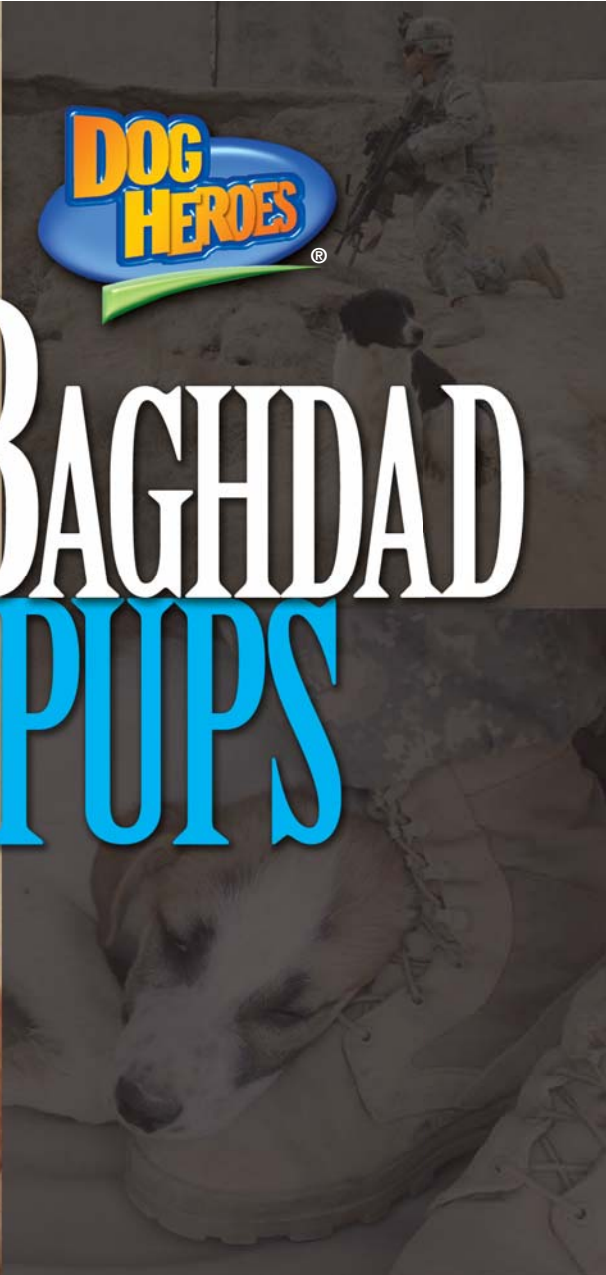




BAGHDAD PUPS



by Meish Goldish

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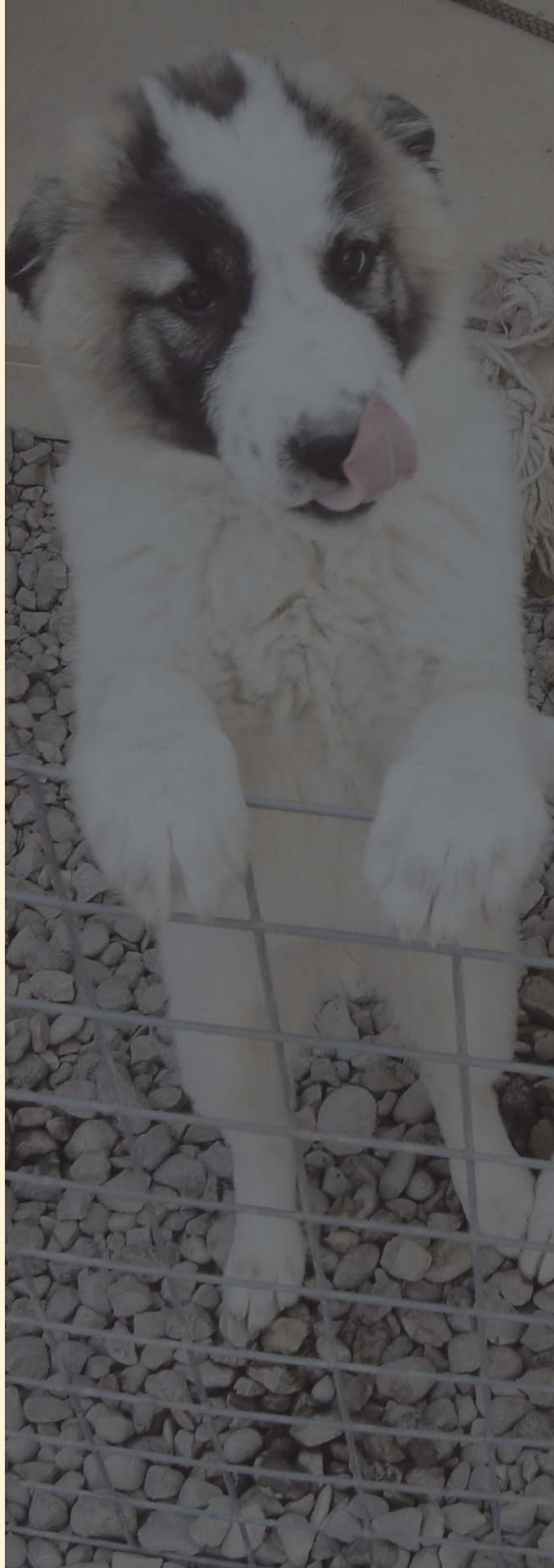
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Table of Contents

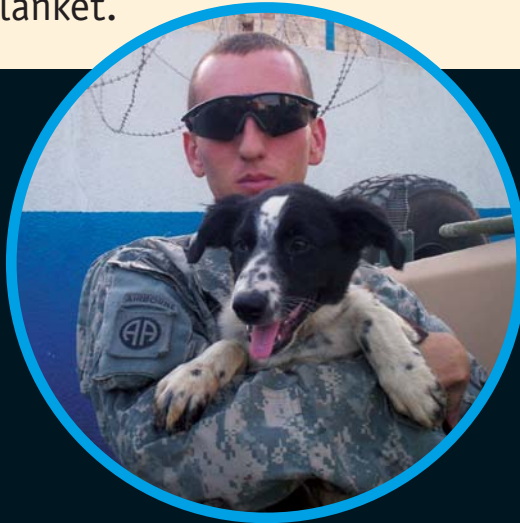
A Wartime Secret	4
No Buddy Left Behind	6
A Cause Is Born	8
A Deadly Surprise	10
Safety Measures	12
Easing the Pain	14
Team Effort	16
Dogs on Duty	18
Sad and Glad	20
A Daring Rescue	22
Power of the People	24
The Work Goes On	26
Just the Facts	28
Common Breeds: Baghdad Pups	29
Glossary	30
Bibliography	31
Read More	31
Learn More Online	31
Index	32
About the Author	32



A Wartime Secret

In 2007, U.S. Army **Sergeant** (Sgt.) Edward Watson was serving in the war in Iraq, a country in southwest Asia. One day, his **regiment** went on patrol in a dangerous neighborhood outside the city of Baghdad (BAG-dad). Suddenly, the soldiers spotted a tiny dog in the street. The black-and-white puppy was covered with fleas and weak from hunger. A soldier scooped him up and wrapped him in a blanket.

Sgt. Edward Watson and the puppy that he and the other soldiers found in Iraq



Baghdad is the capital of Iraq.

Upon returning to their **base**, Sergeant Watson and the other soldiers took turns secretly caring for their new buddy that they named Charlie. While they knew it was against U.S. **military** rules for soldiers to keep animals as pets, the tiny pup helped lift the men's spirits.

Charlie was as small as a potato when he was found as a puppy. He grew quickly, though. Here, he's shown playing with toys the soldiers gave him.

Most dogs in Iraq are **strays**. They live on the streets, often in **packs** of about 35 animals. Many Iraqi strays die from gunshot wounds, disease, beatings, or hunger. Most live for only a few years.



No Buddy Left Behind

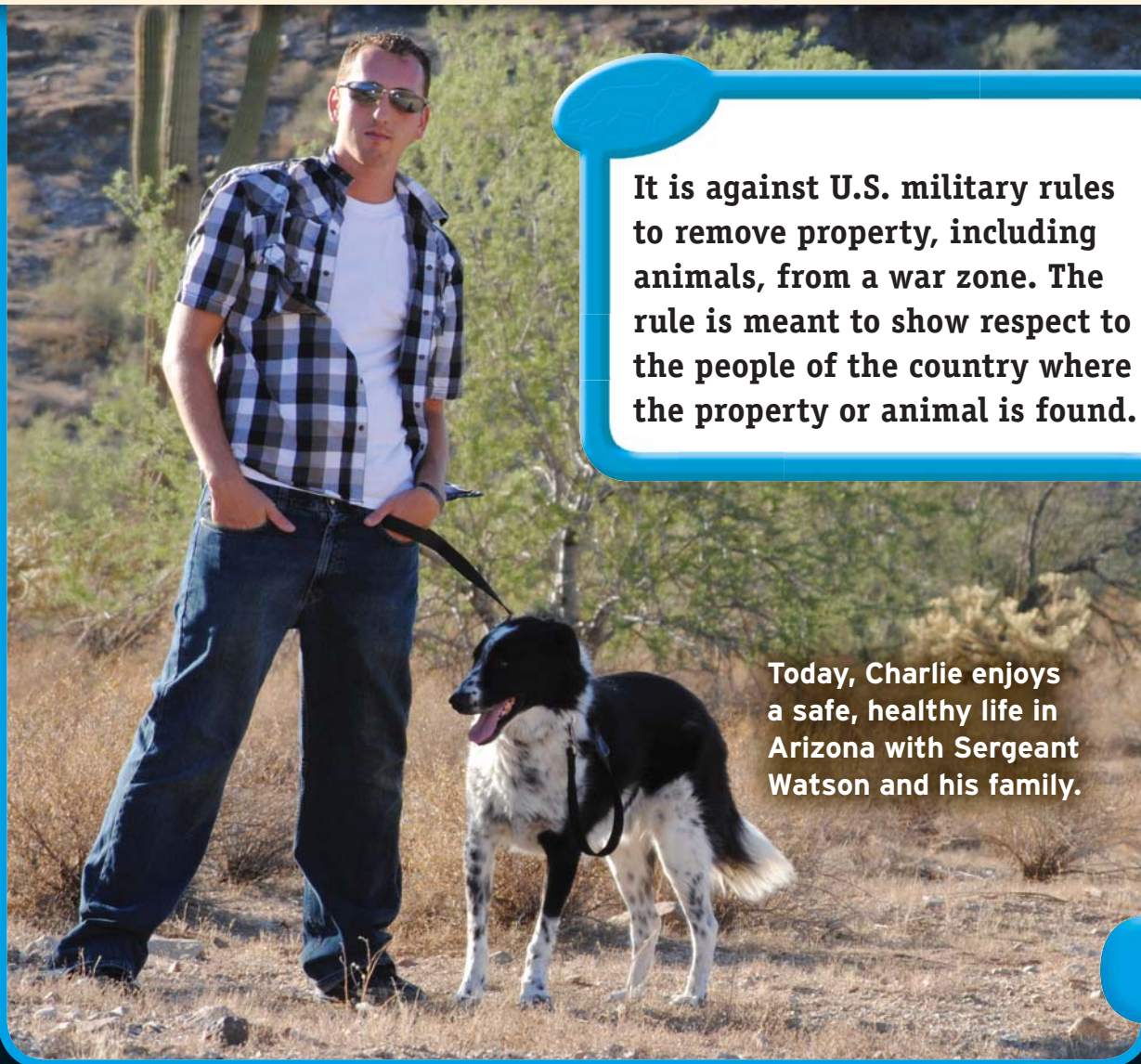
As the soldiers spent time with Charlie, the bond between them grew even stronger. However, a problem soon arose. The group was scheduled to leave Iraq. Sergeant Watson feared that Charlie would die if he was left behind on the war-torn streets of Baghdad. He wanted to bring the dog home with him to America. However, military rules didn't allow it.

Once Charlie grew bigger, he often went on patrol with Sergeant Watson's regiment in Iraq.



Sergeant Watson decided to contact the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals International (SPCAI), a group that works to improve the safety and well-being of animals around the world. He thought that maybe they could help. Sergeant Watson told them, "I just can't leave our buddy behind."

SPCAI employees were touched by Sergeant Watson's request. After months of planning, they were able to fly Charlie out of Baghdad. In February 2008, he arrived in the United States to live with Sergeant Watson in Arizona.



It is against U.S. military rules to remove property, including animals, from a war zone. The rule is meant to show respect to the people of the country where the property or animal is found.

Today, Charlie enjoys a safe, healthy life in Arizona with Sergeant Watson and his family.

Index

- Afghanistan 28
- Alvarez, Dave 19, 20–21
- Band-Aid 22–23, 24
- Beberg, Sgt. Gwen 24–25
- Charlie 4–5, 6–7
- Crisp, Terri 8–9, 14–15, 26
- Crusader 11, 12–13
- Force Protection Canines 18
- Henry, Staff Sgt. Luke 22–23
- military rules 5, 6–7, 10
- Moody 14–15, 16
- Penny 18–19, 20–21
- Petey 18–19, 20
- Phoenix 16–17
- quarantine 12–13
- rabies 11, 12–13
- Ratchet 24–25
- rescue costs 27
- Spears, Staff Sgt. Bryan 15
- vaccination 12–13, 27
- Watson, Sgt. Edward 4–5, 6–7, 8

About the Author

Meish Goldish has written more than 200 books for children. His books *Bug-a-licious* and *Michael Phelps: Anything Is Possible* were Children's Choices Reading List Selections in 2010. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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BAGHDAD PUPS

In 2007, U.S. Army Sgt. Edward Watson was stationed in Iraq. One day, his regiment went on patrol and spotted a tiny black-and-white puppy. The soldiers brought him back to their base and named him Charlie. Sergeant Watson knew that keeping pets was against military rules, yet he saw how much Charlie lifted everyone's spirits. Was there a way to save the tiny pup and give him a new life in the United States?

Charlie was the first dog rescued by a program called Operation Baghdad Pups. Look inside to learn how this bold program helped Charlie and other dogs stay with the soldiers they befriended in Iraq by finding ways to send the dogs to the soldiers' homes in America.

Baghdad Pups

Combat-Wounded Dogs

Disaster Search Dogs

Dog Scouts of America

Eco Dogs

Fire Dogs

Guide Dogs

Hollywood Dogs

Medical Detective Dogs

Military Dogs

Police Dogs

Prison Puppies

Security Dogs

Seizure-Alert Dogs

Service Dogs

Sled Dogs

Snow Search Dogs

Therapy Dogs

Water Rescue Dogs

Wilderness Search Dogs

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