



By now, you all know: Our Lila has left us.

Five simple words, but so full of thoughts, feelings, memories

The first time I saw Lila, she was calmly lying on the floor of the pew Larry was sitting in. Beautiful . . . Quiet . . . Calm.

Turns out she was indeed always beautiful, usually quiet, and when she had her “working” vest off, definitely not always calm.

Lila loved life.

And we loved her for it.



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Do you know what it's like to walk down a public hallway and have everyone who's coming toward you, no matter how preoccupied, break into a smile? I do, because I had Lila on her leash in front of me. That's the effect Lila had on people, and I saw it time and again.



And if we visited someone in turmoil, in pain, either physical or emotional, God worked through Lila to bring that person a moment of respite, of warmth, of peace.

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In the last few weeks, I've received cards and notes about Lila, as I'm sure her other handlers, and especially Larry, have as well. I'll share a couple of them briefly:

“Dear, Joyce—

Just a note to say we are all thinking of you and the entire LCC Community. We are deeply grateful for the time you and Lila gave to our patients and staff. May your faith bring you comfort at this sad and difficult time.”

“Joyce, we are so sorry for your loss. Thank you so much for helping Lila enjoy her job, but even more important, her life. She had such a higher quality of life because [her handlers] treated her with respect and warmth. She was a wonderful dog God bless you.”

“Oh, my heart is shattered. I am so very sorry for your grief and pain over Lila. She was such a beautiful girl and spent her life in service to others. Thank you for sharing yourself and Lila with us at the hospice. I hope your hip is healing well. Now you have a broken heart, too. ☹ ”

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Every Comfort Dog is given a special Bible verse as LCC sends them out into the mission field. Could any dog have embodied her special verse more perfectly than Lila did?

“Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”
—Philippians 4:5

Joyce