



The Retriever

Official Newsletter of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network

Volume 2, Number 3, November 2001



Thanks to the Search and Rescue Dogs!

We'd like to pay tribute and give thanks to the many canine search and rescue teams who've worked around the clock trying to locate and save victims from the September 11th terrorist attacks. While their hard work under unimaginable conditions has greatly aided the rescue initiative, these dogs have suffered from trauma and depression not unlike their human counterparts who work with them.

The Fairfax County, Virginia, Urban Search and Rescue Team members, interviewed in the *New York Post*, 9/23/01, explained that the dogs become sad when they fail to locate living people in the rubble. The dogs' motivation for working long and hard hours is thinking they'll find someone who'll come play with them. One team member recalled that when the dogs didn't have the opportunity to perform rescues during the search for victims of the Oklahoma city bombing, they became so sad that their handlers hid in the rubble to be "rescued."

In addition to the search and rescue teams, other service dogs played important roles in saving people from the recent tragedy. In one case, a blind employee of the Port Authority, overwhelmed by the intensity of the horrific sounds, made it down from the 71st floor of the first tower with the help of his faithful yellow lab. (*NY Times*, 10/7/01) Whether during or after disasters or other catastrophic events, these over-achieving dogs never flag and their dedication to their work and their teams deserves honor and recognition.

If you are interested in learning more, visit www.nasar.org, the website for the National Association for Search and Rescue, a self-supporting, non-profit organization dedicated to search and rescue, disaster aid, emergency medicine and awareness education; the website includes contacts for all regions of the United States.

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.



Inside this issue... ♦ LABMED's story and how LABMED has come to the rescue of L.E.A.R.N. dogs in need of more expensive medical treatment; ♦ What the commitment to adopt means and questions to answer before you make your final decision; ♦ A Labrador who goes to Labrador; ♦ Some dog-related books you may enjoy reading; and more!



The Story of LABMED



Bullet (now Buddy) suffered a shattered front leg and holes in his nose, likely from a shotgun blast.

A farmer found him by the road and recognizing the dog as a Lab, called the local kennel club who referred him to a local Lab breeder. The Lab breeder drove to the farm and when she bent down to check on Bullet he wagged his tail despite the immense pain he must have been in.

She called a local shelter for help but because his medical needs exceeded the local Humane Society's \$30-\$35 per dog budget they were going to euthanize him.

Some quick thinking and acting on her part resulted in a successful attempt of e-mail fundraising among several mailing lists of lab lovers. Bullet's leg required amputation and his nose was treated.

He was renamed Buddy and now lives a happy, active life with his chocolate lab brother, a seeing-eye dog. He also travels to shows around the country as an ambassador for LABMED.

After reading the plight of Bullet two members of Labrador-L, a 1,000 plus member e-mail list, started discussing privately how great it would be if there were a fund to help Labs/Lab mixes found in emergency situations by good Samaritans who wanted to help but couldn't afford the cost of helping a dog. The goal was that Lab/Lab mixes in a rescue situation would not be denied medical treatment only because financial resources were insufficient. They decided to try and collect \$10 from each member of the list and quickly LABMED was born.

An Internet-based, non-profit organization, LABMED has a generous and noble mission: *"to provide emergency monies to offset expenses incurred in the medical treatment of abandoned and/or injured Labrador Retrievers in need of rescue."* In five years, LABMED has saved nearly 300 dogs and has spent over \$118,000 for their medical treatment. The Internet's communication capabilities enable LABMED to intercede worldwide on behalf of Labrador Retrievers in need. Thanks to LABMED, a significant number of L.E.A.R.N. dogs—and many other Labrador Retrievers—have received much needed medical treatment. These dogs have thus been able to regain health, become adopted, and live happily ever after in stable and loving homes. A few LABMED—L.E.A.R.N. successes are featured on the next page.

LABMED's directors, all actively involved with Labs, live throughout the United States. Some show, train and breed Labs and many are involved with their local rescue groups. One of the co-founders, Deb Hamele, is a L.E.A.R.N. volunteer in Wisconsin. Deb has been treasurer of LABMED since its inception and has just been elected President of LABMED for a two-year term.

How can you help LABMED with its mission? L.E.A.R.N. wants to encourage everyone to visit LABMED's website, which offers a great way to finish holiday shopping early while helping save Labs. There are lots of items that any dog lover on your list would love. You can do your Christmas shopping on the LABMED pages or send a donation (tax deductible) to Deb Hamele, 1813 Axel Ave., Madison, WI 53711. For more details visit their web page at www.labmed.org or contact Deb at djh1@chorus.net





LABMED Helps L.E.A.R.N. Dogs—A Few Success Stories



One morning, the staff at a small town veterinary clinic found a beautiful abandoned chocolate Lab tied up to their front door. The veterinary staff tried to find her a new home, but finally called L.E.A.R.N. for help. Nicknaming her **Morgan**, she was vaccinated and sent to a L.E.A.R.N. foster home. It was soon noticed that Morgan had a severe limp that turned out to be a badly injured right knee. This required expensive reconstructive surgery that L.E.A.R.N. simply could not afford. Morgan was so cheerful, gentle, and sweet, she had already endeared herself to her foster family. So L.E.A.R.N. applied to LABMED for help in funding the surgery. After a successful surgery and recovery period, Morgan was quickly adopted by a couple that lives in the Chicago suburbs.

Brooks, a 2-3 year old yellow male, illustrates how dog rescues work together. Brooks came to L.E.A.R.N.'s attention in Illinois through the Great Pyrenees rescue people! L.E.A.R.N. rescued this unclaimed stray from a shelter and lameness in his right rear leg due to a torn cruciate ligament. The vet felt that with surgery, Brooks would recover and have a normal, healthy life. LABMED was pleased to fund Brooks's surgery and help him along the path to his new life.



Scooter was the best boy in the world, but no one knew it. Before his first birthday, he'd been to the shelter 3 times. Being such a sweet dog, Scooter really grew on his foster mom who noticed that he limped an awful lot. X-rays showed that his right hip socket was not there. His foster mom applied to LABMED for help in funding an FHO and LABMED came through.

Bandit and his best hunting buddy had lived together for 9 year when his buddy became very ill and could no longer care for him properly. So Bandit ended up in the shelter, which caused him considerable stress. While two volunteers from L.E.A.R.N. were picking up another Lab, they spotted Bandit, and brought him along too! At the vet, Bandit turned out to be heartworm positive and also had entropion in one eye (a condition where the eyelid rolls inward so eyelashes rub against the eye). This condition can be corrected surgically, but the surgery had to wait until he completed heartworm treatment. LABMED funded both the heartworm treatment and entropion surgery for Bandit.





Patience Pays Off—The Adoption Commitment

By Penny Romasko

Finally, the time has come! You've waited, planned, waited longer. At last it's time to pick up the newest addition to your family. So what happens if the sweet, droopy-eyed pet you've wanted with all your heart suddenly turns into ... *Cujo*? While *Cujo* evokes images more far fetched than any of us will ever have to experience, bad behavior—from slight to severe—can call your carefully planned decision to adopt into question.

The decision to adopt requires much thought. Most often adopters consider practical issues:

- What will the dog eat? Where will this dog sleep?
- Who will watch my pet when I'm traveling?
- How much time will owning a dog take?
- How much will all this cost?

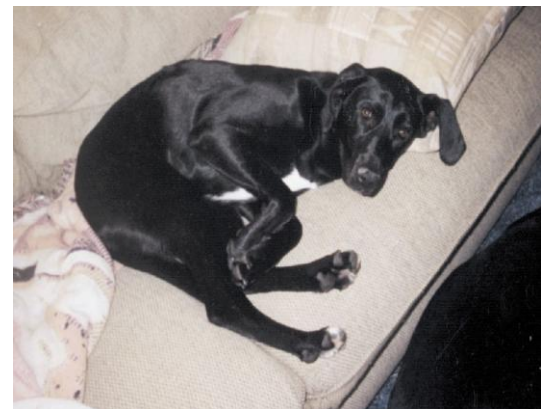
These important questions require answers. Yet with 20/20 hindsight or previous dog experience, new adopters will really want to consider:

- What should I expect as the dog adjusts to his/her new home? How long will the adjustment period take?
- What is the worst that can happen during the adjustment period? After the adjustment period?
- How much energy will this dog require?
- If necessary, am I prepared to walk this dog in cold weather?

Once adjustment issues and other potential challenges have been considered, the decision to adopt becomes a commitment to your dog. If you take the commitment lightly, everyone loses—the dog, you, and all other family members. The unwanted dog that has already had a hard time finding a home suffers more each time he or she is shuffled into a new home. The family who was full of anticipation feels discouraged; the children feel crushed.

For those adopters who commit to the dog as a new family member, the benefits of success far outweigh the challenges along the way. Those who persevere and determine to work through any negative behavioral issues, gain a life-long companion who provides unconditional love and loyalty. Your adopted Friend knows and appreciates what you have done for him/her and consistently shows it.

Consider Cassie, an 8-month-old female, adopted by Martha, Chuck and their family in March of 2001. A sweet, energetic pup, Cassie came with one problem: rough play. Both in foster care and in her forever home, Cassie continuously dominated her playmates by biting at their face, neck and ears. Her energy reached levels much higher than many pups. Martha remembers: "When we first saw Cassie, we thought she was so cute and energetic. I was wondering how she would fit in with Dusty." Two weeks after adopting Cassie Martha recalls, "we were worried we made the wrong decision and wondered if she would be better off in a different home—a one dog home. I thought the adjustment would be faster." Martha and Chuck had many struggles with Cassie but remained committed to her success. They took her to training and consistently worked with her. Almost a year later, Martha has much to say about her trials with Cassie. "I'm really glad we hung in there. It was worth all the anguish and tears."



Challenging behavior is just that: Challenging! Foster care exists not only to provide temporary housing for those labs in need but also to inform potential adopters of positive and negative (if any) behaviors observed in the home. Many foster homes will work with challenging behavior, but obedience training is strongly recommended as soon as possible after a new dog enters your home. Identifying your new dog's challenging behaviors and taking corrective action is the key to long-term success. Patience and perseverance will pay off, and the dog who once absorbed most of your energy will become the loyal companion you adopted.





A Labrador in Labrador



Adopted through L.E.A.R.N. a year ago, Wally has had several people ask to ride along in his travel bag. He frequents the south shore of Lake Superior, visits family out east, and last June sniffed his way through Newfoundland and Labrador. The trip to Labrador allowed Wally to explore his roots and understand his heritage, especially important since he was adopted.

Wally bases his “flying doghouse” at the Madison, WI, airport and his owners pilot him about. His bed occupies the floor of the cabin and allows first class leg, tail, and headroom. For safety, he wears a Four Paws dog seatbelt that’s rigged to two leashes; the leashes are secured by the people seatbelts. This gives him enough room to shift

around, yet protects him in turbulence. Should he decide he might want to squeeze up into the cockpit and help fly the plane, it also protects the pilots. Wally is more than a 14-gallon dog, his weight in fuel at 6lbs./gallon. In transit, Wally sleeps, snores, and enjoys the in-flight ear scratching service. He wakes up when the landing gear comes down and looks out the window to evaluate the surroundings. When he’s inside with his family, He won’t allow customs officials or airport employees too close to the plane. On his first flight he really looked surprised when the “car” became airborne; now he knows it means “adventure!”



The circuitous trip to Labrador and Newfoundland took four half days of flying, with layovers at Lake Superior, the Erie Canal, and the Gaspé Peninsula before reaching Lanse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. From Boston, this would have taken four long days of driving north! In Lanse aux Meadows, Wally protected his family from a huge male moose (twice!) and made such a good impression at the B&B that they invited him back for next year. He rode the ferry from Newfoundland to Labrador and spent much of time running in the waves, exploring the beach, and prancing through meadows. Interestingly, all the dog focus is on Newfoundlands, and the heritage of Labradors who retrieve fishing buoys from the icy waters seems lost.



Wally’s never looked happier than when he was in Labrador and seemed to know he’d found his roots. Wally’s next flight? Likely northern Minnesota for fun in the snow.





Dog Book Reviews

Looking for a new book to read? Interested in learning more about dogs or enjoying some good entertainment? Well, here are some suggestions that will likely entertain as well as educate.

***A Dog's Life*, by Peter Mayle.** This light read really gets you laughing out loud. Boy, a large and shaggy dog rescued by an English couple living in the French countryside, shares his views on human behavior and the finer points of life—from wine-tasting parties to the temptation of white bedspreads. He ponders the human obsession with personal hygiene. He delights in a gift from a recent houseguest: a huge box of used tennis balls from Wimbledon and he can distinguish the different scents thig sweat from the balls being in players' pockets. Beware that there are several scenes of animal cruelty such as when the neighbors chase Boy and swat him with a dead chicken.

***How to Speak Dog*, by Stanley Coren.** It's hard to imagine this book not being informative to everyone—from a new dog owner to “the experts.” Coren deciphers what dogs are telling us based on years of animal research and his own experience. He interprets everything from the movement of tails and ears to body position and illustrates the difference between when a dog shows affection and when a dog displays aggression. Coren also demystifies how a dog's nose works and the role of scents in communication. In addition to presenting communication with dogs as spoken and physical process filled with good sniffs and cluing us into the signals our canine friends are trying to tell us, Coren also provides good entertainment. We learn, for instance, how Elizabeth Mann Borgese (Nobel laureate Thomas Mann's daughter) painstakingly taught her dog Arli to type poetry. The poems were praised by a critic who expected the poet to rise to the ranks of the American greats of the day. The book includes a visual glossary and Doggish phrasebook and this alone makes the paperback well worth its price.



Shucks! No Calendar This Year...

L.E.A.R.N. is disappointed to say that the rescue dog calendar contest has been indefinitely postponed. We were a few months worth of labs short on the entries and hope to try again next year! Thanks for your understanding. All the submitted entries received will be returned.



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!

Brian McLaughlin, Corporate Disk Company- Wood Dale, IL
Alta View Veterinary Clinic- Milwaukee, WI
Nicki Blaumbatt- Madison, WI
George and Bill Bratschi- Chicago, IL
Tricia and Peter Broderick- Chicago, IL
Stephen and Amy Corbisier- Muskego, WI
Sue Cusick & Family- Eagle, WI
Jim and Sandy Deurmier- Belvidere, IL
Elmbrook Humane Society- Brookfield, WI
For Pet's Sake Dog Training- Milwaukee, WI
Howard Friedman- Palatine, IL
Kelly Galash- Madison, WI
Gina Gore- Gurnee, IL
Greentree Animal Hospital- Libertyville, IL
Anne and Richard Irsay- Arlington Heights, IL
Sara Karon- Madison, WI

Helen Koblitz- McHenry, IL
Valentina Lane- Carpentersville, IL
Leslee Larson- Belleville, WI
Wendy McCance- Bloomington, MN
Carol Meland- Milton, WI
Kimberly Molley- Chicago, IL
Mounds Pet Food Warehouse- Middleton, WI
PineTree pet store- Libertyville, IL
Prince of Peace Middle School- Milwaukee, WI
Kathy Rajter- Oak Park, IL
Linda Rosen- Mequon, WI
Adam and Megan Senatori- Madison, WI
St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church- McHenry, IL
Mr. and Mrs. Steinbauer- Raleigh, NC
Tina Steinhagen- Richfield, WI
WTMJ Radio- Milwaukee, WI



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 P.O. Box 164
 Island Lake, IL 60042
 847-289-PETS
 www.labadoption.org

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

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

Labrador Education and Rescue Network, Inc.

PO Box 164

Island Lake, IL 60042

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

*****All prices include shipping and handling charges.*****

Price +S/H	Item	Size	Quantity	Total
\$22.00	White L.E.A.R.N. Sweatshirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$22.00	Gray L.E.A.R.N. Sweatshirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$12.00	L.E.A.R.N. Hat	N/A		
\$13.00	Let A Lab Be Your Buddy T-Shirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$13.00	It's A Lab Thing T-Shirt (M, L, XL, 2XL)			
\$5.00	Lab Head Pin	N/A		
			Enclosed	

(Please Print)

Name

Address

City

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e-mail

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

updated 09-23-01

We Need Your Help!

The holidays are busy stressful times for L.E.A.R.N. Many pets are abandoned or given away as the holidays approach. We continue to find more and more dogs in need of rescue, many in desperate need of expensive medical attention. This is placing a huge drain on our finances. Please consider sending us a modest donation of \$10, \$25, or \$50. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your help!

Yes! I want to support the efforts of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network (L.E.A.R.N.) as they rescue stray, abandoned and unwanted Labrador Retrievers and place them in permanent adoptive homes.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Enclosed please find my check for:

- \$10.00
- \$25.00
- \$50.00
- Other Amount: _____



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