



# The Retriever

Official Newsletter of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network

Volume 4, Number 1, February 2003

*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.*



## Lily Lu Lives!

*This story is about how "Lily Lu" regained life, shows real zeal for it, and loves people as much as any lab is capable, despite being dumped, almost shot, and deathly ill. It's also about the many people who helped her survive and now thrive.*

In December, LEARN received a call from a woman named Christine, involved with basset rescue and also a volunteer for the Green County Humane Society. A farmer had complained to Christine that a female lab had been dumped on his property, that the lab was "bothering" his working dogs, and that if no one came for her, he'd shoot her. Christine worked with a LEARN volunteer and coordinated getting the lab away from the farmer's gun and also finding a foster home. Christine kept the lab (named "Lily") for two days and then she stayed at the Green County H.S. until she could be transported to a LEARN foster home. A vet and volunteer for



LEARN helped transport, vaccinate, and de-worm Lily before Kathy, Lily's new foster mom picked her up to take her home. The next morning Lily was not eating or drinking and stood hanging her head and looking unhappy. Very concerned, Kathy called Eileen, another LEARN volunteer, and they wondered if Lily was feeling the effects from de-worming (having worms die off inside her may not have felt too good!), so Kathy continued to watch her. Lily deteriorated throughout the day, so LEARN recommended that Kathy take her to the emergency vet clinic.. The emergency clinic said that Lily was close to death, severely dehydrated, and needed an IV for fluids to spur her circulation. The attending vet thought Lily had had puppies recently; he also thought she either had a retained placenta or pyometra (uterine infection) and decided that if he could stabilize her, she would need surgery, probably to remove her uterus. During the surgery they did not find a uterine infection. Instead, they found huge quantities of whipworms that had damaged her intestines. Lily also tested positive for parvovirus. Lily's case of whipworms was one of the worst the vets had ever seen. The surgery nearly killed Lily whose blood pressure had dropped to zero twice during the surgery. Another LEARN volunteer visited Lily during her hospital stay when Kathy couldn't be by her side. Lily came around and on New Year's Day—after battling for her life more than once and after \$2,500 in emergency vet clinic expenses—she was finally able to go home with Kathy. *(continued on page 2)*



*Inside this issue...* ♦ Abused, Unwanted, Neglected ♦ Acupuncture for Your Pet ♦ Choosing the Right Doggie Day Care ♦ Invitation to L.E.A.R.N.'s Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction ♦ Upcoming Conference—"Veterinary Medicine for the Non-Vet!" ♦ Upcoming Events ♦ Thanks to Everyone Who's Helped! ♦ More!!



*(Lily Lu Lives, continued from page 1)*

Having Lily at home presented challenges unimaginable even to the most experienced dog owners. Kathy had to quarantine Lily from her own dogs due to parvo and the whipworms, and clean and bleach around the clock to prevent cross contamination. Anyone who had been in contact with Lily had to be notified so they could booster their dogs—this included Christine’s basset hounds, all the dogs at the Green County H. S., and one of Kathy’s 3 dogs (recently inherited, and discovered to be missing the necessary booster). Kathy, her husband Keith, and their two children pitched in to ensure that no detail of preventing cross contamination fell through the cracks, thus jeopardizing the health of their dogs, other animals, and themselves.

Whipworms are nasty. They eat a dog’s intestines. Kathy’s research found that there are two ways to get rid of them: 1) cover your yard in copper sulfate—a highly toxic and dangerous chemical to any life form as well as the environment; or, 2) remove the first 8” of soil on the yard where the dog has been. Whipworms will stay in the soil for 5 years and are weather and climate resistant.

Despite the whipworm challenge, Kathy, Keith and her children came up with a brilliant, but demanding solution for helping Lily yet protecting themselves and their dogs. They built a 5’ x 5’ cubby near a private entrance to their 100 year-old farm home. Keith constructed an outdoor kennel in their front yard where their own dogs never go. Each family member wore special clothes and boots when they took Lily out. The clothes and boots did not leave the mudroom near the cubby and were washed with bleach. Kathy cleaned Lily’s cubby with bleach and washed her blankets in bleach as well. Each feces was picked up immediately and bleached; bleach was poured over each spot where Lily urinated. In addition, Lily received 4 one-hour strength-building walks each day.

To be free of whipworms takes a long time (three months of testing to be 95% sure they’re gone), but against all odds and due to the careful work of Kathy and her family, Lily’s fecal test was negative in two weeks time—a major victory for Lily and her loyal humans! In Kathy’s humble words, what her team did was not difficult, just intense and demanded 24-hour attention: “in terms of work, caring for Lily was like caring for a whole litter of puppies! Keith was a saint the entire time.” Now Lily is out of quarantine, has gained a much needed 10 lbs., plays with Kathy’s other dogs, enjoys her humans, and celebrates life. Her foster home status is considered so special that she was awarded “Lu” to her name, a title that other special animals at Kathy’s have also earned.

Lily Lu’s ordeal was not yet over, however. Lung Flukes were found at her next vet exam. Lung flukes, parasites that settle in lungs much like bloodsuckers, are luckily not contagious to humans or dogs. They come from shellfish or snail-like creatures that Lily Lu likely ate to survive. In order for the Lung Flukes to turn up in a fecal sample, she needed to cough up and then swallow phlegm to get it into her system—hence they were not detected earlier. With medication, all should be cured in time for St. Valentine’s Day.

Lily Lu, now ready to be adopted, has perfect house manners, and would thrive in an active home. How does Kathy feel about Lily Lu being adopted and moving on to a forever home? Comfortable, provided that the adoptive home is extremely special and will provide Lily Lu with happiness and love throughout her life. Kathy has fostered a number of (human) children over the years and understands how the foster home must help and love the human or canine in need to support them as they move on in life.

*LEARN would like to extend special thanks Kathy and her family, Christine from basset rescue, the veterinarians, and all other LEARN volunteers who helped Lily Lu. LEARN would also like to thank everyone who has made a contribution over the last three years because, without supporters, LEARN could not have saved the lives of nearly 400 unique and special dogs to date, including Lily Lu.*



## **L.E.A.R.N. -Petfinder Partnership**

Last year L.E.A.R.N. joined Petfinder to increase the number of people who could see our adoptable labs. Petfinder is a national database of animals at shelters and rescues and also offers a library of pet-related articles and public message forums for posting rescue and pet care-related questions and announcements. To find new rescue info, visit [www.petfinder.org](http://www.petfinder.org); view L.E.A.R.N.’s link at [www.petfinder.org/shelters/IL143.html](http://www.petfinder.org/shelters/IL143.html). E-mail L.E.A.R.N. volunteer, Jill Miller at [jill@fxtech.com](mailto:jill@fxtech.com) with suggestions, changes, or new info for the Petfinder site.



## You're Invited!

# L.E.A.R.N.'s 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Luncheon & Silent Auction

Please “paws” and mark your calendar for Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup> and join us for our Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction. The luncheon and auction are key fundraisers for L.E.A.R.N. each year, those who attend always comment what a fun event it is. We will be celebrating our 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 400 Adoption Anniversary. Our promise of a fun-filled afternoon comes, of course, with a lab theme. In addition to a delicious meal, we will have an ongoing silent auction with many items to bid on before, during, and after lunch.

All proceeds help labs in need, such as Lily Lu, Tiny, Hershey, and many others. This means that the more people who come to share the fun, the more L.E.A.R.N. can help labs. Funds raised help defray some of the substantial medical expenses our organization regularly incurs in order to give loving and deserving labs and lab mixes a new “leash” on life.

This year L.E.A.R.N. is pleased to hold the luncheon and silent auction at *The Country Squire* in Grayslake, Illinois, so as well as a fun venue, it will be a very delicious one! . . .And, just like last year, be sure to bring a picture of your pet with your name on the back so you can join in on our “dog” prize! We look forward to seeing you there!

Date: Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>

Time: 12:00 P.M. Cash Bar; 1:00 P.M. Lunch

\$25.00 per person

Place: *The Country Squire*, Routes 120 & 45, Grayslake, Illinois  
(847) 223-3022

Note: You'll find us through the banquet room doors at the west end of *The Country Squire*.

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(please cut and return this portion)

### Menu:

#### Entrée – Choice of one:

\_\_\_Roast Sirloin of Beef \_\_\_Broiled Lake Superior Whitefish \_\_\_Chicken Kiev with Orange Sauce  
Entrée served with Garlic Whipped Potatoes and California Blend Vegetables, Soup & Salad  
Cheesecake with Strawberry Topping

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 per person

I will be unable to attend, but can help with my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return with your check or money order on or before March 22, 2003, payable to:

L.E.A.R.N.  
P.O. Box 164, Island Lake, Illinois 60042

Please reply early!

Questions? Please call Lois at (847) 949-7021



## The Abused, Unwanted, and Neglected

Custer was on his last stand. A chain had been embedded in his throat from being way too tightly tethered. He was fortunate to have the chain removed surgically and the wound, cleaned. Shunts were inserted into his neck to make sure that the recovering wound would heal properly. Although he won't be wearing a collar anytime soon, a special family adopted Custer from L.E.A.R.N. and he has finally found love and happiness.



*Custer receiving neck care (right)*



*Sport anticipating*



*Bruiser playing*

Nobody wanted Bruiser, an especially sweet eight month-old puppy. Glaucoma had already taken one of his eyes and soon would take his other. He'd been shuttled through several homes and shelters in his short life, and no one wanted to care for a young fellow going blind. L.E.A.R.N. rescued Bruiser, and Bruiser's life was about to change when he met another foster named Sport. Sport had been suffering greatly at a Milwaukee shelter where he'd been dumped for being 10 years old. A retired hearing dog, he was used to working and didn't know how

not to. Bruiser and Sport bonded and ended up being adopted together by a loving and nurturing family, initially interested in adopting Bruiser and knowing that their experience with blindness in the family would make them sensitive to his special needs. While visiting Bruiser, they fell in love with Sport, too, and took them both home. Sport has given Bruiser eyes, and Bruiser has given Sport a purpose.

Hershey was dumped at a shelter for escaping. But Hershey could hardly walk a block due to fused vertebrae that caused crippling arthritic pain in his hindquarters. The pain was bad enough for him to chew up his leg to alleviate the pain. From three potent forms of bacteria found in his open sores, he must have lived in squalid conditions. A skin infection had robbed him of large patches of fur. L.E.A.R.N. rescued him from the shelter, got him appropriate dermatology and other veterinary care, and with a good diet and appropriate supplements, he's a new dog. He's lost fat and built muscle where there had been significant atrophy. He plays, runs in the woods, chases squirrels, loves to have his belly rubbed, and enjoys being a dog. Hershey will make a uniquely special dog for a very special home.

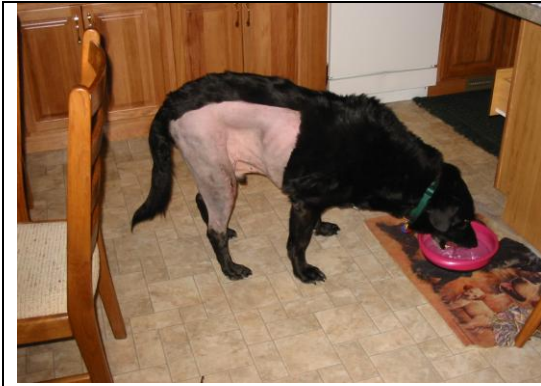


*Hershey traveling (right)*

*(Continued on next page)*



*(The Abused, Unwanted, and Neglected, continued from page 4)*



College students didn't want a dog anymore so brought Tiny to the vet to have him put down. The vet couldn't do it and called L.E.A.R.N. Tiny, anything but tiny and with a huge heart, was greatly overweight and suffered from malnutrition. With slight exercise, L.E.A.R.N. discovered that he needed both rear crutiate ligaments replaced. He had his surgery in late January, is healing nicely, and would love to devote himself to a caring human and be able to run and play again.

*Tiny, post-surgery, up for some water (left)*

Unfortunately, while Custer, Bruiser, Sport, Hershey, and Tiny have been given a new "leash" on life, we know there are hundreds of labs just in Illinois and Wisconsin who are suffering at this very moment. Some will be euthanized without ever having a chance to experience love, happiness, or health. Others will continue to suffer neglect or abuse. Yet others will be dumped because their owners are irresponsible. Many will nearly starve, suffer trauma, become injured, develop infections and disease, and in the winter, risk freezing to death.

Recently, L.E.A.R.N. has helped not only Lily Lu, Tiny, and Hershey, but many other deserving labs with costly health needs—the list includes Molly with seizures and possible mast cell cancer who hasn't been to a vet in two years, Chester with seizures, two dogs with broken legs, Checkers and many others with heartworms, etc. L.E.A.R.N. receives frequent calls from owners, shelters, and vet clinics about dogs that require expensive veterinary procedures (especially allergy problems and hip surgeries) who would otherwise be euthanized if we couldn't take them in. Unfortunately, there are always more deserving labs than we have space and funds to help.

The good news is that you can help! Consider being a foster home—every dog fostered is another dog saved! Make a donation to help defray medical and veterinary expenses. Contribute supplies to help dogs in foster (doggie beds, leashes, crates, food bowls, blankets and towels, food, etc.).

Help that you provide directly helps save and improve the life of a lab, and that lab sends sincere thanks to you (along with wet, sloppy kisses and many tail wags).



## Fun Upcoming Events!

<u>When?</u>	<u>What?</u>	<u>Where?</u>
• March 14 <sup>th</sup> -16th	• Chicagoland Family Pet Show <b>L.E.A.R.N. is Booth #113!</b> See <a href="http://www.towershow.com">www.towershow.com</a> for more info	• Arlington Park, Arlington Heights, IL
• March 30th	• L.E.A.R.N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction	• The Country Squire, Grayslake, IL
• April 19th	• "Veterinary Medicine for the Non-Vet" (Conference for lay-pet owners)	• Embassy Suites Hotel Brookfield, WI
• May 3rd	• L.E.A.R.N.'s Laps for Labs Dog Walk	• Bong Recreation Center, Kansasville, WI



## Acupuncture for Animals By Dr. Martha Greco

*Dr. Greco's earned her DVM from Michigan State University and her Master of Public Health from the University of Minnesota, and is expert in both traditional and alternative approaches. When Kaeli, her lab/setter mix, developed weakness in her hindquarters, she became interested in acupuncture. In January, 1999, Dr. Greco became certified to practice acupuncture through the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society. Dr. Greco makes house calls in the Sauk County and Madison, WI, areas. She can be reached at 608-516-8176.*

**What is Acupuncture?** Acupuncture is part of the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) approach to promote health and well-being. It has been used for hundreds of years in China and other countries and since the 1970's has become increasingly popular in the United States for people and animals. Several different techniques are used to stimulate the acupuncture points but the most common is the use of very fine needles that are inserted through the skin.

**How Does It Work?** In TMC, disease and pain are thought to be the result of imbalances in the body's "Vital Energy," which the Chinese call Qi (pronounced "chi"). Qi travels through channels or meridians in the body and acupuncture points are slight depressions where the flow of Qi can be changed or regulated. Stimulation of the appropriate points helps the body to get back to a balanced state. While there is not a complete understanding of acupuncture by Western scientists, it appears that acupuncture can block the transmission of pain messages in the nervous system. It also causes the release of endorphins (the chemicals responsible for the "runner's high"). Other effects include the stimulation of anti-inflammatory cells and substances that promote health and healing.

**What Kinds of Problems Does Acupuncture Help?** Acupuncture seems to be especially helpful for painful problems such as hip dysplasia, arthritis, and intervertebral disc disease. However, it can also be useful in acute and chronic internal diseases such as kidney failure, vomiting and diarrhea, seizure and urinary disorders. Allergic conditions involving the skin or respiratory systems can sometimes be relieved so that regular medications can be reduced or discontinued. It seems to be an especially welcome option for many geriatric animals who seem to be more comfortable and energetic after their acupuncture treatments.

**What Is Involved with Acupuncture Treatment?** Generally 10-20 needles are placed in an animal and left in for up to 30 minutes. The needles are very fine and because they are made differently than the hypodermic needles that are used to give injections, they cause less discomfort than vaccinations or other injections. Acupuncture seems to induce a state of relaxation and occasionally the animals seem to go to sleep during their treatments. In some cases the needles are connected to each other with a mild electrical current. Sometimes there will be a dramatic change after just one treatment but several treatments may be required to determine if it will help. Usually patients are treated every one to two weeks.

**What Will I See after My Pet Is Treated?** The response is variable and depends on the individual animal, the condition being treated, and the method of treatment. Sometimes there is an immediate dramatic improvement especially if the problem is a recent one. It is not uncommon for the pet to seem actually a little worse for the first 24-72 hours. Then there is usually some improvement noted, often an increase in energy and appetite. Any change noted in the pet after an acupuncture treatment indicates that there was some effect.

**How Often Will My Pet Need To Be Treated?** This is variable, too. Usually it is advisable to treat weekly for several weeks and then evaluate the response to the treatments. Often the treatments can be spaced at longer intervals or even discontinued depending on the condition being treated. Some chronic problems will need to be treated occasionally for the rest of the pet's life.

*Dr. Greco helped Hershey, an 8-year old chocolate male through acupuncture (see page 4 for Hershey's story). Several L.E.A.R.N. volunteers, who use acupuncture to keep their senior dogs active, suggested acupuncture for Hershey to wean him from Rimadyl, a pain-killer believed to cause liver damage, and in some instances death, in some labs. Hershey had been given Rimadyl as a last resort to help him be mobile. Hershey was weaned from Rimadyl and given glucosamine/chondroitin supplements to reduce joint/arthritis pain; he began acupuncture treatments—one treatment/week for 3 weeks, and then one treatment every 3 - 4 weeks for 2 - 3 months. Now he receives treatments as needed, and they appear to help his lick granulomas, sores that he chewed in his leg to alleviate pain and which he still occasionally licks. Not only is he mobile, but he loves to play with puppies and go for hikes in the woods!*

# 10 Things to Think About When Choosing a Doggie Daycare

by Jill Miller

Doggie daycare facilities are becoming more and more popular as American pet owners learn about the joys of having a safe place to leave their canine companions to play and have fun while their owners are out of the house. As with all businesses, some daycares are better than others. How do you know that you are leaving your pal in good hands? Here are ten questions to ask a doggie daycare provider as you seek the best place to take your dog.

- 1. What about the numbers?** It is important to know the maximum number of dogs allowed each day as well as the ratio of dogs to supervising staff. Does it sound reasonable that one person could be expected to pay attention to that many dogs for an entire shift?
- 2. What kind of experience or qualifications does the daycare owner or manager have?** Since doggie daycares are fairly new to the scene most owners or managers won't have years of experience in a daycare setting, but they should have other significant dog experience.
- 3. What kind of experience or qualifications does the daycare staff have?** Again, years of experience in a daycare setting likely won't be the norm, but staff should have some experience handling multiple dogs at once.
- 4. How often does the daycare manager/owner interact with the dogs and staff?** The person in charge could have ten PhDs in animal sciences, but if his or her job is primarily in the office away from the dogs, no one will benefit from that knowledge.
- 5. What activities will your dog be guaranteed to have a chance to do?** At the very least each dog should have a few moments of quality one on one time with a staff member, whether they are getting brushed, cuddled, or having a mini-training session. Other options that may be available to the dogs include: agility equipment to play on, individual walks, and access to swimming areas (weather permitting).
- 6. What additional activities or services are available?** Many daycares offer private walks, grooming services, and special food treats, among other things. Often these services are extra, but it's nice to know what's available.
- 7. What happens if a dog behaves inappropriately?** There really is no reason for any physical corrections. Daycares can use time outs, place dogs in separate areas, or redirect the dog's attention with other activities and should NEVER hit or strike a dog.
- 8. Are the dogs ever left unsupervised?** In some cases dogs may need to be left alone for staff lunch breaks or at the end of the day during home time. If this is the case, what accommodations are made for your dog's safety? Too much can happen in a room full of dogs when there is no responsible human present.
- 9. What happens if your dog gets hurt playing?** All daycares should have a plan of action should any dog become injured while in their care.
- 10. What kind of behavior would ban a dog from returning to daycare?** There should be some kind of behavior that is considered unacceptable as not all dogs are cut out for daycare. Your dog may not exhibit any of these negative behaviors, but it is good to know that the protocols are in place to protect your dog from picking up bad habits or on the receiving end of bullying or aggression.



## 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!

Lindsey Bewick – Madison, WI	Madison Veterinary Clinic – Madison, WI
Fox Lake Animal Hospital – Fox Lake, IL	Merton Veterinary Clinic – Merton, WI
Dr. Frame and staff at the Deer-Grove Vet Clinic	Marlene Schmidt – Madison, WI
Dr. Martha Greco – Baraboo, WI	Spirit of 76 veterinary Clinic – West Allis, WI
Greentree Animal Hospital – Libertyville, IL	Diane Streck – Fitchburg, WI
The Libertyville Tennis and Fitness Club – Libertyville, IL	Dr. Jeff Weiser, Merrick Animal Hospital
Marcelina Loayz - Pembroke Pines, FL	Woodstock Veterinary Clinic – Woodstock, IL
Donna Plaskin - Loveland, OH	



## Veterinary Medicine for the Non-Vet! Save April 19<sup>th</sup>!

The first annual “Veterinary Medicine for the Non-Vet” conference aims to provide breed placement specialists and shelter personnel with the baseline knowledge needed to make informed medical decisions for shelter and rescue animals. The knowledge gained through scientific presentations will help contain medical costs often absorbed by the struggling non-profit organization. The conference is aimed to dog owners who have multiple dogs and/or who frequent dog parks or other areas in which their dog(s) might be exposed to other dogs and any health issues they may have. Sponsored and hosted by L.E.A.R.N., the conference is set for Saturday, April 19, 2003, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Brookfield, Wisconsin. Topics will include:

- The Antibiotic Dilema: What, Where, Why and How Much;
- The Ins and Outs of Parasites;
- Dental Challenges;
- Immunization;
- Healthy Diet, Healthy Pet? A Primer on Nutrition, Natural Diets, and Allergens;
- Sanitation to Prevent and Control Disease: What you Need to Know; and,


other topics relevant for lay pet owners. A panel of veterinarians will serve as course faculty.

The \$35 registration fee includes a sit luncheon, refreshment breaks and a comprehensive course syllabus. Space is limited; all registrations received after March 19, 2003, are subject to space availability. The first 20 registrations received will be entered into a drawing to win an overnight stay the night prior to the conference at the Embassy Suites Hotel. To request a detailed conference brochure, please call (414) 422-8690 or e-mail [CMEmanager@aol.com](mailto:CMEmanager@aol.com). Visit our website at [www.labadoption.org](http://www.labadoption.org) to view the program’s scheduled events. Join us on April 19<sup>th</sup> for a day filled with educational and networking opportunities!



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*You're Invited to L.E.A.R.N.'s  
Annual Luncheon on March 30<sup>th</sup>  
☺ Details Inside! ☺*



**Chicagoland Family Pet Show**  
March 14-16, 2003 · Arlington Park

See us there!  
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