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Repurposed Pup

By Cathy Dausman



Moraga Hardware and Lumber owner Bill Snider with his dog, Wells. Photo Cathy Dausman

The newest employee at Moraga Hardware is a bit on the short side, but bright, friendly and eager to learn. Her name is Wells; she is an 18-month-old purebred black Labrador retriever who made a "career change" from guide dog to all-purpose pet.

Moraga Hardware and Lumber owner Bill Snider took Wells in after the Orinda family who fostered her was notified the dog was up for adoption. Snider said a guide dog family can either keep a career change dog as a pet or place it with someone.

They asked him.

Wells was already familiar with Moraga Hardware since she used to make the rounds with her foster family. Snider recently lost his aging yellow Labrador, so Wells was a natural fit.

"Last summer I said 'goodbye' to her," Snider said, thinking he'd never see Wells again. "We got her the Sunday after Thanksgiving," he said. Wells is a salaried employee, so she works 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. most days ... a little less on Sunday.

She's receiving full benefits (including an abundance of positive strokes from customers) but has no lunch break or pension plan. Her "office" is a comfy crate behind the counter. Snider said after she learns the layout, he'll train her to show customers where the stock is located. Duct tape ... and dog ... on aisle three!

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