

# "Eyes for Others"

## Yolo County Guide Dog Puppy Raisers

Web Site: [www.yologuidedogs.com](http://www.yologuidedogs.com)

Web Master: Julie Young

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## May 2009

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### Meeting Location

Our monthly meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at Harper Jr. High's multi-purpose room. Harper is located at the very east end of Covell before it curves and changes to Mace Blvd.

In addition to our monthly meeting, we try to plan for two Required Outings. Sometimes, we also add in Optional Outings, which are fun events we think would make a great outing for you and your pup, which you can voluntarily go to on your own. Optional Outings do not take the place of a Required Outing, but are in addition. Or sometimes we may have three required outings in a month because that is the way things happen, and maybe only one outing the next month because we know everyone's life is chaotic (such as in December).

We try to plan things several months in advance so that everyone can arrange their schedule around our meetings and outings. These are "tentative" as you never know what can happen to change our calendar. Sometimes a new event comes up that we feel would be more beneficial to the group than one we had planned.

<b>May 1</b>	<b>♥ Heartgard and Flea Control ♥ ♥</b>	
<b>May 7</b> (Thurs)	<b>Classroom Meeting</b> (Required Meeting) Harper Jr. High	<b>7 pm</b>
<b>May 14</b> (Thurs)	<b>Celebrate Davis</b> (Required Outing) Community Park	<b>6 pm</b>
<b>May 16</b> (Sat)	<b>Guide Dog Graduation</b> (Required Outing) San Rafael	<b>10 am</b>
<b>June 1</b>	<b>♥ Heartgard and Flea Control ♥ ♥</b>	
<b>June 4</b> (Thurs)	<b>Classroom Meeting</b> (Required Meeting) Harper Jr. High	<b>7 pm</b>
<b>June 16</b>	<b>California School for the Blind;</b>	<b>TBA</b>

**WEB SITE – [www.yologuidedogs.com](http://www.yologuidedogs.com)**

Julie Young is doing the care and feeding of our web site. So if you have any newsy tidbits (small ones please), dog-related jokes or cartoons, or a picture of your puppy you want to share, email Julie at [jayoung@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jayoung@ucdavis.edu). The web site contains the dates of outings, if you need to check a date.

We continue to thank Acorn Veterinary Clinic for sponsoring our web site. And a special Thank You to Julie for maintaining our website.

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## Leaders

Janet Gift Home – 756-4148 Work – 758-4200  
Email: [janetgift@aol.com](mailto:janetgift@aol.com)

Pat Wight Home – 753-9084 Cell – 304-2050  
Email: [paws4sight@gmail.com](mailto:paws4sight@gmail.com)

Gail Bimson Home – 753-4255 cell – 902-0482  
Email: [gpbimson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gpbimson@sbcglobal.net)

### OUTINGS FOR MAY

#### Thursday – May 14 Celebrate Davis, Community Park

We will meet at Community Park at 6 pm. Celebrate Davis is put on by the Davis Chamber of Commerce. Davis businesses will have booths. There will be food, drink, and bands that play. There will be fireworks once it is dark enough. However, anyone with a Guide Dog Pup **MUST LEAVE BEFORE THE FIREWORKS START**. We do not expose our pups to fireworks at any time. If raisers/sitters wish to watch the fireworks, they must take the GD pup home and return to the event.

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#### Saturday – May 16 Guide Dog Graduation at San Rafael

We will meet at the Big 5 parking lot at 10:00, leaving at 10:15 to travel to San Rafael for the next graduation. We recommend you dress in layers as the ceremony is outside. The weather can be tricky, if it's hot in our area, the fog can linger around San Rafael, so it can be chilly. On the other hand, it can be very warm, thus the reason to dress in layers. Also, bring a hat or visor, and bring sunscreen. The ceremony starts at 1:30pm, and lasts for about 1.5 hours. We will be there early enough so that you can look around before the ceremony. Bring a sack lunch to eat before the ceremony.

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### ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS AND OUTINGS

Attendance at meetings and outings is required by Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc. as part of puppy raiser training responsibilities. It is strongly recommended that a raiser attend as many meetings and outings as possible during the time they have a pup. Youth raisers must be accompanied by a parent. These meetings and outings give the leaders the opportunity to observe the raiser and pup and help work on any issues there may be.

**Raisers:** Must attend 80% of required meetings and outings

**Prospective Raisers:** Must attend 80% of required meetings and outings

**Sitters:** Must attend at least one meeting or outing per month to remain current

If a raiser/sitter is unable to attend a meeting or outing, he/she **must notify a leader**. If the pup is able to attend the meeting or outing but the raiser is not, arrangements may be made for a sitter to take the pup to the meeting/outing. However, this should not become a habit. When a raiser signs on to raise a puppy, they accept the responsibility of attending the required meetings/outings.

## PUPPIES IN TRAINING

<b>Powers</b>	Erin Foley	Phase 10
<b>Landon</b>	Sarah Yang	Phase 5
<b>Pria</b>	Erin Foley	Phase 2

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## WHO IS ALLOWED TO HANDLE OUR DOGS

**Only the assigned Raiser, Raiser family, authorized Roommates and Registered Puppy Sitters are allowed to handle our dogs. There are no exceptions.**

What this means is if you need someone to hold on to your dog while you do something else, this person must attend meetings, must fill out an application, and must receive approval from the Leaders and Guide Dogs. One of the reasons behind this is the leaders have not been able to observe the person to see their training and handling techniques. Handling techniques often change, and the person needs to be up-to-date. Five minutes with someone who is unfamiliar with our techniques can undo months of training, can make the pup fearful, aggressive, etc. Another major reason is the liability issue if your dog should bite someone while under someone else's control or if someone trips over the pup and falls and injures themselves. Guide Dogs may not accept financial responsibility if a non-approved person is handling the pup and it could fall back to you and your family.

If you have any questions about this, please contact Janet, Pat, or Gail.

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## FOX TAIL ALERT!!

Foxtails are a serious hazard for any dog. During the Bay Area's dry season, April through October, pets are vulnerable to what we commonly call the "foxtail" which is the seed head of various grasses. They are distinguished by thin long, needle-like awns that surround the fuzzy seed head. Foxtails can work their way into your dog's skin, but like a fishhook, they cannot work their way out. Emergency surgical intervention is often necessary to remove them.

**To prevent foxtails from embedding in your dog:**

- \*\* Remove all foxtails from your yard (best to kill or remove in Spring, before foxtails form. Mowing or weed-wacking only spreads the needles, so please cut them or pull out by hand)
- \*\* Do not let your dog walk or play in areas that contain foxtails
- \*\* When hiking or walking dog (on leash of course), do not let them off the walkway or sniff the area where foxtails are present. A foxtail can be inhaled in seconds!

**Check your dog thoroughly:**

- \*\* Between the toes
- \*\* Behind and in the ears
- \*\* Combing through the coat

**Some symptoms of an embedded foxtail:**

- \*\* Rubbing the eyes or squinting; swollen eyelids
- \*\* Repeated violent sneezing; nosebleed
- \*\* Rubbing the ears or shaking the head
- \*\* Raised, infected spot on skin or between toes; excessive licking of toes and feet

Foxtails can migrate through the body and are potentially life-threatening. If your dog shows any signs of having an embedded foxtail, call the veterinary clinic immediately and notify a leader. Do not wait to take your pup to the vet as the needles can move quickly.

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## HOT PAVEMENT & GRATES

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of being aware of when the pavement, side walks, wooden sidewalks (even nails in wooden sidewalks), or metal grates are hot. Even dirt (if you take your pup on dirt to relieve) can be hot enough to burn.

If you must take your pup out during the heat of the day (starting at about 85F and above), here are some tips: When getting out of the car, make sure the pups are the last ones out so they don't have to stand around and wait for others to get out of the car. When you start walking to your car, make sure you have your keys in your hand, quickly unlock the door, and let them get in first before unlocking the other doors. If you relieve your pup, try to do it in shade. **DO NOT LET THEM STAND** on pavement/sidewalks/dirt that is in the sun while putting on jackets. Move to a shaded area or grass, then put the jacket on.

If your pup does burn its feet, avoid any further contact with hot pavement, or take them home. **Do Not Leave Them In The Car.** When you get home, check their pads to make sure they aren't severely burned. If you can't see any signs of blistering, then no treatment is necessary. If there is evidence of blistering or your pup appears to be in pain when walking, you should contact your leader who may advise a vet appointment. On that same note, do not let your pup walk over any grates during the summer, unless the grates are cool.

**Always check the pavement/sidewalk/dirt/grate with your hand laying flat on the surface for about 10 seconds if you are uncertain how hot they are. A good rule of thumb: if it's too hot for you to walk on barefoot, it's too hot for your pup. Also keep in mind that it's easy to get sidetracked by chatting and it's easy to forget your puppy is standing on something hot. Never stop or walk slowly on a hot surface. Always move quickly to shade or grass.**

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## HEAT STROKE

It is very easy for a pup to get overheated when outside on hot days, especially black labs. You should be cautious taking your pup out starting about 85F. **Do not take your dog out for exercise, especially vigorous** when it is hot. You may be able to stay reasonably cool, but your dog cannot. The signs we see with heat stroke include:

- Rapid panting (sounds like a locomotive)
- Rapid heart rate
- Reddish mucous membranes best seen in the mouth. Check their gums. They should be a light pink and slick. If they are a dark pink and sticky to the touch, the pup is dehydrated.
- Thick stringy saliva and later very dry mucous membranes
- The eyes can get a glassy appearance.
- You may see stumbling, confusion, etc.
- The thermometer is very important. The temperatures for heatstroke are 104.9 to 109F.
- Jim Russell has seen dogs that lose the ability to use their rear legs, and may actually walk on their front legs while dragging their rear legs.

**What to do if your pup has heat stroke?** It is important to run cool (not cold) water on the abdomen, where there is no hair. **DO NOT** use cold water or ice. Call the veterinarian and transport your pup immediately.

**How to Prevent Heat Stroke?** Dogs are not designed to work hard in hot weather. They cool only by panting, not by sweating (which is a much faster method of cooling).

- Provide water regularly.
- Stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Pups are never ever to be left alone in the car.

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### **Hot Weather Coolers!**

Pups like to chew on ice cubes too, so you can give them ice cubes any time. If you give them ice while inside your house, keep an eye on them to make sure they don't leave it on the kitchen floor. If they do, and you don't realize it, it could result in a nasty slip and fall for someone who didn't see it or the puddle of water a dropped cube leaves behind.

Get your pup a child's wading pool, and fill it with 3 or 4 inches (or more) of water and let them splash around in it. You can put a bone or 2 in the bottom to see if they'll retrieve it. I saw them do this at Guide Dogs, and the pups went nuts over trying to get the bones out. Be aware...male dogs especially, for whatever reason, like to pee in the pools, so try to relieve your pup right before, or even a few minutes after they start playing... putting feet in water must be the stimulant. (Be aware that a wading pool left on your lawn may kill the grass it sits on if it's there for an extended period of time.

After they have played in the water is a great time to trim nails because they'll be a lot softer to cut!

If you have a regular pool, you can take your pup swimming, just don't push them in. If you have to, carry them in. Or lead them in to the step. Get them to sit on the first step, and let them get used to it, then gently lead them into the next. Then, what really helps is if you get behind them and sort of hold them around the middle and walk around the pool with them so they get comfortable. Be careful of their paws!!! They sometimes try to paw at you in the water, and it can hurt, thus the main reason for holding them behind. Make sure you take them in and out of the pool steps 8 or 9 times so they know how to get out. This is very important. Do not leave the pups unsupervised around an unfenced pool. Never allow them to enter the pool on their own...only on command. Some pooches aren't meant to swim and may sink. If this happens, always support your pup when you're in the pool. You can place one of your arms just in back of their front legs, and the other at the flank area, and support them as they try to swim. We had a pup that never could swim without support, and her career change owners have to put a doggy life vest on her when they go swimming.

Just be aware that water causes pups to shed like crazy! So brush them a lot before going into the pool. Then once they dry, you'll want to brush them again because you'll have lots of doggy dust/hair devils running around your floor if you don't.

***Please make sure you clean and dry their ears after playing in water to prevent ear infections.***

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## **The Giggle Section**

### ***K-9 to the Rescue***

Returning home from work, a young blonde woman was shocked to find that her house had been ransacked and burglarized. She telephoned the police at once and reported the crime.

The police dispatcher broadcast the call on the channels and a K-9 unit patrolling nearby was the first to respond.

As the K-9 officer approached the house with his dog on a leash, the woman ran out on the porch and shuddered at the sight of the police officer and his dog.

Then she sat down on the steps, put her face in her hands and moaned, "I come home to find all of my possessions stolen. I call the police for help, and what do they do? They send me a BLIND policeman!"

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### ***Newsletter Notes***

Hi everyone, I (Pat Wight) have had a pretty long break in doing newsletters, that's why this one is so long. But please take the time to read it all as there is some very important information.

If you would like to see something discussed in a newsletter, please let me know. These were done monthly until I started working full time, and boy does the time fly by. I am going to try to do better and do more frequent newsletters as I feel they help reinforce things us leaders tell you during meetings and outings. We have such a large group, that it is hard for everyone to hear everything that leaders may say, especially during outings when we are walking all scattered out. We also sometimes assume everyone knows something discussed earlier, but that may not be the case.

So please feel free to ask questions, talk about your experiences you've had with your pup (good or bad). We all learn from each other. Sometimes a raiser may be experiencing the same difficulty you are, but think they have to "suffer in silence" or think a behavior is normal for a puppy until someone else brings it up. Plus, the leaders can't offer help if we don't realize there is a problem.

We also like to hear the funny stories about your puppy. My email is [paws4sight@gmail.com](mailto:paws4sight@gmail.com)

*On behalf of us leaders and Guide Dogs,  
I would like to thank you all for all you do for our  
program and our club.*