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PUPPIES BEHIND BARS



PHOTOS BY VALERIE SHAFER

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

THE PUPPY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

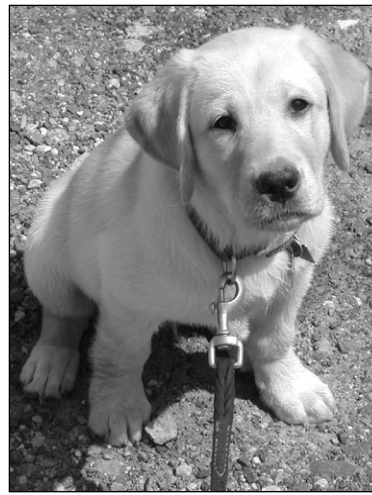
Summer 2003

FOLLOW THAT LAB!

PART ONE: *In Which a Young Puppy Goes to Prison*

Grant was born on February 4, 2003, one of six Labrador puppies in litter I03, two yellow and four, like their mother, black. The records of Guiding Eyes for the Blind, which breeds and trains guide dogs, show that Grant's parents were Umber (sire) and Yonah (dam), and

funded nine P.B.B. dogs, Grant entered the program at the Bedford Hills women's prison. There he met his inmate puppy-raiser, Roslyn. Roz was sent to Bedford Hills at age 16, and has served half of a 50-year sentence, during which time she has gotten her college degree, worked in the Parenting



“Having a puppy involves a lot of accountability,” Roz says. “It fosters a sense of being needed and knowing that **this living creature depends on your best for his best.** It has also helped me come to accept responsibility for my crime; you learn that **any action has a consequence.** What I do or don't do affects me, my puppy, and the whole program.”

Grant with his littermates (top left) and starting his new life in Bedford Hills (right and bottom left)

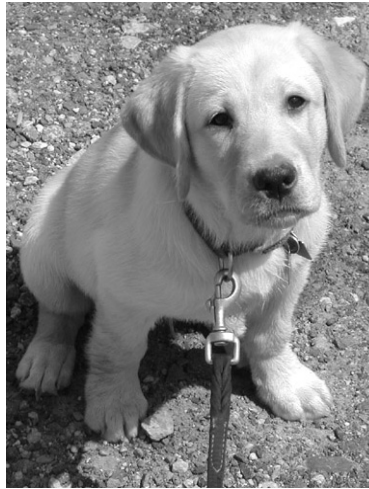
that his medical care was routine—just vaccinations for bordetella, rabies, and the like. Grant's socialization, a routine which included massages, playing with toys, hearing different sounds, learning to climb stairs, walking on a loose leash, and taking care of business outside, began when he was about a week old. He passed the last of three G.E.B. puppy tests on April 1st, as did four of his brothers and sisters. (One pup in the litter failed, and was released to private adoption.)

And so, what Puppies Behind Bars received, on April 8th, was a healthy, wriggly, pale-gold puppy with a mission, should he accept it, to change lives. Sponsored by Kitty Gaisman, who had already

Center (she has a daughter of her own), and taken a writing workshop. But her four years in the P.B.B. program have given her something special, she says. “You can really see your results—seeing your dog become a working dog and knowing that you contributed to helping a person regain their freedom because now they can work or travel with their guide dog.”

Roz had raised two dogs, Thornton and Quinn, and wondered if Grant would be like either of them. But, she found, “He is totally the opposite. He is really laid back and I am glad because I'm sort of low-key, and now I have a match. He is so

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Follow That Lab!

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loving and just makes me feel special when he follows me around. He comes to the shower with me and will take a nap while I shower or peek in at me until I am finished.”

Grant is a curious puppy, who loves to explore. He amazed Roz with his ability to climb stairs, and handled his first public appearance—a trip to Horace Greeley High School with P.B.B. volunteer coordinator Katie Losey—with aplomb, showing no fear of the many strangers around him. Now Roz is teaching him to not pick up everything off the floor, to walk on lead, and to sit when he greets people.



He sleeps in a crate in Roz’s cell, in a special wing of the prison, and goes to the visiting room with Roz when her daughter comes to the prison, which adds immeasurably to their reunions. “It’s neat the way the dogs help to strengthen families,” notes P.B.B. president Gloria Gilbert Stoga. “The kids and spouses and other relatives get to see the inmates doing something right and succeeding at something, and it also gives them a common interest to talk about between visits.”

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What I do or don’t do affects me, my puppy, and the whole program. It sort of affects the larger society and the ripple effects of behavior... I’ve learned to work with others in a group setting and that it takes team work to achieve a goal.” Both Thornton and Quinn are evidence of Roz’s commitment: Thornton is a working guide dog, and Quinn graduated as a guide dog from Guiding Eyes for the Blind on May 24th.

Grant’s story has only just begun, but already he’s gotten quite a lot of media attention. *Greenwich* magazine sent a writer and photographer to capture his first day at Bedford Hills, and on May 1st his photo made the front page of a Westchester county paper, *The Patent Trader*, which ran an article about the success of P.B.B.’s programs. And in the next issue of this newsletter, we’ll bring readers part two of this young puppy’s unusual tale. Stay tuned....

P.B.B. needs your support!

Puppy Kiss...
\$\$\$...you decide!

Collar & Leash \$25

Embroidered Puppy Jacket \$50

Sponsor a Pup \$3000

Puppy Food \$100

Veterinary Care \$500

Textbooks & Educational Supplies \$250

Inmate Vet Assistant Course \$700

• Thanks to **David Frei**, Director of Public Relations for the American Kennel Club, Puppies Behind Bars was featured on the USA Network on February 11th during the last hour of the annual Westminster Dog Show—just before the climatic selection of Best in Show. A week later, *USA Today* printed the following letter from a

PUPS IN THE PRESS

dog-loving reader in New Jersey, who had watched the competition: “The segment of the show

that caught my attention was about the program...that works with inmates to raise and train puppies as guide dogs for the blind and for other assistive roles in local communities. To see these hardened criminals—for whom “life” has become confinement in a small cell—turn into caring human beings with a responsibility and purpose was truly a heartwarming experience. These days, when life itself has become tenuous and uncertain, those few images of life’s affirmation will stay with me for a long time.”

• **Animal Planet** went to the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women to film a segment on P.B.B., for a show that aired nationwide on March 18th.

• **The Patent Trader** of Westchester County published a story about P.B.B. on May 1st, while **DOCS Today** made P.B.B.’s bomb-sniffing initiative the cover story of its May issue.

• In its May issue, **Reader’s Digest** ran a half-page story (“Training Days”) about the program, along with one of **Valerie Shaff’s** wonderful photographs. It included interviews with **Gloria Gilbert Stoga**, guide-dog user **Judy Goldman**, and former puppy-raiser **Susan Hallett**, who is now on parole, working in New York City. “Dogs demand a lot, so you give a lot,” Hallett told *Reader’s Digest*. “Being trusted gave me confidence that I could do anything I set my mind to.”

Do you know people who’d be interested in learning about Puppies Behind Bars? Send us their names and we’ll put them on our mailing list for the newsletter.

Another great way to spread the word: shop at P.B.B. for notecards, notepads,

PUTTING ON THE DOG

and t-shirts. Both the notecards and pads show Valerie Shaff’s photograph of a yellow Lab puppy asleep on a puppy raiser’s shoe. The t-shirts, in sizes kids (large) and adults (S, M, L, XL), have the sentence “Someone trusted me” on the front, and our name on the back. To order, please call (212) 924-7404 or visit our website at www.puppiesbehindbars.com



DONATION FORM

I would like to be a **SURROGATE OWNER** of a puppy (minimum donation: \$3000.)

Please accept my donation for:

1 puppy’s weekend visit to NYC (\$35) A sleeping crate for 1 puppy (\$85)

Leashes and bowls for 1 puppy (\$50) 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: _____

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

Puppies Behind Bars • 99 Madison Avenue, 2nd Floor • New York, NY 10016

● Managing director Lisa Bruno, who came on board in 1999, is leaving P.B.B. this summer. Lisa helped guide P.B.B. through tough times and triumphs, spearheaded its expansion into three new prisons, and did a really demanding job with compas-

PAWS FOR APPLAUSE

sion, commitment, and more than the usual helping of courage. (Oh, and she became a mother, too, in the middle of all this.) It's hard to say goodbye to Lisa, but she'll always be an important part of the P.B.B. family.

● "Ten Thousand Men of Harvard"—well, three men, actually, but with talent beyond their numbers—came to P.B.B.'s aid this winter, thanks to the Harvard Business School Community Partners.

H.B.S.C.P.'s New York operation, which is headed by Jerry Goodman and Joanne Lim, set us up with three advisors, who spent hundreds of hours working pro bono to provide P.B.B. with a development and fund-raising plan. Clay Stobaugh, Marty Katz, and John Semel made their knock-out presentation in March to the P.B.B. board, which joined the staff in expressing its gratitude for the skill and commitment of these talented guys.

● Bowman, who was raised in the Fishkill men's prison, officially graduated as an N.Y.P.D. bomb sniffer

on January 23rd. A few days later, Detective Ken Silva (who has since retired from his job as the N.Y.P.D.'s kennel master) called P.B.B. with some pretty cool news about the pup's new responsibilities.

"You know what Bowman's first sweep was?" Silva asked. "Mayor Bloomberg's private jet!" That's Bowman: straight to the top!

● Since the last newsletter, ten P.B.B. pups have gone on to careers all over the United States and the world. Henry, Vito, Star, and Daisy graduated as guide dogs from Guiding Eyes for the Blind. Daisy, however, is going to be a breeder of potential G.E.B. guide dogs rather than a guide herself. Since only two percent of all dogs are chosen for breeding, this is a particular honor. Austin, Bobbi, and Nancy graduated from The Seeing Eye, becoming working guide-dogs in February. Maggie, Kitty and Duke graduated from the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF). Maggie qualified as an arson-detection canine, joining the Los Angeles County Fire Department in March, while Kitty and Duke are now explosive detection canines in Malaysia. Congratulations and thanks to the sponsors, puppy raisers, and volunteers who put so much love, dedication, and hard work into these very special dogs.

A Triple Play

Longtime supporters and new friends have been networking to spread the message about P.B.B.'s mission. This winter and spring, three separate events helped raise awareness and bring the growing community together. Fran Ehrlich, who is married to board member Burt Ehrlich, was hostess for a warm, intimate luncheon in Greenwich, Ct., on February 5th. Her guests, most new to P.B.B., saw a video in the Ehrlichs' library, then gathered in the dining room for an elegant buffet, enlivened by the presence of Scotty, a yellow Lab pup being raised at Bedford Hills.

The following month, board member Lori Gevalt gave a cocktail party in New York City, on March 25th, to thank a group of P.B.B.'s key New York supporters. The crowd enjoyed an impromptu talk with Police Officer Glenn Ostermann, who arrived with Bowman, P.B.B.'s star bomb-sniffing graduate, and everyone took home a box of Howie's Hearts dog treats, P.B.B. pads and notecards, and a copy of *Chicken Soup for the Dog and Cat Lover's Soul* (thanks to New Jersey volunteer Marianne Uppal).

Last but not least, on May 17th, Francine and Peter Walker opened their Bedford, N.Y. house for a cocktail fundraiser. More than 70 people—including Ben Harvey and Laurie White, who produced the P.B.B. film segment that ran during the Westminster dog show, and local volunteer Cynthia Mas—gathered amid trees and flowers to hear Susan Hallett, a former inmate puppy raiser at the nearby Bedford Hills prison, and Willi Richards, whose guide dog, Victoria, was raised there. Then Willi let Victoria out of her harness, so that she could play on the Walkers' beautiful grounds with their two Newfoundlands.

PUPPIES BEHIND BARS

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