

2016
winter issue

6

THE Owners' *manual*



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issue 6. winter 2016

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BL BUZZ: WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AROUND BL?

- ① BL donated a total \$10,000 in December to the food banks local to our office locations. The KOP office made their donation in style to Philabundance - with a huge check!
- ② The NYC office participates every holiday season in Operation Santa. *What is Operation Santa? Each year kind hearted people (like our employee-owners in NYC!) bring Operation Santa Claus to life by answering "Dear Santa" letters from needy children who would otherwise have no Christmas at all.*
- ③ "Sorry, my dad can't answer your call right now. He is busy with some BL Companies' client care... and I'm the client" (Everly Garon)
- ④ Back in October Molly Salafia volunteered with Kiwanis of Middletown. Here she is with the Key Club Kiwanis girls from Middletown High selling peanuts for Warm the Children. Warm the Children gathers donations to give vouchers to Walmart needy families to buy warm clothing for their children, members volunteer & take families shopping before Christmas. In the past, the organization helped over 700 families in Middlesex County. Molly is the "old lady in the bear suit with the folding chair."
- ⑤ BL Buzz helps the Marketing Dept. to pack for a tradeshow. More on the Magic of Marketing on page 5.
- ⑥ BL was honored with the Distinguished Service Award by CASHO (CT Association of Street & Highway Officials). Many of our employee-owners were at the event to accept the award...and as Derek Kohl so accurately said in his acceptance speech: "BL Rocks!"
- ⑦ The photogenic folks from the Norwood office had a bit of fun in the photobooth at the CT/MA/NY Holiday Party.
- ⑧ The Force was with BL on December 17th!

A vibrant red curtain is pulled back from the left side, revealing a solid black background. The curtain has a gold-colored tassel or cord at the bottom left. The text is centered in the black area.

**Go Behind the Scenes with the
Marketing Department at ICSC NYC**

In December BL Companies participated in one of the largest retail/commercial expositions in the country - the International Conference of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Show at the Jacob Javitz Center in NYC. In this behind the scenes look of what it really takes to pull the BL Companies' booth together, you won't see any pixie dust or fanciful elves - but you will see the

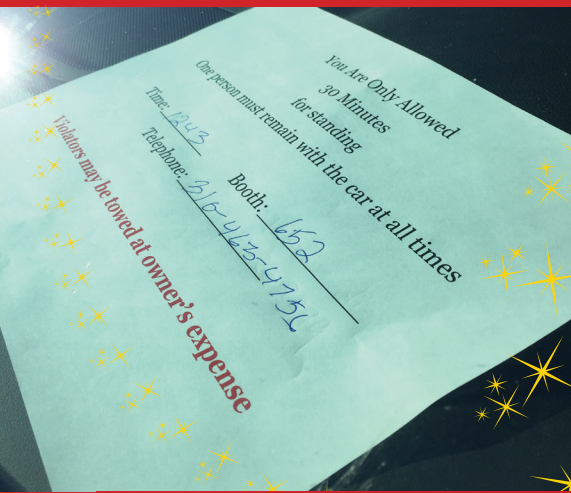
Magic of Marketing.



At the time of planning for this conference, Meriden was without the use of the elevator. That's a lot of boxes to get from the 3rd floor down to the first.



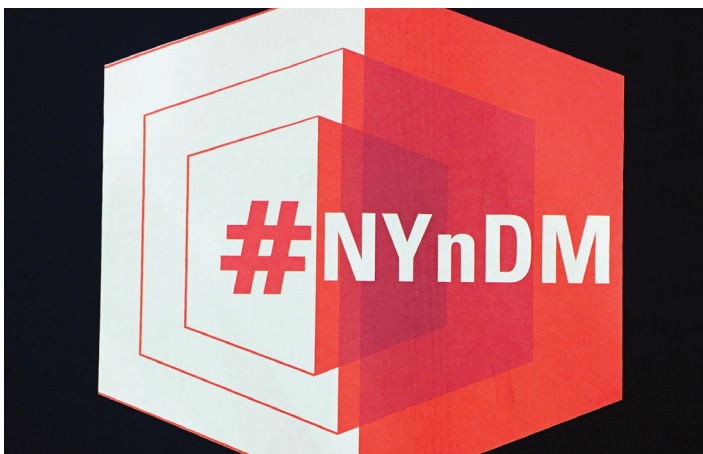
Logistics come into play when organizing for an event. Getting packed up and ready to go is the first step and then hoping it all fits into the vehicle is the second.



After a 2 hour ride from CT to NYC and negotiations with the security officers we got a spot in the loading and unloading area. One problem – one person needed to stay with the car at all times. This made for many trips down escalators and through both construction zones .



2 full days before the show floor opens to attendees, BL is all set up and ready to boogie with our bots and do some business.





Meetings with our retail/commercial clients take place over this 2 day event in NYC both in and outside of the BL booth. It's called ICSC NY Deal Making for a reason.

After 2 days of promoting BL's services to some of the 10,000 attendees of the 2015 show, we pack it all up and head back to the BL office. Unfortunately, no magic can transport the marketing department back home. Unless of course, you consider a GMC Acadia a magic carpet ride.



What is ICSC?

Founded in 1957, ICSC is the global trade association of the shopping center industry. Its more than 70,000 members in over 100 countries include shopping center owners, developers, managers, investors, retailers, brokers, academics, and public officials. The shopping center industry is essential to economic development and opportunity. They are a significant job creator, driver of GDP, and critical revenue source for the communities they serve through the collection of sales taxes and the payment of property taxes. These taxes fund important municipal services like firefighters, police officers, school services, and infrastructure like roadways and parks. Shopping centers aren't only fiscal engines however; they are integral to the social fabric of their communities by providing a central place to congregate with friends and family, discuss community matters, and participate in and encourage philanthropic endeavors. For more information about ICSC visit www.icsc.org



BL'S Best Friends

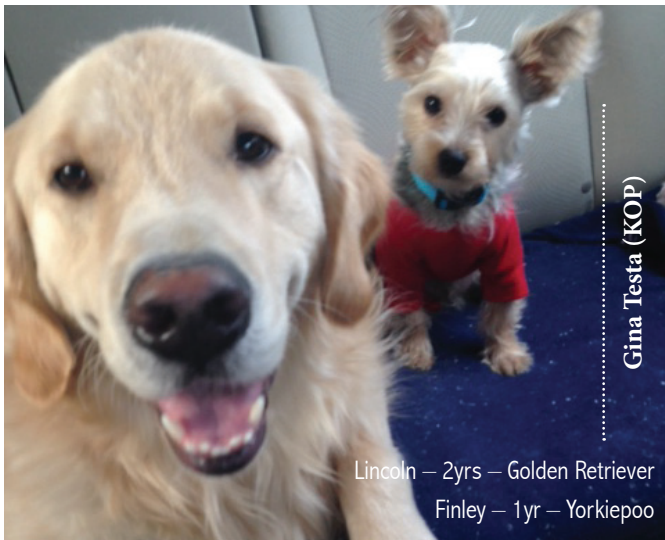
After a busy day at BL, pet owners quite literally feel the love. But it's not all about unconditional love — owning a pet actually provides a wellness boost, too. On an emotional level, owning a pet can decrease depression, stress and anxiety; health-wise, it can lower your blood pressure, improve your immunity and even decrease your risk of heart attack and stroke. But the positives don't stop there.

Read on to discover all of the incredible things our BL Companies' pets offer up to their families and the personal benefits and that can come with having a pet in the family.



Robert DiMenna (KOP)

His name is Pongo. He's a three year old Dalmatian. Joined the family and became my running partner. He loves to hike and be outdoors. He's great at impressions, his best impression being a garbage disposal. He lives in Philadelphia.



Gina Testa (KOP)

Lincoln – 2yrs – Golden Retriever
Finley – 1yr – Yorkiepoo

The greatest part about having dogs is they're always happy. As soon as anyone walks in the door you are flooded with love. At least with our two monsters! You can't sit down anywhere in our house without a furry friend wanting to sit on your lap or nudge your hand for petting. Watching the two of them play and interact is hilarious. Linc is almost 100 lbs and Finny is 6lbs and Finny is IN charge.



Jared Hernandez (Houston)

Lola (3 yr old femal - left)
Sophie (1.5 yr old female - right)

We adopted both dogs, Lola was first and then 1 year later we realized that Lola needed a best friend. It took a while for them to become good friends but once they got use to each other they were inseparable. My dogs make me laugh and just bring overall joy to our household, It's a fun experience and makes coming home that much better cause you know they're going to be super excited to see you. Lola & Sophie are pretty well trained, they both can do the usual tricks like sit, lay, stay, shake, roll over, get down & they both love car rides. Lola also has some bad habits like digging in the back yard and jumping on guests that come over. Overall they're both really good dogs and we wouldn't have it any other way. They are now Family.



Clifford, 7 months

Patty Yeager (Camp Hill)

Clifford is a pure bred Basset Hound. I have owned this breed of dog for almost 40 years, (since 1976). They are fun loving, good with kids and mostly lazy. Clifford is the 7th basset that I've owned, all males. I am a dog lover, and I like coming home from work to see my canine friend waiting for me. No matter how bad of a day, I've had, the minute I walk through the door, he puts a smile on my face. The thing I like the most about owning a dog is that he keeps me active. It's a lot more fun hiking with my dog than hiking alone. All in all, it's been proven that owning a pet can offer physical, mental and emotional improvements to one's life.



Haley Swain (Meriden)

Name/Age:
Izzy, 8 years young
Breed: Tabby/Maine Coon
Why: She needed a good home
Benefits: Always making the family laugh, very affectionate, good with young kids, she is a good cuddle buddy for the whole family
Quirks: Her front two paws are doubled paw (which means she has extra toes), 13 toes in the front all together (7 on left, and 6 on the right). Her purr and snore can be louder than you expect.



Bob Celata (Meriden)

Her name is “Zips Dandy Step” or as we like to call her, **Laney.**

She is a Quarter Horse Mare who turned 20 this summer. Laney joined our family as my daughter Brittany was turning 13. It takes time to build trust between horse and rider and Laney had been moved (sold) many times with no one willing to invest the time to nurture a lifelong bond that both Laney and Brittany needed. I think she bucked Brittany off daily for about three months before Laney believed Brittany was not going to abandon her and Brittany finally understood that Laney would protect her and not send her flying into fences. In their last year competing before Brittany left for college, Laney and Brittany won reserve champion in CT. The bond they built is still very strong even though Brittany lives in Texas and Laney is home with us in Durham. Whenever Brittany comes home to visit she spends most of her time at the barn with Laney.

Benefits: Mucking stalls is therapeutic!



Iris (3), Athena (3), Bella (6 mo.)

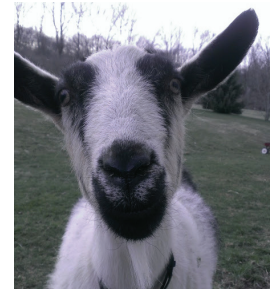
Breed/Type: Alpine dairy goats

How/Why did your pet join your family? 4H

Benefits: Goats are super sweet and very entertaining all the time.

Talents: They keep our yard nicely pruned.

.....
Barbara Joslin (Meriden)



Kinsey, age 6

Breed/Type: Golden Retriever

We used the same breeder for the last 20 years; we’ve had Golden Retrievers since the 70’s! When we were ready for another Golden (after grieving our last one), I reached out to our last breeder, got on a waiting list and several months later we were able to pick her out of a litter of 4 males and 4 females! Getting to see the pups at 4 and 8 weeks old was one of my favorite things I’ve experienced ever.

Benefits: Owning a pet lowers stress, makes you happier, encourages exercise and to view the world a bit more like a dog (family and friends, food, exercise and rest are the key!) She loves to be petted and cuddle but turns into a pip when you stop! She lays about 6” away from a blazing wood stove and spends her winter there...

She thinks she’s a human and is offended when she can’t sit at the table or get the same food that we do!



David Hines (Meriden)



Rai Muhlbauer (Meriden)

Name & Age(s) of Pet(s): **Gunner** is my grandpuppy. He is 12 weeks old.

Breed/Type: Boxer / Great Pyrannees mix

How/Why did your pet join your family? My daughter Abbie moved to Denver and bought a house. It didn't feel like a "home" to her without a dog.

What are the personal benefits of owning your pet? Gunner makes sure Abbie gets out for a walk twice a day and keeps active inside the house trying to keep him from eating everything except his (many) toys.

Talents, quirks, habits: Gunner learned almost immediately to respond to the "sit" and "down" commands. Probably because he hears them about 100 times a day, when trying to keep him from jumping up on visitors and mauling their pant legs with his puppy teeth. The booties and coat in the photo were recommended by his vet. Apparently the boxer half does not enjoy cold weather and snow. As you can see, Gunner does not enjoy booties and coats.



Shawn Poulin (Meriden)

Name and Age: **Autumn**, and she's 2.5 years old

Breed/Type: Tabby

How did pet join my family: Friends cat had kittens, I took her when she was 8 weeks old.

Benefits: Companionship

Talents: She kills mice



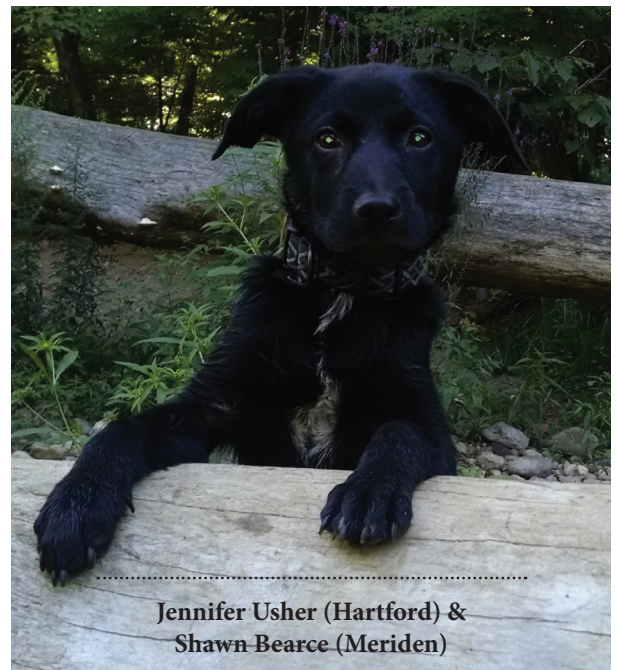
Oliver Flynn Boston Bearce, Age 8 months

Black Labrador Retriever/Aussie Shepard Mix

We had been talking about adopting a dog from Companion Pet Rescue (CPR) for over a year. We were also looking for a black dog since we had read that black dogs have less chance of being adopted. Ollie came from a high-kill shelter in Tennessee, so we were so excited to be able to adopt him and give him a home.

Benefits: At only 8-months old, Ollie is very active, which has kept both of us going. He loves going for walks and playing at the dog park (this is where the photo was taken). It's been a few years since either of us have had a dog and it's been a nice change coming home again to four legs and a wagging tail!

Talents: Ollie has amazed us learning multiple hand and verbal commands in the short time we've had him; we taught him all of his verbal commands in Celtic. Being so young, he just wants to play with everyone, but he really enjoys playing with our friends' bigger dogs and being one of the pack.



Jennifer Usher (Hartford) & Shawn Bearce (Meriden)



Sam Haydock (Bridgewater)

Iggy is an 8 year old yellow lab. He is very loving and gentle. As you can see, he does not like to be left behind when we travel. It only took putting one bag in the car, which he saw, and he would not get out of the car, even though we were not leaving for hours.

Our family loves pets. We have 2 cats and Iggy. We had Maxie before we got Iggy. I could not imagine a household without animals. They are like children to us and even better, they do not talk back. Iggy loves to walk, run and bike. I take him for a walk or a bike ride every night, no matter how late, how cold, or how wet. It is good stress relief and exercise.



Her name is **Jasmine** she is (almost) 12 years old. She's a mutt (half Wheaton Terrier and half Cocker Spaniel).

I begged my parents for a dog and finally roped them into getting her. She makes me happy, so I'd say that's a pretty good benefit. Plus she drags her blanket around the house like a toddler and it's the cutest thing.

Talents: She can rollover and shake. And vacuum!

.....
Rachael Hyland (Meriden)



Cristy Shamus (Meriden)

Mason – about 6 yrs old, a Border Collie mix

Honey – about 5 yrs old, a Chihuahua mix

JD – 15 yrs old, Domestic cat

Henry – 6 yrs old, Domestic cat

Cali – 2 yrs old, Chinese dwarf hamster

Albert Einstein – 1 yr old, Djungarian Hamster

How/Why did your pet join your family?

All of our family pets are rescues (except for the hamsters that Santa dropped off). Mason is from Arkansas and Honey is from Tennessee; one cat is from feral colony in Newtown and one in Southington. Why did all these animals join our family....we are suckers when an animal needs a home!

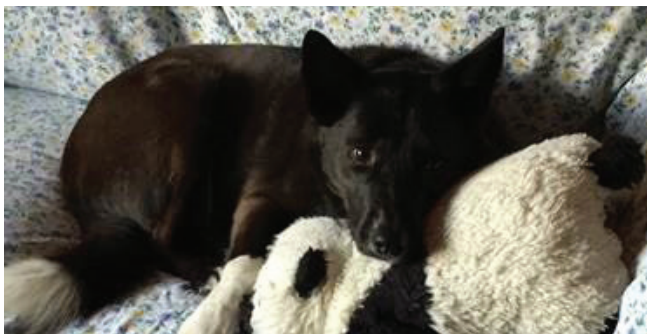
What are the personal benefits of owning your pet?

Mason has become a great running partner with me and the dogs keep us active taking family walks, hikes, and runs when we may have been doing less active things. Each dog prefers to sleep in bed with each one of my daughters.

Talents, quirks, habits:

Talents for our Hamsters seem to be keeping everyone awake at night running on their squeaky wheel and getting dressed up in tiny doll clothes and riding tiny motorcycles.

The cats quirky habits seem to be that they have their own language, to which we are always trying to decipher. JD's talent is also trying to drink my first cup of coffee when I'm not looking. Mason loves to shake paws and lay down for a treat. Honey's talent is keeping anyone but her family away from petting her.



Name & Age(s) of Pet(s)

Kodiak, 4 years old

Breed/Type

80 lb., 100% mutt (chow chow, Catahoula, and ?)

How/Why did your pet join your family?

He was a stray found running around the airport, very scared of people (and everything else). Some airport workers found him, coaxed him back to the airport hangar, and put up an ad looking for a permanent home on Craigslist. My wife and I had been looking for a few months for a dog to adopt, and when we ran across the ad we set up a meeting. He was a perfect fit for us.

What are the personal benefits of owning your pet?

He's an excellent listener. He has been an instant fight-ender. His morning walks are a great way to start the day and a good opportunity to talk and catch up on everything. He's always good for a hug (even though he hates them, for what it's worth). Most importantly, there's nothing more satisfying after a frustrating day than coming home to an adorable, smiling face that is ridiculously happy to see you.

Talents, quirks, habits:

He will never understand the appeal of tennis balls.

He's pretty sure he owns the bed.

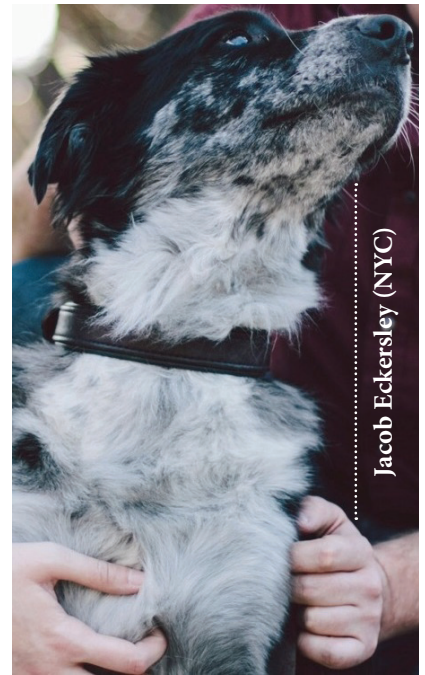
He never has and never will be satisfied with the amount or quality of affection given to him.

We barely had to train him to do anything. He's very smart and wants to do anything he's asked to please us (or get treats, in reality).

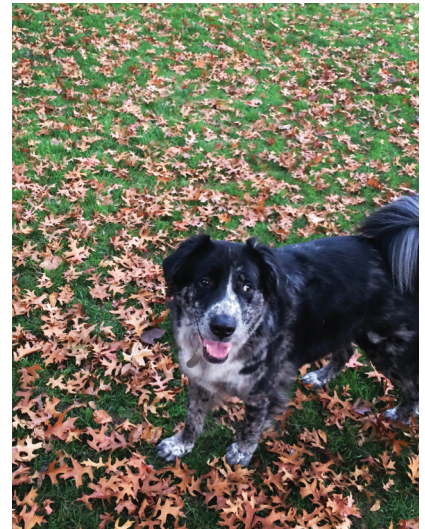
He sighs heavily. A LOT.

He's only scared of dumb things, like bubble gun, pumpkins, watermelons, bubble-gum, etc.

He's a defender of dogs. Anytime we're at a park and someone yells or plays aggressively with their dog he runs up and barks at the person to stop them. The person always gets scared.



Jacob Eckersley (NYC)



Stephen Melingonis (Meriden)

Vander completes the family. He is loving, happy, energetic and smart. While providing companionship and protection to the entire family, he also teaches the kids about responsibility.

Vander's father was a champion, with papers. His half-sister won the sporting group at Westminster in 2008 and was runner up to Best in Show. He is very intelligent – can respond to multiple word commands and hand signals. He is also whistle trained, which comes in handy when we want him to come inside. Besides all that, Vander is like a baby. He always needs to be in the same room I am in, even if it is the bathroom. He weighs 75 lbs. but thinks he is a lap dog. He must sleep under a blanket and with a teddy bear. He is well very behaved, but recently discovered the joy in barking outside at nothing in the middle of the night.



They don't call me the crazy cat lady just for giggles!
Name & Age(s) of Pet(s):
Pooka-14, Pumpkin-9, Herman-9
Breed/Type: Pooka is a snowshoe Siamese, Pumpkin and Herman are



Raina Huebner (Meriden)

Oranges (that's the official term in our household).

How/Why did your pet join your family? Pooka and Pumpkin were adopted from shelters. Herman had been a stray and was too cute to let live on the streets.
Benefits of owning your pet? They provide hours of entertainment, their purrs are soothing, you have personal groomers, and you can blame them for being a "time suck" when chores aren't done due to snuggles (which happens a lot).
Talents: All three of these fur balls have many special quirks, but here are just a few: Pooka loves cheese and has a knack of knowing when you are thinking about it, then tries to climb into the refrigerator to help you get it. She also lacks the ability to acknowledge personal space and likes close-up in your face petting. Pumpkin is a snuggle muffin, and she has to sit with her tush higher than her head. Her positions are whimsical and very comical, just like her meow, which is just a squeak. Herman is a perpetual toe licker and he likes to get you when your pants are down...when using the bathroom. He is our 16 lb meatball of squishy muffin love.



Julia O'Brien (Meriden)

Name: **Clancy** / *Age* – 4 (we think)
Breed/Type: Rescue mutt – mostly black lab and something else
 My kids bugged us for years to get a dog and finally we relented. My husband drove to a parking lot behind a pet store and randomly picked one of the dogs that had been brought up from Tennessee.
Benefits: He is always happy to see me, he always loves and appreciates his breakfast, lunch and dinner (which is the exact same for every meal but he does not complain), he does not complain, he thinks I am the greatest thing in the world, he is incredibly well behaved and actually listens when I ask him to do something.
Talents, quirks, habits: He eats his meal in 23 seconds (yes, we have timed him), he will eat anything and eats a lot of trash that he finds on the street during walks, he particularly enjoys avocados and has once eaten an entire roast chicken, bones and all.

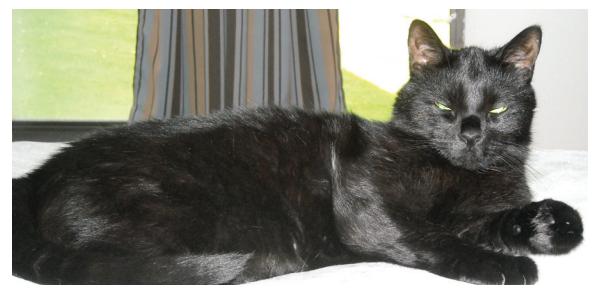
Frank Black McDowell, age 10

Domestic Shorthair/Anti-social

My son, Kyle, brought Frank home as a kitten still too young to be away from his mother (he was dumped at a veterinary clinic)
 Growing up I had cats more often than not. As a shy only child, the cats served as my friends. I still prefer cats to dogs and even though Frank can be a pain in the butt quite often, it's still nice to have him around to talk to (better than admitting I talk to myself).

The quirkiest thing Frank does is that he's totally hands-off during the day – no touching, no petting – and then when it's bedtime and the light goes out, there he is in bed with me, plastered next to my thigh, purring and it's the only time I get to pet him. And, he enjoys looking in my make-up drawer.

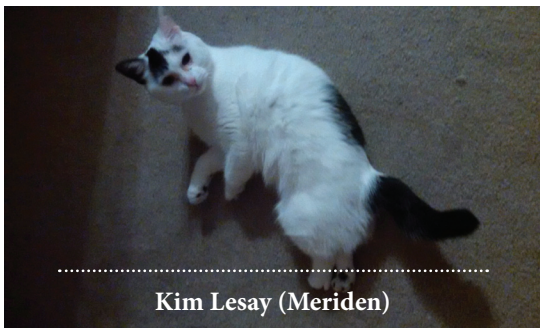
.....
 Susan McDowell (Meriden)





Hope and **Luna** are sisters who suffer from a congenital defect known as arthrogryposis. This is largely attributed to “not enough room in the womb” but also is thought to have possible genetic causes. Certain limbs are affected and are curved or disfigured. My vet, knowing that I used to be a vet tech years ago (and that I’m a sucker) knew we had just lost our family kitty and called. We were not sure how long they would survive or what kind of life and mobility they would have, but we gave it a shot.

3 years later, much to amazement of even our vet, they are still with us. Hope gets along and around just about as well as any other cat, and is very mischievous. Luna is a bit more handicapped, but makes up for her “seal like movement” in her back legs with a very strong “front end”. A strip of carpet on our stairs allows her to even do those on her own, albeit one at a time. To go down, she literally goes down on her front legs only, holding her rear end in the air, and she goes SUPER fast! They are happy, they wrestle with each other, love to watch the birds, and both boss the dog around. They are the love our lives, and a great reminder every day, that where there is a will....there is way!



.....
Kim Lesay (Meriden)

THE BENEFITS OF ADOPTING A PET

When you adopt an animal from a shelter, you’re saving two lives, the life of the animal that you adopted and the life of the animal that’s going to take its place at the shelter. There are so many amazing animals waiting for a loving and caring home. For people who are looking for a purebred pet—studies have shown that over 25% of pets available for adoption at shelters are purebred—there are numerous breed specific rescue groups that focus on a particular dog or cat breed. Another huge benefit to adopting a pet from a shelter is that the animals have been tested for behavioral issues.



David Parent (Meriden)

Pumpkin, 6.5 years old

We had visited pet stores with the kids many times over the years and spent time with the puppies in one of their sharing rooms, but we were always able to leave without any attachments. Well... that changed when my daughter and I met Pumpkin. My daughter would not let us leave until we took Pumpkin with us! I reluctantly agreed because I knew both of our kids would not feed, walk or clean up after Pumpkin. As expected that was the case and Pumpkin became “my” buddy...and now I wouldn’t trade her for anything!

The biggest benefit is coming home to a “Waggin” tail every day. No matter how tired or depressed you are...she always cheers you up.

Her talent is eating! Trying to keep her from being overweight is a challenge! She always acts like she never eats! Her other talent – being as cute as heck!



Jackson is a Chihuahua - Terrier mix rescue dog from Atlanta, Georgia. He is about 3 years old and has an interesting smile as you may see in the picture.

Our family has always owned a pet dog and Jackson is our third one after a year without one. I must say after reluctantly adopting him in June of 2013, he is the only one in the family that runs up to the door to greet me when I arrive home after work. Not only does he have the smile but also loves to go for walks and rip apart stuffed animals, especially the ones that squeak. He is a big dog in a small dog's body.

.....
Nick Giardina (Hartford)



Luna Bear - 10 years young!

Breed/Type: Mix (shepherd, Labrador retriever, chow chow, collie or sheltie????)

How/Why did your pet join your family?

Rescued from Amity Connecticut Animal Control as an 8 week old puppy. Someone tied her pregnant mother to the door of animal control the night before she had the puppies. Lucky for me, I was looking to rescue/adopt a puppy. All the puppies were adopted.

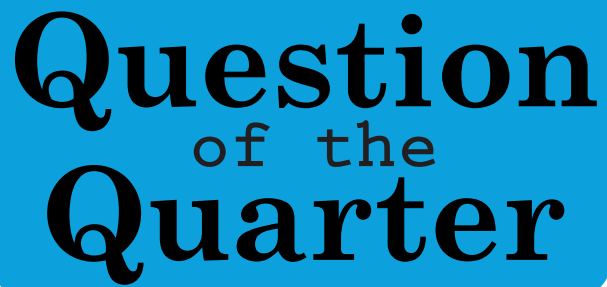
Benefits: Love, cuddling and playtime! Also, she is great motivation for taking a long walk, run or hike! I just can't resist those eyes when she goes over to the door and she wants to go for a walk.

Talents: She loves ice fishing and hiking! Sleeps all day and makes herself comfortable! She's got the life! She doesn't make a sound when she begs for food... she just sits next to you as perfect as possible and taps your leg once in a while to make sure you know she's there and you haven't forgotten to give her a little treat.

She takes ice fishing very seriously! She has a backpack and she leads the way.

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Erin Zelazny & Chad Perkoski (Meriden)





Question
of the
Quarter



Can you share
your experience with the
Graphics department
here at BL Companies?

BL Graphics is the professional right-hand team member to the ASR Project. The answer is always "Yes We Can Do It", no matter the schedule timeline and the best part is they rise to the challenge and get it done. Thanks for making this part of the project less stressful I know I can count on you.
~ Suzan Lacey (Houston)

I am grateful that we have an in-house graphics department! I feel a lot better knowing that Graylon, Gary and the rest of the graphics team are working the goal line for my submittals. The graphics team double checks the pagination and rotation of PDFs before and after printing. Their commitment to quality has resulted in a few last minute revisions that made a good submittal great. Gary works very closely with the design team to coordinate deadlines. The graphics team will work long hours and weekends to make sure the submittal gets out on time. They are an incredibly hard working group!
~ Suz King (Norwood)

What can I say about the guys in BL Graphics? Such a can-do group I've never seen! These are the guys who generally are the last to see a project before it goes out the door to meet a deadline. Yet nothing seems to cause them alarm. They are always helpful and pleasant. When I bring them a proposal or other Marketing project, if they can't jump on it right away, they tell me where to leave it, and when I come back a short time later, it's complete...I never have to hound them to make sure something gets done. Their relaxed but professional manner helps calm my nerves at the critical point of getting a project out the door. They seem to talk in a certain "patois," which perhaps help them keep their sanity during what are surely times of scheduling crisis...I can't always hear what they're saying because of the noise of the machines. Which brings me to my conclusion: BL Graphics runs like a fine-tuned machine! Thanks, guys! ~ Liz Augustine (Meriden)

This year, I have worked with BL graphics on printing and submitting one of the largest permit applications this company has ever had. We filled the cafeteria/BL graphics on multiple occasions with all these plans and reports. It took 78 bags/boxes to hold all the plans and reports for just one of the permit submissions! They worked long nights, weekends and holidays to be able to get these reports and plans printed. They are the final set of eyes on some of these documents and they always speak up if they see anything that needs to be corrected. Then once all the printing is done... they jump right into helping me with the hours upon hours of boxing everything up! I could never buy enough Neill's Donuts to thank them for all their hard work!
~ Erin Zelazny (Meriden)

Safety Tip:

DISTRACTED DRIVING

Nearly everyone is guilty of some form of distracted driving (yes, you). It's difficult to avoid. The car is filled with distractions like your cell phone, radio, GPS, kids and even that cup of coffee in your cup holder. Here are 10 tips for managing some of the most common distractions.

Turn it off and stow it. Turn your phone off or switch it to silent mode before you get in the car. Then stow it away so that it's out of reach.

Spread the word. Record a message on your phone that tells callers you're driving and will get back to them when you're off the road, or sign up for a service that offers this feature.

Pull over. If you need to make a call, pull over to a safe area first.

Use your passengers. Ask a passenger to make the call or respond to a text for you.

X the Text. Don't ever text and drive, surf the web or read your email while driving. It's dangerous and against the law in most state. Even voice-to-text isn't risk-free.

Know the law. Familiarize yourself with state and local laws before you get in the car. Some states and localities prohibit the use of hand-held cell phones in addition to texting.

Prepare. If using a GPS device, enter your destination before you start to drive. If you prefer a map or written directions, review them in advance. If you need help while driving, ask a passenger to assist you or pull over to a safe location to change your GPS or review your map/directions.

Secure your pets. Unsecured pets can be a big distraction in the car.

Mind the kids. Pull over to a safe place to address situations involving children in the car.

Focus on driving. Multi-tasking behind the wheel is dangerous. Refrain from eating, drinking, reading, grooming, smoking, and any other activity that takes your mind and eyes off the road.

can you
DIG
it.?

Meet the Cultural Resources Team

If you've ever visited the Camp Hill office, you've probably noticed that some cubicles are not like the rest. Of course you see the cubes of the engineers with AutoCAD running, or of the landscape architects with their detailed plans spread everywhere, but if you wander through the office long enough you'll come across a different type of cube. Neighborhood plans from the midcentury tacked to the walls or little pieces of glass and ceramics neatly labeled in small bags next to books showing stone spear points and field bags that have trowels, flagging tap and worn field maps beside them: these cubes belong to the cultural department. BL has offered cultural services for over a decade, but because of the scope and nature of cultural work, the department has often flown under the radar of most.

This article will share a little of what the cultural department does, and the services we offer within the wider BL community.



Jon Libbon



Kristen Janowski



All cultural work is guided by an important piece of federal legislation, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Passed in 1966, the act was created to help preserve the historic fabric of the nation. The key part of the NHPA, Section 106, ensures that federal agencies take into account the effect their actions may have on historic properties. NHPA is the framework in which cultural resource professionals operate, and helps us determine what a historic property is, how it is identified, and what must be done to ensure that cultural resources are protected. At BL, the task of ensuring our clients navigate the NHPA successfully falls to BL's Architectural Historian Kristen Janowski, and Jon Libbon, BL's Archaeologist.

Kristen grew up in Connecticut, but has worked throughout the eastern half of the United States, doing both historical architecture and archaeology; but prefers to keep her hands cleaner these days. While she loves historic homes, historic research is her passion. She meets the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) standards for an architectural historian and archaeologist. Jon Libbon has been doing archaeology for around 9 years. He specializes in historic period sites, but has excavated Paleo-Indian sites in Pennsylvania, caves in West Virginia, and Civil War earthworks in North Carolina. He meets the SOI's standards for an archaeologist

and is member of the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA).

At BL, Kristen and Jon provide a range of services, from Phase I archaeological surveys to recording structures according for the Historic American Building Survey. Typically, our clients require cultural services as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This entails survey of the built environment and to determine if archaeology sites are located in the project's footprint. On a recent project for the expansion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, BL documented every structure older than 45 years and determined if they were eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This entailed recording over 100 unique buildings. Archaeology was also done to ensure that the turnpike expansion will not impact any buried archaeological sites. This is just one of many projects BL's cultural staff undertakes to ensure our clients successfully comply with the NHPA.

So if you happen to wander past one of the cultural department's cubicles at the Camp Hill office, or if you over hear a conversation about Early Archaic projectile points or a gorgeous eligible house in your office, take a moment and introduce yourself; we would love to meet you.

Legal Brief

By the Legal Dept.

Practical advice based on BL's policies and procedures as well as things that might be helpful in your life outside BL.

ELECTRONIC SEALS

In 2015, Connecticut adopted rules that allow architects to use electronic seals on digital documents. Engineers and land surveyors in Connecticut have enjoyed this privilege for two years longer than architects. A recent blog post announcing this change prompted the Legal Department to look into the use of electronic seals in the other states where we have offices.

Through our research, we have found that Texas, Massachusetts, Ohio and New York all permit electronic seals on digital documents.

Pennsylvania is a bit unique. Currently, the Board of Engineers regulations do not specifically allow for digital signatures but do allow "a computer image which is a facsimile of the seal." In speaking with the Board,

regulations will be passed in the near future to specifically allow electronic seals. In the interim, the Board stated that, in practice, electronic seals are allowed and PADOT and PADEP were specifically mentioned as agencies accepting electronic seals. For architects in PA, the first page of a document still needs to be stamped with an original seal but every page thereafter can be stamped with an electronic seal.

In New Jersey, the Architecture and Engineering Boards' decision on allowing electronic seals is pending but it is expected to be allowed.

Both NCEES and NCARB in their Model Laws permit the use of an electronic seal. However, state boards govern over these bodies.

IT TIP

BY DOUG CAMPBELL

Microsoft Outlook : CLUTTER

This was an attempt by Microsoft to help those who need help or some assistance in keeping their E-Mail Inbox under control. It was presented as a tool to help “you spend more time doing your job and less time wading through mail you'd rather ignore”. This isn't a “JUNK” E-Mail folder but rather a LOW PRIORITY folder. It was supposed to become the location for E-Mail that you are most likely to ignore based on continual feedback on how you are interacting with your E-Mail inbox leaving the E-Mail you should be interacting with more visible to you.

Is it working to your benefit? Typically, No. It has turned into another folder that you have to manage and where you are using more time to clean it.

Can you turn it OFF? **YES!**

The “Clutter” folder can only be managed through the Office 365 Web portal.

Click on the APPLICATION button and then MAIL. After your mailbox loads / refreshes right-click on the folder “CLUTTER” and select “CLUTTER SETTINGS”. Uncheck both options that are presented to you. This will turn “CLUTTER” off and disables the feature but it will leave the folder in your Inbox with any existing content in it.



Jordan's Furniture | New Haven, CT



Another project complete!

Jordan's Furniture in New Haven, CT features the "World's Largest Indoor Ropes Course", among many other entertainment features. Most unique might be the "wonder wall"; a brilliantly illuminated, 67' high sign made of 330 chairs that's hard to miss from I-95.

Did you know those were chairs?

Wow!



----- Friday, February 5th -----

GO
RED
FOR
WOMEN



“Whoever pulls the sword from the stone will lead this project.”

Happenings

FEBRUARY

- 10-12 Leadership Foundations Prog.
- 15 Presidents' Day (day off!)
- 19 Employee Owner Meeting
- 23 Board Meeting
- 24-26 LDEP

MARCH

- 13 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 20 First Day of Spring
- 27 Easter

APRIL

- 22 Passover Starts
- 22 Earth Day
- 28 Pay it Forward Day
- 30 Passover Ends

MAY

- 7 American Heart Assoc. Walk
- 11-13 LDEP
- 30 Memorial Day (day off!)

The only place Daylight Savings makes me want to 'spring' is back to bed.



Did you know...
Birthdays and BL
anniversaries can be
found on the Intranet!



Architecture
Engineering
Environmental
Land Surveying

Employee owned. Client driven.

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Special THANK YOU to all that
contributed to BL's Best Friends

