

THE LAB'S TALE

Summer 2008
Volume 10, Issue 3



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

Annual Auction= Big Success

This year's Auction, Raise Your Paws for the Cause, was a big success for MLRR.

It was our most successful fundraiser ever, raising a net profit of \$23,000. We had a 34% increase in our number of attendees and had to turn people away as we hit the room capacity due to the overwhelming response to the event.

The night consisted of a full sit-down dinner including Hors D'oeuvres, Dessert, and Chocolate Fountain; and of course the highlight--the silent and live auctions.

The live auction part of the evening was extremely impressive this year with great gifts going home with lucky bidders. Items like an instant wine cellar (complete with stocked wine refrigerator), autographed sports memorabilia, and a shopping spree on Michigan Avenue were huge hits.

As you can see by our financial statements each January newsletter, veterinary costs are our largest financial drain. That's where our Fund-A-Cause portion of the night comes in. This section is when we see our guests pour their hearts and pocket books out directly for our Labs; as the funds generated from this go directly to the care of our rescued Labs. Funding for basic care such as boarding and vaccinations as well as more in-depth care like spay/neuter surgeries and obedience training were very generously donated by our supporters that night.

Mark your calendars for next year's auction **May 16th, 2009**, at the Double Tree Guest Suites and Conference Center in Downers Grove. We are moving locations so we will have more space and plenty of room for friends and family to join us.



Clay a lucky puppy we were able to rescue because of generous donors.

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Is Pet Insurance for You?

Thinking about insurance for your new Lab? Here are a few things to keep in mind when looking into it.

What You'll Get-Basic medical plans cover accidents and illnesses as well as testing and treatment. Pre-existing conditions and elective procedures won't be covered, most likely neither will be hereditary or congenital conditions, which are common in purebreds.

What It Will Cost-A basic plan with VPI Pet Insurance for a Lab (or any dog really) will cost about \$25-\$30 per month and will increase as your Lab ages. In comparison, annual vet costs average about \$200, according to the American Veterinary Medical Assoc. (I want to know which vet they're referring to, I want to go there!).

The Bottom Line-With treatments like chemotherapy and MRIs now available for our lovable Labs vet visits can leave owners with staggering bills. (Tell me about it! My Lab mix was diagnosed with Cushing's Disease 18 months ago and her chemotherapy costs about \$140 for 4-5 weeks of treatment). So, with all things considered, if your Lab gets a life-threatening injury or disease, pet insurance can literally be a lifesaver.



COCOA BEAN MULCH CAN BE TOXIC TO DOGS

If your MLRR Lab likes to spend time in your yard, his treat-seeking nose may lead him to one danger in particular: the sweet-smelling, but potentially harmful cocoa bean mulch. Made of cocoa bean shells it is in demand for its eventual degradation into organic fertilizer, however, it can be toxic to canines if eaten in large quantities.

"Dogs are attracted to the fertilizer's sweet smell," says Dr. Steven Hansen, ASPCA Veterinary Toxicologist and APCC Director, "but like chocolate, cocoa bean mulch can be too much for our canine companions."

The residual chemical in cocoa bean mulch that can make your Lab sick is called theobromine—a natural, caffeine-like compound found in chocolate. There are signs to look for if you suspect your Lab has eaten the mulch. Typically they start with vomiting, diarrhea and elevated heart rate, and if large amounts are consumed, they may progress to hyperactivity, muscle tremors and possibly other more serious neurological signs.

Treatment includes administering activated charcoal, bringing tremors under control, cardiac monitoring and preventing further exposure.

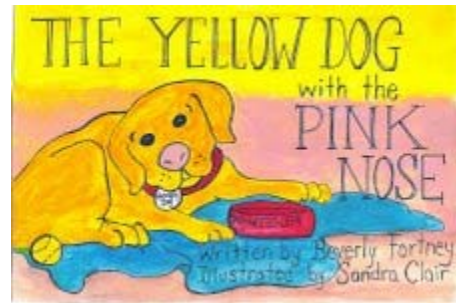
To avoid contact all together, consider a nontoxic alternative, such as shredded pine or cedar. These will keep your Lab—and your garden—healthy.

NOTE: Because theobromine is found in chocolate the warning signs of illness listed above are also applicable if you believe your Lab has eaten anything that contains chocolate. If you notice anything unusual about your Lab's behavior and are at all unsure, take him to your vet immediately.



For more information please see the ASPCA site http://www.aspc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pro_apcc_publicationscocoa

A Book for a Great Cause



We have some exciting news to share! In a previous newsletter we wrote about an MLRR Lab, Princess Leia, who will be starring in a children's book. Well, that book has finally been released. It's called "The Yellow Dog with the Pink Nose" and can be found on Amazon.com and Booksurge.com. The book costs \$15.99 and proceeds from its sales will go to MLRR and the troops in Iraq. The book is about how Leia was found, and the difficulties she went through both before and after she was adopted. It helps children learn their color and number words and also helps them to overcome their fears. And now Leia is helping others by her visits to nursing homes, hospitals, and her owner's (and author) kindergarten class each week.



Kahlua "Lu" looking for a forever home



Recent Adoptions

The following Labs have been adopted since April:

Coal	Jana & Ram R	Downers Grove
Mason	John K	Elmhurst
Dylan	Pam & Mike C	Sugar Grove
April	Dan & Jan D	Bartlett
Parker	Christopher & Janet B	Westmont
Ellie	Jennifer S	Park Ridge
Robin	Jill H	Joliet
Dublin	Marci & Mike V	Elgin
Tiara	Barb & George J	Lockport
Clancy	Sandra & Robert R	Wilmette
Ginger	Maureen M	Orland Park
Carmine/Cooper	Mary & Thomas C	Elmhurst
Daisy	Timothy B	Hanover Park
Thelma	Cathy & Bill S	Streamwood
Louise	Melissa & Matthew D	Chicago
Guinness	Lisa & Albert K	Round Lake
Trooper	Elizabeth & Scott E	Glenview
Ol' Yeller	Keith & Lisa C	Palatine
Rex	Michele Ann S	McHenry
Crystal	Stephanie F	Barrington
Ottie/Odie	Jerry & Gail B	Winthrop Harbor
Brandy	Kevin & Janet B	Northbrook
Shaun	Jay M	North Aurora
Nala	Judi B	Chicago
Maggie	Dori & Michael K	Salem
Brendan	Cindy M	Willowbrook
Jake	Becky L	Gilberts
Sheldon	Bob & Christine S	Glenview
Marlee	Michael S	Chicago
Candace	Mary & Bill T	Glenview
Mel	Greg & Denise L	Cary
Lulu	Julie & Doug A	Glen Ellyn
Cameron	Sally F	Evanston
Kahlua	Danielle L	Forest Park
Mel	Greg & Denise L	Cary



Marlee adopted by Michael S of Chicago

Swimming Fun

Its summer and the perfect time for water sports with your surf-lov'n Lab. What, your Lab is afraid of water? She can't swim? Well don't worry, there's no short circuit in her genetic make-up, your Lab isn't the only one. However, almost any dog can learn to enjoy the water. So if you would like your landlubbing Labbie to discover how much fun playing in the waves can be here are a few suggestions.

Build Trust-Teamwork is the key here. Before you dive right into the wet stuff, try some other types of bonding experiences like obedience training or agility. As your dog begins to trust you her confidence builds.

Teach the Basics-These are your basic commands like come, sit and stay. Your Lab should also be able to drop an object on command, should she get a hold of something potentially harmful when she does take that giant leap into the lake.

Look past the Pool-If you don't have a pool, don't worry, your Lab won't hold it against you. She can still learn to love water. Try a child's wading pool, or local dog parks sometimes have creeks or small lakes for recreation. Or try out a dog beach. Other canine companions are the best teachers of all! While your little Fearful Frannie is frolicking with her friends she'll forget that she is knee deep in water! Any place that offers you a way to introduce water to your dog is a good place to start.

No Sink or Swim-Dock diving may not be the best way to coax (or throw in this case) your dog into the water. Her first jump may be her last with this method. Instead let her acclimate herself at her own pace. Try luring her into a creek or shallow pond. Hold out a tennis ball or another favorite toy (or treat) and encourage her to come get it. And remember don't force her. If it doesn't work the first time, try again another time.



Thanks to Our Donors

Donations from April 1st, 2008

Humane Society of Fulton County	sponsorship for Jake employee match K. Condon
The Pepsi Bottling Group	
Daniel A	in lieu of attending auction
Jill A	in lieu of attending auction
Carolyn & Brad B	in lieu of attending auction
Rita B	
Michael B	in lieu of attending auction
Greg & Meg B	in lieu of attending auction
Jennifer B	AllState Giving Campaign
Jennifer B	in lieu of attending auction
Michael & Suzanne C	in lieu of attending auction
Jim C	in lieu of attending auction
Robert & Yvonne C	
Lora D	AllState Giving Campaign
Rebecca & Steve D	in lieu of attending auction
Michael & Christine D	in lieu of attending auction
Maureen & Dennis D	in memory of Dad
Patricia D	
Gale E	in honor of Wilbur's 4th birthday
Sally F	in lieu of attending auction
Kari F	AllState Giving Campaign
Rebecca & Barry F	in lieu of attending auction
Stephanie F	to help offset the cost of Crystal's vet bills
Andrea & Wilbur G	in lieu of attending auction
Diane & Gary G	AllState Giving Campaign
Cardinal Health Employee Program	on behalf of a Cardinal Health employee
Garry & Michele G	
David & Tiffany H	in lieu of attending auction
iGive.com	
Allison H	AllState Giving Campaign
Lesli J	
Jewel	Jewel Shop & Share
Holly J	in lieu of attending auction
John K	
Delia K	in lieu of attending auction
Harris K	
Alice K	in honor of Jesse
David & Patricia K	in memory of my mom

Carol & Richard K	in lieu of attending auction
Jay & Ellen L	in lieu of attending auction
Paul L	AllState Giving Campaign
Chris M	
Liberty Employee Donations	Liberty Employee Donations
Edward M	in lieu of attending auction
Alan M	
Cynthia M	in lieu of attending auction
Karen N	in lieu of attending auction
Beata N	
Shigeko N	in lieu of attending auction
Paula O	
Amy & Henry O	In memory of Rusty
Karyn & Jimm P	
Chester & Ellen P	in lieu of attending auction
Andrea P	AllState Giving Campaign
Anthony & Cheryl P	Liberty Employee Donations
Brian R	Liberty Employee Donations
Sandy R	in lieu of attending auction
Barbara R	in lieu of auction & in honor of Sadie's b-day (FKA Casey)
Melissa & Joseph R	AllState Giving Campaign
Kathleen & James R	in lieu of attending auction
Al R	AllState Giving Campaign
Amy S	in memory of Kelsey
Stan S	AllState Giving Campaign
Jeff & Sirkka S	in lieu of attending auction
Marcia S	
James (Rick) S	in lieu of attending auction
Katherine S	
Mark T	AllState Giving Campaign
David B	in honor of Linda McEwen
Heather V	in lieu of attending auction
Florence W	in honor of Coco
Rose & Sidney W	
Karen & Steve W	in lieu of attending auction
Carl & Antoinette W	in lieu of attending auction
Liz Z	In honor of Dr. Sharon and Missy
Scott & Nancy Z	in lieu of attending auction



Barkley looking for a forever home.



Important Things to Remember When Microchipping Your Lab

When microchips were first introduced they were thought to be the solution to keeping track of your beloved Lab. However, it's been found that human error is mainly to blame for failure to recover microchipped pets.

Microchips are devices about the size of a grain of rice that are implanted between a pet's shoulder blades and can help trace an animal back to its owner. However, the problem with microchips lies with the pet owners who often make wrong assumptions or fail to do what's necessary to be reunited with a lost animal. Add into the mix competing products and technologies and you have large cracks through which our furry friends can fall.

A microchip is NOT a GPS device. It can't track your Lab sauntering down Michigan Avenue at 10 mph.

The biggest problem with microchips: the lack of follow through on the owner's part. All pertinent information (name, address, phone numbers-both home and cell) needs to be registered with the chip supplier and kept current at all times. If you move and don't update your Lab's chip information you might not get your furry family member back. That chip is your Lab's phone call home...if the information contained is accurate.

Keep in mind, however, that not all scanners read all microchips. There are universal scanners that are provided to thousands of shelters and vets each year, but not even these can read all chips. Your best chance of recovering your lost Labbie and your first line of defense is with old technology; a good old fashioned collar and tags (ID, rabies, city license or all of these). However, veterinarians at Chicago Animal Care and Control say their experience is that chipped pets are reunited with their families 70% to 80% of the time. Without a chip, it's considerably less.

Now, here is where this relates directly to your MLRR adopted Lab. For all Labs adopted before June, 2008; they *may* have been chipped by the shelter we rescued it from. This chip is then registered to that shelter. However, from June 1 forward, because of YOUR overwhelming generosity at our Annual Auction this past may, ALL our Labs will now be microchipped when they are vetted. This chip will be registered to MLRR. So, after adoption it is extremely important that you update that information with YOUR personal information. How do you do that? Contact the chip manufacturer; the company information and chip ID number is in the paper work you received when you adopted your MLRR Lab.

So what do you do if you are looking to chip your currently 'unchipped' Lab? Experts say go with the majority. 98% of chips are working at 125 kHz frequency. The majority of scanners can read 125 to 128 kHz. Two brands you might want to look into are Home Again and Avid. If you have more questions about microchips ask your vet.

TYDTW Day

Take Your Dog to Work Day was first celebrated in 1999. It was created to celebrate the great companions dogs make and to encourage their adoption from humane societies, animal shelters and breed rescue clubs. This annual event encourages employers to experience the value of pets in their workplace for this one special day to promote pet adoptions.

Top 10 Things to Say to Convince Your Boss to Take Part in TYDTW Day

10. The squirrels in the neighborhood deserve a break.
 9. Wagging tails work great when the a/c is on the fritz.
 8. With a dog as your passenger, you'll be able to use the car pool lane.
 7. It's a great way to lick the work day blahs!
 6. My dog thinks you're grrrrreat!
 5. Meetings end as soon as Rover starts staring at the conference room door.
 4. You can blame those missing reports on one of your employees' dogs.
 3. It's the leash you can do.
 2. Finally, someone at your office will actually be working like a dog.
- AND THE NUMBER ONE REASON TO TAKE YOUR DOG TO WORK...
1. Friday, June 20, is Take Your Dog To Work Day@!

Top 10 dog-friendly companies now hiring (SimplyHired.com)

1. Google
2. Amazon.com
3. Banfield, the Pet Hospital
4. Amazon.com, Inc
5. Petsmart
6. Autodesk
7. ValueOptions
8. Nature Conservancy
9. Be Your Best
10. Advent Software

For more information check out the take your dog to work website <http://www.takeyourdog.com/index.php>



SIT/STAY/SLEEP

Looking for a get-away for you and your Lab? Check out some posh pet friendly area hotels.

The James

Chicago, IL
55 E. Ontario St.
(800) 745-8883
JamesHotels.com

The James is an urban oasis smack in the middle of one of the world's dog-friendliest cities.

Pet perks: A pet travel kit featuring the Pooch Spa service menu, David Burke's Primehouse pet menu, clean-up bags, a special treat, a dog or cat toy, and pet tourist map.

Pet policies: \$75 nonrefundable deposit
Check out: Canine Cruises offers afternoon jaunts down the Chicago River
(MercurySkylineCruiseline.com).
Average price: \$259 (standard guest room)

WAGGIN' WEEKEND GETAWAY:

FOR A MIDWESTERN ROAD TRIP, CHECK OUT THESE PET-FRIENDLY LODGINGS.

Glenn Country Inn

1286 64th St, Fennville, MI; (269) 227-3045,
GlennCountryInn.com
Pet Fees: none, Average Price: \$129-\$149 (queen standard)

Hotel Père Marquette

501 Main St, Peoria, IL; (800) 447-1676,
HotelPereMarquette.com
Pet Fees: \$100 refundable deposit, Average Price \$149 (king standard)

TierraLinda Bed, Breakfast and Beyond

826 South Rocky Hill Rd, Galena, IL; (815) 777-1234,
BeautifulEarth.com
Pet Fees: \$20 per dog, per night, Average Price \$125 (queen standard)

For more information please check out Trails Magazine

http://www.tailsinc.com/site/epage/63130_551.htm

LABertisements

Happy Dog Barkery 

Downers Grove
Elmhurst

Coming soon to Yorktown Center in Lombard!

<http://www.happydogbarkery.com/>

News and Events

Mark Your Calendars Now!

Annual Reunion Picnic

Mark Your Calendar

September 13, 2008

11 am - 2pm

Half Day Forest Preserve

Vernon Hills, IL

Food, Fun, Games and Merchandise!! Plus see all of your MLRR friends. Watch your mail and the MLRR website for more information.

Volunteers Desperately Needed!

Because of the record number of applications being received, we are in need of volunteers to conduct home visits, especially in the North and Northwest suburbs.

And, now more than ever, we are in need of additional foster homes. If you can supply love, food and exercise (and what better motivation to get moving than a needy Lab?) then you would make a great foster parent.

If you can help out, even a little, please let us know; our loving Labs thank you! It's more rewarding than you'll ever know!



Lab of the Year: Cassie

Cassie won the honor of being Lab of the Year at this year's MLRR Dinner Auction. Below is a little about Cassie and the heartwarming story of her adoption, as told by her 'parents'. Unfortunately her's is an all too familiar story in the world of rescued female dogs.

We adopted Cassie in November 2006. As far as any one knows she is a puppy mill mama and was brought to a kill shelter once she couldn't produce adequately. Cassie's face tells some of the hardships she's experienced. She has scars all over her face and on the top of her head as well as bald patches on the tops of her ears where a muzzle had been kept on her. One ear has been ripped and healed in a jagged tear. When we got Cassie, she had no muscle tone and little endurance.

Midwest Lab Rescue saved her and a number of other wonderful dogs. We've kept her rescue name Cassie for Cassiopeia since the mythology is her beauty got her in trouble and her world was turned upside down. Sounds like a puppy mill mama's story to us!

Within the first month, Cassie had gained ten pounds of muscle just by playing in the yard. Over the last year she's learned to be less afraid, especially of men, she can beg with the best of them and has even learned to catch mice and participated in a pack 'spraying' by a former, now deceased, neighborhood skunk (no one said skunks would be safe in our yard!).

Cassie loves to wake us up at 5AM with wonderful doggy kisses. She is constantly bounding across the yard in joyful little dances, absolutely LOVES our sump pump 'pond' and the doggy den that's been dug out under the play house. She loves to play 'Get Cassie' as we chase her around the yard but will stop and come for a kiss when we ask for one.

The joy Cassie shows in life enhances our lives daily. We are forever grateful to have Cassie in our family.

Jan and Daryl C.

Below are some pictures of Cassie.....





Giving Labs a Second Chance

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

Recently we have been receiving record numbers of adoption applications and we are thrilled! This means that the word is getting out about adopting rather than buying a pet. It also means that we are giving more Labs than ever, a second chance at a life they so truly deserve. However, with this influx of applications we also have a dilemma; a shortage of the types of dogs in demand. Many applicants are looking for females, in particular, yellow females. While we try our best to have a variety of dogs available for our adoptors, we must be honest (reflecting on an article written in a previous issue on BBDs, Big Black Dogs) that the majority of dogs left to die in shelters are males, again, in particular black males. The typical dog that MLRR brings into rescue is a black male between the ages of 1 and 4 years old. And again, while we do our best to seek out a variety of Labs, this is what we are up against. So, while we thank you tremendously for giving our Labbies the chance at a new life, please be patient with us if your wait time for the type of dog you want may be a little longer than what you hoped for. However, if you are currently waiting for a female, but would consider meeting one of our wonderful, loving males, please let us know. We will be more than happy to update your preferences and set up a meeting! Males are loyal, loving and have great temperaments as well. If you give one a chance, you might just find the match of a lifetime!

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

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