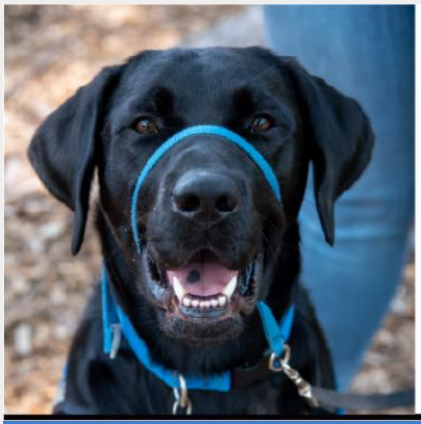


THE CANINE CHRONICLE

News for NEADS Puppy Raisers

MARCH 2025

Dear Puppy Raisers,

Spring is on the horizon, bringing new opportunities for our Puppy Raisers, Service Dogs in Training, and the entire NEADS community. As we step into the season, we have some exciting updates, upcoming events, and important reminders to share with you.

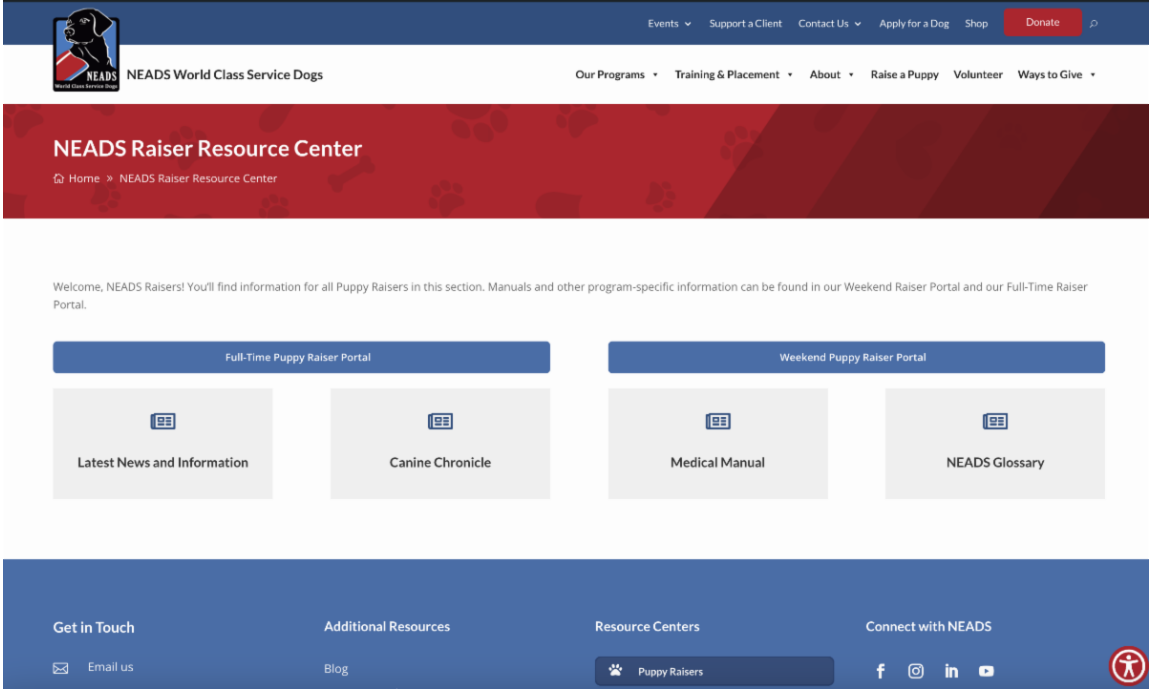
In this issue, you'll find details on upcoming socialization opportunities, a special event honoring veterans, and an update on the Weekend Puppy Raiser Council. We're also diving into the importance of Service Dog in Training evaluations and how they shape the future of our dogs. Plus, we're highlighting a growing initiative—our Dog Sitter Program—to ensure every SDiT gets the best possible care when their Puppy Raiser needs a break.

Thank you for your continued dedication to raising and supporting future Service Dogs. Your commitment makes an incredible difference, and we are grateful to have you as part of the NEADS family.

Happy reading!

Heather Romanoff
Manager of Raiser Operations

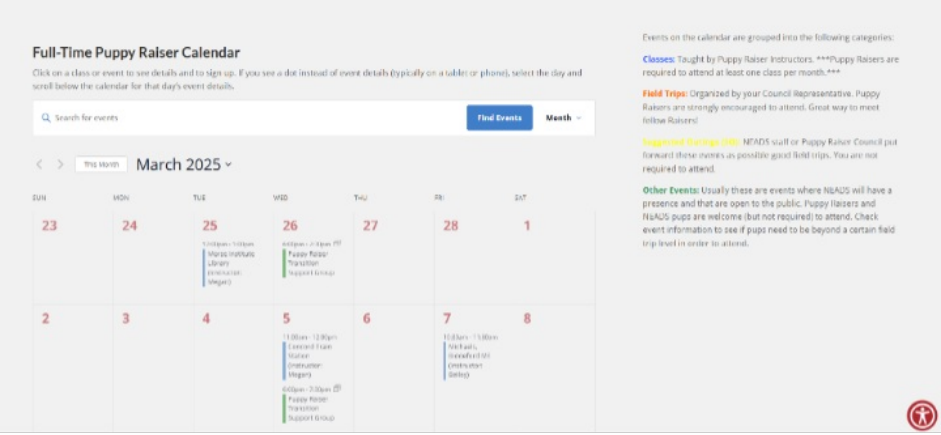
NEADS Website Upgrade and Portal Changes



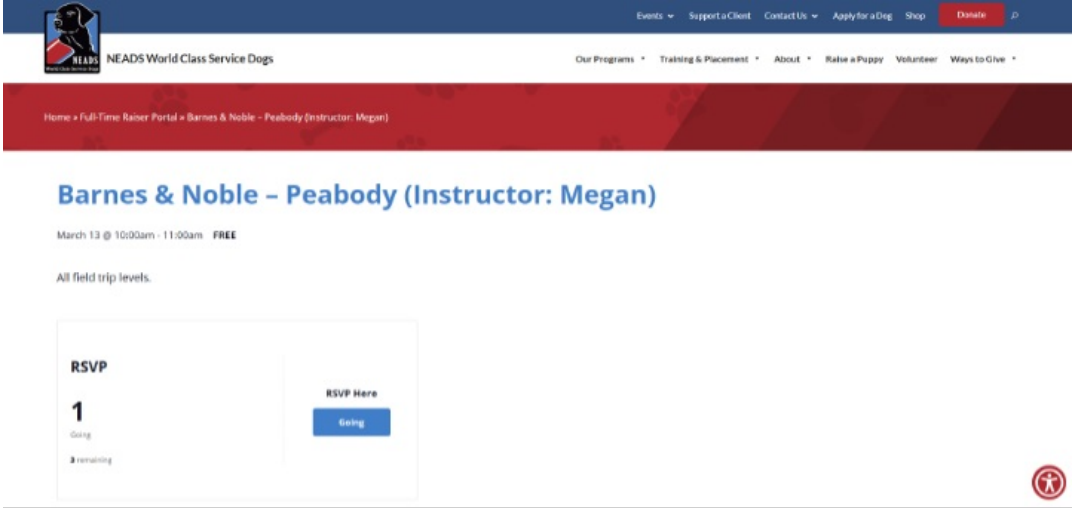
Over the past three months we have announced coming changes to the NEADS website and the Puppy Raiser portals. We are excited to announce that our website upgrades have officially gone live!

Although the website has a lot to explore, we want to make sure that you know how to use some new features on your portal. Over the past year, our Weekend Puppy Raisers have been testing different calendar options. Their feedback has been valuable in selecting our new calendar that will be used by both groups.

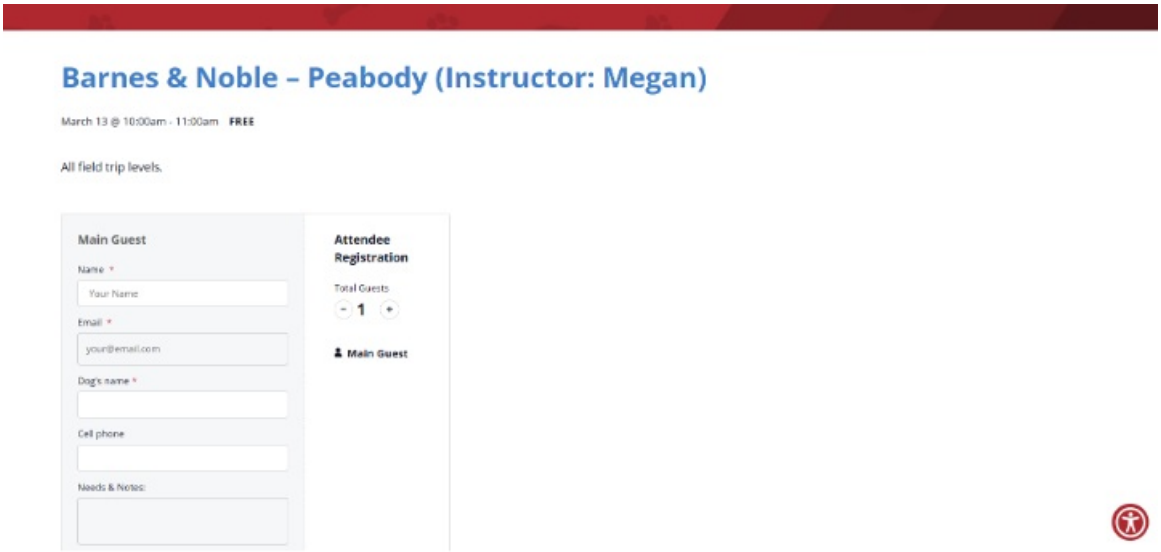
The new calendar can be found by scrolling to the bottom of your portal's page. Be sure to read the color-coding key on the right-hand side to learn what each event is.



To RSVP to a class or event, simply click on the event or class. Be sure to read any descriptions about the event before clicking on the RSVP button. As you can see below, the full time raiser class at Barnes & Noble in Peabody on March 13 is being led by Megan and is for all field trip levels.

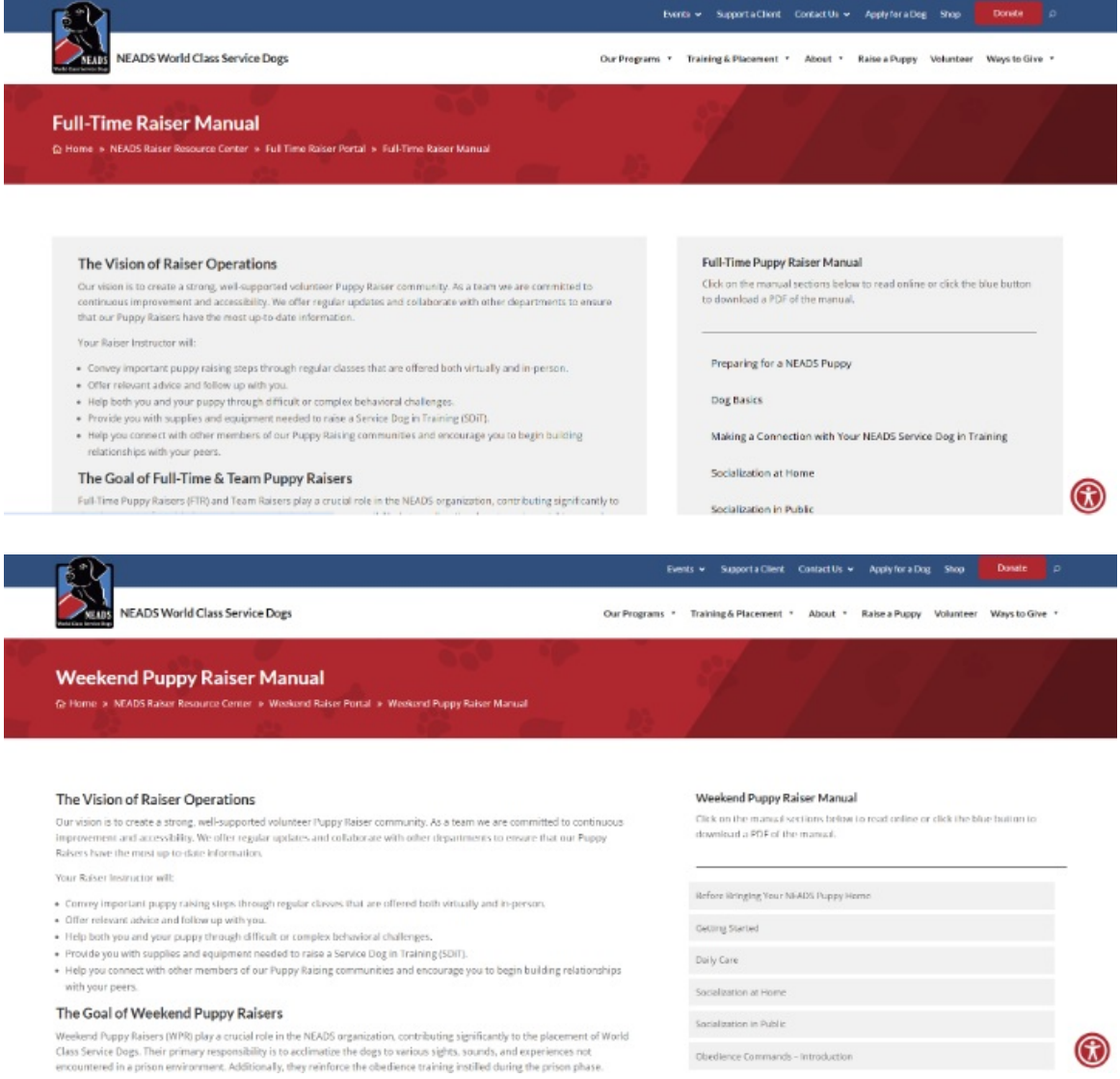


Once you click on the RSVP button, enter your information and include any supplies you may need your Instructor to bring or if your SDiT needs a nail trim or you have anything specific you'd like to discuss after class. Be sure to click finish to submit.



You will receive reminders and will have the opportunity to add the event to your calendar.

Along with the new update, both groups will also see their new updated manuals! There are important updates in each including an update to our costume policy and a basic explanation of our training philosophy. Be sure to read through your new manual to learn more.



We encourage you to browse through the site to become familiar with the new look and layout.

Changes in the Weekend Puppy Raiser Council



We have an exciting update to share about the Weekend Puppy Raiser Council.

Many of you know that Jamie Griffith has been an invaluable representative for MCI Norfolk, helping to stabilize the location after the transition of SDiTs from MCI Concord and strengthening our movement structure between prisons. After careful consideration, Jamie has decided to return to the Farm in Concord as a Weekend Puppy Raiser, a location closer to home. We are incredibly grateful for his dedication and the positive impact he has made at Norfolk.

Stepping into this role is longtime Weekend Puppy Raiser Keith McCormick. Keith has been a dedicated member of our community, always ready to support SDiTs and fellow Puppy Raisers. Currently raising his sixth NEADS SDiT, Keith's passion for our mission and wealth of experience make him the perfect fit for this leadership

position. We are confident he will continue to provide outstanding support to the Norfolk Weekend Puppy Raiser group.

Jamie and Keith will be working together to ensure a smooth transition, and we thank them both for their commitment to NEADS and our SDiTs. Please join us in expressing our appreciation to Jamie and welcoming Keith into this new role!

A Look at Service Dog in Training Evaluations

As Puppy Raisers with NEADS, you've likely heard the term "evaluation." These assessments are a key part of our program, helping us track each dog's progress and ensure they're developing the skills needed to become a world-class Service Dog. But what exactly happens during these evaluations, and why are they so important?

Behavior Checklist
The evaluation process begins early—at just 8 weeks old. Puppies raised in the NEADS Breeding Center undergo their first assessment, known as the Puppy Behavior Checklist (BCL). This evaluation helps us understand how each puppy responds to new experiences and how well they recover from surprising events. These observations provide valuable insight into their temperament and resilience, helping us understand their baseline for early traits that may be important as they progress through training.

Walk & Talk
Soon, NEADS will introduce a new 4 - 6-month evaluation called Walk & Talk. This assessment provides an opportunity for you and your puppy to meet with 2–3 members of the Raiser Operations team at a carefully chosen public location. During this evaluation, instructors observe the puppy's ability to maintain appropriate behavior in a real-world setting and how they respond to different situations. Walk & Talks use the same standardized scoring system as the Puppy BCLs, which means staff are easily able to use a common language to assess these behaviors and compare scores from previous assessments. These insights help guide the next stages of training, ensuring that each puppy receives the support they need to succeed.

10 – 12-Month Old Evaluation
As SDiTs reach 10–12 months old, they participate in a more in-depth evaluation on the NEADS campus, staying for up to seven days. This evaluation allows instructors to assess not only the puppy's behavior in public but also their reaction to the NEADS environment itself. While on campus, each SDiT spends one-on-one time with an Instructor, interacts with NEADS staff in the Hawkins Canine Center, and takes part in field trips to evaluate their behavior in various environments. The results of this evaluation help guide the Training Team in determining the best next steps for the puppy's development.

Additional Evaluations
Once a dog enters either the Prison PUP Program or the String Training Program, Trainers may conduct an additional evaluation between 12 – 18 months old. This step provides an opportunity for Trainers to work with the SDiT in a controlled setting, either one-on-one or alongside other members of the Training Team. These final assessments help ensure that each dog is well-prepared for the next stage of training.

Why Evaluations Matter
By tracking a Service Dog in Training's development across multiple evaluation points, we can adjust training plans to best support each dog's success. Additionally, this data is invaluable to the NEADS Breeding Department, helping us refine our breeding program and select future breeding candidates based on consistent behavioral traits.
These evaluations, combined with the dedication of our volunteer Puppy Raisers and

Trainers, play a crucial role in developing the next generation of NEADS Service Dogs.

Military Appreciation Night with the Worcester Railers

NEADS and the Worcester Railers are inviting NEADS Puppy Raisers to the annual Military Appreciation Game on March 22 at 6:00 PM. Each year the Worcester Railers holds a game to benefit area-wide veterans, with this year's proceeds going to Central Massachusetts Veterans Support.

This will be the second year that NEADS will be attending this event and we're inviting Puppy Raisers and SDiT that have reached the appropriate level. We want to show our support for our veteran community by showing up with a lot of blue vests and Puppy Raisers! We have special box seating for 8 SDiT and 12 Puppy Raisers. Those who attend will be joined by NEADS Raiser Operations, and our new CEO, Aubrey Henderson.
With this event being a loud and busy hockey game, Heather and Bailey will be reaching out to Puppy Raisers that have SDiT at the appropriate level. Once you receive an invitation, please RSVP so we know who to expect. Space is limited and a quick response will be most appreciated.

If you have an SDiT that has not yet reached this point but would like to attend the game to support local veterans, please reach out to your Instructor to arrange for a Dog Sitter.



Gearing Up for 2025 Events & Updates from the Ambassadors



After a busy first year as a group, the Puppy Raiser Ambassadors are excited to return for the 2025 event season. This group represents all of you in communities across New England to offer education and seek new Puppy Raisers.

Joining an Event
Puppy Raisers are often welcome to join in the events attended by Ambassadors. A few things to keep in mind:

- Some events can be quite large and require your SDiT to have reached a certain level. These may require your Instructor's approval.
- The Ambassadors attend events as NEADS vendors/representatives, general attendees, or speakers. Be sure to check the event listing in

your portal calendar for information about the event.

- Some of our Ambassadors are on hiatus from raising and may not have a SDiT. So, depending on the event, an Ambassador may reach out to area Puppy Raisers or request that more Puppy Raisers join them to make a bigger impact.

The events we list can offer great ideas for Field Trips if you're having a difficult time finding the right environment for certain levels.



Ambassador Updates

We're happy to announce that the Ambassador group has grown during our off-season. Katelyn Putvinski and Kate Foley have recently joined the group, and we're thrilled to have their help!

Our library events were very well-received, and we plan on expanding these presentations and visits. If you have a local library that would be interested in education about Service Dogs or for regular meet and greet visits, reach out to Heather or your local Ambassador. We'll be happy to set up the event.

And finally, last year taught the group a lot about what we need to have a successful season. NEADS is working hard to add to our event supplies. This includes adding more Puppy Raiser specific displays, more NEADS branded items, and fun giveaways.

We're excited about the upcoming season and can't wait to see all of you out and about!











2025 Quarterly Puppy Raiser Roundtable Discussions

Each quarter, Raiser Operations has an open invitation to all Puppy Raisers in our community to discuss topics that are important across all groups. The first Roundtable of 2025 was All About Breeding, presented by Kate Albertini, Manager of Breeding & Puppy Development and Megan Kropf, Assistant Manager of Breeding & Puppy Development. In case you missed it, you can watch it here, on our Puppy Raiser Portal

Upcoming Roundtables include:

Q2: What is the Difference Between NEADS Instructors and Trainers - May

- Better understand the roles each play to help our Service Dogs become world class.
- How we're integrated and where we differ.
- Who's in charge of your Service Dog in Training?

Q3: Our Commands and How they Help Clients - August

Special Guest Speaker:
Kara Milotte, Manager of Client Services

- We're often asked why we do things a certain way. In this discussion, we'll talk about the client experience and the physical limitations they have that lead to command shaping.

Happy Birthday!

We're excited to introduce a new series that highlights special birthdays for our Service Dogs and Service Dogs in Training! Many of you love to celebrate these milestones, and we occasionally receive photos capturing these moments—some heartfelt, some funny, and some delightfully over-the-top. Now, we want to share them with the NEADS community!

If you would like to see your SDiT featured in this series, send your birthday photos to your Instructor or tag us in the NEADS Puppy Raiser Facebook group when you share your celebration!

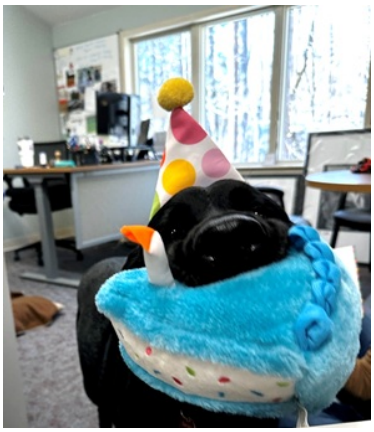
This month, we're celebrating **Assistance Dog Glory.** Glory holds a special place in many hearts—she's a Jettie puppy (which makes her Jen's grandpuppy!), a devoted fan of bananas and banana chips, and, most importantly, a very good girl who has made a lasting impact on so many of you.



As an Assistance Dog, Glory works hard every day, making a difference in the lives of those she serves.

Ambassador Dog Bobby needs no introduction! He collects new followers everywhere he goes.

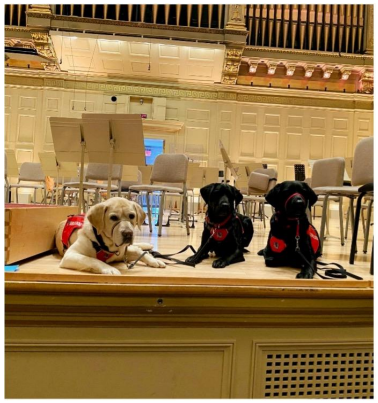
This loveable big guy started his career as a Service Dog for someone with physical disabilities and now works with Kara in client services. He is an incredible ambassador for our Service Dog program, helping to spread education everywhere from the statehouse to local colleges and libraries.



Bobby recently celebrated his 4th birthday!



Ambassador Dog Bobby handled by NEADS Manager of Client Service, Kara, MA Governor Maura Healey, and NEADS Chief Officer of Development and Programs, Cathy Zemaitis.



Service Dog Jones, Ambassador Dog Verna, and Ambassador Dog Bobby filming at the Boston Symphony Orchestra for the NEADS Red Vest Initiative.

Requesting Help from a Sitter



As we move into the final stage of our Dog Sitter Program—connecting and assigning Dog Sitters directly to Puppy Raisers—we want to take a moment to remind everyone of the program's current boundaries.

Our Dog Sitters play a valuable role in supporting Puppy Raisers and our mission, often because they want to be involved but don't have the time to raise a puppy full-time. Many have demanding work schedules, travel frequently, or have busy family commitments. By requesting their help in advance, you allow them to plan accordingly and ensure they can provide the best possible care for your Service Dog in Training (SDiT).

To keep the program running smoothly for everyone, we ask that all Dog Sitting requests be made at least **two weeks in advance**. This timeframe allows us to find a nearby Dog Sitter who is available and gives your Instructor enough time to coordinate the placement. Requests made with less than two weeks' notice can be difficult to accommodate and may lead to scheduling conflicts for Instructors who need to shift priorities to find last-minute care.

We also want to remind both Dog Sitters and Puppy Raisers that SDiTs need transition time when moving between homes, especially if they have not spent time with a Sitter

before.

If a puppy or dog is staying with a Sitter for only a few days, their exposure to new experiences should be kept minimal. Nearly all of you have completed an orientation with me, where we discuss what a puppy can and cannot handle during a transition. Overwhelming a puppy with too many new people or locations can lead to unwanted behavior.

For SDiTs that have spent two or more weeks with a Sitter, transition time is also important when they return to their Puppy Raisers. While you may be eager to jump back into your routines, easing your pup back in gradually can help reduce stress and set them up for success.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in making this program a success for everyone involved. Thank you for being part of our community and for all that you do to help raise and support future Service Dogs!

Significance of a Name

- **Tyler** – Named in honor/memory of the sponsor's son.
- **Paisley** – Favorite dog name of the sponsor.
- **Penny** - Penny was a yellow lab that the sponsors had for 12 + years. . . a best friend.

Welcoming New Puppies



Nicholas

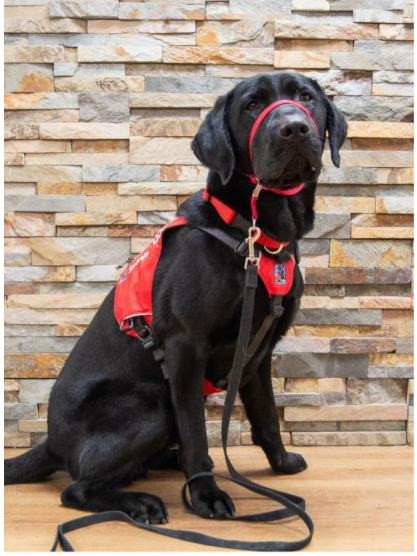
Nicholas's new Full-Time Puppy Raiser fell through and won't be able to get started with us just yet. For now, Nicholas will be spending time with Sue Feit, a former Weekend Puppy Raiser, Full-Time Puppy Raiser, and Team Raiser. We know that little Nicholas is in great hands until a permanent placement opens up.

If you know of someone that lives on the Cape and is currently interested in sharing responsibility in raising a Service Dog in Training, Sue is looking for a teammate. With this much experience, the person that joins her team will have a great partner!

Please have anyone interested **apply on our website**.

Recent Matches

Service Dog Ruby



Service Dog Ruby has come such a long way! Full-Time Puppy Raisers Nora and Mike Hannagan offered Ruby an incredible start living near a dog-friendly beach, which is where she learned to love the water. This was the first SDiT for the Hannagan family and we hope to see them back with their growing family in the future!

Weekend Puppy Raiser Ed Hopkinson followed Ruby to multiple Prison PUP locations as she matured and learned how to become an incredible Service Dog. He and his family gave Ruby just the right support to help her understand the world. This is Ed's second Ruby, now both matched.
Thank you to all of you for helping Ruby become the world class Service Dog she is today!

Reminder:
NEADS Medical Team Updated Hours and Contact Information

A reminder that the NEADS Medical Team has extended hours and updated contact information to improve our accessibility and service to you. The NEADS Medical Team is available from 8am to 8pm.

To ensure efficient communication, we highly recommend reaching out to us via email at medical@neads.org. This email address allows all team members to receive your message, regardless of their location, and ensures a prompt response. For urgent matters, we aim to reply within 2 hours, unless there is an unexpected surge in contacts.

Emergency call number: 978-563-1495.

We hope that by having one number, we can streamline the process of reaching someone in the Medical team more efficiently. During regular business hours, we strive to return emergency calls within 30 minutes. In case of a medical emergency, please take immediate action by visiting your nearest urgent veterinary care facility if it is after hours.

If you are uncertain about the nature of your concern, please refer to the Medical Manual available on the Puppy Raiser Portals. The manual provides a comprehensive list of symptoms to help you determine whether your issue is urgent, an emergency, or a non-emergency.

Non-urgent or non-emergency emails will be responded to within 24 hours.

We appreciate your cooperation and are committed to providing the best care for your needs.

Puppy Raiser Resource Center

Weekend Puppy Raisers enter with password PuppyRaiser
Full Time Puppy Raisers enter with password FTRaiser

Please contact **Audrey Trieschman** with questions, issues, or suggestions about the portal.

NEADS World Class Service Dogs | P.O. Box 1100 | Princeton, MA 01541 US

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