



PASSPORT TO FREEDOM: Gage, a seven-month old Labrador Retriever, is spending his puppyhood with the Jeffries family of Acton who are fostering him for the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guide program. – Frances Niblock photo

Local family fosters Dog Guides...

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Retrievers or Standard Poodles – bred at a Dog Guide centre in Breslau, or donated, are placed with foster families whose job is to socialize, house train and teach basic manners and obedience.

When the dog is about one year old, it goes back to Dog Guides for scrutiny to see if it is a candidate for future training. Just one in 11 dogs “graduates” and those that wash out are offered first to their foster family.

The Jeffries have also fostered four dogs including three older pups like Gage, who came to them several months ago when the first foster placement did not work out.

Bob Jeffries was introduced to Dog Guides when he inquired about doing a story about the organization for Cogeco Cable where he volunteers.

“The more I talked to them about the story, the more I thought what a terrific organization it is. Their big problem is getting dogs to the point of being a year old so they can begin training them,” Jeffries said on Friday.

Puppies are evaluated every four to six weeks at puppy classes at the Dog Guide centre in Oakville, and when they reach one

year, they are assessed and assigned to one of three programs – visual, hearing or special needs.

Further training could take up to a year, and qualified candidates spend a month with their new dog at the Oakville centre learning how to handle, trust and bond with the already trained dog.

There is no cost to the client for their dog and the cost to raise, train and match a dog is \$20,000. Dogs can work for approximately seven years before being retired.

“They pay for all of the food and vet bills and offer support to people because you are making a big commitment to raise a dog for a year,” Jeffries said, adding along with teaching basic good manners, foster families are encouraged to take their dog out in public – wearing a Dog Guide In Training sign.

Jean Jeffries said the hard-

est part is saying goodbye.

“They bring out another dog so your dog is all happy and ready to play and off they go,” she said, admitting to shedding some tears when the last dog they raised was returned for further training.

Bob Jeffries agrees that saying goodbye can be hard.

“If you’re an animal lover and you’ve had a dog for two or three months, you’re kind of locked in already. Anticipating taking the dog back is hard, but the experience is so terrific it’s worth it.”

Foster parents are invited to a ceremony where their dog “graduates” with it’s human – something Jeffries says makes it all worthwhile.

“Some of these people have never been out on their own before, and with a Dog Guide, they can go out alone and be safe – what freedom.”

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Well water info sessions at Limehouse, Brookville

Halton Region’s Health Department is holding two well water information sessions for residents who use private wells.

The first information session will take place on Wednesday, April 18 at the Limehouse Memorial Hall, Fifth Line, Halton Hills. The second will be held on Wednesday, April 25 at the Nassagaweya Community Centre, 11264 Guelph Line, Brookville.

Residents are invited to drop in anytime between 3:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.

“Providing clean, safe drinking water is an important function of Halton Region,” said Gary Carr, Chair of Halton Region. “For our residents who use a private well, we provide them with the tools and education so that they have the knowledge and ability to ensure and maintain the safety of their well water.”

Residents attending the information sessions have an opportunity to:

- Talk to Public Health Inspectors about your well water quality concerns.
- Bring one cup of water in a sterilized jar to have your

water tested for nitrates (nitrates in your water could indicate contamination).

- Drop off a water sample to be sent for bacteria testing. Call us or visit our website at www.halton.ca/health to find out where you can get an approved water sample bottle. (Water samples to be submitted for bacteria testing must put into approved water sample bottles.)
- Pick up approved water sample bottles for future bacteria testing.
- Learn about water treatment systems such as ultra violet, reverse osmosis and chlo-

ration from experienced water treatment companies.

- Talk to staff from Halton Region’s Planning and Public Works Department to discuss water conservation principles.
- Observe well drilling equipment and learn about well drilling from professionals.
- Learn the results from the 2006 Halton Region Rural Well Water Study.

“It is important to monitor bacteria and nitrate levels in your private well water supply,” said Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

DINNER AND MAKEOVER

Date: Monday, April 23rd, 2007

Time: 6:30p.m. - 9p.m.

Venue: Tanners Restaurant, Acton

Cost: \$18 includes dinner (4 course meal), gift for each guest and door prizes

Makeover includes: Three part hand pampering, two-step lip treatment, microdermabrasion treatment and Dash out the Door Glamour Look.

Great Networking Opportunity

Space is limited. Call for more information or to reserve your seat.

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6:30PM



Acton Town Hall Centre
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BUFFET DINNER

CASH BAR (BEER & WINE)
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Tickets \$40 per person

Available at: Acton Home Hardware
Halton Hills Furniture & Appliances
Dollar Stretcher Daze



Tickets purchased by April 21 will be entered in the “Early Bird” draw at the performance

TICKET DEADLINE IS SATURDAY, APRIL 28