

The Seeing Eye® Guide

A Magazine for Friends of The Seeing Eye

Winter 2009
Volume 74, Number 3



Inside:

Jennifer Armbruster & two other Seeing Eye grads return as Paralympic champions





Story on page

4

Jennifer Armbruster (second from left) and Jessie Lorenz (third from left) in their proudest moment. (Photo by Getty Images.)

Contents

Features

- 4** [Seeing Eye Graduates Earn Medals in Beijing](#)
Triumphant Paralympians realize dream of a lifetime
- 5** [A Sporting Life](#)
A generation of blind athletes thank graduate Paul Ponchillia for their success
- 9** [Planning for the Future](#)
The Seeing Eye opens its doors for a very special tour

Departments

- 1** A Seeing Eye Perspective
- 2** Letters to The Seeing Eye
- 8** Advocacy Matters
- 10** From Our Archives
- 12** News Highlights

Front cover: Seeing Eye graduate Jennifer Armbruster (seen in smaller photo with her dog Nitra) leads the U.S. team into the Bird's Nest Stadium at the Paralympics Opening Ceremony. (Photo by Joe Kusumoto.)

Back cover: The Seeing Eye rang in its 80th anniversary celebration on January 6 as its representatives opened the trading day at the New York Stock Exchange. Pictured are (from left) Honorary Trustee Walker Kirby, Communications Director Teresa Davenport, Trustee Donna Chambers, Trustee Pete Crnkovich, puppy raiser Kathy Barter with puppy Nancy, NYSE Executive Vice President Lawrence Leibowitz, Chairman of the Board Michael Ranger, President & CEO Jim Kutsch, Senior Manager/Marketing Amalia Duarte, Director of Finance & Administration Bob Pudlak, and Ginger Kutsch.

Dear Friends:

Hardly a day goes by without us hearing another bit of bad news about the global economy. It is not surprising when our friends ask us how The Seeing Eye is faring in this difficult environment. I want to take a moment to let you know how things are going and what plans have been put in place to ensure our future financial security.

First, let me emphasize that resilience is a fundamental characteristic of The Seeing Eye. Perhaps this comes from being founded in 1929 and born into the Great Depression. People believed strongly enough in our mission back then that their financial support grew throughout the course of the Depression. The support of our donors has sustained us ever since. While we are in a strong position to weather the storm over the long term, we know that we face some immediate challenges and that we must be ready to adjust as necessary.

We depend on three major funding sources in order to achieve our mission: legacies, the draw on endowment, and in-year fundraising. Legacies, though impossible to predict, have been our largest source of income for many years. In the 2008 fiscal year, for example, people who remembered The Seeing Eye in their wills were responsible for contributing \$10.3 million toward our operating costs of \$25.8 million. Gifts from estates could easily shrink as the real estate and investments that comprise those estates have lost value over the recent months.

In terms of endowment income, The Seeing Eye has a self-imposed cap of 5 percent in our annual draw from cash reserves. The value of our reserves fell about 23 percent from January 1, 2008, until December 1, 2008. Thanks to the expert advice of several members of our Board of Trustees, we were fortunate to have taken a more defensive



“As we mark our 80th anniversary... we are well-positioned for the future.”

investment position in mid-2007. As a result, our endowment is doing better than those of many other nonprofits, but the effect, still, is sobering.

The third component, in-year fundraising, could be hit the hardest by the current economy. This is where we rely heavily on the generosity of our family of Seeing Eye supporters. As I write this letter, the jury is still out on the effectiveness of our annual request for support. We are only in the first quarter of our fiscal year which, since it is also the last quarter in the calendar year, is always the busiest in terms of donations. But organizations that track charitable giving are reporting trends that are far from optimistic.

The Seeing Eye's Leadership Team is working proactively to review all expenditures and investigate additional sources of revenue. By taking action now, early in our fiscal year, we have several months in which to re-prioritize specific projects and identify areas for potential savings. We are making changes to reduce costs and are considering new financial models.

We have adapted to many changes over our 80-year-history, and will continue to adapt going forward. We may be facing a few bumps in the road to the future, but I am confident that we will weather the storm and come out even stronger than before. As we mark our 80th anniversary on January 29, 2009, we are well-positioned for the future. However, it will only be through the collective spirit and support of our employees, volunteers, donors, and friends that we will continue to provide the most pioneering and innovative services to people who can benefit from traveling with Seeing Eye dogs.

Sincerely,
James A. Kutsch, Jr.
President & CEO
The Seeing Eye

Letters to The Seeing Eye

Dear Seeing Eye:

I just wanted to let you know that my father [recently deceased graduate David M. “Red” Rutledge] deeply cherished your organization for over 60 years, and I personally grew up and was blessed by having your wonderful dogs as my friends also. Even as an adult I was treated special by each and every one of them. Thank you so much for your part of making my father’s life a happy one.

Kathie Allison

Dear Seeing Eye:

I want to extend my gratitude to you and your organization for reaching out to me. [The Seeing Eye Veterinarian Recognition Award] serves as valuable encouragement to my efforts as well as a reminder for what those efforts should ultimately work toward. I am humbled to have your recognition.

I have enjoyed the privilege of caring for [your graduates’] companions, *Bonnet* and *Tessa*, for over four years now. The endowment of people’s trust is always something I feel proud of, and it rings doubly true with [them]. My experiences with these patient and thoughtful people have given me much benefit.

Thank you for providing such meaningful service to the world and for making the selfless effort of reaching out to encourage me.

Sincerely,

C. Wyatt Cleveland, DVM

Dear Seeing Eye:

Stella is eight years old!

I can’t believe it. It seemed only yesterday that she was barely two and we came home from The Seeing Eye. She went back to the school for three weeks a little over a year after I got her. It seemed like things were on the road to failure. But through hard work, determination, and much struggle, we made it. And now, we are a wonderful team. We not only work well together, but we love each other and are truly a bonded unit.

I have never had a dog—working or pet—for this long, so this is a huge milestone for me. When people look at *Stella*, they see a confident, solid, mature, and seasoned dog. She has been a wonderful example to newer dog guides, and although she is not the most snuggly, affectionate

dog in the world, she is sweet, gentle, and responsive if you know how to engage her.

She is a queen and she knows it. I am incredibly blessed to have such a fabulous dog in my life. I know The Seeing Eye would be very proud of her.

So, happy birthday, “*Stella!*” I cherish every day we have together. It’s up to you now how long you want to work. We’ll keep having fun!

A Seeing Eye Graduate

(The following letter came from a participant in a recent Orientation & Mobility Seminar held at The Seeing Eye. Each month, we invite university students, who are learning to teach travel skills to people who are blind, to spend a couple of days on our campus. They observe our own students in training, walk under blindfold with a Seeing Eye dog, and learn more about how their future clients might benefit from traveling with a dog guide.)

To the Wonderful Folks at The Seeing Eye:

Before another day passes, I have to take a moment to thank everyone who made our recent visit to The Seeing Eye so enjoyable and so memorable; especially Jay Stiteley, Doug Roberts, Ray Kornman, and Lukas Franck. I was part of the [University of Massachusetts at Boston] group that visited The Seeing Eye in November. You were all so welcoming and kind. I was grateful for the tour and your willingness to explain how the whole training process works.

All your presentations were extremely interesting and informative. I was thoroughly engaged the entire time. I am grateful to the individuals who took the time to speak to us about their experiences as dog guide users and to the trainer-instructors who took us out on the streets and allowed us to observe and experience what it is like to walk with a dog guide.

Prior to my visit, I had a very limited understanding of how the dog guide team works. I had a lot of fun and am now more aware of the wonderful possibilities that a dog can provide to the right individuals. I am excited to finish my schooling and get to work. Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable experience.

My best wishes to all,

Jill Suarez

Double Your Donation— For Free!

Find Out if Your Employer
Makes Matching Gifts



Did you know there is a way you can double your donation to The Seeing Eye at no additional cost to you?

Many employers offer matching gifts programs in which your contribution to The Seeing Eye is matched by your company with a donation of its own, usually dollar for dollar. In effect, your contribution is doubled and sometimes even tripled.

The concept was initiated by a General Electric executive back in 1954 who believed strongly in philanthropy and wanted to encourage his employees to contribute to causes that were important to them. He decided that the incentive to contribute would be greater if the company matched each employee's gift. Soon after, other corporations noted the benefits of this form of philanthropy, and matching gift programs have assisted donors and charities ever since.

Companies often want to support nonprofit organizations that operate in their own local areas. Our graduates live and work in every state and province of the United States and Canada, so chances are extremely high that someone in your area is working with a Seeing Eye dog right now.

Many Seeing Eye donors already utilize their companies' matching gift programs. For an example of company matching gift programs that already have contributed to The Seeing Eye, please visit our website at www.seeingeye.org/supportus and click on **Ways to Give/Matching Gifts**.

So, how do you get started? Procedures vary from employer to employer but the following example is typical:

1. **Visit your human resources department to see if your employer has a matching gifts program and to obtain a matching gifts form.**
2. **Fill out the employee portion of the form and mail it with your donation to The Seeing Eye.**
3. **We fill out our portion of the form, certifying that we have received your donation, and then we forward that information back to your employer.**
4. **Your employer verifies your eligibility and ensures that The Seeing Eye has met the company's requirements.**
5. **Your employer sends the matching gift to us.**

Please consider joining us by looking into your employer's matching gift policy when making a donation. If you have any questions, please contact The Seeing Eye Development Office at 800-539-4425 or at donate@seeingeye.org.



The Seeing Eye

ONE DREAM



Triumphant Paralympians Earn Medals in Beijing

Photo above: Jamie Dean (second from right) and teammates celebrate their silver medal victory. Photo below: Jessie Lorenz and her dog NACHO take a break from practice.

Last summer, all eyes were on Beijing as feelings of national pride were sparked by the pageantry, drama, and sportsmanship of the 2008 Olympics.

As the fireworks of the closing ceremony lit the sky, another game was about to begin. With the motto “Two Games, One Dream,” the 2008 Paralympics would parallel the splendor and excitement of the recently concluded Olympic Games. The only difference...these athletes happened to have disabilities.

Among the 4,200 competitors from 138 nations entering the packed Bird’s Nest stadium for opening ceremonies on September 6, three Seeing Eye graduates were ready for the games to begin.

For goalball player Jennifer Armbruster of Colorado Springs, this was the fifth Paralympics. She was humbled to be chosen by her peers as flag bearer for the 208-member U.S. delegation. As the athletes paraded into the stadium, Armbruster’s father, Ken, coach of the women’s goalball team, escorted her as she carried the American flag. “It was so special sharing it with him,” she said. “I always wanted to be in the military and wear my nation’s uniform. This was a different way to represent my country and honor the flag.”

Jessie Lorenz, Armbruster’s teammate, was making her second Paralympic trip, and she had waited four years to finish what she’d started. “We came in second in Athens in 2004, and I saw these games as a continuation of those. We had a good chance, and I felt we could do it.”

And for rower Jamie Dean, the cheers of 91,000 spectators as the team waited to enter the stadium



“So much of my being was dedicated to bringing home the gold. Standing on that medal stand, knowing your dream had come true, was so overwhelming.”

—Jessie Lorenz



Jennifer Armbruster dives for a save during a goalball match in Beijing. (Photo by Getty Images.)

I had always wanted to be in the military and wear my nation's uniform. This was a different way to represent my country.

—Jennifer Armbruster

were overwhelming. “There are no words to describe what I was feeling,” he said.

European neurologist Sir Ludwig Guttman launched the idea of organized sports for spinal cord-injured WWII veterans in 1946. Today, the Paralympic competition is an elite sporting event for athletes with disabilities. Since 1988, the games have been held in the same host cities and venues as the Olympics, beginning two weeks after those games close. Athletes are subject to the same rules and regulations of the International Olympic Committee and go through strict selection criteria. Armbruster, Lorenz, and Dean won spots on the U.S. team through local, regional, and national competitions.

While all three chose not to take their Seeing Eye dogs to Beijing, their dogs played a huge role in getting them to the top of their respective games, patiently waiting dock-side or courtside through years of disciplined practice.

All three athletes recall that their love for sports began as kids. Armbruster played soccer and basketball and dreamt of a military career. She lost her sight at 14 but not her sporting vision. “I started playing goalball in 1989 and was hooked,” she said.

Lorenz and Dean, like many young athletes who are blind or visually impaired, have Armbruster to thank for their introduction to sports. Both blind since birth, Lorenz and Dean attended a sports camp founded by fellow Seeing Eye graduate Dr. Paul Ponchillia at Western Michigan University where Armbruster was a mentor. Dean would find his prowess on the water, but Lorenz would join Armbruster on the goalball court.

(Continued)

A Sporting Life

Of the 27 U.S. athletes with visual impairments competing in the summer 2008 Paralympics, more than two-thirds had something else in common; they were introduced to the world of sports at National Sports Education Camps.

Seeing Eye graduate Dr. Paul Ponchillia and his wife, Dr. Susan Ponchillia, were instrumental in founding the camp program, also known as NSEC, more than 20 years ago, providing sports education and mentoring to children and teens with visual impairments. “The great benefit of sports participation is that it teaches us we can control most outcomes in our lives with self-discipline, hard work, and will,” said Paul Ponchillia.

He should know. When the former plant pathologist lost his vision at age 30, he feared that the image he had of himself as an athlete was dangerously fragile. Ponchillia began searching for sports opportunities in order to stay physically active. Finding nothing, he and a group of other visually impaired athletes formed the Michigan Blind Athletic Association.

Both Ponchillia and his wife worked as professors in Western Michigan University's Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies. As a vision professional, Ponchillia discovered that the lack of sports opportunities was not limited to blind adults. Noticing the dire shortage of physical education programs for blind and visually impaired youth,

(Continued)

he decided to do something about it.

Sports education has been an important part of the curriculum of residential schools for the blind, but as more children began attending public schools, access to inclusive physical education programs was not a priority. “The special education teachers and regular public school teachers just didn’t know what to do,” said Ponchillia. “Sports are an important part of a child’s development. Not only do they promote a healthy lifestyle, but they teach basic social skills and team work—skills that are important for success in later life.”

In 1984, the Michigan Blind Athletic Association and WMU’s Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies began to develop a program that would fill that need, and in 1988, they held the first Sports Education Camp on WMU’s Kalamazoo campus. Today, that camp serves as a model for camps held across the United States.

(Continued)

“You may not speak the same languages, but you do speak the language of sports.”
—Jamie Dean

Goalball became an official Paralympic sport in 1980. Teams consist of three players, and the game is played indoors in a volleyball-size court. Points are scored by rolling a soccer-sized ball into the opposing team’s goal, which extends the width of the court. Players try to intercept the ball by listening for bells embedded inside it. Tactile markings on the court help players maintain orientation. “It’s like reverse dodge ball,” explained Armbruster. “You dive like a soccer player goalie and throw like a bowler,” added Lorenz.

Games consist of two, ten-minute halves, and all players are under blindfold to level the playing field. Players wear foot-ball-type padding, and the game can take quite a toll on the body.

The U.S. team was one of eight competing. “We played seven or eight games in two days,” said Armbruster. “Some days would last 14 hours or more.” Keeping that kind of mental and physical focus is difficult, especially when a gold medal is on the line. “I would psych myself up by watching video replays and talking strategy with our coach.”

On September 14, the U.S. defeated the heavily favored Chinese team, earning the gold in a heart-stopping game before a packed gymnasium. “Anytime you can get that many people excited about goalball, it’s just incredible,” said Lorenz. “So much of my being was dedicated to bringing home the gold. Standing on that medal stand, knowing your dream had come true, was so overwhelming.”

While the women were preparing for their gold medal showdown, Jamie Dean was gearing up for the debut of adaptive rowing as an Olympic sport.

The sport includes three categories defined by the extent of the rowers’ physical disabilities. Dean and others with visual or intellectual impairments compete in the “LTA” classification, in which rowers must have the use of at least one leg plus trunk and arm muscles. Four-member, mixed gender crews plus a coxswain (who barks orders and keeps the rowers posted on their progress) row 35-foot, 20-inch-wide racing shells.

Dean began competing in adaptive rowing four years ago. He believes rowing is the consummate team sport. “If we aren’t rowing in perfect unison, we aren’t moving the boat.”

The competition starts with a dozen 1,000-meter qualifying heats. The fastest times, rather than the order of finish, dictate who advances. “It can be very nerve-wracking because even after a couple of races, you really don’t know where you stand,” he said.



Paul Ponchillia never gave up his love of sports, even kayaking in the fiords of Greenland and introducing his Seeing Eye dog ELLE to the glacial landscape.

Going into the finals, the United States and Italy both were long-shots. Still, Italy managed to earn the gold, but the U.S. team stole the show by edging out powerhouse Great Britain for the silver. During the last 20 strokes, Dean was thinking, “Don’t screw up,” he recalled. “I could hear my wife, Lauren, screaming as we crossed the finish line. We won the medal on September 11, and that was truly special.”

Winning the silver is one of the greatest experiences of his life, he said. “When you accomplish something you have set out to do, there is just no feeling in the world like it. You feel a profound thankfulness for all who helped you achieve your dreams.”

Armbruster, Lorenz, and Dean have returned to their regular lives: Armbruster as a recreation specialist at the Lakeshore Foundation, a sports training center for disabled veterans in Birmingham; Lorenz to her job as Director of Public Policy at the San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind; and Dean to his last year of law school at Wake Forest University. But they are changed forever. “You learn how small the world really is,” said Lorenz.

“You may not speak the same languages, but you all speak the language of sports,” said Dean.

Armbruster was impressed by the dedication of the Chinese organizers. “The effort the Chinese put into making these Paralympics equal the regular Olympics far outweighed what other countries have done or may ever do,” she said.

All three Paralympians will train for the 2012 games. For now, though, they will enjoy some well-deserved pizza, relaxation, and a little play time with three of their biggest supporters, their Seeing Eye dogs. Although Armbruster’s black Lab *Nitra*, Lorenz’s Lab/golden cross *Nacho*, and Dean’s yellow Lab *Priscilla* stayed behind as the athletes circled the globe, there’s little doubt that all the dogs made sure the athletes’ homecoming was better than any tickertape parade they could ever have imagined. ■



During a pre-Paralympics practice, Seeing Eye dog PRISCILLA watches owner Jamie Dean (center) lift the rowing shell into the water. (Photo by Joseph Kaczmarek.)

When you have accomplished something you have set out to do, there is just no feeling in the world like it.

—Jamie Dean

Interested students attend a week-long residential program held during the school year. Kids 10-12 years old learn and refine the mechanics of running, jumping and throwing. Students 13-18 years old learn and compete in judo, cycling, track and field, swimming, wrestling, goalball, gymnastics, and bowling. Paralympians, such as fellow Seeing Eye grad Jennifer Armbruster, act as mentors and coaches for the campers. “It was so great to see so many of these kids go on to compete in the Paralympics,” said Armbruster. “My dream would be for one of them to one day take my place on the goalball team. But I am not going to hand it to them,” she laughed.

Ponchillia is retired from teaching, but still practices what he preaches by staying physically active. He continues to kayak and take long walks with his Seeing Eye dog *Elle*. “If you want to live a long life, by golly you need to be involved in something,” he said.

Certainly, the Paralympians who returned from Beijing—with or without medals—exemplify Ponchillia’s lesson to take control of the “outcomes in our lives.” And they, in turn, will pass along that message of self-determination. “It is our singular responsibility,” he said, “to do all we can to provide children with visual impairments the opportunity to gain that knowledge.” ■

A Less-Than-Golden Moment

Paralympic Medal Winner Experiences the Danger of Uncontrolled Pets

Jessie Lorenz was on top of the world. She had just returned to her California home after her team's gold medal performance in the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing. She had a month to bask in the victory when she was brought back to harsh reality; her Seeing Eye dog *Nacho* was attacked by someone's pet dog that had been left tied to a pole on the sidewalk.

"I've been working dogs for 11 years and have never been in the middle of a dog fight," said Lorenz. "It was really scary." Lorenz called the police, who chased after the dog's owner but never returned to check on her and her dog.

"I waited 15 minutes then went back to my office to have my co-workers check him out." Although not initially apparent to her co-workers, *Nacho* had puncture wounds and bruises, as the veterinarian later confirmed. Lorenz contacted her local Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, who told her the police report stated that Lorenz did not flag them down when they arrived on the scene. "Obviously, I can't do that," she said. She has filed a grievance with the police department's Office of Citizen Complaints. "Even when the cops came to take the report, they asked me to identify the attacker," she said.

The Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools appointed a task force in February 2007 to promote awareness of dog interference and attacks. As a first step, the task force prepared educational materials for law enforcement agencies, including a DVD outlining proper protocol for officers responding to dog attack victims who are blind.

Fortunately, *Nacho* healed well, both physically and emotionally. Not all dog guides and their owners are as lucky; sometimes dogs can be so traumatized by an attack that they must retire from service.

An attack by a dog is a terrifying experience for any person, said Seeing Eye graduate and founding member of The Seeing Eye's Advocacy Council



Yellow Lab NACHO, wearing owner Jessie Lorenz's gold medal, was fortunate to have recovered completely from a recent attack.

“I reached down and felt the other dog's jaws clamped around Nacho's throat...”

The Seeing Eye continues to educate the general public about the need to be responsible pet owners and to encourage state governments to strengthen their legislation. One of the most recent opportunities came last August when the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania held a public hearing for a bill to make it a criminal offense for the owner or handler if a loose or uncontrolled dog harms a service animal. Seeing Eye President and CEO Jim Kutsch presented written testimony urging support for and strengthening of the language in the bill. If this legislation eventually passes, Pennsylvania will become one of more than 35 states to have a guide dog protection law.

Lorenz's home state of California has such a law, but she was told it can be enforced only if someone can positively identify the dog responsible for the harassment or attack.

The Seeing Eye makes available a flyer detailing how pet owners can help. The flyer can be downloaded by going to seeingeye.org/access and clicking on "More on protecting dog guides from attack or interference." And to all those pet owners who keep their dogs under control at all times, The Seeing Eye, its graduates, and dog guide users everywhere extend an enormous "thanks." ■

Ginger Kutsch. "But blind people must face these emergencies without the opportunity to use vision to defend themselves or their dogs."

More recently Kutsch has focused on designing a survey of Seeing Eye graduates that will collect accurate statistics on dog interference and attacks. At the same time, she hopes the project will help to identify more ways to prevent attacks by loose or uncontrolled dogs.

Pet owners can help in a number of ways including not taking a pet (even if leashed) near a dog guide, reporting loose dogs to authorities, alerting a blind person of the presence of the pet while passing, and not leaving a dog tied up and unattended, as in the case of *Nacho's* attacker.



Planning for the Future



For generations, the lives of individuals who are blind or visually impaired have been transformed by the gifts of people who named The Seeing Eye in their wills. The work of our organization would not be possible without the generosity of these donors, many of whom remain unknown to us until the moment we learn of their bequests.

On November 6, The Seeing Eye hosted about 50 certified public accountants, financial planners, trust and estate attorneys, and other professionals who assist individuals in planning their estates. The guests had an opportunity to meet instructors, some of the dogs-in-training, President & CEO Jim Kutsch, and other members of the staff, plus they received a special tour of the veterinary clinic and kennels.

“Our hope is that when their clients seek advice about leaving The Seeing Eye in their wills, these professionals, because of their familiarity with our mission, will feel confident in supporting that choice,” said Kutsch. ■



Pictured, above, and proceeding clockwise:

President & CEO Jim Kutsch and Major Gifts & Planned Giving Officer Peggy Harris meet Lisa Berry from Bank of America.

Event attendees were treated to a campus tour, including the clinic in the Stable Canine Health Center.

Guest speaker J. William Widing III, Esq. from The Pennsylvania Trust Co., shared his experience of administering the estate of a client who remembered The Seeing Eye in her will.

Jane Hardin, Esq., of Day Pitney LLP, had questions for President Kutsch and his wife, Ginger, following her campus tour.

The event provided an opportunity for Chief Marketing Officer William Haines (left) from The Pennsylvania Trust Co., Nancy Hamilton of the Community Foundation of New Jersey, and Michael Tormey, J.D., from Peapack-Gladstone Bank, to meet peers within their industry.

Nichole Cipriani (foreground) and Regina Spielberg, Esq., both of Schenck, Price, Smith & King, LLP, admire black Lab INEZ. The puppy is being raised by long-time puppy raiser Janet Keeler (right).

From Our Archives
1966/67

On Sunday nights in the 1960s, American

audiences gathered in front of their televisions to watch Disney's Wonderful World of Color. For three consecutive Sunday nights in March 1967, that audience learned all about how The Seeing Eye in Morristown, N.J., was training amazing dogs to lead people who are blind. In February 2009, the three-part series, titled "Atta Girl, Kelly," is being released on DVD by Disney in recognition of The Seeing Eye's 80th Anniversary.

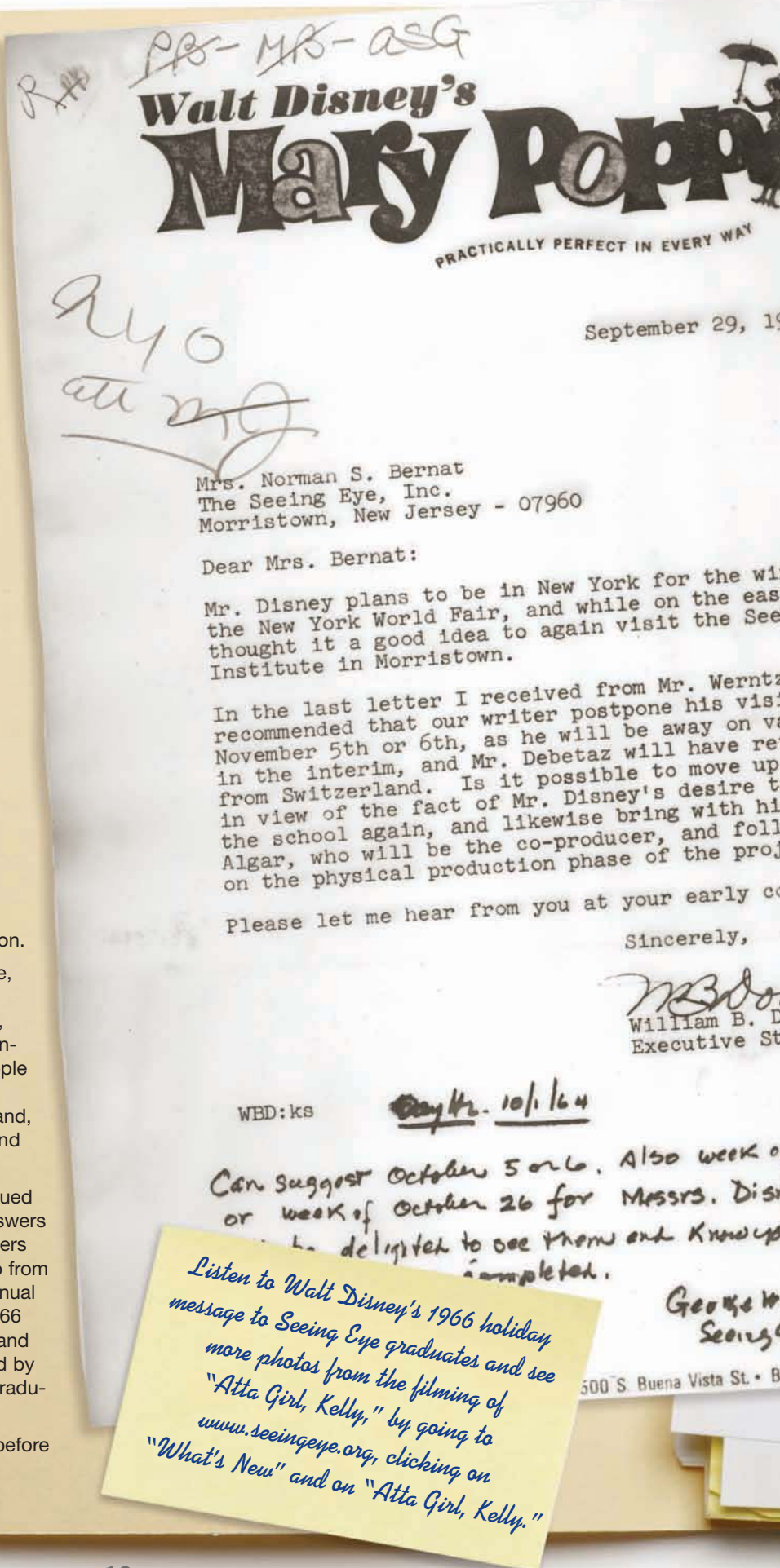
As part of that DVD project, Disney filmed a 20-minute bonus feature that highlights The Seeing Eye and its programs today. While researching the history of "Atta Girl, Kelly" in preparation for the filming of that featurette, we found a plentiful supply of information about the production and release of the original show. From letters that date back to 1963, it's clear that administrators of The Seeing Eye discussed the possibility of partnering with Disney since as early as 1936, when Seeing Eye co-founder Dorothy Harrison Eustis apparently met Walt Disney for the first time.

It was after a 1963 visit to The Seeing Eye by Mr. and Mrs. Disney that the idea really took root. Vice President of Training William Debetaz served as technical consultant, and a July 1966 article in the "Newark News" reported that a crew of 50 arrived in Morristown by truck and bus to work on the production.

A postcard was sent to friends of The Seeing Eye, alerting them of the "Red Letter Sundays" on which "Atta Girl, Kelly" was to appear. After the show aired, the Guide magazine reported that the school was inundated with mail, including 500 letters from young people asking about becoming Seeing Eye instructors. "The typewriters hummed constantly," the article stated, "and, eventually, every letter and postcard was answered and thousands of pieces of literature were sent out."

For at least the next five years, the school continued to receive letters from fans, and in response, sent answers to "frequently asked questions" addressed to "Members of Kelly's Fan Club." An especially touching memento from the era is a message Walt Disney recorded for the annual holiday message to Seeing Eye graduates. On the 1966 phonograph record, among the voices of instructors and other staff members is the voice of Disney, introduced by Debetaz, describing the TV production and wishing graduates and their dogs "the best Christmas ever."

Sadly, Disney passed away that December, just before graduates received the holiday message.



OCT 1 1964
ans
 © 1964 Walt Disney Productions

RECEIVED
 OCT 5 1964
 N.Y. OFFICE

TO: MISS JOBSON
 FROM: MR. WERTZ

You saw the letter
 I just now talked t
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 i he plans to see Mr. North while he is at The Seeing Eye.

ill keep you posted as this develops, but it might be helpful
 you could sit in with us the day we go over the "new treatment"
 h Mr. Alley. Mr. Dover said they would send us a copy of this
 advance.

MT. dis.

PB



"WALT DISNEY'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF COLOR"
 a TV production for
 NBC
 "ATTA GIRL KELLY - Dog of Destiny"

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Join Disney Movie Club
 to get your own copy of
 "Atta Girl, Kelly." Go to
www.DisneyMovieClub.com
 to become a member,
 or call 1-800-362-4587.



Red Letter Sundays

for Friends of
THE SEEING EYE, INC.
 MORRISTOWN, N. J.

March 5, 12 and 19

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS, INC.
 presents... **"ATTA GIRL, KELLY!"**

A Story of the Three Loves of a Seeing Eye® Dog
 Tune in "The Wonderful World of Color"

Your NBC-TV Station 7:30 E.S.T., or check your local TV listing

March, 1967

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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TV Commercial Challenges Obstacles of Dog Guide Access

A young couple enters a restaurant, requesting a table for two. As they are seated, a young boy flicks a paper “football” across the table. A man talks loudly on a cell phone. A woman removes gum from her mouth, shrugs, and sticks it under her barstool.

Meanwhile, a Seeing Eye dog lies underneath the chair of the woman we first saw entering the restaurant. The dog is well-groomed and perfectly behaved, in stark contrast to the human customers. And that’s the whole point.

These are the images from a new public service announcement, produced by The Seeing Eye and distributed to 1,000 TV stations nationwide. The commercial is part of a campaign to educate the public about access for dog guides.

Shot in a Morristown, N.J., restaurant and in The Seeing Eye kitchen, the commercial stars graduate Kathy Murray and her dog *Winsome* and features several of the school’s employees, including cooks Karen Sibilia and Jorge Henao.

As Henao’s character reports to Sibilia there’s a dog in the restaurant, Sibilia responds, “Too bad the people aren’t as well-behaved.”

Produced by the Communications Department, the one-minute commercial was distributed as an unpaid announcement, to be aired by stations as a public service. “Despite the advocacy work that has occurred since the time of Morris Frank and in spite of federal laws that guarantee access, dog guide owners still find themselves denied entry to restaurants, taxis, hospitals, and stores,” said Seeing Eye Director of Communications Teresa Davenport. “Our hope is that customers and employees of restaurants and other public facilities will remember these images the next time they see a dog guide team.”

You can watch The Seeing Eye’s public service announcement at www.youtube.com/seeing4me. ■

Student Center Gets ‘Green’ Light

Downtown Training Facility Makes Its Debut



Instructors under blindfold begin their daily training route from the new Seeing Eye Jane H. Booker Student Center.

On December 8, the first Seeing Eye van, filled with excited dogs-in-training, pulled into the new downtown Morristown training center garage.

The environmentally-friendly Seeing Eye Jane H. Booker Student Center opened its doors to its first official class of students, dogs, and their instructors. No longer will instructors need to shoehorn their vans into too few spaces before taking their dogs on training routes. And no longer will students have to wait in parked vans while they take turns learning routes with their instructors.

Now, the instructors easily pull into 30 parking spaces in the garage, and students wait upstairs in a comfortable living room, checking email via wireless internet or chatting over soft drinks. Off the building’s main lobby, visitors to Morristown soon can drop in on the new Seeing Eye visitors center to pick up a brochure, watch a video, and purchase a logo T-shirt.

A gift from the Jane H. Booker Foundation partially funded the development of the Center. It replaces a building that served for 20 years as the downtown base camp for students, dogs, and their instructors.

Owners of the facility, which is shared with several other non-profit organizations, have constructed the first building in Morristown, N.J., to be certified under the U.S. Green Building Council LEED program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Some of the standards that help make it a LEED-certified building include a vegetative roof, sun blocking shelves over the windows, solar panels, a living biowall to filter air, geothermal wells for heating and cooling, and salvaged building materials.

While visitors might not notice all the energy being saved or all the healthy air that surrounds them, what they will notice is a comfortable, attractive environment that’s conducive to learning. ■

Seeing Eye Puppies Get Vested

Of course, we would like to believe that every Seeing Eye puppy is so perfectly well-behaved that the public immediately recognizes them as the VIPs (Very Important Puppies) that they are. But just to be sure that the pups-in-training are easily identifiable, The Seeing Eye recently began issuing specially designed vests for puppies to wear while in public.



The vests, decorated with the new Seeing Eye puppy raiser logo, serve two purposes, explained Peggy Gibbon, the Linda Feinne-Roth Manager of Puppy Placement. “It gets the puppy used to wearing something on its body in preparation for wearing a harness. Also, the vests clearly identify the puppy as a Seeing Eye puppy-in-training. Many service animal organizations have their puppies wearing this type of identification, and business owners and the general public have come to expect it.”

The vests will not change the public access rights

of puppy raisers. Puppies-in-training do not have the same rights as fully trained service animals, so puppy raisers must continue to request permission before taking a puppy into an establishment that does not normally allow dogs.

Like a merit badge or athletic letter, the vests must be earned. Puppies must be at least six months of age and demonstrate the basic obedience commands of sit, down,

rest, and come, as well as displaying overall good manners while in public. “Not all puppies mature at the same rate,” said Assistant Manager of Puppy Placement Kathy Daly. “But by six months they have usually learned these basic skills.”

The vests have been well received by puppies and raisers alike. “The puppy raisers really work hard to earn this honor so their puppies can wear the vests proudly in public as true representatives of The Seeing Eye,” said Daly. ■

Room at the Inn

Retired Seeing Eye Guide Makes Holidays Brighter

On the weekend before Thanksgiving, when most people were out buying turkeys, the keeper of a very special inn and her daughter were buying dog toys for the newest member of their family.

Vi, a 5-year-old yellow Lab and retired Seeing Eye dog, had found a new home and a new job at The Children’s Inn at the NIH (National Institutes of Health).

The Children’s Inn, established in 1990, is a nonprofit residence for 59 children and families who stay in a homelike setting while participating in treatment at the National Institutes of Health. Now children will be able to hug and play with a furry friend who dispenses medicine in the form of big “doggy” kisses. *Vi* will live with Resident Manager Deanna Wharwood and spend scheduled times with the children.

The Seeing Eye’s Director of Canine Health Dr. Dolores Holle, who helped facilitate the special



Deanna Wharwood, with her daughter Sydney and Vi.

match, said this adoption was especially heartwarming. “NIH wanted to do everything right. We actually had conference calls with NIH before *Vi* moved in. Everyone really loves her.”

Vi was met at The Children’s Inn by staff and residents with open arms and eager faces. “We heard that she greeted the first warm body, and immediately fell on her back to have her belly rubbed,” said Dr. Holle.

Although Wharwood and her daughter, Sydney, will be *Vi*’s primary caretakers, several staff members and residents lined up to spend time with her.

The Seeing Eye has an adoption program for any dogs that fail to complete training to become guides and for those guides who have retired and whose owners were unable to keep them or place them with friends. ■



The Seeing Eye officially began its 80th anniversary celebration by ringing the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange. For more information, see page 1.

THE SEEING EYE

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The Seeing Eye follows the guidelines recommended by the Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools for the humane care and training of dogs to be guides, and the instruction and graduate services offered to people who are blind or visually impaired.

The Seeing Eye is an accredited member of the International Guide Dog Federation.

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