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Ribbon Cutting Celebrates Opening of Cynthia Perlman Puppy Sensory Park and Outdoor Running Yards

CENTRAL POINT, OR – On Tuesday, April 15th, DBL and distinguished guests will celebrate the completion of the Cynthia Perlman Puppy Sensory Park and outdoor Running Yards, with a ribbon cutting. The *Central Point Chamber of Commerce* will provide ribbon and scissors for the event, while we share this ribbon cutting via *Facebook Live* and *Teams*, with closed captioning.

In April 2020, Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) broke ground on the *Cynthia Perlman Puppy Sensory Park*. The 100' x 100' park provides invaluable opportunities to puppies and supports their early introduction to experiences within a variety of surrounding environments.

Located between the North Kennel and solar array, the Puppy Sensory Park provides numerous environments across its pathways and interior for puppies to explore, including rock, bark, sand, grass, and a water feature, among the trees and bushes to smell and fertilize.

"The *Cynthia Perlman Puppy Sensory Park* provides us with a unique opportunity to show our puppies at an early age what they will encounter on their journey to becoming future Assistance Dogs, explained Puppy Program Coordinator, Hannah Crane. "It's so important that we provide the tools necessary for our puppies and raisers to succeed, and this Puppy Sensory Park is a big part of that."

The *Cynthia Perlman Puppy Sensory Park* would not have been possible without the generosity of local and national philanthropic support, including Richard Perlman, Laura J. Niles Foundation, and the Carrico Foundation. Richard Perlman and his late wife Cynthia had a long-time love of and compassion for dogs, highlighting why they wished to support this project.

"This project is very special to me for a couple of reasons," stated Richard Perlman. "DBL was one of the organizations which Cynthia always made certain we contributed to, and I wanted to do something to honor her blessed life and that would make her proud. She loved dogs, as do I, and we both agreed with the Will Rogers quote, 'If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went.' She was completely accurate in her feelings that it does not get any better than doing something good for dogs who ultimately are vitally significant to the well-being of those people who need service dogs."

In addition to the Puppy Sensory Park, DBL is nearing completion of two running yards, located to the west of the North Kennel. The running yards are situated on irrigated grass and will be utilized year-round for the dogs to exercise and let loose, outside of training sessions.

One of the two running yards is named for Marvin Rhodes, a former and longtime board member (1986-2016) with then, Dogs for the Deaf. A plaque attached to the fence line, recognizes Rhodes, while acknowledging his many years of service to Dogs for Better Lives.

“Having a place just outside our North Kennel for our dogs in training to run free and play in the grass gives them time to just be dogs, stated Operations Director Trish Welch. “Much like humans, they need fun and downtime too!”

Funding for this project came from a number of donors, including Marvin Rhodes Memorial Fund, Paul Loozen and Virginia Madigan, Carrico Foundation, and the Pacific Power Foundation.

To learn more about ways to support DBL and/or become a Puppy Raiser, visit our website’s “Get Involved” section... <https://dogsforbetterlives.org/get-involved/>.



Dogs for Better Lives is a nationally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focusing on the professional training and placement of Hearing Assistance Dogs, Autism Assistance Dogs, and Facility Dogs. Accredited by [Assistance Dogs International \(ADI\)](#) and recognized by [Charity Navigator](#) as a top 4-star nonprofit, Dogs for Better Lives has been rescuing dogs, bettering lives, and providing Assistance Dogs since 1977.

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