



The Retriever

Official Newsletter of the Labrador Education and Rescue Network

Volume 3, Number 4, November 2002



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.

Hannah's Story

In the summer of 2000, Hannah's owners vacated their apartment and left her behind, all alone. Hannah, not quite a year old, came to L.E.A.R.N., thrived for 6 weeks at her foster home, enjoyed her canine foster siblings, and was a classic lab sweetie. She then was adopted by what seemed to be a perfect home.

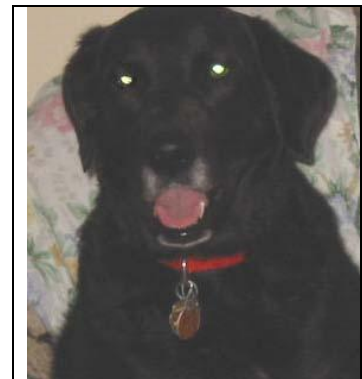
This September Hannah's home contacted L.E.A.R.N. to say that she had become dangerously fear aggressive, some people were afraid to enter their home, and L.E.A.R.N. needed to take her back and put her to sleep. ***What had caused this alleged Jeckyl to Hyde transformation?***

Suspecting that L.E.A.R.N. had not heard Hannah's real story, we decided to give her a chance. The first step was to take Hannah to the vet to see if there was some health explanation for the described behaviors. The visit to the vet was a disaster because Hannah was uncontrollably terrified. Shocked after the vet experience and suspecting that there may be more than health issues at stake, L.E.A.R.N. enlisted the help of Robin Williams of **Animal Instincts**. Robin, a professional Animal Communicator, generously helps L.E.A.R.N.'s special cases. (See "*L.E.A.R.N. Labs Speak.*")

Robin immediately learned that Hannah had experienced severe trauma at the adoptive home. Hannah was in a fragile state, did not want to suffer anymore—more suffering would be unbearable for her. However, in the right environment, Hannah could get rid of her baggage and be happy in a home that made her feel safe, protected, and loved. Hannah now knew there were people trying to help her.

L.E.A.R.N. volunteers visited Hannah at the boarding facility and brought creature comforts (bed, blanket), and ensured that all signs and smells of her past home were removed by replacing her collar, leash, toys, etc. Robin communicated with Hannah several more times over the next days and reported that Hannah was feeling more relaxed and positive. Robin also reported that Hannah told her she would be fine with other dogs in a new foster home and just needed a space, like a crate, where she could feel safe.

Hannah is now in a new foster home and doing great, as Robin predicted. The foster home has worked wonders with Hannah by providing the love, security, and structure that Hannah needs. Interestingly, with very little information from L.E.A.R.N., Robin described Hannah's severe trauma in the same terms as L.E.A.R.N.'s unspoken theory of what might have happened to her in her home. Robin was in touch with Hannah a number of times and always accurate in depicting her current emotional state and improvements. While skeptics will always find alternative explanations and plead coincidence, Robin's ability to give Hannah a voice, along with the extraordinary dedication of L.E.A.R.N. volunteers and Hannah's new foster family, helped save her life.



Hannah happy at her new foster home



Inside this issue... ♦ L.E.A.R.N. Labs speak! ♦ Interview with an Animal Communicator ♦ What you need to know about Giardia ♦ Lab Holiday Cards now available ♦ "What Kind of Day Is This" ♦ Micro-chips for Labs ♦ Upcoming Events, including LABMED auction! And more!



L.E.A.R.N. Foster Labs Speak!

Have you ever wished that you could converse with your dog and L.E.A.R.N. what's on each others' minds? Well, telepathy can make your wish come true! Mounting evidence suggests that this is for real and even a few (but not all!) diehard skeptics are starting to wonder. In fact, inter-species communication is likely happening all around you; you may be conveying things unknowingly to your furry companions. It's a hot topic! Regional papers have recently run articles about interspecies communication, and Animal Planet Channel's *Pet Psychic* has made a huge sensation in the ratings.

Most animal communicators say that they have had the natural gift since childhood. In some cases, social pressures have repressed these childhood abilities, which are later rekindled as an adult, while others have cultivated the talent since childhood. Many say that we are born with the potential ability to communicate with other species, but modern society, removing us from nature, distracting us with technology, and filling lives with stress, has caused us to lose touch with these natural abilities.

Telepathy, which means "distant feeling," is how it's done, and to understand more about it, L.E.A.R.N. invited Robin Williamson of Animal Instincts to find out what some foster labs had on their minds.

Robin conversed with Galaxy and Dozer; both said a lot.

Galaxy, a young dark chocolate lab, most wants to fulfill a purpose in life and be a working dog. He sees himself as a big and handsome boy and can imagine helping the elderly or children in some way. When asked about his interest in agility or flyball that he recently observed, Galaxy, an average sized lab but perceiving himself as 4'-5' tall, expressed concern that the equipment would not be big enough for him. Galaxy also had the impression that he would live forever at his foster home. Interestingly, his foster home was considering adopting him, and shortly thereafter, his permanent status became official!



King Dozer in his royal pose with Robin

Initially, Dozer felt uncertain about how much he should share. He first conveyed that he'd had a stupid sounding name—like Biff—and would do better with a more formal, dignified appellation. (He's now King Dozer!) Dozer didn't like Galaxy because Galaxy hadn't lived enough yet and said that the host dog looked like a walrus. Dozer claims he's smarter than anyone knows. He would like a peaceful home, preferably with a fenced-in yard to help him feel safe, and would love to be with respectful children. He could play with them after school and have quiet during the day. Dozer had a good life until he was 3 or 4 years old but then life became downhill battle, with challenging times in a cruel kennel, attacks by other dogs, and survival as a stray

Further Resources

Interested in learning more about animal communication? Here are a few places to begin:

- For diehard skeptics, try Rupert Sheldrake's *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home*. Sheldrake holds a PhD in Biochemistry and has taken a scientific approach to explaining things that traditional science fails to explain. He applies the scientific method to telepathy.
- For those receptive to possibilities, try Penelope Smith's *When Animals Speak* or *Animal Talk*. Her website, www.animaltalk.net, is a good place to start.
- Whether skeptic or believer, Kate Solisti-Mattelon's *Conversations With Dog*, is excellent food for thought on how a dog might philosophize on everything from the existence of God to rolling in disgusting things in the woods.



Interview with an Animal Communicator

We asked professional Animal Communicator Robin Williamson questions on the topic to help us understand it better. Here is what she had to say!

1. How and when did you first discover your gift to communicate with animals? Did you also realize that most people lack your gift and skills?

I feel that I have always been able to communicate with animals. It has come through in different ways at different times in my life. It may have come through in feelings, thoughts or just a quick picture. As people go through different things in their lives they are more aware at some points more than others. We all have the innate ability to communicate with animals. We all come here with this gift. We as humans have the tendency to hold on to our emotions. This baggage will sometimes get in the way of what we truly need to do and hear in our lives.

2. Are some animals (different species, different personalities) easier to communicate with than others?

It is more the personality of the animal than the species. If a being is hard to communicate with on a daily basis they will sometimes carry that part of themselves into a session. I have found this to be more true with horses than with other animals. I think that this may be because horses are more aware than we know or would choose to believe. If you are intimidated by an animal, then the animal is going to sense this and only show you what they want you to see. Animals communicate with us everyday, some days it is more subtle than others. It may come through in little things that they do or a look that comes across their face—little gestures that we so often miss in our busy lives.

If you own a cat: You lie down to rest because you have a headache. The cat may come up to you wrap its body around your head while you are resting. The cat is sensing the pain that you are in. They are trying to take your pain away and also comfort you. I have had this also happen with my own animals where they see that I am uncomfortable and just want to help

3. How would you describe the communication process with an animal? How do you initially connect?

The way that I connect may be different than how others connect. I will visualize the body type of the animal that I want to connect with. I will then ask that soul that I am looking for to come forward. Sometimes animals are shy or a little unsure. They may be busy with something and chose not to be disturbed. I simply ask if I can set up a time that is more convenient for them. I would describe the process as gentle. I am very careful to get the animals permission to not invade their boundaries. I feel it is of the highest importance not to break the trust of the animal. I feel that I am basically the interpreter between the animal being and the human parents.

4. If you are working with a photo of an animal and conveying the conversation over the phone, how do you know you've reached the right animal?

Invariably I will say something to the animal parent that will be a light bulb for them. I will say something or feel something that there is no way that I could have known. I will also normally get a picture of the animal and see them in full color. Sometimes they are animated, sometimes it is like looking at a portrait.

5. What does the training you do entail?

The training that I have done has come from many different sources. I have taken classes in working with universal energy. I have taken classes to help me grow spiritually. Beyond a shadow of a doubt the most important thing that I need to do for myself is meditate. To find the peace and calm that we all need. For myself, it doesn't matter where or how I find that calm, I just know that is what works for me. In today's busy world it is my biggest challenge.

6. Do you also communicate telepathically with people?

I have been communicating telepathically with people for a number of years. I then started to hear about openly communicating with animals. I had already "talked with the animals" on different levels for a number of years. I realized that it was time for me to buckle down and do it openly. I continue to do sessions for people, however it is more frequently for the person and their animal.

7. What are some examples of animals (and their people) you've helped through communication?

One particular client stands out. She had a knee injury. This had kept her down for a couple of weeks. The thing that she wanted to do the most was to go work with the horse that she had just purchased. With the injury that was impossible. When she made her initial call to me she was concerned about the horse. When I arrived at her home I

had three other animals waiting for me. They of course had things that they wanted to say. By the time that I was done I had talked with five animals. I received a lot of information that was passed on to the parent. She emailed me a week later said that she and the horse had a closeness that was like never before. She purchased a couple of books that I had recommended. All she really needed was for someone outside of her inner circle to tell her it was okay for her to take time for herself.

8. What do you enjoy most about communicating with animals?

I enjoy finding out their personality. To see if they are really who they show everyone that they are. The thing that I find the most delightful is in seeing the sense of humor that most animals have. They think that most humans need to relax a little more.

9. What's the most unusual experience you've had while communicating with an animal?

The most touching thing that has ever happened is when a horse that I was working with shed a tear. The most unusual was when I was working with a parent. The dog came parading through all dressed up. With a very strong English accent said "they dress me up but I have no place to go". The saddest was when a parent was being very hard on themselves about an animal that had passed over. The animal came through saying that they were watching the parent being hard on themselves. The animal just wanted the parent to know that they did everything that they could.

*The goal of **Animal Instincts** is to help companion animals tap into their innate ability to heal themselves. In addition to animal communication, Robin's business offers other helpful services for animals, including massage therapy, Reiki, Bach Flower Essence, and Hot Stone Therapy. With her communication skills, she has helped people locate lost pets, particularly cats. Robin's training in each of these areas is extensive and she continues to strengthen her abilities. She has studied with nationally and internationally regarded animal communicators, and after becoming Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, learned K-9 massage at Integrated Touch Therapy, Inc., in Ohio. You can reach Robin at 1.608.921.PETS (7387) or rwanimalinstincts@yahoo.com.*



What Kind of Day Is This?

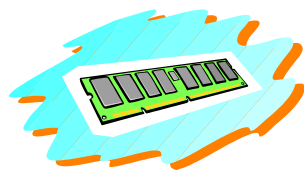
A Rescue Tribute

What kind of day is this? It's a day filled with love.
The warm cloudless kind, With the sun bright above.
What do we need, As we go to the store, We need food, toys, leashes And a whole lot more.
He had a bad home, Where he was ignored. He did some small damage, Because he was bored.
He dug the rose bushes, Danced and was glad. Not thinking it's wrong, Not knowing it's bad.
They did not love him, The way that they could. They did not want him, The way that they should.
We have looked all over, To find the right one. Thank goodness for rescue, Our searching is done.
He's beautiful, he's gorgeous, It was love at first sight. We'll love him forever, He'll make our world right.
It's a grand day for us, We've waited so long. He'll finally come home, He will finally belong.
What kind of day is this, With the sun bright above?
It's a day filled with joy, We brought home our new love.

By Janie Wormsbecker



Micro-Chips for L.E.A.R.N. Labs



L.E.A.R.N. now micro-chips each new foster dog and we can help you to protect your dog with a micro-chip! Most shelters and laboratories (a destination of money-hungry dog thieves) will scan dogs upon arrival and if the dog has a micro-chip, the owner's address, telephone number, and any other registered information will appear.

Micro-chips are injected into the dog in the "scruff of the neck" area.

If you would like L.E.A.R.N. to micro-chip your dog, feel free to contact us. The cost is \$25 per dog, and it's an excellent investment in your dog's safety and protection.



Tiny Giardia Can Make Fido Mighty Sick *by Norma Bennett Woolf*

Small organism can be big trouble... Fido has diarrhea, is listless, and has lost weight... The symptoms are typical of several diseases, but if Fido has had contact with dirty (or potentially contaminated) water or with dogs showing similar signs, Giardiasis should at least be suspected. Giardia are protozoans, tiny, one-celled parasitic life forms with the potential to cause serious illness. Some dogs are carriers who show no symptoms, but others get sick and need treatment.

Like many disease organisms, Giardia mature in stages. Unlike many others, no time elapses between infestation with the dormant phase and activation of the disease. The cysts (the inactive form) are found in contaminated water and feces. Once ingested by the dog, the cysts open and discharge the mobile form known as the trophozoite, a pear-shaped critter with whip-like flagella that propel it through the intestine. If the dog is healthy, the trophozoites may live in the lower digestive tract for years. If the dog has an immature or overburdened immune system, the trophozoites continue to multiply by dividing and can cause the debilitating disease.

The life cycle of Giardia is still somewhat of a mystery. Scientists do know that the trophozoites encyst at some point, and that the cysts are passed into the environment when the dog defecates, but the exact timing and mechanism are not yet known. It is also unclear whether the protozoans are a single species or several species, each with a specific host. Suffice to say, however, that Giardia is an equal opportunity disease that infects several species of animals, including humans. Thus the presence of cysts in the environment can trigger an outbreak in people as well as pets. Cysts can remain viable for several weeks or months in cold, wet environments, so areas littered with feces should be avoided and piles should be removed from backyards.

In the mid 1990s, a guide dog school in England was hit by a severe outbreak of diarrhea. Dr. Maggie Fisher, a veterinarian with an interest in parasitology, helped devise a treatment and disinfection strategy to prevent recurrence. Fisher described the diagnosis and treatment of the disease as follows.

Symptoms: Large populations of Giardia can interfere with the absorption of food and produce feces that are soft, light-colored, and greasy. Mucus from the large intestine may also indicate that the large intestine is irritated even though the colony of active protozoa remains in the small intestine. Blood tests appear normal with the possible exception of an increase in a type of white blood cells and mild anemia.

Diagnosis: Since diarrhea is a common symptom of intestinal infection, causes such as Salmonella and Campylobacter are generally ruled out before testing for Giardia is done. Direct microscopic inspection of feces is necessary to determine the presence of the protozoan. Examination of soft feces may reveal the active trophozoites, and cysts may be found in firm excrement. The number of cysts can vary from day to day, so best chances of detecting this form of Giardia lies in collecting samples over three days for a fecal flotation test or conducting individual tests every two or three days until at least three tests have been done. A quicker test does exist, but it is more expensive and requires an experienced technician to run.

Treatment: There are several options of treatment, some with two- or three-day protocols and others needing seven-to-10 days to complete the job. Flagyl (Metronidazole) is an old stand-by treatment for bacterial infestations that cause diarrhea and is about 60-70 percent effective in curing giardiasis. However, Flagyl has potentially serious side-effects in some animals, including vomiting, anorexia, liver toxicity, and some neurological signs, and it cannot be used in pregnant dogs. In a recent study, Panacur (Fenbendazole), which is approved for use in treating dogs with roundworm, hookworm, and whipworm, has been shown to be effective in treating canine giardiasis. Panacur is safe to use in puppies at least six weeks of age.

In large kennels, mass treatment of all dogs is preferable, and the kennel and exercise areas should be thoroughly disinfected. Kennel runs should be steam-cleaned and left to dry for several days before dogs are reintroduced. Lysol, ammonia, and bleach are effective decontamination agents.

Because Giardia crosses species and can infect people, sanitation is important when caring for dogs. Kennel workers and pet owners alike should be sure to wash hands after cleaning dog runs or removing feces from yards, and babies and toddlers should be kept away from dogs that have diarrhea. When traveling with Fido, owners should prevent him from drinking potentially infected water in streams, ponds, or swamps and, if possible, avoid public areas polluted with feces.

References: 1. Giardia in Dogs by Maggie Fisher, BVetMed, MRCVS; at [Vet On-Line](http://www.priory.com/vet.htm), (<http://www.priory.com/vet.htm>) a service of Priory Lodge Education Limited. 2. Treatment information is a blend of information from Dr. Fisher and from "Giardia," an article by Dr. Holly Frisby, Drs. Foster and Smith Veterinary Services Department, (<http://www.drsfostersmith.com>). Printed From: Dog Owner's Guide: Giardia (www.canismajor.com/dog/giardia.html) is a part of the Dog Owner's Guide internet website and is [copyright](#) 2002 by Canis Major Publications.



Fun Upcoming Events!

<u>When?</u>	<u>What?</u>	<u>Where?</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 1 - 9 • November 3, 10:00 - 4:00 • November 2-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LABMED's Seventh Annual <i>Bullet's Benefit Bash</i> Internet auction (see below!) • Wisconsin Dog Fair • Chicago Pet Expo at Navy Pier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.labmed.org/auction • Marriott West Convention Center, Madison, WI • Chicago, IL



LABMED's Online Auction is Here!

LABMED (www.labmed.org), a 501c3 non-profit which assists the medical needs of Labs/Lab mixes who are in a rescue situation, has helped fund surgeries for L.E.A.R.N. dogs as well as many others across the nation and thus enabled them to experience joyful lives.

LABMED's Seventh Annual *Bullet's Benefit Bash* Internet auction will be Friday, November 1, 2002 through Saturday, November 9, 2002.

7TH ANNUAL BULLETS BENEFIT BASH!
www.labmed.org

Questions? Please contact Deb Hamele (djh1@chorus.net or 608 273-0172) or visit <http://www.labmed.org>.



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!

Amy and Jonathan Overby	Linda Goad	Animart- Madison, WI
David and Kathy Rajter	Linda Rosen	Bark-n-Town Kennels- Ingleside, IL
Diane Newman	Lisa Beckers	Cudahy Veterinary Clinic- Cudahy, WI
Don and Judy Hayes	Lisa Genson	Fox Lake Animal Hospital- Fox Lake, IL
George and Bill Bratschi	Megan Senatori	Greentree Animal Hospital- Libertyville, IL
Glen Switalski	Mitzi Heytow	Mounds Pet Food Warehouse- Madison, WI
James Levinson	Patricia Walden	Spirit of 76 Veterinary Clinic- West Allis, WI
Jeanne Schuett	Rich and Carol Ulsay	Woodstock Veterinary Clinic-Woodstock, IL
Joan Rothberg	Robin Williamson	
Julie Janikowski	Roy Cali	
Kelly C. Knieling	Shaila Bolger	
Kent and Denise Blotter	Steve and Amy Corbisier	
Kimberly Molley	Sue Cusick	
Kristin Giangregio		



Order Your L.E.A.R.N. Holiday Cards Now!

This season, greet your friends and family with a custom designed Labrador holiday card!

The three varieties are shown below, and the cards are in beautiful color (not our black and white newsletter format!!).

CARD 1- YELLOW LAB



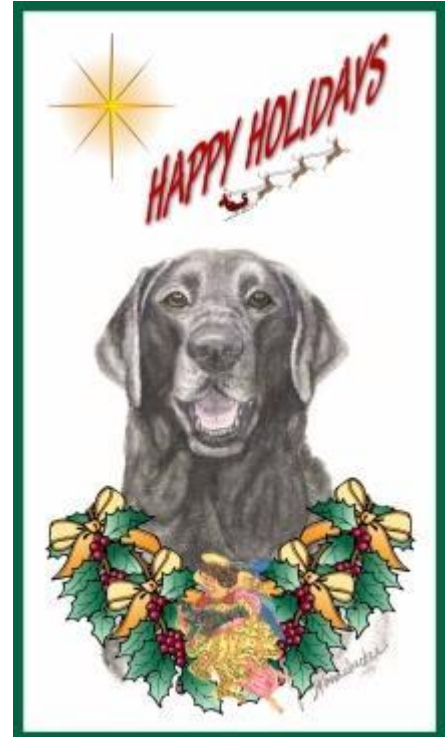
Wishing you a holiday season filled with warmth and happiness now and throughout the Year.

CARD 3 – THREE LABS



It's that time of the year to "PAWS" for a moment to wish you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season.

CARD 2 – BLACK LAB



May your holidays be merry and bright!

Cards come with envelopes in packages of 10 and the cost is \$12.00/box plus \$2.00 shipping/handling.

On the back of the cards, we will show who L.E.A.R.N. is along with our name, address, website, and e-mail address.

Order from our website or see the back of this page for the order form.

Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. All orders must be received by **November 27, 2002**.

Happy Holidays!



L.E.A.R.N. Holiday Cards Order Form — *See inside for details!*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Number of Boxes (10 cards/box) Card 1 (Yellow) _____ Card 2 (Black) _____ Card 3 (Three Labs) _____

Total Boxes Ordered = _____ x \$12.00/box = _____

For shipping, add an **additional** \$2.00 for the first 4 boxes, \$5.00 for 5-10 boxes, and \$7.00 for 11 or more boxes.

Total Cost with shipping = _____

Please enclose your check, payable to L.E.A.R.N., and mail to L.E.A.R.N., PO Box 164, Island Lake, IL 60042



L.E.A.R.N.
PO Box 164
Island Lake, IL 60042
(847) 289-PETS (7387)
Website: www.labadoption.org
E-mail: L.E.A.R.N.dogs@yahoo.com