



Talk to the Paw

Support Dogs, Inc. Volunteer Newsletter
Fall 2016



Sherrie Gordon

Sherrie has always had a love for dogs, so if you have been at the Support Dogs office at some point in the past 5 years, chances are you have heard of or interacted with her volunteering in any one of many facets of the organization. When Sherrie's boys were younger and she took them to school, she noticed a few teachers taking dogs into the classrooms. That prompted her to start reading articles about raising puppies to be service dogs. She found out about Support Dogs, signed up to be a volunteer and began to raise her first puppy Finale, a black lab that she calls Ali. Sherrie's family raised Ali for a few months and then the dog continued her training in the prison environment. Ali was released from the Service Dog program and Sherrie's family was allowed to adopt her, where Ali continues to be their much loved family pet.

Since raising her first puppy for SDI, Sherrie has continued to expand her volunteering roles within the organization. She does kennel enrichment, which involves playing with the in-house dogs before they go out to their clients. She and her family sit for SDI puppies and dogs in their home. Sherrie is also a whelping helper and has assisted with multiple births and has coordinated eye exams for puppies before they go out to their volunteer puppy raisers. In addition to working with all of our dogs, you may also see Sherrie working at the front desk answering phones or helping with office work. She even finds time to help with special events during the year including The Gala and Trivia Night. During our team training sessions, Sherrie helps by providing lunches to and visiting with our clients, assisting with outings during the training and making sure each service dog leaves SDI with a special toy that she purchases just for that dog to take home with the client.



Sherrie, her husband Dave and their three sons, Tim, Chris and John have all volunteered working with the dogs. In fact, John, as an Eagle Scout project, made an amazing whelping box that expands to include a potty area for the pups as they grow. It is inventively made so that it can break down when not in use and when in use can be expanded to meet the puppies and mamma's needs as they grow.

The entire Gordon family is passionate about Support Dogs. She loves the mission, watching the puppies grow into working service dogs and seeing the incredible bond that is created between our clients and their dogs in such a short period of time.

Sherrie loves being able to volunteer at SDI, she is grateful for having access to all of the staff and has learned so much from their extensive knowledge of our dogs. Support Dogs is lucky to have you, Sherrie as such a confident and strong volunteer who gives so much of your time and life to help make us all better volunteers and to make SDI such a successful organization. Thank you for all that you do!

SAVE THE DATE

February 18th – A Fetching Affair (formerly known as the Tacky Ball) Chase Park Plaza

TOUCH Dog Teams - Retired

Judye Dubelman/Beemer
Bea Hardester/Doppler

TOUCH Dogs – Rainbow Bridge

Chris Rogers/Beau

TOUCH Teams at Children's Hospital





We heard you on the Spring Survey:

- You want more and different volunteers featured in this newsletter so we are
 - Including a new SPOTLIGHT section to feature an additional volunteer (see article about Terri).
 - Asking for TOUCH team pictures to include in this newsletter (see Halloween picture).
- You were not clear about the “Conversations Meetings with ...”
 - We are working on this idea and have invited a speaker for the evening of Feb 22nd – we will have more information for you in the new year.
- Including information about other volunteer roles
 - We are rotating our feature article to include TOUCH teams, volunteer puppy raisers, event helpers, whelpers, those who help at the front desk and much more.

Please stayed tuned - more to come!

NEW

Some of you have asked for information about your pet’s health issues, recipes, training tips and various other topics. From time to time we will offer links to sites we think might be of interest. This is not an official endorsement – rather this is a friend-to-friend – ‘have a look.’ This quarter check out:

American Kennel Club
<http://www.akc.org/content/dog-care/>

Go to www.akc.org, scroll to the bottom of the page, choose ‘Family Dog’ and a newsletter will pop-up with information about cleaning your dog’s teeth; grooming feet, eyes and ears; quotes about losing a dog and much more.

Link to sign up for their newsletters:
http://www.akc.org/subscription/?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWWprME1ETTRPVE15TjZlZC1slnQiOjIjDcUVWbU5OaTF6Z3Q3Qi9yUmpmVIBWQUhYZXd4Z0hWa0JQVMT0T3JMYUVzRWlCdnRpemFKV0Z2emJvZm1TT1JEVEEdMK1JRdzNBMHIMVmdyeTJFc3Z3VnRqOkRvSGJvZWx6STByK0Rlc016Zz0ifQ%3D%3D



November 17 Teams finishing up PAWS requirements:

Cynthia Biehle/Zoe
Janice Brennan/Charlie
Dawn Crump/Buddy
Scott Crump/Buddy
Pam Piel/Winston

Volunteer Advisory Council Members

- Val Anania
- Jo Ann Bane (Vice Chair)
- Jan Boyle
- Sharon Dozier
- Jim Ellis
- Christine Figge (Chair)
- Barbara Harris
- Jim Hart
- Candace Metcalf
- Shelley Newman (Secretary)
- Cindy Perez
- Kay Schmidt
- Bob Snyder
- Sue Weick
- Patty Zubal

Contact the Volunteer Advisory Council at the following email if you are interested in joining the team. VAC@supportdogs.org

The goal of the Volunteer Advisory Council is to grow the volunteer team, improve the volunteer experience, and support the staff to be able to provide more services to more people in a professional and safe manner.

Volunteer Advisory Council Corner

Is there someone with whom you volunteer that you would like us to write about? Or, do you have a photo you would like to share? Send an email to us at VAC@supportdogs.org.

Dress for Success in Support Dogs volunteer gear through Lands End

<https://business.landsend.com/store/volunteersatsdi>



Support Dogs Breeding and Whelping Program Continues to Grow

Support Dogs whelping program continues at the new site with another new litter was born on September 1st of this year to Peaches. She was caring for 8 pups total – all adorable labs. The puppies are super cute and are now out with their volunteer puppy raisers. Peaches continues to be cared for by Susan Kelly.

Ellie delivered a liter of 9 black labs on October 10th and is cared for by Kathy Howard. Our Whelper Helpers have been getting a lot of puppy time and not too much sleep staffing the puppy room 24/7!



Peaches and her hungry puppies



A very serious Boch in his new cape



Goose – worn out by the heavy responsibilities ahead



Call for Volunteer Puppy Raisers

If you are interested in raising one of our adorable puppies OR know of someone who might be, please contact Stephanie in the Volunteer Office at 314-997-2325!

Ellie and her puppies



Blessing of the Animals at St. Nicholas Family Life Center (September 17th)



TOUCH teams from L to R: JoAnne Hauge/Carson, Cindi Blanke/Kia, Stacey and Tom Alexander/Thunder.



Cindi accepts a check and pet carrier on behalf of Support Dogs from Helen Carey and Jeanne Tompras



Lot of dogs, an iguana and a hedgehog



Touch Graduations

Touch Graduation (Adult) – October 18th



L to R in Front Row: Becky Prag/Dakota, Dawn Crump/Buddy, Lyn Castellano/Jaz, Mary Bornheimer/Henry
Back Row: Pat Thayer/Macie, Pam Piel/Winston, Barbara Harris/Miri, Donna Gaffin/Leo, Belle Barnard/Trudy
Not present: Cynthia Biehle/Zoe, Scott Crump/Buddy, Patty Howard/Shelby

Touch Graduation (Adult and Child) Nov 17th



L to R: Vicki Rolufs/Poppy, Gwen Lane/Finn, Shelley Newman/Louie, Margaret Weiss/Molly, Sharon Megee/Ruby, Barbara Harris/Dara*, Belle Barnard/Trudy*, and Jan Knoche/ Lincoln*
Not present: Lyn Castellano/Jaz*, Jennifer McGrath/Raspberry*
*denotes Child certification

SPOTLIGHT ON



Terri Thornton/Kylie
Volunteer Puppy Raiser
Raising Puppy #7 in
Colorado



Why I volunteer at SDI: I feel my life has been blessed and I was looking for a way to "give back". I stumbled across the idea of being a puppy raiser. My love for dogs and a desire to learn more about the proper way to train them made being a puppy raiser a great fit.

Challenges I face being an out-of-town VPR: I face a couple of challenges. One is the lack of interaction with other puppies in training. I compensate by signing up for a local obedience class. I got lucky as the trainer is okay that our commands are sometimes different than what she uses. The other challenge is just staying connected to SDI. I read the newsletters and check the website regularly, but miss the interaction I use to have with the people of SDI and attending events.

Most unusual experience with your dogs: I was challenged by an owner of a restaurant that I was NOT BLIND and thus the dog couldn't come into his restaurant. He stood directly in front of me, leaned in real close and said "you not blind".

Best dog toys and treats: I like to use animal crackers as treats since they are low fat and inexpensive. For toys, I love using Kongs, tennis balls and have a puzzle in which to hide treats so the pup needs to figure out how to get the treat. The SDI pups are chewers by nature so I use toys that are more durable and difficult to destroy while giving them some chewing satisfaction.

Funniest/cutest public outing I've had: Buckley and I were stranded at O'Hare airport due to snow. We were in the very crowded lower level where the smaller planes board and the hordes of people were pretty stressed by the delay. A young mom was struggling with her toddler and he was screaming at the top of his lungs. After about twenty minutes that seemed like hours, I asked the mom if her son liked dogs. She said she didn't really know as they hadn't really been around dogs. I encouraged Buckley to move in close and the little boy immediately began to giggle. The child ended up sleeping on the floor next to Buckley. Other patrons in the airport gave us a round of applause.

Emotions I feel when returning my dogs to SDI: WOW!!! Absolute joy and pride mixed with sorrow, topped off with anticipation of meeting the next pup. The day of transition is an emotional roller coaster. I'm sad to be letting go of a puppy that has been so very much a part of my everyday life. I cry every time and I thought it would get easier with each pup. It's never easy, but the reward of graduation makes it worth it.

Things I've learned since becoming a VPR: I've learned I have the ability to be patient. My work life can be quite hectic and working with the pups has shown me that discipline and patience pay off in a big way. I've also learned to take the time to relax, regroup and de-stress. A few puppy kisses can de-stress me in seconds!