

RIDGE DOGS NEWSLETTER

Coyote Ridge Correction Center
February 2012 Edition

Created by Linda Ampofo Quaye
Edited by Tara Proctor

COYOTE

Pictures of the Newest Ridge Dogs!

Humor and Hero Stories!

Other Ridge Dogs Available for Adoption!



Pet Toxins and Poisons in Your Home!

New Year's Resolution for Your Pet!

Movie Suggestions

Word Search

RIDGE DOGS

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GRADUATED FROM RIDGE DOGS PROGRAM!

Randy

~Female ~ Shepherd Mix
Estimated 2 years old



~GRADUATED~

Randy arrived at the animal shelter on 11-22-11. She arrived here at CRCC on 12-29-11. Randy was REALLY quick to pick on her training and went through this training program like she'd done it a thousand times before! She was attentive to her handlers and used as an example in most training classes. She loves to be around people and so far, is a VERY laid back dog. She doesn't react around the other dogs.

Hailey

~Female ~ Blue Healer Lab Mix
Estimated 8 months old



~GRADUATED~

Hailey arrived at the animal shelter on 10-05-11. She arrived here at CRCC on 12-29-11. Hailey was REALLY quick to pick on her training and when she realized she got more attention when she completed a cue, she was ALL OVER IT! She was attentive to her handlers and always looking for someone to pet her or scratch her belly. She loves to play and be around people. She doesn't react around the other dogs.

Shelby

~Male ~ Retriever/Lab
Estimated 1year 2 months old



~GRADUATED~

Shelby arrived at the animal shelter on 06-08-11. He arrived here at CRCC on 12-29-11. Hailey was REALLY quick to pick on training, but was a bit hyper. The handlers spent a lot of time on his hyper behavior and getting his attention. He was quick to learn his cues and has graduated – He's still a hyper dog but he's fully trained – once he bonds with you, you'll always have his attention.

Ratty

~Male ~ Pinscher mix
Estimated 3 years old



~GRADUATED~

Ratty arrived at the animal shelter on 10-20-11 and arrived at Coyote Ridge Correction Center on 12-29-11 to begin the training program. He weighs about 9 pounds. He actually looks like he's got some "Mexican Hairless Chihuahua or naked mole rat?" A very smart, sweet dog who wants to please his handlers – He sometimes looks at them like "did I do it right??"

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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM RIDGE DOGS!

Professional Photos Taken By Rob DiPiazza—Rob's Artistic Portraits



Randy



Hailey



Silky



Dexter



Sweetums



Ratty



Arrow

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NEW TO RIDGE DOGS PROGRAM!

COCOA



PRINCESS



RORY



TINA



INTERESTED IN ADOPTING

If you are interested in adopting or pre-adopting any of these Ridge Dogs please contact Rick Karten, CPM at MSU; Jennifer Lynch, Sergeant; or Denise Cook, CC2 both located in B Unit. They will be happy to assist you with more Information.



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“What the dog program has done for me”

Mason, Thomas #315848

Never in my life did I ever think I would spend a day in prison. I was happily married to my high school sweetheart, lived in our dreamy 4,000 SQFT home on four acres with three of my best friends; Rosy, Buddy and Rusty – Yes, a cocker spaniel, lab and Chesapeake bay retriever. We had our toys, boats, corvettes, classic cars and wonderful family members. I lost it all because of my choice to try a drug called “METH.”

At age 39 I spent my first days in jail, 18 months later I was off to prison to do a 20 year sentence. I plead to two counts of 1st degree manslaughter & 1st degree arson. It all happened July 23, 2006. Me, my wife Susan and Cousin Tim all decided to commit suicide in our home by burning it down while up in the attic. Yes, they died. The only reason why I lived is that my wife wanted down after being in the attic 15 minutes. As I said my goodbyes to her, my cousin Tim opened the crawlspace and smoke engulfed his lungs as she dropped down. Screaming for help, I dropped down to try and save her and when I couldn't locate her I made my way out of the burning house. The only good decision I made that day was to let my three best friends out of the home before we burned it down. I have always had a strong love for animals & an even stronger one for dogs.

Prison life is very lonely and dark. We are all one bad choice or decision of being here and I believe in 2nd chances. This dog program has provided my second chance, 13 years before I thought I'd receive it. My days are not so lonely and dark anymore, I have a purpose, a responsibility, I get to learn and most of all, I get to live. With a little work and effort in training, dogs will go to an individual or family and be a great addition. The dogs get a second chance at life as well.

Case & point: Me and my cellie just finished with a dog named Hobbs. Hobbs is an Irish setter mix and came to the program at approximately 12 months old. His first day in prison was CRAZY – Barking, whining, jumping, everything. The other handlers who did not have Hobbs was very happy to NOT have him, he was crazy. Most people thought he needed medication, some thought he needed to be put down. We were not the first to have Hobbs, we were fourth or fifth pair of trainers to try to train this dog. It took work and patience and after a few weeks staff, inmates, and dog trainers noticed an amazing progress with this dog. The result of all this was Hobbs is now living on 200 acres with a pond. Talk about a reward – I was ecstatic for Mr. Hobbs. Handing off Hobbs was not at all sad for me, it was pure joy for Hobbs as he got his 2nd chance. That feeling is better than any drug I've ever tried. I know you don't need drugs to get high on life.

I never thought I would land my dream job while being locked up, but I have. This so called job (as it doesn't feel like one) brings internal happiness to me and I get to see the external happiness of other inmates and staff when I have a dog. This program provides love and happiness for many people and dogs. When you have love and happiness in your life, what else do you really need?

Thank you & all staff who brought me my 2nd chance 13 years early

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RIDGE DOGS- AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION!

SHY BOY

Shy Boy is a German Shepherd/Hound Mix. He currently is Orange Bandana and no one has pre-adopted him. Shy Boy is VERY timid and SHY, he appears to be a Farrell dog that lived on the run for a long time. He hides his food and stores it so he can eat it when no one is looking. He is a beautiful dog and once he realizes that no one is going to hurt him, he'll come out of his shell and make someone a GREAT dog. He's very playful within the cell and out in the yard when he gets to go off leash.



SHELBY

Shelby is a 14 Month Old Male Shepherd/Lab/Retriever Mix, currently a Orange Bandana. Shelby is like a full grown puppy – He LOVES to play and he is VERY smart. He has some concerns with nipping and biting at his leash and wanting to nip and bite playfully when he's excited. We observed his handlers working with him in the dayroom where they directed Shelby to lay down and stay and then they would walk over him, around him and bend over his face all while the dog laid on his back and kept his head down waiting to be released. It was pretty amazing to see the work they have put in with this dog when just a few days ago he was biting and nipping to play with his handlers.



INTERESTED IN ADOPTING

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MISSY—ADOPTED!



Missy promoted to green bandana and has been adopted. She has gone to her new home and family. Missy is a one and a half year old Terrier Pit Mix. While in the Ridge Dogs Program Missy was very playful and friendly with lots of energy. Missy was a “Pre-Madonna” she didn't like to lay on the cold cement and would rather be snuggled up in a sweater or blanket. She loves attention and going for a walk.

Best Wishes to Missy and her new family!





“What the dog program has done for me” Jolliffe, Daniel #713907

Man’s Best Friend – How the dog program has influenced my life

After almost two decades of continuous incarceration I have learned that prison has the potential to teach individuals an enormous amount about themselves, the world, and life in general or nothing at all. Either way, it will be for society’s advantage or detriment. For me, it wasn’t until about ten years ago that I began to realize that I still have the potential to achieve great things in life: both in prison and eventually upon my release. It was during that awakening that I was able to see how I had allowed one bad choice in my life to become compounded by a cycle of bad choices in prison. Although this cycle was most definitely influenced by a system which was mired in negativity, I can certainly see where I failed to take advantage of opportunities to change my course along the way. That said, once I did begin to re-orient myself back towards positivity, it was and is programs like extended family visiting, Native American regalia, associate of arts degree and especially “Ridge Dogs” which have helped me work my way back to a path of achieving my potential.

It has been through the Ridge Dog program in particular that I have developed an ever-present awareness that whether I am incarcerated or not, I will always have a say-so in the course of my life and whether or not I want to contribute to the universe in a positive or negative manner. The deepest portion of that awareness has come from contemplating who I’ve been in my life, who I am currently, and who I am capable of being, and ultimately comparing all of that with what I claim to believe. A few important factors have influenced that contemplation including the people I love; more importantly who love me; time (quite often in lengthy segregation programs) and continued education.

With all of that in mind, it has been the dog program which has provided me the means to get back to who I am capable of being through a venue that is compatible with what I believe as well. It has occurred to me that although I am considered to be one of the “Well known inmates” in this system, it has not been for the types of things which I believe in and which really matter in life, at least not during my time in prison. Thus from asking myself the question – what do I believe in? I believe in positivity, positivity in saving the lives of dogs, positivity in my fellow handlers, positivity in staff who has supported the program in myriad ways, and positivity in myself. Having been given the responsibility of another life and the latitude to truly flourish in this program while teaching both dogs and fellow handlers, has allowed me to focus on that positivity while continuously learning and growing. It is through the dog program that I and my fellow handlers are once again headed back towards great accomplishments and the spectacular future. I think this is what true friends want for each other, and this is what the dog program has become for me.



LOVE POEMS ABOUT DOGS!



True Love: The Love of a Dog

Gorgeously delightful
eyes of chocolate brown
Love so sweet and tender
whenever you're around ~

Head that rests so softly
upon the lap within
A faithful loyal friend
where love truly begins.

Gentleness that whispers
speaks volumes to the heart
Eyes convey a message
they're everywhere you are ~

Powerful yet loving
they speak a thousand words,
And still they melt your heart within
for they truly are your world!

A love forever faithful
how can one be without
Such loyal devotion
and the nudging from that snout?

For a house is not a home unless
one pauses to see
Through the eyes of he who lives
with love unconditionally.

© Christina

I look into your eyes

I look into your eyes and can see,
The trust that is built between you and me.
You never judge me when I am blue,
You are a friend that's always true.
The life you lead is like that of a child,
Sometimes your calm and sometimes your wild.
We walk outside every day,
And that is when we both like to play.
If life was as simple as it seems to be for you,
We would be content and happy too.
Your loyalty is one of love,
You are a gift from heaven above.
It's hard to think of you as just a pet,
When you are the best friend I could ever get.
I know to most you're only a dog that lives here,
But to me you're the friend that is always near.

From: <http://www.inspirational-poems.net/dog-poems>



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“What the dog program has done for me”

Collins, Travis #895695

My name is Travis Collins and throughout my adult life I have struggled with addiction. I have never considered myself a bad person, just a person who has made some poor decisions. Like most addicts, I have been attempting to fill a void caused by childhood trauma for as long as I can remember. I have been searching for a purpose and a meaningful life. It is safe to say “I have been looking in all the wrong places.” My past failures and attempting to “fit in” has lead me to where I am today. Throughout my life I have kept a positive outlook, I believe that in any situation good or bad there is something to be learned. I have kept this attitude throughout my incarcerations keeping in mind “what good can I take from this experience?” I arrived at Coyote Ridge Correction Center in September 2010. Immediately I noticed the dogs, they brought a familiar feeling in an un-familiar place. I knew right away this was the “good” that would come from a bad situation.

Growing up, our family always had a dog, so I had plenty of experience caring for them but almost none training them. I was hired in January 2011 immersing myself in the dog program, soaking as much knowledge as possible from Mrs. Ellingson and her assigned mentors. With each dog I trained, I gained more knowledge. Not just about the dogs but about myself. I was forced to learn how to communicate effectively with dogs and my peers. I credit this new skill solely to Mrs. Ellingson and her dog program.

It is funny how life works, the void I have been attempting to fill my whole life, I found in prison. I plan to further my education upon my release by attending Animal Behavior College. I am excited and very optimistic about my future and the path my life is headed. I have finally found something I feel passionate about and the feeling I get from training dogs is better than any drug. I would like to extend my gratitude to Mrs. Ellingson and everyone involved in making this program what it is. One thing I have learned is everyone, humans and dogs, deserve a second chance at happiness.



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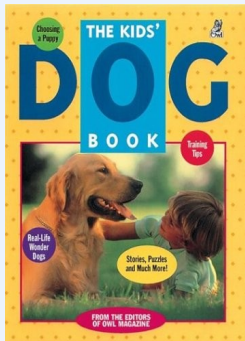
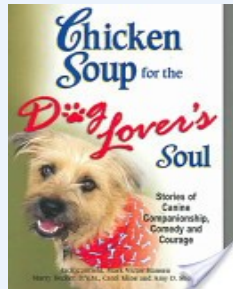
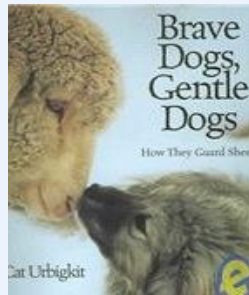
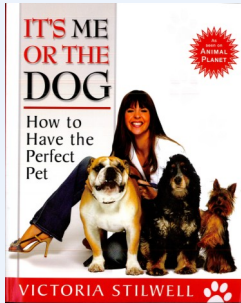
A PICTURE SAYS IT ALL - HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!





FAMILY FUN

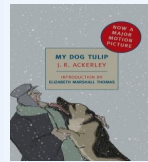
Books



Movies



Balto was adapted from a true story that occurred in Nome, Alaska during the winter of 1925 and inspired the Iditarod dog sled race. The animated film tells the story of wolf/husky mix who becomes a hero during a diphtheria outbreak. Balto leads a team of dogs on a several hundred mile trip across the Alaskan tundra to get medicine for the sick. Though several facts from the original story were changed for the movie, this animated film is both dramatic and inspiring. Features the voices of Kevin Bacon, Bob Hoskins and Bridget Fonda (who plays a dog named Jenna).



My Dog Tulip

The distinguished British man of letters J. R. Ackerley hardly thought of himself as a dog lover when, well into middle age, he came into possession of a German shepherd. To his surprise, she turned out to be the love of his life, the “ideal friend” he had been searching for in vain for years. *My Dog Tulip* is a bittersweet retrospective account of their sixteen-year companionship, as well as a profound and subtle meditation on the strangeness that lies at the heart of all relationships. In vivid and sometimes startling detail, Ackerley tells of Tulip’s often erratic behavior and very canine tastes, and of his own fumbling but determined efforts to ensure for her an existence of perfect happiness. Paul and Sandra Fierlinger’s animated feature film of *My Dog Tulip*, starring Christopher Plummer, Lynn Redgrave, and Isabella Rossellini, was released in 2010.



To be fair, the main character of this film is a cat named Oliver. As a homeless kitten wandering the streets, Oliver meets up with a gang of stray dogs who show him how to survive, but also involve him in their life of crime. Soon, Oliver meets a girl who becomes his new owner, and the two must escape some trouble involving some of the dogs. This adaptation of "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens is a sweet animated film with entertaining music and characters.

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WORD SEARCH



Find the words listed at the bottom of the page in the word search grid. The words can be forwards, backwards, vertical, horizontal, or diagonal.

V E S O R E T X E D C Y D N A C B
 E A N O C H O C O L A T E I L O E
 S S L D O G G I E T R E A T S S S
 M H I E C A N D Y H E A R T S R T
 R Y A L N S E I R O M E M R O E F
 O B A I K T N A O P I D O I W W R
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 A O R E H S W E E T H E A R T U N

ARROW
 VALENTINES
 DAY
 BEST FRIENDS
 SILKY
 MEMORIES
 TRUE LOVE
 CANDY HEARTS



RANDY
 DEXTER
 SHY BOY
 SWEETHEART
 SWEETUMS
 HAILEY
 RATTY



NO CHOCOLATE
 ROMANCE
 DOGGIE TREATS
 CUPID
 PLAYFUL
 FLOWERS
 PUPPY LOVE

