



The Retriever

Official Newsletter of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network

Volume 2, Number 1, April 2001



L.E.A.R.N. Celebrates 200 Saved Labs and its 2nd Year!

L.E.A.R.N.'s second birthday coincides with the rescue of over 200 Labrador Retrievers! It was only two years ago that a small handful of Labrador lovers sat around a table and decided to form a new Lab rescue group that would serve Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin. In April, 1999, the **Labrador Education and Rescue Network (L.E.A.R.N.)** was born. These six people became the Board of Directors for L.E.A.R.N. and started rescuing dogs with money from their own pockets. During its first year, L.E.A.R.N. expanded its network to include over 25 volunteers across northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin, and worked hard to establish relationships with local shelters, convince veterinarians to provide us with discounted medical services, raise funds, and create promotional materials and the Website. During the first year, this dedicated network of volunteers saved over 30 dogs and place them in loving homes.

L.E.A.R.N.'s mission is to assist in the rescue of unwanted Labrador Retrievers by placing them in homes through fostering, adoption and referral. In addition, we strive to provide public education regarding Labrador Retrievers and to promote responsible ownership and the humane treatment of all dogs.

L.E.A.R.N.'s first year built a solid foundation for much growth in its second year—170 more dogs have been saved and placed into loving homes! In addition, L.E.A.R.N. now boasts nearly 70 volunteers in Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin. That's nearly a 600% increase in rescued labs and a 300% increase in volunteers. The volunteers foster the rescued labs in need of homes, transport dogs, help assess a dog's temperament, work with vets and shelters, raise funds, run a website, and the list goes on!

With all of the growth in the last year, fundraising has never been as critical. President Mary VanderBloomen has named fundraising to be L.E.A.R.N.'s biggest priority for 2001. L.E.A.R.N. could save even more dogs with more funds. Every dog that comes to L.E.A.R.N. has faced challenges, and it seems more dogs than ever are in need of medical attention due to injury, illness, or poor backyard breeding. L.E.A.R.N. spays or neuters each dog, tests for Heartworm Disease, and provides normal vaccinations. As an entirely volunteer-run organization, L.E.A.R.N. operates on a shoe-string budget and must make many difficult decisions to stay within the budget. Even with the generosity of many vets, individuals, and organizations, L.E.A.R.N. needs to find more ways to raise money to save dogs.

New Website Offerings!

L.E.A.R.N. has recently added "Events" and "Merchandise" to its website at www.labadoption.org. Come visit, support L.E.A.R.N. and join us for fun at events! Also see our calendar page in this newsletter!

In addition to fundraising, L.E.A.R.N desperately needs more foster homes. Foster homes are the backbone of the organization, and the more foster home, the more dogs saved. There is always a list of wonderful and great dogs waiting for a place in a foster home and dangerously close to being euthanized at a shelter. If you are interested in learning more about fostering a dog or know someone who is, please contact us.

As we begin our third year, we hope to strengthen our ability to raise necessary funding, expand our network of foster homes and volunteers, continue to increase our visibility and reach more people, and place even more rescued dogs into loving permanent homes. We are grateful to everyone who has helped us come as far as we have.



Amazing Lady Jane



From her photo, you might remark how perfect her posture is and what a proud, pleased, and maternal demeanor she has. Add a costume, and Lady Jane could easily have been an aristocratic dog of a past era posing for her portrait.

Before the call came to LEARN about Lady Jane, her life had been that of a dog that no one wanted, in and out of shelters, placed into homes only to be disowned again—at least three times in her life of 2-3 years. Most recently she belonged to an older man who called LEARN and said he wanted to get rid of her two days prior to making a move from country to city. He feared that she might be pregnant because she looked rather heavy, but the shelter from which he adopted her had said she'd been spayed. Frustrated with the prospects, he saw the options as either leaving her or doing away with her.

The very next day, the shelter called LeAnne Nord to see if she would be willing to pick up a lab mix having puppies—at that very moment. Lady Jane and her puppies were outside in 15-degree F cold to protect them from risk of infection inside the shelter. Soon they graduated to the employees' restroom. While Lady Jane's Labrador features were easily discernable, even under her filthy farm dog façade, no one knew how "Labby" her puppies would look.

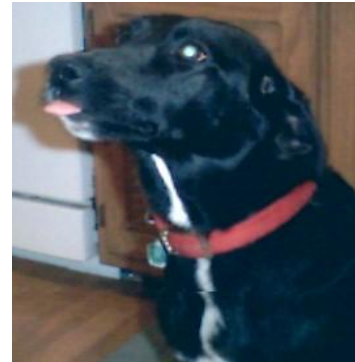
The Lady Jane story did not stop once she and her puppies were

rescued by LeAnne and LEARN. Extremely protective of her litter, Lady Jane would not let anyone come near them and would not emerge from her crate. No one could approach Lady Jane, and it seemed a most risky proposition even for LeAnne to bring her water. People were questioning whether this dog was too aggressive and potentially dangerous to help or just reacting very protectively towards her puppies in a new and unknown environment.

Gradually and fortunately, the new mother began to calm down. Lady Jane accepted LeAnne two days later and LeAnne's family three days later. Initially, Lady Jane was dog aggressive but then a week later, began accepting other dogs. Soon, she had made a 180-degree turn and now has come completely out of her shell.

The story gets even better. Not only did Lady Jane come out of her shell, she also turned out to be a brilliant dog. Of the hundreds of dogs LeAnne has known, Lady Jane is right up there with the quickest. Lady Jane was housebroken in two days, and learned "sit," "down," "shake," and "speak" in less than a day. Her puppies inherited some of their mother's intelligence, most evidenced by figuring out how to run up and down steps in 3-3 ½ weeks. In addition to being smart, Lady Jane has personality plus—it will be fun to see the characters her puppies develop over time.

With the puppies now big enough to go to their own families, some have been adopted already and a few more are hoping to find their forever homes soon. As for Lady Jane, she has found a loving family for good and is very happy to have become a devoted companion for life.



The Myth about Male Dogs

Q: Is it true that all male dogs are prone to hump all female dogs and guest and mark everywhere as their own turf?

A: No. In fact, male dogs and female dogs both make wonderful, well-behaved, and loving companions when neutered. When a male dog has not been neutered, he will want to mark his turf and let his hormones do the driving around the neighborhood. Most neutered males could earn "honorary" female status for what people consider good behavior. . It is more important to consider the dog's disposition, comfort around children, need for exercise, etc., so that the dog fits into your life. For someone without much experience with larger dogs, a strong willed alpha female can be a much greater hand full than a neutered male who's more "middle of the pack." Just like females, neutered male dogs can be extremely sweet and sensitive. More important than gender, color, or looks, the dog should fit into your life.



Reminder about ticks, fleas and heartworms!

If you haven't already, it's now time to protect your pets
against ticks, fleas, and heartworms.

When? Begin protecting your dog prior to the onset of the insect season. Now!!

How? For tick and flea control, a variety of topical products—each with their own active ingredients—exist that you apply monthly to your dog. For Heartworm prevention, your vet can provide you with a tablet, given orally once a month.

What should I know about flea and tick products? Veterinarians consider the topical products both safer and more effective than flea and tick collars, and LEARN recommends that you consult your vet to determine which option is right for your dog and for you. As you decide, be aware that some products are more toxic than others and hence may pose long-term health risks that may not yet be scientifically quantified.

How do flea and tick preventatives work? The idea behind most flea and tick products is that they kill and repel ticks and fleas and also kill their eggs before they hatch. By breaking the flea and tick life cycle, your dog is saved from irritation and scratching caused by flea biting. These products also kill most ticks on dogs within several days of application.

Why are ticks dangerous to my dog? Ticks carry serious diseases (canine Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis and babesiosis). Three kinds of ticks live in the Midwest, including the Deer Tick, Brown Dog Tick, and American Dog Tick. The Deer Tick is the vector for Lyme disease.

What is Heartworm Disease? Heartworm disease is serious and potentially fatal for dogs. Much of the damage happens before any outward signs can be observed. Therefore, prevention is critical! A large round worm that lives in the right side of the heart and neighboring blood vessels causes the disease. Without being on a preventative, a dog can be infected with numerous worms (some up to 14 inches long!) that clog the heart and the major blood vessels leading to the heart. As a result, blood supply is reduced to the lungs, liver, kidneys, and other organs resulting in their malfunction.

How does Heartworm disease spread? Heartworm disease can be spread from dog to dog by more than 70 species of mosquito. Female adult heartworms release larval forms named microfilariae into the bloodstream of a dog. The mosquito becomes infected by sucking up these microfilariae as it enjoys a blood meal from an infected dog; during the next 10 to 14 days, the microfilariae grow and molt twice, thus reaching the infective larval stage, which in turn enters the dog as the mosquito feeds again. It takes six months in a dog to have these larvae grow, move to the heart, mate, and begin the cycle once again.

What about other intestinal worms? Heartworm preventatives also protect your dog from intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms. Adult dogs can acquire infections by ingesting eggs and infective larvae that accumulate in their environment. These eggs and larvae may live in some of those putrid things that some dogs love to seek out in the woods.



Checkout L.E.A.R.N.'s New Merchandise!

L.E.A.R.N. now has merchandise available for sale on the website (www.labadoption.org). You can view two T-shirts (“Let A Lab Be Your Buddy” and “It’s A Lab Thing”) as well as a Lab Head Pin. Your purchase will help to save a Lab. You may print an order form from the website, or use the form attached at the back of this newsletter.



Anchor the Happiness Machine



At 9:30 pm every evening, Anchor enjoys his nightcap cookie, an event he anticipates with the punctuality of the finest Swiss clock. Despite the turmoil and transition he recently experienced, the 9:30 cookie tradition has been held sacred in his happy new home. Anchor lived most of his 12 years with a family who loved him and cared for him very much. Sadly, Anchor suffered the deteriorating health and subsequent passage of his owner last September. The owner's daughter-in-law tried to take in Anchor, but her dog continued to behave aggressively towards him, and Anchor, who did not fight



back, was being badly bitten. So Anchor's photo was posted on the referral section of LEARN's website, and the owner's daughter-in-law had him live at the owner's home and would visit him daily and take him out. For a dog who thrived in the company of people, being alone for long days took a huge toll on Anchor. He had been taken off his skin allergy medication because it caused him to drink excessive amounts of water, and thus to need to go outside every two hours. Without the medication he itched terribly, lost his eyelashes, whiskers, and hair around his eyes, and had a huge sore around one eye from regular scratching.

The daughter-in-law had not found anyone who wanted Anchor, the house was sold, and despite extreme guilt, she saw no option other than to put him down.

Luckily for Anchor and for those whose lives he touches, his desperate need coincided with Gina becoming a LEARN foster home. Gina prefers more senior dogs, nine years and older, because they are calm, trained, and especially sweet. Gina, a very dedicated and giving animal lover, also fosters the terminally ill, medically challenged, or "old as dirt unacceptable dogs" for a no kill shelter. "I have a soft spot for these ones," she explains. Gina met Anchor in a McDonald's parking lot, the transfer point on his way to what would turn out to be his new forever home. An old and clumsy happiness machine, Anchor is also over-enthusiastic about getting out of a car, and Gina watched as this 100 lb goof with a huge head tumbled out of Jenny's SUV with much delight. Anchor went to his foster home and joined two senior female poms, two cats, rats, and orphan puppies and kittens that Gina feeds with a bottle. Anchor really loves these little ones.



Gina put Anchor back on Pred, his allergy medication, and Anchor started drinking too much again. Gina would let him out every two hours during the day and would get up in the night to let him out when she'd hear him whining by the door. The situation with allergies and water made this senior dog a difficult candidate for any potential adopter.

After consulting Dr. Simms at Greentree Animal Hospital, Gina cut Anchor's Pred dosage in half, checked for diabetes (one consequence of long-term Pred usage), and switched his food to Senior Iams. His diet change worked a health miracle. Anchor came off of Pred entirely and Gina introduced Omega Three oils to his regime. Anchor's hair became shiny and glossy, and he no longer itches. His sores have healed, and he loves to flop down and roll over during a luxurious brushing session. Anchor now makes it through the night without needing the great outdoors.

Unfortunately, Anchor soon began having major difficulties moving. The Pred pills had also act as an anti-inflammatory. While the diet change and elimination of Pred helped his allergies and reduced his excessive water drinking, Anchor needed the anti-inflammatory to move comfortably. He struggled to get up from a laying down position, he stumbled occasionally and he has never ventured up any stairs in Gina's house. More than a short walk gives him pain in his knees and elbows. During attempts to help his pain and stiffness, Anchor suffered

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(Anchor—continued from previous page)
extreme reactions both to Estogesic and to Aspirin. He is on Cosequin for his arthritis and experiences no known side-effects. After being in foster care for four months and because of his health challenges and the discovery that he is 12 and not nine (as the owner had believed), Anchor was at even more risk of not finding a forever home. When Gina first brought Anchor home, his eyes reflected how much he missed his owner. His owner had taken meticulous care of him—as shown in years of vet records—and even had a decorative bone with his name on it. Anchor quickly adapted to his loss by forming a strong bond with Gina’s husband. They even eat chips together on the couch while they watch football. Totally endearing, Gina and her family realized that Anchor had become an important part of their life. Had Anchor found a family to adopt him, the change both for him and for Gina and her family would have been painfully difficult. The decision

seemed natural that Anchor had found his new home in which to enjoy the rest of his life. Anchor spends his days riding to and from pre-school each day with Gina and her three and five-year old boys, who adore him and respect him. He walks in the backyard when the boys play. And he lives for the homecomings of Gina’s husband each day. When her husband travels, Anchor requires extra hugs until he returns home. Anchor retrieves the paper from the driveway, and he sucks on his security rags that he carries around the house. He plays ball and Frisbee at a relaxed and leisurely pace. He can’t seem to stop his tail from being in perpetual motion. At 9:30 pm, just as his owner did for years, Gina gives Anchor his cookie. Anchor makes a difference because he is “truly so special, loving, and gentle, like a big bear.”

Note: The photos show Anchor snoring on the couch; Anchor doing his best “sit” for the camera; and, Anchor with “Girlfriend,” one of Gina’s poms



Reminder about Garage Sales—April 20th and 21st in Madison

L.E.A.R.N.’s Madison garage sale is right around the corner, and more are to follow soon—Freedom, WI, on May 18th and 19th, and Milwaukee on June 22nd—24th.

Please clean out your closets, garages, basements, and attics to see if you have something you’d like to donate! Remember that all donations are tax-deductible, and we can provide you with a donation receipt for tax purposes. Please price and mark all items before you bring them to us. We are especially interested in baby and kids’ clothing, toys, and equipment; furniture and small appliances; handmade craft items; antiques and collectibles; books, records, and CDs. To learn more, please visit our website at www.labadoption.org and see the “Events” section. For the Madison garage sale (Madison only, please!) email welovelabs@hotmail.com

Enormous Thanks!



The following people have generously donated money, supplies, time, or services to our wonderful rescued Labradors. We could not make it without their help!

In our last issue "For Pet's Sake" was left out of the acknowledgements. We wish to extend our thanks to Patti Muraczewski for supporting Lab rescue.

Liz Abel, Libertyville, IL	Stefanie Kohn, Madison, WI
Jill Arce, Crystal Lake, IL	Landmark Kennels
Annette Benkusky, Crystal Lake, IL	Elizabeth Leonard, Mettowa, IL
Judy Berg, Belvidere, IL	Dawn Ladik, Markee's Mane Attraction, Madison, WI
George Bratschi, Chicago, IL	Stewart & Maureen McNames, Rockford, IL
Cecile Burke, Mudeliem, IL	Gerald & Kris Miesbauer, Marshall, WI
Polly Duchow, Madison, WI	Mary Nelson, Waunakee, WI
Marie Eichinger, Madison, WI	Carol Robinson, Alexandria, LA
The Family Dog, Inc., Gardiner, NY	Mary B. Roseberry, Rochester, IL
Frank & Laura Farwell, Madison, WI	Fred Ruh, Batavia, IL
Howard Friedman, Palatine, IL	Jan & Jenny Ruther, Cary, IL
Ann Budzak Garza, LaCrosse, WI	Linda M. Schorsch, Hebron, IL
Great Dane Rescue of Wisconsin, Inc, Staughton, WI	Mr. & Mrs. George Schuett, Milwaukee, WI
Mike Gruber, Madison, WI	Carrie and Greg Scott, Lindstrom, MN
Mitzi Heytow, Libertyville, IL	Dr. Barbara J. Smith, DVM, Waterloo Veterinary Clinic, Waterloo, WI
Ann & Richard Irsay, Arlington Heights, IL	Lois Toll, Mudeliem, IL
Stephanie Johns, Hoffman Estates, IL	Tuckaway Veterinary Clinic
Patty Kingston, The Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, IL	Winnebago Labrador Retriever Club
Thomas A. Knox, Madison, WI	



Enter the First LEARN Photo Contest!

Maybe your dog can help you win a LEARN T-shirt! LEARN is beginning a series of photo contests for any dog, regardless of breed, but able to show some "Lab spirit"! Each contest will have a theme that we think is fun and even creative.

First theme: "Caught in the Act"

For those with dogs who aren't always perfect angels, this is the contest for you! Just capture the misdemeanor on film and send it to LEARN. (e.g., escaping with the entire roast, surfing the counter from on top of the counter, etc.) The photo can be old, but make sure you currently own the dog!

Prize: The winner's owner will receive a L.E.A.R.N. T-shirt. Honorable mentions, with the winner, will be printed in the next newsletter.

Entry Deadline: For consideration, all entries must be received by June 2, 2001.

What to do: Send (1) your "Caught in the Act" photo, (2) a sentence explaining the circumstances, and (3) a \$5.00 check payable to LEARN to: LEARN Photo Contest, PO Box 164, Island Lake, IL 60042. Please write both your name and your dog's name on the back of the photo, and if you'd like the photo returned, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. LEARN is not responsible for any lost photos, and all judges decisions are final. The \$5.00 entry fee is tax deductible and will be used to help us continue to rescue unwanted Labradors and place them permanent loving homes.





Labrador Education and Rescue Network, Inc.

PO Box 164

Island Lake, IL 60042

847-289-PETS

www.labadoption.org

ORDER FORM

Please complete order form and mail with your check or money order to:

Labrador Education and Rescue Network, Inc.

PO Box 164

Island Lake, IL 60042

Check or money order should be made payable to L.E.A.R.N.

All prices include shipping and handling charges.

Price	Item	Size	Quantity	Total Price
\$12.00	Let A Lab Be Your Buddy T-Shirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$12.00	It's A Lab Thing T-Shirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$6.00	Lab Head Pin	N/A		
			Total Enclosed	

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

L.E.A.R.N. Use Only	
Date Received	
Date Sent	

updated 03-16-01

L.E.A.R.N.'s Calendar of Events - 2001



Please check out the following upcoming events for opportunities to help us continue to rescue unwanted Labradors and place them permanent loving homes. Watch our website www.labadoption.org for more details on up-coming events!

- Can you donate items for us to sell at one of our garage sales?
- Can you help us spread the word about an event?
- Can you donate your time, advertising space, or supplies?
- Can you join us yourself for some FUN?

When	Where	What
April 20-21	LEARN Garage Sale	Madison, WI
April 21	Booth at Pets Plus	Mundelein, IL
May 5	Booth at Sauk County Humane Society Dog Walk	Sauk City, WI
May 18-19	LEARN Garage Sale	Freedom, WI
June 10	Booth at Dog Fest at Warner Park	Madison, WI
June 16	Booth at Winnebago Labrador Retriever Club Specialty	Beloit, WI
June 22-24	LEARN Garage Sale	Milwaukee, WI
August 17-19	Booth at Ducks Unlimited Great Outdoors Show	OshKosh, WI
October 6-7	Booth at Rockford Family Pet Show	Rockford, IL
October 20-21	Booth at Milwaukee Family Pet Show	Milwaukee, WI



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