



GUIDING EYES FOR THE BLIND MONTGOMERY REGION

Training Center & Offices
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800-942-0149
www.guidingeyes.org

Canine Development Center
361 Routes 164
Patterson, NY 12563
845- 878-3330

Montgomery Region
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Maneuvering Thru a Pandemic With the Help of a Guide Dog

November-December 2020

Guiding Eyes for the Blind's website has continually provided updates on each of their programs and the following information was extracted from their website (Guidingeyes.org) The information was posted as of September 2020. *There is so much more to learn, so do go to the website for complete information.*

"As Guiding Eyes continues to navigate the pandemic, we wanted to give you an update on the exciting progress we have made in getting back to our mission – to provide guide dogs to people with vision loss. The health and safety of our staff, volunteers, dogs, students, and graduates is always our highest priority and we are committed to working with all of you to continue to build the best path forward.

Updates have been provided on each of our programs, from puppy raising to training placements and fieldwork. We continue to work diligently in these different areas to communicate with our applicants, graduates, volunteers, and donors."

Yorktown Campus/Training Center: all dogs placed in foster homes in March returned for training; a new Foster Home Training program helps with local training and allows for more dogs to be returned to the training center. Additional training vans added to help with transportation of foster home dogs.

Patterson Campus/Canine Development Center: Center was completely cleaned and in August welcomed back two broods ready to deliver their pups.

Veterinary Services: The vet team has been energized by the reopening of our kennels and the opportunity to continue to provide day-to-day veterinary care for the amazing dogs that help us to fulfill our mission. Curbside drop-off of laboratory samples and medication pick up (or mailing when possible) will continue.

We are operational and are enjoying the return to performing routine procedures in compliance with NY State guidelines.

Admissions: We currently have 162 applicants waiting to receive a guide dog. We continue to accept new applications, process applications received, conduct pre-screen phone calls, and review completed applications.

All applicants are being considered for the Home Training program. The Residential training program is on pause for the foreseeable future.

Student Instruction, Home Training: Throughout the summer months, formal Student training resumed in incremental steps, considering the health and safety of students and staff. Our decision to train is based on CDC guidelines, NY State Travel Restriction Guidelines, and a safety assessment of the area we would be conducting the training by the GEB Nurse Manager and Training Team Management.

We will continue to operate on a home training model until we feel it is safe to bring students back together safely through our residential general class program.

Puppy Program: While the usual in-person Puppy Program classes are still on hold, the Puppy Program continues to support the development and progress of the pups' skills using virtual classes and one-on-one support.

Our waiting list of people who have offered to raise a puppy continues to grow and the next group of puppies will be ready for placement in late October/November.

We want to thank our volunteers all for all the added support they have given the pups and all of us over the recent months as they prepare the dogs for the next phase of their journey. Please know how much the hard work you have done is appreciated; we could not do it without you.



Human Resources: We continue to communicate with our staff regarding compliance changes related to the pandemic and make adjustments, as necessary, to our protocols.

Events/Graduations: In-house graduations are still on hold until further notice and the annual June Golf event was postponed. Guiding Eyes will continue to update this plan as needed as we move forward to carry out our mission.

Until the Residential Training Program is able to resume, our visually impaired applicants are being considered for Home Training. After assessing all aspects of the potential training, our Training Department establishes a plan which includes accessibility of travel routes, physical distancing details, PPE training, and availability within governmental guidelines and clearance in their local area. Visit the website to see recent home training graduates and to learn about the virtual graduation sponsorship program.

Graduate Follow-Up Services: **There is** increased communications with our graduate community through phone and video calls. The Training Team has been actively contacting and working with our graduates helping with issues through phone conversations, video, and online mapping resources. We will be providing in-person support services on a case-by-case basis when urgent issues arise that impact the safety of a working guide dog team

We are developing new strategies in our field work that we expect will improve the services offered to Guiding Eyes graduates into the future.

Facilities: the maintenance team has used this time to improve campus life in the following areas: nursing office, kennel run, Yorktown and Patterson campuses

Welcome Repeat Raisers

What better way to end 2020 then to have two new pups arrive in the Montgomery Region. So, let us count the ways...(1) they will be raised by our long-time dedicated volunteers Bobbie and Jody; (2) Minnie and Marvin are siblings, and (3) –This Region is so lucky to have such great volunteer raisers. (Minnie is pictured on the left/ Marvin on the right)



Can you see the resemblance!



Fun Places to Go

Let us know where you like to take your pup for outings



Orchard and Navy “Rock” wearing their Nats Gear

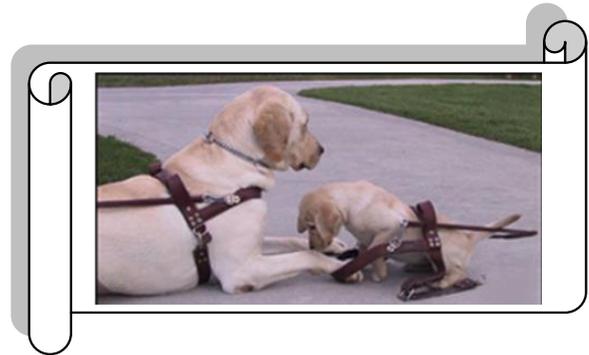
This year’s disruption of training, graduations, etc., didn’t put a damper on holding the annual Halloween Contest. Pictures were submitted by regional puppy raisers and votes cast by regions.

The winner this year was ARYA Submitted by Puppy Raiser Ann Halburian, Capital Region





Fundraising in our communities Will help me grow into this harness!



The Montgomery Region is highly dependent upon donations and the monies received support class space, crates, medications and other items for our pups in training. In order to maintain this support for our volunteers and pups in training, monetary contributions are always needed.

So, how can you help? Take the time to look around your community, or inquire at your place of work or worship. You may be able to identify a business, organization or individual looking to either sponsor or contribute to a worthwhile non-profit organization.

- Restaurants – Many local restaurants will partner and host a non-profit lunch/dinner
- Retail stores – Many stores will host a shopping event
- Place of work – Is your place of work looking to make a tax deductible contribution, or already has a matching charitable contribution program
- Financial organizations, grocery stores, sororities and fraternities...can they donate
- Yard sale –Is there a yard sale in your community in which we can participate
- GEB is on the national list of non-profit participating agencies for the Combined Federal Campaign #10248

Reach out to the Region's management team, Jeanyne and Jean, with your ideas.

Listed are contributions to date for 2020

- Verizon

*Deadline for
submission of articles
and pictures is the 1st
of each month*



Your articles will be included in future issues
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