

PARTNERS

TALES FROM THE SEEING EYE



The Seeing Eye
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“

Although I have lost my sight,

with the help of the *angel* who walks on my left side,

I have regained my vision. She not only has *guided*

my footsteps, she guided my heart, my mind, and my *spirit.*”

Seeing Eye Graduate

WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE THESE AMAZING STORIES.

INSPIRING STORIES

The difference The Seeing Eye makes in the lives of people who are blind can best be explained by the graduates themselves ... people who are living their lives—some ordinary and others not-so-ordinary—enhanced by their daily experiences with their dogs.

The Seeing Eye is the world's oldest guide dog school. We breed, raise, and train the world-famous Seeing Eye® dogs, and every month bring blind men and women from across the United States and Canada to our campus in Morristown, New Jersey to learn how to care for and work with these amazing dogs. We are a charitable organization supported solely by donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Please help us put “miracles in motion” by visiting www.seeingeye.org/supportus or by calling 800.539-4425.



LINDA RAGLAND & RJ



Linda Ragland was partnered with her first Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Misty, in 1986. She recently returned to The Seeing Eye to be partnered with her sixth—a yellow Lab named RJ. Linda, a long-time resident of Dickson, Tennessee, originally wanted a Seeing Eye dog so she could walk with her children in their neighborhood as well as run errands. The photo shows Linda smiling as she stands next to RJ.

“It was becoming increasingly difficult for me to walk with my children or to go to the school, the library, or the store,” Linda said. At that time, she still had a little usable vision, and thought that one needed to be completely blind in order to qualify for a Seeing Eye dog. Finally, a friend told her to talk to The Seeing Eye. She did, and learned that her vision was poor enough to be accepted at the school.

“It was one of the best things I’ve ever done,” Linda said. “I’m a hands-on type of person. As soon as I picked up Misty’s harness, I knew.

“There are some great cane users out there, but I’m not one of them. I prefer having a living, breathing partner to get me where I need to go,” Linda said.

JIM KUTSCH & Vegas



Since 1929, The Seeing Eye has been partnering people who are blind or visually impaired with dogs we have trained to guide them. Seeing Eye® dogs are renowned the world over for their intelligence, loyalty, and gentleness. We have created more than 16,000 Seeing Eye partnerships. Each one is an amazing, inspiring, and unique story. We wanted to share a few of those stories with you, featuring recent graduates of The Seeing Eye.

As for me, my name is Jim Kutsch, and in 2006, I became the first graduate of The Seeing Eye to be named its President and CEO. I was teamed with my first Seeing Eye dog, a German shepherd named Sheba, in 1970; in 2013, I was teamed with my eighth, a German shepherd named Vegas. The picture shows me with my arm around Vegas standing in front of a background of green bushes.

We hope you enjoy these stories, and remember, thanks to your generous support, The Seeing Eye is creating new amazing stories of partnerships every day.

KAYE LESLIE & *Jordan*



*K*aye Leslie, a Toronto resident, was partnered with her first Seeing Eye dog in 1994. Kaye, the manager of workforce diversity at Scotia Bank, is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Disabilities Studies at York University and is now with her fourth dog, a golden retriever named Jordan. The picture shows Kaye standing on a slate patio with stone steps and a snow-covered lawn behind her. Jordan is proudly sitting at her feet.

"Being teamed with my first dog, Ultra, was truly a life-altering moment. My first thought was, 'Wow, I should have done this sooner!'" Kaye said.

Ultra's first test came at The Seeing Eye during training in New York City. "I just couldn't believe I was going to be able to navigate through all those people. How are we going to do this? But that little shepherd just plowed us right through!" she said.

"Traveling without a dog was difficult for me. I would come home exhausted, because I was so tense—I was all curled up just expecting that next collision. With a Seeing Eye dog, I can just relax. I can keep my head up and walk with confidence," Kaye said.



DAVIS DUTY & *Ellery*



*D*avis Duty, an attorney and former municipal and federal judge, has been working with Seeing Eye dogs since 1952, when he was matched with a female German shepherd named Binney. Last month, Judge Duty returned to The Seeing Eye for his ninth Seeing Eye dog, a male German shepherd named Ellery. In the photo, Judge Duty is kneeling down next to Ellery with a beautiful view of The Seeing Eye campus behind them. Prior to Ellery, he worked with a male German shepherd named Izmir.

"Izmir was a terrific dog, and when he died, what I really wanted was another Izmir," he said. "And I got very lucky in that they found this wonderful dog, Ellery, for me. And he reminded me so much of Izmir that I asked, and it turns out that, sure enough, Ellery and Izmir are from the same line! It's really remarkable, but it's not surprising to me, because he's so much like Izmir—a big strong dog, smart, responsive, exactly what I need."

However, there's one trait Izmir and Ellery don't share. "Ellery is a lot more affectionate, while Izmir was a bit more standoffish," he said. "Two pats on the head and a rub on the ear and that's about all Izmir would let you have. But Ellery, I can't groom him without getting a face wash. He makes it very plain that the deal is, you can brush him but he gets to lick your face the entire time. He's probably the most affectionate dog I've ever had, and it's just wonderful."



KRISTIN FLESCHNER & Zoe



This photo shows Kristin Fleschner and her first Seeing Eye dog, a yellow Labrador retriever named Zoe, in front of a large fountain that has been turned into a planter full of colorful tulips. Kristin is crouching down and holding Zoe, who is looking back at the camera with her tongue hanging out.

Kristin is entering her final year as a student at Harvard Law School. She also runs half marathons! Kristin and Zoe were returning to the hotel after Kristin ran the Rock and Roll Half Marathon in Washington, D.C., with a friend as her guide. (Zoe didn't run the half marathon, of course, but met her after the finish line.) "I was completely exhausted after the race, and we were walking in a city that was new to Zoe, even though I had spent many years in Washington. We were approaching a crosswalk I was familiar with and suddenly we reached construction tape. Members of the construction crew came over and explained that the road was closed, and asked if they could help me across. I asked them to give Zoe a chance, but if she couldn't find a safe route I would ask them for assistance. We backed up and Zoe paused five or 10 seconds looking for an alternative route. She quickly located a safe path several feet down the street. She took me out into the street while hugging the curb and keeping me safe, then promptly returned to the sidewalk when it was available. The construction crew and a large group of pedestrians who had watched all this cheered as Zoe located the sidewalk. Zoe leaped in the air, tail wagging, and gave me lots of kisses. She knew we were safe!"

DANIEL NOVIELLI & Dante



Seeing Eye graduate Daniel Novielli is Senior Business Development Manager, Products, for SourceAmerica. He was teamed with his first Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Quaid, in 1996; he's been with his third, a golden retriever named Dante, since 2007.

Daniel recently moved to the Washington, D.C., area after living in Arkansas for several years. Needless to say, going from a small city with limited public transportation to a bustling metropolitan area with subways was a huge change! Would Dante, now almost 9 years old, be able to handle it?

"Given that Dante is getting older and has not had many challenging work years under his belt, I was nervous how he would handle this busy city with trains, buses, and walkways to get anywhere I need to go," Daniel said. "Well, my expectations have been far exceeded. Right out of the gate, from the time we stepped foot on that plane in August, Dante has been teaching me and has worked like a seasoned city guide dog. Without first being taught the route, Dante has taken me in the train tunnels, town escalators, on the train, to the bus connections and to my office. He works like he's young, and remembers all he has been taught at The Seeing Eye and works flawlessly like a seasoned dog.

"I don't know why I am shocked. I think my previous lifestyle made me take for granted how amazingly wonderful these dogs are and more importantly, how incredibly necessary we need these dogs to guide us so we can be independent," he said.

TERRI WEBB & Evon



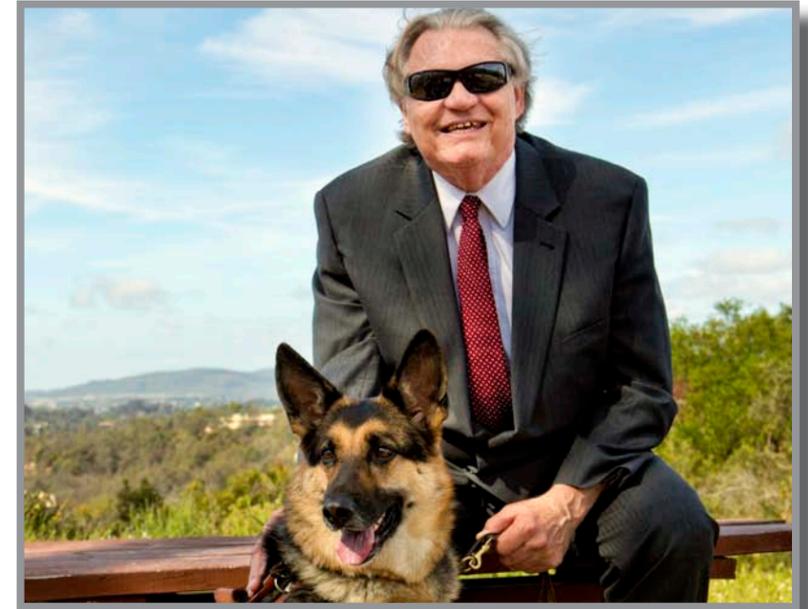
A Seeing Eye dog can guide you anywhere—even to the birth of your grandson!

Terri Webb, an artist living in Adel, Georgia, was there for the delivery of her third grandchild—Jackson Reid McDaniel, born on October 11, 2013. Also with her was her first Seeing Eye dog, a female German shepherd named Evon. The two were matched in January 2012.

“My daughter Lydia wanted me there for the delivery,” Terri said. “So I said to the doctor: what is it going to take to get Evon into the delivery room? And there was absolutely no problem at all. Evon and I were right there! Evon was just so calm. She took it all in but didn’t get in the way and didn’t get excited. Lydia told us that having Evon in the room really helped keep her calm, as well. When Jackson was born, Evon got up and looked at him, then she went right back down.”

In this amazing picture taken minutes after the delivery, you see Terri sitting in a chair, cradling her newborn grandson in her left arm while reaching out with her right hand to stroke Evon’s cheek, who is calmly seated next to the chair. Evon is leaning in to sniff the newest addition to her pack!

JOSEPH KLATT & Enya



*R*eal estate broker, mediator, and author Dr. Joseph Klatt is in his 46th year of dog travel, now teamed with his seventh Seeing Eye dog, a German shepherd, named Enya. The photo shows Joe, wearing a suit and sunglasses, sitting on a bench with Enya sitting in front of him.

Joe compares getting a new Seeing Eye dog with getting a new wife—“it’s a major change!” Since Joe, a former San Diego City lifeguard, walks a brisk five miles a day, he requires a fast traveler with lots of endurance. Enya, “my little rocket dog,” is focused, intelligent, and precise, he said.

One of Joe’s previous dogs, Marvel, saved his life when at an intersection when a truck ignored new traffic signs and roared around stopped cars. The truck hit Joe’s right knee and broke his ankle, but Marvel “reared up like a stallion” and pulled Joe out of the street and away from further harm.

It all starts with the training he received at The Seeing Eye, Joe said. “I call The Seeing Eye training ‘boot camp,’ so people understand it’s an intensive procedure,” he said. “That’s why I’ve had such good results.”

ANNA MARIE WILLIAMS & Flossy



*A*nna Marie Williams was born in Window Rock, the capital of the Navajo Nation, and now lives in Fort Defiance, Arizona. She was matched with her first Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Bonita, in 2004; she recently returned to The Seeing Eye for her second, a black Labrador retriever named Flossy. The photo shows Anna hugging Flossy in front of a brick façade.

“Bonita was a good dog,” Anna said. “When she was in harness she was a really good worker, but out of the harness she was a rambunctious little puppy! She was so beautiful, people would come up all the time and ask if they could pet her. And I would have to say no, I’m sorry, she’s working. But when we got to where we were going I would take her out of the harness and she made sure everyone petted her then! She just loved to play and she loved people.”

Anna said at first she didn’t know if a guide dog was right for her, but she’s glad she made the decision to come to The Seeing Eye. “When you get your first dog, it’s hard to put your trust. You have to step out off the curb and trust that the dog is going to keep you safe. And she does. And then it gets easier,” she said. “For me, it has worked out really well.”

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KYLE STREET & Pj



*K*yle Street was a high school senior when he was matched with P.J., his first Seeing Eye dog. Kyle, a resident of Raleigh, North Carolina, is now a college student. The picture shows Kyle holding P.J., who is looking shyly at the camera. He looks like he’s ready to get to work!

When Kyle was in training, he directed his new dog, P.J. to go forward. P.J. refused. Kyle then made the classic rookie mistake: He went ahead of P.J., and walked right into a torn-up sidewalk. A match was made!

“I never thought I could put all my trust into a dog,” Kyle said, “but I do. P.J. is awesome!”

Back at home, as a student at Wake Technical Community College and employee at an Apple store, Kyle appreciates how P.J. remembers a classroom or, in new situations, makes finding counters or doorways easy. To illustrate this, he has taught P.J. to step on an “easy button” from Staples. Kyle says, “What do you think?” P.J. steps on the button, which says, “That was easy!”

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JORDAN WALTERS GIST & Plato



Jordan Walters Gist was matched with her first Seeing Eye dog, a German shepherd named Plato, in 2008. Jordan plays center for the USA Women's Goalball team. The picture, taken by Hal Yeager of The Birmingham News, shows Jordan and Plato walking off the court after a match in Alabama. Goalball, a game designed for people who are visually impaired, is played using a basketball-sized ball loaded with bells so players can determine its location on the court. To score, you roll or bounce into the other team's goal, while the other team tries to catch or block it.

"Plato is a great Goalball dog," Jordan said. "Some dogs get excited—they see you jumping around and diving and the ball rolling around and they want to get out there and play too. But he just lays there and stays quiet. The one time I heard him, I was playing wing instead of center, and I dove to block a ball and I heard a soft little eager whine. I thought, 'Is that Plato?' I asked my coach later what happened and he said when I dove for the ball, I got so close to Plato that I could have reached out and touched his snout. But he didn't move at all. He's great."



CARISSA ORTEGA & Bonnie



Carissa Ortega, a college student from Colorado, has been teamed with her Seeing Eye dog Bonnie—or "Bon Bon"—since 2011. The photo shows Carissa standing next to Bonnie, a female golden retriever, in front of the Main House at The Seeing Eye.

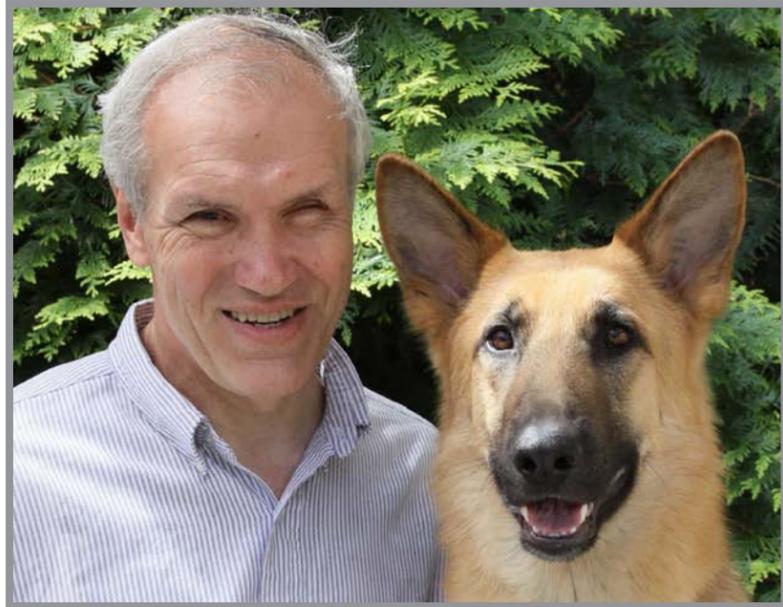
Carissa first became interested in getting a Seeing Eye dog after talking to friends who had guide dogs. "I liked how it seemed easier, and how they seemed more independent," she said. "And there was a sense of companionship that I really wanted."

But working with a Seeing Eye dog isn't as easy as walking a dog. "I expected Bonnie to be perfectly trained when I met her. Well, she was—but I wasn't! It felt like I had three left feet!" Carissa laughed. "After a few days of training, I knew we were a match. It still took some adjusting, but I knew it was going to work."

Bonnie is a serious worker when she's in harness, but when she's "off duty" she's all fun. "I still think of her like a puppy. She's super hyper! And when we go home she likes to steal my little sisters' toys. It's really cute."



BOB KENNEDY *& Flyer*



*B*ob Kennedy is now matched with his third Seeing Eye dog, a male German shepherd named Flyer. Bob, who lives in North Carolina, works for National Industries for the Blind. The photo shows Bob smiling as he stands next to Flyer in front of a backdrop of green bushes.

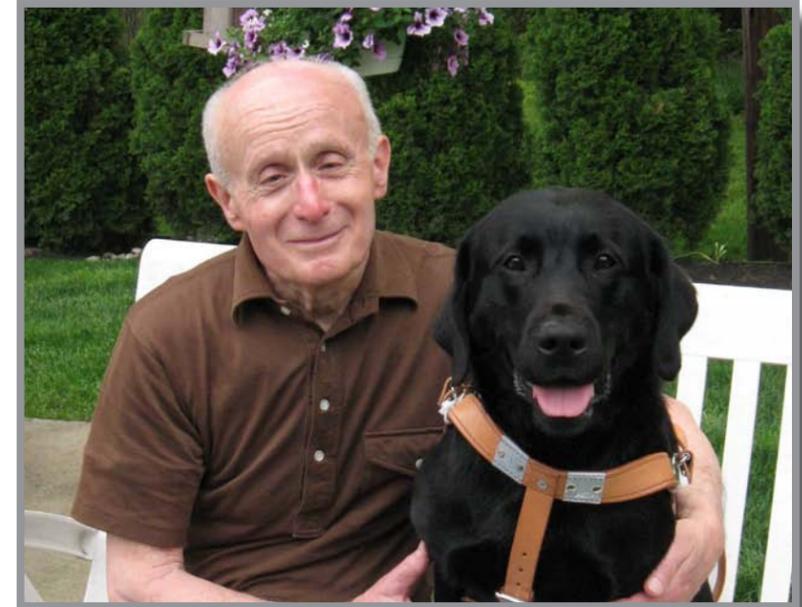
Bob also enjoys woodworking, making items as small as peppermills and salt shakers to as large as cradles and vanities. Wait... woodworking? How does he do it?

“I am totally blind, so colors are all in my mind now, relying on memories from the 12 years of sight I did have,” Bob said. Bob said he loves building furniture. “I can take a pile of very rough wood and mill it into a table, chair, desk, or whatever I want to make,” he said. “It’s a great feeling of satisfaction to watch a piece of very rough cut wood turn into a glass-smooth finished piece. If it feels good to the touch it will look good to the eyes.”

Bob admits he can be a little fussy when it comes to making sure a piece is perfect. “Being as particular as I am, I probably have the world’s largest collection of custom firewood!”

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MORT KAYSER *& Wanda*



*M*ort Kayser has worked with Seeing Eye dogs for the past 60 years. The photo shows him sitting on a bench with his current Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Wanda. At the age of 22, Mort fell ill with spinal meningitis and slipped into a coma. When he woke up, he was blind.

“After doing some research, I eventually heard of The Seeing Eye. Based on what I had heard, I knew that I wanted to be there,” Mort said. He was matched with Flip, a boxer—the first of his eight Seeing Eye dogs.

“From the moment I picked up Flip’s harness, I could tell there was an immediate connection,” Mort said. “One morning while training, Flip and I were walking down a narrow road. The first time through, everything went smoothly. The second time down the road, I could sense something was different, but couldn’t tell exactly what was wrong. At the end of the day, my instructor informed me that the path had a narrow sidewalk that was bordered by a tall brick wall. In order to prevent me from walking into the wall or into the street, Flip guided me with her hind legs in the gutter and her front legs on the sidewalk. It was really incredible.”

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ROBERT DITTMAN & *Snickers*

Robert Dittman is an attorney, Coast Guard Auxiliarist, musician, and graduate of The Seeing Eye. He was matched with his first Seeing Eye dog, a Labrador retriever/golden retriever cross named Harriet, in 1996; he was matched with Snickers, a chocolate Labrador retriever, in 2007. And in 2013, Robert was matched again—with Dr. Mary Kate Lawler, a veterinary surgeon! The two had been dating for 10 years, but made it official on September 29 with a wedding aboard a Disney Cruise.

In the photo, you see Robert in his Coast Guard uniform—aka “mess dress”—with a red rose in the lapel as he stands on the deck of the ship. With his right hand he is holding hands with his new bride, Mary Kate, who is wearing a white wedding dress and a white hat. And in his left hand he is holding Snickers’s leash. If you look closely, you’ll see that over his Seeing Eye harness, Snickers is wearing a bow tie, and on his forelegs are white “cuff links”!

“The cruise was absolutely amazing. They took care of everything,” Robert said. “On the way back we sailed through Tropical Storm Karen, and there’s nothing like working your dog on 19-foot swells!”



GAIL HAMILTON & *Vinnie*

Seeing Eye graduate Gail Hamilton, with her fourth Seeing Eye dog Vinnie at her side, won the 2013 Ms. Senior Colorado pageant, and competed in the 2013 Ms. Senior America Pageant!

The picture shows Gail immediately after she won the Ms. Senior Colorado pageant. She is wearing a sleeveless silver and gray ball gown with a sash that reads “Ms. Colorado”. She is wearing a tiara in her hair and holding a bouquet of red flowers. Vinnie, a black Labrador/golden retriever cross, is lying calmly next to her.

Gail said Vinnie’s assistance goes far beyond pageants. “I can’t imagine my life without him. There have been times in my life without a Seeing Eye dog, and I can say for certain now, I’ll never live without a guide dog again. He provides me confidence, dignity, and ease, and there are no words to express the physical and psychological freedom he provides. Is he perfect? No. Neither am I! The trick is to learn how to love, work, and trust the paws that guide me. I trust Sir Vinnie with my life and am eternally grateful to The Seeing Eye for providing such high quality expertise dogs to blind folks. You give me wings to fly and I’m blessed to be the proud owner of my fourth Seeing Eye dog!”

