

# A little help from a friend

Apprentice trainers  
and comfort dogs  
from the Northbrook-  
based Lutheran  
Church Charities  
attend weekly training  
classes held in  
Northbrook. PHOTO  
SUBMITTED

Northbrook's  
Lutheran Church  
Charities brings  
comfort through  
K-9 Ministries,  
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**I & A COVER STORY**

# Lutheran Church Charities spreads joy with comfort dogs

**ALAN P. HENRY**  
Freelance Reporter

If you love dogs, and want to do good, and are looking for a unique volunteer experience, Northbrook-based Lutheran Church Charities's K-9 Ministries quite literally has a "golden" opportunity for you.

Right now, LCC is looking for volunteers willing to make a two-year commitment to becoming apprentice trainers and welcome an LCC K-9 golden retriever comfort dog-in-training into their homes. Once the dog has "graduated," it will be sent to a Lutheran church in process and waiting in the United States, where it will be used to bring comfort to people of all ages and circumstances who are in need.

"If you want to do something positive and fulfilling with your time there is no

better way to do it than to help train a comfort dog that is going to be making a difference in peoples' lives as he or she get older," said Megan Glowacz, an LCC staff trainer who will be training apprentices. "I knew I wanted to do something that made an impact in my community, but even broader if I could do so, and when I found LCC I thought it was amazing how many lives these dogs could touch and the impact they could have, not just in the Northbrook area but all across the nation."

To staff trainer Becky Kolzow, the connection that is formed between the dogs and their apprentice trainers is particularly touching.

"There is definitely a big bond," she said. The dogs are living with the people so they are a part of their families and their homes,

and the joy the volunteer experiences when they see their dogs graduate is really pretty cool. They also follow the dogs that have graduated on Facebook (each dog has a Facebook page) and love seeing where they are now."

LCC gets 8-week-old golden retriever puppies from top breeders that follow Golden Retriever Club of America breeding guidelines. Retrievers are selected because of their loving, easy-going temperament.

Each puppy is given two volunteer apprentice trainers who will share the responsibility of training and attending weekly classes, which are overseen by a staff trainer. Each week the dog and apprentice trainer attend class for 2-2.5 hours and every other week for a one hour individual lesson with staff at LCC headquarters on Milwaukee Avenue. A total of more than 2,000 hours of initial and ongoing training ensues over the next 18-24 months.

During that period, the two apprentices will alternate having the dog live in their home.

"That way the dog gets that added benefit of experiencing different environments and different homes. It helps get the dog to a place where when it is placed it is going to be comfortable in all situations and surroundings with people of all ages," said Rich Martin, Director of K-9 Ministries.

During the week, an apprentice trainer works on daily training, socializing, exercising and caring for the dog. As time passes, the trainers take their dog on field trips assigned by LCC staff that build on the

dogs experiences, such as going to nursing homes, hospitals, community special needs programs, malls, and emergency situations, where the dog's adaptability skills and distraction training are put to the test. LCC, which relies on

donors, provides training equipment, dog food and veterinarian expenses.

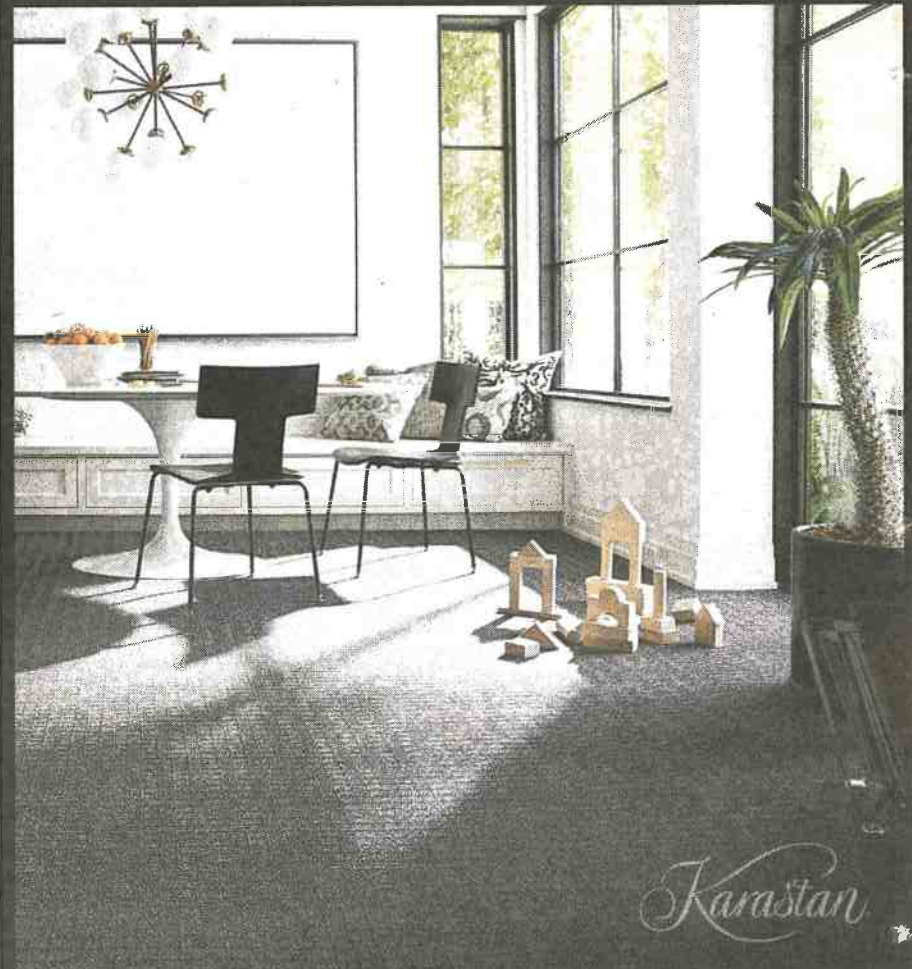
To date, there are roughly 130 K-9 Comfort Dogs in 26 states, which includes those in training and placed in Lutheran churches, schools, and universities. The prob-

lem is that the demand by churches for comfort dogs is growing faster that LCC can supply the dogs, which is why they need to train more volunteer apprentice trainers as quickly as

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Dona and Rich Martin, both with Lutheran Church Charities's K-9 Ministries, pose for a photo with comfort dogs Emma and Ruthie. PHOTO SUBMITTED

# 90 students receive catholic sacrament of Confirmation with Cardinal Cupich

SUBMITTED BY ST. NORBERT SCHOOL

Cardinal Cupich was present at St. Norbert and Our Lady of the Brook Parish to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation to 90 students in grades seven and eight on April 13.

"As Catholics, we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation only one time in our life. For these young men and women, being confirmed by our Cardinal is truly a once-in-a-life time opportunity" said Jon Konz, Director of Faith Formation for the Northbrook parish.

Students pursuing the Sacrament participate in a 2-year preparatory program.

Students at St. Norbert School enter into the program as a part of the school's curriculum. Public school students have

the opportunity to participate in Religious Education classes on Sunday evenings. Both programs are designed to help them deepen their relationship with Jesus.

"We work hard to help our students understand that Confirmation is not an obligation. It is a choice; a deepening of their relationship with Christ," Konz said.

"Through Confirmation, our students begin their adulthood in the Church," said MaryBeth Schwall, a St. Norbert School Religion teacher. "As their teacher, watching them get Confirmed, especially by the Cardinal, was truly one of my proudest moments; my students were becoming adults in God's eyes, and I was lucky enough to be a witness."

At the conclusion of



Nearly 100 students received the catholic sacrament of confirmation on April 13. PHOTO SUBMITTED

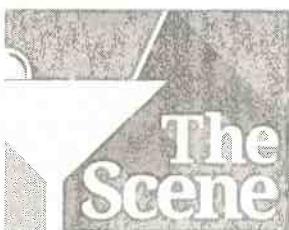
this preparation time, having grown in faith and learned a lot about living out their Catholic faith, students are invited to

confirm their Baptismal promises in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

As a next step in their faith journey, these stu-

dents have the option to attend the Totus Tuus Catholic Summer Camp July 14 – 19 at St. Norbert Church. This camp

is open to the public. Those interested in attending, visit [www.northbrookcatholic.church](http://www.northbrookcatholic.church) to find out more.



WHERE YOU WANT TO BE SEEN THIS WEEKEND

## NORTHBROOK Pinstripes

(1150 Willow Road,  
(847) 480-2323)

■ From open until close all week: bowling and bocce

## Northbrook Sports Center

(1730 Pflugsten Road)

■ 7 p.m. May 10: Northbrook on Ice

## Landmark Inn

(1352 Shermer Road,

(847) 559-1919)

■ 8 p.m. Friday, May 4:  
Rock band Ciao Mang

## GLENVIEW Johnny's Kitchen

(1740 Milwaukee Ave.  
(847) 699-9999)

■ 7:30 p.m. every Friday  
and Saturday: Live  
Music

## The Rock House

(1742 Glenview Road  
(224) 616-3062)

■ 5 p.m. Friday, May  
3: Family Night and  
Karaoke

■ 9:30 a.m. Saturday,  
May 4: Gene Lim

## Ten Ninety Brewing Co.

(1025 N. Waukegan  
Road, (224) 432-5472)

■ 7-9 p.m. every Thurs-  
day: Trivia Night

## Oil Lamp Theater

(1723 Glenview Road)

■ Through May 5: Ongo-  
ing performances of  
"Play On!"

## LAKE FOREST

### Gorton Community Center

(400 E. Illinois Road)

■ 8-10 p.m. Saturday,  
May 4: Truth Be Told

### Lake Forest Recreation Center

(400 Hastings Road  
(847) 234-6700)

■ 4-6 p.m. Saturday, May  
11: Family Drive-In  
Movie Night

## WINNETKA

### Fred's Garage

(574 Green Bay Road)

■ Saturday, May 4:

Kentucky Derby food  
specials

■ Sunday, May 5: Cinco  
De Mayo drink specials  
■ Every Friday: Fred's  
Garage Fish Fry Fridays

## Winnetka Ice Area

(490 Hibbard Road)

■ 7 p.m. Friday, May 3,  
and 6 p.m. Saturday,  
May 4: 45th Annual  
Winnetka Ice Show

## Radoons

(962 1/2 Green Bay  
Road)

■ 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Satur-  
day, May 4: Radoons  
20-year anniversary

To place an event in The  
Scene, email [martin@northbrooktower.com](mailto:martin@northbrooktower.com)

## DOGS

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possible, Martin said.

In looking for new apprentice trainers, LCC seeks men and women 18 and older who are patient, physically and emotionally willing to make the time and work commitment, and open to fostering a dog in their home.

"We don't necessarily need someone with experience because we teach them everything there is to know," Martin said.

They also have to be willing to "let go" when the dog moves on from training, said LCC's Deb Baran. "You have to realize there is a purpose for a trainer, that the dog is going to go on to greater things, and that they can feel proud of that," she said.

Launched in 2008, the LCC K-9 Comfort Dog ministry has helped Lutheran churches nationwide expand their mission and their reach into the community.

"This has enabled a lot of churches to do something that may have been difficult to do before, which is connecting with the community," said Tim Hetzner, President and CEO of LCC. "It is not about 'how do I get someone to come in and sit in my pew,' it is 'how can I go out and show people it is not about just coming into our building and being part of us.' It is about us being the church in the community."

For more information or to apply to become a volunteer apprentice trainer, visit [www.LutheranChurchCharities.org](http://www.LutheranChurchCharities.org), or call 866-455-6466.