



# Isaac's Puppy by Rob Hurd

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I am in the Pet Industry, and work as a National Field Representative for America's Pet Registry. I also lost a son to Leukemia in 1980 after a nine month battle. So when a "plea" for a free puppy for an Iowa boy fighting Leukemia popped up on one of the buy/sell/trade pets Facebook pages that I am apparently a member of, I was intrigued... something about the way it was written caught my attention.

I messaged the person that had posted it. After researching her story I discovered a little boy, Isaac Gipson from Shenandoah, IA had been hospitalized for most of the past 9 months. I made contact with Isaac's mom, Chris Lewis-Gipson. Chris and I made an emotional connection immediately. I posted the following on my Facebook Page.

*I have a two part personal request of all of my Facebook Friends. There is a 10 yr. old boy here in Iowa who was diagnosed with a rare form of Leukemia in January. He has spent most of this year in a Nebraska Hospital and recently had a bone marrow transplant. He is starting to respond positively to treatments and to the transplant. So first and foremost I would ask all of you to take a moment and pray for Isaac Gipson. Secondly, since long before this disease was diagnosed, Isaac has wanted a Beagle puppy, specifically a female Beagle puppy. I am asking one of you to reach into your heart and help Isaacs wish come true. Mom, Chris is on board with a puppy and their family does have a Shih Tzu, so they certainly understand the responsibilities of dog ownership and responsibility. If you wondering why Mom doesn't just buy him a puppy, well, Chris is a single Mom of 2 boys and has not been able to work since Isaac became sick. Family have helped out and the family is not asking for any other type of financial help, but to be honest there is just no room in a tight budget for a puppy. So if any of you have or know someone who has a female Beagle Puppy for Isaac, please let me know, and I will figure out transportation as well as a care package for a new puppy. Those of you who know me can probably understand why Isaac has touched my heart. Children Cancer patients are Special and bring special Blessings on all of us. Once again I would ask that you say special prayers for Isaac. God Bless All*



*(Most all of us have experienced pleas like this before....I have vetted this story and talked to Isaac's mom and I believe this little boy deserves our help.)*

Within 4 hrs. my Facebook community (most of my Facebook friends are involved in the pet industry in one way or another) had responded with offers of more than 10 puppies, 2 puppies from distributors, a year's supply of puppy food, free spaying at a Missouri vet clinic, transportation to Iowa, and people were wanting to know how to donate money.

A female Beagle puppy was donated by the Buenings in Neosho, MO. Thanks to Terry Buening I was able to send a picture of the puppy to Isaac that day. I received hundreds of responses from all over the country of people who were praying and following Isaacs' progress. Isaac's Puppy campaign was in motion.

The puppy, "Butie" was spayed at 7 weeks at Pinnacle Vet Clinic a Division Of Pinnacle Pets in Neosho, MO. The following week Helen Kettleston Transport of Iowa transported Butie to Western, IA. Great News, Isaac's bone marrow transplant that he underwent in June was successful and DNA testing showed that his host donor had replaced all of his bone marrow and he was cancer free. His mom reported that Isaac should be able to come home in a week or so. LouAnn and I would be puppy-sitting for a few days.

All the great news in the world and the joy of taking care of an active Beagle puppy did not prepare us for the tragic news we received at the end of that week. Isaac had undergone a simple medical procedure earlier in the week and his condition went south and on Friday the 13th of September, Isaac Gipson, 8 years old, went home to the Lord. I was in a state of shock.

By now I was totally vested in Isaacs' story. I had no idea if the family would want this puppy or if it would be a sad, constant reminder of the loss of a child. I traveled to Shenandoah on the following Wednesday to attend the visitation for Isaac. I was one of about 600 people in attendance at the visitation. After an hour in line I approached the receiving line and as I reached Chris, I leaned in and said "I am Rob" ....the puppy guy. Chris threw her arms around me and asked if I had brought the puppy. Thank the lord, because I was not quite sure what to do with that little scoundrel.

I contacted the Iowa Column writer at the Des Moines Register and explained the Isaacs Puppy story to him. He was anxious to do an

article about the puppy and Isaac and later that week he and a photographer were in Shenandoah to gather his story. The story appeared in the Des Moines Register on September 29, front page of the Metro Section and a full page of pictures.

The Puppy, now named Hunter, is doing well. I visited Chris and Branden, the 16 yr. old brother just before Christmas. Chris is an amazing young woman, and I am astounded at her ability to deal with the death of her son. Hunter has been adopted by Isaac's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class and had become an unofficial school mascot. Chris attends a lot of the school activities and after-school programs.

The Isaacs Puppy story has reached out and touched people across the country. I have received messages from hundreds of people. The Faith and Spirit of this young boy is alive and well. Isaac had a picture of Butie aka Hunter on his cellphone and showed it to everyone. One of the last things he asked of his mother was to make sure that the puppy had a home with her and Branden forever.

Thank You Pet Breeders and Industry people for your prayers and love and concern for a little boy that none of us ever met face to face. You showed your compassion and your ability to share, love and give of yourselves. God Bless Each and Every One of YOU.

Rob Hurd

**Beagle Puppy** donated by Terry & Howard Buening  
**Years supply puppy food** donated by Nutrisouce/Tuffys  
**Transportation to Iowa** donated by Helen Kettleison  
**Spay surgery** donated by Pinnacle Vet Clinic/Pinnacle Pets  
**Micro Chip and lifetime registration** donated by PetKey  
**Toys/grooming supplies etc.** donated by Revival Animal Health  
**Registration and Pedigree** donated by America's Pet Registry  
**+ People from the breeding community across the US donated money**

*Rob Hurd raised dogs for 16 years and now works diligently for the Iowa Pet Breeders Association and the Iowa Federation of Animal Owners. He is also a national rep for America's Pet Registry. Thank you, Rob!*

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[Video by the Des Moines Register about Isaac's Puppy](#)