



# The Lab's Tale

Midwest Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc.

"We give Labs a second chance"

Volume 8 Issue 3 Summer 2006

## Rae's Story

The story of Rae is a sad story with a wonderful ending!



Rae

When she was a young puppy, Rae was purchased on the side of a road somewhere in the Midwest. The people who purchased her were not experienced dog owners and did not have time for her. Rae developed corneal ulcers which eventually ruptured and made her blind in both eyes. Her owners were no longer willing to care for her so they gave her to an animal shelter.

MLRR heard about Rae's sad situation from a fellow rescuer (Pam S.) and we knew she needed our help. Thanks to Pam, Appi P. and Jennifer L. she was transported to the Chicago area. MLRR took her to an eye specialist and learned the Rae would be permanently blind. Rae never skipped a beat. She quickly became familiar with the new surroundings in her foster home and she enjoyed playing with the other Labs that lived there. However, Rae turned out to be a barker. This would not work as her foster family's neighbor complained about the barking. So she was moved to a temporary foster home with Kim and Chris, who had adopted two Labs from MLRR in the past. Their Labs, Toby and Bosz, took Rae under their wings and showed her love and companionship. Kim and Chris fostered Rae for a month before her forever family adopted her.

We are happy to report that Rae is now known as Danni Rae. Her forever family is no stranger to adopting MLRR Labs. They previously adopted two Labs from MLRR. One of their adopted Labs is blind. You may remember Stevie "The Wonder" Dog from a few years ago. Peggy and Matt have relocated to Washington State, however that did not stop them from adding yet another MLRR dog to their family. Peggy flew to O'Hare

from Washington State and drove Danni Rae back to their homestead in Washington. Danni Rae now lives on 5-acres along with two other MLRR alums and a newly rescued yellow female Lab.

Danni Rae proved to be a wonderful traveler in her cross-country trip to Washington. She has adapted well to her new home, and to her new family.

Bobby Lee (a/k/a Stevie) is especially playful with her. She shows no fear running around their yard, and seems to have an uncanny sense when walking around the house - she doesn't bump into things as much as it seems Bobby Lee does. Maybe she can teach him something.

She is learning the stairway that leads to the door to the backyard. She's having a hard time taking the first step, but her family has found that if they carry her to the 2nd or 3rd step, she'll go down the rest of the way. This has been a few weeks now of working on it, and she'll eventually get it. And while she barked a bit when she first got there, she's hardly barking at all, unless the whole group gets into it. What a great addition to the pack! Danni brings a lot of energy and spirit to the group. As her foster mom had said, her eyes may be broken, but her spirit is not.



Rae (front left), Bobby Lee (front right) and friends

Midwest Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc. (MLRR)

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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.

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## Recent Adoptions

The following Labs have been adopted since December:

<b>Wilma</b>	Michael & Tammy V.	Wheaton
<b>Carl</b>	Lori & Josh K.	Park Ridge
<b>Sundance</b>	Georgann & Robert P.	Chicago
<b>Angus</b>	Jennifer & George P.	Lake in the Hills
<b>Frango</b>	Jake A.	Tinley Park
<b>Butch</b>	Joan & Bill B.	Gurnee
<b>Dinah</b>	Dianne T.	Arlington Heights
<b>Sydney</b>	MyXuan M.	Chicago
<b>Roscoe</b>	Peter W.	Chicago
<b>Carter</b>	Deb & Paul C.	Downers Grove
<b>Hugo</b>	John K.	Elmhurst
<b>Marshall</b>	Mandy & Joe S.	Algonquin
<b>Carla</b>	Jan & Dennis C.	Palatine
<b>Caribou</b>	David & Cheryl P.	Manhattan
<b>Patrick</b>	Sarah S.	Evanston
<b>Bauer</b>	Jill D.	Chicago
<b>Palmer</b>	Randy & Connie S.	Warrenville
<b>Raven</b>	Tom & Vicky P.	Rockford
<b>Chloe</b>	Denise & Brian M.	South Elgin
<b>Edgar</b>	Chrysse & Joe P.	Carol Stream
<b>Lucas</b>	Karen & Denis M.	Downers Grove
<b>Gordon</b>	John K.	Elmhurst
<b>Hazel</b>	Donna & Glenn H.	Montgomery
<b>Maya</b>	Claudine & Matthew M.	Muscatine
<b>Rae</b>	Matt & Peggy M.	Olympia
<b>Lucy</b>	Rose & Joseph C.	West Chicago
<b>Dora</b>	Lisa & Mark V.	Romeoville
<b>Victor</b>	Kristina T.	Tinley Park
<b>Buchanan</b>	Donna & Darren E.	McHenry
<b>Logan</b>	Patricia & Ronald L.	Palos Heights
<b>Honda</b>	Holly J.	Wilmette
<b>Shemp</b>	Pam & Mike C.	Sugar Grove
<b>Fergus</b>	Molly W.	Lake Forest

## Volunteer Spotlight

**Sarah & Jeff Genens** Sarah and Jeff Genens began fostering in March 2005. So far they have fostered 17 dogs ranging from seniors, to dogs with heartworm, to dogs with behavioral issues. They have proven to be a great foster home by always putting the dogs first and giving each and every Lab the extra T.L.C. it needs and deserves. Their latest fosters include Henderson, who needs a second round of heartworm treatment, and Hugo who is in need of a very special adoptive family due to his behavior. Did I mention that they also will take more than one foster at a time????

A special thanks goes to this awesome foster home!!

### When I Got My New Dog

I asked for strength that I might rear her perfectly;  
I was given weakness that I might feed her more treats.

I asked for good health that I might rest easy;  
I was given a "special needs" dog that I might know nurturing.

I asked for an obedient dog that I might feel proud;  
I was given stubbornness that I might feel humble.

I asked for compliance that I might feel masterful;  
I was given a clown that I might laugh.

I asked for a companion that I might not feel lonely;  
I was given a best friend that I would feel loved.

I got nothing I asked for,  
But everything that I needed.

Author Unknown



**Fiona** is the MLRR Calendar Contest winner for June

Read more about the Calendar Contest on our web site at: <http://www.midwestlabrescue.org/calendar.shtml>

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## **Skin and Allergy Problems in Dogs**

By Cheryl Minnier  
Edited for length

### **Introduction**

The most common medical complaint we see in dogs is skin or ear related. Unlike humans who react to allergens with nasal symptoms, dogs react with skin problems. These problems may range from poor coat texture or length, to itching and chewing, to hot spots and self mutilation. Allergies may also play a part in chronic ear infections. To make matters more difficult to diagnose and treat, thyroid disease may add to the problem as well.

In order to overcome these frustrating symptoms your approach needs to be thorough and systematic. Shortcuts usually will not produce results and only add to owner frustration. Remember, your best source of information is your vet. You need to remember though, that the success or failure of treatment will rest mainly on you. There is no magic pill to deal with these problems. Unfortunately, there is also no "cure", only systematic treatment options. Much of the information below is taken from "Guide to Skin and Haircoat Problems in the Dog" by Lowell Ackerman, DMV.

### **Inhalant Allergies**

Substances which can cause an allergic reaction in dogs are much the same as those which cause reactions in people including pollens, dust mites and molds. A clue to diagnosing these allergies is to look at the timing of the reaction. Does it happen year round? This may be mold or dust. If the reaction is seasonal, pollens may be the culprit.

Symptoms of inhalant allergies include: SCRATCHING, BITING, CHEWING AT FEET AND CONSTANT LICKING. The itching may be most severe on feet, flanks, groin and armpits. Dogs may rub their face on the carpet. Ear flaps may become red and hot. Chronic ear infections may follow. Skin becomes thickened, greasy and has a strong odor. Hot spots may develop due to irritation from constant chewing or scratching, which is then followed by infection. Allergies have also been implicated as a possible cause of Acral Lick Granulomas, a frustrating, treatment resistant condition whereby the dog creates a sore on his skin from constant licking.

### **Treatment Options**

#### **Symptomatic Therapy**

Treating the dogs symptoms may include; cool baths with or without colloidal oatmeal, Epsom salts, or medicated shampoos. This can be done frequently but provides only temporary relief. Caution should be used with sprays and ointments because many contain potentially harmful substances. According to Dr. Ackerman, Dermacool is a safe spray containing witch hazel. Cortispray is a low dose, non-systemic cortisone spray which can be safely used for short periods of time.

#### **Immunotherapy**

Allergy shots are very safe and many people have great success with them, however, they are very slow to work. It may be six to twelve months before improvement is seen. I spoke with Dr. Christine Johnson, a veterinarian with the dermatology department of the University of Pennsylvania, about intradermal skin testing for inhalant allergies. She reports the average success rate is 70-75%. This rate is for dogs showing any improvement at all. Substances that are tested include cats(!), feathers, wool, molds, dust, trees, insects, plants and pollens. Before testing, your pet must be free from all steroids, oral or injected (including those found in ear and eye medicines) for a specified period of time in order for the test to be valid. In all about 60 different substances are tested for.

#### **Corticosteroids**

These compounds reduce itching by reducing inflammation. Unfortunately, they also affect every organ in the body. According to Dr. Ackerman, steroids should be considered only when the allergy season is short, the amount of drug required is small or as a last resort to relieve a dog in extreme discomfort. Side effects can include increased thirst and appetite, increased need to urinate and behavioral changes. Long term use can result in diabetes, decreased resistance to infection and increased susceptibility to seizures. You can recognize steroids by the suffix "-one", such as cortisone, dexamethasone, prednisone..etc.. In short, alternatives to steroid therapy should always be considered.

#### **Antihistamines**

Antihistamines can be used with relative safety in dogs. About one third of owners report success with them. The major drawback, as with people, is sedation. Dr. Ackerman recommends that a minimum of three different types of antihistamines be tried before owners give up on this therapy. According to Dr. Johnson, the most common problem with this type of treatment is that owners give the drugs at doses that are too low. Check with your vet on correct dosing.

Examples of antihistamines commonly used for dogs include: Tavist, Benadryl, Chlortrimeton, Atarax and Seldane.

#### **Environmental Control**

If you know which substances your dog is allergic to avoidance is the best method of control. Even if you are desensitizing the dog with allergy shots, it is best to avoid the allergen altogether. Molds can be reduced by using a dehumidifier or placing activated charcoal on top of the exposed dirt in your house plants. Dusts and pollens are best controlled by using an air cleaner with a HEPA filter. Air conditioning can also reduce circulating amounts of airborne allergens because windows are then kept closed.

#### **References**

Ackerman, L.: Guide To Skin and Haircoat Problems in Dogs. Alpine Publishing, 1994: 7-19.

Used with permission from the author. This article has been edited for length. The original article can be found at:

<http://www.k9web.com/dog-faqs/medical/canine-allergies.html>

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## Success Stories

All Success Stories can be viewed on our web site (<http://www.midwestlabrescue.org/success.shtml>). Some of the following letters have been edited for length.

### Oliver (formerly Kessler) and Bailey

We are all doing very well. I couldn't have asked for better dogs. We have taken them up to the lake with us and it is very true, Labs LOVE water. They would swim all day if we let them. They are in training class now and learning how to heal, stay, lay, down, etc. They are both very smart.



Oliver & Bailey share a stick

### Little Bear

Attached is a recent photo of Little Bear, who we adopted from MLRR in 2001. At that time we resided in Northbrook, Ill., but have since relocated to Surprise, Ariz. Little Bear is now about 10 years old and we look forward to many more years of companionship with her. Little Bear is doing great and we couldn't have asked for a better friend and companion. She is everyone's friend and is our official greeter when anyone comes to our house. She loves to go swimming and hiking. She is wonderful with our 2 year old grandson, who adores her.



Little Bear

### Moxie (formerly Indy)

Moxie is doing great! She has just learned to swim and goes crazy when she sees we are going to the beach. I am training for the Susan Komen breast cancer 3-day walk and she is by my side training with me, walking one to three hours per day. We love her madly!



Moxie

### Snoop (formerly Jimmy Beam)

Snoop is almost seven months old now. He is the PERFECT dog. I know, everyone says that about their pups! Snoop is a very bright and good pup. He was housebroken within two weeks of bringing him home. I had enrolled him in puppy school at PetSmart for an eight-week course. He graduated April 2, 2006. Snoop knows how to sit, stay, come, lay down he can even give you a Hi five with both paws. He is learning how to sit and stay without verbal commands. He is loved by my family, friends and my 18 year old cat Misty. He's been to the beach and he loves the water. He loves to fetch. Sometimes he will pick up a sock or underwear and bring it outside to the back yard. Thank God my backyard is fenced because the neighbors would probably think it's raining socks and panties! I want to thank Midwest Lab Rescue for bringing Snoop into my life. Your organization is honest, professional and above all caring. I have recommended several people to MLRR. Snoop has been blessing a gift from God.



Snoop

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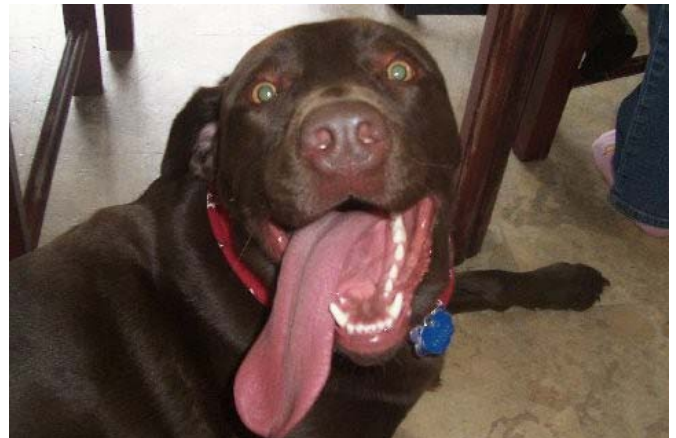
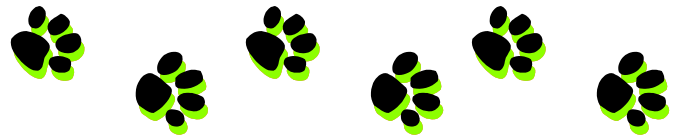
## Thanks To Our Donors

Thanks to generous donors like the following, we are able to care for many Labs that were previously homeless and unwanted. These donations will help us to continue our rescue efforts, and to place more wonderful dogs in new loving homes.

Deb & Paul T.	Angus
Waller Family	Angus
Nikki Y.	
Kathie B.	in honor of Andrew James
Sally H.	Angus
Kari F.	Allstate giving campaign
Elizabeth & Jeff W.	Allstate giving campaign
Larry L.	Allstate giving campaign
Stan S.	Allstate giving campaign
Laura W.	In memory of Tom M. from his daughter Rosemary
Katherine S.	
Christopher T.	for Bosco from his brother Cash (aka Larry) on behalf of Vicki B.
Carl & Antoinette W.	in lieu of silent auction
Peter W.	
iGive.com	
Allstate	
GH and Bernadette I.	
Valerie K.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Michael L.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Andrea P.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Chuck & Maribel G.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Alison G.	in honor of Lacy & to help other Labs find a home
Melissa & Joseph R.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Paige W.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Paula O.	
Kay & John D.	in honor of MLRR volunteers who have helped so many labs
Liz & Mike H.	in honor of all the terrific volunteers
Michael & Nicole H.	in memory of Sedona
Timothy O.	in honor of Wowser
Kenneth W. Jr.	in memory of Harley
Barbara R.	in honor of Sadie AKA Casey
Jennifer B.	Allstate Giving Campaign
Hansen Family	in memory of Casey
Andrew & Janet T.	in honor of Melba Jean
Carmella A.	help with medical bills
Amy S.	in memory of Kelsey & in honor of Brody & Bailey
Lisa G.	in memory of Lola
Rob & Julie P.	in honor of Melba Jean
Dan & Colleen N.	

## Donors Continued

Kimberly K.	in honor of Bryn FKA Sabrina for 2nd birthday & 1st yr with forever family
Bill & Sue V.	
Eric & Judith W.	in honor of Kia
Robert & Yvonne C.	in honor of Tiki formerly Monique
Michael & Patricia P.	
Cindy & Patrick C.	in lieu of spay & neuter deposits
Katherine S.	
Betsy R.	towels for crates
Randy C.	
Manuel D.	
James O.	
James & Annmarie B.	
Jill A.	
David & Patricia K.	Molly fka Sandy. 4 years in her forever home
Kim S.	in honor of Dakota
Katherine S.	
Garry & Michele G.	
Matthew & Christine D.	
Francis & Gloria S.	birthday for Tamara & Cristina



**Buddy** is the MLRR Calendar Contest winner for March

Read more about the Calendar Contest on our web site at: <http://www.midwestlabrescue.org/calendar.shtml>

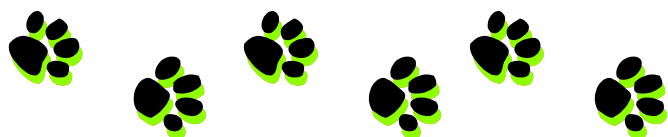
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## Wish List

MLRR is always in need of the following:

- \* "Frontline" Flea Preventative
- \* Heartworm preventative (ie. Heartgard or Interceptor)
- \* First class postage
- \* Gift certificates to pet supply stores
- \* Collars (large, snap-type)
- \* Laser printer paper
- \* Envelopes
- \* Cash donations
- \* More volunteers and foster homes!



## News and Events

Mark your calendar now!

### DuPage Fall Festival

Saturday, September 16

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

400 County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL

Free Admission and Parking

MLRR will have a booth at this event which includes: Food and entertainment, Bake Sale, Flea Market and Craft Fair, Scarecrow Patch & Mum sale.

Area shelters, rescue groups and other animal organizations, Contests for children, adults, and pets, Raffles, Animal related demonstrations.

Socialized, leashed pets are welcome to attend

### 6<sup>th</sup> Annual MLRR Reunion

Saturday, September 23, 2006

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lake County Forest Preserve

***By invitation only...Watch your mail, as invitations will be mailed soon!***

Nonprofit Organization  
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