

Life with Jake

It was one year ago today that we got Jake (formerly Jacoby) at a GSRNC adoption event in Palo Alto. I'd already done my research online, and I was hoping he'd still be available when we got there. Thankfully, he was.

My wife wasn't sure. She thought she wanted a smaller dog, and she was worried he might be hard to handle or a barker. For me, there was no doubt. Even though he was nervous and skinny, and his tail was firmly tucked between his legs, he was just what I wanted – a little goofy, a little scared, and totally beautiful. We talked with the couple who had fostered him. He sounded like a good dog.



Adopted

Registry

GSRNC
German Shepherd Rescue of Northern California

German Shepherd Rescue of Northern California, Inc. ("GSRNC," "we" or "us"), a California non-profit corporation, and Epilogue.org, ("Adapter" or "you"), in consideration of the mutual premises in this Agreement, and other good and valuable consideration, intending to be legally bound by this Agreement, agree to the following:

1. The Dog: We are placing the following described dog with you, the Adopter, for adoption by you as an indoor pet (the "Dog").

Gender	Male	GSRNC Tag No	6811
GSRNC Dog named	Jacoby	Renamed	
Estimated birth date	09/01/2016	Color Markings	Black/ Tan
Tattoo / Microchip	98102002125314	Spay/Neuter Date	09/01/2017
Spay/Neuter Vet	County of Santa Clara	Vet Phone No.	408-686-3900
Whisks	09/01/2017	DHPP/Di2yp/Dhlyp	08/14/2017
Hondaniella	08/14/2017	Other Advantage & Pyramet	08/14/2017
Known medical conditions (if any)			

2. No Warranties. You understand that this Dog was previously unwanted or lost, and was rescued by us from what may have been a dangerous, unhealthy or cruel situation. This could have long-lasting effects on the Dog. You agree that we are making no warranties about the medical condition, temperament, or personality of the Dog.

3. Disclaimer of Dog's History. GSRNC has made a good faith effort to disclose relevant information of which we are aware. However, given the nature of rescue work, it is likely that we do not have knowledge of all events in the Dog's history. You may investigate further and/or have the Dog's behavior and temperament assessed by a trained animal behavior specialist.

Form 101.1

After some discussion, the handler asked if we'd like to take him for a walk. My wife hesitated, then agreed. They put on his collar and we walked him for about 10 minutes. I made sure my wife held the leash. When we got back, she spoke the two sweetest words she's ever said to me (after "I do"). "Well, okay."

We completed the paperwork, bought some supplies, and brought him home.

Jake isn't our first dog. Our most recent two had died more than a year before, though, and I was ready for another. My son wasn't. We'd had the other dogs for 15 years – through most of his childhood – and although he was 26, he said he never wanted another dog. Losing the others was too hard to go through again. "That's okay", I said, "Jake will be **my** dog. I'll walk him twice a day. I'll feed him. I'll clean up after him. I'll train him."

And that's just what I've done. I knew what I was signing up for and did so happily.

My One-Year Status Report

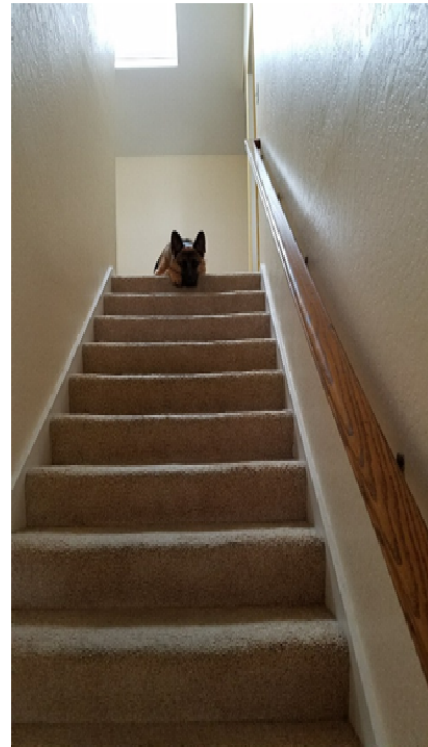
Jake's not food-motivated. He never begs or takes things off people's plates. The only food he goes out of his way for is ice cream. Still, he's gone from a too-skinny 69 pounds when we got him to a healthy 78 pounds today.

I took him to training for 4 months, through basic, intermediate, and advanced obedience. He will never be a service dog, or a protection dog, or compete in agility events, but he's easy to handle and good on a leash.

He's trained us as well. It took a while, but we now know how to play fetch. Jake goes to the top of the stairs with a ball, and he nudges over the first step ... bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce. It's our job to pick it up and toss it back to him. If we don't throw it back right away, that's okay. He's patient with us.



Jake and I walk every morning and every evening. I've lived in my neighborhood for 22 years, but in the last year I've gotten to know more of my neighbors – and their pets – than in the prior 21. When we meet someone else walking, there are two common interactions. "What a beautiful dog!" they'll say, more times than I can count. (It reminds me of the Bonnie Raitt song, "She don't need anybody, to tell her she's pretty, she's heard it every single day of her life...") And they often follow up with "I have/used to have/grew up with a Shepherd. They're the best dogs."



All the walking has been good for me, too. According to my fitness tracker, my average daily steps have increased 90%, to over 13,600 per day. That translates to over 6 ½ miles a day, or more than 2,400 miles for the year. My doctor tells me I have the blood pressure of a teenager, and I'm happy with my weight. I should write a book: The Dog Diet: How to lose weight and be a happier person. It would have two steps:

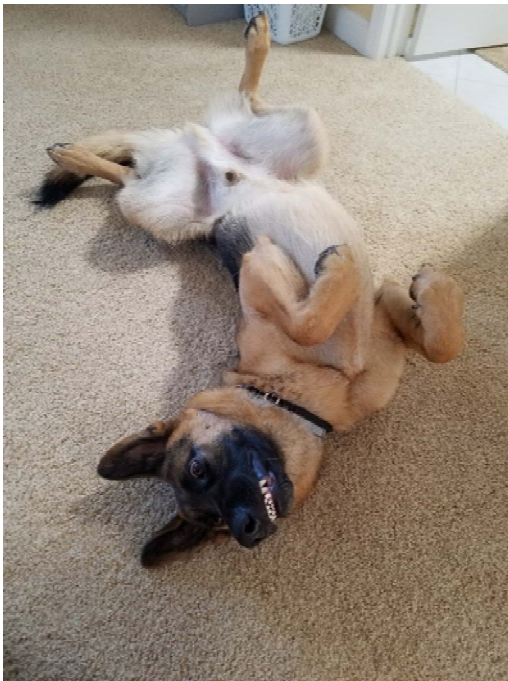
- 1) Get a dog
- 2) Pay more attention to your dog than your phone

I'm glad to say that Jake is not a barker. He will occasionally howl if he hears a siren, but the only person he barks at regularly is my son – because he's so happy to see him. And the feeling's mutual. They've really taken to each other and will watch TV together whenever my son comes by.



My daughter is a fan, too. Whenever she visits from her home in Portland, she joins me on walks with Jake.

So that's chapter 1 of our story. I look forward to many more. I think Jake does, too.



My deepest thanks to GSRNC for making this possible.