

give them to seniors, widows, friends, neighbors, and upon occasion,

looking out the window at Lake Hartwell which

yeah and how about saying that any lawns

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**Bowers**  
By Vivian  
Staff writer

# It's an open letter to a dog

**D**ear Chance, Remember when I met you? Remember that day when I found you hobbling down Bowman Highway all alone and injured? It's beginning to take on a foggy haze that I blame on the weakness of memory. For you, the circumstances that brought you to me are burned much deeper, and maybe forever, into your mind.

I read something similar to your story in the news, today. Somewhere in Arkansas on December 20th, 57 dogs were found dead on a tract of land that is for sale. Someone brought at least 63 dogs to the area, drugged them with sleeping pills and used them for live target practice. These dogs, it was determined, were not even put out of their misery afterward. They died slowly and painfully. Several were found alive in survivable condition; five were too wounded and had to be euthanized; four are in veterinary care; and two are still loose, though the authorities are trying to trap them.

Your story, Chance, may be a bit like the dog massacre in Arkansas. For whatever horrible reason, someone thought to shoot you in the leg with a shotgun. Buckshot nearly severed your right hind leg.



They did not kill you, though. Somehow, according to the veterinarian, you managed to live with that injury for about a year. I hate to think of it. The bone rotted away in your precious little leg until there was nothing left to be saved.

Of course, sweet boy, I am glad you lived so we can cuddle you and your kissable Labrador muzzle. I am so grateful I get to gaze into your amber eyes, though they beg me to explain my species, explain the pain, to answer for the horrors inflicted upon you. Sadly, I can't.

I don't know why that horrible person shot you. What is more, I cannot explain why, very recently, someone shot you again. How could someone could even glimpse your sweet eyes and the injury you already faced, but decide to shoot you a second time with a non-lethal birdshot? I marvel even more that you trust anyone at all. But you do.

I am so glad that my part of helping you has been so easy. All I had

to do was pick up my cell phone and call a few numbers. I called the sheriff, animal control, the humane society, and a rescue. Remember how we sat with you and waited until real help could come? I am not prepared to help an injured animal, with all the necessary trappings and knowledge, but we still helped by calling the right people. Remember the kind deputy Coggins from Hart County? He came to offer you support, answer our questions, help us contact Hart County Animal Rescue, and get you loaded into their car. The vets at Royston Animal Hospital loved you. They helped you with your leg, finishing the amputation and giving you medicine. Judy at Hart Co. Animal Rescue took you to the vet and organized her networks to get you help. So many have helped you, paying your bills and sending you love.

You are healing, getting stronger, learning to run, climb and play on three limbs. It has only been 9 days and you are so much better! I know you don't entirely believe it, yet, but you are safe. The other day the shotguns went off at my neighbor's house and I thought we'd lost you to the horrors in your memory. I fell to the ground and hugged you; I held on tight

while you yelped as though you'd only just now been shot. I cried and promised you "It's not for you, Chance. Never again for you!" But you grabbed the leash in your mouth and pulled me back to "safety." Imagine that. You in such emotional pain but you made sure we made it home together. Everyone should be loved by such a dog.

I am so happy that I was there to help you that day and that you have come to stay while your forever home is found and made ready. I guarantee you will have your forever home. You will have people who will sing you lullabies because you love them. We will send you home with your bones, toys, bowls, blankies, and many loving memories.

Some day, maybe, we can understand and prevent the crimes that hurt you and that hurt those dogs in Arkansas. Maybe the laws that punish animal abusers as felons will actually begin to mean something. For my part, I helped you now, but I hope that all of us here in Georgia can help other dogs never have to suffer as you have.

Love,  
Your Foster Mom,  
Christie Bogle

*If you see an injured or abandoned animal, please contact your local animal shelters, the police, or animal control. Help is out there.*

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