

RYE RESCUES: Week of February 20, 2015

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The Monroe Family

Betsy and Steve Monroe knew they wanted to rescue a dog and went about it in the smartest possible way. They figured out what breed they thought would be the best fit for their family (a Labrador), learned how to incorporate him into their daily lives, and researched all about how to find a great Lab rescue online.

Turns out, it isn't very difficult as there are literally thousands of purebred and mixed-breed dogs born to "backyard breeders" in other parts of the country that are simply considered surplus inventory, victims of geography. Labradors, used primarily as hunting dogs, are especially abundant.

Betsy and Steve, and their boys Griffin and Spencer, found the award-winning rescue operation called Labs4Rescue (Labs4Rescue.org) and started working with an adoption coordinator to find the best fit for their family. A beautiful black Lab from Louisiana was hand-selected as a wonderful match and soon "Tobie" was on his way north to his forever home.

There is a truly amazing operation called Rescue Road Trips (rescueroadtips.com) that picks up dogs every two weeks at different points down South and brings them up to homes in the Northeast where there is far greater demand for dogs. At every stop in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and further North, there are happy people awaiting their newest family member. It is emotional and deeply inspiring. The Monroes had tracked Tobie's progress from when he boarded the transport, and it was love at first sight when Tobie was led out of the truck – he immediately rolled over for a belly rub from the boys. He had found his family.

Tobie needed some training but was smart and eager to please so he quickly adapted to life in Rye. A young pup of indeterminate age, Tobie was calm and gracious, a really beautiful family dog. Rescues often have a mysterious past, making for fun speculation at family dinnertime, and the Monroes thought Tobie had a noble past because of his regal bearing and stature.

Surely they were right because it just so happens that Tobie is a Field Lab – a dog of distinction. He's a thoroughbred, the real deal, with an easy and sweet temperament. Tobie is extremely clever and can let himself in and out of the house into the backyard by pushing the door handle, among other tricks. He is also high-energy and as he enters adolescence, needs lots of exercise. He is a great match for the Monroes because they are a fantastically action-oriented family. They hike, camp, play all kinds of sports, and compete in marathons and triathalons, and Tobie goes along for the ride.

Maybe you've seen Betsy run along Forest Avenue early in the morning with a beautiful black dog sprinting at her side – even after an hour's run, Tobie wants more. But for all his energy, he absolutely never turns destructive when he wants to play. He is gentle with the boys and guests, respectful of authority and loves to snuggle with his family. The Monroes cannot imagine life without Tobie, he is a part of their active pack, and everyone is happy knowing they have saved a life.