Allie Mae: Once blind, now she can see!
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!

Steve and Alayne with Daisy, another of our diabetics who came to us blind but can now see, thanks to cataract surgery.

Hello, Roxy!

In a Caribbean island full of unwanted stray dogs, Roxy was lucky enough to have a family to call her own. Yet her luck ran out one day when a neighbor threw acid on her face, burning her skin and eyes.

She was taken to a vet clinic for emergency treatment, but her family decided to abandon her there.

Aruba’s only animal rescue group heard about Roxy’s plight and stepped in to pay the vet bills. They also found a foster home to get her through the long recovery.

A Boston-based couple who work with the rescue group to re-home Aruba’s stray dogs with American families learned about Roxy and asked if we could take her. They’d fly her to Boston if we could meet them at the airport and pick her up there. We agreed.

When we saw Roxy for the first time, we were surprised she had any vision left. Both eyes have pronounced scar tissue on each cornea. Yet she can see to some extent. She’s a little skittish because depending on her eye movement and where the scar tissue is in her field of vision, images can sometimes quickly disappear and then re-emerge just as quickly. This startles her. But she has learned to cope and we do not consider her to be blind.

Although there isn’t a surgical way to remove the corneal scar tissue, our veterinary ophthalmologist found that the acid had burned away most of the eyelid margins on both eyes, resulting in the loss of most of her Meibomian glands.

These glands produce a lipid, or oil, that the eye doctor said “is a critical component to the tear film to prevent water evaporation off the surface of the eyes.” As a result, Roxy will be on daily cyclosporine eye drops for the rest of her life.

But otherwise, she’s healthy, happy and enjoying her new life in New Hampshire!
Ever since Wally the blind Dachshund arrived from a Houston shelter a couple of years ago, his favorite spot in winter has been in front of the wood stove. Actually, since we need to use the wood stove for at least six months of the year, this being northern New Hampshire, he spends a good part of the year by the warmth of that thing! Sometimes he’s curled up next to it, sometimes he’s just sitting by it, and sometimes – like here – he’s rolled over on his back and is sound asleep.

Allie Mae’s elderly owner placed her beloved dog in a boarding kennel in Virginia before going into the hospital – and died there a few weeks later. Allie Mae was blind, diabetic, and a senior herself. The owner’s son called the kennel operator, a wonderful lady named Joan, and told her he’d come by in a few days to pick up Allie Mae and take her to a vet clinic for euthanasia.

Joan had known Allie Mae for a long time and had frequently boarded her. She was horrified to hear that this lovely, sweet dog was going to be euthanized. Joan put out word to the local rescue community about Allie Mae’s predicament, and a concerned citizen contacted us to see if we could help. We offered to take her. The son relinquished custody to us, and Allie Mae was soon on her way to New Hampshire.

Our veterinary ophthalmologist performed cataract surgery on Allie Mae soon after she arrived. For the first time in years, she could see again.

The surgery opened a whole new world for her, and she took advantage of it. Allie Mae loves to study things in nature, it turns out. She will see something – a flower, an insect, a frog, a puddle of water, or a bird in a tree overhead, for example – and stare at it for minutes. Allie Mae gets transfixed on these objects, studying them intently.

Watching her examine a plant, for example – one of her favorite subjects – Alayne will report that “Allie Mae is being a botanist again.” We don’t know what she’s thinking when she does this, of course, but it’s fascinating to see how intrigued she is by the world around her. It’s almost like spending years as a blind dog made her appreciate the visual wonder of life even more.

Back in the house, she’s pretty much the queen bee. (Though Daisy thinks she owns that title.) Allie Mae is as loving and affectionate as she is beautiful. Also, yes, a bit bossy. When it comes to meal time, Allie Mae starts jumping up and down, woofing and making chirping sounds (that comes from her study of birds, apparently), then does a sort of canine tap-dance with her feet.

The overall effect is endearing to us and rather effective from her perspective. We end up feeding Allie Mae first to keep her antics from getting all the other dogs worked up, too.

Despite twice daily insulin injections, her diabetes has recently become less well regulated than it was. At the time we’re writing this, Allie Mae has just completed another day-long blood glucose curve and other diagnostics under the care of our internal medicine specialist. We’re making further adjustments in her dosing and diet, and will re-test again shortly.

Fortunately, her other medical work shows she’s in pretty good health overall. She’ll continue to get the best possible veterinary care – and all the love she deserves!

So thanks to Joan and her efforts to save Allie Mae, this adorable girl gets to appreciate every new day. Which is good, because there is a lot to study out there!
Mice discovered that the best way to avoid our barn cats, Brook and Angel, was to get inside our vehicles’ ventilation systems and build their nests there. After repair jobs on two vehicles, we now leave the hoods open so the cats can get to them no matter what.

Over the years we’ve noticed an odd pattern: Big dogs cramming themselves into small beds, while small dogs prefer to take over big beds. That’s three-legged Tanner above, squeezing into a round bed designed for a Dachshund.

And speaking of Dachshunds, here’s Wally again, with plenty of room to spare in a bed large enough for a Malamute:

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!