

The Puppies' First Visit to the Vet

The Agency's four new K9 recruits – Suni, Indigo, Freya, and Nicole – had their first veterinary exam since joining the CIA program with Dr. Buck Drummond at Old Dominion Animal Health Center, who specializes in the unique medical challenges of working dogs. Heide and Lulu, the other two CIA “Puppy Class” K9s, belong to Frederick County Fire Marshal and Fairfax County Police respectively and will have exams at their local vets.

Before classes begin, all Agency dogs go the vet for a full health exam and any necessary vaccinations. Old Dominion is known regionally for its work with law enforcement and military K9s, including CIA's K9 officers. They even started a program to help support retired military, CIA, and police K9s called *Paws of Honor*. Most K9 handlers – whether military, police, or CIA – keep their K9 partners once the dogs retire. Medical care for the dogs, however, is often no longer covered by the government. Programs like *Paws of Honor* help the handlers with veterinary expenses throughout the retired dog's life.



First up was Suni, a whorl of wiggles and kisses, who leapt out of the CIA K9 van and greeted every person, shrub, and butterfly she saw. It was her nose, however, that most dictated her path. Darting from bushes to shoes to rocks to flowers to trees, Suni followed any curious scent she encountered in the parking lot, weaving a mysterious, seemingly haphazard pattern of puppy energy that only a dog could discern. Same thing happened once she bounded into the lobby of the veterinary clinic, jumping from sniffing rugs and chairs legs and shelves of specialty dog treats, to leaping into the arms of the kneeling veterinarian, Dr. Drummond. A gaggle of puppy kisses greeted her new best friend, and then she was off again tracking another unknown scent.

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(b)(6)



(SUNI)

Other than potential allergies and some gunk that had to be cleaned from her ears, Suni was declared healthy and ready for class. She received the remainder of her yearly vaccines and was sent home with some medication to help with her watery eyes and dirty ears. She bounced out of the veterinary clinic as wiggly and affectionately as she had bounded in.

All of the pups received clean bills of health, although none were thrilled about having their ears cleaned or receiving their inoculations. Indigo tried to leap from the exam table, and when that was unsuccessful, she buried her head into the crook of K9 instructor Andy's arm until her vet exam was done.



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(INDIGO)

On her way out of the clinic, Indigo sprang up onto the receptionist counter, front feet only, begging for rubs and treats. Instead of being admonished as impolite, she was rewarded and encouraged to do it a second time! Our trainers actually like this behavior because she'll need to be comfortable getting onto all kinds of different surfaces—like chairs, tables, or truck beds—in her line of work (of course, under the careful guidance of her handler). Even a trip to the vet provides a good learning opportunity for the new pups.

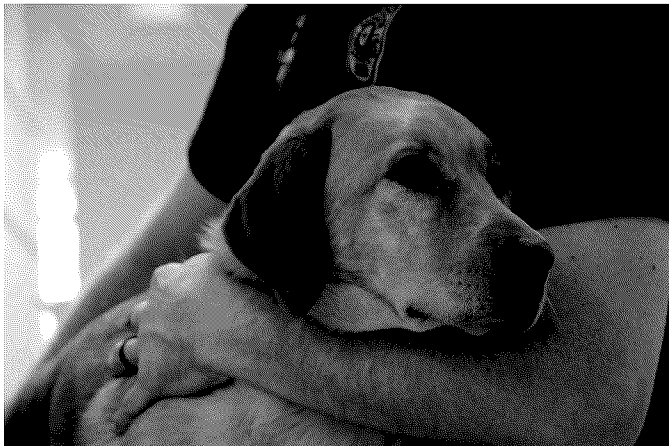
Freya, who would much rather ride shotgun in the passenger seat than in the state-of-the-art K9 van kennels, showed her spunk as soon as she entered the lobby of the vet clinic. Greeted by Dr.

Drummond, she immediately assumed the puppy play position (paws and head low to the floor, rear-end raised high) and started roughhousing with her new friend. Her big paws tap-danced across the linoleum floors in a chaotic beat as she tried to entice the vet and Andy to play with her. Once her exam started, Freya stood quietly and let Dr. Drummond look her over and administer her vaccines, but the expression on her face made sure everyone knew how she felt about it.



(FREYA)

Nicole was the calmest puppy of the bunch, happy and sweet and beaming with joy as she made her rounds saying hi to the clinic staff. She was very polite for her exam, sensitive to whatever Andy or Dr. Drummond asked of her. Like Suni, Nicole also had slight allergies, which the vet treated, and then he examined her paws.



(NICOLE)

The vet found two small bumps, most likely Sebaceous cysts, between her second and third toes on each front foot. They don't seem to bother her, but of course, as with any Agency dog, she'll have a full workup done to be sure she's healthy and that the cysts don't need to be removed. Dr. Drummond took extra blood to run additional tests out of an abundance of caution, and the K9 training staff should receive her results next week.

What's Next?

The pups are now ready for their first week of classes, where they'll learn what it means to "seek" and how to detect their first explosive odors.

If you missed any of the previous articles in this series, visit "Follow CIA's New Puppy Class!" main page, where we are chronicling the puppies' progresses over the next 16-weeks.