



# GDF Suncoast Puppy Raisers Newsletter

August 2016



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## GUIDE DOG FOUNDATION

### Suncoast Puppy Raisers Sunday Meeting

**Date:** August 14, 2016

**Where:** (swah-rey)

**2105 Central Ave., St. Petersburg**

**Time:** 11:00am – 1:00pm

[www.swah-rey.com](http://www.swah-rey.com)

Hi everyone,

Up front, we want you to notice that this month's Saturday morning meeting is actually on a Sunday. The reason for this is, Deana Izzo, GDF Field rep and our fearless leader wants to visit with us. We are meeting at (swah-rey), "St. Pete's new trendy dessert bar with beer, wine and coffee with local art and artists. Their motto is "enjoy life by eating dessert."

We chose this location for a very special reason. The owners of (swah-rey) are very civic minded and have on display a lot of local art work. They are also members of the St. Pete Lions Club and wanted to honor Walter B., sponsored by the St. Pete Lions by placing a full size painting of him on their wall. Walter B says it makes him look fat, but he is proud of it anyways. During the meeting we will also be showing the Zoo Project video that was premiered in Orlando.

(swah-rey) only serves desserts, but they are partnering with a local BBQ restaurant to offer some lunch before we indulge ourselves in their

awesome homemade creations. So save your calories and get ready for a delicious experience.

**Directions:** From I275 southbound exit the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North exit go straight to Central Avenue turn right 1 block and (swah-rey) will be on your right. Park in any open space on Central as there is no parking fees on Sunday's. From the south take I275 north bound exit 31<sup>st</sup> street south (this is a left side exit) turn left or northbound on 31<sup>st</sup> street. Go to Central Avenue and turn right 10 blocks (swah-rey) will be on your left. Park on Central Avenue, again no parking meters on Sunday's. If you need other directions or have any issues finding us give Chuck a call on his cell phone.



**Above Suncoast Puppy Raisers look on as swimming lessons take place below during last month's meeting at the Anderson's house. Pictures thanks to Glen Anderson.**



## *Last Month*

We had another successful pool party at the Anderson's. It was plenty hot, we had a good crowd and we had fun teaching the pups how to safely enter and exit a swimming pool via the stairs. We had a few side jumpers and some dogs trying to drown others trying to retrieve toys, but they were well supervised and everyone survived. Next, we took our pups for a walk to the beach so they could have a different type of water experience. I don't think any of the pups needed lessons on how to romp in the Bay's shallow water. We returned back to the house, got the puppies hosed off just in time to escape an incoming thunderstorm. We had to move the party indoors even though we were all still a little wet and sandy. Glen and Diane must really love dogs to allow us to destroy their living room while they cheerfully served us lunch. Glen grilled awesome burgers and hot dogs while the pups enjoyed their "frosty Paws" frozen dessert. Thanks again Glen and Diane and we hope we didn't leave too much hair behind!



**Showing pups the steps out of the pool with some interested on lookers at last month's meeting. Photo thanks to Glen Anderson**

WE did not have a second meeting in July. It was decided to take a mid-summer break since many raisers including our group leaders and AC's were going to be out of town on vacation. We will get back in rhythm in August.

## *Training Up Date*

We've received a preliminary trainer up date for Mac, raised by Joe and Fran Merle. He and his trainer are just getting to know each other but it was reported that Mac had very good obedience. They will be starting clicker training and working on distractions and impulse control. I think we all could use a little more training on impulse control. Good job Mac and we are looking forward to your next report.

Beatrice raised by Don and Donna Thompson struggled with prison life. So GDF made the difficult decision to drop her from the program. Sometimes it is just not meant to be in spite of all the time and effort the Thompson's put into her. Beatrice we wish you the best of times in your new career path wherever that takes you.

## *In for Training*

We do not have any call backs at this time for any of our puppies. Essie, raised by Donna and Don is being pushed back to a September recall. Stay tuned.

## *Training Tip – End on a Positive Note*

We recently took on a bit of a challenge for ourselves that gives me a greater appreciation of what our puppy raisers deal with on a daily basis, we took on a puppy Although, thank goodness, we were getting Rugby, a calm, well behaved, 11 month old dog instead of a new pup, there were still built in challenges. We agreed to take Rugby because his raiser, Frances was going to be on an extended vacation and out of the country for a little over 2 months. We did not want to have Rugby bounced around every 2 weeks with different raisers and wanted to give him some stability. Besides, he was old enough for me to take him to work and give him some great exposures.

You would think that after raising 8 puppies and being AC's for over 20 years that this would be a piece of cake. Well, as Paul Harvey would say, "here's the rest of the story."



The first challenge was introducing him to our current pack, Maddox, Trouble and the cat. Maddox had no problem because Rugby accepted his authority with no questions asked. However, Trouble could make trouble hence her name. She was a very insecure dog when she came to us and being part Pit, we knew she was not going to accept another dog moving in on her second in command position. Trouble and Rugby sparred for a few days and then I caught Trouble humping Rugby. Dominance

was established and Rugby was low man on the totem pole. The cat, being a cat, just ignored Rugby so no problem there.

Our next challenge was setting up an eating and relieving schedule. We have a pet door and we are not use to having to take our dogs out on a leash to relieve. After being on the receiving end of several accidents, we quickly learned we needed a routine. We used his crate at first to get him on our schedule and I took the morning breaks and Chuck took the evening breaks.

After a couple of days of settling in, my next step was to take Rugby with me to work. Although a very gentle and well behaved dog, he still pulls and gets distracted. I'm trying to guide myself with my cane and guide him at the same time. We made it safely to the bus. After being dragged up the steps to get on the bus, I realized we need some work in that area. However, once loaded, Rugby was down and under perfectly. He took a nap while I collected by thoughts, backpack, hat, cane, bus pass, and purse. We exited the bus and he would not relieve before we entered the courthouse, definitely a red flag of possible impending doom. But I had to get to work so through security we went, got dragged up the steps and finally made it to my office. A little bedraggled, I gave out a sigh and then realized I didn't have a tie down. I had taken mine home when I retired Maddox last year. Oh well, Frances assured me that all Rugby does when she takes him to work is sleep, so I took him out of coat, gave him a small drink and secured him with his leather leash.

I brought him a toy to chew on and thought I would make him more comfortable by giving him a doggie bed to lie on. Frances told me specifically not to give him one for his crate, but thought it would be safe under my desk where I do come back and forth to during the day. I wasn't gone a half hour and he had chewed up his leash and had the corner of the bed tore apart!

However, our day wasn't over yet. When it was time to go home, I realized too late that I probably should have relieved him earlier. Keeping my fingers crossed we headed out to go downstairs when the inevitable happened. And, since it's been over 15 years since I've raised a puppy, I was not armed with clean up supplies. Luckily, no one was around at the time so I hurried back to the coffee shop, got what I needed, took care of the clean up and dashed out the building.

Learning from my mistakes, the next trip to work went a little more smoothly. I had my tie down, clean up supplies and vowed to not wait so long to relieve him. When the time came, we went downstairs and out the front door. We successfully made it outside this time, but he pooped and peed right outside the door. This left



**We reported to you at last month's meeting the Kayak to the Fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July raised \$1516.00 For the Suncoast Puppy Raisers sponsorship fund. Thank You to our sponsors Bill Jacksons, Osprey Bay and Sweetwater Kayaks. And a big Thank you to Mike and Alecia Masterson you two are too generous. Thank you all once again for making this a success! As we also reported Chuck left the money on the cocktail table for a couple of days until Rugby thought since we raised the money for him it must be his to chew on! Once again not his fault but Chucks for leaving it at nose level. Thankfully the bankers Debbie deals with like Rugby and replaced the chewed bills with new ones. And we now have a story to tell for years to come.**

**Puppy Raising is an adventure!**

every one behind us stunned and having to take a wide path around us. Wanting to avoid another embarrassing moment, I decided that it would be better for me to take him out the back door.

Now, it's finally the weekend. We are getting used to our relieving schedule, we went to work twice, I explained to everyone at work that he was still a guide dog in training, and not a working guide dog, so things were getting easier. From what I observed, Rugby's house manners were good so I let him move about the house freely. Then I hear him crunching on something that he shouldn't be crunching on. It was his coat. I had left it on a chair and since it smelled like him, he took ownership of it and chewed off one of the buckles. The worst part of the entire experience, was having to contact Deana, admit to her that after raising 8 puppies, and being an AC for over 20 years that I made all the first time puppy raiser rookie mistakes. Because of my lack of following the guide lines, in just the first week the puppy I was taking care of had chewed up his leash, had accidents both in our home and at work, chewed up his dog bed after Frances told me not to give him one and then oh by the way, could you please send me a new coat because he chewed that up too!

Although I was hoping to be fired as an AC, Deana just laughed and reminded me to go back to the basics. We did and I want to leave you with this positive note. Now lets fast forward a month and I want to tell you about our latest trip to work. We get out the door, Rugby relieves on command. We easily make it to the bus without a lot of pulling and he is down and under quietly sleeping all the way to work. We get through security and Rugby guides me to the elevator, shows me the button, leads me to the open door, then exits the elevator leading me to my office. I didn't even need to use my cane. He is down and under the desk an unstressed about me leaving him alone. We leave for the day, and made it successfully out the FRONT door and at an appropriate distance for him to relieve. We walk to the YMCA and he showed me the entrance, and then he automatically did a switch to enter the ladies dressing room. On our way home, we gently got on the bus and he immediately was down under for his nap. Arriving at Gateway it started raining pretty hard. Rugby did not like getting wet so we waited it out under a shelter until it slowed down to a drizzle. Starting off for the house Rugby still didn't like to be wet but he went on like a trooper. He did enjoy the toweling off he got when we finally got home.

We got Rugby a few weeks before his 1 year birthday on July 15<sup>th</sup>, and in one month he has gone from a puppy to a young adult dog. All the hardship at the beginning was all on us for not following the guidelines and doing what I know to be the right things to do. So when you are struggling, I can totally relate, so don't hesitate to call even if it is just to vent at how much work raising a puppy can be. You will be so proud by the time your puppy is ready to go in for training. So hang in there keep following the manual and in the end you will raise a pup to be proud of!

See you all at the (swah-rey) Debbie & Chuck Hietala



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**We were asked to speak at the Crystal Beach Community Church and Karen Killen and Mickey agreed to be the guest speakers. We have heard they were a big hit! Thanks Karen and Mickey for letting this congregation know what we are all doing in our community. Photo thanks to Karen.**



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