



The Retriever

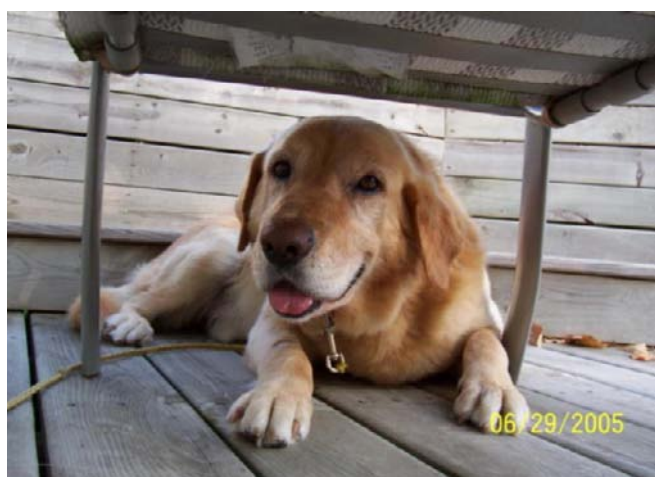
Labrador Education And Rescue Network's Newsletter

Volume 8, Number 2, July 2007

LEARN'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

Cooper and Marsha

By Jennifer Bacon, Cooper's Foster Mom



A Happy Cooper

This is the story of a very special LEARN alumni and the very special family that adopted him. Cooper came into LEARN as a stray in June of 2005. Not much was known about this handsome guy except that he was probably 6-8 years old and that he was a Lab/golden retriever mix. He seemed very sweet, had excellent manners but was afraid of many things including most men, loud noises and camera flashes. I spent several hours one evening sitting in the bushes next to the house convincing him that it was safe to venture back into the house after the neighborhood kids shot off fireworks over the 4th of July holiday. Cooper has the sweetest face and eyes that melt your heart, making it all worthwhile.

After the vet gave him a clean bill of health, Marsha and Jerry Rather adopted Cooper July, 2005, and this is when this lucky guy hit the jackpot! When Marsha and Jerry took Cooper to their Vet for a check-up, the Vet discovered that he buckshot remnants under his

skin from his shoulder to his hip. Poor guy! This explained his terror of loud noises and probably, his fear of men. Marsha and Jerry went into high gear and researched what was best for this lucky Lab. They contacted Diane Streck from LEARN after she followed up with them on his adoption. Diane gave them some tips and resources to help Cooper deal with his anxiety and fears. The Rathers took Cooper to an Animal Behaviorist and worked diligently with him to help make his life as comfortable and happy as a Lab's life should be. I visited Cooper over the months after his adoption; it was clear that Cooper had developed a special relationship with Marsha. He adored her and was coming around to thinking that Jerry was pretty cool also. Cooper is very happy as part of the Rather family. The Rathers made the comment to me several times that "we will not give up on him," and they never have.



Marsha Rather, right; Diane Streck receives LEARN check, left

Two years later, Marsha contacted LEARN again. Marsha was retiring after many years as a highly respected professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Wisconsin. She asked her colleagues and

friends to make a donation to LEARN in lieu of gifts—what a generous and thoughtful gesture! She invited LEARN to her retirement reception to accept the donation and to talk about LEARN so people would know how their gift would be used. To date, LEARN has received donations of over \$1,000 in honor of Marsha.

LEARN is so lucky to have generous supporters and Lab parents like Marsha and Jerry. Cooper is a

challenging Lab with unique needs which the Rathers knew before they adopted him. The Rathers have never wavered in their dedication to this special guy and have been great friends to LEARN. Cooper, now 9 or 10 years old, is living the life he always deserved.

Very special THANKS to Marsha and all (listed below) who contributed to Marsha's Retirement Gift! You've saved and enabled lives.

Janice Anderzon
Anonymous donors
Carolyn Aradine
Marcia Gale Barber
Linda Ciofu Baumann
James & Lois Belekevich
Susan Brown
Joanne Conger
Signe Cooper
Kathleen Corbett Freimuth
Philip Daub
Regina Dunst
Patricia Feltskog
Lea Rae Galarawicz
Gail Greuel
Jeff Grossman / Nadine Nehls

Susan Heidrich
Jerome Hill
Patricia Hummel
Joan Johnston
Anne Jozwiak
Mary Kelly-Powell
Karin Kirchhoff
Sarah & David Kruger
Kristine Kwekkeboom
Catherine Ann Langsdorf
Patricia Lasky
Diane Lauver
Vivian Littlefield
Ruth Lutze
Helen Marsh
Dr. Marilyn McCubbin

Mary Ellen Murray
John & Bernice Owen
Karen Pridham
James & Marsha Quick
Pamela Scheibel
Jane Schimmel
Susan Tipple
Marcia Voss
Rita Vosters
Sandra Ward
Thelma Wells
Mary Jo Willis
Laura Ziebarth
Carole Zuege

LEARN's 3RD Annual PAWGUST FEST

Bring your dog and join an outdoor festival "For and About Dogs," Saturday, August 11th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Libertyville, IL. Your dog will enjoy activities like lure coursing, games, doggy services and swimming in the in-ground pool and/or pond.

- Vendors and other Rescues will be showcasing their merchandise and services
- Demonstrations and games for the entire family (Proper Paws University)
- Learn more about your pet's inner thoughts (Rebecca Moravec, Animal Communicator)
- Photograph you and your favorite canine kids (Marge Hudson of Wetnose Photography)
- Massages you and your pooch can relax and enjoy (White Springs Massage)
- "Ask the Trainer" (Laura Colquitt, Proper Paws University)
- Canine nail trims and/or polish; brushing; ear cleaning; teeth cleaning; microchipping (Wind Lake & Muskego Animal Hospitals with LEARN's help)



- LEARN will conduct a raffle with great items
- Plus, frozen treats for the dogs and lots of food for humans, too!

Location: 25775 St. Mary Road, Libertyville, IL.

Admission is only \$10/person or \$15/family. Pre-registration packages are also available. If your canine companions are well behaved, socialized and current on vaccinations, they'll want to come! For more info, visit www.Labadoption.org, or email us at pawgustfest@Labadoption.org.

Determining and Maintaining Your Dog's Ideal Weight

By Diane Streck

You may recall one of the LEARN Tips in the last issue of *The Retriever*: dogs live an average of 2.8 years longer when kept at their “ideal” weight. In addition, dogs kept at their ideal weight have a lower incidence of cancer, arthritis and diabetes. How can you tell if your dog is at their ideal weight, and how do you keep them there?



The **ideal weight** varies with each individual dog. However, you can tell if your dog is at his/her ideal weight by looking at them and lightly feeling their rib cage area. You should be able to feel your dog's ribs with a light touch but not see your dog's ribs. You should also be able to see a slight waistline when viewing your dog from above and a tucked abdomen when viewing from the side.



Most dogs are **overweight**; they have no waistline, rather their abdomen is slightly rounded; you cannot feel their ribs with a light touch; and sometimes their flanks jiggle when they walk. To help overweight dogs get to their ideal weight, slightly reduce the number of calories they consume. You can accomplish this in 3 ways: 1) reduce the amount of food; 2) switch to a lite food; and/or 3) reduce the number or size of treats. (Treats have calories, too!) Combine calorie reduction with a slight increase in activity. Just like with humans, strict dieting alone just encourages the dog's body to conserve energy and become more efficient at resisting weight loss. So be sure to include an increase in activity in any weight loss program.

Severely overweight dogs need gradual reductions (at 2 – 3 week intervals) in calories and gradual increases in exercise to give their bodies time to adjust. You can

substitute ¼ to 1/3 C of cooked oatmeal or canned unseasoned pumpkin for an equal portion of food. The oatmeal and pumpkin helps a dog feel full in spite of eating fewer calories. No crash diets or exercise programs. Studies have shown that dogs needing to lose weight do best when they lose just over 1% of their body weight/week.



A few dogs are **underweight**. Given a Lab's propensity to eat, this may seem difficult to believe. Nevertheless, LEARN has rescued several underweight Labs. An underweight dog's ribs are highly visible; there is a very obvious waist when viewed from above; and often their pelvic bones are prominent. To help an underweight dog get to their ideal weight, increase their food slightly. Severely underweight dogs need gradual increases in food to allow their stomach to expand. Note: it may take months to notice any weight gain.

Once your dog is at their ideal weight, how do you maintain it? Forget about the recommended quantity on the dog food package. It's usually overstated and doesn't take into account your individual dog's lifestyle and metabolism. The amount of food your dog needs to maintain their “ideal” weight varies with the amount of exercise they receive, the kind of food they eat (some foods are more calorific than others), the outside temperature and their metabolism. It is better for your dog to be a little too thin than too heavy. Actually measuring, rather than eyeballing, the amount of food you feed your dog can help with weight control. If you switch foods, keep the calories consistent, not the quantity.

Keep an eye on your dog's waistline, feel his/her ribs and adjust caloric intake accordingly. If they're getting too thin, feed slightly more; if they're getting heavy, feed slightly less and slightly increase their exercise. These slight adjustments can help your dog maintain his/her ideal weight. Remember, dogs live an average of 2.8 years longer if kept at their “ideal” weight.

Hardships Inspire: Of Heroes and Clowns

Why do dogs who live with great hardships often exude happiness and inspire? Whether blind, missing a limb or suffering chronic disease, these dogs are true gifts to those who'll receive. Perhaps dogs bonded with humans thousands of years ago to be their sages and motivators?

As LEARN ages, so do the Labs that have been rescued. Aging rarely happens gracefully, but Labs seem to make it so. Memories often bring tears of both grief and laughter. The Tribute page on LEARN's website remembers our alums who've passed; this article focuses on two Labs, representative of countless others, who always smiled despite hard lives due to health challenges.

A Tribute to Codi by Denise Spangler

Unexpectedly, on May 9th, Codi had his last bowl of kibbles, and quickly passed away with Donna and Jim at his side. We all miss him very much, and would like to share his story with you.

Codi's life with LEARN began with a phone call from the Vet School. LEARN Volunteer Jim Champagne remembers it well. "They said, 'We've got a dog here we'd like you to take a look at. His tail doesn't work, but we think there's a lot of life left in him.'"

Jim and his wife, LEARN Volunteer Donna Spangler, went to meet Codi, a 7 year-old whose hind section was paralyzed due to ruptured discs in his spine. Surgery relieved pressure on his spinal cord, but the extent of his recovery was questionable. His former owners were unable to meet his many physical needs. Just one look into his shining brown eyes, and Donna and Jim committed to giving him that chance and brought him into their home, with their two labs Norton 7, and Trixie 6.

Their living room became a hospital room, something familiar to Donna and Jim, both health professionals. Donna works days; Jim nights, so someone was always home to meet Codi's numerous needs. He had control of his front legs, but when he had to move, Donna or Jim had to support his weight. At first, they even had to turn him every 2 to 4 hours to prevent pressure sores. Codi's spirit and true love of life continued to shine through, and after a few weeks there were tears of joy when we saw a flicker of movement in Codi's leg and tail.

The First Annual Laps for Labs held the fall of 2003 raised funds for Codi's medical bills. Codi proudly knew that all this fuss was for him. Always the gracious ambassador, Codi worked the crowd from his wheelchair.



Codi the Hero, who inspired anyone he met

In the fall of 2003, Codi went to TOPS Rehabilitation Center in Grayslake, Illinois. After two weeks of extensive Physical Therapy, Codi was able to "put it all together" and started to walk again. (OK, he staggered like a drunken sailor, but he did it!!!) Codi was more than happy to leave his wheelchair behind, and he NEVER LOOKED BACK.

Codi was able to "walk" and even "run" when the situation called for it. Over the past four years, I have so many "favorite Codi Stories." Like the time we "chased" the mailman down the street. Or the time he chased a bunny in the meadow—of course he couldn't catch it, but he tried. That's the spirit Codi showed in everything he did, and that made him my hero.

Codi, also famous for his appetite, loved to eat, and many of his adventures were food-oriented. He frequented the apple tree, for instance. And the first time he had a tomato, you should have seen the grin on his face after he bit down. The next day he learned where those wonderful things came from, and would walk over and eat them right off the vine. He also had a remarkable sense of time and always knew when it was 2 o'clock: bone time. Once he went to the cornfield across the road; as his punishment for crossing the road, Jim made him walk home. Well, a few minutes later I came along and saw Codi walking down the driveway. I stopped, and he looked up at me and, as Jim called it, "played the cripple card." I lifted him into my van and gave him a ride the rest of the way to the house. When we got there, Codi and Jim were both laughing. That time the joke was on me.

Codi was certainly a LEARN favorite and had quite a fan club. He inspired all who met him. Last fall, Codi had a few weak, listless days, and we thought we were going to lose him, but he still wanted to "patrol the perimeter" (go on his daily walk around the inside of the fence, and beyond). Again, for those few days, Donna and Jim had to

support his weight while he “steered” with his front legs. He recovered, was able to get around by himself again, and went on to truly enjoy every day of his life.

A tribute to Codi is also a tribute to Donna and Jim for their endless commitment these past 4 years, the extent of which others will never know. They are quick to say that they got back as much as they gave, and even more. Codi taught us love of life, the importance of maximizing what abilities we have, and that sometimes, you just have to laugh. These lessons are especially important to me, as I have a spinal disorder making it difficult for me to get around. Two years ago I was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 46. Every day Codi was there to remind me of what’s really important in life. I credit the dogs in the household in aiding my recovery and keeping me focused, and for that I am forever grateful.

Remembering Hershey by Laura Farwell

Hershey came to LEARN in June 2002, with too much weight, lick granulomas (self-inflicted wounds on both hind legs—chewing them raw relieved arthritic pain that radiated down his spine), fused vertebrae and little ability to walk. Pre-shelter, he had likely lived in squalid conditions judging by nasty bacteria species that infected his skin. He had to be carried outside to relieve himself and only Rimidyl, a controversial but potent pain-killer, made him mobile. After 5 months, his foster home was due for their first child, so he moved in with us. We continued his care, and with glucosamine and a raw diet, weaned him from Rimidyl. He became active. A little ability to move helped Hershey to earn the comment “must have a sense of humor to appreciate this dog” on LEARN’s list of dogs available for adoption. But his open sores, eight years and health needs didn’t make Hershey an easily adoptable poster boy.

His regime included acupuncture treatments from Dr. Martha Greco. Thus began a love affair that would result in Martha adopting Hershey 5 months later.

Having Hershey as a foster with our dog, Wally, resurrected the odd couple: Hershey as Oscar, Wally as Felix. Opposites bonded as brothers: the happy slob, the fastidious order-keeper.

They treed a raccoon together on a 15-foot cliff on Madison’s Lake Mendota. Wally returned after a job well done, but Hershey hadn’t finished. The raccoon’s tree limb broke, it fell (jumped?) into the lake, and Hershey went after it. The two spat in November white caps while I helplessly waited on shore, tempted to go in while wondering how to explain to LEARN that my

Codi with his Family

(Donna and Jim, top; Norton and Trixie, behind pumpkins; Codi, in front of pumpkins)



foster dog drowned. Finally Hershey came back to a little triangle of beach where I quickly snagged him.

Hershey needed more raccoon. A week later, Wally found a raccoon carcass in the woods. I finally separated him from it when Hershey stole it, ran off, and consumed the whole thing.

My husband piloted us to Vermont for Thanksgiving with relatives on their llama farm. We took the neighbor’s Duffy, Wally and Hershey for a walk in the woods at dusk that Friday. Soon we noticed the dogs had gone off. We called. Wally came, then Duffy. After more calling, Hershey bounded back. In the dim light we’d failed to notice that the boys had met a porcupine. Hershey outdid himself. All needed urgent vet care, but Hershey had quills down his throat; we knew he’d eagerly do it again, even better next time. We drove an old mini-van-turned-llama-transporter through a dark blizzard for an hour on windy, narrow roads to meet the vet. Hershey became his most extreme porcupine case. But Hershey didn’t get enough. At his next acupuncture appointment, he ate a needle.



Hershey flies to Vermont, and later visits vet

During the winter it became a challenge to walk the dogs together on-leash without one urinating on the other's head—one sniffing the spot, the other marking it. If Wally could procure and eat a banana, Hershey'd slurp the peel. If food bowls collided during dinner, the two would erupt barking ferociously at each other until they remembered food remained to be inhaled.

When Dr. Martha Greco adopted Hershey, he became the only dog allowed in the east-side cat clinic where she worked one day a week. On other days, he rode along on house calls. On breaks, he'd get walks. And lots of free acupuncture! He never figured out how Martha's cats could walk behind the couch and disappear. Through all his antics, Hershey suffered



Hershey readies to pounce on ray of sunlight

back problems, continued to be plagued by his lick granulomas, and had developed quite a limp after slipping and then slipping again. One vet believed his digestive system had suffered permanent damage pre-

LEARN. Nonetheless, he continued to smile and play the clown. Every day welcomed a new Hershey story. The highlight of Hershey's life came after Martha had finished examining a cat at a client's farm. She inadvertently let go of Hershey's leash while talking with her client. Not only did Hershey get into the hen house but he caught one all by himself. As a delicate, injured but tenacious senior, he could beat a large, young Lab in tug-of-war with a stick; Martha and her client were thus not favored to recover the hen. Finally, Martha got the chicken free, raced it into the kitchen table, and administered acupuncture. The hen could not be revived. It had been the client's favorite, ironically named Martha.

Easter, 2006, Hershey almost passed on. Miraculously he rose and lived happily until last November thanks to Martha's great efforts and sacrifices. On his last day, Martha took him to Devil's Lake, one of his favorite places, for lunch. Later that day, the 12 year-old, received assistance passing and during his last moment, managed to get his nose completely in the vet's jar peanut butter.

When Martha shared the news of Hershey with me, it was nice to hear yet again what a special human Hershey had found; the last ¾'s our phone conversation was spent telling Hershey stories amidst fits of incontrollable laughter. Hershey would have wanted it that way. Despite his pains and ailments, he was all about humor for perspective and happiness.

Critical Reminder to Adopters! Please update your address and phone number with LEARN. If your dog is lost, our network of volunteers across IL and WI and other organizations we work with can help reunite you and your dog. A LEARN tag stays with all alums for life and that tag number and/or microchip, combined with current adopter info, has enabled a number of Labs to be reunited safely with their families.

Our Labs Need Your Help!

Many dogs desperately need our help, including expensive medical care that drains our finances. Donations (tax-deductible) are greatly appreciated. LEARN and their Labs thank you!

I want to support the efforts of LEARN as they rescue homeless Labs and Lab mixes and place them in permanent adoptive homes.

Name: _____ Address _____

For donations of \$50+, you may receive our printed newsletter. If you'd like to stretch your donation further by receiving our Newsletter by email, please include your email address here: _____

Please find my check for: \$25.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 Other Amount \$ _____

Please mail to **LEARN, PO Box 164, Island Lake, IL 60042** or donate at www.Labadoption.org via **PayPal**.

LEARN Tips... compiled from questions adopters have asked and the experience of LEARN volunteers.

- 1. Fear of Thunder?** Try using an “anxiety wrap,” which can vary from a snug T-shirt to a specially designed “anxiety wrap” that uses a concept called *maintained pressure*, to help calm a dog and redirect his or her focus. It’s enabled many dogs to sleep through the bangs of a storm. For more info: <http://www.anxietywrap.com/anxietywrap.htm> and <http://www.anxietywrap.com/inthenews.htm>
- 2 Keep your buddy safe.** Don’t give your dog rawhide bones or anything that can break into small hard pieces when he/she is unsupervised. Choking is a huge risk, even for dogs who aren’t passionate chewers. Always supervise your dog when he/she chews a rawhide or other bone.
- 3. Your new puppy doesn’t like being crated?** And thus do you both not sleep through the night? Try putting some larger, soft stuffed animals in with him or her and a ticking wind-up (alarm) clock wrapped in a towel to simulate a heart beat of another dog. Don’t use a watch—it could be eaten!
- 4. Need to Remove a Tick?** Use rubber gloves (if available) and small pointed tweezers to grasp the tick by its mouth parts (not the body!); then, gently tug until the tick lets go. Do not dab the tick with alcohol, vasoline, a match, etc., to facilitate the tick’s release unless you check first with your vet; this can likely cause the tick to regurgitate saliva (possibly infectious) into the wound. If part of the head remains, it will come out in time (like a splinter); risk of infection from the head is considered negligible. Post-removal, use antiseptic on the bite AND the tweezers. Save the tick in a jar with alcohol for your vet; otherwise, flush it down the toilet. Don’t squash the tick as this can spread any carried disease. Should the wound get worse, consult your vet. Note: while synthetic products like Frontline will keep your dog virtually tick-free, some volunteers—concerned about the chemicals in such products—have found a healthy, successful alternative in Sprout’s Spray for Fleas and Ticks that uses Neem oil and essential oils; it can be combined with Neem Tree Bark powder (www.dancingbeeacres.com or 541-922-3174). Careful—if you have a cat, avoid Neem products.
- 5. Seeking a Trainer or Obedience School?** ALWAYS check out trainers, doggie day cares, and boarding facilities yourself BEFORE placing your dog in their care. Remember: ANYONE can call themselves a trainer. Read a disturbing case that occurred in the Chicago area at www.chicagoreader.com/features/stories/dogtraining. LEARN lists positive reinforcement trainers/schools at www.labadoption.org: click on “Dog Behavior Topics.”

WANT TO HELP SAVE MORE LABS?

LEARN needs foster homes. The more foster homes we have, the more Labs we can save.

Many people say they can’t foster because they wouldn’t be able to part with their foster dog. The adoption *is* bittersweet. Just keep in mind that when your foster dog is adopted, you’ve just helped save that Lab and started him/her on their way to a much better life —and by his/her adoption, you have now room to save another Lab’s life. Still not sure? You wouldn’t hesitate if you knew how many Labs are in need and cannot be saved because LEARN doesn’t have any foster homes available. Even fostering just once would help.

Interested? Please visit 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.

Thanks for considering it. ☺

Would you like to “retrieve” *The Retriever* via email ? If so, please email newsletter@Labadoption.org with "Mailing List" in the Subject line. To subscribe to our printed edition, please mail your name and address with a \$5 check to: LEARN, P.O Box 292, Cross Plains, WI 53528. Subscriptions are for a calendar year and are non-refundable. We regret that we cannot pro-rate subscriptions. For back issues, please visit www.Labadoption.org.

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. (*in memorial to Norbert Hauber)

Jeff, Vivian & Scott Aikin
Kenneth Anderson*
Brendan, Mary Catherine &
Joanna Barrett
Mary Beck
Paul & Mary Benson
Gerry Biestek
George Bratschi
James Corey
Randy Coutre
Chet & Susan Cusick
Barbara and Michael Doyle
Jonathan & Barbara Eichorst
Michele Erickson
The Farwell Family
Heath & Heidi Fossier
Jennifer Gaab / Brian Axell
Marie Galoney
Carol & William Gillen
Howard Gleason
Jeff Goldman
Mary Goltz
Martha Greco

Karen Grikstas
Julie Grosso
Brian & Stephanie Haack
Daniel & Beth Harvey
Chuck Hauber*
Jean Hauber*
Mitzi Heytow
Lee & Marge Hintz
Ann Howell
Georgene Hrdlicka
Susan Hutchings
Jillian Iampland
Patricia Jackson
Maureen Kasper
Lisa Keen
Arnold & Jan Kemper
Patricia Kingston
Norb & Sandy Klincik
Lori & Harry Lakric
Jon & Ann Listek
Kim Louagie
Madison Veterinary Clinic Ltd
Norman Mareci*

Doug and Nancy Maurer
Kelly McCann
Doug and Ginny Mills
Andrea Moen
Jennifer Moore
Samantha Moore
Kenneth Myszka
Meetra Nahavandi
Dana Osinga
Marsha Rather
Roberta Ricci
Kristin Richter-Toppe
Beth Ann Seen
Eileen Sherburne
Kari Smith
Kim Sperandeo-Wehner
Steve & Diane Streck
Patricia Tabor
Marian Teson
Daniele Thoms
Kristin Tope
Lisa Torrey
Gerald Wallen

Congrats to Labbies who found their new families!

February 2007

Gus - *Diana Kruse & Family*
Jada - *Jill & Matt Stalter*
Savannah - *Misty & Brian Lindstrand*
Flash - *Bradley & Stacey Arnett*
Sadie - *Eric & Michelle Linner*
Otis - *Michael & Jennifer Mansell*

March 2007

Mocha - *Michael & Jody Vega*
Tyler - *Jeff & Betsy Milbrath*
Luke - *Anne & John Mandl*
Coco - *Deborah Brach Brooks*
Katie - *Anthony & Tammy DeLaurentes*

Auggie - *Wayne & Susan Johnson*
Buddy - *Dawn Hutchings*
Maggie - *Tom & Barb Stubitsch*
Scout - *Bob & Wendi Kaczowski*
Pete - *Jeff Goldmann*

April 2007

Daisy - *Chris & Kim Martin*
Xander / Jesse - *John & Nancy White*
Hunter - *Beth Bant*
Astro - *Lisa & Randall Torrey*
Sandy - *Bridget Botha*
Tanner - *William & Carol Frolow*
Millie - *Christopher & Jennifer Temme*

Simon - *William & Paula Cate*
Gunner - *Tammy & Eric Holstrom*
Gracie - *Holly Banse*
Bentley - *Mitzi Heytow*
Buddy - *Trent & Nicole Olson*
Farley - *Gary & Anne Slawny*
Luke - *LeAnn & Vincent Rauter*

May 2007

Gilli - *Diane Geyer*
Maverick - *Lance & Ann Scott*
Boone - *Chad & Jillian Russell*
Max - *Chad & Monique Faber*
Hank Joseph & Mary Day
Samantha - *Alan & Helen White*

LEARN Volunteers Inspire . . . *This column introduces LEARN's volunteers and tells what they do, often behind the scenes, to save Labs and why. Our Labs have their own stories, and so do our volunteers who help them. In this issue, we feature our understated Board of Directors.*



From left: Robin, Tammy, Kathy, Chris, Donna, Joanne, Lois, and Pat

LEARN's Board far exceeds their humble bios. Always there for the Labs, they oversee and roll up their sleeves to rescue Labs, foster Labs, transport them in the nick of time, screen and educate potential adopters, help make sure a dog and a family make a happy match, get the word out through tradeshows and other events, help heal ill or injured fosters, and if that's not enough already—keep donations and other revenues coming in through outreach, fundraising, and merchandise sales . . . and manage LEARN's finances. By the way, they also coordinate and support over 100 volunteers, including 15 foster homes, and use the website and email as the organization's communication hub. Just writing this makes you need to catch your breath! THANK YOU, BOARD!

Comments from our Board:

Chris: I've been a volunteer with LEARN for 3 years and a Board member for 1 ½ years. My husband, Don, and I are foster parents for LEARN which has been a very rewarding experience. In addition, I handle the intake calls for IL; handle fundraising and promotional events; do home visits; and help with transport. We have four dogs of our own, Rocky, a golden retriever, and three Labs, A.J., Henry and Charlie – one of each color. Charlie made us members of the Foster Home Failure Club--we just couldn't live without him so we adopted him into our family. We also have a cat, Felix.

Donna: I've been a volunteer with LEARN since 1999. I began fostering, then quickly became more involved as I saw the tremendous need for a group like ours. I have been on the Board for several years and am currently President. I'm married to Jim, and we have 2 wonderful Labby "children": Norton 12, and Trixie 10. We recently lost our beloved Codi whom we started fostering in 2003 and later adopted him I am very fortunate to have such a loving and understanding

family that allows me to spend as much time as I do for the Labs.

Joanne: I started in Rescue when I retired in 1997. I'm one of the founders and original Board members of LEARN. Rescue has become a very important part of my life, and I enjoy it. I have Flash, 11 years young (came into my life as a 8 week old puppy) and Lilly (8 years old whom I fostered and fell in love with). My life is busy with Rescue, church and community service. I went back to work as a school bus driver so I can come home every few hours to be with my girls Flash and Lilly. I am proud to be a part of this wonderful organization. I want to thank all the past and present board members and volunteers who have made LEARN the great organization that it is today.

Kathy: I started volunteering with LEARN in 2003 by doing Lab match and home visits. Shortly after joining LEARN, we began fostering due to the need for foster homes. Currently I serve (*cont., p. 10*)

(Board, continued) on the Board of Directors as Secretary and head of Lab match. I have a husband, Eric, and 3 Labs: Dragon 5 1/2, Midas 5, and Emma (our foster failure) 2. We also have 2 cats that we adopted from the humane society: Bojo and Cirrus. I love helping LEARN and saving the lives of Labs in need. There's no better feeling than seeing a Lab start a new life in a great home.

Lois: I have just retired after 21 years with State Farm Insurance in the homeowner claims department. My husband, Len, and I will celebrate our 44th wedding anniversary this October. I've been doing humane

work since 1980, starting at a cat shelter in Chicago named Tree House. I've been volunteering with LEARN since 2000 and a Board member since 2001.

Pat: I have been a volunteer with LEARN since 2001. I also started out fostering and things snowballed from there. I have been on the Board for several years and currently serve as Treasurer. I have two children who have been a huge help with foster dogs over the years. Erin is 17 and Matthew is 15. I could never have fostered so many dogs without their help! We also have Libby 6 and Cody 5, both adopted from LEARN.

LEARN & Lab Events! *Mark your calendar*

<p>Our 3rd Annual Pawgust Fest Saturday, August 11 10 am to 4 pm Libertyville, IL <u>See page 2 inside</u></p>	<p>Canine Classic Dog Fair Saturday, August 26 10 am to 4 pm at Lockwood Park Rockford, IL</p>	<p>Laps for Labs Saturday, October 6 in Rock Cut State Park, Rockford, IL Please see www.labadoption.org in August for details. Open to all dogs, not just labs. Please join us!</p>
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NEXT ISSUE: *Look for a feature on different types of collars and their risks; learn about the neck, spine, and esophagus damage that even small jerks or pulls can cause as well as ways to avoid these dangers.*
