If you are a regular reader of The Guide, you know that The Seeing Eye is in the midst of a capital campaign. Unlike many schools, which use capital campaigns for “bricks and mortar” projects, the funds raised in our campaign are for something that will last even longer than a building: The Seeing Eye itself.

Soon after our founding in 1929, Dorothy Harrison Eustis and Morris Frank knew that it wouldn’t be enough just to train guide dogs once for each applicant. The Seeing Eye would need to be here to provide ongoing support to all those Seeing Eye teams, and, when a graduate’s dog retired, to train a successor dog and instruct the graduate in how to use him or her.

As an institution born during the Great Depression, our founders also knew that in order to thrive, our future could not be subject to the ebb and flow of the economy. To ensure our continued survival, in 1937 Eustis established an endowment that would enable The Seeing Eye to weather future economic downturns. Proceeds from our endowment pay for a portion of the annual costs of breeding, raising, and training dogs and the instruction of our students but also cover all of our administrative costs, enabling every dollar we receive from donations to go toward our mission of breeding and training the world’s best guide dogs and matching them with people who are blind from across the United States and Canada.

The most recent recession was a difficult one for charities, and some did not survive it. But thanks to our endowment, The Seeing Eye not only continued its mission, but over the last 10 years turned out more guide dog teams than we did during the 10 years before that. Funds from the endowment made that possible.

Two years ago, with the recession behind us, The Seeing Eye embarked on its first-ever capital campaign. Our goal is to raise $10 million over five years to replenish our endowment. It was an ambitious target when we started, but if we can achieve it, it will mean a conservative 5 percent draw on the endowment would cover half our annual costs. It will further assure that The Seeing Eye will be here as long as people who are blind or visually impaired need Seeing Eye dogs.

Thanks to your generous support and that of other foundations, corporations, and individuals, we are now at 91 percent of that lofty goal – and we’re only just reaching the halfway mark of our five-year campaign!

This issue of The Guide has stories about two people who supported the capital campaign: Seeing Eye graduate Lois Mills and former Seeing Eye Chairman Michael W. Ranger. Please join them, and me, by making a tax-deductible gift to help ensure we will always be here for those who need our dogs.

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

This spring, the students at Greenwood Elementary School in Hamilton, New Jersey, have been raising money for your organization through the Pennies for Puppies® program. The students and teachers absolutely loved being able to make a difference and were able to raise $840. We would like to thank you for all of the hard work you do at The Seeing Eye. The puppy raisers and puppies that came out put on a wonderful assembly for our kindergarten through fifth grade students. Thank you again for everything you do, we look forward to working with you again next year!

Jennifer Haas

Editor’s Note: Pennies for Puppies is a program for schools, Scouts, and other youth organizations to raise money for The Seeing Eye. (Dollars for Dogs® is a companion program for adult organizations.) For more information about setting up a Pennies program with your school or youth group, call (973) 539-4425 or email pennies@seeingeye.org.

Dear Seeing Eye:

Where have those four years gone? Within these great four years, I have had the amazing opportunity of raising three great Seeing Eye dogs. As I reflect on my experiences, I have realized that The Seeing Eye has contributed to my growth and formulation of my identity.

The puppy love began with Fenton the summer of my freshman year in high school. He was this golden puff that sprinted all around my house. When we went to the puppy club meetings, they proved to be learning experiences for both of us. As time passed, he continued to learn the commands such as rest and down. Meanwhile, I learned the different ways to administer the commands and how to control his energy. After about a year of training, he went back to Morristown to start school. Unfortunately, he did not pass, so we adopted him. While I was sad he did not become a guide dog, I was excited to be able to use the training experience with him to train more puppies.

The September of my sophomore year, Speedwell came to my house. He was a great dog to train because he was conscientious about the environment around him and made astute observations. With such traits, he proved to accomplish commands quickly. Additionally, his confidence and docile nature allowed him to become a guide dog to a judge in California.

My last puppy came the winter after Hurricane Sandy. While junior year was busy with SATs and a harder schedule, Niles offered me a way to temporarily escape the ardor of school. When I found time in my schedule, I would take him out on long walks and practice commands with him. He went back for training in February of my senior year and I saw his town walk in June. I hope he gets matched soon!

My experience with The Seeing Eye has marked a cycle. As I have grown intuitively, I have also changed and gained a better understanding of others and myself. Raising Fenton was similar to my experience as a freshman in high school. I had to learn to adjust and understand how to prepare for tests. Likewise, training Fenton provided me with a better understanding of how to train dogs. Over time, I became more mature and have been able to balance my busy schedule. Additionally, I have become a better handler with Seeing Eye dogs. Overall, my four years with The Seeing Eye have proven to be a parallel of my growth as a student. I have come to appreciate new experiences and challenges. Every time I received a new puppy, I looked forward to training them and preparing them for a life of excellence and independence.

I am thankful for the scholarship but also for the great memories and learning experience. I feel honored to have your support as I enter the next chapter of my life.

Alyssa Ahn
Mills, who grew up in New Jersey and was diagnosed at an early age with retinitis pigmentosa, said she’d always known about The Seeing Eye.

“My father saw a Seeing Eye team working once, and he wanted to talk to them to find out more about the program. He tried to chase after them but he couldn’t catch up to them! He told me that story and I knew then I wanted a Seeing Eye dog.”

After completing her undergraduate degree at Caldwell College (now Caldwell University), Mills came to The Seeing Eye
Eye, knowing she’d need a canine partner for her next step in life – getting her master’s degree in American History at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

“The instant I took my first step with a harness in my hand, I knew this was for me,” she said. “All of a sudden I’m not hanging onto someone’s arm or tapping ahead with a cane. I am standing up straight and walking down the street as fast as I please, just like anyone else. And my first thought was: ‘Where have you been all my life?’”

At first, Mills said, she was a little overwhelmed by the hustle and bustle of Washington, D.C. But she and Nip quickly conquered the challenge.

“By the time I graduated, I could go anywhere in that city,” she said. “Just give me the address and I can find it. Nip was an amazing dog. She’d go as fast or as slow as you wanted to go, and she never forgot a thing. She was wonderful.”

The two were paired for 10 years, and during that time Mills got her master’s degree, moved back to New Jersey and taught at St. Dominick Academy in Jersey City, returned to D.C. to work as an analyst with the Department of Defense, and met the man who would become her husband, a non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army who worked at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

“I joined a visually impaired bowling league, and I’d have to take three buses to get home at 1 or 2 in the morning,” she said. “But I had this black Lab next to me and no one bothered us.”

Her husband was transferred to Puerto Rico, and after a few years there, they moved to Orlando. Soon after he passed away, and Mills retired Nip. Then she was matched with her second dog – another black Labrador retriever, this one named Cookie. The two soon mastered Orlando, just as Mills and Nip had done in D.C.

“Now this was pre-Disney,” she said. “There have been a lot of changes since then!”

Mills’s instructor for her first two Seeing Eye dogs was Daniel Boeke, who was very interested in humanitarian causes because of his family’s experiences in Nazi-occupied Holland. After Boeke died, she learned his family had requested donations in lieu of flowers be sent to Amnesty International.

Remembering Boeke’s stories about the war, she decided not only to start making regular donations to the organization but to get involved with helping people in her own community. She went to Florida Technological University (now University of Central Florida) and earned a paralegal degree, and spent the next 15 years working at a local Legal Aid Society, running the intake department.

“We helped anyone in Orange County who needed an attorney and couldn’t afford one, other than for criminal cases,” she said. “A lot of family law, landlord/tenant issues, consumer cases, bankruptcies, protecting children and senior citizens, wills… every kind of case you can imagine.”

Now she’s with Rita, her seventh dog. Rita, a German shepherd, is “a very good guide but she has a mind of her own,” Mills said.

“She’s a character,” she laughed. “People always forget my name, but they always remember Rita!”

Mills is a member of the Graduate Society, which is comprised of Seeing Eye graduates who annually donate to the school. She also has made a gift to The Seeing Eye’s capital campaign, which will secure the school’s future for the generations of Seeing Eye teams that will come later.

“How you can donate to the capital campaign

If you would like to make your tax-deductible donation to The Seeing Eye’s capital campaign, please use the enclosed envelope and check off “Capital Campaign.” Or make a donation online by going to SeeingEye.org/Donate and selecting “Capital Campaign” from the first pull-down menu (“Direct My Gift To…”). Every dollar you donate will go to our endowment, which ensures the future of The Seeing Eye.

“More than 50 years of crossing streets and I’ve never been injured – of course I’m going to give back!” she said.

She stays active by taking exercise classes and participating in charitable causes. “You have to be of service to other people, to animals, and to the planet,” she said. “Too many people look inward. You have to look outward. You have to get involved. Get out of yourself.”

Her advice to new Seeing Eye graduates is simple: “My advice is to be kind to your dogs,” she said. “No, that’s not advice – that’s a command! You have to accept them and love them as they are, and if you take care of them, they will take care of you.”
The Seeing Eye on the Silver Screen

Countless television shows, movies, and books have featured the premise of a character who suddenly becomes blind and, seemingly the next day, is matched with a Seeing Eye dog.

Of course, real life doesn’t work that way. Getting a Seeing Eye dog requires months, sometimes years of preparation. The prospective handler must already have good travel and orientation skills, including how to use a white cane. He or she must submit references from acquaintances as well as medical professionals attesting to the need for a Seeing Eye dog and the ability to walk the several miles a day required during training. And finally, a Seeing Eye instructor will visit the applicant’s home to observe his or her home environment, need for a Seeing Eye dog, and, through a Juno walk, the candidate’s walking speed, handling ability, and travel skills. Then there’s the month the person spends at The Seeing Eye, learning how to work with a dog.

But with few exceptions, such details are typically skipped, with a trained dog given to a recently blinded person – sometimes before they even leave the hospital!

Hollywood’s fascination with Seeing Eye dogs began in 1935, just seven years after Morris Frank and Buddy landed in New York City to introduce the concept of guide dogs to Americans, with a feature film called Wings in the Dark.

The Paramount Pictures film starred Cary Grant as an aeronautical engineer who is developing a new system of instruments to enable pilots to “fly blind” in bad weather. But when he is blinded in an accident, Grant has to learn a new kind of blind navigation – holding onto the harness of a Seeing Eye dog!
Over the next 30 years other movies with Seeing Eye dogs would try to cash in on the intriguing concept of guide dogs. Ace the Wonder Dog made his debut in 1938’s *Blind Alibi*, and Donna Reed appeared in 1942’s *Eyes in the Night*, a movie about a blind detective uncovering a Nazi spy ring with the help of his Seeing Eye dog Friday.

But for most Americans, the concept of a Seeing Eye dog was introduced in 1967 by *Atta Girl, Kelly!* The movie, starring Beau Bridges, Billy Corcoran, and J.D. Cannon, followed a Seeing Eye dog from her days with her puppy raiser through training and ultimately being matched with a man who is blind. It was filmed on The Seeing Eye’s Washington Valley campus and long-time Seeing Eye instructor G. William Debetaz served as a technical adviser. It was shown on three consecutive Sundays – March 5, March 12, and March 19 – on “Walt Disney’s Wonderful World of Color.” A special edition of the film was released on DVD in 2009 to celebrate The Seeing Eye’s 80th anniversary.

“I watched *Atta Girl, Kelly!* when it originally aired, before I lost my sight, and thought it was a good movie – but I never thought I’d need a Seeing Eye dog,” said Jim Kutsch, President & CEO of The Seeing Eye, who would be blinded by a chemical explosion three months after the program aired.

In 1984, Disney made another TV movie, *Love Leads the Way.* This film told the story of The Seeing Eye, with Timothy Bottoms as Morris Frank and Eva Marie Saint as Dorothy Harrison Eustis. In 2005, there was a short-lived ABC series called *Blind Justice* about a police officer who is blinded in the line of duty but remains on the force after being paired with a guide dog.

Most recently, a guide dog was featured last spring on NBC’s *Growing Up Fisher*, starring J.K. Simmons as a lawyer who is blind and matched with a guide dog. The show was created by D.J. Nash, whose father, Eugene Nash, is a graduate of The Seeing Eye. It was not renewed for this season.

*Keep On Keepin’ On*

The most recent appearance of a Seeing Eye dog on the silver screen came at the 2014 TriBeCa Film Festival, where *Keep On Keepin’ On* won the Best New Documentary Director Award and the Heineken Audience Award for Best Documentary. It was also honored at film festivals in Seattle, Boulder, and Provincetown. The documentary is about Seeing Eye graduate Justin Kaufflin, a jazz protégé, and his mentor, jazz legend Clark Terry.

Kaufflin was matched with his first Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Candy, in 2009.
More than 2,000 riders participated in the fourth annual Gran Fondo NJ on September 7, and in the process raised more than $50,000 to benefit The Seeing Eye.

The bicycle tour - not a race - had four routes through the beautiful Highlands region of New Jersey. Employees, volunteers, and puppy raisers from The Seeing Eye staffed a rest stop that was visited by riders from three of the four routes.

Seeing Eye Senior Manager of Instruction and Training Tom Pender has ridden in the Gran Fondo every year since it was founded in 2011. “There were some good challenging hills and nice scenery,” Pender said. “The rest stops were all well-equipped and staffed by enthusiastic volunteers who were cheering the riders on.”

Trisha Ebel was one of four Seeing Eye graduates - along with Richard Blair, Kathleen Gallagher, and Tiffany Jessen - who rode on tandem bikes. In addition to Pender, five other Seeing Eye employees also rode: instructors Kim Geczi, Drew Gibbon, and Jim Kessler, Puppy Development coordinator Jill Jaycox, and nurse Amy Einhorn. There also were 25 riders from Alcatel-Lucent who raised money for The Seeing Eye. In total, 75 riders raised money for us.

Ebel and her pilot, her husband Dave, finished the 18-mile Breve Fondo in 2 hours and 25 minutes, and also raised more than $3,200 for The Seeing Eye - more than twice her fundraising goal. “I promised those who donated that if I made my goal I would dye my hair, and yes I dyed my hair purple with sparkles on the morning of the ride,” she said.

Ebel was matched with her fourth Seeing Eye dog, a black Labrador retriever named Astro, in February. She said she rides for The Seeing Eye because the school “has given me my life back.”

“I have more confidence and self-esteem than I ever thought imaginable because of The Seeing Eye, and I just want to shout out to everyone in the whole world how wonderful life is now that I have a Seeing Eye dog!”

Donations on behalf of Ebel or any of The Seeing Eye riders can be made through The Seeing Eye’s donation page at http://www.SeeingEye.org/Donate.
PUPPY POWER!

THE SEEING EYE HOSTS FAMILY DAY, RECOGNIZES PUPPY RAISERS

Forty-nine students were recognized with Puppy Raiser Scholarships on August 9, 2014. All the recipients are college-bound high school seniors who raised at least two puppies for The Seeing Eye, including one during their junior or senior year, and who attended at least 70 percent of their puppy club’s meetings and activities. The scholarships are not based on academics, but rather on community service. Each applicant writes an essay about the effect being a puppy raiser has had on his or her life.

“Raising a puppy takes patience and perseverance,” said Kathy Daly, the Linda Feinne-Roth Manager of Puppy Development. “It’s also about selflessness. It’s not easy to raise a puppy for a year and then give it back. But it teaches valuable lessons about helping others, about responsibility, and about seeing things through.”

Many of the scholarships were made possible by gifts in the names of Josephine Aresty, Edward A. Bragaline, Katherine Ann Engleking, Sally A. Jumper, Toni Stabile, Vincent Stabile, Bernice Barbour Foundation, Anton and Augusta Birkel Foundation, David M. Crowley Foundation, Fludzinski Foundation, Bruce J. Heim Foundation, Hermione Foundation, Michael J. Koslowski Foundation, Aaron & Rachel Meyer Foundation, PETCO Foundation, and Sandy Hill Foundation.

If you’re interested in raising a puppy for The Seeing Eye, go to our website at http://www.SeeingEye.org/Raise.
A Lifelong Friend

MICHAEL W. RANGER’S MANY GIFTS TO THE SEEING EYE

Even after leaving The Seeing Eye’s Board of Trustees, Michael W. Ranger continues to support the organization through his charitable donations. The Seeing Eye thanked his generous donation to our ongoing capital campaign by naming the Ranger Dining Room in his family’s honor.

“I am going to remain a lifelong friend of The Seeing Eye,” said Ranger, the co-founder of Diamond Castle, Inc.

Ranger volunteered to serve on The Seeing Eye’s Board of Trustees from 2002 through 2013, including as Chairman of the Board from 2005 through 2009. He said he was approached by S. Dillard Kirby and his mother, Walker Dillard Kirby, who were Seeing Eye Trustees at the time, and asked if he would be interested in serving on the board. (Mrs. Kirby continues to serve on the board as an Honorary Trustee.)

“I’ve lived in the Morristown area since 1990, so I’d seen The Seeing Eye in action on the street for a long time, and I was always intrigued by it,” he said. “But what really drew me in and convinced me to volunteer was the very deep and profound effect The Seeing Eye has on its students and graduates. The Seeing Eye makes life-changing differences in the lives of so many people.”

Although he was familiar with The Seeing Eye’s mission, he said once he got directly involved, he was surprised by the complexity of the organization.

“It’s not just a dog training facility,” he said. “It is, in essence, an educational organization, for training dogs as well as instructing students. But there’s also a science component, with a lot of attention paid to genetics, breeding, and health. It’s a very expensive proposition, and not all the people who benefit from these dogs are in a position to support it. Fundraising and management of the endowment are the key to our long-term success.”

In fact, the goal of the capital campaign is to grow the endowment, which declined during the recent economic recession. Thanks to the generous donations of Ranger and others, The Seeing Eye is now at 91 percent of its goal to raise $10 million to replenish the endowment.

“With the success of the capital campaign, the campus renovation that we went through, and our restructuring of our operating budget, I’m very confident that this organization is in a very good place for the long term. And when you say long term at The Seeing Eye, you really mean long term. When that 17- or 18-year-old student comes in for her first dog, you want to be there in 60 years when she comes back for her last one.”

Now Available From The Seeing Eye

The Seeing Eye is selling Holiday Cards to share with all your puppy-loving friends! This year’s photo features two dogs — an adult golden retriever in harness and a yellow Labrador retriever puppy — on a large red doggy bed in front of a blazing fire. Next to them is a green pine tree just waiting to be decorated with ornaments. Propped up against a chair is a harness that one day the little Lab will be big enough to wear when he becomes a Seeing Eye dog. The caption inside reads: Wishing you the comforts of a joyous holiday season and a peaceful New Year!

Also available are our 2015 Puppy Raiser calendar, featuring amazing pictures of our Seeing Eye puppies taken by our puppy raiser families, and the 85th anniversary memory book, The Seeing Eye: Celebrating 85 Years.

To order these and other items from The Seeing Eye, please visit our online store at SeeingEye.org/store or call the Donor and Public Relations Department at (800) 539-4425.
GOLD FOR GOALBALL!

THE U.S. WOMEN’S GOALBALL TEAM WON THE 2014 IBSA GOALBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, HELD THIS SUMMER IN FINLAND. TEAM USA HAS TWO SEEING EYE GRADUATES, JENNIFER ARMBRUSTER AND JORDAN GIST.

The women overcame Brazil, 5-3, in the quarterfinals, then beat Japan, 2-0, in the semifinals and Russia, 3-0, in the finals. “We put the goose egg on the board,” Armbruster said after the game. “Our defense came through, and that’s what the USA is known for. We’re known for our defense, and it really showed up for the games that counted.”

It’s been a great year so far for the women’s team. In addition to the world championships, the team also won the Malmo Lady Intercup in Sweden and the Pajulahti Games in Finland. Next up is the Para Pan American Games in Toronto, to be held next year.

By winning the world championships, the women qualify for the 2016 Paralympics, to be held in Rio de Janeiro.

The members of the U.S. Women’s Goalball team celebrate after defeating Russia in the World Championships.

Armbruster was partnered with her first Seeing Eye dog in 1993; she’s now with her third, a German shepherd named Vail. Gist is working with her first, a German shepherd named Plato.
Follow us on Facebook

This picture of seven Seeing Eye students and their Seeing Eye dogs was taken at a minor league baseball game in August. It quickly became our most popular post on Facebook, with more than 15,000 likes, and was seen by more than a quarter-million people! You can see this picture and many more on our Facebook page at Facebook.com/SeeingEye. We now have more than 90,000 followers… are you one of them?