

Summer 2020 | Volume 86, Number 2

THE SEEING EYE®

GUIDE

A MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS OF THE SEEING EYE





A Seeing Eye Perspective

It's certainly been an interesting, and unprecedented, few months at The Seeing Eye. I hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.

In March, with coronavirus hitting New Jersey and New York particularly hard,

The Seeing Eye was required to enter "limited operations mode." We finished up our March class about a week early, graduating those students with their Seeing Eye® dogs, and had most of our staff begin to work remotely.

Following local, state, and federal guidelines, we are cautiously beginning to return to normal operations, with a plan that our first students will be matched with dogs in August. To reduce the number of people on campus, we will be rotating shifts and still have some employees working remotely. Those who are on campus are observing strict social distancing as well as wearing masks and taking other daily precautions.

During limited operations mode, we continued to provide follow-up support to graduates across the United States and Canada, and we reached out to grads and supporters to ask about and to express our support for their COVID-related challenges. We supported a staff food drive to help those less fortunate in our area. We kept our staff employed, paid our bills, and carried out other office duties; our

puppy raiser families continued to meet, virtually, and participated in our annual Puppy Raiser Calendar contest; and we held a number of important fundraisers, including our online auction, our annual Dinner Party (turned into a virtual event), and participated in the national Giving Tuesday Now. Thank you to all of you who have continued to support us through this difficult time!

It's been quite an eventful first year for me as President & CEO of The Seeing Eye. I've been asked by a few people, maybe not entirely in jest, if I regret taking this job. And I can honestly tell you: Not for one minute. As the old saying goes, "smooth seas do not make for skilled sailors." Crisis reveals The Seeing Eye's character and resilience.

Every day, I have been impressed by the determination, the resourcefulness, unity of purpose, gratitude, and the generosity of our employees, volunteers, donors, puppy raisers, and graduates as we all come together – metaphorically of course – to continue to carry out our mission to enhance the independence, dignity, and self-confidence of people who are blind through the use of Seeing Eye dogs.

Sincerely,
Glenn Hoagland
President & CEO

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ON THE COVER: *The Seeing Eye is training again... with some precautions. Seeing Eye Instructor Nicole Murray, with Seeing Eye dog in training Xenos, stands alongside the statue of Morris Frank and Buddy off the Morristown Green. Nicole is wearing a mask... and so is Morris! Photo by Seeing Eye Instructor Oscar Pelaez*



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Seeing Eye,

Glenn, I just listened to your voice for the first time. During these tough months, it was great hearing your video speak about the “forward” command. I celebrate it with you. And, as a person who hopes to be in that first class once reopening happens, I say “Forward... all in good time.”

I also appreciate hearing that instructors have opted to care for dogs at home.

Jane L. Toleno

SEEING EYE GRADUATE

Editor’s note: Seeing Eye President & CEO Glenn Hoagland recorded two video updates about The Seeing Eye’s response to COVID-19. To play the videos, go to seeingeye.org/update and seeingeye.org/update2.

Dear Seeing Eye,

I attended The Seeing Eye’s graduate reunion in August... that seems like a long time ago!

I just wanted to say hello, and wish you the best during this difficult time.

I have had four Seeing Eye dogs, my latest being my sweet Vesta, and I absolutely love and am devoted to The Seeing Eye.

I am so thankful first for my wonderful dogs, and also the kindness, dedication, and commitment to the staff.

I am so glad that you have joined The Seeing Eye family.

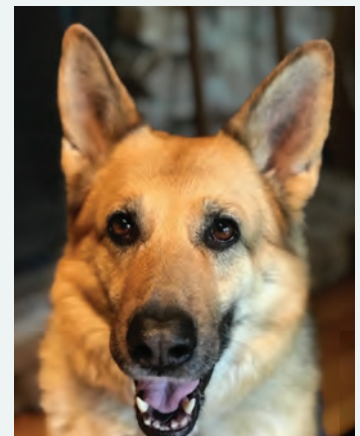
Becky Miller

SEEING EYE GRADUATE

Dear Seeing Eye,

Please use this modest gift to continue your mission to enhance the independence, dignity, and self-confidence of people who are blind, through the use of specially trained Seeing Eye dogs. This gift is in memory of our adopted “career change” dog, Millie.

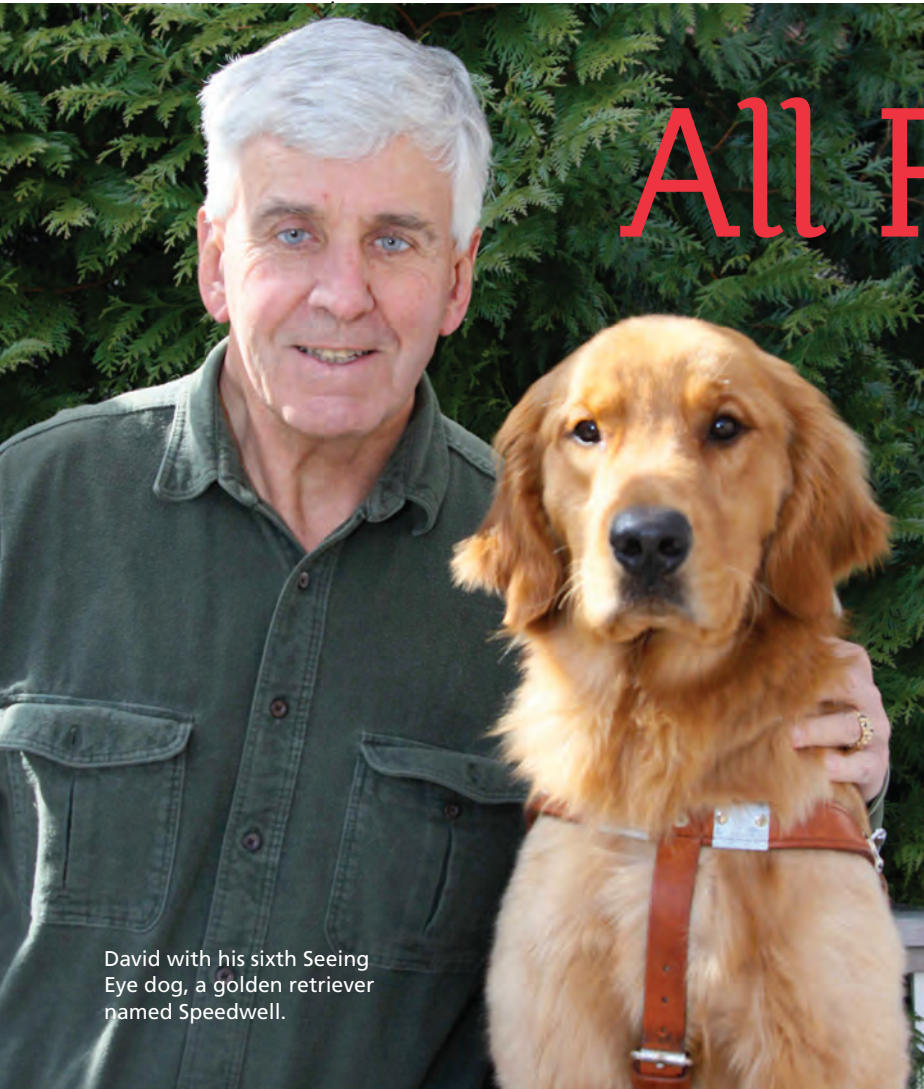
Last week we tearfully said goodbye to Millie, our beloved German shepherd. We adopted Millie from your organization eight years ago. We like to think that although Millie was not placed with one of your clients, she was a lifelong



ambassador to The Seeing Eye. Because of her excellent puppy raiser and the staff and volunteers who support your dogs, Millie spent a lifetime reflecting the high degree of training that came from your organization. She had both self-control and empathy. She would greet all with a friendly tail wag and (when appropriate) a kiss. Throughout her life, people were amazed with her quiet demeanor, her excellent conduct, and her gentle manner. We always explained to those in awe that Millie was a trained Seeing Eye dog. Because of Millie, hundreds of people who may not have known about The Seeing Eye were introduced to your mission.

We have no doubt that The Seeing Eye will continue to make the world’s best guide dogs and we are proud of our small part to make that happen. Thank you for the gift of Millie.

Stephen and Marcia Slaton



David with his sixth Seeing Eye dog, a golden retriever named Speedwell.

All Rise

U.S. Army officer, Vietnam veteran, Veterans Affairs counselor, prosecutor, judge, golfer, and now... author.

The Honorable David Szumowski has many accomplishments, and many of them have happened with a Seeing Eye dog at his side.



David Szumowski, the son of two World War II veterans – his mother was an Army nurse, his father a tank mechanic who served under General George S. Patton – followed in his parents’ footsteps, joining the U.S. Army after graduating from the University of Richmond in 1967 via the ROTC program.

He was an instructor at the U.S. Army Armor School in Fort Knox for a year, then at the age of 23 was sent to Vietnam with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment as a tank platoon commander. (Coincidentally, his commanding officer was George Patton IV, the son of the very same commanding officer David’s father had served under.)

On March 20, 1969 – a month after arriving in Vietnam – his tank platoon was leading an assault on a well-defended enemy position near Dau Tieng.

First Lieutenant Szumowski’s tank came under heavy fire from machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades. His tank took a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade, and shrapnel hit him in the face. He was totally blind, but continued directing the assault. When it was finally over, he was evacuated for medical treatment. His sight could not be restored.

“As long as I was conscious, I kept our mission in mind. With the help of my driver, and a helicopter pilot overhead, we were able to keep advancing as long as we could,” David said.

David was awarded the Silver Star as well as the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star with “V” device and oak leaf cluster, and a Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze service stars.

In November 1969 – just two months after his medical discharge from the Army – David came to The Seeing Eye to be matched with his first Seeing Eye dog, a German shepherd named Jon.

The first time he picked up a harness handle at The Seeing Eye, David said, he knew he'd made the right decision.

"It was exhilarating," he said. "I had been training with a cane for a few months, and I had gotten used to that – the pace, the detection, it's very different from working with a Seeing Eye dog. When I picked up that harness handle, it was off to the races!"

Since 2013, David has been working with his sixth, a golden retriever aptly named Speedwell.

He earned a law degree from the University of Denver in 1973, but said he "lost his compass." He didn't realize it at the time, but he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"I was not focused on anything. I was living day to day, going through a tough time, mishandling a lot of emotions," David said.

David decided he needed a fresh start in San Diego, California. But just before he left Colorado, he met a woman named Janice.

"We hit it off pretty well, but I had to break it to her that I was leaving," he said. "She helped me move, and we stayed in touch... and about a year later, she followed me to California."

In May, they celebrated their 35th anniversary.

David passed the bar exam, then became a benefits counselor for the Department of Veterans Affairs, then served as executive director of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program.

But the law was calling to him. He became an attorney and, after a stint in private practice, became an assistant district attorney in San Diego. After 12 years, he was appointed a municipal judge by Governor Pete Wilson. Later that year, he became a Superior Court judge for the County of San Diego and remained in that position until he retired in 2016.

"I had a great career. I was very fortunate," David said. "Life gives you opportunities, but you have to be ready to take advantage of them."

Now that he's retired, David says, he can focus on his golf game.

"I hit about 50 or 60 balls today, just to get my groove back," he said. "I took up golf when I could see, so I have the muscle

memory there, and I take lessons. I never miss the ball, and I can drive it pretty good. Just point me in the right way."

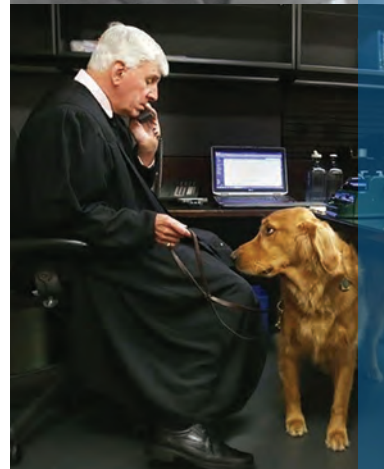
In March 2019, David published his memoir, *Reach for More: A Journey from Loss to Love and Fulfilment*. It is available from in print, as an ebook, or as an audiobook from Amazon, Audible, Barnes & Noble, Bookshare.org, and other book sellers, as well as a downloadable talking book through the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (DB 99056).



The Hon. David Szumowski retired in 2016 after serving 18 years on the San Diego County Superior Court bench for 18 years.
Photo by Peggy Peattie/San Diego Union-Tribune.



David as a young lieutenant in the U.S. Army.



The Hon. David Szumowski in his chambers with his Seeing Eye dog, a golden retriever named Speedwell.
Photo by Peggy Peattie/San Diego Union-Tribune.



Our response to COVID-19

Faced with an unprecedented crisis, The Seeing Eye quickly took action to ensure the safety of our students, our staff, and our dogs.



A Seeing Eye puppy raiser wears a mask as she meets her new puppy, Franklin, a yellow Labrador retriever.

The Seeing Eye began pandemic planning in early February, and in mid-March, after New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy declared a state of emergency, The Seeing Eye leadership team entered a limited operations mode, with as many employees working from home as possible in order to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Working remotely, these employees provided support to graduates and puppy raisers, as well as paid bills, processed payroll, answered applicants, and accepted donations.

However, we still had students in class, and dogs on campus. The Instruction & Training team, and those students, put in extra hours for additional preparation and were able to confidently graduate and travel home with their dogs about a week ahead of schedule.

But what about the dogs?

There were more than 200 dogs at the Washington Valley campus in various stages of training. Puppy raisers, instructors, and other staff members volunteered to bring them home to foster them during this period. The majority of the dogs went to puppy raiser families who volunteered care for them until re-opening. The dogs were delivered using special social distancing and safety precautions.

“It was a huge effort, but thanks to the efforts of our Puppy Development and kennel staff, it was very well organized and went smoothly,” Seeing Eye President & CEO Glenn Hoagland said. “Some dogs were on medications or special diets, so we had to ensure each dog was sent home with the appropriate supplies and information.”

And as for puppies, those that were at the Breeding Station in Chester were kept with their mothers until they were weaned and then delivered as scheduled to puppy raisers, again using special precautions to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Two puppy raisers maintain proper social distance as they meet their new puppies, a golden retriever and a chocolate Labrador retriever, in front of a Seeing Eye minivan.

Older puppies in homes with their puppy raisers that had been scheduled to come back to campus from March through July remained in those homes until the campus re-opened. Breeding at the breeding station was suspended.

There were still some staff members who needed to come to work. There were still puppies at the Breeding Station in Chester, dogs being cared for at the Vincent A. Stabile Canine Health Center, and employees on campus to ensure our buildings were properly secured, cleaned, and maintained. Those employees followed strict guidelines including mask wearing, frequent handwashing, and remaining at a distance when possible. Surfaces were frequently and thoroughly cleaned.

Many of these procedures were in place in Chester long before COVID-19, Glenn explained.

“Because it is already a biological barrier facility by design and protocol, the routine precautions of wearing PPE, deep cleaning, frequent hand washing, and other precautions have been easy to adhere to at the Breeding Station,” Glenn said.

On July 6, The Seeing Eye began the process of resuming normal operations. The first step is bringing back the dogs to the Washington Valley campus. Before those dogs can be matched with graduates, the dogs need their training refreshed.



Seeing Eye Instructors Jacqui Wyatt and Brian McKenna training dogs in Morristown.



"As always, the safety of our students and graduates is our paramount concern, and we want to make sure the dogs haven't forgotten their training," said David Johnson, Director of Instruction & Training.

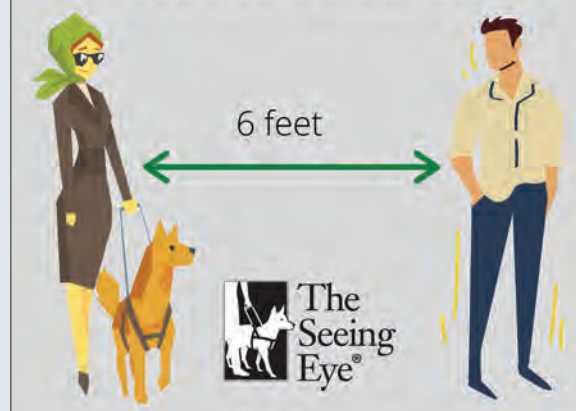
The dogs that were closest to being matched before we shut down in March are now getting "tuned up" in preparation of being assigned to students. In August, we will begin matching those dogs with applicants who live within driving distance of The Seeing Eye, in order to reduce the risk to staff members by flying.

As employees return to work, they are issued face masks and hand sanitizer, and each morning before entering the campus they are given a temperature check and asked key questions about their contacts and health status recommended by the CDC. Employees also have been asked to reduce travel to "hot spot" areas of the country.

"We know there is a backlog of people waiting for our dogs, and we want to serve them as quickly but also as safely as possible," Glenn said.



Guide dogs don't understand social distancing. Please help keep a safe distance.



Safe Distance

Help Seeing Eye dog owners practice safe social distancing

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19, Seeing Eye staff members are wearing masks and keeping their distance from others... at least six feet.

Seeing Eye dogs don't know to stay that far away from strangers... but you do! Please help us out by keeping your distance from guide dog teams if you see them on the street. And please help us spread the word.

Now more than ever, it's important to remember to allow guide dogs to do their job.

- Please don't allow your pet near a guide dog, even if your pet is leashed. Your dog may be friendly and just want to "say hi," but even a momentary distraction can cause a guide dog to lose focus on the important job he or she has to do.
- It's helpful to let a person who is blind know that you're there, particularly if you have a dog with you. Just say, "Hi, I have a dog with me."
- Keep your dog on a leash and under control at all times.
- Do not pet the guide dog, call the dog's name, make eye contact, feed the dog, or talk to the dog. It's always best to treat a guide dog like he or she is not there.
- Don't grab a blind person by the arm. You can ask if he or she needs help or directions.

Remember, when you see a Seeing Eye dog in harness, he or she is working!

For more information about how you can help keep guide dog teams safe, go to guidedogatwork.org.

Greetings from

Florida!

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, Seeing Eye staff members – and dogs! – traveled to Florida to attend two very special donor events hosted by members of our Board of Trustees.

A cocktail reception and presentation was hosted March 4 by Trustee Anthony J. DeCarlo, V.M.D., at the clubhouse at Quail West in Naples, and the following day, Trustee David Hertz hosted a meet-and-greet for friends and neighbors, also in Naples.

At both events, the guests were treated to interacting with Seeing Eye puppies and Ritz, a retired breeder from The Seeing Eye. Seeing Eye graduate Alex Elman, with her Seeing Eye dog, a chocolate Labrador/golden retriever cross named Izmir, was on hand to answer questions, as were Seeing Eye Instructor Kristen DeMarco, who was with a black Labrador

retriever puppy also named DeMarco – the puppy was named after her courtesy of a generous donation from one of her students! – and Puppy Development Area Coordinator Kristin Miiicke, who brought Carson, a golden retriever puppy being raised for The Seeing Eye by her family.

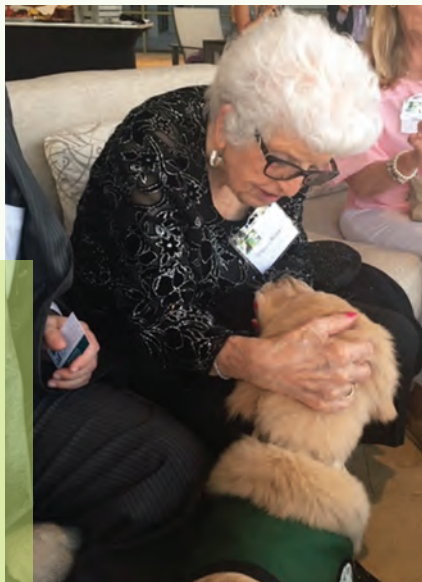
“We are so appreciative to our Trustees for their support by hosting of events such as these,” said Seeing Eye President & CEO Glenn Hoagland, who also attended both events.

Even though we can no longer meet face to face, for now, The Seeing Eye continued to hold fundraiser events through the spring and summer, including our annual Dinner Party – held as a virtual event – and our online auction. The Seeing Eye also

participated in Giving Tuesday Now on May 5, a national fundraising effort for nonprofit organizations.



Standing, from left: Melissa Greig, Glenn Hoagland, Seeing Eye graduate Alex Elman with her Seeing Eye dog, a chocolate Labrador/golden retriever cross named Izmir, Seeing Eye Trustee David Hertz, Sharyl Hertz, and Elise Ross with her retired Seeing Eye breeder, a golden retriever named Ritz. *Front row:* Seeing Eye staff members Kristen DeMarco, with a black Labrador retriever puppy named DeMarco, and Kristin Miiicke with a golden retriever puppy named Carson.



Seeing Eye supporter Frances Bernard greets a Seeing Eye puppy, a golden retriever named Carson.



Seeing Eye Trustee David Hertz and his wife, Sharyl, held a meet-and-greet at their Florida home.

The Seeing Eye Gives Back

Seeing Eye Instructor Jane Schneiderman spearheaded an effort in April to collect donations from Seeing Eye employees for The Table of Hope in Morristown, an organization that serves meals at no cost to people who need them every week night, and also has a mobile food pantry.

“A huge thanks to all that donated masks, cleaning supplies, and more to The Table of Hope,” Jane said. “When I went to drop off yesterday, the line of people to get food wrapped around the block.”

Seeing Eye Instructor Kristen Oplinger and Apprentice Instructor Alexis Wisniewski-Chesson helped Jane with the delivery.



PAW PARTNERS TAKE THE LEAD



Discover the benefits of being a monthly donor today!

Become a Paw Partner!

The Seeing Eye has a new monthly giving club called Paw Partners, recognizing those who are making a very special commitment by making a recurring monthly gift of \$15 or more. You'll also know that you are giving The Seeing Eye the support needed to breed, raise, and train Seeing Eye dogs.

Members of Paw Partners enjoy these special benefits:

- Exclusive communications just for Paw Partners members.
- A special Member Card, annual Puppy Calendar, and a subscription to *The Guide* magazine.
- An exclusive discount code for purchases from the online store.
- A special invitation to The Seeing Eye's annual donor reception for qualifying Paw Partners.
- Plus, an adorable Seeing Eye plush puppy!

For more information, go to seeingeye.org/monthly, email donate@seeingeye.org, or call the Donor & Public Relations Department at 1-800-539-4425.



Ringin' Out 90 Years!

To celebrate the final days of our year-long 90th anniversary celebration, The Seeing Eye rang the closing bell at the Nasdaq MarketSite in Times Square on January 27.

You can watch a video of this year's event at www.seeingeye.org/nasdaq.

In attendance was Seeing Eye President & CEO Glenn Hoagland, New Jersey Senator Anthony M. Bucco, Seeing Eye Board Chair Tom Duffy and members of The Seeing Eye Board of Trustees, staff members, two working Seeing Eye dogs, three Seeing Eye dogs in training, and two Seeing Eye puppies!

The Nasdaq closing bell ceremony bookended our 90th anniversary year... we also did it on January 28, 2019, with then-president and CEO Jim Kutsch, now retired, performing the honors.

The Seeing Eye was founded on January 29, 1929, by Morris Frank in Nashville, Tennessee. A year earlier, he had returned from Switzerland with the first Seeing Eye dog, Buddy, after training with her in Switzerland at a kennel and dog training center owned by Dorothy Harrison Eustis. Morris had promised Dorothy that if she trained a dog for him, he would open a school in the United States to provide to other people who were blind the life-changing mobility, confidence, and independence of a Seeing Eye dog.



The Seeing Eye was founded in 1929 in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1931, we moved to Whippany, New Jersey... and in 1965, to the historic Washington Valley section of Morris Township, New Jersey.

Last year, in recognition of our 90th anniversary, we were honored that the Morris Township Committee voted to change our address from Washington Valley Road to 1 Seeing Eye Way. But we didn't actually relocate.

We still haven't moved... but you may have noticed another new address! As a cost-saving measure, our business reply envelopes now use the post office box of our mail processing vendor – P.O. Box 96916, Washington, D.C. 20077-7995.

But rest assured The Seeing Eye is still located in New Jersey, and your generous gift will come to us. If you prefer to send your gift to us directly, you can still send it to P.O. Box 375, Morristown NJ 07963.

The Seeing Eye thanks its corporate partners



Transforming Lives™

Benjamin Moore® is proud to support The Seeing Eye® in its efforts to enhance the lives of people who are blind.



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www.HealthyVisionAssociation.com



The Seeing Eye is proud to recognize our corporate partners who have made a significant commitment to providing independence for people who are blind or visually impaired through Seeing Eye® dogs.

If your company would like to get involved, please visit SeeingEye.org/Partner for more information.

www.SeeingEye.org



Back at work!

Six Seeing Eye
dogs in training
look happy to be

back at the
Washington Valley
kennel!

Photo by Seeing Eye Instructor Nicole Murray.



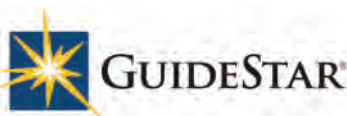
The Seeing Eye

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The Seeing Eye follows the guidelines recommended by the Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools for the humane care and training of dogs to be guides, and the instruction and graduate services offered to people who are blind or visually impaired.

The Seeing Eye is an accredited member of the International Guide Dog Federation. The mission of The Seeing Eye is to enhance the independence, dignity and self-confidence of people who are blind, through the use of specially trained Seeing Eye dogs.