

GOLD RUSH CHAMPIONS

DOG SENSE

Holiday Caution: If ingested, tinsel may cause obstruction or even cutting of the intestine.

Begging is a terrible habit that is annoying to people and **FRUSTRATING** to the dog.

To remove pet hair when you vacuum, mist the upholstery with an anti-static spray first. Hair will come right up!

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Gold Rush Champions

THE NUGGET



CANINE COMPANIONS
FOR INDEPENDENCE

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2008

The Grand Opening—And How Grand It Was!

By Chris Kittredge

For years and years, the Northeast campus of CCI was housed in a pig barn in New York. In spite of cramped quarters, few kennels, meek training facilities, and no dormitories, the spirit lived on and exceptional dogs for exceptional people were graduated every quarter. Truly the slogan, “where there is a will, there is a way” lived in the hearts of staff and volunteers. It was obvious, however, that this situation needed to change and it was always a dream that a new facility would be built.

The dream turned to a reality when Jean Schultz and John Miller, a National Board Member, joined forces. They worked tirelessly to plant the seed and shortly the challenge started to catch on and penetrate other people’s priorities. Raising the money to convert an old union hall in Medford, NY to meet CCI’s needs became a full time job for NE staff and many staff members in Santa Rosa. The capital campaign seemed to go on forever but slowly and surely progress was made. From a wonderful young boy who raised money selling lemonade by the glass, to high level executives who dug deep, the money was raised to build an amazing facility, The Miller Family Campus.



I had the honor to attend the Grand Opening on October 4th and was not prepared for the emotion that I would feel upon finally seeing the building. It is beautiful and meets all of the needs, but there is a spirit in that building that is unexplainable. To coin the now old phrase, “build it and they will come,” applies here. The campus is in the middle of a neighborhood and when you come around the corner, the last thing you expect to see is this impressive building, beautifully landscaped, and the Canine Companions for Independence sign. As you enter the gate you wind down a tree-lined road, named, as it should be, Schultz Drive. It’s an exciting place and good things are happening.

Without a doubt one of the highlights of the entire building is the beautiful donor wall as you come in the front door. It is the most tastefully done “presentation” that I have ever seen. It lists all of the major donors that have contributed and along the top a series of photographs depicts all of the different stages of CCI. How proud I was when I looked up and saw that there was my dear friend and puppy raiser extraordinaire, Joan Buntin, up on that wall. I think that we all would agree that there is no one who represents the devotion and dedication of puppy raisers better than Joan!



Needless to say if you get a chance to visit CCI in Medford, NY (Long Island) by all means do so... an exceptional facility and exceptional staff working with exceptional volunteers to raise exceptional dogs for exceptional people.

Bone Voyage—November Turn In Pups

Best of luck to the November turn in pups and their puppy raisers! At right, some of the Big Dogs took time from their final class to pose for a farewell portrait.



Albert Foster and **Devin**
 Kayla & Lyle McCarty and **Vanya II**
 Matthew & Ryan Valdez and **Shelly II**
 Kristin Shahan and **Zinji**
 Kate Goulard and **Arena**
 Gina Arthurs and **Angus II**
 Lia Versaevel and **Darlan**
 Gisel Moore and **Fern VI**
 Cassie Black and **Onalee**
 KC & Angela Palazuelos and **Sunke**

Kathy Zastrow and **Prairie IV**
 Karen & Kathy Lawler and **Tamlyn**
 Brittany Long & Ben Rode and **Tahnee III**
 Jamie Putnam and **Valerie**
 Jean Kelly & Amy Bush and **Whisper**
 Beverly Pimentel and **Walker IV**

WE DID IT!!! *By Joan Buntin*

This year the Dawgs in the Ruff golf tournament had a new look. The committee (specifically Bev and Joan) decided to try something with a little (well actually a LOT) less work. In place of the silent/live auction we decided to try a “BIG” raffle with a push for pre-sale of raffle tickets. The first step was to ask for much needed help from all of the GRC. You guys came through big time.

Many of you donated wonderful raffle baskets, wines or wine accessories enabling the raffle committee to put together 37 fantastic raffle items. We had 25 items available for pre-sale tickets and the remaining 12 items exclusive to just the tournament. All of the event attendees seemed to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and many remarked on the quality of the 37 items available. In total the raffle netted over \$12,000, enough to sponsor a GRADUATE TEAM.

The pre-sale brought in about half of this amount and a big thank you goes out to those who worked so hard selling tickets. Thomas Zahner and his skilled companion, Keldon, went door to door, who can refuse a kid and his dog. Sandy McKaig and her pup Elan tried a different tactic. Elan sported a sandwich board saying “Need a hug this week? – Buy a raffle ticket” and walked by the offices of her co-workers. Teresa Hart was the number one seller and close behind was Irina Green, Jill Quan, Amy Bush and Lorelle Banzett. Tiffany Poland and her service dog Karilee also worked hard along with others.



On behalf of the raffle committee and the entire golf committee we want to thank all of you for your help in making this a success.

GRCers, next year let’s go for 2 TEAMS!!!!

November 2008 NW Graduation

The Northwest (NW) Region's November 2008 Matriculation and Graduation Ceremony returned to the familiar venue at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts on Saturday November 15, 2008. NW Regional Executive Director, Kathy Pierson opened the ceremony noting that the historic nature of the recent presidential election was similar to the barrier that was broken many years ago when Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected as the first American president with a disability.

Community supporters and Team Training sponsors were honored, including:

- * National Automobile Dealers Charitable Foundation donation of \$10,000 at the ceremony and over \$100,000 in total to CCI
- * Walgreens Woodland Distribution Center, Annual Employee and Organization Fundraiser donated \$21,000. Walgreens matched the donation for a total of \$42,000. This donation was provided funding for a "life of the dog" and Walgreen's is sponsoring Willow IV.
- * Merial, Loren Poncia (makers of Frontline and Heartgard)
- * Celebrity Chef, A Tail of Two Cities raised \$170,000
- * Puget Sound Chapter's Gift of Miracles Gala raised \$90,000
- * GRC Dawgs in the Ruff Golf Tournament raised \$40,000

Next up, Esther Molina, National Breeding and Puppy Program Manager, acknowledged new breeders including three breeders who were born in the GRC, Dara (**Sequoia** x **Halor**), Wanda V (Lamond x **Yvonne**) and OMSI II (Blaze x **Chandra**). Following the presentation of the new breeders, the always entertaining puppy slide show featuring many of the GRC "Big Dogs" was the prelude to the presentation of the matriculating class by NW Puppy Program Manager, Lorna O'Connor.



PR Stephanie and Grad Kendra

Happily, three of the ten graduate dogs were raised by GRC puppy



Mary Jo Colletti visits with grad dog Vivian

raisers! **Cammie II**, raised by Cris Gerard and Marilyn and Steffane Lui graduated as a facility dog. **Tia IV**, raised by Stephanie Wilson graduated as a

Skilled Companion. Stephanie reports that she was thrilled with her first CCI graduate and notes that the special day will stay with her for a long time to come. Stephanie also reports that, "Tia looked so good in that blue cape, I know she is so proud to wear it." Way to go Stephanie and Tia. **Vivian III**, raised by Mary Jo Colletti graduated as a Skilled Companion for an 8 year

old autistic boy who also has Type I Diabetes. Following the November CCI graduation. Vivian was sent to begin training at Dogs 4 Diabetics. When she finishes her training in mid December she will go home to begin her dual role as Skilled Companion / Alert dog trained to recognize a blood sugar drop in her new best friend. Mary Jo reports that she is, "remarkably proud" of Vivian and credits GRC friend and mentor, Suzanne Wharton, as keeping her "sane and focused during the rough spots".

Congratulations to the new graduate teams and their puppy raisers!

Earlier this year, our family adopted retired service dog, Sable. Sable had been Skip Osborn's service dog for over 10 years. She is a beautiful Lab/Golden cross who turned 12 in January. A friend of Skip's said that Sable seemed to intuitively know what Skip needed or wanted her to do, even when Skip would sometimes only say her name.

When word got around that we had adopted Sable, I was asked to write an article about service dog retirement. Being somewhat of a technical person, I soon figured out that I could write about the process of retiring a service dog, but I might not be able to address the emotional side of a service dog's retirement. I looked to GRC graduates Nancy Sawhney, Sally Simcoe, and Skip Osborn for their input on retiring a service dog. Suzanne Wharton offered some insight into adopting a service dog. Many thanks to all of them for their contributions to this article.

As a breeder/caretaker, I know that when the pups born in my home are about 8 weeks old, I'm going to happily drive them to CCI, knowing that it's time for them to begin training and that they will go to loving, caring homes all over the country. As a puppy raiser, I know that there is a lot more emotion involved in turning in a puppy for advanced training. My long, hard efforts to raise and train my puppy have resulted in a love affair that has lasted over 15 months. My pup has been with me at work, at play, and around the house ~ and just when the puppy finally understands commands and is well-behaved – I have to give her up to CCI.



Retired SD Kaufman

What I don't know is what it is like to be a graduate ~ to make the decision that a service dog would be right for me, to go through the difficult process of applying for a dog, filling out the paperwork, getting my doctor's participation, being interviewed, and waiting, waiting, waiting for a date to go to team training, all the time not knowing what kind of dog, what color, what gender, what temperament of dog I will receive.



Skip and Sable

Then, I still can't quite comprehend what it's like once I'm in team training; the excitement and fear that graduates must go through as they learn about proper canine care, learn over 50 commands, and then perform the commands with a new dog every day for two weeks, all the time getting more instruction, help and advice from the instructors.

So, now, let's say I've been paired with my beautiful service dog for a number of years, and, assuming my dog is healthy, I must decide when the right time is for her to retire. My dog has been by my side for years – all day, every day. I depend on this dog more than my dog depends on me. We have been through everything together and I can't imagine life without her there, all the time, anticipating my wants and needs. But I notice that she is slowing down. Sometimes she is sleeping so soundly, she doesn't hear my call. Her work ethic seems to be less strong and she has trouble climbing in and out of my car. I start to think about retirement – but I'm in denial and prefer to think that all is well. I've forgotten the early years when my dog had boundless energy and was excited to get dressed and head out to run errands. I find myself slowing down my activities so my dog can keep up with me, and while I used to use her to pull my chair – I just don't have the heart to ask her to do that anymore.

I attend the annual graduate seminar and drag myself to the retirement session. I find that CCI has much to offer on this subject. They offer handholding, encouragement, advice and support while I struggle with this decision. Once I make the decision that retirement is clearly on the horizon, I must decide where my dog will live in retirement. My first thought is, "I'll just keep her, she's my dog and she'll be fine." But then, I start to think in a more practical sense... Will I have the energy to care for two dogs? Am I physically able to groom, feed, and exercise two dogs? Will my new dog get enough attention? Will my old



Nancy Sawhney and Union

dog be able to let the new dog work? Can I afford to care for an aging dog and a new dog? Will I favor one dog over the other or unfairly compare the two? Are my home, yard, and car big enough for two large dogs? Do I have family members who will help with the care of the older dog?

Much as it pains me, I come to the conclusion that I need to find a home for my partner in retirement. I find out that many graduates look to the puppy raisers as possible homes for their dogs. In many cases, puppy raisers have stayed in touch and are thrilled to be able to offer their homes to the puppy they once raised. The dogs seem to have impossibly good memories and know they are approaching "home" as they round the corner on the way to the P/R's home. They remember the family members and their way around the house as if they've never left. Other graduates look to family friends and relatives to provide homes for their

retired dogs. A third option is CCI's adoption list. CCI carefully screens the people who apply for dogs and is very thorough in addressing the possible needs of a retired service dog before the dog is placed. And, some grads decide that they will not place their dog and do not apply for a successor dog until their dogs have passed away.



Sally Simcoe and Shelby

As I look at all of the options, I realize that I must make the decision about retirement and begin to look to the future. I contact CCI and advise them of when I would like to retire my dog and where I would like her to live out her life. I ask for the successor dog paperwork and begin the process of filling out all of the applications and providing the documentation required by CCI. I'm interviewed over the phone and eventually, I attend a group interview and I'm placed on "the list." I'm told that successor applications are handled more quickly, so my wait won't be long. I place my dog with friends, knowing that she will be loved and cared for in a way she deserves for all of the hard work she has happily given me over the years. When asked "What time of the day do I miss her most?" I respond, "Every second of every day..."

Save The Date!

GRC **Snow Day** will be Saturday **March 7, 2009** at the home of George and Lorrie Moore. Their home is accessible and the yard is fully fenced.

The annual Lions Project for CCI **Crab Feed** will be held on **March 14, 2009** at Jones Hall, Placer County Fairgrounds in Roseville. The LPCCI Crab Feast is a big annual fund raiser seating nearly 1000 people and in past years has raised \$20,000+ for CCI. Watch your email for more details about this fun event that features all you can eat crab, prawns, clam chowder, green salad and rolls!

Trainer Talk

Start With The End In Mind *by Carly Fermer*

Have you noticed that our dogs are turning in at 14 to 16 months? Compared to a year ago when most turn in dogs were 16 to 20 months old, turn in is occurring earlier. With early turn in it's critical to stay on track by attending puppy class and learning and practicing commands. This will provide your pup with the best possible preparation for Advanced Training. Don't procrastinate and wait until the last minute to cram for turn in. This is stressful for you and your pup! The best advice I can offer is to learn the commands on schedule now and maintain this level of training until turn in.

Impulse Control *adapted from the Southwest Pup-E-Connection Newsletter*

As puppies grow, we ask them to ignore bouncing balls, kibble on the ground, and other dogs walking past. Impulse control is an essential part of their training. CCI puppies are taught "Don't", a general command that communicates what the puppy is doing is inappropriate. When puppies are 2-3 months old, "Don't" is often paired with a food reward. For example, as a distracting item passes by, the puppy's handler says "Don't" and lures the puppy's nose toward them with a treat distraction as a reward. The leash is used to prevent the puppy from accessing the item, but not to correct the puppy. The puppy begins to learn "Don't", means that she should turn away from the distraction for positive reinforcement.

Around 14 weeks of age, physical correction begins to come in, in the form of a firm leash pop, paired with the word "Don't". When the puppy lunges for a distraction, they receive an assertive but emotionally neutral correction. As soon as the lunging ceases, praise in the form of pets and food reward are lavished upon the puppy.

A proactive approach is essential. As you find yourself approaching a distraction with the pup, it is important to try to engage them by calling their name and using enticing noises (clapping, kissing sounds). As soon as you have their focus, say "Good!" and offer a food reward. The ideal is to teach the puppy that handlers are more exciting and rewarding than the distraction. It is essential to use the physical correction, but making good choices rewarding is even more essential.

Many puppy raisers are pleased when their dog avoids or moves away from an object such as food on the ground that they undoubtedly are attracted to. However, avoidance is not the same as confident self control. Consider this scenario: A graduate needs to move down a narrow aisle in a store where a few crackers have been left on the floor. The dog is unable to walk over them and instead avoids the crackers by continually ducking behind the chair. This scenarios demonstrates why correction for lapses in impulse control must be well-balanced with praise and food rewards. The puppy must learn confident control as demonstrated by walking through a "field of kibble" at puppy class looking to their handler and holding a Let's Go position, while receiving ample praise for making a difficult choice.

The avoidant puppy will duck away from the food, unable to complete commands near it. What to do with avoidance? Add distance between the puppy and those items they find particularly challenging. This will give you the opportunity to reward and build their confidence. Slowly close the gap between the puppy and the difficult item, always taking a step back in difficulty level if they show insecure and avoidant behavior. Work until the puppy can be near the object (toys, food, people, dogs) with confidence!

Safety Update *by Jill Quan*

Not long ago, a CCI pup was found running loose. All is well, and the dog was reunited with its puppy raiser. This scary situation is a great lesson to all of us. Every CCI pup must have a tag on it with your local contact information. Consider including your cell phone number as well as your vet's phone number. While the CCI tag has a toll-free number, AFTER BUSINESS HOURS, this reaches a recorded message which instructs the caller to call a toll number. This toll number then allows the caller to leave a message to be returned by CCI staff. As you can see, having your phone number(s) We are all careful with our dogs, but things happen. Gates blow open, fences break, your steady dog gets spooked by something, you mistakenly leave the garage door open and let the dogs out the backdoor (my most frequent mistake). Be safe, have no regrets. Make sure your pup has a tag with your contact information on it. You can even leave the dog's name off so you can continue to use it with future CCI pups.

Health Update—ASPCA Xylitol Warning

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center cautions animal owners that xylitol, a sweetener found in certain sugar-free chewing gums, candies, baked goods and other products can potentially cause serious and even life-threatening problems for pets.

“Last year, we managed more than 170 cases involving xylitol-containing products,” says Dana Farbman, CVT and spokesperson for the Center. “This is a significant increase from 2004, when we managed about 70.” Barely halfway into 2006, the Center has already managed about 114 cases. Why the increase? “It’s difficult to say,” Farbman states. “Xylitol products are relatively new to the United States marketplace, so one possibility may be an increase in availability.”

According to Dr. Eric Dunayer, veterinarian and toxicologist for the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, dogs ingesting significant amounts of items sweetened with xylitol could develop a fairly sudden drop in blood sugar, resulting in depression, loss of coordination and seizures. “These signs can develop quite rapidly, at times less than 30 minutes after ingestion of the product. Therefore, it is crucial that pet owners seek veterinary treatment immediately.” Dr. Dunayer also stated that there appears to be a strong link between xylitol ingestions and the development of liver failure in dogs.

While it was previously thought that only large concentrations of xylitol could result in problems, this appears to no longer be the case. “We seem to be learning new information with each subsequent case we manage,” says Dr. Dunayer. “Our concern used to be mainly with products that contain xylitol as one of the first ingredients. However, we have begun to see problems developing from ingestions of products with lesser amounts of this sweetener.” He also says that with smaller concentrations of xylitol, the onset of clinical signs could be delayed as much as 12 hours after ingestion. “Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that even if your pet does not develop signs right away, it does not mean that problems won’t develop later on.”

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center strongly urges pet owners to be especially diligent in keeping candy, gum or other foods containing xylitol out of the reach of pets. As with any potentially toxic substance, should accidental exposures occur, it is important to contact your local veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center for immediate assistance.

Dreaming Big

Have you seen the drawings of a two-story breeding facility in the main lobby? If so, you already know that CCI is DREAMING BIG! A breeding center is a long time dream of National Director of Canine Programs, Paul Mundell. To take that first step toward making that dream come true someday, the sketches were drawn to get preliminary cost estimates and foster donor cultivation efforts.

The concept for the breeding facility is that it would enhance and augment, not eliminate, the current breeding program structure. The breeding center would support the needs of breeder caretakers, support the needs of the female breeders and have the ability to provide optimal care of neonates in transition to puppy raisers.

While CCI is dreaming big, there are no current definitive plans to pursue the facility thus no timelines or operational plans for how the breeding center would function. Stay tuned though, CCI with it's legions of volunteers, may also make this miracle happen!



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Breeder Caretaker Corner

Litter News—Stork Report

Lyric whelped seven LGX on August 20, 2008. Litter letter is “C”. Sire is BC George and Lorrie Moore with Emily Williams.

Ember whelped seven LGX puppies on October, 2008. Litter letter is “Y”. Sire is OMSI III. BC Joan Buntin.

Avani whelped eight LGX puppies on October 5, 2008. Litter letter is “A”. Sire is Pryde. BC Alyshia Patrick-Putty.

Bryar whelped ten LGX puppies on October 2, 2008 Litter letter is “S”. Sire is Wasatch. BC Jodi Atkins with Pam Flanagan.

Caro whelped eleven LGX puppies on October 14, 2008. Litter letter is “C”. Sire is Pryde. BC Cindy Lawton

Auburn whelped ten LGX puppies on November 7, 2008. Litter letter is “M”. Sire is Terrence. BC Kathy Albrecht with Mary Roseberry.

Omeeka was bred to Alijah. BC Cindy Lawton with Carly Fermer

Luna was bred to Camden. BC Mary Roseberry and Matt Beymer

Keala was bred to Lawrence. BC Jan Thornburg

Sashi was bred to OMSI III. BC Cindy Whitcher

Chandra was bred to Lawrence. BC Laura Allen

Rowina was bred to Weiss. BC Rachel & Holt Gedeit

Linar was bred to Pryde. BC Judy Osen with Pam Flanagan

Featured Breeder—Avani

Breeder Caretaker— Alyshia and Kayla Putty

Name: Avani

Status: Active Breeder

DOB: May 30, 2006

Parents: Baumann x Shasta

Breed: Lab / Golden Cross

Puppies: One litter—SEVEN Boys

Fun Facts: Avani was a lazy, roly poly pup who quickly became an amazing worker, loving the attention involved with learning commands. We were delighted when she was selected as a breeder.





CANINE COMPANIONS
FOR INDEPENDENCE®

Gold Rush Champions

4120 St. Andrews Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95821

E-mail: nugget@goldrushchampions.com

Who We Are . . .

The Gold Rush Champions is a volunteer chapter of Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). We are a group of volunteers who come together to support the mission of CCI in the Sacramento foothills region of California historically known as the Gold Rush area.

CCI is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve the needs of people with disabilities by providing trained assistance dogs and continuing support to ensure the success of the working team.

The Gold Rush Champions are volunteers who support CCI's mission with their time, special skills, and dedication. Our members include Puppy Raisers, Breeder Caretakers, Graduate Teams and volunteers. We hold fund raising events and public education activities in addition to supporting each other in our efforts to volunteer for CCI.

