



The Retriever

Labrador Education and Rescue Network's Newsletter

Volume 7, Number 3, November 2006

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

Aziah's Story: From Neglect to Nurture

When LEARN volunteer Chris W. met Aziah, a 7 year-old yellow Lab, she and her sister had been kept in a crate a garage. The garage lacked windows. The dogs stayed there all night and, according to the owners, "a couple of hours during the day." Chris wondered if the dogs sweltered there during the heat wave this past July. The owners lacked funds to take Aziah to the vet, and her ears had swollen shut—"she probably can't hear you because of her ears," Chris was told. Aziah was not up-to-date on vaccinations, and ringworm had stripped spots of hair by her ears. Her allergies, skin infections, kennel sores and urinary incontinence had gone uncared for. The owners attributed her state to poor breeding as her "sister" didn't have Aziah's health issues. (Aziah's sister has gone to live with the owner's relatives.)



Aziah and foster brother rest together

Aziah was at first shy towards Chris but the gift of a tennis ball—her favorite thing in the world—brought out her inner warmth immediately.



Aziah with foster brother and sister

The next day Chris returned to rescue Aziah. She stayed with Chris for her first week in LEARN and fit right in with the other dogs and resident cat. She received a trip the vet—likely the first in years. The vet was shocked at how poorly she'd been treated. Despite her condition and prior neglect, everyone remarked how very sweet, loving, and beautiful this girl is. For Chris, "rescuing a dog like Aziah is what being a LEARN volunteer is all about!"

At her foster home, foster mom Liz couldn't imagine how miserable this girl must have felt, and commented how she wags her tail ceaselessly and exudes happiness. Aziah wanted to fetch constantly, making up for years in a garage; she loved being around her foster parents, and would happily lie by their blind Lab. With her wonderful disposition, she "tolerated" her "bossy diva beagle [foster sister]" very well. She also boasted excellent house manners. Finding joy at each simple turn, Aziah would play

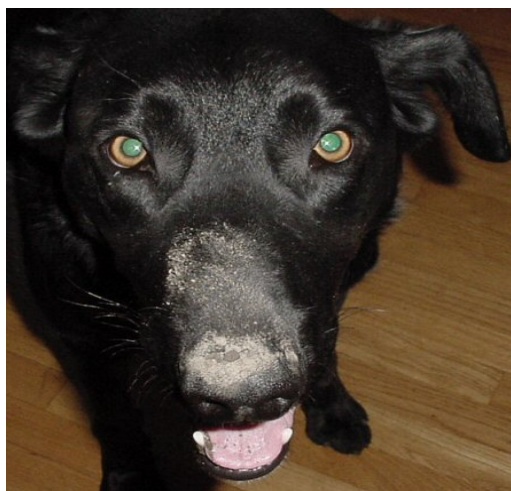
watchdog if someone came to the door and always be ready for a ride in the car. For Liz, it must have been a full-time job keeping up with Aziah's vet regime but the rewards of seeing her health return made it more than worth it.

Recently Aziah begun "being spoiled" in her new forever home where she has a sister Kelly who's a 3-pound Yorkie. *Many congratulations to Aziah and her new family, and many thanks to Chris, Liz, and the other volunteers who rescued her.*

NOTE: As we were going to print, news came that Aziah's preexisting ear problem will need expensive surgery to unblock her ear canal. If you'd like to help, please send your tax-deductible contribution to LEARN and specify it's for Aziah's surgery. Thanks for thinking of this special girl!

Five Tips for Keeping Your New Home

by Merlin J. Wylt CGC, DSA, PD, TT



“Mudface”

Dumped in the middle of the night at a kill pound when I was about four weeks old, I miraculously made it to LEARN. Having no clue how dogs should behave, I was fortunate to have a foster mom who happened to be a professional dog trainer. Then one day LEARN called Mommy, Mommy came to see me, and I found my Forever Home. Since my early days, I've become much more enlightened about canine behavior.

As a public service to all the LEARN Labs out there waiting for homes, and those newly adopted Labs too, I'd like to give you some advice on how to endear yourself to your Forever Home.

1. Be Cute

When your new human yells out "Who ate all the doorframes?!" tip your head sideways with a look of puzzled innocence. If possible, smile and wag only the tip of your tail in sympathy.

2. Be Entertaining

If your humans have company over, be sure to engage them. One thing I've found that gets the best reaction is to find the laundry, pick out some dirty underwear, and bring it to the guests for a game of pull toy.

3. Be Protective

Humans aren't very smart when it comes to dangers, so you will need to protect them. I recommend barking at all 2 a.m. sounds and also preventing food poisoning by making sure that nothing edible remains on the counter for more than a few seconds; if need be, take that iffy chop out of the pan as it is cooking.

4. Be Helpful

Find a job that needs doing and make it yours. I make sure that squirrels remain up in trees and that birds don't steal the seed out of Mommy's feeders.

5. Be Loving

Who says that a seventy-five pound or larger dog can't be a lap dog? Climb into any lap you can find; unlike a toy poodle, you cannot be evicted from the lap until *you* feel like moving.

If you follow these tips, your new home will be sure to become your Forever Home. Good luck!

Editor's note: You can read Merlin's monthly diary entries at www.geocities.com/bendulac

Reiki – A Natural Healing for People and Pets *by Tracy Disch*

Reiki (pronounced Ray-Key) is a system of healing developed in the early 1900's by Mikao Usui in Japan. The word *Reiki* comes from the Japanese – *Rei*, meaning Universal Life Force and *Ki*, meaning Energy. Reiki is passed down from Master to Student. During training, the student receives an “attunement” or initiation from his Master/Teacher that opens up the student’s energy pathways to allow them to channel the energy.

Reiki helps to harmonize body, mind and spirit. The theory is that energy, both good and bad, is stored in the body; if the “bad” energy builds up in our energy pathways (aka Chakras), problems can arise. Reiki helps open those energy pathways to allow the energy to flow as intended. A typical Reiki session can last from a few minutes to an hour. The practitioner lays his/her hands on the recipient and the Reiki energy begins to flow. The energy is spiritually guided, so it “knows” where it is needed.

Reiki can be used to:

- Promote natural self-healing
- Balance the energies in the body
- Strengthen the immune system
- Treat symptoms and causes of illness
- Relieve pain
- Clear toxins
- Relax and reduces stress
- Release blocked and suppressed feelings
- Aid meditation and positive thinking

So, how can Reiki be used on animals? Our pets may not have the same every day stresses that we do, but they do still have stress and anxiety and can benefit from Reiki treatments. Animals often benefit more than some humans because they don’t question whether or not the energy is working. They accept it and allow it to help them heal. Not all animals (or people) respond the same way to Reiki therapy; however, most describe a deep sense of relaxation and stress relief.

Case Examples

1. A very arthritic 22 year-old horse with owner extremely skeptical of all holistic therapies.

“She said, ‘I’ve tried everything else, why don’t you try some of your “witchcraft”.’ . . . Her attitude changed the minute I started working on her horse. At first, the horse was very tense and in a lot of pain.

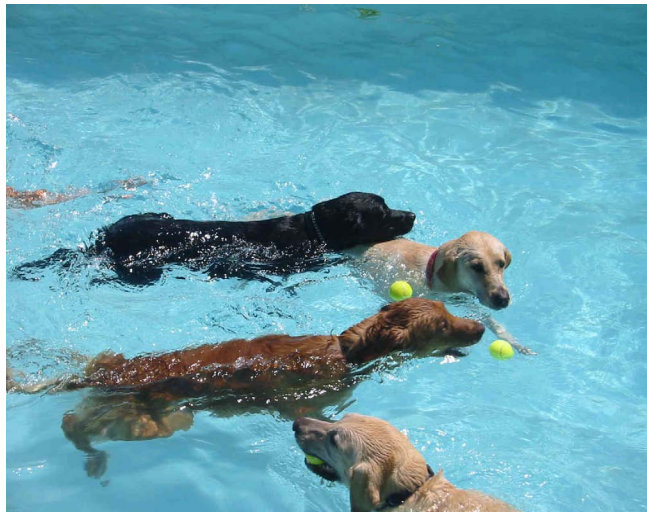
After 3 minutes of Reiki, the horse visually relaxed to the point of going to sleep. Her head went down, her lips hung open and she let out a great big SIGH of relief. The owner came to me a week later and said she couldn’t believe the difference. Her horse had increased energy, didn’t seem as stiff, and the owner actually rode her for the first time in months. The results only lasted about a week before the same symptoms started to show again. I worked on her a few more times, but in the end the owner had to put her down due to her pain.”

2. A rescue Boxer with cancer: “Spike was so loved and adored as my friend’s and her husband’s only ‘child’ that when they learned he had cancer, they did everything they could to save him. They said he always seemed in better spirits after his Reiki. When I worked on Spike, I really felt like he understood why I was there and we established such a bond, that on the night that Spike passed away, he came to me in my sleep. I dreamed that I was holding his head in my hands and telling him that it was okay to go and that I would take care of [his “parents”]. The next day I called my friend and learned that Spike passed away the previous night. I told her that he transitioned peacefully and that I could feel how much he loved them. Sometimes Reiki is not used as much to heal, as to help [animal/ human] to transition peacefully.”

3. A Golden Retriever with separation anxiety, obsessive about tennis balls: “He didn’t respond as well to Reiki as some, but he did calm down quite a bit while I worked on him. Unfortunately, immediately after the session, he’d go right back to his old ways. Some habits are hard to break!”

*Tracy Disch, for the last 12 years, has worked as a Wide Area Network Engineer who designs and implements computer networks for one of the world’s largest Benefits/HR consulting firms. She trained and studied to become a Reiki Master/Teacher (highest of 3 levels) because she “believes in the power of energy work and I love to see the response from animals and people. Unfortunately, there are those people out there that exploit energy work/holistic practices and that contributes to many people being skeptical.” If you’d like to learn more about Reiki, have a session, or participate in a training class, contact Tracy at 847-340-2121 for more info. ** LEARN volunteers and adopters will receive a 20% discount on training or sessions or may choose to have that amount donated to LEARN.*

Pawgust Fest Brings More Fun, Delight, and Joy to All



Pawgust Fest probably merits the best dog party in the Midwest, with an inground pool and pond for the dogs, lure coursing, and doggie games (like the tennis ball relay race). After playing, the dogs then retire to eat their frosty paws, a frozen non-dairy doggie dessert. Humans enjoyed food, doggy services, raffles, booths of great dog merchandise and services, and the fun of partying with their dogs and others. At the end of the day, the catch phrase was “see you next year!” Extra special thanks to Mitzi Heytow for again opening her private dog spa for the event and for her generosity in making it all possible.

Photos: (top from left) Amy Stevens with Hope, one of the blind puppies featured the in last newsletter; buddies enjoying water and balls; (bottom) Billy flies through the luring course.

Many thanks to our sponsors and donors! Without your help, Pawgust Fest could not have happened.

Pampered Pupz
Noah’s Ark Animal Workshop
Bestfriends Pet Resort
Petco
Greenies
Fetch Magazine
Old Mother Hubbard
Skip Haynes
Lupine
Zukes
HBH Pet Products
Animal Massage & Therapies

Best Friend’s Pet Resort
FURminator
Solid Gold Products/Doggie
Gourmet
Pet Ag
Tame Products
C.L. Swanson Corporation
Nelson DeCamp Inc.
TDS Metrocom
A&E Hand Tools
Shur-Line/Rubbermaid
Mitzi Heytow

Jovita Miller
The Stevens Family
The Genson Family
The Toll Family
The Caywood Family
The Beck Family
The Palm Family
The Moen Family
The Wenz Family
The Butcher Family
The Bills Family

4th Annual Laps for Labs GREAT Success

Thanks go out to all the volunteers, their friends, and sponsors who helped make this event a success. The Labs loved the laps, and the humans enjoyed the socializing and appreciated the nail cutting and micro-chipping services. Ten foster dogs participated at the Adopt-a-Thon and showed off in front of approved adopters. Including merchandise sales, the event raised over \$4,000 all of which directly helps save Labs.

Once again Steve Streck and Daisy won for “most money raised.” We deeply appreciate Steve (and Diane's) work with LEARN and Daisy, for inspiring everyone to donate generously. Daisy also won the award for the dog who traveled the farthest—from

Appleton—to attend this year's event. Good going Daisy (and chauffeurs)! In the category of “adopted the longest ago from LEARN”: Libby Caywood, adopted in 2001! Pat and Erin Caywood both attended with Libby, one lucky Labby. Finally, the award for the most senior participant goes to Mooch, a 13 year-old who was walked by Ilda Dresen from Racine. Way to go Mooch!!

The lucky winners received a certificate and gift-card for the doggy's choice of wonderful items at a local pet store. Their humans received a box of Famous Cora Lee English Toffee, generously donated by Lois and Len Toll

Many thanks to all and see you at the 5th Annual!



LEARN's 2007 Calendars are Ready—Order Yours Now!

Calendars of LEARN Labs make excellent gifts for your Lab loving friends and family. This is one of LEARN's annual FUNdraisers, and we appreciate your support. You'll find details to order them on our website OR by mail: enclose a check, payable to LEARN, and send to: P.O. Box 164, Island Lake, IL

60042. With your payment, please include the address where you'd like the calendars sent. The cost is \$12.00/calendar plus \$1.50 per calendar to cover postage. We will also have at upcoming events. For further details please contact Chris Wallen at chris4Labs@hotmail.com

Congrats to Labbies who found their new families!

June

Forrest	<i>Hardison & Ann Gross</i>
Annie	<i>Gary & Vicki Carr</i>
Sierra	<i>Geno & Mary Beck</i>
Mia	<i>Eric & Audra Swenson</i>
Tally	<i>Georgene Hrdlicka</i>
Lex	<i>Ann & Jon Listek</i>
Jackie	<i>John Akelaitis</i>
Carson	<i>Scott & Laura Ritchie</i>
Cosmo	<i>Barb & Mike Doyle</i>
MacKenzie	<i>John & Luanne Schaefer</i>
Haley	<i>Jan Cingatura</i>
Hana	<i>Todd Pike & Sterling Dewitt</i>
Rupert	<i>Meaghan Savidusky & Kris Loy</i>
Ike	<i>Sheila & Craig Wesolowski</i>
Millie	<i>Mark & Tracy Schweitzer</i>

July

Mavis	<i>Nancy & John Wedell</i>
Maynard	<i>Jonathan & Barbara Eichorst</i>
Molly	<i>Steve & Kelly Romel</i>
Thumper	<i>Marian Teson</i>
Billy	<i>David & Darlene Daray</i>
Terra	<i>Mary Frost</i>

July (cont.)

Kyp <u>and</u> Katy	<i>Cheryl Ketzer & Family</i>
Mattie	<i>Susan Buchanan & Mike Davis</i>
Martin	<i>Dave Prohaska & Roxanne Aide</i>
Buddy	<i>Amy & David Caes</i>

August

Elsie	<i>Cheryl & Joe Dorava</i>
Jack	<i>Dana & Amy Osinga</i>
MacKenzie	<i>Jay (Jeremiah) Strong & Carrie Estok</i>
Maggie	<i>Michelle Drew</i>
Morris	<i>Mary Kennedy</i>
Myron	<i>Naheed & Peter Finch</i>
Hope	<i>Tom & Teresa Patek</i>
Chips	<i>Ryan Dai & Michael Shaw</i>
Jack	<i>Bob & Judy Stephens</i>

September

Mango	<i>Cindy Anderson & Larry Henning</i>
Cookie	<i>Arlan & Patricia Nathan</i>
Pinkie	<i>Joni & John Birkenheier</i>
Mitzi	<i>Tim & Mary Nelson</i>
Ty	<i>William & Rae Roscoe</i>
Thunder	<i>Mark & Laura Lloyd</i>

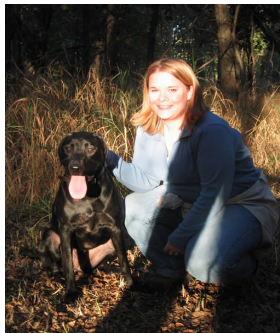
Enormous Thanks! The following people generously donated money, supplies, or services to help our rescued Labs. Without your help, these Labs wouldn't be alive today.

Margaret Azzara	Tammy Gauger	The Newman Family
Mary Benson	Donna Godlewski	Kathy Rajter
John & Joanne Birkenheier	Don & Judy Hayes	Jeanne Schuett
George R. Bratschi	Mary Hoyne	Beth & Chuck Seen
Lewis & Evelyn Bartfield	Pat Justin-Bridgman	John Sonnemann
Jerome & Rita Borowski	Jan & Arnie Kemper	Cy & Bev Spangler
Devin Brosseau	Helen Koblitz	John Sparks
Sue & Tom Burek	Karen & John Linehan	Tim Stewart
Mr & Mrs Charles Carlson	Andrea Moen	Steve & Diane Streck
James & Dolores Champagne	Andy & Gretchen Moffit	Julie Toshner
Randy Coutre	Steward & Gena Muller	Jim & Amy Tuchler
Hal & Sharon Ditzig	Wendy Nelson	Tad & Kim Wehner
Jennifer Gaab & Brian Axell	Nancy Newbourne	Janet Willman

Critical Reminder to Adopters! Please update your address & phone with LEARN

Should your dog become missing, our network of volunteers across IL and WI and other organizations we work with can help return your dog to you. A LEARN tag stays with all alums for life; that tag number and/or microchip, combined with current adopter info, has enabled a number of Labs to be reunited safely with their families.

LEARN Volunteers Inspire . . . Hear what LEARN's volunteers do and why they do it, often behind the scenes, to save Labs. Our Labs have their own stories, and so do our volunteers who help them.



With AJ on a hike; with foster Sammy who stole her heart

Beth Frechette, formerly Bouffleur, has been with LEARN for 4 years and still loves it. She continues to do it all: evaluate, transport and foster dogs; attend events; write newspaper ads, and until recently, manage LEARN's website—a nearly full-time Labor of Lab love which Beth did with professional and technical expertise. Huge thanks, Beth!

Beth and her 5 year-old Lab AJ LOVE Pawgust Fest and will continue to go annually to keep up with former fosters and volunteers who've become friends.

What motivates Beth? "I strongly believe it's everyone's responsibility to make a positive impact on the world; the way I make an impact is by helping one dog at a time... they would be dead or perpetually neglected without our intervention."

Beth feels she gives her time and her heart, but gets so much back in return: "To know that you've saved a life; to know that a dog who had been previously neglected is now spoiled rotten in their 'forever home';

to know that one man's trash is another's treasure; to see that Labrador smile of relief when they know they've been saved; to be able to love a creature who has not been shown kindness before; to [help] a mother dog with her newborn puppies as you take them to safety at their foster home; and to make a family complete by adding what had been missing—unconditional Labrador love. To see all of those things are what keep me going and keep me dedicated to making a difference."

Beth feels the Labs she's helped have taught her to be a better person and that we all can learn from these dogs: "the ability to give unconditional love no matter what life has dealt you."

Exposing her Lab, AJ, to fosters has been a great experience. She loves playing with any dog and teaching them to play fetch. Many dogs come into LEARN not knowing how to play. "[AJ] enjoys it as much as I."

"My favorite volunteer activity has been fostering... the most rewarding thing I've ever done in my life. Yes it can be hard and yes I've cried when my foster 'kid' leaves, but the tears are of joy, knowing that a wonderful, deserving home has a new family member." Beth's devotion to making an impact is summed up by her statement: "I can't imagine not volunteering my time to helping make the future brighter, not only for stray and abandoned Labs, but for myself by giving of myself."

WANT TO HELP SAVE MORE LABS?

LEARN needs more foster homes. Due to moves, changes in living circumstances, etc., LEARN has lost several foster homes and really needs to replace them. The more foster homes we have, the more Labs we can save. LEARN has had to turn away dogs in need because no foster homes were available, which unfortunately often sentences them to death. Fostering is a very rewarding experience. Yes, it's bittersweet when the foster is adopted . . . but only until you remind yourself that you just helped save that Lab and found him/her a great forever home to live happily ever after—and by his/her adoption, you are now able to save another Lab's life. Want to help? If so, please go to LEARN's website for more information and an application:

www.Labadoption.org/linkpages/HowToHelp/Fosters.htm or contact Donna Spangler at nortntrix@aol.com or call (847) 289-PETS (7387) and leave a message for Donna.

"Blessed is the person who sees the need, recognizes the responsibility, and actively becomes the answer." ~William A. Ward

The Retriever Changes'----- PLEASE READ! See postcard inside!

As you may have read in our last issue, with our mailing list now exceeding 1,400 people, *The Retriever* has become too expensive for LEARN to continue free distribution. To allow us to conserve our funds to help more Labs, LEARN has adopted a new distribution policy for *The Retriever* which goes into effect with our next issue (Winter 2007). You may continue to receive *The Retriever* by:

1. **Email.** Please email newsletter@labadoption.org with The Retriever in the subject line and **include your current mailing address** so that we can make sure we don't also mail you a printed version. We'll e-mail a link to you whenever *The Retriever* is published.

OR

2. **U.S. Mail.** For a nominal, nonrefundable, annual \$5.00 subscription fee you can continue to receive the printed version. This subscription fee will cover one calendar year and will help defray the printing and postage expense. **Please fill out the enclosed postcard and mail it to LEARN with your \$5.00 check.**

Families who have recently adopted a Lab from LEARN will receive a free year's subscription. We'll also continue to send newsletters for free to Vets who help us and to supporters who have donated \$50.00 or more during the previous calendar year. Renewal notices will be included in the Fall issue of *The Retriever*. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us via phone (847)-289-7387 and leave a message, or e-mail learndogs@Labadoption.org

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.



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E-mail: learndogs@Labadoption.org

LEARN & Lab 2006 Events!

► **Lab Fest and Meet and Greet** on Sunday, November 19th, at the Vernon Hills PetCo, 555 Townline Road, Vernon Hills, IL 60061

► **LEARN Holiday Cards & Gifts:** Watch www.labadoption.org for new merchandise and holiday cards! For that special someone with everything, consider a tax-deductible contribution to LEARN in his or her honor to help save Labs. Thanks for your support!

