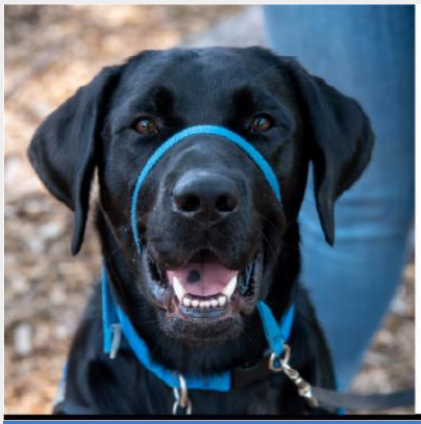


THE CANINE CHRONICLE

News for NEADS Puppy Raisers

June 2025

Dear NEADS Puppy Raiser Community,

As we wrap up spring and head into the warmer months, I'm feeling especially grateful for this remarkable group of volunteers. Whether you're welcoming a new puppy or cheering each other on, your dedication continues to define the heart of NEADS.

This month's Canine Chronicle is full of stories that reflect that spirit—from the inspiring volunteers featured in Paw It Forward, to the latest updates on our transition to LIMA-based training, to the outings and events that keep our dogs learning and our community connected. And of course, we're thrilled to introduce a new group of puppies and the Puppy Raisers who are getting them off to a strong start.

Looking ahead, I hope you'll mark your calendars for something special:**Puppy Raiser Appreciation Day at Kimball Farm on September 6.** This off-campus celebration is shaping up to be our most fun (and delicious) yet, and RSVPs are now open. We can't wait to honor you in person with sunshine, ice cream, and plenty of gratitude.

Thank you for all you do—I'm so lucky to be in this work with you.

Heather Romanoff
Manager of Raiser Operations

2025 Puppy Raiser Appreciation Day

Saturday, September 6, 11:45am-2:30pm

Kimball Farm, 400 Littleton Road, Westford, MA



We're Taking the Celebration Off Campus!

This year, we're going off campus for our most exciting Puppy Raiser Appreciation Day yet! We can't wait to celebrate everything our volunteers do to raise and love NEADS Service Dogs in Training.

We're thrilled to invite you to **Kimball Farm**, one of the most beloved ice cream and family fun spots in Massachusetts. From legendary sundaes to mini golf and bumper boats, this event promises fun for the whole family —and a heartfelt thank-you to those who make our mission

possible.

What's Included (with access until 4pm):

- Ice Cream Buffet (yes, unlimited toppings!)
- Mini Golf on two full courses
- Bumper Boats & Bumper Cars
- Driving Range + 9-Hole Pitch & Putt
- Sand Volleyball, Field Games, and More
- 2 Batting Cage Tokens
- **Bonus: 50% off Zip Line and 10% off at the Country Store (with event wristband)**

A Special Moment:



We're honored to welcome **NEADS Client Kate Thurman** as our featured speaker. Kate will be joining us with her **Dual Service & Hearing Dog, Pally**, to share her story and reflect on the incredible impact Puppy Raisers have had in her life.

Dual Dog Pally is Kate's third NEADS dog and she is excited to share her journey with all of you.

Reminders:

- Due to the venue's public nature, only **Raiser Operations–approved puppies** may attend. (No fenced-in space will be available.)
- Have a younger pup or one not yet cleared for a venue like this? Come solo—we'll work with you on Dog Sitter coverage or give approval for friends and family to sit your puppy.
- **Space is limited to live-in, immediate family only.**
- **Registration open until August 22.**

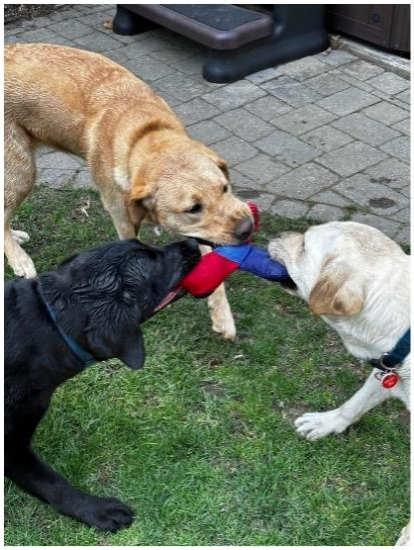
Details and Registration

Passwords:
Weekend Puppy Raisers: PuppyRaiser
Full Time Puppy Raisers: FTRaiser

See photos from last year's event here.

Paw It Forward

We have two more community members to welcome this month! Thank you to everyone who has jumped in with stories and interacted with our Paw It Forward posts in the NEADS Puppy Raiser Facebook group. It's been wonderful to see our community continue to grow closer together. If you want to recognize another Puppy Raiser, **click on Paw It Forward** on the Puppy Raiser Resource page in our portal.



Vickie Engelhardt and Michelle Lundquist jointly nominated **Karen Terry** for Paw It Forward. Here is what they ad to say about Karen as a community member:

"Karen Terry has an encouraging word for all her fellow Puppy Raisers. She is our cheerleader when we need it, giving us words of encouragement, supporting us and our dogs as they move through training and is always available for one-on-one support if needed.
We were so fortunate to connect when we started with our first pups. She was and is so generous with her perfect yard for puppy play dates.
Karen continues to raise these wonderful pups and is an inspiration to us all."

As one of your Puppy Raiser Ambassadors, Karen has consistently represented all of you for over a year. She embodies what it is to be part of a community and has sought ways to share her knowledge and training both within the Puppy Raiser community and within communities across Massachusetts. I'm thrilled that Karen is being recognized for her hard work by so many people.



If you've been part of the NEADS Puppy Raiser community for any amount of time, chances are you've met **Brenda Torres**—or felt the ripple effects of her impact. Brenda is a Weekend Puppy Raiser currently raising her 14th Service Dog in Training, and she's done far more than show up weekend after weekend—she's helped shape what it means to be a truly involved and mission-driven volunteer.

This nomination comes from me personally. Brenda, thank you for the heart, energy, and unwavering teamwork you bring to this community. You inspire me, and so many others, every day.

"Brenda doesn't just raise pups—she helps raise up the community. She's the Council Member for our String Program, the College Raiser Liaison at Assumption, and she's constantly supporting Raiser Ops behind the scenes in ways that often go unnoticed.
She's been instrumental in helping to create impactful outings for multiple Prison Pup Program locations and recently helped us form a relationship with a local nursing and recovery home—a setting that's vital for Service Dog development and one we're losing access to in other areas.

Brenda embodies what it means to live the NEADS mission. I'm so grateful to work alongside her and excited to share my admiration publicly."

Brenda, thank you for showing what's possible when compassion meets consistency. You are an inspiration to Puppy Raisers and staff alike.

Summer Outing Opportunities

After a long, drawn-out winter, we're more than ready to soak up the sunshine—and what better way than alongside a Service Dog in Training?

Each summer, Raiser Operations works to curate a mix of events that connect Puppy Raisers to their communities, strengthen bonds with NEADS Ambassadors, and offer SDiTs the kinds of real-world experiences that prepare them for future success. Some events are just for fun. Others may serve as approved field trips—talk to your Instructor if you think one may be a good match for your pup's current needs.

In the past, we shared a printed list in the Canine Chronicle, but to make planning easier, you can now find all events, exposure opportunities, and class offerings directly on your **Weekend Raiser and Full-Time Raiser portal calendars**. That way, you can build your schedule around your SDiT's progress and your own availability.

Here's a quick look at some of our recent outings:

Ride the Wave at Gillette Stadium
This event, hosted by Empower, brought together 25–30 children who have lost their fathers to tragic circumstances. Weekend Puppy Raisers from the String Program and Norfolk offered comfort, playfulness, and connection to these children—just by showing up with their pups.

PMC Kids Ride – Franklin
Ambassador Lindsay Semas and local Puppy Raisers joined young riders raising money for pediatric cancer research. As kids pedaled their hearts out over a 10-mile ride, our dogs and volunteers were there cheering them on, reminding everyone how community support can take many forms.

Meet-Up with The Common Room at Bibi Café & Bakery
The Common Room, a nonprofit supporting autistic adults, is connected to NEADS through Assistance Dog Gleason and their past donations of lovingly made dog treats and toys. This special event at Bibi Café allowed Puppy Raisers, clients, and community members to connect with these kind-hearted volunteers in person while raising awareness for both organizations.

And that's just the start. Whether you're new to NEADS or have raised many pups before, we hope you'll join us at one of the many events happening this season. There's something for everyone—and every dog—as we shake off the winter chill and step into summer together.

Check your portal calendar often—we'll see you outside!

An Update on Our Dental Chew Toy Test

Last year, we began testing a wider range of softer



chew toys to help protect the dental health of our Service Dogs in Training. Thanks to the thoughtful feedback from many of you, we've been able to identify toys that are both enriching and gentle on puppy teeth.

Weekend Puppy Raiser Rob Arico recently shared this about SDiT Chief's newest favorite find:

"The interesting thing is that for 3 hours Chief never looked for the bin or any other toys. He was content with the Jughead. Normally, if we talk to him while he has a toy, he'll drop it and make eye contact—just in case a treat is involved. On this day, most of the times that we spoke to him, he kept the Jughead in his mouth and made eye contact. He even dozed off once with it still in his mouth."

If you or your SDiT have thoughts to share on the new dental chew toys, send your feedback to Heather at **hromanoff@neads.org**. As we move into a new fiscal year this September, your input will help guide which toys we invest in for enrichment and safety.

Traveling by Car Update



At NEADS, the safety of our Service Dogs in Training is always a top priority. That's why we've updated our guidelines on how SDiTs should travel in vehicles.

Going forward, **SDiTs may no longer be tethered to a vehicle using their leash and collar.** While this was a common practice in the past, we now know that tethering in this way poses serious risks in the event of an accident—including choking and entanglement.
Crating (recommended for pups under 5 months): A secure crate in the back seat or trunk area.
Loose in the back/trunk seat: With leash *on but not tethered*, dogs may ride on the seat or a hammock-style cover.
Harness with seatbelt attachment: This is a great option for dogs that need a little more structure. Be sure the leash is clipped to a harness, *not* a collar, and consult your Instructor before using this setup.

 No riding in front seats.
 No tethering to collars under any circumstances.

These updated guidelines are already live in your digital manual as an addendum and will be fully integrated into the printed version this winter. In the meantime, please begin using one of the approved methods right away.

Questions? Reach out to your Instructor—we're here to help you find the safest, most comfortable travel setup for your SDiT.

Program Updates: A Positive Shift in Training

At NEADS, we're proud of our nearly 50-year legacy of innovation and excellence in training and socialization. This year, we're continuing that tradition by fully integrating **Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA)** methods into our training approach—a philosophy you may have already seen introduced in your 2025 manual.

Endorsed by **Assistance Dogs International (ADI)**, LIMA emphasizes the physical and emotional well-being of our Service Dogs in Training. By focusing on positive reinforcement and setting dogs up for success, we're creating stronger, more confident partners for the people they will one day serve.

Over the past year, these methods have been tested and refined in our Prison Pup Program with encouraging results. Now, Assistant Manager of Raiser Operations **Bailey Sullivan** and Manager of Training **Andy Woodcock** are bringing this progress to the Puppy Raiser community. Their collaboration is helping us take the next exciting step in evolving how we teach—and how our dogs learn.

We've already seen great responses from our pups using this approach, and we can't wait for you to experience the difference, too. Full details will be available in your volunteer manuals and training portals by the end of the month.

Significance of a Name

CHARLEY - is named in honor/memory of the sponsor's father. A much-loved and lovable person.

ANNIE – named for the donor's mother. She was named Ann and family/friends called her Annie.

RUBY - named in honor/memory of a family dog. Named by the Worcester Fire Department. We currently have 8 active Service Dogs in Training that have been named by the Worcester Fire Department!

Welcoming New Puppies & Puppy Raisers

We're closing out the spring season with a small (but mighty!) group of puppies entering our Full-Time program—and even more pups are set to arrive at Concord Farm this summer. Looking ahead, our next wave of Service Dogs in Training will be entering the program in September.

If you're a Full-Time/Team Puppy Raiser thinking about returning from hiatus—or if you know someone who would love to help us change lives—now's a great time to reach out. Contact Heather at **hromanoff@neads.org** to talk about timing and

meet the puppies who are on the way!

Miller



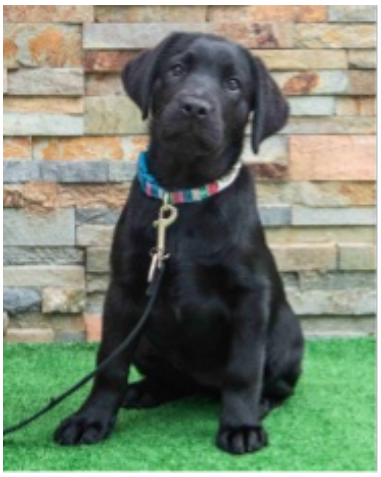
Puppy Miller is one of two brothers from Educated Canines Assisting with Disabilities in Connecticut. Miller is a smart boy that's ready to jump into learning with his Full-Time Puppy Raisers, Michelle Lundquist. Welcome back Michelle, we hope you love this big guy!

Rebel



Miller's brother, Rebel looks like a copy and paste of his brother and he's just as smart. He already perfected giving puppy eyes while holding a perfect sit before going home with his new Full-Time Puppy Raiser, Erin MacKenzie and her family. They are so excited to be part of the community!

Ruby



Puppy Ruby is a tiny puppy with a big personality. She's ready to take on training to become the best Service Dog in Training she can be with new Full-Time Puppy Raiser Lori Hoyt. Welcome to the community Lori and Ruby!

Charley



Puppy Charley came to us from Canine Partners for Life in Pennsylvania. Charley will be going home with returning Full-Time Puppy Raiser Jill Mongeau Gaines. Welcome back Jill! We can't wait for you to meet this sweet girl.

Annie



Puppy Annie came to us from Warrior Canine Connections in Maryland. This little superstar doesn't know it yet, but she's going home with an incredible team with returning Full-Time Puppy Raisers and Ambassador Rick & Cindy Ressijac with new teammate, returning Full-Time Puppy Raiser Teri Adams. Annie is going to learn so much with this new team!

Kilroy



This little puppy with a famous name in our community comes to us from Eyes Ears Nose and Paws in North Carolina. He will be going home with long-time Full-Time Puppy Raiser Rachel Gould, where he will be able to pick up some great habits from SDiT Hank this summer. Kilroy will certainly be ready for the new school year this fall!

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.

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