

Puppy Prints



North Carolina Puppy Raising Program Newsletter

Summer 2006

Congratulations to NCPRP's Most Recent Graduates: Benny, Debbie, Lenny and Opal!

Benny and Lenny recently graduated from Guiding Eyes for the Blind. Opal graduated from the Canadian Guide Dog School and Debbie graduated from Susquehanna Service Dogs. Stories about each of their graduations are below.

Lenny's Graduation By Carrie Barnett

In March, I got "the call" from Sherry Dodson that Lenny (5LL04) was graduating. I was so excited! All of the hard work I had put into raising my first little puppy into a fine dog, the heartache I felt returning him to GEB, and the nervous waiting for four months while he was in training was worth it at that very second. I learned he would be doing home training with Kamil Fulwood who lived in New York City. Home training is typically for experienced guide dog users who are unable to attend the 26 day residential training program held at the GEB Training School. Normally, the home training students do not attend graduation. However, Kamil agreed to meet me with Lenny at the April graduation. I felt very lucky for the opportunity to be able to meet her and see Lenny again!

The graduation was great and many students spoke, sang, and recited poems that reflected their feelings about their new dogs and the appreciation they had for the GEB instructors, staff, and puppy raisers. Many people were reaching for the boxes of tissues by the end! After the ceremony, we were allowed to meet the graduates and see the pups. Kamil and Lenny were sitting on the end of a busy aisle (as they didn't actually "graduate" and just attended the ceremony). Miranda, their home training instructor, was there to help Kamil. When I approached, Lenny turned around and instantly perked up as I told them I was Lenny's puppy raiser. Kamil seemed very delighted to see me and we began making introductions (her mother was also with her).



GEB Lenny with (from left to right) Mirada Beckmann, Lenny's trainer, Kamil Fulwood, Lenny's new partner and Carrie Barnett, Lenny's puppy raiser

We chatted for awhile and she took Lenny's harness off so I could visit with him. Kamil had a million questions for me about Lenny's "childhood." She even asked, "Do you think he will wear reindeer antlers for our Christmas cards?" Most people would think that was a silly question, but I think it surprised her when I told her he had pictures with reindeer antlers the Christmas before! I told her I always knew Lenny was a born "city" dog and it was great to see them together. Our visit went by quickly and it was soon time to part ways. I watched as Kamil and Lenny made their way back to the car with Kamil's mom. Even though Kamil and Lenny had only been together for a month, it was obvious there was a strong bond between the two, and they were going to make a great team!

Lenny was raised by Carrie Barnett of Raleigh, NC. Lenny's vet sponsor was Falls Village Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor was Carrie.

On Raising Benny **By Dana Geiner**

Raising Benny was very trying and emotional for my family. I have epilepsy and after 30 years I am finally controlled thanks to a wonderful doctor. I know what it is like to be dependent on people. Now that I am independent, I wanted do the same for someone as my doctor did for me. After a long discussion we all agreed GEB was right. When we all first saw Benny he was this cute, cuddly bundle of puppy. He rarely barked or whined and was quick to learn, however, the one thing that he always had a problem with was distractions. The kids knew how well he did at home and saw his potential, however, at some of the evaluations he would act up. Upset-sure, frustrated-yup. But the one thing that I kept telling myself and the kids, " My doctor NEVER gave up on me and

believed in me, and we are NOT giving up on BENNY because I believe in him ."

I home-schooled my twins and Benny would lie by my chair, however, as soon as the sun hit the front steps he went and laid on them. He would follow the sun up the steps as it set. I would talk to him and say, "You better not go any further, do you understand me." He would cock his head. There were times he fell asleep on the steps- we have pictures.

He LOVED working- he knew that when I got his coat out it was time to work and no fooling around. He knew the difference between his working leash and outside leash. He loved to go to the park and go on the play-gyms with the kids. Following them through the tunnels was a fun game. My oldest boy Andrew even wrote a paper on his experience with raising Benny and why we did it. I told him I was proud of him! Allison my youngest would sit on the floor at night and give him a 'manicure', while the 2 of them watched TV. That was something Benny loved to do. Ashley gave him his 'manicure on the steps. Alex loved to groom him. The kids all loved their responsibilities and were proud of what they were doing.

Letting go was the biggest challenge and we all knew it had to come and as much as you prepare, it is still hard. As much as raising these dogs means to me, I wanted to make sure that the kids wanted to raise another one. I gave them some time, and they came back to me and said, "We are ready and understand why it is important but it will still be hard to give up the puppy." I told them "That is normal."

We are all so proud of Benny and happy! We are now ready for our next bundle of joy and challenge. I must not forget to thank everyone in our group who was there to support me whenever I needed it!! You truly are special people!



GEB Benny with Monty, Benny's new partner

Benny was raised by Dana, Rob, Andrew, Ashley, Alex & Allison Geiner of Raleigh, NC. His vet sponsor was Swift Creek Animal Hospital of Raleigh and the Geiner's were his food sponsors. Benny currently lives in Woodburne, NY with Monty LaHanko. Benny is Monty's 3rd guide dog.

Opal Graduates from the Canadian Guide Dog School!

Opal, a female black lab raised by Angel Anderson and family of Apex, recently graduated from the Canadian Guide Dog School on May 20th. Opal's vet sponsor was Apex Animal Hospital and her food sponsor was the Anderson Family. The Anderson's weren't able to attend Opal's graduation in Canada, but they provided the following about their conversation with Opal's new partner, Holly:

Holly is from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and she is a writer, age 51 and she is short and petite, factors which were why they matched her with Opal because Opal is very small. She writes novels. She went blind over a period of 3 years from retina degeneration, and this is her first guide dog. She contacted the Canadian school because she wanted more mobility. Opal has been specially trained to go through traffic lights very quickly because they change fast in Halifax, so Holly has to trot to keep up with her when they cross a street.

Debbie Graduates from Susquehanna Service Dogs!

Debbie, a female yellow lab raised by Jackie and Bob Schmidt of Merritt, NC, recently graduated from Susquehanna Service Dogs. Debbie's vet sponsor was Oriental Village Veterinary Hospital and her food sponsors were Bob & Jackie. Jackie and Bob attended the graduation and provided the following about their experience:

It was wonderful to see Debbie and to meet her "client." After the ceremony we got to spend about 2 hours with him and Debbie. It was heart warming to see how close they are. In fact part of the ceremony involves the raisers having the dog with them and presenting the dog to the client when they are called to receive their certificate. Debbie was happy to see us but clearly wanted to be back stage with her David. Once they were together again she was a different girl and gladly gave us her attention and all the kisses we could ever want. Debbie is David's dog but she is also used by him and two other therapists with some of their children. David told us how Debbie is used in crisis intervention among other duties. In fact her first day on the job was dealing with a death that affected the children. David also told us about how he received a call from one of the other psychologists concerning a 5th grader who was threatening to hurt himself if he could not talk to Debbie. They couldn't get Debbie to him that evening but a bargain was made that if he didn't hurt himself that evening she would see him first thing in the morning. When he saw her the next morning he spent over an hour with her telling her all the things that he needed to and then the counselors could help him accordingly. You know those stories had tears of pride and joy in my eyes. To think that she can be so helpful and fulfill such a needed and vital role is beyond words.

Meet NCPRP's Newest Puppies!

Elway, a male yellow lab, is being raised by Susan Piron & Joe Brown of Macon, NC. Elway is Susan's 4th GEB puppy! Elway's vet sponsor is Pine Hollow Animal Hospital of Warrenton, NC and his food sponsor is Citizens for Animal Protection (CAPs) of Warren County.



GEB Elway (3rd from left) sitting and drying off after a swim with Lake, Baldwin and Porter (l to r)

Iota is a male black lab being raised by first-time puppy raiser Laura Wiles and her parents Brian and JoAnne of Wendell, NC. Iota's vet sponsor is Neuse River Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor is the Wiles family. Laura provided the following on Iota: *Iota has a very mellow personality and also enjoys chasing his tail. He has already become the mascot for our 4-H club and attended his first big horse show.*

Van Gogh, a male yellow lab, is being raised by Danny Overcash of Mooresville, NC. Van Gogh is Danny's 9th GEB puppy! Van Gogh's vet sponsor is Lakewood Animal Hospital of Mooresville and Danny is his vet sponsor. Danny provided the following about Van Gogh: *Van Gogh entered our household at 13 weeks of age. His previous raiser was Jane Russenberger. Hope we can follow in her footsteps and continue her good work. Van Gogh is a lively little guy who has slipped right into our menagerie of 2 released Labs and 2 Siamese cats. He's confident and well behaved and has already won over the neighbors...adults, kids and dogs! As it was 96 degrees the day he arrived in NC, he quickly made the air conditioning vents his "place." Splashing in his water bowl is a favorite activity; especially*



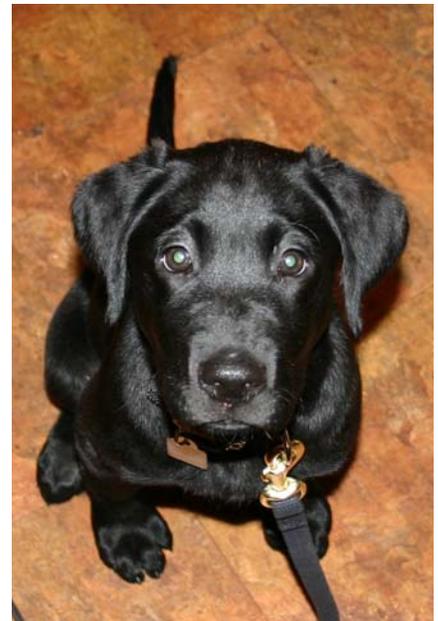
GEB Iota



GEB Van Gogh

as it sits next to a vent...one can be wet and cool at the same time! Obviously, we are still adjusting to the heat. Fortunately our backyard has lots of trees so shade is always available. Life has changed here in Mooresville with the arrival of the sweet, handsome and lovable Van Gogh...changed for the better.

Walt, a male black lab, is being raised by Susan Shinn and family of Concord, NC. Walt is the Shinn's 3rd GEB puppy! Walt's vet sponsor is Randall Veterinary Hospital of Mooresville, NC and his food sponsor is the Faison & Associates of Charlotte.



GEB Winifred

Will, a male black lab, is being raised by first-time raiser Forrest Griffith and family of LAGRANGE, NC. Forrest is raising Will as part of his Eagle Scout project. Will's vet sponsor is Riverbank Animal Hospital of Kinston, NC and his food sponsor is the Griffith family.

Winifred is a female black lab being raised by first-time puppy raiser Heather Blackledge of Waxhaw, NC. Winifred's vet sponsor is Rea Road Animal Hospital of Charlotte and her food sponsor is the UPS Store and Harold and Wanda Parks of West Jefferson, NC.

Where are they now?

Cora, a female black lab, recently passed her in-for-training test! Cora was raised by Kathie and Bill Rysanek of Raleigh, NC. Cora was the Rysanek's 3rd GEB puppy! Cora's vet sponsor was Six Forks Animal Hospital in Raleigh and the Rysaneks were her food sponsors. Cora was previously raised by Nancy Inger of Oriental, NC, Robin Stern of Cary, NC and Donovan Leonard of Raleigh, NC. Cora's previous vet sponsors include Oriental Village Veterinary Hospital and Northwoods Animal Hospital of Cary. Her previous food sponsors were Robin Stern & Donovan Leonard.

Elaine, a female black lab, recently passed her in-for-training test! Elaine was raised by Jane Vignovic of Cary, NC. Elaine's vet sponsor was Mayfair Animal Hospital of Cary and Jane was her food sponsor.

Gamma, a female yellow lab, recently joined the home of a new family in Virginia. Gamma was initially raised by Margot Bennett and family of Cary, NC. Margot and family miss Gamma very much and are keeping in close contact with the new family. Gamma's vet sponsor was Gentle Care Animal Hospital of Raleigh, NC and the Bennett's were her food sponsor.

Indigo, a female black lab recently retired from her career as a guide dog. She will be joining the home of her puppy raiser, MaryLynn Harvey of Virginia. Indigo was a guide for 6 and a half years.

Karo, a male yellow lab, was recently released from the GEB puppy raising program due to chronic ear infections. Karo will be permanently joining the home of his beloved puppy raiser, Chris Echols and her family of Raleigh, NC. Chris plans to train Karo to do therapy work. Karo was the Echols' 3rd GEB Puppy! His vet sponsor was Armadale Animal Hospital of Raleigh and his food sponsor was the Echols family.

ANNUAL POTLUCK SOCIAL!!

When: Saturday, August 12th, Noon

Where: Raleigh Church of Christ - see evaluation schedule for directions

Who: All Volunteers and Friends of the NCPRP! Puppy raisers, sitters, friends, family and prospective volunteers!!

What: BBQ provided by Ole Time BBQ! Drinks and utensils provided by NCPRP. Please bring a dish to pass. If you live nearby the evaluation site in the triangle area, please bring a salad or side-dish. If you are traveling from Charlotte or the coast, please bring a dessert.



GUEST SPEAKER is Rene Abernathy accompanied by her guide dog Dolce and DEMO by arson detection team Jerry Webster and Roxy. Both canines, Dolce & Roxy, were raised in NCPRP!!

ATTENTION ALL PUPPY RAISERS:

Please bring your DVD and an accurate reading of your puppy's weight to the next evaluation and don't forget to fill out a Quarterly Evaluation Report (www.guidingeyesbcweb.org)!

EVALUATION SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, August 11th and SATURDAY, August 12th, 2006

Raleigh Church of Christ

Friday 8/11	PUPPY	RAISER
11:30 AM	Rambler	Cooke
12:15 PM	Nino*	Geiner
1:15 PM	Onslo	Cucurullo
2:00 PM	Powell*	Neve
3:00 PM	Will*	Griffith
4:00 PM	Jeeter	Haynes
4:45 PM	Jewel	Gilleland
5:30 PM	Osage	Bierwirth
6:15 PM	Toma	Davan
7:15 PM	Iota*	Wiles
Saturday 8/12	PUPPY	RAISER
8:00 AM	Verna	Jackson
8:30 AM	Wilbur	Meek
9:30 AM	Louie	Dickey
10:15 AM	Paige*	McCarthy
11:15 AM	New Puppy*	Quesenberry
12:00 NOON	POTLUCK SOCIAL!! <u>Guest Speakers:</u> GEB grads Rene Abernathy & Dolce; Arson demo by Jerry Webster & Roxy. Both dogs were raised in NCPRP!	
1:45 PM	Walt*	Shinn
2:45 PM	Van Gogh*	Overcash
3:45 PM	Sidney*	Tanner
4:45 PM	Elway*	Piron
5:45 PM	Winnie*	Blackledge
6:45 PM	Velvet	Burkett

* Beside Pup's name and Raiser's name indicates need for photograph by Rick Tanner

Driving Directions to Raleigh Church of Christ for Winter Evaluation:

From I-440:

- Take exit 1C, Jones Franklin Rd and drive North approximately 0.35 miles
- Turn Left onto Barringer Rd and the church building will be on the Right about 0.11 miles

UPCOMING EVENTS: 2006-2007

August 11-12, 2006

Evaluation & Potluck Social,
Raleigh Church of Christ

November 10-11, 2006

Evaluation, Prince of Peace Episcopal Church,
Apex, NC

February 9-10, 2007

Evaluation, Location TBD

May 4-5, 2007

Evaluation, Location TBD

August 10-11, 2007

Evaluation, Location TBD

November 9-10, 2007

Evaluation, Location, TBD

MISSION STATEMENT

Guiding Eyes for the Blind is dedicated to enriching the lives of blind and visually impaired men and women by providing them with the freedom to travel safely, thereby assuring greater independence, dignity and new horizons of opportunity.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Guiding Eyes for the Blind

North Carolina Puppy Raising Program

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www.guidingeyesnc.org

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