

PUPPIES BEHIND BARS

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TRAINING INMATES TO RAISE PUPPIES TO BE GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND AND EXPLOSIVE-DETECTION CANINES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

THE PUPPY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Summer 2006

THREE'S MORE THAN COMPANY

From working security details to bonding with special-ed kids, P.B.B.-raised pups affect the world around them in many ways. Below, three human "partners" write about the dogs they've worked with, and moments they won't forget.

LARRY

Raised at: *Edna Mahan Correctional Facility*
Working as: *Explosive detection canine for the C.I.A.*

Larry's slept on everything from the web jump seat of military aircraft flying over Asia to silk-covered chairs at a Ritz Carlton in the Middle East, says his handler, Rick D. But one of their most memorable assignments was right in the nation's capital. As Rick describes that day:

This past Fourth of July, Larry and I helped sweep the Mall in Washington, D.C. There were canine teams from many different agencies. Every team had its own area of responsibility; ours was just west of the Washington Monument. Larry and I joined up with an A.T.F. agent and his Labrador and started early in the day, before the area was open to the public. The morning was warm and the sun was out; it would not be long before the dogs were overheated. In just a couple of hours we had finished checking our area for explosives. At the first-aid tent we found plenty of water for both dogs and handlers. Now it was 10 a.m. and close to 90 degrees.

Just as we were finishing our water break, Larry and I, and the A.T.F. handler and his Lab, were asked to check the stairwell inside the Washington Monument. That sounded good, because the monument is air-conditioned. We all rode the elevator

to the observation deck at the 500-foot level. The view of the city from that height was awesome, but we had 50 flights of stairs to check, so we didn't stay very long. There aren't many productive areas to search on the way down, not many places for someone to hide a device, but someone had to check, and we were happy to do it.

Larry enjoyed the first 10 flights down, but

with 40 flights to go he began to think that the stairs he was descending might not end. At the top of each staircase, Larry would stop for a second and look up at me as if to ask, "Really?" I'd give him some encouragement, and off he'd go. I have to say that by the time we had descended 30 flights of stairs I began to wonder if it was going to end, too. The air-conditioning didn't seem to be effective anymore. Soon we were down to the foyer entrance, where the floor was made of cold, white marble. Larry and his

buddy were flat on their bellies with legs straight out, tired but happy.

TEDDY

Raised at: *Edna Mahan Correctional Facility*
Working as: *Bomb-sniffing trainee, and "visitor" in P.B.B.'s Paws & Reflect program.*

P.B.B. volunteer puppy-sitter Hallie Levine went with Teddy to visit one of the homebound elderly New Yorkers who participate in Paws & Reflect. Here's Levine's account of that first meeting.

After several interviews with P.B.B. and

continued on page 2



continued from page 1

J.A.S.A. [Jewish Association for Services for the Aged] staff, I was paired with Helen, a 79-year-old woman who lives on the Upper East Side. As I headed off for my first visit on a blustery December day with Teddy, a year-old female black Lab, I felt a bit apprehensive. All I knew of Helen was that she was a uterine-cancer survivor, a native New Yorker who had spent her years living and working on the Upper East Side. Would Helen feel comfortable with me, a stranger, walking into her home? What would we talk about? What if she was afraid of the puppies, or vice versa?

But 40 minutes later, when Teddy trotted into Helen's third-floor walkup and marched right up and placed her paws right on the older woman's lap, staring excitedly into her eyes, I knew I needn't have worried. "Goodness! You're going to get to be so big! Look at your paws!" the silver-haired woman in the flowered housedress crooned. She buried her face in Teddy's warm fur, cradling the dog to her chest. I was amazed, not only at how instantly the two had connected, but at the pup's innate gentleness as she licked Helen's hand and cuddled against her.

Minutes later, Teddy was snoring blissfully at Helen's feet, while Helen peppered me with questions: How old was Teddy? What prison did she come from? Did I know anything about the woman who watched over her? Was she well taken care of? Did she get enough treats? Were there other puppies for her in prison to play with? Did I think she minded sleeping in a jail cell? Her face was furrowed with concern, but she smiled when I explained about the letter I'd received from the prisoner, who'd lovingly dubbed Teddy "Princess" because she liked clean fleece liners in her sleeping kennel.

ADA

Raised at: *Bedford Hills Correctional Facility*

Working as: *Guide dog in training at Guiding Eyes for the Blind*

A special-ed teacher at John Jay High School in Bedford, N.Y., contacted P.B.B. to ask if someone could bring a puppy to her Life Skills class, and give the students—Lexi, Trevor, and Alexa—the experience of being with dogs. Volunteer Ann Gastrich offered to bring Ada, and, as she reports, it was a very rewarding experience.

I took Ada to our first meeting, which was on Halloween. The students had been briefed about the program. I filled them in on the many commands that the dogs know and showed them some of those commands in the classroom. Ada was introduced to the students individually. They were very cautious and shy in this first encounter. Fortunately I was able to bring Ada back several times before she left to be tested at Guiding Eyes for the Blind.

During each visit the students became more comfortable, and they walked Ada in the corridor. Alexa, who is in a wheelchair, was thrilled to use her walker with the dog alongside her. The students and I have been writing journals to keep a record of our experiences. The pictures that I have taken were well received by the students and Ada's inmate puppy-raiser, who was bragging that her dog went to school!

As I bring new dogs to the classroom the students are becoming aware of the differences in the dogs—personality, color, and style. They continue to be impressed with how the dogs behave. Trevor says that he is practicing commands with his dog at home. Alexa says that she likes walking with the dogs and it keeps her focused. Lexi says the dogs make her relax. I continue to inform them about Ada's progress, and perhaps we will go to her graduation together.

SUMMER SUCCESS Terrell Brown came to work as a P.B.B. intern in the summer of 2004, returning for a second internship in the summer of 2005. But this year, Brown became the first person in

PAWS FOR APPLAUSE

his family to graduate from high school, so next month he will be packing up to attend Sullivan Community College outside Albany, New York. He wants to study

criminal justice, in the hope that one day he'll help keep the city safe by working with an N.Y.P.D. K-9 or mounted unit.

CITIZEN GLORIA For the work that P.B.B. does to help the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in the fight against terrorism, founder and president **Gloria Gilbert Stoga** will receive the **A.T.F. Civilian of the Year** award from **Attorney General Alberto Gonzales**. She was nominated by **Terry Bohan**, head of the bureau's Canine Branch, and selected from among nominees around the world.

LEO RISING Eighteen-year-old **Matthew Krauze**, president of the youth-service based Warwick Valley Leo Club, has raised both money and invaluable awareness for P.B.B. over the past three years. To honor his contributions, one of the puppies in the Mid-Orange prison was named **Leo**, and Leo is now a canine member of the N.Y.P.D. Bomb Squad. Krauze has just been honored again, this time by the Build a Bear Workshop, as a "Huggable Hero." This award, which is given to outstanding young volunteers, comes with a \$2,500 donation to Krauze's cause—that's P.B.B.—and he will be featured in the 2007 Huggable Heroes calendar.

SECOND CHANCE In the four years after her release from the Edna Mahan prison in New Jersey, former inmate puppy-raiser Kimberly Gordon worked her way up to become manager of her local Petco grooming salon. She also got married, bought a house, and had a baby. Now she's starting her own business. "In 1994 when I was convicted and sent to prison, I thought that my life was over, even before I had a chance to live it right," she recently wrote to P.B.B. "If Puppies Behind Bars was not part of that time that I spent in [prison], I might not be writing this letter today, nor would I be the person I am today. On June 1, I am celebrating the grand opening of my very own business, Kimberly's Pampered Pets (a grooming salon and pet supply store)."

STARS BEHIND BARS Four Preppy Paws, which designs and sells stylish accessories for both canine and human, supports worthy charities through its "Paws for a Cause" initiative. After learning about Puppies Behind Bars' work, the company's founder, **Heidi Barraza**, created the "American Classic" collection, and is donating 10% of the proceeds to P.B.B. Barraza's belief, and the inspiration for the collection, is that "All P.B.B.'s puppies are



American Classic

stars." You can deck out yourself and your puppy by visiting Four Preppy Paws' first retail store, which is opening in Boston this summer, or by going to www.fourpreppypaws.com.

ALL ABOUT JOAN

Joan LaCaille doesn't think she does much for Puppies Behind Bars. After all, she's just a founding board member, the current treasurer, and the most tireless, dedicated fundraiser the organization has ever had. No big deal, she would tell you; let's not make a fuss. So when P.B.B. decided to hold a party in honor of LaCaille, the planning was going to have to be top secret.

At noon on March 31, more than 150 of her friends, her colleagues at Warburg Realty, and other P.B.B. supporters gathered on the second floor of the legendary New York restaurant "21." As MC, LaCaille's long-time pal Doris Roberts, of "Everybody Loves Raymond" fame, took the mike at around 12:15 to inform the crowd that the guest of honor would be arriving at 12:30, expecting to have lunch with representatives from a charitable foundation. "Joan will be O.K. I have a vodka and grapefruit juice for her," she said, holding up the glass to much applause. A quarter-hour later, the room fell miraculously silent. LaCaille walked in, and was greeted by a very loud "Surprise!"

Her shock was only partly mitigated by the vodka and grapefruit juice as she made her way around the room, encountering all the familiar faces who'd come to celebrate her. Then she turned to P.B.B. president Gloria Gilbert Stoga and said, in her inim-



Joan LaCaille, above, at right, and at far right with Doris Roberts and Glenn Goord.



itable fashion, "I don't believe you, Gloria. You should have spent this money on Puppies."

But the delicious crabcake-and-champagne lunch turned into an impromptu fundraiser. First, Gilbert Stoga told the crowd how fearless LaCaille has been in her quest for money for P.B.B., and recalled her saying about one potential donor, "Babykins, his pockets are deep, and I'm going to pick them for Puppies." Then P.B.B.'s chairwoman, Sue Bloomberg, introduced Roberts, who talked about some of the wilder times she'd shared with LaCaille over the past 40 years. After a video about LaCaille and

one very special puppy—named Joan, in her honor—who is a companion to a gravely ill child, Roberts announced she is sponsoring two new puppies, in honor of her grandchildren. Within minutes, Gilbert Stoga told everyone that five more puppies had been sponsored by other guests. By the end of the lunch, nine pups had been sponsored, for a total of \$27,000.

Giving Doris Roberts a run for

her money as biggest star at the event was a handsome black Lab named Larry, who is now a bomb-sniffing dog for the C.I.A., and whose handler, Rick D., had brought him up from Langley, Va. (For more about Larry, see p. 1.) As it happens, Larry is also a son of Raymond, the very first pup that Roberts sponsored once LaCaille got her involved with P.B.B.

Joan LaCaille probably still doesn't get how important a role she plays. "I'm totally overwhelmed here," she said, as she thanked the assembled guests. "I didn't know I had so many friends." But everyone at P.B.B. learned a long time ago how very popular—and effective—she is.

DONATION FORM

I would like to sponsor and name a puppy (minimum donation: \$3000.)

Please accept my donation for:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 puppy's weekend visit to NYC (\$35) | <input type="checkbox"/> A sleeping crate for 1 puppy (\$85) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leashes and bowls for 1 puppy (\$50) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other amount |

Please charge my credit card:

Visa MasterCard AmEx

(Please list name as it appears on card. List billing address.)

Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Add my friend to your mailing list

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State & Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please mail your tax-deductible contribution with this form to:

Puppies Behind Bars • 10 East 40th Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10016

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the nine years since Puppies Behind Bars was founded, the world around us has changed dramatically. And, as P.B.B. has grown, we have tried to reflect some of those changes. When the program began, our focus was solely on raising guide dogs, in partnership with a top-ranked school, Guiding Eyes for the Blind. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, we began to raise puppies to become explosive-detection canines (E.D.C.'s). We soon found that our dogs were in great demand, first by the New York Police Department and then by various Federal agencies. Today P.B.B.-raised dogs are engaged in security work around the globe, from Washington, D.C., to the Iraqi-Jordanian border and beyond. It has been an enormous source of pride to the prison inmates—and all of us at P.B.B.—that our dogs are helping to keep Americans safe from terrorism.

At the same time, the need for guide dogs is gradually (and mercifully) declining, as more and more causes of blindness are being prevented. Puppies Behind Bars is committed to raising dogs that will not only benefit society at large (our E.D.C.'s, for example) but also help individuals and their families find freedom and independence. Over the next year, therefore, P.B.B. will phase out raising future guide dogs and start raising service dogs for the handicapped. As our many donors and volunteers know, guide-dog puppies are raised and trained solely to work with the blind. Service-dog puppies are raised and trained to help people with physical handicaps of various types.

In the past, when for some reason P.B.B.-raised puppies did not become guide dogs, Guiding Eyes for the Blind allowed us to donate a maximum of five puppies each year to families with blind children. Over the years, we've given eight puppies to such families, getting tremendous satisfaction from the difference those puppies made in their lives. But it has been quite difficult for us to be unable to donate dogs to families of children with physical handicaps. Now, we will be able to raise dogs directly for children: children who are in wheelchairs, children who suffer from cerebral palsy, children who are deaf, children who are shunned by classmates and for whom a dog can not only open a door or pick up a dropped pencil, but also be a bridge to other kids.

Guiding Eyes for the Blind has been a wonderful partner, and we are honored to have been able to raise close to 200 dogs for them. We have learned much from them and appreciate deeply the extraordinary quality of their breeding program. As we move away from raising guide dogs, we look forward to new relationships with several of the United States' premier service-dog organizations and the new puppies that will come into our lives. As has always been the case, we will treat each puppy as an individual with its own pace of learning. "Raising each puppy to its fullest potential" is the creed by which we operate and each of our inmate puppy-raisers knows it is the backbone of the job they have undertaken.

As you continue to read this newsletter, as our volunteers continue to take our pup-

pies out of the prisons for hourly or weekend socialization, and as donors continue to sponsor and name pups and receive quarterly updates from the raisers, you will continue to see photos of gorgeous Labrador retriever puppies—and you will begin to see some Golden retrievers as well. (We've raised a couple of Golden retrievers over the years, for Guide Dogs of America and for Guiding Eyes, and have decided that these fluffy balls of fur are about the cutest things we've ever seen.)

Our first service-dog puppies will enter the Otisville Correctional Facility in June. Otisville is the seventh, and latest, prison to become part of the P.B.B. program. The inmate puppy-raisers will teach the dogs such tasks as opening and closing doors, turning light switches on and off, and pulling socks off the feet of someone who has climbed into bed. It will be a new challenge in understanding dogs and how to train them. For our puppy-raisers, our board, and our staff, this new initiative is another exciting way P.B.B. can serve the public through the wonderful love, companionship, and intelligence inherent in each and every puppy we raise.

Thank you for your continued support of our very important work.



Gloria Gilbert Stoga

PUPPIES BEHIND BARS

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