



## **CANINE COMPANIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER**

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**Indianapolis, IN**

**Winter 2007**

**[www.cci-indy.org](http://www.cci-indy.org)**

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### **New Chapter Officers for 2007**

The central Indiana chapter has new officers for 2007. The new officers are Linda Saunders as president and Claudia Fagan as the puppy coordinator.

Cindy Calley will remain as the secretary and has added managing the Excite.com email list to her duties. Thank you, Cindy, for accepting the e-mail responsibility.

Pam Chelf will continue as treasurer for which we are thankful as she does a wonderful job of keeping the finances in order.

Nancy Jo Acree will continue as the newsletter editor. We are most grateful to Nancy Jo for doing such a great job. Thank you, Nancy Jo, for a job well done and much appreciated.

Mary Klee and Carol Lehman will remain on the fundraising committee and be joined by past president Scott Fogo. This team will lead us in our fundraising efforts, most notably the Sam's Club fundraisers. Thank you for all your hard work!!

### **RUIZ GOES TO ADVANCED TRAINING**

**by Elizabeth Hague**

**August 12, 2006**

Our days with Ruiz are numbered. We are quickly approaching the time we have to return him to Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). I will soon find out if my puppy surrendering theories are right.

I knew when I signed on that he wasn't mine; that I couldn't keep him. I figure that giving him back to CCI so he can be trained to help someone is an easier loss to bear than giving him up to old age and infirmities that require euthanasia.

Ruiz has grown into a well-mannered, skinny, lanky, perpetually happy, 80-pound puppy. He thanks me for his meals and teases with his ball or string bone. When he's happy to see someone he knows, his entire back end wiggles and his powerful tail thumps whatever is nearby so hard that people marvel he hasn't broken it. He has wiggled and thumped his way into the hearts of nearly everyone he's met including a few die-hard feline fans.

I think Ruiz has been relatively easy to train. He's eager to please and wants to be with me. He's smart and learns quickly. He's confident and adaptable, easy-going, and so happy. He makes me look good. People who see us together think I'm a dog trainer and sometimes ask for advice. I am no more a

dog trainer than Brittany Spears is an opera singer. I was given a great dog and, hopefully, I haven't messed him up.

Whether or not Ruiz graduates as a Service Dog, I have no doubt that he'll make a positive impact in his little world. He has been an ambassador for Service Dogs by making people aware of them and how to behave around them (don't touch!). He has enlightened me about accessibility issues and laws. There have been several people we've encountered whose days have been brightened by seeing Ruiz someplace unexpected. Countless times I have seen a face break into a smile followed by, "Beautiful dog!" or "Bring him anytime".

## **August 22, 2006**

I have now experienced a CCI graduation and puppy turn-in. My puppy-surrendering theories were right. I don't think I'm a hard-hearted person, but returning Ruiz may have been easier than I anticipated. I suspect the Canine Companions staff has been briefed in the psychological aspects of raising and returning their puppies. My suspicions are based on the order of business at graduation:

CCI graduation is the culmination of two weeks of Team Training during which a trained dog is paired with a recipient. At this most recent graduation, six dogs were placed with six people in wheelchairs; three were adults and three were students. The applicants and their immediate families spent two weeks learning the commands and how to get the dog to respond to their needs. The dogs had been through basic and advanced training and were now learning to do things required to help their new handlers, such as retrieving a dropped item, opening and closing doors and drawers, turning on lights, etc. It was hard, sometimes frustrating, but rewarding work for all involved

At graduation, the puppy raisers and their dogs were recognized. The dogs wore blue neck ribbons with rosettes proclaiming their status. They looked very regal and honored. There were 23 dogs this time and odds are that only 10-12 will make it through to graduation. We watched a wonderful slide show of pictures the puppy raisers sent.

The human graduates were introduced one by one and the puppy raiser of their dog brought the dog forward and turned the leash over to its recipient. It was moving and rather emotional for the recipients and their families who had waited over a year to receive a dog. A video montage of the previous two weeks was shown of the dogs and people training together and bonding. As expected, this was the part that got to me and when the lights came up, I don't think there was a dry eye in the house.

Kimberly Robb, an accessibility expert who works for the Chicago Transit Authority, spoke eloquently for her graduating class as her new dog, Caitlin, waited by her side. With humor and a strong speaking voice, she spoke about her journey to being paired with a Service Dog. She had a Top Ten list of "Things CCI Didn't Tell Us Before Coming to Team Training" and she told about some of the humorous incidents that happened during Team Training and of the new friends she made.

After the ceremony, the puppy raisers drove to the CCI kennel to return the puppies. Considering what we'd seen, how could one NOT give up their puppy? This has nothing to do with guilt. The dogs make such a big difference in the lives of the recipients and they are so grateful to receive one, it seems selfish to keep a puppy just because you have grown attached to it.

The atmosphere at the kennel was relaxed and happy with dogs on the floor, dogs in the kennels, new puppies being cradled, and people chatting with old friends. Most everyone there had done this before. Ruiz's "roommate" was his little brother, Ronnie, who was raised in Michigan. They had not seen

each other since they were eight weeks old. Ruiz will be happy to share his space with someone he can play with. I met Ruiz's trainer and learned that I will hear from her by the end of August about Ruiz's progress.

My husband recently pointed out that puppy-raising is like hosting a foreign exchange student and I agree. The dog is with us temporarily to learn as much as it can. We provide the basics like food, shelter, and medical care, plus a few souvenirs (balls and bones). While we don't speak the same language, our canine student soon learns what we mean. As we grow fond of each other, we know we'll be sad when the time comes to part, but we'll keep in touch until we eventually meet again.

Will I do it again? You bet. I have all the supplies now and I learned a few things with the first one that I plan to use on the second one. I'll pick up a new puppy at the end of September, which means you'll be seeing us on the streets and in the stores after the New Year.

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## **November Graduation**

The November graduation for the North Central Region was held Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup> at the Dublin Recreational Center in Dublin, OH.

After the welcome by Maria Kuzel, Development Associate, each puppy raiser and their CCI puppy were introduced and they came forward to take their place on the stage for a much deserved recognition. Following this introduction was a slide show presentation of pictures of the puppies taken during their months with their puppy raisers.

Following the puppy raiser video, Gwen Daugstrup, Instructor/Program Manager, introduced the November graduates. She was assisted in the introductions by Eric Fatka, Instructor and Adrena Wilhelm, Instructor. The graduating class included eleven teams; 1 Service Dog Team, 2 Successor Service Dog Teams, 6 Skilled Companion Teams, 1 Facility Dog Team and 1 Successor Facility Dog Team.

Three dogs from the central Indiana chapter graduated in November. The chapter congratulates chapter members Pam and Mike Chelf, puppy raisers of Aero who graduated as a Skilled Companion and now lives in Iowa, Teresa and Kristin Buchheit who together raised Bingo who graduated as a Skilled Companion and now lives in Ohio, and Nannette, Jeff and Nathan Kinney who raised Duran who graduated as a Successor Service Dog and now lives in Ohio.

The graduation closed with a graduate video presentation that showed the teams learning to work together during Team Training.

## **November Matriculating Dogs**

The central Indiana chapter had only one dog begin advanced training in November. Karen Steele raised Dora, a female LGX. Our best wishes to Karen and Dora as she begins Advanced Training, the next phase in Dora's journey to determine her future.

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### **New Chapter Puppies**

The central Indiana chapter welcomes two new CCI puppies. Jeff and Linda Saunders picked up new puppy, Zerrin, on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Zerrin is a yellow female LGX whose parents are Isabella and Lamond. Isabella is a littermate to Iku, who was previously raised by the Saunders family. Zerrin is the sixth CCI puppy to be a part of the Saunders family.

Becky and Peter Qualy have a new puppy named Orenda. Orenda is a male Golden Retriever whose parents are Hardin II and Pala. The Qualys traveled to North Central to pick up Orenda on December 22. Orenda joins the Qualy family as their 11<sup>th</sup> CCI puppy.

We welcome these new puppies and look forward to watching them grow.

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### **CCI Donations for 2006**

The central Indiana chapter raised a total of \$16, 254.90 in 2006 for CCI!!

The chapter raised \$13,044.90 through fundraisers and donations. The chapter's major fundraiser was Sam's Clubs events, which raised \$3,910.25.

The annual ERMCO golf outing donation for 2006 was \$7,500. A big thank you to ERMCO for their generous donation to CCI!!

The chapter raised \$1,335.00 through presentations and general donations.

CCI puppy raisers, Becky and Peter Qualy, generated \$1,850.00 in donations by dog sitting and not accepting any money, but rather by asking that all money be donated to CCI. Thanks, Becky and Peter, for your generous giving of time and efforts to support CCI and for furnishing a wonderful, loving place for the dogs while their humans are away.

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**DOG INGREDIENTS:** slobbering tongue, owner loyalty, incredible hearing and sense of smell, four legs, no arms, cold nose and warm heart.

### **Who are Chapter Volunteers?**

Chapter volunteers support CCI with their time, talent, energy, and dedication. Volunteer chapters exist across the U.S and work together to develop ideas and projects that support their CCI Regional Training

Center. Chapter members include puppy raisers, CCI graduates, breeders/caretakers and all other individuals willing to give their time, talent and energy to this great mission.

### **Central Indiana Chapter Officers:**

President	Linda Saunders	<a href="mailto:lindafoxsaunders@sbcglobal.net">lindafoxsaunders@sbcglobal.net</a>
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### Calendar of Events

For updated event information, check out the chapter website at [www.cci-indy.org](http://www.cci-indy.org)

March 2007 (date to be determined) An evening of bowling

April 2007 (dates to be determined) Sam’s Club Fundraiser

May 2007 (date to be determined) Indians Baseball Game

May 2007 (dates to be determined) Sam’s Club Fundraiser

May 19, 2007 May Graduation, 11AM at the Dublin Recreation Center, Dublin, OH

June 2007 (date to be determined) Meet the Graduates

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