

Raising Our Seeing-Eye Puppy

A Personal Essay by Kevin Gonzales

What could be more enjoyable than to get a new puppy every year? Well, it is a lot of fun! It is also a lot of hard work. My family has raised multiple seeing-eye dogs. These are special dogs that are trained to work with blind people and assist them in their everyday activities.

Every year we get a new puppy to train. Right now, we are training a golden retriever named Ella. Before Ella can be a seeing-eye dog, she has to live with our family for a year and learn to be obedient. We teach her basic commands like “sit,” “stay,” or “come” when called.

We help her learn to be friendly around people and other animals. We take our puppies everywhere we go, even the grocery store! We do this so that the puppies will be comfortable going places with their new owner.

Someday a blind person will own Ella. Ella will have to help her master go to work, or school, or get on the bus or train. She will help her master go for walks and safely cross busy streets.



It is important that Ella learn good manners. She is not allowed to bark. She is not allowed to jump on people. She is not allowed to chew things. It is a difficult task to teach her all of these things.

Yet, the hardest part is knowing that I will have to give her away someday. After a year with us, Ella will go to a training school where she will learn to be a seeing-eye dog.

Once Ella graduates from the training program, she will be matched with a blind person who needs a seeing-eye dog. Saying goodbye to Ella will be heartbreaking, but I am happy that she will be helping someone who needs her. It's a good feeling to know that I helped train a working dog!

