



December 2013

“The NSD Scoop”

“Enriching the quality of life and enhancing the independence of children and families living with autism and special needs.”

A Mother's Perspective

My son Braydon has Autism. A chorus of joy and celebration at our community's Great Tricycle Race is an assault of sight and sound to his senses. So every year, my husband and daughter would venture into the festivities while Braydon and I would watch it from afar and imagine a world without an autism prison in it. The bars of our cell were not a figment of our imagination. I could sense that Braydon was so aware of them that they might as well have been constructed of cold iron.

Last year we received National Service Dog, Whoopi to help with Braydon's safety. If he would begin to feel a sensory overload he would run into danger, but tethered to a Service Dog there was less chance of something harmful happening to him. This year, we were able to attend the Tricycle Race for the very first time.



While we were at this grand community event, we were invited to enter into a photo contest that captured the spirit of what the races mean to us. How do you capture inspiration in a single photo? I am not certain that this is even possible.

Please take a good look at this photo! Do you see anything missing? Take a closer look. I don't see iron bars, a prison cell. I see a little boy with his older sister and faithful Service Dog, overcoming impossible barriers to explore the community around him.

NSD Spotlight

**I am only one person, but still I am one.
I cannot do everything, but still I can do something.**

Those words echoed by American author, Helen Keller, over 50 years ago, sum up the principals that guide a truly great volunteer; NSD's 2013 Volunteer Award winner, Gail Densmore. Gail has become quite a fixture at National Service Dogs. You may find her working with the trainers, running the dogs in the leash free park or working in the Evening Enrichment Program. Gail is one lady who has truly made a difference at NSD. On the day I chatted with Gail, she was folding laundry in the boardroom, helping out, as is her custom, in any way she can. Gail is a native of Cambridge, a busy professional who works full time at a local accounting firm. Yet, Gail makes time every week to help out at NSD. Gail is a Key Volunteer, which means she helps execute the Evening Program for our Advanced Training Dogs. Gail also provides a loving temporary home for our Dogs, and in the three years she has volunteered at NSD, has taken in 40 of our Advanced Training Dogs. Gail always makes herself available for fundraising events; whether she's braving the mud of the Plowing Match or the rain at Mantracking, she is always a welcome part of our team.

Gail has been volunteering with NSD since July 2010. Although she passed our offices on Cedar Creek Rd. frequently, she didn't know much about NSD. It wasn't until a co-worker shared his experiences as a NSD volunteer that she began to consider helping out in our programs. As Gail said, "My family was healthy; I was healthy so it was time to start putting something back into the community." After a few months of volunteering, Gail fell in love with the program.

Why is volunteerism so important at NSD? As Gail explained, "There is nothing else; NSD couldn't function without volunteers. There is no funding for the work volunteers do, so the volunteers help keep NSD going." True; in the past year our volunteers dedicated nearly 500,000 hours of their own time to our organization. In fact, if we paid our volunteers minimum wage, that would amount to \$5.5 million. Our volunteers play a paramount role in our operations.



Gail with NSD Harris

Over the years Gail has made great friends at NSD and met some wonderful people. What keeps her going? "The impact – when you see what these Dogs do for people, how they change their lives, when you see the end results and know you played a role in making that happen, well that's just incredible! How can you not want to be a part of that?" Gail is a huge part of that; her dedication, hard work and self-sacrifice continue to inspire everyone she works with at NSD. Thank you Gail and all our incredible volunteers who have made a difference at NSD in 2013!

NSD Happenings & Updates

2014 Easter Egg Hunt for Dogs & their Families Registration Open!

Good Friday, April 18, 2014, Registration at 10:00 a.m., Hunt begins at 11:00 a.m.

Barrie, Brampton, Calgary, Guelph, Kitchener, London, Oakville, St. Catharines

Each year, thousands of plastic eggs are filled with dog treats and hidden over a defined area of a local park. Each egg contains a Milk-Bone treat and a sticker, representing a chance to win one of hundreds of great prizes.

Registrants receive two egg cartons, giving them the opportunity to collect up to 24 eggs. Participants who collect donations on NSD's behalf are eligible to collect more eggs based on the dollar value of the donations they received.

For more information and to register and start collecting pledges today, visit www.nsd.on.ca.

Congratulations Class of October 2013!

- Harmon - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Holly - Canine Assisted Intervention
- Kobe - Skilled Companion Dog
- Ivy - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Izzy - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Ice - Certified Service Dog, dual trained
- Juno - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Jasmine - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Harris - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Nestle - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Jelly Bean - Certified Service Dog, Autism
- Rudy - Certified Service Dog, Physical Assist

Re-gift for the Right Reasons

Were you recently faced with receiving a gift that is worthy of re-gifting? Not to worry, we can put your unwanted gifts to good use. We can use all donated gifts as prizes and raffle items for upcoming fundraisers.

Start Saving Your Unwanted Electronics

NSD introduces an innovative social enterprise to raise funds for our organization. Together with Greentec, we are launching an e-recycling program. We'll accept laptops, digital cameras, MP3s, Ipods, tablets and CELL PHONES. Stay tuned to www.nsd.on.ca for details or email Laura at laura@nsd.on.ca

Volunteer Opportunities

If you have a couple of hours once a week, once every two weeks or once in a while, we can use your help with:

Puppy Raising

- Help us socialize and train our puppies-in-training by welcoming one into your home for app. 16 months

Weekend Sitting

- Help provide a relaxing weekend for a dog in Advanced Training

Fundraising

- Work with our staff to ensure the success of various fundraising events

Building Maintenance

- Assist with general repairs including painting, building kennels, completing electrical work and plumbing.

Official Food Sponsor:



Official Treat Sponsor:



NSD Breeding Page



The Pure Golden Retriever Isla-Vedo litter were recently placed with their new puppy raisers and are settling in nicely. See their pictures on Facebook! Beautiful furry cream bundles! A big thanks to Steve and Sharon Langham and their children Menley, Katia and Cole of London who assisted from the preparation of erecting the whelping pen and laying blankets, helping at the birth and the subsequent feedings and cleaning up for the past 6 weeks. A special mention to their own Golden Retriever "Clara" who assumed the role of nanny during the entire time and helped with puppy sitting and clean-up. The "U" puppies joined puppy class in early October to begin their kindergarten education! Their names are Urban, Uley, Utah, Umber, Usher, Uno, Uri and Uma*.

NSD Yoshee is in season so we must seek a suitable and worthy husband to compliment her adorable nature!

We are looking forward to the late October and early November 2013 Puppy Camps. This will be a chance for the next group of dogs due in for Advanced Training to see what kennel life is all about. The older puppies will stay here in kennel for three days during which time they are played with, exercised, introduced to the Gail Dubrick Park, groomed, introduced to the training vans and taken out along the trails for walks. Its a fun packed few days that we could not do without the aid of our volunteers.

The R, S, and T litters are doing well in class. They have already lost their puppy cuteness and are showing signs of being great dogs!

Remember! When working with dogs, you'll be rewarded if you spend time being consistent yourself!

Garry Stephenson.
Breeding/Puppy Program Manager

*At the time of publication, we were awaiting the birth of National Service Dog Jingles' puppies. For details, updates and pictures stay tuned to our Facebook pages.

Tips to Keep your Puppy healthy over the Holidays!

Watch out for these toxic holiday plants:

- **Holly (Ilex sp.)**. This plant, commonly found around Christmas time, can cause intense vomiting and diarrhea. Mental depression can also occur.
- **Amaryllis (Amaryllis spp)**. Ingestion can result in vomiting, diarrhea, depression, lack of appetite, tremors, drooling and abdominal pain.
- **Mistletoe (Phoradendron spp.)**. This plant, another Christmas plant, can also cause significant vomiting and diarrhea. In addition, this plant has been associated with difficulty breathing, slowed heart rate, collapse and, if a lot is ingested, death can occur. Some animals may even show erratic behaviour and possible hallucinations.
- **Poinsettia (Euphorbia)**. This plant can cause irritation to the mouth and stomach and sometimes vomiting. It has a low level of toxicity and is overrated as a toxic plant. Many people consider it basically non-toxic.
- **Christmas cactus, Thanksgiving cactus, Easter cactus (Schlumbergera or Zygocactus)**. In dogs, if large quantities of this plant are ingested, vomiting, possibly with blood, diarrhea, possibly with blood and mental depression have been reported. With small ingestion's, typically there are no signs of toxicity. These plants are considered low toxicity plants.