



# FETCH!

## *the newsletter of Fetching Companions*

Inaugural Issue

November 2006

### A Banner Year

It's getting close to the year-end holidays, so we volunteers at FCRR would like to extend our best wishes to you and your loved ones.

As you celebrate the season of giving, please remember that you can enable many deserving, homeless Labradors by including them in your own giving.

November marks our first anniversary. It's been quite a ride and the number of terrific Labs we were able to save and re-home during year one is no small source of pride.

Intense teamwork by our small cadre of veteran rescuers has resulted in a performance disproportionate to our size.

Our pace of about four dogs a month, even though we started the year with a mere 9 active volunteers and ended it with 19.

We'll do even better in the coming year with your help. Adoption fees simply don't cover our expenses. Although we generally edge into the black on healthy dogs, those needing more than normal veterinary care can cost us hundreds or even thousands of dollars. This is why your donations are so necessary.

The plight of our 8-year-old poster girl, Dutchess, is a case in point. There's an article about her on this page, *(continued overleaf)*



### Dutchess

A furry black head pops up from under the dining room table and into my lap. It's Dutchess. She prods my right arm with her cold nose to demand attention. I give her a vigorous ear rub, which merely whets her appetite for more. Pretty soon she's affectionately mouthing my hand and arm. A mouthy eight-year-old who must think she's a pup.

I won't normally allow this, but I do this time, because she's such a sweet-natured girl and, darn it, because she's blind. Not that you'd notice it in our home. She knows her way around the house and our routines almost as well as our sighted dogs.

How'd she lose her vision? In a word, through neglect. She has diabetes that's gone untreated so long that cataracts have stolen her sight. Unfortunately the list doesn't end there. She also has partial tears in the ligaments of both knees and painful pressure on her spinal cord in what would be the lower back in a human.

Her sunny behavior belies all that. She gets around fine and loves attention and walks. She was very wary of our dogs at first, giving voice to her disapproval when her personal space was inadvertently violated. She now tolerates the other guys and gives them a

friendly nuzzle now and again. She walks well on a leash and only occasionally runs into a curb or a parked car. Her back problem does make it difficult for her to walk much more than a half mile, though.

Her back is correctable through surgery. Her knees aren't painful, so it's possible nothing need be done about them. The diabetes is under control via twice-daily injections of insulin, done by yours truly. It's a simple procedure that anyone can quickly learn to do.

The largest question is her eyesight. She may be a candidate for lens implants that would fully restore her vision, but we've got to make sure the rest of her eyes are up to the task first. This requires some specialized testing by a veterinary ophthalmologist. The fees will run to several hundred dollars, even with a rescue discount.

By the time she gets her spinal surgery and eye tests, her expenses will add up to something on the order of a couple of thousand dollars. The lens implantation, assuming that it will be done, may more than double that figure.

Why do we go to such expense and trouble for a single dog, when there are so many other *(continued overleaf)*

### Who the Heck Are These Guys, Anyway?

Since you're looking at this newsletter, you may well wonder who we are and why we sent it to you.

Answering the last part of the question first, we sent you this because we know you're a compassionate person. How do we know that? Because at some time in the past, you've been in contact with one of our volunteers regarding dog rescue.

It could be that you dealt with that volunteer during the last year when he or she was part of Fetching Companions, or it could have been farther in the past when he or she worked with another rescue, most likely Southern California Labrador Retriever Rescue (SCLRR).

As to who we are, we're a group of like-minded volunteers sharing a deep concern for the welfare of Labradors who've dropped through the cracks of

society. As to experience, most of us are alumni of SCLRR. In fact, some of us helped found that organization in 1997. The point is that although we may be a young organization, nearly all of us have quite a number of years of solid rescue experience.

We know what rescue is about, we understand Labs, and we understand how to match the needs of dogs and adopters, resulting in all those happy endings you'll see on our website.

Another answer to the "why" part of the original question is that we hope that you'll consider helping us to continue to rescue, rehabilitate, and re-home Labs in ever-increasing numbers by helping us financially, through a generous donation; or materially, by volunteering with us; or better yet, both!



Two of Hopper's many hunting victims beg for mercy.

## Hopper

Hopper is a chocolate pup who never had a chance. At three months of age, he was dumped at the Riverside animal shelter by a backyard breeder because of a congenital defect. His right foreleg is weak, causing him to stride forward with both forelegs simultaneously at any pace above a slow walk. This gives him a pretty strange gait: he actually hops, hence his name. He didn't have a chance because the shelter, believing that Hopper had a severe orthopedic shoulder problem, would not offer him for public adoption. So he was well along the road to euthanasia. Luckily, Riverside contacted us to ask if we could take the pup on. We did. He's just too cute to turn down. He has no trouble getting around and can actually run pretty swiftly for a little guy. He engages in enthusiastic roughhouse play with Cody, a much bigger, faster and stronger 9-month old. Though Cody has

his number, Hopper never gives up and gives as much as he gets. One of the perks of rescue is being able to watch these guys go at it in a pure pursuit of fun. In an effort to pin down the problem, we've had Hopper x-rayed from stem to stern, which yielded a big surprise. He has no detectable orthopedic problem! Moreover, he's clearly in no pain, so we have a medical mystery on our hands. Our vet has an animal neurologist interested in the problem, so we've made a video of all Hopper's gaits and bundled that up with his x-rays so the neurologist can make an educated guess. Keep your fingers crossed. We suspect that Hopper's condition won't get worse and hope the neurologist will confirm that. If so, his strange hopping will wind up being no more than a conversational icebreaker at the dog park.

### Fetching Companions

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## Dutchess

*(continued from overleaf)*

deserving dogs out there? This is where logic breaks down. One look at Dutchess' eager, trusting face and you'd understand. Rescue, you see, is at least as much about compassion as it is about numbers.

Dutchess just signaled that she wants to make a backyard excursion. Sorry, gotta run. Duty calls.

## A Banner Year

*(continued from overleaf)*

so without going into detail here, she's got multiple chronic health problems. She faces two major surgeries-- one to restore her sight and another to relieve pressure on her spinal cord. Even though the vets we use generously discount their services to us, we expect to nonetheless have several thousand dollars wrapped up in returning Dutchess to good health.

Even healthy dogs can run up

our tab. Take the case of Kona, a lively and charming 18-month-old chocolate girl. Though robustly healthy, she injured her tail and wound up having three surgeries. The total expense was well into three figures.

The bottom line is that we rely on the charity of compassionate donors to fulfill our mission of compassionate rescue. Please give a deserving dog a new start in life through a tax-deductible donation to FCRR.

## Adoption Roster

Heartfelt thanks to all these wonderful folks who have given FCRR-rescued dogs a new life!

| Adopter                 | Dog         | Adopted    |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------|
| John Agaman             | Hank        | 3/19/2006  |
| Cathy Avenancio         | Chip        | 8/9/2006   |
| Terri Bailey            | Chocolat    | 11/13/2006 |
| Jan Barker              | Molly       | 9/2/2006   |
| Bob Besa                | Kimo        | 11/5/2006  |
| Jonathan Bigwood        | Baxter      | 10/22/2006 |
| Randy Burg              | Lady        | 10/22/2006 |
| Julie Carey             | Sophie      | 8/26/2006  |
| Michelle Chubarov       | Dora        | 10/22/2006 |
| Jane Copelan            | Shelby      | 2/7/2006   |
| Carol Curtis            | Cruiser     | 2/8/2006   |
| Melissa Denlinger       | Marley      | 8/15/2006  |
| Angela Farrow           | Champ       | 7/30/2006  |
| Kim Garrett             | MacDuff     | 3/27/2006  |
| Ian and Sue Goltz       | Bear        | 11/5/2006  |
| Crystal Guzman          | Kona        | 8/31/2006  |
| Annette Haigh           | Cary Grant  | 9/6/2006   |
| Ann Havens              | Pearl       | 7/3/2006   |
| Patricia Huhnke         | Sharrona    | 2/10/2006  |
| Shelly Ingram           | Buttercup   | 10/19/2006 |
| Scott Jackson           | Truffle     | 8/24/2006  |
| Lynn & Chip Jarman      | Rosie       | 12/21/2005 |
| Karen Keglevic          | Max and Mia | 9/7/2006   |
| Laura Koester           | Dougal      | 7/11/2006  |
| Jane Lee                | Buddy       | 8/28/2006  |
| Annie Lin               | Wesley      | 10/21/2006 |
| Ingrid Lingstrom        | Fudgie      | 6/13/2006  |
| Gail Loel               | Callie      | 7/5/2006   |
| Kitty or Bob Meese      | Daisy       | 5/1/2006   |
| Scott Minikus           | Brendan     | 3/8/2006   |
| Michelle Mortellaro     | Porter      | 3/19/2006  |
| Kelly Newton            | Bantry      | 10/12/2006 |
| Liza O'sullivan         | Jackson     | 3/23/2006  |
| Susie Rivera            | Clancy      | 9/28/2006  |
| Erik & Suzanne Rundberg | Lucky       | 11/12/2006 |
| Nivardo Salazar         | Penny       | 8/6/2006   |
| Lisa & Richard Schmidt  | Chester     | 11/12/2006 |
| Marvin Schwartz         | Nellie      | 9/14/2006  |
| Samuel Tell             | MacTavish   | 10/7/2006  |
| Jim Valentine           | Pismo       | 5/20/2006  |
| Leanne Williams         | Otis        | 9/14/2006  |
| Jane & Jerry Wright     | Kiowa       | 6/27/2006  |
| Steven Zap              | Chica       | 10/10/2006 |