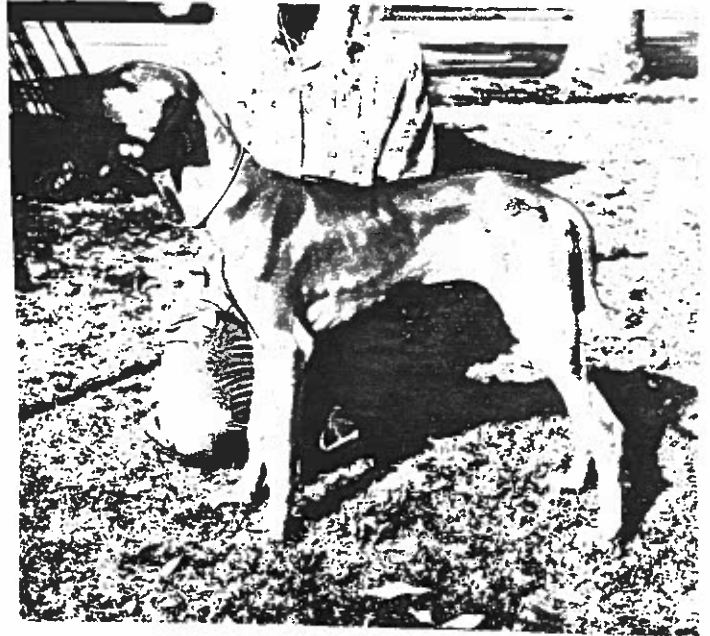


## Then and Now

In this issue, Aegis features the dog, ARBA JRCH Forty Thieves Atilla (Arazi X ARBA CH Al-Hara's Ulissa) bred and owned by Bonnie Saher.



7 weeks



4 months



15 months



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New York, New York, my Way

by

Allen R. Koppelman

The kindest aspect of my disability is my partnership with my service dog. Disabilities come in all flavors; so do service dogs. Guellal, a.k.a. Booboo, is a two year old Azawakh dog. His harness and backpack help explain that he is a dog with rights superseding "no dogs allowed" signs. Sometimes, our outings together are smooth sailing. But, sometimes, we are skating on thin ice.

Few dogs are temperamentally suited to work with a disabled handler. A rare breed sight hound, an Azawakh is an unlikely partner. A companion as striking as this lean, powerful dog helps break the ice in new situations. How lucky I was to have imported him from France as a puppy! He is one a million, and certainly he is the only Azawakh who enables a human partner.

Disabled rights being so much in the news now, it is surprising how much trouble Booboo and I get into. Some of

these moments have been difficult. Others are actually funny, after the excitement is over. Our problems arise in part from my reticence to discuss my disabilities with strangers. My privacy is important to me. I want to blend into the "beautiful mosaic" that is New York City.

I walk with a cane, but am not visually impaired. This makes for very interesting encounters with transit police and security guards. Law enforcement types usually think that only blind persons need or are allowed the assistance of a service dog. When our right to go anywhere or do anything is challenged, my hackles go up. I give the "forward!" command and we are off. There is no stopping us. We want to go about our business and be ignored, even though it is hard not to notice us.

Booboo and I began working together on July 1, 1993. On that day the Americans with Disabilities Act became the law of the land. As a life long dog person with good, but not competitive level training skills, I was able to ascertain what my individual needs were and trained my dog accordingly.

I am a closed-head injury survivor. When the cumulative weight of cognitive and physical damage take their toll I have brief moments of dislocation. In lay terms, I space out. In a moment of sudden confusion, having a focused dog with me makes all the difference. When I am out alone he

keeps me centered in space. So, in addition to helping me with orthopedic problems, Booboo is a space dog.

Booboo gives me the confidence and the room I need. He paces his gait precisely to mine and he is very traffic aware. Standing 27 inches tall, he is a real help going up and down stairs. My right knee is often unstable. If I stumble he is there to help me recover. His harness is my floating handrail.

Part of my disability is that I am specially prone to heat prostration. If the temperature and humidity rise above levels that make most people only uncomfortable, I get dizzy and can pass out. In New York City, if you might have occasion to be passed out on a sidewalk, a big dog is the one essential fashion accessory not to be caught without! My service dog? I don't leave home without him.

Dogs are not allowed to ride on public transit in New York City, unless they are working, or are in pet carriers. As the holder of an official reduced fare card for the disabled you would think I would not have problems riding the subways and buses. This is not the case. In the beginning things were really rough. I have had more screaming matches than there is room to recount with personnel above and below ground.

Once, after being ticketed by Transit Police, Booboo and I were not allowed into court to plead not guilty! The

same old story! No dogs allowed in court. As the ticket was dismissed on a technicality I let it pass, but justice was not served. I think I finally made some kind of reputation for myself. We are more and more being greeted warmly, or just ignored.

Boo is a real city dog. Nothing bothers him. He is a very fast learner and fearless. He knows my schedule and enjoys working. Boo is phenomenal on the subway. He has no difficulties with the train and stands as near to the platform's edge as I let him. When the train stops he heads for the nearest open door and takes me inside. After I am seated he sits between my legs, back to me, and lays down. Only the worst lurching gets him up. He ignores passengers stepping over him.

Monday afternoon we go to the therapist. This is a two subway trip. Boo knows the transfer from one line to the other. He adores therapy. My therapist is a dog lover and lets him nap on the couch. The couch is part of his reward for excellent service. She has ruined him for waiting rooms. Where ever we have to sit and wait, he just assumes the furniture is for him. Booboo hopes I never leave therapy.

A singularly terrifying travel moment occurred when the subway doors closed on us. I stepped into the train as the doors snapped shut. Boo was on the platform next to me. I struggled with the door and freed my arm and Boo's neck.

Suddenly, train was rolling down the tracks. He was still on the platform. The space separating us was a lifetime and seven blocks.

I "ran" uptown one station. When I staggered back into the station I was out of breath and still panicked. Boo was fine. Strangers came to his rescue. Seeing our predicament someone grabbed his leash when it dropped from the door. A transit officer who knows us was holding him for me. The next week when I paid my fare the clerk joked "Don't forget your dog today."

The "no dogs" concept is at work in department stores. Once, I walked into Barney's, one of the trendier fashion stores. A doorman held the door for us, and we marched inside. A security type pounced on us like flies on, well, you know. "Dogs must be carried," he informed me. Think about it. If I carry the dog, who is going to carry me? When I pointed out the obvious situation he finally disappeared behind the potted plants again. Well, that's New York.

Like Master Card and American Express we are accepted in fine dining establishments without question. We are always given good seats in the no smoking section. To minimize his walk through dining rooms we are not stuck near the kitchen, nor are we too near the door. Booboo lies next to me or disappears under the table.

We provide an authentic European dining experience when we eat out. "Oh! That man has a dog under his table." The only "moment" dining out came when he bolted from under the table in an Italian restaurant to course, a rabbit-sized cockroach. Management recovered by bringing him a bowl of San Pellegrino water, exchanging it for the paw-flattened bug. No one was the wiser. Al fresco seating is our preferred solution if weather permits.

Whenever I can, I call ahead to reduce "dog shock." Just the other day we spent a wonderful day at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A friend who works at the museum gave me a behind the scenes tour. I telephoned visitor information desk and was told that there would be no problem. There was genuine concern to ensure a pleasurable and stress free visit.

Walking through the museum's door, I heard my name being called. A reception official was there to greet me and offer any assistance I might need. He handed me a slip of paper printed across the top with "Permission Pass." It stated that I was a visitor "with dog." The pass was a good idea. It should be adopted in all buildings that have no "pet" policies. The few times that I was approached by guards I showed my pass.

The visit was a great success for both the dog, me and the staff of the museum. There I was in one of the world's



greatest treasure troves with the only living dog in sight. There were some mummified dogs around the place, and of course the life-sized Mastiff wearing a suit of armor.

Camera-laden Japanese tourists posed us in front of a large European painting. Booboo and I before an aristocratic grouping with Greyhounds gave a thrill to the entire gallery we were moseying through. In the Islamic Art galleries, a guard lamented that illuminated manuscripts with hounds, "just like your dog," had just been rotated off the floor. He suggested European Art if I wanted dogs.

Since we had already been there, we crossed into Egypt and went leopard hunting with the pharaohs instead. Next week I think we'll check out the dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History. Two year olds love dinosaurs.

The End.

Kesia's Story  
by Deb Kidwell

Sometimes when I see Kesia (my brindle Azawakh bitch) curled up on the couch, I feel a sense of astonishment and wonder that she is here, safe and content. Kesia's story is one where diligence and miracles intertwine to create a happy ending, where happy endings are rare.

It all started on Labor Day several years ago. Kesia was in high heat and driving all my males crazy. I had to go to the hardware store, so rather than crating all the males and consigning Kesia to the bitch pen, I took her with me. At the time, I had a station wagon with a metal barrier to keep the dogs in the back seat and, since, it was hot, I left the front windows open trusting the barrier to contain Kesia while I made a quick trip into the store. To my horror, when I returned to the car a short while later, Kesia was gone! She had pushed the arm rest down between the seats and wiggled through the small opening to freedom. I am sure she only meant to come find me, for she generally won't leave my side. The Labor Day trade in the store was heavy and she was surrounded by strangers. She is very timid and must have felt totally overwhelmed by the noise and activity, so, she ran, and ran and ran. By the time I had returned to the car, people said she had been long gone, running down the middle of Route 1, a four-lane highway.

Fortunately, I had been laid off from my job on the previous Friday. I was able to devote myself full time to the search for Kesia. The next six weeks of my life were spent printing flyers, running newspaper ads, visiting animal shelters and veterinarians. Each night I retired with legs sore from walking and throat hoarse from calling her name.

I had done all the "right" things. Kesia had been tattooed with my social security number and was wearing a collar with identification. I felt the odds were in my favor in finding her, right? My flyers had a recent picture. I printed them on brightly colored paper to catch people's attention. In my spare time, I waited by the phone praying for a call. After two weeks, of being crazy with worry picturing my girl lying dead in a ditch or, worse, lying injured and in pain somewhere, the phone rang. The woman on the line said she had found Kesia's collar out by her dog's house. I got directions to her house and jumped into my car. Mrs. Smith lived in a small housing development about 3 miles from where Kesia was lost. Kesia had been hanging around the area for about two weeks with a herd of males trailing behind her. She said she was very skittish and had recently started limping badly after having been hit by a car. My heart was in my throat, but at least she was alive. Mrs. Smith said that Kesia had been trying to get into her dog, Patches, house for shelter. She also said that she had seen my flyers in town and knew it was the dog advertised but hadn't bothered to get the number on the flyer to call. It wasn't until she found the collar that she had called. I thanked her profusely and started combing the neighborhood, asking questions and calling for Kesia. Everyone I spoke to had seen her and they confirmed that she had been

injured and probably had, at least, one broken leg. No one had been able to get near her.

After returning home that evening, I reconsidered my method of search. Obviously, the flyers in the local businesses and tacked to telephone poles were ineffective. Offers of reward seemed to have no motivational effect. Now Kesia was minus her collar and badly injured. I redoubled my efforts with the local vets and started putting updated flyers with offers of a reward for ANY information that would lead to her capture in individual mailboxes for miles surrounding the area that she was hanging out in. The flyers in the mailboxes netted a few calls and also a flurry of complaints from people to, "PLEASE stop putting all those flyers in my mailbox". I kept it up anyway, figuring that if I kept the picture and information about Kesia in people's minds that, sooner or later, someone would call.

I followed up on every call. Kesia was ranging over a ten mile radius of the original sighting. It was incredible that this dog with such severe injuries could do so much traveling. Old Mrs. Smith called every few days to see how things were going. I was also befriended by a woman who worked for a building contractor in the area. Donna headed up the animal shelter in the next county and was currently feeding a pack of wild dogs in the area hoping to capture and rehabilitate them. We hoped that Kesia would meet up with this pack and join them. Donna helped me search in her spare time and on her lunch hours. We became fast friends. By this time, almost a month had passed since Kesia was lost.

The personnel at the animal shelter told me to give it up. That I was crazy to keep up the search for Kesia must surely be dead by then. This attitude only served to fuel my energy for the search, if only to prove them wrong. I signed out a dog trap and started leaving it at Ms. Smith's house with all kinds of yummy treats.

One night a woman called to say that she had seen Kesia near a local restaurant when she went to her car after closing. She described her minutely. My hope leapt. Since this sighting was within a mile (as the crow flies) from Ms. Smith's, I felt it must be legitimate. I immediately jumped into my car and drove there, calling and searching all night. I put out food as at all the other sighting points. After a few days, I saw the dog. It WAS a brindle dog, but not Kesia! Oh, all my hopes of finding her died. I figured that everyone had seen this brindle dog, who did vaguely match Kesia's description. What were the odds of two brindle dogs being lost in the same general vicinity? I set out to capture the dog and see if people would continue seeing Kesia after he was gone. After a while I gained his trust and was able to get my hands on him. I turned him over to the animal shelter. They openly gloated over the fact that it wasn't my dog and were amazed when I asked to sign out the dog trap again. Something in me just couldn't give up.

I continued to make the daily rounds with my flyers and searching in the early mornings and late evenings when I figured that Kesia would be out foraging. Late one evening, I was sitting at home reading the paper and, there in my horoscope for the

following day was something to the effect that "luck and intuition would be with me today". I remember thinking, maybe tomorrow, maybe tomorrow. All the next day, I made the rounds of the area, calling Kesia, talking to people, setting out the food, baiting the trap. As I drifted off to sleep after midnight that night, I remember thinking, "Well, so much for THAT horoscope. Today hadn't been lucky at all". About 1:30 A.M. the phone rang in my ear and Ms. Smith's voice came over the line. She said, "Kesia is here and trying to get into Patches' dog house. I didn't know if you wanted to come this late but it was my intuition to call you". The hair stood up on my neck at the word "intuition" coming out the mouth of this old country woman. It was such an uncharacteristic word. Anyway, I leapt up out of bed throwing my clothes on and calling to Kiffah, Kesia's mother, who I hoped would help me to catch her. Mario Andretti couldn't have driven my old station wagon any faster to Ms. Smith's house that night. When I pulled into her driveway, Ms. Smith said that Patches wouldn't let Kesia into the house and that she had left a few minutes before. The night was cold and I felt a flash of anger at Patches for not wanting to share his dog house with Kesia. I drove a short way up the road and saw Kesia cross the road a few hundred yards ahead. Stopping the car, I got out with Kiffah and called to her softly. Kesia whirled around at the sound of my voice and I could see her confusion and mistrust. Then she ran into the woods on the right side of the road. My heart stopped. I moved the car off the road and turned the engine off. Kiffah was on a flexi-lead and we began walking up the road. I kept calling softly to Kesia and we heard her crashing through the woods to our right. Every so often, the twigs and branches snapping would stop and I could feel Kesia's eyes and ears trained on Kiffah and me. Kiffah was air scenting her daughter with her nose in the air. She slowly walked toward the edge of the road and stood at the end of the Flexi-lead. Suddenly, Kesia came leaping out of the woods and collapsed at Kiffah's feet in the roadside ditch. She was crying and peeing all over herself in her joy at seeing her mother again. I ran over with tears running down my face unheeded and gathered her into my arms, feeling her for injuries while she sniffed and snuffled all over my face. All my time, energy and persistence had finally paid off. I had my dog back. On the drive back home, Kesia tried her best to sit in my lap, not wanting even one inch between her and myself. She cried her joy continuously.

At home, I was able to examine her thoroughly and find all her injuries. She had a large lump on the long bone of her right front leg about the size of a grapefruit, which I assumed was a calcified break. One of her rear hocks had a dime-sized hole all the way to the bone and the other rear leg was swollen and sore. I had expected to find a limping skeleton and was pleasantly surprised to find my dog in relatively good shape except for smelling perfectly awful. After a quick bath, I took her to bed with me. She moaned and groaned her pleasure all night long.

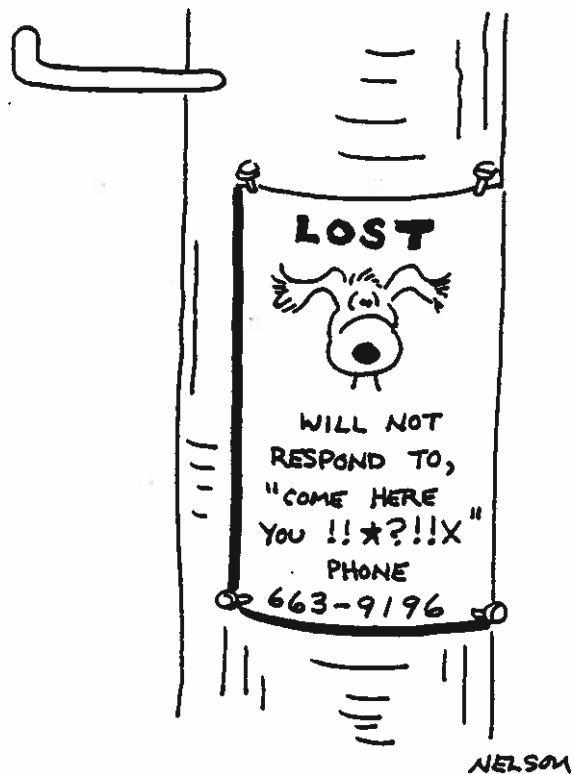
The following day, we went to the vet. X-rays revealed a complete break of the long bone in her front leg. The enormous calcification which had occurred had stabilized the break. The

hole in her hock had apparently come from being dragged by the car that had broken her leg. The vet recommended letting all her injuries heal on their own. The calcification which had occurred around the break had progressed to such a point that he felt that rebreaking the area would cause more problems. The other good news was that Kesia was not pregnant. One of my fears had been that she would have been bred by any number of males resulting in a litter of mixed breed pups. The vet was unsure if she had been bred and aborted when the car hit her or whether she had not allowed herself to be bred. After the vet, we had several more stops to make. First, was Ms. Smith. Profuse thanks and payment of the reward could not express my gratitude to this woman. Then, we made our way to the animal shelter where the employees had been so unpleasant. They were astounded that I had found my dog and I think I left them with an education on what a dedicated person can accomplish. Perhaps they will be more understanding in the future. On the way home, we stopped by Donna's and she was overjoyed that Kesia had finally been found. Of all my old, and new friends, Donna had been the most encouraging and dedicated to helping me with my search.

My purpose in writing this saga of Kesia was to give hope to people engaged in the search for a lost animal and also, to let people know what works and what doesn't when searching for a pet. Keep a collar with identification on your pet at all times. Get your pet tattooed and REGISTER your tattoo with an organization such as National Dog Registry, Tattoo-A-Pet, etc. Take pictures of your pet on a regular basis so that you have one available if needed. Try to have a few of your pet standing from the side that shows markings. Cute pictures of your dog sitting or laying down are not effective in a flyer. Think mug shot!

I found that while flyers in businesses and on telephone poles alert people to the fact that an animal has been lost, people rarely bother to take the phone number off the flyer. At least five people who had seen Kesia had seen my flyers in stores and not bothered to call. The classified ads worked a little bit. The call I received about the brindle dog at the restaurant was the result of the newspaper ad. All in all, the flyers in the mailboxes worked the best. Of course, this is technically illegal but I usually waited until after the mail had been delivered to distribute my flyers. When newspaper tubes were available, I used them instead of the mailbox. Some newspaper carriers called to complain, however they were more understanding after I explained what was going on. While putting up flyers in parks seemed like a good idea, some park rangers can be rude when they call to explain that it is illegal to do so. Visit local animal shelters, Department of Transportations (the people who pick up road kills) and veterinarians, personally. Try to provide them with actual photos, along with an accurate description of your pet. When dealing with a rare breed, such as an Azawakh, it is better to describe what "type" of dog you have lost. Nobody knows what an Azawakh looks like, but most people would be familiar with a "Greyhound-type" dog. Be polite, but PERSISTENT when dealing with the animal shelters. They deal with any number of lost animals everyday and may not be very

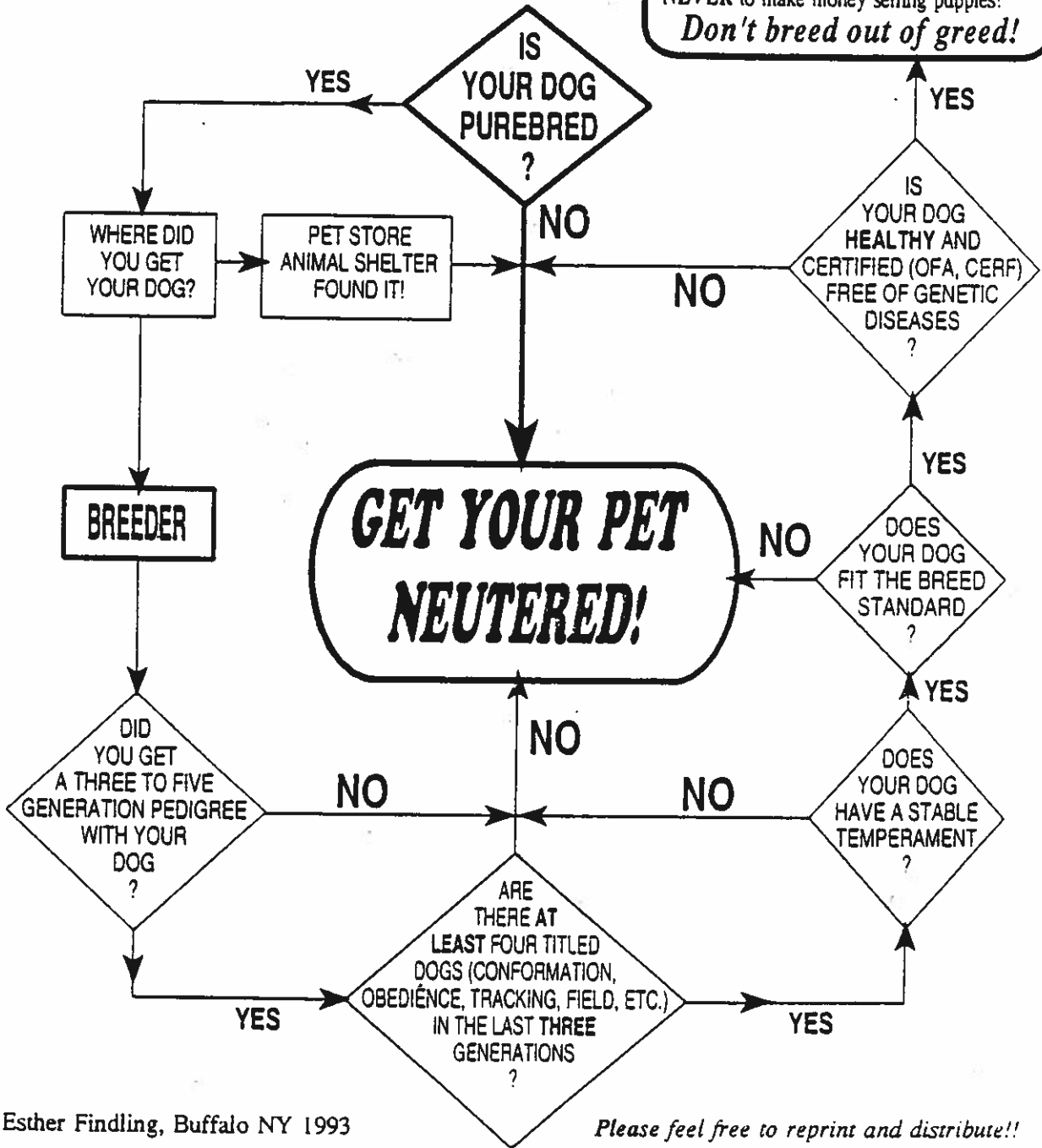
sympathetic but you need them for your search. Look every spare minute of every day. Don't sit at home waiting for a call. If you don't have an answering machine, print the phone number of a friend on the flyer also. Change the message on your answering machine to encourage people to leave messages with phone numbers so you can get back to them. I could not count the number of calls I got from people who told me they saw my dog but didn't leave a phone number or the location of WHERE they saw her. Go door to door if possible in the area where your dog was lost. Show people pictures. Get kids involved. They are enthusiastic about helping out. Making personal contacts makes your search more important to people who may see your dog. Above all, don't give up. Until you know for sure your dog is dead for whatever reason, there is always hope. Dogs are amazing creatures. Their will to survive is very strong and you CAN find them, given the time and a strong desire to do so.



# IS YOUR DOG BREEDING QUALITY??

START HERE

Yes, you have a dog of breeding quality. However, if you are not active in showing or working your dog, think very carefully about your reason for breeding. Breeding should be done to **IMPROVE THE BREED**, not so the kids can see puppies being born, or because you want "a puppy from her," and **NEVER** to make money selling puppies!  
**Don't breed out of greed!**







# HAVE YOU HUGGED YOUR HUMAN TODAY?



A CRACKED TEAR-OUT/TEAR-UP POSTER

