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## BeFreegle Foundation

*"Giving Former Research Beagles a New Leash on Life"*

## It's Just So Xcitin!!

By Lucy D'Introno

Hello everyone, it's me Lucy. My Freegle sister Juno was kind enough to make me the editor of the BeFreegle Howler this month. I hope that was a good idea because sometimes I am just so silly I can scare myself. I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday season because I know me and beagle brothers did. You see, we take nothing for granted. If there was a holiday on the calendar, we celebrate. We just will do anything for a treat or an extra snack. All the decorations have been taken down and the lights and pretty colors are all gone. This was my 4<sup>th</sup> Christmas season with my furever family and I loved every second of it.

When we crossed over into 2014, there was a special delivery of something called a blizzard. It was really xcitin because I'm only 10 inches tall and the snow was just under my nose. It was so cold and snowy that my mom dressed us like EWOKS with coats, scarfs, and silly hats for my brothers. But 2014, also brings us something else. It is the next issue of the BeFreegle Howler.

In this issue, you can read about Freegle Star, who like the rest of us was lucky enough to choose a wonderful furever family. A mom, a dad and two little girls, what else could a little freegle ask for? Like the rest of us, Star had to work at being a regular pup, but we'll all get there.

Now for anyone who loves an adventure, wait until you hear this. This was more exciting than a ride at Disneyworld or even going for a sleigh ride. With the help of some dedicated volunteers, the BeFreegle Foundation initiated its first BeFreegle Homecoming just two weeks ago. A very long journey of 2,200 miles roundtrip with wind, rain, snow and ice to a place called Iowa to bring the "new" Freegles home to New York. The Freegles are all residing comfortably at base camp in Putnam Valley and are looking forward to their furever homes.



*From the Desk of Lucy the Freegle.*



*Freegle Lucy with her brothers Linus and Schroeder*

## A Star is Born

By Margie Druss Fodor



*Freegle Star loves to snuggle with her family and watch the Food Network!*

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*"She is a shining, loving addition to our family and we are happy she has found her forever home with us."*

I scanned the faces of the sweet dogs up for adoption. One by one, I learned their stories, their needs, their likes and dislikes. Where did they come from? What are their personalities like? And mostly, do they like kids?

As far back as I can remember, my older daughter, Emma, now 13, wanted a dog. For her 9th birthday, instead of getting presents, she asked her friends to purchase gifts for the Ramapo Bergen Animal Refuge, a rescue shelter in Oakland, N.J. Everyone obliged. After the party, we packed the car and dropped off dog food, toys, gift cards and other supplies to the shelter.

After her birthday, we talked as a family about having a dog. I have to admit, I was the holdout. I was a little worried at first about the responsibility. My husband Ken grew up with dogs and my two daughters, the youngest, Phyliscia, is now almost 8, really wanted one. I knew I would end up doing much of the caretaking so I had to think about it. I always loved animals and really enjoyed meeting and talking with the people at RBARI. Rescuing a dog, to me, would be opening our home in Bergen County, NJ, to another family member. Yes, I wanted to do this.

One day during our search for a dog in 2010, a group of beagle faces popped up on Petfinder.com's website. I later learned how 120 beagles were rescued from a New Jersey lab that shut down in the summer of 2010. Rescue organizations across the New York/New Jersey area were trying to find them homes as part of what was called the Great Beagle Escape. The beagles were rescued around July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend and were given Independence Day themed names such as Star, Sparkler, etc. One little face caught my eye right away – that of Star and she was at RBARI. I called the shelter and asked if we could meet her.

We brought the entire family down to RBARI to see Star and as quickly as they brought her in, we fell in love with her. She came to us right away, as if to say, you have been what I've been waiting for! We were thrilled to find out we could adopt her.

It's hard to believe that Star lived the first several years of her life in a laboratory, likely never running on grass. About 5 years old when we adopted her, she had trouble going up even a few stairs, wasn't sure how to walk on a leash, and wasn't house trained.

Within months, she was walking up and down the street, sniffing everything she could, as beagles like to do. While she still can't go up a long flight of stairs, she virtually gallops up the several stairs into our home after playing in the backyard.

I often think back to the months when I hesitated about getting a dog. I can't imagine our home without Star. She is a shining, loving addition to our family and we are happy she has found her forever home with us.



*Margie Druss Fodor with her Freegle, Star.*



Our Freegle tags being made at PetSmart

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*"In retrospect, I think we all believe that we had a guardian angel assigned to us for three days straight."*



**Freegle Homecoming Video**  
[Click photo to go to YouTube](#)

## Homecoming

By Kate Aubry

The BeFreegle Foundation was pleased to welcome our very first Freegles who arrived to a special homecoming celebration on January 20, 2014.

These three sweet girls traveled from a laboratory in Colorado via Kindness Ranch all the way to New York. These girls were ready to be released and with Kindness Ranch near capacity, they reached out to us. Could we help? Without a second thought, we quickly began to organize our resources. An email to our key volunteers, could they spare their time to help three Freegle girls? Their replies all came quickly and as if in unison a collective cry of YES was heard throughout the lower Hudson Valley!! To Petsmart for Freegle supplies followed by a search for a good value on a van rental a quick stop for human provisions. In record time, we were on the road.

In retrospect had we checked the weather I doubt anyone would have changed his or her minds about our mission. In retrospect, I think we all believe that we had a guardian angel assigned to us for three days straight. After all, when your mission is this important is there any doubt that the universe sends invincibility?

So off I drove, first stop on the way, Joe, Freegle Lucy's dad. We knew right away we needed Joe on our Homecoming Team, as he is the official Beagle Whisperer! I gladly handed over the keys as we headed to pick up Vice Prez and co-founder Melanie and her husband, Van in New Jersey.

The snow started slowly at first but gained momentum as we made our way through the Saturday morning Jersey traffic. By the time we reached Melanie and Van the snow was coming down in flakes the size of large donuts or small beagles! I nervously checked my weather app, which insisted it was a partly cloudy day, as we loaded up their luggage watching the snow coming down sideways. It's going to get better from here I said, out loud or to myself, I don't remember now. And it did get better, for a little while anyway. Through Pennsylvania then Ohio, our spirits were high. As the day wore on and the sun set we entered Indiana and the snow started up again. Snow, which quickly turned the roads to ice and made for treacherous driving but with Van and Joe taking turns driving we felt safe. Then we passed an overturned tractor-trailer, then another and another. For the entire state of Indiana along Interstate 80 we were white knuckled but determined to reach our stopping point in Joliet, Illinois. I don't remember what time it was when we arrived but I know it was well past midnight. I fell into a dreamless, restless sleep knowing that in a few short hours we would be back on the road toward our Freegle girls. One more night girls, one more night!!

Enter Charlie Petrick, animal transport extraordinaire!! Charlie was kind enough to volunteer her time and vehicle to transport our Freegles from Kindness Ranch to a meeting point in Des Moines, Iowa. For 10 hours, she transported our precious cargo and spent the night with them in a Des Moines motel waiting for us and the opportunity for a new leash on life for our girls.

Bleary eyed from too little sleep, truck stop food and snacks in place of meals we arrived at our meeting place. Both Melanie and I thought we would be overcome with tears as we met our Freegle girls for the first time. There were no tears though but only overwhelming joy in our hearts.

They were frightened but curious as they first sniffed Melanie and me then began to pepper us with kisses, not something we expected. I think I speak for both of us when I say we could have sat there all day being kissed by these sweet wonderful little girls but we had traveled 1,100 miles in just over 24 hours. Now we had to turn around and go back to get our girls home and settled so they could begin their new lives.

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[Contact Us](#)

What's on your mind?

Questions/Comments?  
Letter to the Editor?  
Email:

[Contact@BeFreegleFoundation.org](mailto:Contact@BeFreegleFoundation.org)

Have lots of time on your hands?  
Love beagles?  
Volunteer with us!!  
Email:

[Volunteer@BeFreegleFoundation.org](mailto:Volunteer@BeFreegleFoundation.org)

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**We're on the Web!**

Find us at:

<http://befreeglefoundation.org/>

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(Homecoming. continued from page 3)

I can honestly say that aside from layovers, I have never traveled 1,100 miles to spend a grand total of 45 minutes anywhere and then leave to go home. Des Moines, the only part of you I saw was a hotel off the Interstate but I have to say it was well worth the trip. As the girls got to BeFreegle Base Camp, they emerged as East Coast girls from their crates quickly. What would you expect from an East Coast girl anyway?

It's been just over two weeks and they are adjusting beautifully to their new life. Yes, they are timid but curious and that is a good thing. Learning comes slowly when everything is new. The vacuum sends everyone scurrying but then little faces peer around the corner to investigate. Beagles are nosy by nature and this can only help our girls to acclimate to their new lives.

Sunshine and Daisy are both in foster care at the moment making great strides in learning where and where not to pee and poop! Little Maya, the smallest of the group will be staying on as the newest member of the Aubry pack. She has stolen my heart and really is there such a thing as too many Freegles?

When I said I didn't cry when first meeting our Freegle girls it was true. It wasn't until I got home and settled and began seeing all of the beautiful comments and messages from all of our friends, family and supporters that I was overcome with gratitude. You thank us for what we do, but really without you it would not be possible. Each of you accompanies us as we travel cross-country and each of you is with us as we celebrate every success of our Freegle girls. For that, we could not be more grateful. You have our endless gratitude, every one of you. Bless you all.

A very special thank you to Joe and Donna D'Introno for all of your help with the Freegles and of course Lucy, Linus and Schroeder for sharing Mom and Dad. A debt of gratitude to Van Portsche for driving, the hotel rooms and telling me to chill out! I'm chill, man, I'm chill. To Tamra and Steph from Kindness Ranch, thank you for calling on us and for choosing my new daughter, Maya, for me. To Charlie, you are an angel to the animals and to us, thank you for caring so much for our girls. To Melanie's mom, you are a bright and shining star. Next time we will stay for breakfast, I promise. To Stephanie D'Introno for the care package for our precious girls. To Kitty, for your long distance counsel and figurin skills! And Mel, what can I say? We did it! We always knew we would! And finally, to all of the Freegles who have yet to find their way home, thank you for inspiring us to do what we do.

To inquire about adopting one of these Freegle girls please visit our [website](#).



*Our First Freegle Homecoming  
(left to right, Sunshine, Daisy and Maya)*

