

Partners Forum

International Association of Assistance Dog Partners

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Assistance Dogs International in the 21st Century

Important Vote for ADI Members at 2006 Conference

by Joan Froling

Assistance Dogs International members passed a resolution in 2004 that authorized the ADI Board to explore the possibility of setting up a new organizational structure for the future. At that time, Assistance Dogs of Europe had just been formed to serve the needs of programs in that geographical area, many of whom were too small to afford travel overseas to the annual ADI conference, traditionally held in North America. Assistance Dogs of Asia had been formed for similar reasons. A number of service and hearing dog training programs had sprung up in Australia and New Zealand, but due to the distance and travel costs involved, it was not possible for the majority of them to become active participants in ADI.

The ADI Board recognized the value of regional organizations but did not want to lose the advantages of a worldwide coalition that promotes the same training and accreditation standards and works together on advocacy issues at

the international level. Under the leadership of Board President, Linda Jennings, Executive Director of Loving Paws Assistance Dogs, a great deal of work has taken place to develop a structure that will better serve the needs of current and future member programs. The November 2005 issue of the ADI newsletter described ADI's goals in drafting the necessary bylaw changes in this way:

1. Vision: To position ADI as the international authority guiding the advancement of the assistance animal industry.
2. Membership: To expand membership world wide by

- creating regional chapters and making membership attractive to a broad range of assistance dog programs, large and small, and inclusive of guide dog schools who are members of the International Guide Dog Federation.
3. Governance: To redesign membership on the board of directors to guarantee broad international representation with a balance of geographic coverage and expertise."

At the upcoming conference in San Diego in 2006, the programs which presently belong to ADI will be asked to vote on whether or not to ratify the proposed new structure. If adopted, the new ADI will have an international board whose members will be elected from different regions of the world. Regional chapter organizations under ADI's umbrella will include Assistance Dogs of Europe, Assistance Dogs of Asia, Assistance Dogs of New Zealand/Australia and Assistance Dogs of Canada/USA.

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issue



Service Dog In Action: Endal opens the train door by pressing a button with encouragement from his partner, Allen Parton, who obtained his now famous service dog from Canine Partners in the U.K. (Article on page 4)

Important Vote for ADI Members

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ADI anticipates that some day there may be other regional chapters, perhaps an Assistance Dogs of Africa, when a sufficient number of programs are established on that continent to qualify that geographical area to elect a representative to ADI's international board.

Each regional organization belonging to Assistance Dogs International will elect its own board and hold its own conference for the assistance dog training program members in their geographical sphere of influence. The ADI international board will hold an international conference at prescribed intervals in conjunction with one of the regional conferences, beginning in 2008 in Europe.

ADI's board met with IAADP's board in 2005 to discuss the proposed new structure. IAADP learned ADI anticipates including IAADP in the new structure as a non-voting Affiliate member. A core part of IAADP's mission is to give assistance dog partners "a voice" in the assistance dog field. We appreciate ADI's recognition of the value of our input to its committees and on consumer related issues during its business meetings over the last twelve years. We will keep you informed about ADI's efforts and our own to retain the best of what went before while embracing new opportunities to foster the growth of the assistance dog movement worldwide.

Emergencies: Let's Be Prepared

By Toni and Ed Eames

The Consensus Conference, Disaster Relief and Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities, we were scheduled to attend in September, was postponed to December due to the tragic events in the Gulf Coast. A document on assistance dogs we prepared for this conference can be found on the IAADP website,

www.iaadp.org/disaster.html

When you became an assistance dog partner member of IAADP, you received an Emergency Recovery Kit supported by Bayer Animal Health with information to identify your dog and a caretaker if you are separated. If you want a replacement kit, please send a check or money order for \$5 made out to IAADP and mail to Kathi Duran-Diaz, 808 E. Pontiac, Fresno, CA 93704.

If you have a cell phone, authorities recommend adding the word ICE, standing for in case of emergency, to your address book. Then list the numbers for your veterinarian and a friend who can care for your canine partner if you are incapacitated. ICE allows first responders to quickly access this important information.

Remember to microchip your dog and keep the information current. The Avid Company provides free microchips for assistance dogs.

IAADP Salutes Fort Dodge Animal Health!

By Toni and Ed Eames

We are delighted that **Fort Dodge Animal Health** has graciously agreed to sponsor another issue of *Partners' Forum*. It is one more indication of this caring company's commitment to fostering the relationship between IAADP members and their guide, hearing and service dogs.

Initially, Fort Dodge joined other sponsors of the Veterinary Care Partnership program, but soon extended its connection into a multitude of arenas. A unique \$20 rebate program was developed for members whose veterinarians use Fort Dodge vaccines. Not only did Fort Dodge establish the program, they also printed the brochures and coupons, and sponsored the distribution of this material to all current and new members! What benefactors!

Recognizing the value of the relationship between our two organizations, Fort Dodge arranged for an article about IAADP in DVM magazine distributed to all veterinarians in the United States. Since publicizing IAADP's existence is a never ending process, this publicity helped make the veterinary profession aware of IAADP and the various linkages we have built with the animal health care community.

For the last two years, Fort Dodge has been a major sponsor of IAADP's annual conference. This year they have added to their generous support, sponsorship of three scholarships to pay for future leaders of the assistance dog movement to attend the San Diego conference.

We all know the value of veterinary visits for our working guide, hearing and service dogs. Fort Dodge, in conjunction with the American Veterinary Medical Association, has launched National Pet Wellness Month to make pet owners aware of the needs for twice a year veterinary visits for their companion animals and educate them about the health needs of their aging pets.

On a personal note, Fort Dodge has assumed the sponsorship of our presentations at six veterinary schools during 2006 and is also supporting our presentations at the North American Veterinary Conference in Orlando in January. One of the highlights for us will be distributing signed copies of our book, *Partners in Independence: A Success Story of Dogs and the Disabled*, compliments of Fort Dodge. On Saturday morning, January 7, we are scheduled to do four presentations dealing with various aspects of the assistance dog movement. Being able to devote an entire morning session to this topic at the largest veterinary conference in the United States is an indication of the recognition assistance dogs and IAADP are receiving under Fort Dodge's mentorship.

Air Travel Security Update

By Barb Burton

In 2004 a group of us who are partnered with assistance dogs got together for a chat. We discussed the difficulties we had faced while traveling with our dogs and in particular those we had faced at airport security checkpoints. Determined to find a way to improve our encounters with security screeners, I contacted the Transportation Security Administration offices at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) and made them an offer I hoped they would not refuse. I offered to bring to them real assistance dog teams to practice the screening process as outlined on the TSA website. I offered a collaborative effort, one I hoped would create a better trained force of airport screeners thus making the lives of travelers with disabilities a little easier.

To be honest I expected TSA's representatives to tell me to go away. I was delighted when Robert Clarke embraced the project and turned it over to TSA's training coordinator Cassandra Clark. Within a couple months we scheduled four training sessions at the airport. With technical assistance from Circle Tail, Inc. trainers, I presented programs on assistance dog teams and, to a lesser extent, passengers with disabilities to TSA supervisors and lead personnel who then brought the information back to their screeners. The programs were met with enthusiasm. My audiences also rewarded me by giving me advice and information I could take back to my colleagues with assistance dogs.

Furthering the educational exchange, Curtis "Bob" Burns, a TSA trainer, visited our group of assistance dog teams to teach us more about the screening process so teams that had not yet traveled by air would better understand what to expect at the airport. He demonstrated how a person sitting in a wheelchair would be screened. He explained that if any of us ever had a bad experience with a screener we should ask to speak to a supervisor. He told us how to report a problem screener. He also demonstrated how each of our dogs would be screened. By the end of the program our dogs were in love and shamelessly throwing themselves at Bob.

Cassandra Clark had the foresight to invite TSA representatives from other regional airports to attend my presentations. The one who did, William Wiggins, Jr. of the Dayton International Airport asked if we would bring the program to his personnel in Dayton. Again we conducted four trainings and again we were received enthusiastically.

The Dayton screeners heard me when I talked about the difficulty of being between flights and having to leave the secure area to take my dog to relieve herself. Regulations require me to go through the screening process again, and while TSA says I can move to the front of the screening line, my ability to do so rests in the hands of the person who checks boarding passes, a person who is not a TSA employee. The screeners immediately proposed a quick and easy solution to my problem. It is a solution that currently works only at the Dayton airport, but one Mr. Wiggins is trying to convince other airports to implement.

In July 2005 CVG TSA hosted a group of assistance dog

teams along with assistance dogs-in-training and their trainers and their foster families. With the help of Lead Screeners Michelle Curiel, Alan Russell and Tom Allen and Sara Roberts of payroll who functioned as our tour guides, the intrepid dogs and handlers were able to experience the wonders of Terminal 3, the largest at the airport. They took small groups of us through the security checkpoints, giving us all a chance to practice without the stress of a travel timetable. It also gave TSA screeners a chance to practice screening assistance dogs and people with disabilities. Once through the checkpoints we were given the opportunity to practice using the moving sidewalks, the elevators, escalators, trains, and the buses to the Comair terminal. We were escorted through concourses for two hours. It was an incomparable training for people and dogs alike and we plan to do it again in 2006.

My work with CVG and DAY TSA employees resulted in an invitation to join TSA's Disability Coalition. This is a national advisory board of organizations representing people with disabilities. The coalition works with Sandra Cammaroto, director of TSA's Office of Screening of Passengers with Disabilities (OSPWD). The board provides information about various disabilities and special medical needs. It also informs TSA when a large group of people with disabilities will be traveling out of a particular airport as would happen during a conference. This allows TSA to bring in additional screeners if necessary and to review specifics of the disability with their screeners.

On November 4, 2005 I attended the Transportation Security Administration's Fourth Annual Disability Coalition meeting at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. The meeting was a way for TSA to update representatives from member organizations on what the Office of Screening of Persons with Disabilities has accomplished in the last year.

We began with addresses from Sandra Cammaroto; the Honorable Michael Jackson, Deputy Secretary Department of Homeland Security; and Kip Hawley, Assistant Secretary Department of Homeland Security. Each reiterated TSA's commitment to passengers with disabilities.

We viewed the new training video TSA produced for its screeners nationwide. It features passengers with many different disabilities and special medical needs and shows screeners how to work sensitively and effectively with them. Rather than using actors to portray passengers with disabilities, TSA included members of its Disability Coalition and a Denver-based group of actors with disabilities.

Representatives from the Department of Transportation joined us to discuss their accomplishments. These included getting the cooperation of the United Kingdom in allowing assistance dogs to fly in the cabin of most passenger airlines to the UK and enter the UK without quarantine. Thus far this is for air travel only and does not include travel by ship.

During the Q&A session I asked the DOT representa-

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Air Travel Security Update

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tives about the status of the proposed rule change that would allow airlines to charge assistance dog partners for an extra ticket for their dogs. The answer was essentially “No comment since this is still being examined.”

A gentleman by the name of Tim Houston talked about a new device that allows phrases used by TSA screeners to be translated into various other languages. The Dayton Airport and the Portland, OR airport are piloting the use of this device and may see how it works, using the visual screen on the device, with people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

A presentation on the new Explosive Trace Portals revealed that assistance dog teams should probably avoid these devices at airports where they are in use. They rely on strong bursts of air to remove particles of explosives from passengers’ clothing and the presenter felt the repeated bursts could be frightening for even the most experienced assistance dog. Fortunately, passengers only need to be screened in this way if the initial screening indicates the presence of explosive trace material.

Dennis Murphy of the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport discussed their new accessible paging system that allows people with almost any disability to be alerted to and retrieve pages. This includes emergency information. In a private conversation he told me about their new dog relief area. This will make the lives of assistance dog teams easier, but teams need to understand that since it is outside the “sterile security area”, when they are done they must again go through screening.

TSA keeps customer satisfaction information and rates their performance when it comes to screening passengers with disabilities. The area of greatest dissatisfaction is how assistance dogs are screened. Too often screeners insist on removing our dogs’ working gear. As a result TSA will continue to work with screeners to make improvements. Overall, however, satisfaction among passengers with disabilities has improved each year and every single complaint that is registered with the OSPWD is thoroughly investigated and resolved.

As far as government agencies go TSA is very young. In

its four years of existence and in the midst of trying to keep the country’s airline passengers safe from terrorists TSA recognized that passengers with disabilities can require and benefit from a special approach when being screened. The OSPWD is committed to making sure passengers with disabilities are thoroughly screened while being treated in a dignified manner.

The TSA website has detailed information for passengers with disabilities, passengers traveling with an assistance animal and passengers with special medical needs. In an effort to keep abreast of the latest medical devices, TSA representatives consult with companies manufacturing such devices as cochlear implants, implanted defibrillators, insulin pumps, implanted pain relief devices, etc. They are determined to learn as much as they can so they can advise passengers with these devices if they should avoid the metal detectors in favor of hand screening since the metal detectors can have an adverse effect on certain medical devices.

TSA utilizes a customer satisfaction survey to help them find areas that need real improvement and then works to make improvements. Every complaint received by the offices in Arlington, Virginia is investigated. Every one.

In the last year especially I have noticed an improvement in the way my assistance dog and I are screened. My dog receives a thorough and professional examination without being intimidated and without having her gear removed from her (a signal to her she is no longer working). As a person with a mobility difficulty I find that my cane is returned to me from the X-ray belt much faster. As a person with a hearing loss I also find screeners are more likely to face me when they speak, certainly after I let them know I have trouble hearing. This was not the case several years ago.

Travel by air can be stressful and chaotic. The security checkpoints are never anyone’s first choice for a fun place to visit and the stress of going through them can be doubled if the passenger has a disability and especially if the passenger has an assistance dog. TSA’s work to improve the screening process for passengers with disabilities is making travel a little easier.

Pure Gold

When Endal, a quiet, unassuming yellow Labrador, won PDSA’s Gold Medal in 2003, it was another remarkable episode in a remarkable life. Matthew Le Fèvre tells his story and that of the man whose world he helped to transform.

On a late autumn day in 2002, a Labrador, smart in a purple jacket, his intelligence shining through in his bright-eyed alertness, stood attentively beside a man in a wheelchair. Before them a ceremony was taking place. The assembled guests were told how, after the man had been knocked from his wheelchair by a reversing car, the dog rolled his companion’s unconscious form into the re-

covery position, draped a blanket over him, nudged his mobile phone close to his face and then went to fetch help. Actions that many people might not have had the composure and the calm sense of purpose to carry out.

Afterwards, HRH Princess Alexandra presented the Labrador with the PDSA’s Gold Medal, awarded to animals that have shown outstanding devotion to their duties in time

of peace. For his astonishing response to the accident, he became one of only three dogs to receive the Medal since its introduction. The dog's name was Endal; his companion was Allen Parton. What had brought them together, and what had brought them to this ceremony, were a series of events that were as despairing as, eventually, they were hope-filled.

A Lifetime Lost

When Allen Parton, a weapons electronics officer in the Royal Navy, waved goodbye to his wife, Sandra, and their two children, Liam and Zoe, he was also bidding farewell to life as he had known it. It was 1991, and Allen was heading out to the Gulf War. He was, of course, fully aware of the dangers that lay ahead; but he was equally sure that experience and good fortune would see him return home untouched and unharmed.

Allen was wrong; Allen got unlucky. A month after he arrived, his military car was wrecked in an accident and Allen's body with it. He woke six weeks later in a British military hospital, his right hand side devoid of feeling and his mind even number. His memory had been so horribly obliterated by the injuries he sustained that he was unable to recognize Sandra and had no recollection of his marriage or his children. He had to be introduced to his family. The simplest of words — bed, chair — deserted him. He spoke, if at all, as he remembered: in disjointed, meaningless fragments. Imprisoned by his wheelchair, trapped by his fumbling speech, and dispossessed of his own past, Allen saw no reason to have faith in the future. Twice he tried to take his own life.

After five years of hospitalization and rehabilitation, Allen at last returned to his home in Hampshire, a stranger to the person he had once been, and raging at his fate. By his own admission, Allen was all too willing to share his anger and bitterness with those around him. "I refused to accept I was disabled and I'm ashamed to say I was pretty much horrible to everyone," he admitted.

An Encounter

Sandra, who gave up her job as a nurse to care for Allen, had volunteered as a puppy walker for Canine Partners, an organization that trains dogs to help disabled people enjoy a greater degree of independence. One morning, in the summer of 1997, the bus that had been due to ferry Allen to the day centre he attended failed to turn up. Rather than leave her husband to brood at home, Sandra took Allen with her to the Canine Partners training centre.

There Allen sat, his wheelchair parked in a corner, as self-conscious and withdrawn as he always was in public. Until, that is, his eye caught a young dog, resting from a training session. The dog wandered over to the wheelchair, accepted Allen's offer of a welcoming pat on the head and promptly dived on to his lap. It was Endal. Allen's life was about to emerge from night and into the sun.

A Partnership Is Born

Everyone saw that there was a clear and instant bond between Endal and Allen, something instinctive and rooted in the way they interpreted each other's needs. After a few more meetings between the two — it was difficult to tell who anticipated Allen's visits to the training centre the more

— Allen decided to apply to take Endal as an assistance dog. It was only while the forms were being completed that Allen understood and accepted the importance of the psychological step he was taking: "I had to describe my disabilities and this was the first time I had admitted there was something wrong with me. It was a cathartic experience. Until I met Endal, I was in the depths of despair. Now I suddenly saw a chink of light."

Life Begins Anew

With Allen still struggling as much with his word recollection as his mobility, Endal's ability to read the sign language with which Allen was sometimes forced to communicate was central to their relationship. A pat on Allen's head meant, and was understood as, "fetch my cap". A touch on Allen's cheek and Endal was off to bring him his razor case. Hands held up? A second later Allen's gloves appeared. 'Tugs' were added to everything — doors, cupboards, clothes drawers, the toilet seat — in the Parton house that needed opening or closing or lifting so that Endal could help Allen get dressed, wash and manage the domestic chores.

Endal was soon as adept at shopping as he was around the house. Allen simply issued the appropriate instructions from his wheelchair — cereal, soup, tins of tomatoes, bread — and Endal would unfailingly nose it from the shelf and drop it into the shopping basket. He even helped to pay. Once Allen had tapped in his PIN, Endal would gently retrieve the money and card from the cash dispenser.

The differences that Endal brought to Allen's everyday world weren't just practical, however impressive his abilities to sniff out a bargain at the supermarket. They were therapeutic too. Where five years of intensive speech coaching had seen little progress, Allen's urge to talk to Endal meant that he was becoming ever more articulate, his vocabulary as broad as it was before the accident. Once Allen, embarrassed at his inability to remember words let alone names, would shy from social contact. Now Endal gave him the confidence to reengage with the world that once had felt so alien and intimidating. "Endal provides a talking point," explained Allen. "People stroke and chat about him which helps me to socialize."

Perhaps most importantly of all, Endal restored Allen to his family, allowing him the emotional strength needed to rediscover and renew the bonds of human love. "Life will never be the same again but, thanks to Endal, Allen has a second chance," said Sandra. "As do we. The children lost their old dad but Endal has given them a new one." Recently, Allen and Sandra took their wedding vows again.

Fame

A dog as talented as Endal is a difficult secret to keep. His prowess at the cash machine was spotted by a journalist from a national newspaper. After that the media floodgates opened wide. Reporters and film crews from around the world have queued up to watch and marvel as Endal, wallet in mouth, picks up Allen's prescription at the chemist's or operates the electronic doors on a train.

What really threw the spotlight on Endal, however, was the story of the heroics for which he was awarded the PDSA's Gold Medal. Invited to attend a stand at Crufts in

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Pure Gold

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2001, the pair had been exercising in the car park afterwards when the vehicle, unseen by Allen until the last second, struck him and threw him from his wheelchair. Endal's resolve and quiet control made headline news and won him that most prestigious of animal awards.

The Future

Endal is now nine years old. There will come a time when he will be too old to carry out his duties, however strong and faithful the urge to do so. When that happens, Allen will be there to look after him, repaying what he acknowledges to be an unrepayable debt.

The day in the car park that saw Endal save Allen's life by grasping his coat and pulling him, unconscious, into the recovery position was truly remarkable. What is almost as remarkable is that Endal has been saving Allen's life, precious piece by precious piece, each and every day, before and since.

Editor's Product Find

I used to dread using the nail grinder on my Samoyed service dog. He'd keep snatching his paws away, turning a ten minute job into an exhausting forty minute struggle. I'm so elated by the amazing change in him since I purchased the **Dremel Multipro 770** from a dog catalog, I want to share this discovery. With a top speed of 20,000 r.p.m. versus 10,000 r.p.m., it is so much faster and more gentle than the old grinder! All three of my dogs really appreciate the differences. I comparison tested it with the fast new Oster product, which is not cordless, unnerves a dog with its noise and stops working if you dare press it against a nail for more than one second. If you have a multi-dog household or simply want to give a great manicure, consider the Multipro 770 [kit 7700-02], available for \$44.95 at Dremel.com or stores like Ace Hardware.

Writing Competition Entry

An Autumn Night

By Bethany Brake

We walked tonight, my service dog and I, in the dim yellow harvest glow of the campus lights, under a nearly full moon. The air is crisp, a hint of winter on the way, layered with the spicy, singular aroma of fallen leaves, that crisp and earthy tone that hails the autumn.

Chester is exuberant, bouncing after a long day, while I am sleepy, languorous, at peace. I sit on a bench under a grandfather tree, one so tall and old that its presence can be felt, ancient as the earth, timeless. I take off his vest and Chester is instantly all dog, nose to the ground, racing circles around me while I sit and smell the scents of autumn under the gracious moon. Leaves crackle under his feet, and his buoyant playing kicks them into the air, where they flutter for a moment before alighting gently back on earth. Everything is golden, bathed in low ambient light, the brown leaves underfoot acquiring an almost unearthly glow, heaven on earth and God in all. A gentle breeze blows with a hint of bite, warning of winter to come, but saying now to be content as there still is time to play.

Chester has worn himself out, and comes to lay at my feet. I watch him quietly, thinking only how beautiful he is, what a gloriously beautiful and noble creature...the golden light caresses his fur, catching highs and lows, lights and darks, shimmering with the gentle motions of his breathing. I watch his ears prick and swivel as he listens to the night sounds; he is alert but not tense. He looks up at me, his brown eyes warm,

relaxed, and I smile at him. Such a beautiful creature. My dog. My heart. He stares at me, his eyes speaking volumes, and then stands and licks my hands, my face as I bend down to him and wrap my arms around him. I could not dare but love him, the earnest ways in which he tries to please me, to help me, his never failing trust of me; the all consuming goodness of him.

Animals must have souls; anyone who has experienced their pure, conditionless love could do little but come to that conclusion. My heart hurts with the love I have for him, and brings tears to my eyes...I love him so much, And all I give to him is mirrored right back for me.

After a long moment, I rise and we get ready to leave. He picks up his vest from where it has lain on the bench next to me, and places it into my hands. I open it up and he slips his head into the strap, and stands quietly while I buckle it around his belly. Then he hands me the leash, his tail wagging, ready for a new adventure. Oh, to be so happy with life, to await with eagerness even the mundane. I wonder if he knows that it is time to go inside and get ready for tomorrow and then bed? Even though the fun is over for the night, he doesn't complain, there is no disappointment in his eyes. Just a zest for life and eagerness to move on that sometimes astounds me. He lives in the moment, he truly does. I gather the leash and we walk together back home, life intruding again on something that seemed, however brief, truly other worldly.

A Tail To Tell

By Toni and Ed Eames

Since our last Tail column we have been pretty sedentary, making only two major trips in conjunction with our veterinary school lectures. In April, accompanied by Golden Retriever guide dogs Keebler and Latrell, we traveled to Minnesota and Alabama to do presentations at the University of Minnesota, Auburn and Tuskegee. In August we combined an IAADP board meeting with additional lectures.

Minneapolis is one of our favorite cities to visit, and if only they had more reasonable winters we would consider it as a potential place to live! It has walkable sidewalks, excellent public transportation and the Mall of America!

On April 9 after dropping off our luggage at the downtown Ramada Inn, we took a taxi to the Pillsbury House Theater to see the play, "The Story." When calling for tickets before leaving Fresno, we learned the play would be audio described for blind audience members on the day before our arrival. Toni shared her disappointment with Veronica, the box office receptionist, and was delighted and touched when Veronica called the next day to say the audio describer would return on the 9th just for us! Audio description is the process in which professionally trained individuals provide verbal descriptions of the action on stage or in a movie during silent times. There is an expression, Minnesota Nice, and we certainly concur with this view! The play itself was rather avant garde and left the audience with many unresolved questions, but the audio description was invaluable in cluing us in on what was happening on stage!

The next morning we walked from our hotel with Minnesota friends Linda and David Gregorich to the Marriott Hotel where we spoke at a meeting of Guide Dog Users of Minnesota. After our presentation, we exchanged lots of fun stories with Rebecca and Phil Cragnes and other members of the group.

That evening, the Ramada Inn shuttle drove us to the Cedar Cultural Center where we were met by new friend Rebecca Cragnes with her Golden Retriever guide dog Winnal. Rebecca, a musician, jumped at the opportunity to join us. The evening's entertainment was a Scottish duo playing accordion and fiddle Celtic music. The musicians had a great line of patter, but with their thick Scottish accents, we lost some of the finer points! What a wonderful, enjoyable concert!

We then went to an Irish pub for a snack. Making sure Rebecca got on her bus, we decided to walk back to our hotel. However, we must have started off on the wrong street, because we were lost in a deserted area. But the beauty of a big city is that usually within a few minutes someone comes along who can help. Our Good Samaritan turned out to be the backstage manager of The Lion King, appearing in a theater near the hotel. He walked us the three blocks back to the hotel. Even though it was after midnight, the streets seemed friendly and we thought of it as a real urban adventure!

It was back to work on Tuesday with two presentations at the University of Minnesota vet school. Between sessions, we visited one of our favorite stores, the Factory Card Outlet, where every card is 59 cents! Larry Bjorklung, the student advisor, patiently read cards for our

selection and we left with a \$36 purchase. Wish we had this chain in Fresno!

The next day it was off to Montgomery, Alabama. Tuskegee vet school professor Caroline Schaffer met us at the airport, joined us for a light lunch and drove us to Auburn. Before our evening presentation to the Auburn vet students, we spent time with Dr. John Saidla, director of the veterinary teaching hospital. It was John who several years before was instrumental in setting up a no-fee policy for assistance dogs treated at the Auburn University hospital.

The next day it was Tuskegee's turn! Caroline always sets up multiple presentation opportunities and we had a good time with the students. In the evening lecture over dinner, we were able to have a more informal discussion with the audience.

Since our flight did not leave until mid-afternoon on the 15th, we took the opportunity to do some sight-seeing with Caroline in Montgomery. They have an historic narrated trolley trip, but most wonderful was our tour of the Rosa Parks Museum. The video narration is vivid and clear and visitors feel a part of the described action. It enhanced our respect and admiration for the heroes of the civil rights movement!

Our second major trip was in August, when we combined attendance at the IAADP board meeting with presentations for Delta Air Lines, the Wayne State veterinary technician training program and the University of Tennessee.

Since we were scheduled to do presentations at the Detroit airport for Delta Air Lines before the IAADP board meeting, we flew in a day early and stayed at the airport Crowne Plaza. Following two presentations for Delta, we joined the staff from Wayne State for dinner followed by another educational outreach effort. We were delighted when the vet tech students presented a donation check for IAADP. It turned out one of the faculty members lived near the hotel where we were staying for the board meeting and got us there expeditiously!

Board member Devon Wilkins and her guide dog Oak shared our suite, with Carol King and service dog Heart and Jill Exposito with hearing dog Uriah next door. Mike Osborn with guide dog Hastings and Lynn Houston with service dog Chance joined us Friday morning at the home of Joan Froling for the board meeting. Joan is partnered with Spirit, her Samoyed service dog, and whenever the weather permitted, the eight dogs enjoyed gallivanting in the huge fenced-in yard. Each year we look forward to dinner at the Red Hot and Blue, a rib restaurant near our hotel featuring dry rubbed ribs. What a treat! Finger licking good, and hush puppies to boot!

Saturday lunch at Joan's house was double bacon pizza. That evening the celebratory meal was at the Hunt Club, a lovely facility where Carol Froling, Joan's sister, boards her horse. What a thoughtful and lovely evening!

Don't get us wrong! The IAADP Board worked hard and long between these gluttonous outings!

When the board meeting ended on Sunday, we returned to the hotel to do laundry and to meet Paws With A Cause trainer Lynn Hoekstra for dinner at the Olive Garden.

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A Tail to Tell

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Again, it was good food and great company!

Wayne State Vet Tech instructor Mary Ann was so gracious and enamored of our dogs, she met us very early Monday morning to share breakfast and drive us to the Detroit airport. The original plans were to fly from Detroit to Golden Triangle Mississippi to meet friends and do an evening presentation for the vet students at Mississippi State. Since Hurricane Katrina was headed there, Delta canceled all flights into the area. With a quick shift in plans, we flew to Atlanta and spent extra time with friends there.

Two days later we took a short flight to Knoxville. John New, a University of Tennessee professor who arranged the lecture, met us at the airport, got us to our hotel and then to the auditorium. It was hard for Ed, but he passed up the pizza served to students and saved his appetite for a Tennessee barbecue that was outstanding!

After a brief flight to Cincinnati the next day, a Delta supervisor met us and escorted us to an airport restaurant where two members of IAADP met us for lunch and sat in on our subsequent presentation. It was great meeting Barb Burton with her hearing dog Vicky and Tanya Eversole with her service dog Brooke. This time we had a mixed audience of staff from security, in-flight and gate agents. It was wonderful having representatives of all types of assistance dogs doing the presentation, and Barb and Tanya added to the information provided.

Our subsequent flights home were comfortable and on time. It was fun being on the road again, but also good to be back home!

For the past ten years, Bayer Animal Health has sponsored our veterinary school presentations allowing us to travel throughout the U.S. spreading the word about assistance dogs to the animal health care community. When we received a certified letter telling us that Bayer was restructuring and would no longer provide sponsorship, we were devastated. Fort Dodge Animal Health came to the rescue! Not only has this company been a wonderful supporter of IAADP, it will now be our corporate sponsor for future veterinary school and conference lectures!

One of the fulfilling elements of our current lifestyle is meeting interesting people and receiving exciting gifts. Artist Ceil Moore, CEO of Barx Brothers, maker of greeting cards designed primarily for the veterinary market is one of these interesting persons. Ceil shares her home with lots of cats and shares her backyard with lots of pet chickens who she has rescued when they fall off trucks taking them to market in the Georgia countryside. With 25 rescued chickens, she collects lots of eggs, but does not eat them! Hearing how much we love eggs, she had 3 dozen Fed Exed to us! It was exciting to check out each egg, somewhat different in shape and shell texture, and according to Lanie, our reader who was at our home when the package was delivered, the color varied as well. It was a hoot! Unfortunately, Ceil was not present to identify the chicken who laid each egg!

One of our medical scares during this period occurred when Ed complained about shortness of breath and we called 911. Fearing a heart attack, we decided to go to the emergency room at St. Agnes Medical Center. Toni asked the EMT if she could ride in the ambulance with both dogs. True to the Fresno spirit, Russ agreed and off we sped to the hospital.

The emergency room was busy but not frenetic. Toni and the dogs waited in a private room until preliminary tests on Ed were performed. She had been smart enough to bring along her knitting and sure got a lot done that night!

Around 1 A.M. Toni rejoined Ed in a small curtained-off cubical. Latrell and Keebler's muzzles stuck out under the curtain and drew much positive attention. In fact, a nurse, not one of Ed's, came by and asked if he could take a photo of the dogs to show his wife!

After many boring hours, Ed was moved to an upstairs room. We were pleasantly shocked to learn the diagnosis was pneumonia, not a heart attack. Ed and Latrell spent three days in the hospital and, for several weeks after, Ed felt pretty tired toward the end of the day.

July 26 was the 15th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act. Ed wrote a wonderful Op Ed piece for our local newspaper, *The Fresno Bee*, and we appeared on evening television to discuss local access issues. We've been on TV many times since moving to Fresno, but this was Keebler and Latrell's debut! The film crew came to the Greyhound station and got some good footage of us entering and going through the terminal and boarding a bus on our way to visit friends in northern California.

Over the last few months, we have been in contact with Laura Otis, a tenured third grade teacher from southern California fighting to be allowed to have her service dog accompany her to work. Laura gladly accepted our invitation to visit during her school break and she arrived on October 6 with a carload of Jewish food, delicacies we do not have in Fresno. For days we feasted on chopped liver, noodle pudding, potato knishes, stuffed derma (kishka), fabulous bagels and pastrami and corned beef!

Zoe, a Poodle/Schnauzer cross, is a cutey and does her service dog tasks well. Laura is rather timid and we spent much time injecting her with self righteous anger. We mostly stayed home and chatted and ate!

With the tragedies of Katrina and Rita, we wanted to make sure IAADP members in that area were safe. When we phoned Chad Ferrand, we were distressed to learn from his father Rod that Chad died several weeks after the floods.

When Chad was diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy, doctors said he would not live past the age of two, but he proved them wrong by graduating from high school and college. Chad was working as an insurance salesman, had his own apartment and was living independently with his Paws With A Cause service dog Haden in New Orleans.

According to his dad, Chad was outgoing, involved and had many friends. When the threat of flooding became a reality, Chad was rescued by his parents, also living in New Orleans. Sadly, he died a couple of weeks after the evacuation at the age of 25 due to complications caused by MD. Haden was returned to PAWS to be matched with someone else who could benefit from his services. More than 400 people showed up at Chad's memorial service. A second service was held for those who couldn't make the first one. Chad's father said the family was blessed to have had him for 23 years beyond the time the doctors predicted.

If anyone has information about other IAADP members whose lives were transformed by Katrina or Rita, please contact us.

Toni and Ed Eames can be contacted at 3376 North Wishon, Fresno, CA 93704-4832; Telephone 559 - 224-0544; e-mail eeames@csufresno.edu.

Notice of IAADP Election in 2006

Twelve years have passed since the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners's inaugural meeting. Held in conjunction with the Delta Society and Assistance Dogs International conferences in St. Louis, MO, this historic meeting brought together men and women partnered with guide, hearing and service dogs to discuss compelling issues confronting the assistance dog movement. The outcome was an unanimous vote to establish an independent cross-disability organization which would represent and advocate for disabled persons partnered with guide, hearing and service dogs. A board of directors was elected that evening to carry out IAADP's mission to (a) give assistance dog partners "a voice" in the assistance dog field, and (b) to bring together those partnered with guide, hearing and service dogs to work together on issues of mutual concern, and (c) to foster the assistance dog/human partner relationship.

In 2006, IAADP Partner Members will have the opportunity to vote for the men and women who will represent them on the IAADP Board. As per our bylaws we are giving a first Notice of Election in plenty of time to allow our members partnered with guide, hearing and service dogs to consider whether or not they might want to stand for election.

Board members serve a four year term in a volunteer capacity. If you are someone who loves the assistance dog movement and you would like participate in interesting projects, become involved in advocacy work and/or assist with putting on our annual conference, please consider getting in touch.

Prospective IAADP board members must commit to attending two board meetings a year. Our annual board meeting takes place over a two day period in conjunction with putting on IAADP's annual conference for the assistance dog field. We also participate in ADI's Conference to provide consumer input on relevant issues. While IAADP does not cover travel expenses or reimburse more than one night's lodging for the annual meeting, we will work with a board member upon request to help reduce some of the cost of attendance.

Our midyear board meeting is a three day board retreat which takes place in August at IAADP's headquarters in Michigan. Lodging will be covered and a stipend for travel expenses may be available in a case of financial hardship.

Partner members who would be interested in volunteering to serve a four year term should send a biographical resume and two references to the IAADP Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 1326, Sterling Hts., MI 48311 in the USA. Your letter must be postmarked no later than June 1, 2006.

Irish Guide Dog School Combats Fireworks

Guide dogs are being deafened by fireworks

By Denis J Croke, Laois Nationalist, Republic of Ireland, October 21, 2005

IRISH Guide Dogs for the Blind (IGDB) have just launched their Fireworks Awareness Campaign to highlight the problems caused to guide dogs and their owners at this time of year.

IGDB aims, through its awareness campaign, to encourage people to show consideration to guide dogs and their owners and not use illegal fireworks and bangers in built up areas.

The use of illegal fireworks has grown significantly in recent years. The usage of fireworks and bangers around the country starts as early as August and can continue for over three months.

Annoying for many people, illegal fireworks can be particularly stressful for guide dogs and animals in general, but also people, especially vulnerable during this period include senior citizens, citizens with disability or recovering from illness and families with young children, due to the repeated and sudden loud noise.

In the case of a guide dog that is affected, it can mean separation from their owner, having to be retrained, or in a small number of cases, withdrawn from working altogether.

Dogs have an incredible hearing ability and can detect sounds that are too faint for the human ear. Fear grows with increased exposure to loud noises, and dogs seldom get used to them, nor do they learn that they will come to no harm.

As the season approaches again, IGDB recommend a number of measures that pet owners can take to minimize the trauma that Halloween festivities can cause to their pets.

These include: confine pets to the general living areas rather than quieter areas such as hallways and leave the radio and TV on to drown out some of the external noises; plenty of exercise before dark will minimize the exposure and tire the dog so that they will be more relaxed and more likely to sleep through the evening and owners are advised to refrain from fussing over a nervous dog as this only exacerbates the situation

If a dog is particularly stressed, it is recommend using a natural remedy such as Bach Flower Remedies or Serene-UM, a natural food supplement which is widely available from vets and pharmacies.

<http://www.laois-nationalist.ie/news/story.asp?j=21036>

Guide Dog Use Debated in Singapore

TODAY online; Monday, October 31, 2005
By Vinita Ramani, vinita@newstoday.com.sg

In a further easing of rules to make Singapore a friendlier place for the visually handicapped who rely on guide dogs, restaurant owners will soon be able to allow guide dogs on their premises without having to apply for a special licence.

A National Environment Agency (NEA) spokesperson told Today: "NEA recently carried out a review and has decided to grant licensees of food establishments the discretion to allow guide dogs on their premises, so long as the dogs are harnessed and kept at the owner's side at all times."

The change will come into effect by the end of the year, after details are ironed out. Currently, a licence is issued for food establishments where pets are allowed.

This revelation follows on the heels of SBS Transit's recent announcement that it will allow blind persons with guide dogs to board buses from the beginning of next month. Guide dogs are already allowed in MRT stations and on trains.

As restrictions are removed from various public spaces, the question is whether Singaporeans are ready to accept guide dogs for the visually handicapped.

News of the SBS Transit decision two weeks ago sparked a debate in the visually handicapped community and other related organizations.

Mr. Ron Chandran-Dudley, former president of the then Association for the Blind, now the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH), and founder-president of the Disabled People's Association, feels that Singaporeans "have to go further and look at the whole infrastructure of training dogs," before they applaud the move to accept guide dogs from the United States organization, Guide Dogs for the Blind.

"What are the responsibilities of the visually handicapped person in this issue? Are we prepared to do the caretaking of such dogs, which need special training?" he said.

Singapore Kennel Club president Jina Williams also pointed out that visually handicapped people are trained with a specific guide dog in a match that has to be carefully made.

"Changing handlers would require retraining to serve as a guide for someone else," she said.

"Providing such a service would require substantial investments, and having properly-trained individuals is a cornerstone of such a program."

Traditionally, Kennel Clubs across the world are not involved in guide dog training programs and the Singapore branch does not have the facilities.

There is a back-story to such conservative sentiments.

Mr. Kua Cheng Hock, who works with currently the only guide dog for the blind in Singapore, a Labrador, Kendra, had brought in one from an Australian organization in 1982. Then, as neither the infrastructure nor the social consciousness was in place to accept the move, the dog was recalled

by the Australian organization after a brief stay in Singapore.

It was in this light that Mr. Chandran-Dudley asked whether the move to bring back guide dogs will involve "creating a need" that may not necessarily exist.

Busker Chong Jeo Ann, however, thinks the move is long overdue. "We've passed the stage of being ready. It is one optional aide for the visually handicapped," he said.

SAVH is "fully supportive" of the initiative as well. Its president, Ms. Lyn Low, pointed out that visually handicapped women would benefit from the independence, instead of having to approach "complete strangers for directions."

Professor Au Eong Kah Guan, Alexandra Hospital's head of ophthalmology and visual sciences, acknowledged that the society needs time to get used to the idea but thinks this should not stop guide dogs from entering the country.

The hospital recently became the first medical establishment to allow guide dogs on its premises.

Said Professor Au, "Initial users may face more difficulties, but in time, society will get used to this reality."

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Fort Dodge Vaccine Rebate Coupons

IAADP has adopted the following policy for the Annual distribution of the Ft. Dodge coupon which entitles a Partner member in the USA to receive up to a \$20 rebate on vaccinations.

New teams will receive this terrific benefit in their New Member Packet.

Partner members who renew for one year will receive their next coupon in the envelope containing their renewal membership ID card.

As stated on the website in the benefit section, Partners who take advantage of our fantastic offer, "Renew for Two Years, Get Your Third Year Free," will receive the coupon the first year with their renewal ID membership card that does not expire for three years. In the second and third year, however, we are asking those individuals to send us a self addressed, stamped envelope and a note requesting the Ft. Dodge rebate coupon. Write to: IAADP c/o Kathi Duran Diaz, 808 E. Pontiac Way, Fresno, CA 93704. We regret the slight inconvenience, but our only alternative would be to cancel this renewal offer as it creates a coupon distribution problem.

A New Lease On Life

By Jeff Ertz, Staff Writer, 09/06/2005

COCHRANVILLE — The 12 years that Norberto “Bert” Rosa was incarcerated in Graterford State Prison had stripped him of the personal responsibilities the outside world expected him to dutifully pick up upon his April 18 release.

But it was Rosa’s participation in the puppy prison training program through Canine Partners For Life that offered him an opportunity few inmates receive.

Program founder and executive director Darlene Sullivan started the CPL prison program at Graterford and other Pennsylvania and Maryland correctional facilities and has instilled among prisoners involved a sense of responsibility that can easily be lost in the monotony of prison life.

Now commuting from Philadelphia to CPL’s 45-acre property in Cochranville as the executive director’s assistant, Rosa is the only ex-inmate known to Graterford outside service unit manager Gerry Sobotor who has found work after being released this year.

“It’s hard for an ex-offender to get out and get a job,” Rosa said. “And for Darlene to give me the opportunity to work for her organization is appreciated by me and my family.”

Prison Program

Since April 2003, Sullivan has been teaching inmates at Graterford’s outside services unit to train assistance dogs, mostly Labrador retriever mixes, who are later placed with individuals with mobility impairments.

Inmates whose crimes did not involve harming animals or children can participate and Sobotor said there is always an abundance of volunteers.

The first of two years of the dogs’ training takes place in prison at the hands of inmates’ in accordance with Sullivan’s biweekly instruction there. Volunteers train other canines for the first year in their homes.

When the dogs finish their second year of training at CPL in Cochranville, many of them are able to pay cashiers, open refrigerator doors, turn lights on and off, pick up a dime off concrete and help people off the floor. Some dogs are able to detect seizures in epileptics or low blood sugar in diabetics.

“Some inmates say it’s given them a better appreciation for parenting skills,” said Graterford’s Gerald G. Galinski, who is the drug and alcohol treatment manager and public information officer.

Other inmates, who spend days and nights with their companions for about a year, feel the quality of training they exhibit is a direct reflection on themselves, Sobotor said.

“They take a lot of pride in seeing the progress of the dog and knowing they’re going to be assigned to someone it’s really going to benefit,” he said.

There are four canines at Graterford at a time and eight inmates working with them in teams of two, one as the primary handler.

Galinski said no one has tracked how the prison puppy training program has affected ex-inmates in the long haul’ but it’s clear that the bond created through nurturing and raising the animals has a positive impact.

Tommy and Terp

Rosa, who as a child wanted to be a veterinarian, worked with three dogs while at Graterford.

Described by Sobotor as “one of the best handlers,” Rosa would always take the initiative, Sullivan said.

In one instance, Rosa was the only inmate who volunteered to install a microchip in his canine Terp, a Labrador mix.

Handlers create a bond with their dogs that lasts for years, Sullivan said, and the strength of that bond was apparent when *The Reporter* visited the outside service unit in July 2004.

While poring over pictures of himself and his service dog during the 2004 open house, one inmate had spoken about his “buddy” like a parent would recall memories of a child. The dog slept in his cell for 11 months and followed him everywhere, until the day came when they had to say goodbye.

While in Graterford, Rosa said farewell to Terp but when he started working at CPL on May 21 of this year, he was surprised to find Terp there finishing up his second and final year of training.

“He was happy,” Rosa said. “Me on the other hand, I said “EAAhhhh!” Because (at Graterford), that was my farewell with Terp.”

In addition to Rosa’s administrative duties — he’s been organizing paperwork and preparing for the nonprofit’s accreditation audit and fall training and fund-raising projects — he has been conducting final training exercises with Terp.

A few days after Rosa spoke about Terp in Sullivan’s Cochranville office, the Labrador was placed as a home companion dog for someone with a disability.

Rosa said the separation is difficult but he has at least been able to maintain a relationship with Tommy, a Labrador mix that Rosa worked with in Graterford that could not be placed in a home because of aggression issues.

Rosa adopted him.

Still in Transition

Rosa said that when he was released from Graterford he went straight to his mother. Then he called Sullivan.

Galinski said Rosa, like all inmates about to be released, underwent a two-week community-oriented reintegration program where inmates learn basic reintegration skills, including classes on decision-making coping skills and interview techniques. “Each inmate leaves with a resume,” Galinski said.

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A new Lease on Life

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In addition to the prison puppy training program, Galinski said Graterford aims to rehabilitate inmates based on their individual needs. If inmates don't have a high school diploma, Galinski said, they're paid to attend classes to secure a GED in Graterford and are forbidden to work without it.

Then they have somewhat of a choice to work in the prison kitchen with mechanical equipment or at a vocation where they had prior experience.

Eventually, with good behavior, inmates can become involved in one of the outside service unit's programs, which include Philadelphia's mural arts program and wheels to the world, where inmates restore wheelchairs for people worldwide who can't afford them.

Sullivan said the correctional system doesn't have a way to slowly ease ex-inmates back into societal normalcy, and the transition from dictated decision-making to the overwhelming onset of choice is something Rosa is still coping with.

In addition to having to learn how to use an ATM, computer and fax machine — the seemingly routine tasks to those on the outside — making decisions such as choosing a brand of cereal can prove difficult.

When Rosa celebrated his 32nd birthday a few months ago, the years of spending the day in a prison cell set him at a loss.

So he didn't celebrate.

"I was home twirling my fingers like, What am I going to do?" said Rosa.

He lives at his parents' home in Philadelphia surrounded by much of his extended family who live nearby and Rosa said it's been the support of his family and Sullivan that have helped him cope.

Sullivan worked with CPL's board of directors to create a position for Rosa while he was still in prison and assisted him in obtaining a driver's license and the necessary travel permits to work in Cochranville, a process that moved faster than they had anticipated.

With a schedule full of travel, including to correctional facilities where the puppy program is under way, Sullivan is aiming to expand Rosa's basic training responsibilities.

He's attended some training demonstrations outside CPL's facility, but Sullivan is trying to obtain the permission needed for Rosa to teach Graterford inmates.

"That's great that he has that interest," Sobotor said.

Rosa said he's taking his time to adjust to civilian life and has no other plans but to continue to work at CPL, which fills his plate. He doesn't even mind the long commute.

"It's a good commute, considering where I came from," said Rosa.

Sullivan said the prison puppy training program is "a solid program," and she anticipates its continued growth.

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Homeowner's Insurance Excludes Service Dog

Written for the web by C. Johnson, Internet News Producer, News10.net

Insurance companies are increasingly using ownership of certain dog breeds as a reason to deny coverage. A Sacramento man says that's not right when the pet is a service dog.

Ed Nelson learned of the exclusion when he went to change policies after his previous company increased his premiums. Nelson's dog is a German Shepherd service dog named Ace. The Sacramento man has a disability that's not readily apparent, but with Ace by his side, Nelson is able to go to work everyday as an automobile mechanic. "He's with me 24-7," he said. "To be without him, I'm lost."

After shopping around, Nelson was set to change his coverage to Allied Insurance Company. However, when the company learned he had a German Shepherd, Nelson said the company declined to write his homeowner's policy unless he got rid of Ace.

According to Allied spokesperson Mike Palmer, the exclusion took effect in 2004. He said "certain breeds that have a tendency to be problematic may not qualify" for the home owner to obtain coverage.

An attorney who also trains service dogs said that's not unusual. "Dog bites make up a lot of claims they end up paying," said Dawn Capp. "They want to limit their risk." Capp said she knows of only two carriers that have no breed discrimination policies.

Nelson said he thinks exceptions should be made for service dogs without a violent history. "Because of one bad apple somewhere down the line, they're going to make me get rid of what helps me function in life," he said.

Allied has told Nelson that if Ace successfully completes the American Kennel Clubs Good Citizen Program, it would reconsider his insurance application.

Among the dog breeds that insurance companies may exclude are Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, Chows, Akitas, Huskies, Great Danes and German Shepherds.

Capp said she wouldn't be surprised if there are more exclusions when a new law takes effect in January in California that allows counties to force certain breeds to be neutered and spayed. "So once counties start targeting breeds, insurance companies will very likely decide those breeds are too much of a liability," she said.

<http://www.news10.net/storyfull2.aspx?storyid=14512>
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IAADP Revises Membership Definitions

by Joan Froling

Twelve years ago, most assistance dog partners were the graduates of a guide dog school or one of the service and hearing dog training programs belonging to Assistance Dogs International. Those few partners who trained their own guide, hearing or service dog were typically experienced trainers or individuals who had the help of a provider to accomplish this feat. In those days, everybody understood what we meant by the term “assistance dog partner.”

Since 1994, our Information and Advocacy Center has responded to thousands of inquiries from disabled adults and the parents of disabled children. We’re aware of the dramatic rise in the number of people who have decided to utilize their own dog as their service dog or acquire one from a breeder, shelter or rescue for that purpose. Because of ongoing funding shortages which limit the number of program trained service and hearing dogs available to the disabled community each year, we do not think this trend will reverse itself in the foreseeable future.

After doing research by phone and/or the internet, a number of disabled persons turn to books and videos like *Teamwork I & II*, email lists for owner trainers and take community obedience classes in the effort to achieve a successful outcome. Some live near a program or group like the Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound which offer instructors and a support system. Others work with a professional dog trainer to accomplish their training goals.

Unfortunately, not every disabled person is “on the same page.” A significant percentage of those who get in touch with us in this day and age do not appear to comprehend the differences between a pet and a working assistance dog.

We hear from an increasing number of people who think a prescription from their doctor or therapist is all that is needed to have public access rights with their companion animal. Some conversations start out “I want to register my dog with you to show my landlord that he’s a service dog” and it turns out the so called service dog is eight weeks old. Quite a few assistance dog training programs refer callers to us who want to have their pet dog certified, usually as a result of access denial. It is left up to us to educate the disabled person about the law and how much training and what kind of training is needed to transform their pet into a legitimate service animal.

Muddying the waters are government agencies like the U.S. Department of Transportation and HUD which classify emotional support animals as service animals instead of maintaining a clear cut distinction between pets that lack any special training and an assistance dog. Another source of confusion are members of the medical profession who have been handing out prescriptions without educating themselves or their patients on the differences between a pet and a service animal. Publicity about the psychological and physical health benefits of pet ownership in medical journals as well as the popular press and books like “The Healing Power of Pets” by Marty Beckman, D.V.M. have

led to pressure on human rights and civil rights commissions in various states to rule that animals which provide companionship are service animals if the owner has a disability. Recently proposed legislation in Vermont, viewed as “pioneering” by its proponents, would grant public access rights to disabled persons who have a companion animal, not just housing access, if a medical professional such as a doctor, therapist or social worker says the [non-task trained] pet is needed to mitigate some aspect of a disability, such as social isolation.

IAADP continues to work with other members of the Coalition of Assistance Dog Organizations (CADO) to vigorously oppose these attempts to water down the definition of a service animal till there is no meaningful distinction between a service dog and a pet. However, with the prescription pet movement gathering strength and momentum in the USA, we know the outcome is by no means certain.

To help ensure that visitors to our website realize that assistance dog partnership and pet ownership are not interchangeable concepts, IAADP’s board has decided to update the website, beginning with our Membership definitions. We have always supported Assistance Dogs International’s efforts to establish minimum training standards for programs that train assistance dogs. We believe all assistance dogs, whether owner trained, privately trained or program trained, need to receive a proper education. We have now made this quite explicit by publishing a set of “Minimum Training Standards for Public Access,” and incorporating those requirements into our membership definitions.

Our standards are drawn from ADI’s minimum standards for service dog training which were developed for programs with consumer input from IAADP over a decade ago. They also encompass the jist of CADO’s minimum behavior and training standards for all service animals.

Rather than leave it up to prospective members who are owner trainers to go to other websites to track down information on what kind of schooling we expect them to give their dogs prior to enrollment, we have decided it is time to address this ourselves.

We are encouraged by the fact that the disabled persons and families whom we talk to by phone or email have been very receptive to the counseling we give them. We believe most people will do the right thing, once given the right information.

For all those who don’t contact us directly, but come to the website in search of information on training or certification, we are preparing a Training Resources Guide that will list educational options they may wish to explore. From non-profit programs to private enterprise trainers to community obedience classes to email lists for owner trainers, to books, videos, website articles, conferences and seminars, there is certainly much more available today than there was 12 years ago for disabled persons who don’t

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IAADP Revises Membership Definition

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meet the criteria for a free service or hearing dog from one of the non profit providers.

Our new membership definitions will follow. After that, you can read the web page introducing our new Minimum

Training Standards for Public Access, definitions of things like “a physical task” and our comments on ADI’s Public Access Test, which we prefer to promote over the AKC Canine Good Citizenship Test as a benchmark assessment tool for new teams.

We welcome your comments on this initiative.



Membership Categories... Which one are you eligible for?

Partner Membership: - open to disabled persons working with an adult guide, hearing or service dog obtained from a Provider or one trained by the owner for a minimum of six months. Prior to enrollment, training must be completed in accordance with the Minimum Training Standards for obedience, manners and disability related tasks.

([click here](#) for IAADP Minimum Training Standards for Public Access)

Friend Membership: - open to disabled individuals with a puppy or dog “in training” for a career as an assistance

dog who has not yet completed the required amount of schooling to become eligible for a Partner Membership. Health care professionals, puppy raisers and others interested in the assistance dog movement are also encouraged to become an IAADP Friend.

Provider Membership: - open to training programs and professional dog trainers who provide task trained assistance dogs to disabled persons. Also open to programs or trainers assisting disabled individuals to train their own dogs to meet or exceed our Minimum Training Standards



IAADP Minimum Training Standards for Public Access

IAADP’s overall mission is to foster the assistance dog movement in the USA and other countries. As part of this mission, we seek to promote the responsible use of access rights in the disabled community.

For over 75 years, assistance dogs have worked successfully in public and won the public’s acceptance by achieving high behavioral and training standards which set them apart from pets and other animals. Their exemplary conduct led to state legislatures granting access rights to the blind, deaf and mobility impaired. Those early teams paved the way for the Americans With Disabilities Act, which has opened the door to individuals with a wide range of physical and mental impairments being able to have access rights.

In response to many inquiries from disabled citizens who want to train a dog to be their assistance dog, but tell us they do not know how much training or what kinds of training to give the dog, IAADP has developed a set of Minimum Training Standards for Public Access. These are drawn from the Minimum Training Standards for Service Dogs first established a decade ago by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) with consumer input from IAADP.

<http://www.adionline.org>

If you are a disabled person and want the right to be accompanied by an assistance dog in public, we encourage you to meet or exceed the minimum standards set forth below for training an assistance dog for public access.

Disabled persons who want to join IAADP as a Partner Member [voting member] must have a professionally trained guide, hearing or service dog from a Provider or a dog at least twelve months old whom they have trained to meet or exceed IAADP’s Minimum Training Standards.

IAADP Minimum Training Standards for Public Access

1. **Amount of Schooling:** your dog should be given a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) hours of schooling over a period of six months or more. At least thirty (30) hours should be devoted to outings that will prepare the dog to work obediently and unobtrusively in public places.*

2. **Obedience Training:** Your dog must master the basic obedience skills: “Sit, Stay, Come, Down, Heel” and an off leash Recall in response to verbal commands and/or hand signals.

3. **Manners:** Your dog must acquire proper social behavior skills. This includes at a minimum:

- No aggressive behavior toward people or other animals - no biting, no snapping, no growling, no lunging and/or barking;
- No begging for food or petting from other people;
- No sniffing merchandise or people who pass by;
- No urinating or defecating in public unless given a command/signal to toilet in an appropriate place.

4. **Disability Related Tasks:** the dog must be individually trained to perform identifiable physical tasks for the benefit of the disabled human partner.

NOTE: ([Click here](#) for a definition of a “physical task”, “individually trained” and examples of tasks performed by different kinds of assistance dogs)

* the number of hours required for schooling a hearing or guide dog may be reduced to the number required by ADI’s minimum training standards for those programs if you utilize a professional dog trainer’s services. See www.adionline.org

Public Access Test

How will you know when your dog is ready to graduate from an “in training” status to the status of a full fledged assistance dog with whom you are entitled to have public access rights?

The best tool for evaluating a team’s readiness to graduate [e.g. finish up formal training] is the Public Access Test. It can be printed out from the Assistance Dogs International website for educational purposes. Visit www.adionline.org

The ADI Public Access Test was developed as a consumer protection measure by the ADI Team Testing Committee with input from IAADP Partner members more than a decade ago. Overall, the test measures whether or not the dog has been adequately prepared for public access work so the team can go places without trainer supervision. The safety of the dog, the handler and the public were the main considerations in developing the specific exercises for testing the team.

This test creates a level playing field, since it does not matter whether it is a guide, hearing or service dog team being tested or who trained the dog.

Disability mitigating tasks are not critiqued. The tester evaluates the dog’s obedience and manners and the handler’s abilities in a variety of situations which include:

A. The handler’s abilities to: (1) safely load and unload the dog from a vehicle; (2) recover the leash if accidentally dropped.

B. The dog’s ability to: (1) safely cross a parking lot, halt for traffic, and ignore distractions; (2) heel through narrow aisles; (3) hold a Sit-Stay when a shopping cart passes by or when a person stops to chat and pets the dog; (4) hold a Down Stay when a child approaches and pets the dog; (5) resist food temptations; (6) remain calm if someone else

holds the leash while the handler moves 20 feet away; (7) remain calm while another dog passes within 6 feet of the team.

C. The team’s ability to: to enter a public place through a doorway with the dog remaining under excellent control.

If you do not have a trainer to administer the test, it can be administered by a colleague or family member for informational purposes, as it is easy to score to measure your dogs readiness for Public Access!

IAADP agrees with ADI’s ethical position that the amount of training given to an assistance dog should NEVER fall below the minimum level needed to pass this Public Access Test.

NOTE: Passing the Public Access Test does not officially “certify” a dog unless a program giving the test provides such a Certificate of Training to its graduates. However, it could serve as documentation for an owner trainer to prove that he/she has made a serious effort to train the dog to the level required by Assistance Dogs International for a service animal in case of an access dispute, especially if you have the test video taped.

If you have any questions about the Minimum Training Standards for Public Access set forth by IAADP or anything else in this section, please feel free to contact Joan at iaadp@aol.com

To see our informative Training Resources Guide for those who want to train a dog to be their assistance dog, please [click here](#)



DEFINITIONS

What is a Physical Task?

A physical task is a certain desired behavior or set of behaviors the dog is trained to habitually perform in response to a command or a particular situation such as the onset of a seizure.

What is meant by “individually trained”?

“Individual training” involves deliberately rewarding the dog for the right response and, at times, it may require correcting the dog for the wrong response. The task is learned when the dog reliably exhibits the desired behavior whenever needed to assist his/her partner in a way that mitigates the disabling condition. Examples of individually trained tasks include, but are not limited to: retrieving a phone in a medical crisis; guiding a blind person around an obstacle in

the team’s path or providing balance support on a staircase to prevent a fall.

What is NOT an individually trained task?

Spontaneous behavior a dog occasionally exhibits such as licking someone’s face or barking does not qualify as a “trained task” under ADA even if it accidentally or coincidentally has a beneficial result. While everyone enjoys the emotional, social and safety benefits that a dog’s presence can provide, those benefits do not constitute trained tasks that would transform a disabled person’s pet into a legitimate Service Dog under ADA.

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Definitions

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Why are individually trained Tasks so important?

Trained tasks that mitigate [e.g. lessen the effects of] a disabling condition are the legal basis for granting access rights to disabled handlers under the Americans With Disabilities Act. An assistance dog with this special training is viewed as assistive technology/medical equipment, not as a pet. Businesses have the right to ask a disabled person, "what Tasks does your service animal perform?" This question can be asked if there is doubt about the legitimacy of the dog and whether to legally impose existing restrictive pet policies. (An acceptable answer might be, "my service dog is trained to get help for me in a medical crisis by

Fill in the blank as to the specific task _____."

You do not have to reveal your disability in formulating your reply)

Task examples: Traditional Tasks performed by Guide, Hearing and Service Dogs. [click here](#)

Task examples: Tasks for Service Dogs for Persons with a Psychiatric Disability. [click here](#)

Editor's Note: if you want to read the above mentioned articles and don't have a home computer, ask the public library or an acquaintance with a computer to print out the desired information. Our website address is: www.iaadp.org.

IAADP Writing Competition

Offering Annual \$50 Prize in each of 3 categories:

- Best Article
- Best Opinion Piece
- Best Short Story or Anecdote

Entries accepted year round. Unpublished and published material welcome. Photo may accompany article, but not required.

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Membership Information

Membership Dues: \$20 - Partner Member, \$20 - Renewal; \$20 - Friend Member; \$25 - Provider Member. Send check with signed application from website at <http://www.iaadp.org/membership.html> to IAADP c/o IAADP c/o Kathi Duran-Diaz, 808 E. Pontiac Way, Fresno CA 93704. You may also obtain a Membership Application with S.A.S.E., by fax (\$1.00 extra), or send a letter with your signature attesting you're partnered with an assistance dog. Specify Print, Cassette, Disk.

Renewal Date: All members should check their membership expiration date, which now appears on the mailing label of the most recent copy of *Partners Forum*. Partner Members will also find their expiration date on their Membership Card. Renewal notices may or may not be sent out, so members should be careful to renew their memberships 45-60 days in advance of the expiration date to maintain coverage for benefits.

Questions? Contact our Information & Advocacy Center
Call (760) 439-9544 or e-mail IAADP@aol.com or the IAADP website: www.iaadp.org. You can also contact us by mail at IAADP, P.O. Box 1326. Sterling Heights, MI 48311.

International Association of Assistance Dog Partners

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