

## How Jason Gross Ran Across the USA And Was Adopted By A Rez Dog

On July 4, 2004 I left Riverside Park in NYC to run across the United States to raise money for the American Diabetes Association ([www.diabetesrun.com](http://www.diabetesrun.com)) I had a support team of two and we lived in an RV. The run had lots of ups and downs and by the time I hit the 4 Corners on US 160 it was early November and I was tired and ready to be done. At small gift stand I purchased an arrowhead necklace for a few dollars from a Navajo woman who told me that it would bring me protection. Heading into Arizona I was struck by the beauty and vastness of the land. It seemed to be an unforgiving place...

On the afternoon of November 9, I was running on the side of the road and a mangy, skinny dog started following me. I didn't think much of it at first as I had numerous dogs "run" with me for bits and pieces while on the road. However, this guy looked sickly and I didn't think he'd make it too far. I only had a few miles left in my run for the day so when I made it to the RV on the side of the road we immediately fed the dog. Dave fired up some hamburger and I shared my stash of animal crackers (does that make my dog a cannibal?) That night in the RV we talked about the dog. I didn't

think I would ever see him again. Dave on the other hand thought I would. At the crack of dawn the next morning I left the RV to begin my run and from the distance I noticed an animal hurtling toward me - it was the dog!!! Amazingly he ran right beside me again and at this point I knew I was not going to let him go! Before my first break that day we made it to a gas station near Tuba City where I shared snacks with the dog. I decided to name the dog Boss after Bruce Springsteen and his song Born to Run...after all, it seemed like that's what the dog and I were born to do!

After a night at the RV park in Tuba City I started out the next day and not too far on down US 160 there was actually a small Veterinarian's office that was open...so I ran right in there with the dog. The vet seemed surprised I wanted to keep this dog but he gave him all of his shots and we were on our way! Sadly, I noticed dead dogs, and other stray dogs throughout the reservation lands...

For the rest of the trip Boss would typically run with me 10-15 miles a day. I finished the run on Dec 11, 2004 at the Santa Monica Pier in L.A. At first he was never on a leash but as traffic increased he needed to be leashed—he was leashed for the first time near Flagstaff. In fact, one of my favorite stories happened when we "lost" Boss near Flagstaff and found out he was at the Flagstaff pound! Dave and I drove back for him and he was so excited to see us that he stood on 2 legs at the fence. Boss was balancing

his 2 front paws on the fence so it looked like he was standing at a urinal and he started peeing—I lost it and started laughing uncontrollably...the woman at the pound began yelling at me not to laugh at the dogs. I told her to come over and have a look!

At the conclusion of the run I drove all the way back across the country to Buffalo with Boss (just me and the dog). After a short time in Buffalo I moved back to Washington, DC and Boss and I lived in the city from 2005 - 2007. In the summer of 2007 I moved back to Buffalo where we currently reside.

It has been an amazing experience to have this dog. I feel like we have been through a lot together....and as I said all my future dogs will come from the Rez...If there is anything I can do to help you out from the East coast let me know. The Southwest is a mystical place....Thank you so much for all you're doing to help the Rez dogs!!! It's awesome!



## Michael Haines, Blackhat Supporter Since '06

I'm a 70-year-old man in San Francisco who has always loved all animals and who has almost always had a dog companion. I think I belong to just about every major animal welfare group there is. I became aware of the situation on the Navajo Reservation in October of 2006, when on a tour of the Southwest. The bus stopped at Kayenta and I immediately saw two dogs in a condition I had never seen an animal in before. They were both sick and starving and begging for food. I learned that this was an all too common sight there. I was horrified and at once called Best Friends and a friend who worked for them. When I returned home, I found out as much as I could about what was happening (and not happening) in the Kayenta area and the Rez generally. Ever since then, I have tried each month to remember those animals and the need to save them. I am so grateful to organizations like Blackhat for engaging in this very difficult but necessary task.



## History of Blackhat Humane Society

In addition to his picture, the first thing a potential adopter sees on your foster dog's Petfinder ad is his name.

There are plenty of great dog names.

Here is the

### TOP 10 LIST OF NAMES TO AVOID:

10. Snarley
9. Scooter
8. Fang
7. Snapper
6. Stinky
5. Humper
4. Scabs
3. Puddles
2. Spot

And the Number One name to avoid: **Cujo**

Blackhat Humane Society was started in the year 2000 by some people who wanted to do more than just feed the starving, homeless animals wandering the vast and open Navajo Nation. On the "Rez", towns are often 100 miles apart with nothing but desert and red rocks between them.

Many folks who live and work on the Navajo Reservation are concerned about pet overpopulation and they're doing all they can to find medical care and homes for these extra animals. What our group does is help these kind people to continue helping the animals. Dogs and cats are taken into foster care where they receive food, vaccinations, medical care and lots of love.

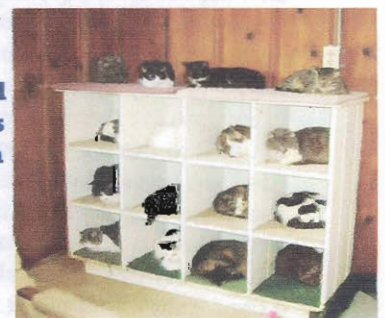
When the foster home feels the animal is ready for adoption, Blackhat puts the animal's picture

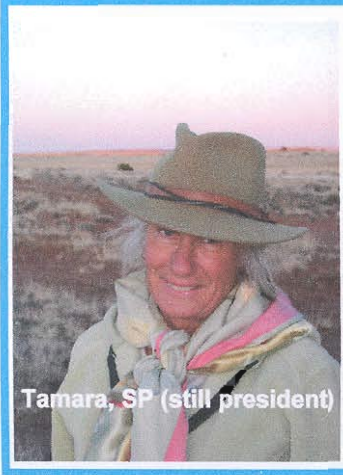
and biography on our site: [www.rezdog.petfinder.org](http://www.rezdog.petfinder.org)

Our group cares mainly for dogs and cats but we care about **ALL** the animals and have helped horses, cows, goats and hawks to find a safe haven. 98% of our money goes to veterinary care. Few young animals receive vaccinations on the Rez, resulting in a high incidence of Parvo and Distemper viruses. All BHS animals are vaccinated and spayed or neutered before adoption. Our group knows that education is the way to make changes and we have taken steps to provide programs and literature regarding responsible animal care to all ages.

**In 2008, we rescued 312 dogs, 48 cats, 4 horses and 6 chickens. To date in 2009, we have saved the lives of 230 dogs, 44 cats, a snake, a turtle and a hummingbird.**

- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- THANK YOU!!**
- Peggy Tyra
- Dorothy Wolf
- Sabrina Ezzell
- Mary Furney
- Lucy Magruder
- Rick Spring
- Connie Wilkins
- Kristi Nix
- Zoe Dehner
- Noahs Ark Rescue
- The Roe Family
- Rose Moonwater
- Cody, Jess and Tess
- Pegasus Foundation
- Nat'l Relief Charities
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★





Tamara, SP (still president)

## Blackhat Prez is Resigned to Not Resigning

I was feeling very overwhelmed by my Dad's visit in May so I asked for help and I got it! Cindy Yurth will now be in charge of our Petfinder website, freeing me to do things like this newsletter, scheduling spay/neuter clinics and fostering more dogs. Cindy is a journalist with the Navajo Times and she now writes the witty prose that accompanies each picture on [www.rezdog.petfinder.org](http://www.rezdog.petfinder.org)



Cindy Yurth

## Uncle Rudy

By Donna Diamond, Treasurer, Blackhat Humane Society

I presently have 4 dogs, two from the White Mountain Humane Society and two abandoned by the road. Three of my dogs are Labrador Retrievers (black, chocolate and yellow.) Goldie is the little one, a tiny blonde pixie found running down a busy highway. She was strictly a spoiled little house dog until I found Rudy, the Yellow Lab. This is the story.....

Someone must have just dropped him off...he was running furiously down the road when we first saw him. When Tamara stopped her truck next to him, he looked up as if to say "well, what do you have to offer me?" She picked him up and threw him into her pick-up truck which began to answer his question. We took him to my house where I planned to foster him until he was presentable for adoption. I kept putting off trying to find him a home because he settled into my life so easily.

In the meantime, Rudy took over the education of Goldie. He taught her the proper way to cross a road to go exploring. I found out about this from my neighbor who told me she saw Rudy and Goldie attempting to cross the road in front of her car. Goldie started across the road but Rudy stopped her and whispered something in her ear. Goldie promptly sat down and waited for my neighbor's car to pass. Then he escorted Goldie home.

A few weeks later Tamara and I went to the White Mountain Animal Shelter in Show Low, AZ to drop off a stray dog. Well, I came home with a Chocolate Lab puppy named Annie.

At 5 months she is a real "pistol". Rudy loves her and he protects her as well when they're out on the dirt road. Again, my neighbor observed Annie starting across the street only to be met by Rudy who ran up to her, got under her and knocked her end over end.

Who ever guessed that big yellow dog Rudy would turn out to be a "mother hen" and take care of the smaller dogs?



Rudy never got adopted. He's now part of our family and I wouldn't give him up for anything!



## BLACKHAT T-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE!



50/50 blend

Available in sizes M, L, XL and 2XL

Order form in this newsletter!

## MAX.....

a wonderful cat who really knew how to turn on the charm.

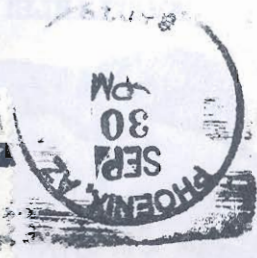


Sadly missed by Judy Whichard

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated"

*Mahatma Gandhi*

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 Our homepage: www.rezdog.petfinder.org



## Volunteer Opportunities

Blackhat Humane Society would be lost without our wonderful foster homes! We are proud that none of our rescued animals are confined in cages. All live in foster homes and are part of the family who cares for them. We can tell you if they're housebroken, if they like children, whether they embrace or chase cats and their behavior around livestock. We know how they behave while riding in cars and how they act at feeding time. All of our rescued animals go to their adoptive homes up-to-date on vaccinations. All are spayed or neutered (if old enough). We support our foster homes with food, supplies and financial assistance for veterinary care. We advertise for prospective adopters and are always avail-

able to guide the foster parents through the adoption process.

\_\_\_\_\_ No I can't foster but please accept my donation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



In memory of our loving, loyal and friendly Shadow. You blessed us for 13 years. We deeply miss our beloved companion.

Dave and Judy Roe



# Blackhat T-Shirt Order Form—T-shirts are 50/50 - shrinkage is minimal They are white with the Blackhat logo

Shirts are \$10, \$12 for 2XL \* S&H for 1 shirt=\$2.50, 2 shirts=\$5, 3 or more=\$7

**MED**

**LRG**

**X- LRG**

**2X-LRG**

Check or MO payable to Blackhat Humane Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

