The best way to help the animals is with a cash donation. You can mail a check in the enclosed envelope or make a secure online donation at our website. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Also, if you’d like to leave a legacy of helping disabled animals, please consider making a bequest in your will. Bequests are important gifts that secure our long-term mission. Thank you!

Alayne and Steve with Sunny, who came to us several years ago from a Louisiana rescue group. Sunny has a deformed right front leg, but it isn’t causing him any problems. He is now on medication for a thyroid condition, but is otherwise a happy, healthy boy.

Dear Friends,

We hope you had a wonderful and enjoyable year! All is well here at the farm as we prepare for another winter ahead.

We’re pleased to introduce two of our recent arrivals in this issue, blind Wally from Texas and blind Mildred from South Carolina. Both of these seniors had twists and turns in their lives that eventually led them to us, and both are thriving.

We didn’t have room in this issue for all our new arrivals, but we’ll introduce them in the next annual newsletter … or you can see them on our blog in the meantime.

And just before we went to press, we had a 9-month old Newfoundland puppy named Mia come to us from a vet clinic in New York. She has severe hip dysplasia in both hips – at 9 months! – and a fractured left elbow. Mia has already seen our veterinary surgeon in Burlington for a consultation, and she has multiple surgeries ahead.

We remain ever so grateful for all your generous donations that make it possible for us to take in dogs like Wally, Mildred and Mia. Thank you for your wonderful support this holiday season!

Steve Smith and Alayne Marker, Co-founders

P.S. Just a reminder that we have transitioned to an annual, year-end newsletter schedule to save on postage and printing costs. Our blog has the latest updates on the animals.

Please welcome Mildred!

This little girl came to us from the Spartanburg, South Carolina humane society, where she had ended up after being found as a stray. She was elderly and blind from cataracts, and she also had significant skin problems. The shelter considered her unadoptable and asked if we could provide a home for her.

In a medical whirlwind soon after arriving, Mildred saw our veterinary internal medicine specialist, cardiologist, ophthalmologist, radiologist, and last but not least, our dermatologist.

It was during the first ultrasound that the radiologist found Mildred had a gallbladder mucocele, in which the gallbladder doesn’t function properly and retains mucus. Untreated, eventually this can lead to a life-threatening rupture.

Our internal medicine specialist put Mildred on a roster of medications to manage the condition, and we did repeat ultrasounds to monitor the gallbladder over several months. Eventually, though, our surgeon had to remove it.

The ophthalmologist restored Mildred’s vision with cataract surgery, but shortly afterwards her retinas detached and she also developed uveitis. Soon she was blind again, yet this didn’t affect her spirits at all.

And that’s probably the most remarkable thing about Mildred. Despite her age and medical challenges, she is one spunky, happy girl. Whenever we bring her inside after her potty business, she twirls on the floor, whirling around and then doing little play-bows. When she’s out and about in the living room, she wags her tail constantly.

And when she’s not doing that, she’s trying to hog as many beds as she can.

Volume 18, Issue 1. Written by Steve Smith. Graphic design by Cathleen Clapper. Photos by Steve Smith and Alayne Marker. All rights reserved to the Rolling Dog Farm.
Hello, Wally!

This handsome fellow came to us from a Houston shelter. Two things happened that turned Wally’s life upside down. Just after losing his vision to progressive retinal atrophy, the couple who owned him had a baby. Wally struggled to accept these changes.

The couple said he began having accidents in the house, and he would occasionally growl or snap at the baby. They decided to take Wally to their vet clinic for euthanasia. He was only nine years old.

The vet didn’t want to euthanize Wally, and instead convinced the owners to surrender him instead. The vet soon found Wally a place in a no-kill shelter named Special Pals that took wonderful care of him.

Once here, Wally proved himself to be a perfect gentleman. Never any accidents in the house, no growling or snapping, just an easy-going, friendly Dachshund.

Of course, being a Dachshund means he likes to burrow. The Wikipedia page on this breed says “the standard-size Dachshund was developed to scent, chase, and flush out badgers and other burrow-dwelling animals.”

We’re not sure how this ferocious trait evolved into the single-minded pursuit of burrowing under blankets instead, but that’s one feature shared by every Dachshund we’ve ever had.

There are multiple variations on this theme. One is the “nose out” version, seen here below. (We think it’d be hard to see a badger this way.)

Then there are the various “head-out” and “head-under” versions.

So here’s a typical head-out view:

Then there’s the “head-under” method, leaving the rest of the body uncovered:

The last one in the portfolio is the “feet-out” variation, otherwise known as the “warm body/cold feet” method:

When he’s not burrowed under blankets, he can be found on top of a bed, happily chewing on a toy … in this case, Mr. Hot Dog. And yes, that’s as close as we’re going to get to a Dachshund weiner joke!

Gladiators

That’s Bugsy landing a right hook on Daisy, who’s just about to duck her head down to grab his shoulder. They love roughhousing like this. Bugsy is blind and Daisy can see (thanks to cataract surgery!), yet that doesn’t put Bugsy at a disadvantage. These two are pretty evenly matched!
That’s Tanner insisting the blanket is all his. Who could argue with that face?

About the farm

Rolling Dog Farm has been home to many types of disabled animals over the years – our residents have included blind dogs, blind horses, deaf dogs, blind cats, three-legged dogs and cats, and others with neurological and orthopedic issues. While we focus primarily now on disabled dogs, we still have a blind horse.

Although these animals may have disabilities, they do not consider themselves handicapped. They just want to get on with life and enjoy themselves. Thanks to your support, that’s what they get to do here.

Yet these are the animals who are among the least likely to be adopted and among the most likely to be euthanized in traditional shelters. That’s why we work with the disabled. Steve Smith and Alayne Marker founded the farm in 2000 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization known as a private operating foundation. Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

The Rolling Dog Farm is located in the beautiful White Mountains of northern New Hampshire. This special place for disabled animals is supported 100% by your donations. Thank you for your gifts!

We just updated our BlindHorses.org website, which we first created back in 2005. Until then, there was no real source of information on the subject of caring for blind horses. The default assumption in the horse community was that a blind horse couldn’t have a good quality of life and that the only humane thing to do was to euthanize it.

Yet there were people who did not want to put their beloved horse down just because it had gone blind. They had learned we were caring for several blind horses who were enjoying life, and they turned to us with their questions and concerns.

To help these horse owners, we realized we needed to create a website as a “one-stop shop” of all the things we had learned along the way from our blind horses. Two leading equine ophthalmologists and a New York equine veterinarian supported our efforts and contributed content to the site. To this day it remains the best resource on how to care for a blind horse.