

THE LAB'S TALE



Fall 2009
Volume 11, Issue 3

Midwest Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc.
"We give Labs a second chance"

Midwest Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc.
Celebrating 10 Years of Rescuing Labs
1999-2009

Our 9th Annual Reunion

Our 9th annual reunion to celebrate 10 years of rescuing Labs was held at a new indoor location this year. We had excellent weather and many Labs and adoptive families in attendance. This was the first year we could actually let dogs off leash to meet, sniff and play with each other! Some dogs were more behaved than others but with Labs we all know they are aren't perfect! The food was excellent as usual!

The tennis ball raffle winner was Laura C., who is a founding member of MLRR!!! She won over **\$1,500 dollars**. MLRR's foster Lab, Heather, was the one selected to choose the winning ball.

We are currently looking into locations for next year. We would like your suggestions to different locations (indoor vs. outdoor, City vs. Suburb, etc.) Please send your ideas to Jenny Paul @ jennypaul17@comcast.net. The winning idea will be rewarded!!!!



Heather picking the winning ball

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2009 9 th Annual Reunion	1
Do Dogs Mourn?	2
Recent Adoptions	3
Thanks to Our Donors	4
Pet Videos / I Rescued a Human Today	5
Holiday Photo Cards / Can You Help Us Help Them	6
Board Member Spotlight/Pets and Car Accidents	7

Celebrating our 1000th Adoption!!

We are so proud to be celebrating not only our 10th year rescuing needy Labs, but even more so, our 1000th adoption!

In September, Kody, a 2 year old black male lab was adopted by Al and Donna K. from Arlington Heights.

Kody was introduced to us by a shelter manager in Quincy, IL. He was surrendered by his family as they could no longer afford to feed him. Now, all his worries are behind him and he has a great life to look forward to. Just take a look at what Donna and Al have to say after only a short time with Kody...

"We have had him now since THURS night... but it seems like always. What a great match between Kody and ourselves... we needed each other. I wanted to thank you again for preparing us for the adoption and making it a great experience. We adopted before but your fostering and the Midwest experience were "head and shoulders" above the other. Your review of Kody was "right-on". He needs luv...luv...luv and doesn't let us forget. He hasn't missed any meals. He is Very attentive and soon to enroll in "pet school". He always lets us know when he wants to go out although we have a generous schedule of walks."

Congratulations Kody and Thank You Al and Donna!





Do Dogs Mourn?

When one dog dies, owners will often notice some changes in the pets that are left behind. They may become aloof or lethargic. Some may stop eating or become clingy. Based on these outward signs, it appears that dogs do grieve when their canine companion dies.

Because our pets cannot speak, we don't really know what is going through their minds or what they are thinking. We must base our interpretations of their emotional state on their behavior - what they do in certain situations and under specific circumstances.

When a person experiences the death of a human loved one, we may know he feels grief based on what he says. Very often, however, it is how he reacts or what he does that tells us he is suffering. He loses his focus, becomes listless and disoriented, doesn't eat and becomes disinterested in what is happening around him. The person may cry or go without sleep or sleep more than usual. An animal that is experiencing the loss of another animal companion may react similarly. "Some animals can actually become depressed when they lose a loved one," says Monique D. Chretien, MSc, AHT, Animal Behavior Consultant. "They show symptoms similar to humans such as loss of interest in their favorite activities and sleeping more than usual. However, sometimes dogs may distance themselves from the family and sleep more than usual when they are ill, so you should consult with your veterinarian before seeing a behaviorist if your dog exhibits symptoms such as these."

Your dog may lose her appetite, become disoriented, or become more clingy. If the deceased dog was taken to a veterinarian to be euthanized, the grieving dog may sit at the window for days watching for her return. Animal behaviorists commonly call this emotional state separation anxiety. On the surface, the pet's behavior is similar to that of a person experiencing grief over the loss of a loved one.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals conducted a Companion Animal Mourning Project in 1996. The study found that 36 percent of dogs ate less than usual after the death of another canine companion. About 11 percent actually stopped eating completely. About 63 percent of dogs vocalized more than normal or became quieter. Study respondents indicated that surviving dogs changed the quantity and location of sleep. More than half the surviving pets became more affectionate and clingy with their caregivers. Overall, the study revealed that 66 percent of dogs exhibited four or more behavioral changes after losing a pet companion.

If your dog shows signs that she is grieving the loss of an animal or human family member, provide her with more attention and affection. "Try to take her mind off it by engaging her in a favorite activity," says Chretien. If she enjoys human company, invite friends that she likes to visit and spend time with her. Use environmental enrichment techniques such as toys to help keep her busy. Hide toys or treats at her favorite spots for her to find during the day.

If your dog is too depressed over the loss, she may not respond to extra activity right away. The old saying, "Time heals all wounds," has meaning for your dog, too. "Time is one thing that may help," says Chretien. Based on the results of the ASPCA study, most dogs returned to normal after about two weeks but some dogs took up to six months to fully recover.

If your dog is vocalizing more or howling, don't give her treats to distract her or you might unintentionally reinforce the howling. "Giving attention during any behavior will help to reinforce it so be sure you are not reinforcing a behavior that you don't like," says Chretien. "Give attention at a time when your dog is engaging in behaviors that you do like, such as when she is resting quietly or watching the squirrels. As the pain of the loss begins to subside, so should the vocalizing, as long as it is related to the grieving process."

You may also want to consult with your veterinarian regarding drug therapy to help decrease your dog's anxiety, advises Chretien.

If you are thinking about adding another dog, wait until you and your surviving dog have adjusted to the loss. Forcing your dog to get to know a newcomer will only add stress to her already anxiety-ridden emotional state. And be patient. Your dog may miss her canine companion as much as you do.

MLRR Volunteer of the Year-2009

We are excited to announce Carolyn Scheck as volunteer for the year. Carolyn has gone above and beyond to help save so many Labs. As the transport coordinator, she very often transported dogs at the last minute when no one else would. She checks the MLRR PO box every week and handles all of the printing coordination. Her help as intake coordinator was a sad and daunting one which she did with ease. Not only did she handle the medical coordinator role she was also astronomical in her help with the auction. It goes without saying that Carolyn made a huge impact to the lives of many Labs as well as a former board member. We will miss having her on the board of directors and we send her a GREAT BIG ***thank you***





Recent Adoptions

The following Labs have been adopted since July:

Coco	Beth S.	Downers Grove
Daphne	Frank Jr. & Frank Sr. T.	Chicago
Beckwith	Jason W.	Chicago
Penny	Leo & JoAnne A.	Glenwood
Daisy	Betsy & Jeffrey H.	Elgin
Honda	Sharon W.	Chicago
Tanner	Carl & Paulette H.	Schaumburg
Shelby	Carolyn & Mike S.	Libertyville
Summer	Peg & Tom M.	Park Ridge
Hank	Randy & Lisa M.	Yorkville
Ranger	Ken & Rose P.	Schaumburg
Jerry	Jennifer & Mike F.	Schaumburg
Kody	Albert & Donna K.	Arlington Heights
Lucky	Barak & Michelle Z.	Round Lake
Rebel	John & Rob Barbara C.	Chicago
Duke	Jackie & Mike B.	Oak Park
Heather	Denice G.	Aurora

Smelling like a Doghouse!

With the closed window season upon us, here are few tips to help keep your home from becoming "The Doghouse":

1. Open the window! Circulate fresh air from the outside to diminish strong doggy odors.
2. Keep the rugs clean. Vacuuming alone won't do; it doesn't get all of the smelly dog hair and bacteria deep down in your rug, so it's best to wash them once a week.
3. If you can't pull up your rug, spray it with an odor removal solution. It is also helpful to have your carpets professionally cleaned every year to help eliminate those deep rooted stains and odors.
4. Keep your dog's bedding clean. It holds tons of hairs and bacteria that can cause odor.
5. Keep your dog clean. I know this is a no brainer, but dirty dogs not only smell bad, they spread bacteria throughout your house.
5. Keep your vents clean. Try using a handheld vacuum cleaner or vacuum attachment. We cannot see them, but lots of hairs get trapped inside our vents.
6. Use air freshener, particularly those that really attack odor molecules.
7. Mop the floor. It may not look like it, but even hardwood collects dirt, hairs and bacteria. Be sure to get corners, because this is usually where lots of hair hides and builds up.

No more Doghouse!

In Memory...

Maya-Maya came to us as an 9-10 year old senior Lab and spent over a year in foster care with Lisa B. until Claudine and Matthew M. adopted her in May, 2006. She was a loved and cherished member of their family, albeit it for only 3 years. "The idea that anyone would hesitate to adopt an older black dog because they somehow aren't remarkable is unbelievable to me" -*Claudine M.*



Ranger-Ranger was a 6 year old, heartworm positive Casanova when he was rescued. He was in foster care with Jim and Allison H. for about 4 weeks when he was adopted by Rose and Ken P. Since he was HW positive, he was not able to be neutered until he was clear of the disease. Unfortunately once he was cleared his system must have been too weak and he very tragically passed away during surgery.



Both Maya and Ranger will be missed not only by their loving forever families, but also by their MLRR family, too.

MLRR IS ON FACEBOOK. BECOME A FAN OF THE MIDWEST LABRADOR RETRIEVER RESCUE GROUP AND STAY UP TO DATE.



Thanks to Our Donors

Donations from July 1st, 2009

Allstate Giving	Donation from John S. grant
Sarah D.	In lieu of wedding donations
Colleen B.	In Memory of Lindsay G.
Garry & Michele G.	
Peter & Sandra M.	In honor of Bailey's 5th birthday May 14 th
Teresa B.	
Anna R.	In memory of Allen E.
George & Sandra K.	Donation in memory of Jake
Katherine & Roman K.	
Marcia & Edward S.	
Stan S.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Anonymous	Allstate Giving Campaign
Elaine & Jeffrey A.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Jennifer B.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Allstate Giving Campaign	employee giving campaign
Andrea P.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Melissa & Joseph R.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Al R.	
Al R.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Amy S.	In memory of Alex
Takeda	
Mark T.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Paige W.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Michael & Joy Ann P.	
Carol & Steve B.	In honor of Carson
Wendy & Stu D.	
Ralph S.	
Leanne S.	For Missy
May W.	
Donna L.	In honor of Katy C.
Sarah S.	In lieu of attending the reunion
Randy & Tracy C.	
Stephanie & Susan R.	
Marla & Tom W.	
Scott & Nancy Z.	



Pet Sitter Checklist

Ready or not, the holidays are approaching and you might find yourself making plans for an out of town vacation without your furry family members. If this is the case and you will be leaving your pets with a friend, pet sitter, or even kennel you may want to consider these tips to make their job easier and to make your pet more at comfortable.

- **Get a checkup before your trip.** If something seems wrong with your pet, don't ignore it. It may turn into a crisis in your absence. Do your best to confirm that your pet is in good health before you leave town.
 - **Provide contact information to your pet sitter.** Leave a cell phone number, and answer it even if you're on the beach. If you're traveling to an area where you'll be completely unreachable, designate someone local to make decisions in your absence, and put it in writing. Normally you would do this for your two-legged kids, so transfer this thinking to your four-legged ones too.
 - **Make your wishes known.** Talk to your pet sitter about how you want veterinary emergencies handled. Pick a pet sitter you trust, and leave your credit card number with him or her (along with a signed note allowing them to use the card and authorize medical treatments). Provide your vet's office with the credit card information and a copy of the note to keep on record.
- Pet sitting is a labor of love. Take the steps listed above and be kind to your pet sitter.



Check Out the MLRR website to see some of the new dogs we have available to adopt.

<http://www.midwestlabrescue.org>

Riley and Tyler are just 2 of the dogs available and looking for their forever homes. Both are 10 week old puppies.





Making Great Pet Videos

We all love watching good pet videos, but maybe get a little flustered when we try to make one on our own... so here are a few tips for having fun and making a video that you will be proud to share.

* Keep your video to one to two minutes in length. Especially when working with pets, get the cuteness, get it right, and get it quickly. If it takes 18 minutes for your pet to do that amazing trick, edit out the first 17.

* Label your video with a descriptive title. Come up with something short and sweet, but one that lets people know what *might* be happening in the clip. I say *might* because you still want to create an element of suspense so that people watch it. "Larry Lab Jumps Over a Chair and Then sits On top of the Cat for Twelve Seconds Last Sunday" is not a great title, for example - it gives WAY too much away.

* Hold the camera steady. Nothing is worse than watching a video where the camerahuman is shaking or laughing too hard to get a good shot. Granted, this can't really apply to spontaneous footage, but if you're trying to capture a trick that you've seen before, set up the camera on a tripod and wait for it... wait for it.. wait for it...

* Make sure you have good lighting. When capturing pets in still or moving pictures, good lighting is a must. If you are shooting your pet in front of a window or a strongly backlit area, you may want to consider setting up an extra light so that he or she does not turn into just a silhouette.

* If sound is a key element in the trick/action, make sure that your microphone is working properly and that you're actually catching the sound.

* Don't zoom in and out too much. Yes, an amazing technological breakthrough those little plus and minus buttons on your camera, but it's not that fun to watch a video when you're zooming in and out on a subject. Don't make the viewer feel sick. Keep it steady.

* Frame your shots well. Sometimes a really great trick or bit of cuteness is ruined because of the (really!) dirty socks on the floor or the half eaten bagel on the table. Look around you and move YOUR position so that you've got an attractive image within the frame.

* Have fun and be creative! Batteries can be re-charged and bad video can be erased and replaced, so feel free to try things out with your pet, see how he/she reacts and then shoot it all over again. This can be a great bit of bonding and exercise for you and your pet!



Ricky looking for his forever home

I Rescued A Human Today

Her eyes met mine as she walked down the corridor peering apprehensively into the kennels. I felt her need instantly and knew I had to help her.

I wagged my tail, not too exuberantly, so she wouldn't be afraid. As she stopped at my kennel I blocked her view from a little accident I had in the back of my cage. I didn't want her to know that I hadn't been walked today. Sometimes the shelter keepers get too busy and I didn't want her to think poorly of them.

As she read my kennel card I hoped that she wouldn't feel sad about my past I only have the future to look forward to and want to make a difference in someone's life.

She got down on her knees and made little kissy sounds at me. I shoved my shoulder and side of my head up against the bars to comfort her. Gentle fingertips caressed my neck; she was desperate for companionship. A tear fell down her cheek and I raised my paw to assure her that all would be well.

Soon my kennel door opened and her smile was so bright that I instantly jumped into her arms. I would promise to keep her safe. I would promise to always be by her side. I would promise to do everything I could to see that radiant smile and sparkle in her eyes.

I was so fortunate that she came down my corridor. So many more are out there who haven't walked the corridors. So many more to be saved. At least I could save one.

I rescued a human today.

Did you know....

That October is Adopt A Dog month?
Tell your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors
and strangers on the street, to visit a shelter and
ADOPT DON'T SHOP!



Your Holiday Card Photos

Other than baby photos, pictures of pets are among the most popular in any household. Unfortunately, they also tend to suffer the most from poor quality and with the holidays coming up you're probably already thinking about how to take a picture of your Lab for the annual card. Well, here are 5 surefire tips to help make your pet's next holiday card the best it can be.

1) Change angles

Most pet photos are taken from the perspective of a human being looking down while the pet looks up. Bor-rinnnnng! Try something different and get down at their level or, if they're moving, pan with them as you take the shot.

2) Stick with natural light

Turn off or cover the on-camera flash. On-camera flashes are evil. They flatten everything out, cast harsh shadows and are the source of the infamous glowing green pet eyes. If you have to use a flash go with an off-camera one and bounce the light off a ceiling or wall.

3) Stay out of direct sun and shoot in the morning or late afternoon

Contrary to popular belief, bright sunlight is not a photographer's friend. It wreaks havoc with your exposure and you typically end up with lots of nasty shadows in places you don't want them. I avoid photographing subjects outside in direct light except first thing in the morning or in the late afternoon before sunset when the light is angled low.

4) Don't wait for the perfect moment and don't be afraid to take lots of shots but...

Most of us are shooting digital these days so you can essentially take as many pictures as you want. With pets, unpredictability is the rule of law. You never know how a shoot is going to go. All you can do is be there and hope you catch the moment. This requires taking a lot of shots in quick sequence and culling through them later for the best one.

5) ...make sure you edit yourself

Some of the most important work happens after you shoot. It sounds cliché but less is more. It's easy to become enamored of the 100 pictures you took of Spot playing with his new ball but chances are your friends won't feel the same way. Limit what you show people to only the very best.

Can You Help Us Help Them?

Desperate times call for desperate measures, so once again all of us at MLRR are reaching out to you for help.

The economy may be slowly turning around, but not nearly fast enough for the furry family members who are left to languish or die in shelters.

Did you know that dogs who are surrendered by their owners do not have a stay of execution like strays do? They can be signed over to the shelter and immediately put to sleep due to the severe overcrowding the shelters are experiencing.

We are running out of options to help these poor 'owned' dogs. It's not their fault that their families can't afford to feed them anymore; and faced with a horrible choice the owners are surrendering them. However, now we are faced with a new problem; dogs are being let loose or getting loose, animal control agencies are picking them up but the owners can't afford to pay the fees to get them back, so again they sit waiting for a stranger to decide their fate.

That's where you come in. Can you spare some of your time and love to help a Lab that has no where else to turn? We know of 23 Labs in just the past few weeks that desperately need our help. Some of them have been surrendered or not picked up by their owners due to lack of financial resources and risk euthanasia shortly.

Please let us know quickly if you can help us save even one of these dogs.

Email us directly at mail@midwestlabrescue.org with the subject as "Fostering" to let us know you want to help and then we can direct you to the proper forms to fill out. This way we can save a dog especially for you! All you need to provide is food, toys, love and attention (most of which they have lacked in their past). The average stay of a foster dog is about 2-3 weeks and right now we have about 40 families on our waiting list; and some have been waiting for months!

You have no idea how good you will feel knowing that you saved a life. And as the saying goes,

"If you save one dog you may not have changed the world, but you have changed the world for that one dog"

Thank you so much for opening your mind and heart to these poor, helpless creatures.

Holiday Treat for Your Lab

Pumpkin Freeze- Cover cookie sheet with waxed paper, spoon out individual sized portions of canned pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling) directly from can and freeze for 30 minutes. Peel frozen portions from waxed paper, place in plastic bag or other container and store in freezer until needed.



Board Member Spotlight-Kathy Delia

The story behind this photo is how we, Maggie and I (I'm the one on the chair) started volunteering with MLRR. Our vet had opened a new clinic and for the opening hosted a Halloween party with all proceeds going to a rescue group he supports. After meeting many of the volunteers and hearing what a difference they made in the lives of animals who had been surrendered or found, we decided it was time to make a difference wherever we could. As I tell Maggie, she has had a privileged life and now it's her time to give back to the community.

We chose Midwest Lab because of their philosophy, the right family for the right Lab forever. Maggie and I go on home visits, foster and transport Labs and in general help where we can. Recently I had the privilege of becoming a board member and am the volunteer coordinator.

I wish I could explain the emotions that go with finding homes for these unfortunate Labs. We smile every time we hear that a family we interviewed for adoption has found their forever Lab. Any sadness we felt when a foster Lab was leaving our home for their forever home was quickly replaced by a smile because we saw and felt in our hearts the love between the Lab and their new family, and knew it was right.

We love the success stories on the website and attending the reunion. At the recent reunion we saw one of our fosters we had become very attached to and she remembered us! Words cannot express how happy that made us, and even happier when she walked away with that Lab smile to her smiling mom and dad whom she adores.

Those smiles and making a difference is what makes it all worthwhile.

In my spare time (ha) I am a nurse employed by an insurance company managing the defense of claims throughout the country. I also love to knit hats for Halos of Hope, an Illinois group who donates hats to chemotherapy patients; and I am currently pursuing a degree as a veterinary technician. In addition to her MLRR activities, Maggie walks with her friends on a daily basis and enjoys weekly cross training at her exercise club.



Don't Let Your Pet Kill You in an Accident

Buckle up your pets in a car or truck to protect you, your pet and your passengers. If you have an accident, your pet can become a projectile. The Laws of Physics don't stop. In a 35 mph crash 60 a pound pet becomes about 2,700 pounds of force (about the same as two full grown, male grizzly bears). Many people allow their pets to scoot around, unrestrained, in the back seat of the car or in the bed of a truck. It's safer for everyone in the vehicle if a dog or cat is restrained. A recent American Automobile Association (AAA) survey found, "A large number of accidents, something like 30,000 a year, are caused by dogs in the front seats."

According to the Bark Buckle UP Web site, 82% of dogs travel in vehicles on family vacations. A recent study by the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association showed that only about 20% of pet owners buckle up their dogs and cats when they travel with them in a vehicle.

Dr. Alicia Faggella, a Portland, Oregon, veterinarian who has had advanced training in emergency and critical care, cites several reasons why pet owners should buckle up their dogs and cats:

Pets can cause an accident by jumping into the driver's lap, distracting the driver, or blocking the driver's vision. Small dogs can also get under the pedals

Pets can become "missiles" if they're in an accident; or if the driver makes a hard stop or quick turn. This can kill or severely injure not only the animal, but also the people in the vehicle

When left unrestrained in a parked car, pets can dislodge the parking brake, causing the car to roll down a hill, into another car or person

Unrestrained pets in the back of a pick-up can be severely injured or killed by falling or jumping out of a moving vehicle or hitting the cab when the truck stops short.



**Midwest Labrador Retriever
Rescue, Inc. (MLRR)**

P.O. Box 1473
Lombard, Illinois 60148

Phone:
(847) 604-3254

E-Mail:
mail@midwestlabrescue.org

MLRR is an **all volunteer**, 501(c)(3)
non-profit organization dedicated to
finding loving, permanent homes for
unwanted or abandoned Labrador
Retrievers throughout the Chicago area

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.midwestlabrescue.org

Pets and Accidents continued....

An unrestrained pet is at risk of falling out of open windows in a moving vehicle, and is at risk of escaping at rest stops when car doors are opened. Dogs and cats can also be killed or injured by airbags and should always be placed in a seat that does not have airbags if the bags can't be turned off.

In an accident, animals may run loose and create problems for firefighters, emergency medical personnel and police officers responding to the already-chaotic scene of a vehicle collision. Dogs shocked from the trauma of an accident may snap at or attack strangers and could delay rescue efforts of their injured owners. After an accident, unrestrained pets can be injured and trapped under cars or may run into traffic and be hit or killed and cause another accident. Often, there aren't sufficient responders to deal with pet problems at an accident scene.

Anything done to get animals out of the front seat or restrain them will keep pets and passenger safer. Seatbelt harnesses can be purchased at local pet stores. Most harnesses have leash attachments and can be used outside of the car to walk your dog. There are other types of car restraints for pets besides a harness: a zip line that secures a dog but also lets it move back and forth, and a back seat barrier that creates a wall between the front and back seats of the car. Do some research and pick the type you think best suited to your pet. Prices for pet restraints start at around \$25.

Midwest Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc.
P.O Box 1473
Lombard, IL 60148

**Non-Profit Organization
Presort Standard Mail
Permit # 100
Algonquin, Illinois 60102**