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LOCAL RESIDENT RECEIVES GUIDE DOG

Mr. Rick Barnard of Wenatchee graduated recently with a yellow Labrador Retriever Guide Dog named Ibsen at his side. The duo completed two weeks of intensive training at Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc., in Boring, Oregon. Graduation took place on Saturday, September 25 at an 11-acre campus, located 25 miles east of Portland.

During the course of training, skilled Guide Dogs and their new partners learn to negotiate stairways, elevators, overhead obstacles, crowded sidewalks and busy streets. The dogs are trained to avoid distractions and disobey commands to cross a street if traffic is approaching.

Guide Dogs for the Blind is more than a school – it is a community dedicated to providing people who are blind with the opportunity to experience what a powerful partnership with a Guide Dog can mean – not only to mobility, but to quality of life. It is the only school in the country that has built its program around both the functional and personal aspects of a Guide Dog partnership. The school is committed to matching each person with the right dog, developing a personalized training program matched to each person's lifestyle, and providing unprecedented support services to establish a true life-long partnership.

Guide Dogs for the Blind has been serving our community since 1942. They have produced more than 10,000 trained guides for graduates across the United States and Canada. There are currently more than 2,500 people with vision loss enjoying the comfort, companionship and safety of these exceptional dogs.

The school also ensures that every one of its dogs is well cared for during its life, whether or not it becomes a guide. Students are offered air transportation, room and board, training, equipment, financial assistance for veterinary care and support services free-of-charge. Guide Dogs' extensive post-graduation support underlines their lifelong commitment to the continuing success of each graduating team. And upon the retirement of a guide, the graduate is invited to return for training with a new Guide Dog.

Guide Dogs for the Blind is a nonprofit organization supported entirely by private, charitable donations and the time and talents of dedicated staff members, puppy raisers and other volunteers working together toward a common mission.

For more information, contact Guide Dogs for the Blind at 800 295-4050, and on the web at www.guidedogs.com.