



New Partnership Between IAADP and Pet Assure

By Ed and Toni Eames

We're delighted to announce a new program to benefit a number of our members. A unique aspect of this new relationship is that it was initiated by an IAADP partner member. Viki Gentilman contacted us about Pet Assure since her veterinarian is a participating member of this unique discounted fee and product program. The result is another opportunity to decrease the financial burden we all assume when deciding to improve the quality of our lives through working with assistance dogs.

The following description was prepared by Janine Anzalone, Pet Assure Business Development Manager.

Pet Assure is America's Number One Discount Plan for Veterinary Care!

IAADP members enjoy a special reduced rate of \$59 a year for your assistance dog and all other pets in the home compared with a regular retail family plan covering only up to four household pets for \$149. IAADP members receive a \$90 savings per year.

Membership includes your assistance dog and all of your other pets for one low price. There's never been an easier way to save money on your pet's and assistance dog's needs!

To join now go to www.petassure.com and click on the Join Now link. Enter promo code for IAADP to access this special offer. Here's a glimpse of what your membership includes:

- 25% off all medical services each and every time you visit a participating network veterinarian! With Pet Assure, you'll receive

your discount right at the vet's office. This plan is not insurance so there are no hassles, no claim forms and no deductibles. Savings are instant! (See details on page 2)

- 5% - 35% off on pet products and specialty items at over 1,000 participating national pet product retailers! (See details on page 2)
- 10% - 35% savings on other services, such as boarding, grooming, training, day care, etc. (See details on page 2)
- 24/7 Pet Assure Locator Service (PALS Tag). Don't worry about your canine assistant or pet getting lost anymore! Every animal who joins gets a pet ID tag linked to Pet Assure's 24/7 Lost Pet Recovery Service. This lost pet recovery service has reunited hundreds of lost pets with their families. (See details on page 2)
- Bi-weekly Pet Assure e-Newsletter – the perfect compliment to your assistance dog and pet care needs de-

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Features You Shouldn't Miss

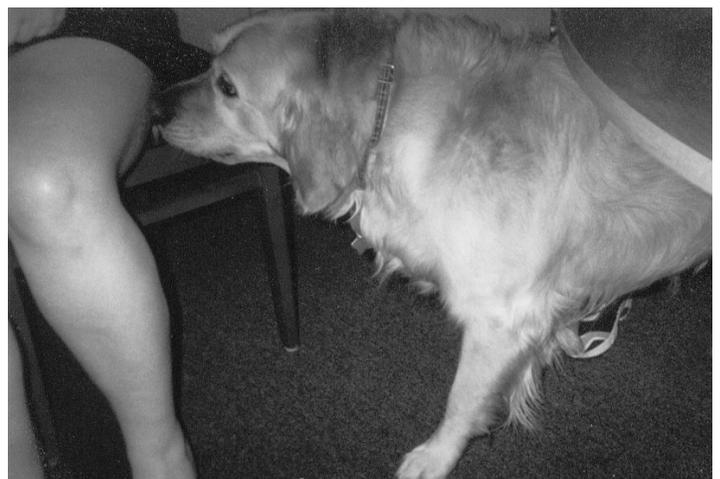
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Editor: Joan Froling
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Hearing Dog In Action: Trained by CCI, "Uriah" rushes through a vacation condo to enthusiastically alert his partner, Jill Exposito, to a phone ringing in the other room.



New Partnership with Pet Assure

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livered to your email inbox! Find valuable animal care tips, fun stories and games, a question and answer section addressing concerns, plus enter your pet and canine assistant photos for a chance to be featured as photo of the month!

- Daily Pet Calendar sent directly to your email and sure to put a smile on your face! These calendar cuties are so adorable that you won't want to start your day without one!

For a complete listing of participating veterinary practices and merchants, visit us online at:

www.petassure.com

If you have any questions, please call Pet Assure at:

1-888-789-PETS (7387)

Using Your Pet Assure Membership is Simple!

Veterinary Care Discounts

It's time to take your four-legged friend to the vet and you're looking for sound care at a low cost. Let Pet Assure help you give your canine assistant and pets the care they need with the savings you want. Our members receive an automatic 25% off exams and office visits, all vaccines, X-rays, any elective procedure (e.g., dental care), any surgeries (e.g., spay and neutering), hospitalization and more!*

Here's how...

Simply present your Pet Assure membership card to a participating provider when paying for services and receive instant savings with no paperwork, no deductibles and no hidden fees*. The discount is applied directly to your bill so you don't have to wait for reimbursements or fill out time-consuming claim forms**. Pet Assure is not insurance, which lets us give you extra savings without the hassle.

Whether your assistance dog or companion animal is furry, feathered, or covered in scales, Pet Assure offers the same discounts. There are no exclusions! All assistance dogs and pets are eligible for care regardless of type, age, health status, previous health history, or any health related conditions that may arise in the future. And the savings never stop. We don't cap your usage with an annual limit. You can use your card as long as you're an active member.

How do I find a vet near me?

Find participating veterinarians, retailers and other pet services in your area on our easy-to-navigate website at **www.petassure.com**. Our network reaches across all 50 States, Washington DC and Puerto Rico. We make it easy to find a network provider near you. Enter your zip code to search for providers.

More savings on retail products

Save on food, supplements, medications, toys, kitty litter, boarding, grooming, pet sitting, training, other services and so much more. Our national and local networks of par-

ticipating retailers such as The Hungry Puppy, Petzlife, 1-800-PetMeds, **PetFoodDirect.com** and more, make these products easy to find and purchase for our exclusive discounted prices. To locate a participating retail provider near you, log on to **www.petassure.com** or call customer service toll free at 1-888-789-7387.

Lost Pet Recovery Service

For many animal owners, a lost assistance dog or pet is like a lost member of the family and in our big world a missing pet can be hard to find. With your Pet Assure membership, you won't get caught off guard. Each animal enrolled in the Pet Assure program is protected by PALS, Pet Assure's Locator Service. Our service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You won't stop your search for a lost pet at the end of the day and neither do we. Our recovery service has reunited hundreds of lost pets with their families.

Here's how PALS works

On your initial login at **www.petassure.com** you will be guided to create your own personal user account and to register your assistance dog and pets. Complete and save the required registration field. PALS will provide you with a specialized ID tag that will aid in recovery. Each tag is equipped with individual identification numbers which are linked to the animal's confidential information in Pet Assure's database. When an animal is recovered, the pet finder simply calls the 24/7 Toll Free service number listed on the tag to report the missing animal has been found. PALS will immediately begin to call all the provided emergency contacts until the owner has been reached for a speedy recovery back to you!

Join today to start saving!

* These discounts apply to billed veterinary services from participating in-network vets. Present your Pet Assure membership card at the time of payment to ensure your discount.

** Discounts on food, flea and parasite control products, medications, non-medical boarding and grooming and any outside services such as lab work or specialist visits are not discounted at the vet's office but can be found at a discount with our extensive network of participating retailers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Access Problem?

Contact: ADA Helpline at
800-514-0301

TTY: 800-514-0363

Email: ada.complaint@usdoj.gov

Joy of Living

By Kevin Frankeberger, Ph.D., CFRE

Across the globe, we face difficult economic times. Even so, philanthropy – the joy of giving – continues. Do you share your treasure? According to “Giving USA” more money is given by individuals in the United States and throughout the world than all corporations and foundations combined. We, by our gifts of \$5 and \$10, are that ultimate safety net. Government helps and of course so do corporations and foundations. We speak often in the *Partners Forum* about our corporate partners. IAADP couldn't be as helpful as we are without them. But, it truly is us – the members – who can make great things happen.

How can we give when 60% of us are unemployed? We can because we are committed to the human-canine bond and existence. We can and should because others have committed to us. All of us need to be committed to IAADP.

As Board members we chat with potential corporate or foundation donors. It is powerful news that we share – 100% of your Board members contribute financially to IAADP. It truly doesn't matter the size of our gifts as each of us is in a different financial place but, one \$5 gift is as heartfelt as another's perhaps much larger gift. It is our commitment, the sharing of our own treasure that garners their attention. You, our membership, can help greatly. You too, can share your treasure.

When you do, we can then say, “not only does 100% of our Board contribute directly to IAADP but so do (percent, readers, help fill in the blank) of our members do as well beyond the modest membership.” And, note that it is not the amount of money given that moves corporations and foundations to assist IAADP but the numbers of giving members that counts. Of course, give at your capacity, but if that is an extra \$5 annually beyond your membership, THANK YOU! Or, if it is \$50 a month or, \$600 annually beyond your membership, THANK YOU!

We have recently revamped the “giving” page on the IAADP website – www.iaadp.org. On the front page you will find a “Donate” button. That will take you to a page with a host of options for your giving. Listed there is a P.O. Box and a telephone number – both of which are needed if you use a bill paying service through your bank. You can set up a recurring donation monthly or a one-time gift. Also on that page you can link to Pay Pal. Within Pay Pal you can use a credit card or your own Pay Pal account to give. If you need assistance with any of that or if you'd like to discuss estate gifts, gifts of appreciated assets (do any of us have that anymore? <grin>) feel free to contact me (Kevin@iaadp.org) and I'll help as I can or direct you to whomever we might need to help answer your question.

If you are employed and your employer offers a matching gift program, email me

and I can provide you whatever documentation your HR department or whomever at your business might need to process their matching support.

IAADP is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Your contributions are tax deductible as allowed by US law. Always consult your tax professional.

Kevin was recently elected to serve on the Board of Directors of IAADP. He is blind and travels with his Guide Dogs for the Blind Labrador, Tomasso. Kevin's wife Becky, also blind, travels with her Seeing Eye dog Jake. Having been named a National Transit Success Story in 2003, Kevin is associated with Damon Brooks Associates, Cornell University and the University of Washington. He travels frequently giving seminars and speeches regarding disability awareness. The Frankebergers reside in a cottage with a trout lake as their front yard in the Pacific Northwest.

Dear Ed, Toni and the Board of IAADP,

Several weeks ago, my Service Dog, Chloe, became very ill with what was diagnosed as acute liver failure. We were never able to discover the cause but treated the symptoms. Over the course of four days, she became so ill we were not sure she would recover. Multiple tests, four days of IV fluids and antibiotics and many days of force feeding put her on the road to recovery. After one small set-back, just enough to scare us, she seems completely well. She is back at work with me in my office, picking up the things I drop!

Our vet at River Road Animal Hospital in Puyallup, WA called IAADP as soon as it became clear we were dealing with a serious illness. We received a check from you to help cover the large bill. Chloe will need to be on two liver medications for some time, and through IAADP's relationship with Nutramax Laboratories, Inc., we have received both of her medications free of charge. I want to thank the IAADP for helping return Chloe to health and being a working partner with me. My thanks, too, go to the Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound for the valuable service the club provides the members with our membership in the IAADP.

Thank you for the many benefits of membership.

Sincerely,

Dan McConnell & SD Chloe
Fife, WA

Adventures in Access

By Stephanie Smith, Ph.D

I live in a small rural county about 40 miles northeast of Dallas, Texas. As far as I know, there are only two other service dogs in the county, both labs. My hearing and mobility assistance dog is a striking cream Standard Poodle named Amber that I trained. I have had Poodles since I was four years old. Amber's predecessor earned her companion dog excellent title and could have earned far more had my health not worsened. I have a doctorate in psychology and joke that the only thing I use it for is to train my dogs.

Why do I use a service dog? I have a constellation of respiratory and neurological problems, but the one that causes the most issues is hereditary spastic paraparesis (HPL). This causes the long motor neurons to degenerate, resulting in balance problems, muscle spasms, frequent falls, fatigue, pain, and the inability to walk far, especially over uneven ground. When I fall, which is often, if there is nothing to rest my hand on for balance, I cannot get up. I am rather like a turtle flipped on its back.

In addition, HPL has attacked the software in my brain that processes sound. I do not hear many sounds at all. If someone speaks to me, I often hear a garble of noise. Consequently, I do a lot of lip reading and my phones are amplified.

Amber is trained to stay with me at all times when I am not in the house. Inside the house, she stays where she can see and hear me but is not necessarily right at my feet. My pet dog, an Australian Cattle Dog, stays at my feet at home. When I fall, Amber comes and stands in front of me. I tell her "brace" and then rest my hand on her back for balance. She remains still until I am standing and stable again. I do not put weight on her back, but do need to hold on for balance.

Amber is trained to specifically alert me to someone turning into our driveway, walking up to the house, the microwave timer going off, the oven timer going off, the alarm clock going off, and any strange noises that occur in the house. When we are outside of the house, she alerts me to someone calling my name, coming up behind me, a car getting near me, and any other strange sound. Her alerts are unobtrusive. At home, she will catch my eye or nudge me and then walk to the sound. Other places she nudges me to get my attention, then looks toward the sound. When I am seated, she usually lays so she faces the other direction from me, to guard my back.

In addition to the alerts Amber is trained to give, she will fuss when I am tired or hungry. My feet start to drag when I am tired, and I fall more. My blood sugar will drop when I need to eat, and I get wobbly. I know that when she fusses, I need to sit down and look inward to see if I need to eat or I am getting too tired to continue my activities and need to rest. My friends have learned to watch Amber for cues that I need to stop and rest or eat. My dog rats me out every time!

Living in a rural area is wonderful. It does mean, however, that you deal with people who are not as knowledgeable about the Americans with Disabilities Act and the

Service Dog Access laws as most city folk. Most of the encounters we have had were brought to a friendly conclusion. I carry the Department of Justice FAQ for businesses with me and giving the business owner something from the DOJ helps a lot. Sometimes, though, that is not sufficient. In the three years I have been partnered with Amber, I have had five denial of access cases that took more work to solve. From these cases, I have learned some ways of dealing with people who either do not know about the ADA laws, or do not care.

1. If the manager on duty will not help, contact the corporate office. The assistant manager of Dollar General in Greenville tried to throw me out of the store. When I cited the law and refused to leave, she stomped off and actually threw things she was so mad. I filled out the complaint form on the website, and soon got a call from the district manager. Not only did he straighten out the personnel at that store, I have not had trouble in any of the Dollar General stores in Hunt County.
2. Sometimes the corporate lawyer is your friend. I used to go to a Mexican restaurant here a lot called Ta Molly's. Amber and I had been many times, but one time the assistant manager very worriedly told us the health inspector would shut him down if she saw us. We assured him that it was the law that a service dog was allowed. However, the next time we went, a police officer stopped us as we were leaving and sternly wanted to know why the dog was there. My friend slunk off to get the car while I told the officer why Amber was a service dog, and that I was sure he knew the ADA well enough to know we had a right to be there. I called the restaurant later that day and got the number for their corporate office. When I called, I explained the problem and asked to speak to their lawyer. He was horrified, knew exactly which manager it was, and spread the word that we belonged there. I have not had any further problems.
3. You will run into people who should know the law but do not. Educate not only them, but present it to their superiors as a training issue. The Director of Security challenged me at the Dallas Museum of Art. He did so after my friend and I had been through the King Tut exhibit, eaten at the café, and then talked to the main desk with a question. Only when we went to the permanent collection did someone on staff summon him. This man had obviously had some training, because he asked if Amber was a working dog and if she was working. But then he demanded her papers, and tried to convince me she would damage his artifacts. Since the museum was full of children who were running, screaming, and touching things, I was not impressed. I told him I could guarantee my dog was better behaved than any child in his museum. I also wrote to the Director of Public Relations when I got home. She replied and said that all security staff would be required to attend a refresher course on the ADA and service dog access laws.

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4. Sometimes it is not about you. A maintenance supervisor tried to throw me out of the county building where I volunteer as a master gardener. I had been doing that for five or six years, and Amber had been with me for two. It turned out he was in a turf war with someone in the building and was trying to prove he could control access to it. His boss and the County Judge both apologized, and assured me that I can go in any county building without a problem.
5. Finally, sometimes you have to throw up your hands and complain to the Department of Justice. One restaurant, Molina's, added a new branch in Greenville. I had eaten at the Commerce branch, so tried to go to the Greenville branch. The manager refused to seat me, talk to me, look at the information on the law, or deal with me in any way. The owner refused to talk to me either. Currently, the DOJ is investigating them because they refused mediation and will not cooperate with the investigator.

So why do I continue to use a service dog? Because Amber makes it possible for me to exist in the world without fear — fear that I will fall and not be able to get up, fear that someone will walk up behind me and grab me, fear I will miss some important sound and get hurt. Not being afraid is worth the hassle of people coming up when I am in a hurry, having to assert my rights with people who are ignorant of them, or any other inconvenience. Amber gives me the courage to try to be the person she thinks I am.

A Tail To Tell

By Toni and Ed Eames

Toni confessed she didn't read *Little Women* during her growing up years, so we jumped at the opportunity to join the Guide Dogs for the Blind puppy raising group at a dress rehearsal of the musical. This play was going to be performed at a local theater in our hometown of Fresno, California. Our Golden Retriever guide dogs Keebler and Latrell were joined by seven pups, all well behaved and mannerly during the performance. No barking and no whining from this group of guide dog candidates! Maybe our experienced Goldens counseled the youngsters on proper etiquette at the theater!

Several weeks later, we joined a much larger contingent of puppy raisers at a local shopping mall. We had the chance to meet several pups, including an 8-week-old black Lab who arrived in Fresno the day before the event. Keebler likes other dogs, but Latrell goes beyond like and thrills at being among canine friends. He had a ball!

Joining two other Fresno guide dog partners, we spoke with the group of fifty people about what working with a guide dog means to us. We saluted the puppy raisers for their incredible and selfless devotion to their mission. Many in attendance have raised more than ten future guides.

Ed's North Fresno Lions Club, which helps support IAADP with an annual contribution, has a number of fund raisers during the year, but the crab feed on March 28 was the most fun and the most successful. At the end of this festive event, we discovered Keebler, the consummate scavenger, had ingested several dropped paper napkins filled with who knows what! In the middle of the night she threw up and had to be rushed out for a poop break. That scenario was recapitulated throughout the rest of the night. She spent the next 24 hours off food and on leash restriction.

Keebler's scavenging is not limited to discarded dirty napkins at crab feasts. She is also very fond of cat poop! In order to thwart this disgusting habit, we bought a piece of kitty litter furniture from Harris Works. It is a beautiful-looking cabinet with the cat pan inside. It matches our living room furniture! The cats enter through a hole, and thankfully we are mostly able to block Keebler's head from entering!

We've continued our veterinary school outreach efforts under the sponsorship of Fort Dodge Animal Health. On Easter Sunday we flew to Madison, Wisconsin with a layover in Denver. On the second leg of the flight, we met Peggy Iden, an 80-year-old woman traveling with her 9-year-old cat Pepper. Only two veterinary teaching hospitals in the United States perform kidney transplants, so Peggy was traveling from Boulder, Colorado for Pepper's surgery in Madison. We were particularly moved by her devotion to her cat, since we are going through hospice care for our two older feline family members, Bonzie and Nifty.

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Note from Germany

Dear International Association of Assistance Dog Partners,

This is Karly, my hearing ear dog. We are residing in Bavaria, Germany, due to my husband's work with the U.S. Department of Defense. I would like to say a sincere "Thank You" to all of you that have made the wonderful benefits available to us and our assistance dogs. When we arrived in Germany I did not know if I would still be eligible for the services offered from IAADP, but to our good fortune we have all access to the U.S. Military Veterinarians here on the U.S. Army post and they were so helpful and impressed by IAADP and the benefits offered to fill all our requests. Thanks to these awesome companies offering these benefits, Karly is getting top of the line supplements from Nutramax, and Advantix from Bayer Healthcare. We can't tell you thank you enough and let you know how important IAADP has been to us and the generosity of these companies is a true godsend. We are an active pair and Karly is constantly exposed to all sorts of climates and travel (she's awesome on the trains too~) so we need to keep at optimum health, thanks to Nutramax, Bayer Healthcare, and your continued commitment to assistance dog partnerships we are in excellent hands!

A sincere "Thank You" to all again!

Sincerely,
Kelly Jerome - Karly too!

A Tail To Tell

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The two days we spent in Madison were made most pleasant by our hostess, Phyllis Degioia, a fellow member of the Dog Writers Association of America. Our silly citified Golden retrievers took little pleasure in running with Phyllis' two dogs in the large fenced yard, but preferred to wrestle and play at our feet back in the house!

Since Peggy was in Madison not knowing anyone, we invited her to come to our presentation to the vet students. Wishing to extend friendship, we invited her back to Phyllis' house where we really got to know her. For dinner that night, we had a true Wisconsin feast at Laurel's Tavern, with fried cheese curds and bratwurst sandwiches. The dining arrangements were ideal with our table set in front of a fireplace. Marsha Carlson and Meghan Whalen, two Madison based IAADP members filled out the dinner party.

Leaving Madison on the 14th for the flights to Des Moines, Iowa, we knew Peggy was in good hands. Both Phyllis and Marsha took her under their wings, and we all cried with the news that Pepper died after the surgical procedure. Everyone who commits to having a kidney transplant, must adopt the donor cat, so Badger went home with Peggy and has fit into her six cat family. Meeting such a wonderful, caring woman was a true high!

Without a special friend in Iowa, a cadre of veterinary students became our drivers and dinner companions. Generally, we don't have time to get to know the students, so this was great fun!

Our next vet school lecture was in southern California in April. Beth Shea, an IAADP member partnered with a service dog, was our driver and companion for the trip to speak at Western University Veterinary School, the newest one in this country. On the way there, we stopped to share an evening at the home of Dr. Alice Villalobos and husband Ira. Dr. Alice, along with our Fresno-based Waterhouse Hospital team, have kept Nifty and Bonzie, dealing with cancer and kidney failure respectively, comfortable.

The next day we spoke with the entire first year veterinary student body, approximately 100. Lunch with the faculty after the presentation provided the opportunity to continue networking. A fun encounter was meeting a professor who had been a student at the University of Georgia when we spoke there several years ago.

Our third trip was to St. Louis to lecture at the Univer-

sity of Missouri vet school. We stayed with Mark and Peggy Holly, a wonderful, warm and welcoming couple we met 12 years ago on our first trip to South Africa.

The Hollies enjoy entertaining, so arranged a dinner for ten the evening we arrived. The food was good and the conversation stimulating. Among the guests were Judy and Rick Burch, a blind couple partnered with guide dogs. The Burchs were among the small group of assistance dog partners who initiated IAADP in 1993, and we reminisced about that occasion.

Latrell and Keebler enjoyed four days at Camp Holly. Peggy and Mark are runners and took the couch potato Golden retrievers for runs and long walks, something they don't get to do back in Fresno. They were exhausted but happy when we returned home.

Monday in St. Louis was busy with a luncheon tour and presentation to the staff and volunteers at Support Dogs, a program training service and hearing dogs. Their training facility was impressive, and we were delighted to discover they have a puppy raising program at a federal prison. The major goal of this effort is to provide skills for inmates who receive certification as trainers and groomers. After a one year apprenticeship, the Department of Justice considers the women trained and ready for the job market.

Later that afternoon our talk with the veterinary students at the U of Missouri was invigorating. Arriving a bit early, we were able to partake of Tiger Paws, a specialty ice cream made at the university dairy and named after the school mascot.

Student leaders are getting more creative in the food they serve to get their peers to attend lectures! When we began our vet school lecturing careers, pizza was the universal fare. Now it has expanded to include a diversity of offerings. This time it was a huge baked potato with all the trimmings!

Tuesday's lunch date was with folks from Champ, another service dog program in St. Louis.

Spring is our favorite season in Fresno. The scent of orange blossoms, the soft breezes caressing our wind chimes and comfortable evenings without air conditioning are true delights! By the time you read our next "Tail" column, we will have suffered through a summer season of scorching temperatures above 100 degrees!

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

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.

**Hope You Will
Support IAADP!**

Donate by Shopping Through

<http://www.IGIVE.com/IAADP>

Final Tribute to a Gentle Giant - Sasquatch d'Otterhound

By Norma Ramirez

He had an obscure past. He was a wanderer of the streets in Chicopee, Mass. He was a survivor. He was rough-coated and sported that perfectly imperfect tousled coiffure on his head and body. This gentle giant would be rescued from the Chicopee Animal Shelter by the National Education of Assistance Dog Services in Princeton, Mass., and thus destined for a second chance to make a difference in someone's life.

That someone turned out to be me. In December 2000, I had applied for an assistance dog partner at NEADS because I had balance issues due to a neurological situation as a result of a viral infection. Seven weeks after my interview, I got the call that I was matched to one of the largest dogs at the school, and his name was "Sasquatch," an Otterhound, which is a rare breed originating from Great Britain in the early 1100s.

This gentle giant weighed an impressive 115 pounds during his most productive years with me.

In fact, Dave Hessel, one of the NEADS trainers, reminisced: "I can still remember that day when we were looking for dogs at the shelter in Chicopee and we came across this giant Otterhound without a collar. And if I remember correctly, there was a sign on his run door that said something to the effect of 'Hard to handle' or 'Do not handle'. He was so huge that we thought it would be hysterical to bring him back to NEADS. So we prepared a leash loop and let him out and wrestled the loop onto him. We laughed the entire way out of there because he was such a giant clown! During our trip back from Chicopee, we tossed around name ideas for him, and then I threw Bigfoot out there, and then the American-Indian equivalent for Bigfoot, which is Sasquatch. We laughed so hard that we were crying, and then we missed our exit off the Pike! So, it took forever to get back to the NEADS campus."

"Creature Comforts" had featured this black, gentle giant with big brown eyes back in November 2004, and photographer Bob LaPree documented Sasquatch's ability to perform housework – carrying the laundry bag from the bathroom to the kitchen, then loading the washer and unloading the dryer and taking the trash out to the dumpster, to name a few.

This fuzzy guy knew the difference between bottled water and canned soda, which he would fetch by opening the door of the refrigerator – while resisting the temptation to snack on the cold cuts in there. He was often seen at Shaw's in Goffstown, helping me get items off the shelves as I did my weekly shopping.

He retrieved my prescriptions from the pharmacist on duty. He fetched the cordless phone when it rang and picked up loose change from the floor and gently put it in the palm of my hand without dripping saliva on me.

Our bond was sealed early on in this partnership; he knew when my body would be medically compromised

before I would be aware of trouble. He would stand in front of me, placing his paws on my shoulders and stare eye-to-eye to warn me of an oncoming migraine or asthma flare.

He pulled me toward the bedroom at 2 p.m. every day so I could take a nap. He made sure I had my facemask on with the oxygen and C-Pap machine operating before I fell asleep. Only then would he join me on the bed, lying beside me while holding my right hand with his paw. If the oxygen tubing dislodged, he would "seek" for the end of the tubing and wake me up to reattach it to the mask. Every morning, he woke me up by 6 a.m. so I could start taking my medication and he helped me get out of bed by steadying my balance. He fetched my clothes and assisted me in dressing.

Sasquatch was truly a smart hound. While training to be a walker-balance assistance dog at NEADS, he would be out in the play yard with his fellow kennel-mates, sitting by the sidelines watching the other dogs running around and also observing the trainers who were supervising the playtime. Apparently, he was studying how the trainers accessed this enclosed area by unlatching two gates. Well, one day he decided to open these gates, which led to a parking lot and then the freedom of the 12-acre campus. My fuzzy instigator let the rest of his kennel-mates loose and the dogs scattered like the wind!

And where was Sasquatch? After sniffing around the parking lot, he waited by the entrance of the school's reception area so he could go inside the building to hang out with the humans. Meanwhile, all the trainers and other staff members were running after the dogs to corral them back to the kennel. It was after this incident that the trainers nicknamed him "Houdini."

Sasquatch had an imposing stature, especially when I let his hair grow out for the winter season. He preferred the "natural look" and would vigorously shake his entire body after time was painstakingly spent brushing and grooming him; he looked like he got zapped by static electricity. He didn't care as long as he could scamper away from the comb and brush.

Sasquatch was very intelligent. It took him less than an hour to learn the task of opening the fridge and targeting bottled water or a soda can, then shutting the fridge door. Being food-motivated made this task easy to teach him. But then he turned the tables on me when he would arbitrarily bring me bottled water repeatedly until I gave him a slice of cheese! "He" trained "me" well!

At noontime every day, Sasquatch would get a snack of vegetable, from wilted spinach to steamed green beans,



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Final Tribute to a Gentle Giant

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beets, carrots, cauliflower, or broccoli. He would sit in front of his empty bowl and quietly wait for his snack. When he got impatient, I would hear him howling with his vocal “basso profundo.” If I did not appear in the kitchen quick enough, he would grab the empty bowl with his mouth and trot to the living room where I would be working at my computer, and would slam the bowl to the floor! Another howl would follow to get my undivided attention. I swear he truly mastered the art of communication!

As a true hound dog, Sasquatch had that inner drive to hunt. Even though he was trained not to chase four-legged creatures of the meowing kind, he enjoyed taunting the feral cats of the neighborhood when he was off duty and catching some rays out in the front stoop. He was securely tied and never within reach of these kitty cats.

During the winter, I would heighten his propensity to hunt by taking his Kong toy, filling it with a cookie or peanut butter, and laying a trail around the house so he would follow the scent, digging under his bed, sniffing out the laundry hamper, only to find the object of desire balanced high above the top of the bathroom door or on the top bookshelf in the living room. He would bark at the toy, thinking it would drop down on its own accord. But you could see him thinking through his dilemma, and he would have an “eureka” moment, figuring that if he slammed the door shut, the toy would fall to the floor and he would triumphantly take possession of the big prize. If the toy was on the top shelf of the bookcase, he figured that he could reach the toy by climbing onto a nearby chair.

Sasquatch gave me the courage to embrace life, and he taught me to live for the moment. I have a hard time with that because the moment he left our earth on April 1 to join the other angels at “Rainbow Bridge,” my grief bore a void in my heart and I am reminded of feeling his warm body against me as I held him in my lap and caressed his muzzle, cradling his head.

It was a peaceful moment for us both, though I knew that we would be separated by the dimensions of life and the afterlife. I won’t say goodbye for now because he is always with me as I hold him close to my heart. We shared a phenomenal partnership for exactly eight years since he came into my life April 1 of 2001. He was the clown of my life; so apropos for April Fool’s Day.

Enjoy being whole again, my dear Fuzzy Momo! Fly high with your angel wings; try not to bang into the other angel doggies at “Rainbow Bridge.” My love for you is steadfast. Feel free to visit me in my dreams!

Norma Ramirez lives in Manchester New Hampshire.

* This is a reprint from the “Creature Comforts” column from the *New Hampshire Union Leader/Sunday News* April 19, 2009 edition

IAADP WEBSITE:
www.iaadp.org

Assistance dogs: Party Animals when the harness comes off

By Phyllis DeGioia, April 20, 2009

With the song “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun” bouncing through my head, I think of my recent visitors and laugh. Ed and Toni Eames of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP) hit the road regularly to talk to veterinary students across the country about the needs of assistance dogs and disabled clients. Last week I watched them speak at the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine. Even within crowds of students at a veterinary school, Goldens Keebler and Latrell draw attention; you can hear the oohs and aahs as the two guide dogs strut their stuff.

For those folks who wonder if or when assistance dogs ever get to “just be dogs,” be assured that they do. Once those harnesses come off, Keebler and Latrell stop flaunting their work ethic and get down to enjoying life like any red-blooded dog. It’s like seeing actors right after they’ve walked back stage after a performance: everything changes in a second, and they are themselves again instead of the character they play. Unlike actors, the dogs are always happy.

They stayed at my house. The Eames live in a townhouse, so we thought the dogs would love romping around my fenced yard. Not quite: both Keebler and Latrell decided inside next to mom and dad was better, although Latrell enjoyed the yard more than Keebler did. Latrell knew he could chase a ball farther out there.

These dogs play with other dogs, roll on their backs in the grass, enjoy toys, run after a ball, find a few sticks, and soak in the sun. Keebler and Latrell could each wear a “Life is Good” t-shirt.

Like Dodger, Keebler also likes to disembowel toys and shred them into little pieces. Between the two of them, there was a lot of shredded stuffing. Little bits of white stuffing and bitten-off pieces of fleece were in every room of the house. Dodger needs a new stash of toys now because what’s left in the toy box is a bunch of empty, headless fleece skins. Dodger was almost ready for a new stash anyway; Keebler just sped up the process. Ginger supervised activity, pretending she has a work ethic I know she doesn’t have. Dodger doesn’t know what a work ethic is, and doesn’t care either.

Latrell preferred running around the yard to any disembowelment activities. Latrell is such a goofball; half the time you can find him on his back, inviting belly rubs and laughs, and just rolling around scratching his back if he doesn’t get a belly rub.

No matter how much fun they have, though, the moment the harness goes back on, so does the work ethic. They are off and on, like an actor on stage and back stage. Like actors, they work for love, but instead of applause they get to take off their harnesses and play. To paraphrase Cyndi Lauper, “That’s all they really want/Some fun/When the workin’ day is done/Oh dogs just wanna have fun/oh dogs just wanna have fun.”

UPDATE

Service Animal Relief Areas at Airports

By Ed and Toni Eames

We have had three very different experiences at airports in relation to the U.S. Department of Transportation requirement of installation of service animal relief areas.

In our home town of Fresno, California a relief area was established within the secure perimeter. Although accessible and safe, it was inadequate. The area of artificial turf was too small, there was no fence and no water or cleaning material. The airport manager is working with Emily Simone, field representative for Guide Dogs for the Blind, and us to establish a model facility. He plans to have a major media event when the installation is complete and formally opened!

On the way home from St. Louis on May 13, the official date when these areas were to have been established, we were appalled to discover Lambert St. Louis Airport officials were unaware of this mandate.

With a long layover in Denver, Colorado we decided to check out the service animal relief area at this airport. There was no relief area in the secured perimeter so while Toni stayed back at the gate with the luggage, an airport volunteer took Ed and the dogs on a long trek to get the Golden Retrievers to a well setup and maintained pet relief area outside the main terminal. It was about 10 by 20 feet, fenced in with a trash bin and bags for disposal of waste. It even had an accessible emergency phone. However, the adventure took one hour and would not have been feasible if our layover time had been shorter.

If IAADP members want to see adequate service animal relief areas at all airports, it will be up to all of us to file written complaints with DOT to ensure compliance.

The following report was prepared by IAADP partner member Kathy Taylor of Indiana.

On May 14, 2009 I was so excited to scope out the Service Animal Relief areas at the Indianapolis, Indiana airport. I'm happy to report there are four, and my hearing dog Janet and I were able to visit three. Two are located outside the baggage areas making it extremely easy to get to either one.

From inside the baggage area you are able to see the signs, however the bad news is the areas are not fenced and I would say they are 6 feet by 8 feet – not the recommended 10 x 10. Also, there were no bags for pickup or pooper scoopers at these locations. There is a trash receptacle located near the exit doors but this would have required me to carry her “deposit” about 25 feet. Thank goodness we always have bags in her vest!

After passing through the TSA check points I thought we'd check out the relief areas inside the airport. I approached a TSA security officer and was informed that we would have to go back outside the baggage area but I explained that as of yesterday [May 13th, 2009] there were two areas located within the airport and two outside. After he made a couple of telephone calls he informed me I was to ask US Airway staff and thanked me for bringing this to his attention.

US Airway was a different story. Not only were they informed by email earlier in the week explaining where the areas were, but they were very eager to meet our needs. We were escorted through a door down a flight of stairs and taken outside along the security fence for Janet to use the two foot strip of grass. I asked how someone with mobility issues could access this area, and was told there was an elevator to provide access.

IAADP would like to hear about your experiences while traveling with your assistance dog.

Internet Radio Has Gone to the Dogs!

By Marcie Davis and Whistle and Franz Freibert, Ph.D.

In 2009, **PetLifeRadio.com** launched the new Internet radio show, *Working Like Dogs*, hosted by me, Marcie Davis, and my service dog Whistle. PetLifeRadio, LLC offers free pet podcasts and downloads from the **PetLifeRadio.com** website, as well as pet podcasts through iTunes. The **PetLifeRadio.com** website contains great pet podcasts, podcasts for pet lovers, and pet podcasts from the experts about everything for dogs, cats, birds, fish or exotic pets. Every pet podcast features great information about pet care, pet health, and interviews with the top pet professionals. Through *Working Like Dogs*, **PetLifeRadio.com** has

now expanded its lineup to feature a podcast specifically for assistance dogs and other working dogs and animals.

As a member of a service dog team for over 16 years, the author of *Working Like Dogs: The Service Dog Guidebook*, and through the website **workinglikedogs.com**, I receive lots of questions regarding assistance dogs in general and service dogs in particular. These questions come from curious people who are interested in obtaining an assistance dog or in assisting others to obtain an assistance dog, and from assistance dog partners who desire more infor-

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Internet Radio Has Gone to the Dogs!

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mation on issues such as assistance dog health care, retirement, nutrition, and other relevant topics. So, when I read in *Alpine Publications* monthly newsletter that PetLifeRadio was looking for ideas for new shows to add to their lineup, I submitted a proposal to create a show specifically discussing assistance dogs, other working dogs, and working animals.

This new podcast, *Working Like Dogs*, provides a forum to discuss a variety of topics and issues specifically relating to assistance dogs, other working dogs, and working animals. This podcast features 30-minute episodes that address such questions as “How do I get started as a trainer of working animals?” “How do I acquire a working animal?” “How do I best take care of my animal companion?” and many others. In these episodes, listeners learn what it means to work side by side with a working dog or other working animal. We cover working animals such as assistance dogs (service dogs, guide dogs, hearing dogs, seizure dogs, etc.), police dogs, search and rescue dogs, military dogs, etc. In addition to dogs, I plan to discuss working horses, elephants, pigeons, and the list goes on and on. Also, we discuss topics such as equipment, grooming, nutrition, training, traveling with your working companion, veterinary issues, retirement, and behavior.

This working animal podcast includes guests in every field of the assistance dogs, other working dogs, and working animal world. Trainers, handlers, veterinarians, working animal experts, and animal communicators give you the inside scoop on everything you’ve always wanted to know about assistance dogs, other working dogs, and working animals. These interviews are conducted via Skype and telephone with me in Santa Fe, New Mexico and my Executive Producer and PetLifeRadio Co-founder, Mark Winter, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Because of the flexibility of Skype and the telephone we can interview anyone virtually anywhere!

To date, we have featured such animal experts and specialists as:

- Dani Weinberg, Ph.D., Dog Trainer and Behavior Consultant, author of *Teaching People, Teaching Dogs* and field instructor for Paws With A Cause®. Dani discussed with us her work as a clicker trainer and her passion for working with both dogs and their human partners. She offered some practical training tips and techniques for working with service dogs and their human partners.
- Joe White, veteran and military dog handler and founder of K-9 Corps Day joined us to discuss the history of military dogs and the selfless contributions they have made and continue to make to our grateful nation.
- Josh Griffith who is owner of WireDog Petjoy (www.petjoyonline.com), an online company specializing in service dog equipment, stopped in to share with us a variety of service dog products, training gear, and other working dog equipment and supplies.
- Laura Hames, certified BodyTalk Practitioner and Access Instructor, talked about her knowledge and experiences performing BodyTalk for animals, an alternative healing technique for both humans and animals. She discussed how BodyTalk could benefit working dogs.

- My husband, Franz Freibert, Ph.D., joined the show to discuss his personal experiences as a spouse and family member of a working service dog team. He discussed my decision to get a service dog and how it impacted *his* life. Franz addressed lots of questions such as, “What was it like to meet my service dog for the first time?” “Do working dogs ever get to cut loose and play?” “Can you pet a working dog?” and much more.
- Nicole Meadowcroft, Executive Director of the OccuPaws Guide Dog Association, dropped in to talk with us about her organization that provides guide dogs to individuals who are blind or who have low vision. Nicole discussed OccuPaws’ innovative guide dog training program that utilizes a “community” or “in-home” training approach for individuals who want a guide dog and can not attend a traditional “out-of-home” program. Nicole shared her exhilarating experiences as a guide dog trainer and a member of a guide dog team.
- Ed Eames, Ph.D., President and Toni Eames, M.S., Treasurer, respectively of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP) discussed the benefits of IAADP membership and the current issues IAADP is working to address. They shared exciting news about the release of *Partners in Independence*, an informative DVD about real life working dogs and IAADP’s advocacy campaign to ensure that the United States (U.S.) Department of Transportation’s new rules requiring all U.S. airports to create service animal relief areas are successfully implemented.

Stay tuned for many more future episodes which are in production, including: veterinarian experts discussing eye care for dogs and the National Service Dog Eye Exam Day, nutritional experts discussing raw food and other dietary choices, puppy raisers sharing their personal experiences, and the list goes on and on.

Working Like Dogs is available as a free podcast and can be downloaded from the **PetLifeRadio.com** website. Podcasts can be accessed through iTunes, Podcast Alley, Odeo, Pod-planet, Pod Nova, Podcast Pickle, Podcasting Station, Podanza and other major podcast portals! You can even subscribe to the podcasts with Foneshow and Melodeo and have them downloaded right into your cell phone.

If you have any comments or questions about *Working Like Dogs* or if you have an idea for a show or a topic you would like the show to address, please contact me, Marcie Davis, at marcie@petliferadio.com or at 1-866-445-DOGS (3647).

Marcie Davis is the author of *Working Like Dogs: The Service Dog Guidebook*, founder of www.workinglikedogs.com, founder of National Assistance Dogs Week, August 9-15, 2009, and the host of *Working Like Dogs* at www.petliferadio.com.

Franz Freibert, Ph.D., is a physicist at Los Alamos National Laboratory and Vice President of Davis Innovations, Inc. (www.davisinnovates.com).

U.S. DOT's new FAQ

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) discusses a number of service animal issues in an 18 page FAQ document which you can find on IAADP's website in the Air Travel section. It is titled: **May 13, 2009 Disability Rule: Frequently Asked Questions** on the DOT's website. The two items listed here contain recent decisions on issues that IAADP had requested clarification on after reading the New Rule amending the Air Carrier Access Act in May 2008.

33. Question: What type of documentation are carriers permitted to require as a condition of permitting a service animal to travel on a flight segment scheduled to take eight hours or more?

Answer: The carrier may require documentation that the animal will not need to relieve itself during the expected duration of the flight or that the animal can relieve itself in a way that does not create a health or sanitation issue on the flight. Examples of documentation a passenger could provide include either a written statement from a veterinarian, a signed statement from the passenger containing the procedures that he/she employs to prevent the animal from having to relieve itself (e.g., limitation on the provision of food and water) and an assurance that the use of these procedures has prevented the animal from relieving itself for a period similar to that of the planned duration of the flight, or a signed statement with photographs or other illustrations of the animal's ability to relieve itself without posing a health or sanitation problem (e.g., the use of a passenger-provided absorbent plastic-backed pad).

47. Question: Are food and equipment that a service animal requires to function as a service animal considered assistive devices under Part 382?

Answer: Equipment used by a service animal (e.g., harness, leash, vest) in conjunction with its work as a service animal is an assistive device under the rule. Food is not equipment under this definition and therefore when tendered as carry-on or checked baggage, the standard size, weight, and baggage allowance limits of the carrier may apply.



Call for Articles

By Ed and Toni Eames

Editor Joan Froling is always looking for articles from IAADP members for publication in *Partners' Forum*. One area of particular interest is approaches your veterinarian has developed to keep your dog working, going beyond the usual procedures that would be used in treating a pet. As an illustration, we've heard about an alternative

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Partner Member Benefits

Free benefits unless otherwise noted

All Members Worldwide

- "Partners Forum" Newsletter
- Muttluks - 50% discount on boots, 50% discount on shipping in North America
- International Help-line [call or write]

Available in United States

- Sentinel Flavor Tabs from Novartis Animal Health
- Advantage Multi, Advantage or Advantix from Bayer Animal Health
- Dasuquin, Cosequin, Welactin, Denosyl from Nutramax Laboratories
- AVID Microchip - Avid Microchip ID Systems, Inc.
- Registration in PETtrac and/or the AKC Companion Animal Recovery Program
- Veterinary Care Partnership Grant (eligibility guidelines on website)
- KV Vet Supply offers 15% off all non-pharmaceutical products
- Fort Dodge Animal Health - vaccine rebate up to \$20
- Veterinary Centers of America - 10% discount
- Kansas State University Veterinary Diagnostic Labs - 50% discount on titer testing.

Available in Canada

- Advantage or Advantage Multi from Bayer Animal Health Canada
- Wyeth Animal Health - vaccine rebate up to \$20

Available in UK

- Cosequin provided by Bioiberica, the manufacturer with the cooperation of the distributor, Schering Plough UK

Note: Members in other countries are encouraged to seek similar benefits from companies for their geographical area.

MEMBERSHIP QUERIES?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Contact Carol at 888-54-IAADP

or at carol@iaadp.org

Call for Articles

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surgical procedure designed by the University of Minnesota Veterinary Teaching Hospital when a service dog was diagnosed with cancer of the jaw. The usual procedure would be to remove the lower jaw where the cancer was located. This would not have interfered with a pet's ability to eat, but would have ended the working career of the service dog whose job included retrieving dropped and requested items. The surgical team preserved enough of the lower jaw in this case to permit the dog to continue performing retrieval tasks and maintain his working career. The focus of the article should be on the way the veterinarian has recognized the tasks your assistance dog performs and devised a treatment protocol beyond those in everyday use.

As many of you know, IAADP has been involved in a number of cases where access to schools or jobs has been denied because of the presence of an assistance dog. In contrast to these unlawful restrictions, many of you have been able to bring your canine assistant to school or work. We'd like to see some articles on the positive encounters with school authorities and employers who welcomed your dog. Some suggested issues worth exploring are; accommodations provided for your dog, fellow student and worker reactions to the presence of your dog, your feelings about the good and bad aspects of the presence of your canine assistant, etc.

Submissions should be 1,000 words or less. Please submit articles to Ed Eames, eames@iaadp.org or 3376 North Wishon, Fresno, CA 93704.

Proving Your Dog is a Service Animal

By Joan Froling

Over the past year, a number of calls to IAADP's Information & Advocacy Center have revealed that stores, hospitals and parks and other places of public accommodation are becoming more knowledgeable and assertive about their rights under the federal law, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), with regard to service animal access. Most of the assistance dog handlers I speak with have refused to answer certain inquiries from employees, for they are under the impression the only legitimate question that may be asked of a disabled person is whether or not the animal with them is a service animal or a pet. Some have filed ADA complaints or tell me that they plan to sue, upset by what they view as "harassment" and/or wrongful denial of access.

Even though IAADP includes in each New Member packet, a copy of the latest interpretative guidance document on the ADA titled "Business Brief: Service Animals," issued by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in January 2002, the contents are not necessarily something everyone recalls in detail after one reading. One passage in particular you need to be aware of, is "a business may ask if an animal is a service animal or ask what tasks the animal has been trained to perform, but cannot require special ID cards for the animal or ask about the person's disability." This right to ask about the tasks our dogs perform applies to all businesses open to the public, including restaurants, hotels, taxis, grocery stores and department stores, hospitals and medical offices, theaters, health clubs, parks and zoos.

One of IAADP's founding board members, attorney Ilene Caroom, wrote something in an article for *Partners Forum* that I've never forgotten. She said, "In our legal system, laws like the ADA mean what the courts say they mean, so we must be aware of these interpretations." [e.g. "Federal Appeals Court Rules on Landlord's Exclusion of Hearing Dog," by Ilene Caroom, copyright 1995]

A very influential case, *Grill v. Costco*, which was heard

on January 22, 2004, upheld the right of a business to rely on the U.S. DOJ's "Business Brief: Service Animals," which permits a task or function question. The United States District Court, Western District of Washington at Seattle, dismissed Susan Grill's lawsuit in pretrial motion by Costco for Summary Judgement. It ruled Costco did not violate the ADA with its policy that "if a member or guest brings in a dog not visibly identified as a service animal, Costco personnel are to inquire of the animal's owner what tasks or functions the animal performs that its owner cannot otherwise perform. If the owner is unwilling to provide this information, the animal will not be allowed to enter the Costco warehouse." "Susan Grill, a disabled woman, refused to answer the task or function question when she brought in a dog wearing nothing but a collar and leash. In her lawsuit, she argued the question was illegal as it would force her to reveal her disability. The Court disagreed. It accepted Costco's argument that the question could be answered with a response that does not reveal the person's disability, such as (1) "the animal is trained to alert me when a medical condition is about to occur" or (2) "the animal is trained to pick items up off the floor for me."

That was not the last word on when a business may inquire about what tasks an alleged service animal is trained to perform and whether the business violated a disabled person's civil rights by the action they subsequently took with regard to access. The two additional cases I shall acquaint you with in this report raise some thought provoking questions. Whether a court in your state or federal district would interpret the ADA or other applicable laws the same way is not a certainty, but courts tend to give weight to what other courts had to say when deliberating a similar legal issue.

Thompson v. Dover Downs

Should the fact an animal wears a vest and the owner

shows a card that states the animal is a certified service dog suffice as proof it is a service animal? Does the fact the state law does not require a disabled person to answer a question as to what tasks the dog performs in order to have access rights preclude a business from seeking that information before granting access? Does a business err if it follows the advice it receives from the ADA Information Line established by the U.S. Department of Justice to provide technical assistance to businesses and persons having questions about the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)? When a state law grants trainer access rights, does it make the question by a business as to what tasks a service animal is trained to perform, irrelevant?

These were important legal issues that the Supreme Court of Delaware ruled on when it issued its opinion on November 3, 2005, in *Thompson v. Dover Downs*.

By way of background, Thompson, a disabled man, brought a four-month-old puppy to a casino in 2002. The pup had no leash on him. The pup had a vest tied around his neck with a piece of nylon clothesline. The security officer on duty at the entrance to Dover Downs asked Thompson what tasks his dog was trained to perform. Thompson refused to answer, claiming the question was a violation of his civil rights. He produced an identification card to prove his dog was a certified service dog. When the shift supervisor of security personnel, Bill Beever, was called to the entrance, Thompson again refused to answer the question as to what tasks his dog was trained to perform and gave him a card with the telephone number of the ADA Information line, insisting it be called.

The opinion issued by the appeals court details the advice which the casino received when Beever obliged by contacting the ADA Information Line.

It stated: "After being connected to an ADA representative, Beever explained the events preceding his call and described Thompson's dog, including its age and attire. The ADA representative advised that although Beever was not entitled to ask about Thompson's disability, he could ask about the dog's training, and he could also deny the dog entry into the casino if Thompson refused to answer the training-related questions. The ADA representative noted that cards and vests are not indicative of training and can be easily obtained in a store, and that it was unlikely that a four-month-old dog was trained, because normally one to two years are needed to train a support animal.

"After this conversation, Beever returned to the main entrance of the casino, and told Thompson of his conversation with the ADA representative. Specifically, Beever noted the advice that he was permitted to ask Thompson about his dog's training and that he could refuse the dog access if Thompson failed to provide that information. Beever then asked Thompson again what his dog was trained to do, and again Thompson refused to answer.

"Thompson's continued refusal to answer that question came as a surprise to Beever who, during his employment with Dover Downs, had encountered approximately 10 to 15 persons, other than Thompson, who had been accompanied by support animals. Beever had asked these persons questions about the training of their support animals, and each person had volunteered that information without argument and was permitted to enter the casino with the support animal." [end of quote]

Two months after the casino denied access, Thompson filed a complaint with the Delaware Human Rights Commission, which found in his favor. The DHRC said the vest and identification card should have been enough to establish the animal was a service animal. It declared the task question was a mere pretext and the casino had discriminated against Thompson under the state law by refusing access. It ordered the casino to pay \$5,000 to Thompson for causing humiliation, \$5,000 as a civil penalty for violating the state law and to establish a policy for dealing with handicapped persons with support animals.

The state Supreme Court upheld the Superior Court decision that the Delaware Human Rights Commission (DHRC) was legally erroneous in its findings. The DHRC failed to give credence to the fact that under the ADA, a business is legally entitled to ask about what tasks a dog is trained to perform if uncertain it is a service animal. The DHRC also erred in deciding the casino was discriminating against Thompson and the question about task training was only a pretext. In actuality, the casino had made it clear to Thompson that he was welcome in the casino without his dog. The age of the animal and the uncommon attire made it reasonable for employees to have experienced some doubt as to whether this was a service animal and to be entitled to inquire as to what tasks the animal was trained to perform. The Supreme Court concluded there was no rational basis for the DHRC declaring the query on task training to be a pretext.

The Supreme Court affirmed the Superior Court decision that the casino did not err in relying on the advice from the ADA Information Line. It dismissed Thompson's contention that the casino should have disregarded that advice since the state law does not require a disabled person to answer a question on what tasks their service animal performs in order to have access rights.

The state Supreme Court also ruled as to whether the existence of trainer access rights in the state law made the casino's question on task training inapplicable to disabled handlers. This was an issue Thompson raised on appeal. Thompson took the position the General Assembly prohibited discrimination against support animals, even if they were not yet trained to perform a task, thus it made the casino's question on task training, irrelevant. The Supreme Court determined that Thompson read far too much into the fact that one section of the state law included access for the trainers of dogs for the handicapped. The Court observed that the state's definition of a service animal mirrored the ADA definition by requiring a service animal to be individually trained to perform tasks. Citing precedents, the judges affirmed the lower court was absolutely correct in looking to the federal government for guidance and relying on the fact that under the ADA, if a business is unsure a dog is a service animal, a business has a legal right to ask if a dog is trained to perform tasks and if the handicapped individual refuses to answer this question, the dog can be excluded.

I think the decision by the state Supreme Court was a sensible one in view of the facts. Thompson tried to pass his unleashed pup off as a certified service animal, even demanding they call the ADA Information Line. This gave the casino the right to ask what tasks his dog was trained

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Proving Your Dog is a Service Animal

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to perform to qualify it as a service animal under the ADA. If someone had presented a properly leashed and attired pup as a “service dog-in-training” and explained that as the dog’s trainer, they wanted access for training purposes, showing a copy of the state law on trainer access rights to the casino security officer, the outcome might have been quite different.

Dilorenzo v. Costco Wholesale Corp.

What is permitted under the ADA if a business has doubts an alleged service animal is legitimate? To what length may the business go in questioning a disabled person before it becomes a violation of that individual’s civil rights? If an employee does not follow the store’s policy on how to treat a customer with an animal visibly identified as a service animal, does it violate the ADA and make that company liable for damages? Is someone entitled to damages for extreme mental or emotional distress if he or she is questioned more than once or if the customer does not like the tone or location of the questioning or the outcome?

These were the legal issues that came before Judge J. Coughenour in the United States District Court in the State of Washington on October 2, 2007. The judge was asked by the Defendant, Costco Wholesale Corp., for a Summary Judgement. Costco contended it was entitled to have the case dismissed as the law was clearly on its side and a jury could not come to a different conclusion. As it so happens, the judge agreed.

By way of background, Rebecca Dilorenzo brought a twelve-week-old pug into Costco on April 30, 2004, announcing he was her service dog in training. The puppy did not wear any accessories to indicate this status. She was directed to a podium where an employee gave her a copy of Costco’s service animal policy and the U.S. Department of Justice ADA Business Brief: Service Animals. She reportedly showed the employee a letter from a psychologist verifying she had a disability and attesting that she would be a good candidate for and responsible person for ownership of a service animal. She did not leave a copy of the letter with the employee or her name for future reference. [Note: the state law does not mention trainer access rights according to the most recent edition of the Assistance Dogs International law book]

In July 2004, she returned with the six-month-old pug named Dilo, whom she carried in her arms most of the time. According to the manager, Adele Wolcott, he wore a vest that looked partly “homemade.” When Adele questioned Rebecca as to whom the dog worked for and what tasks the dog was trained to perform, Rebecca asserted the dog was her’s and he alerted to spells. She then went through the checkout line.

The opinion issued by the court recounts that “while approaching the warehouse exit, Plaintiff and her party were confronted by Ms. Wolcott and Ken Burnham, another manager, who asked to speak with her. Id. at 114:19-22. According to Plaintiff, Ms. Wolcott said she believed the dog belonged to Plaintiff’s husband, apparently because he had

brought Dilo into the warehouse on a previous occasion. Ms. Wolcott also asserted that the dog’s vest was not “regulation.” Id. at 116:12-13; 117:16-19. Finally, Ms. Wolcott objected to the fact that Plaintiff had carried the dog around the warehouse. The tone of this interaction, according to Plaintiff, was not “nice,” but rather “inappropriate...loud...embarrassing...humiliating...degrading.” Id. at 118:2-5. At that point, Burnham informed Plaintiff that companion animals were not allowed in the warehouse and that in the future Plaintiff could “sit in [her] car with [her] dog.” Id. at 118:18-20. Plaintiff asserts that Defendant’s employees’ actions constituted harassment, as they were, in her words, accusing her of being a “liar.” Id. at 213:9-11. Plaintiff also claims that the encounter may have created the false impression for passers-by, some of whom may have been acquaintances, that she was suspected of shoplifting. Id. 218:1-7. Feeling uncomfortable, Plaintiff took note of Ms. Wolcott and Mr. Burnham’s contact information and left the warehouse.”

Costco followed up by sending a letter to Dilo’s owner which asked what training the dog had received and what tasks he performed. The purpose of the letter was to find out if the dog was a bona fide service animal. Whether or not she would be able to shop there in the future with Dilo would be conditioned on her answer. Rebecca chose not to answer the letter, claiming it was evidence of further harassment from Costco.

Rebecca also tried to make much of something that Costco did not completely refute, which is that the Costco employees may have deviated from Costco’s internal policy that service animals visually identifiable as such would not be subject to further scrutiny.

The judge began by tackling the issue of whether the store should have modified its practices under the ADA to admit the woman with her service dog without questioning her about her dog’s qualifications for that status. The opinion reads:

“Plaintiff’s ADA claim ultimately depends on whether Defendant exceeded the parameters of a legitimate inquiry in confronting Plaintiff about her dog. That Costco had a right to make an inquiry in the first place cannot seriously be questioned. This follows from DOJ interpretations regarding ‘legitimate inquiry,’ the Grill case, as well as common sense. In operating its business, Costco has the authority to exclude ordinary pets from its facilities, and yet must also comply with federal anti-discrimination law, which under most circumstances includes permitting service animals into its warehouses. Given these two co-existing conditions, an occasion for some kind of inquiry is bound to arise. In Grill, the court examined the limitations on inquiry about service animal’s qualifications, citing a DOJ business brief providing that a “[business may ask if an animal is a service animal or ask what tasks the animal has been trained to perform, but cannot require special ID cards for the animal or ask about the person’s disability.” Grill, 312 F.Supp.2d at 1352. This is referred to as a “task or function” inquiry and is the key method for distinguishing a service dog from a pet.”

Judge Coughenour decided the inquiry by Costco employees had not exceeded the boundaries of what is permitted under the ADA. They had asked her about the dog’s

training to perform tasks and did not ask the customer about her disability or request a special ID card.

He also clarified that Costco did not commit any violation of the ADA if an employee deviates from an internal store policy, such as a policy not to question a customer if an animal wears some form of visible identification as a service animal.

With regard to the charge that sending a follow-up letter was harassment, the judge took pains to draw a line on what the ADA permits. He determined the fact that a business may not believe a dog is a service animal does not mean it is at liberty to harass a disabled person with repeated inquiries long past the point where any legitimate purpose could be served by such inquiries, as that could discourage someone from shopping there. Thus in the future, in theory it might be possible for a business's queries to be so repetitive as to possibly qualify as harassment even if the dog in question was not a legitimate service animal. However as far as the Dilorenzo case was concerned, the Judge determined there was nothing wrong with Costco sending a follow-up letter in the effort to obtain additional information on what training the dog received and what tasks or function it performed. He ruled that nothing in the letter exceeded what is permitted under the ADA.

The judge explains: "a similar course of action to what Defendant took here has been recognized as legitimate in the housing context. In *Prindable v. Ass'n of Apartment Owners*, the court concluded that: *In any event, there is no evidence that Defendants ever denied the Plaintiff's request for a service animal. Beginning with their response to Dr. Kalauawa's May 17, 2000 letter, the AOA merely requested additional, appropriate information from Prindable and his treating physicians.* 304 F.Supp.2d 1245, 1260 (D.Haw.2003)."

Judge Coughenour concluded, "The Court finds this reasoning analogous to the present case."

He also cited the fact there were reasons for the store to be suspicious of Dilo's status. The first time she brought him to Costco, Dilo was an untrained puppy. On at least one other occasion, the husband had told a Costco manager that the young pug was his comfort dog. The wife had carried the dog in her arms almost the entire time. This made it impossible for the dog to perform the alleged task of alerting to spells, so the employees had no way to determine if the dog was a task trained service animal through observation of him.

Indeed, as pre-trial testimony later revealed, Dilo had not been able to perform a trained task in July 2004. Rebecca had disclosed in her deposition it took them six or seven months of training before the dog could alert to a panic attack without the husband's prompting. As they had purchased him in March at the age of eight weeks of age, by her own account it would have been September at the earliest before he qualified as a service animal under the ADA.

The judge said he had no doubt the confrontation with the employees had been antagonistic and this may have caused serious distress to Dilo's owner. However, a jury would not find in her favor on the tort claim for damages for intentional infliction of emotional damage/outrage. The questions asked by Costco did not meet the standard for "extreme and outrageous conduct" established by Washing-

ton's Supreme Court, which held that the conduct in question must be 'so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.'

Rebecca also claimed damages were owed to her for Negligent Infliction of Emotional Damages (NIED). She took the position that the psychologist's letter which she showed a Costco employee in April 2004 put them on notice that she was at high risk of a dangerous injury if they drew any unnecessary attention to her or her service animal by asking questions of her in a public place. Costco argued she never gave them the letter or her name, so how could she contend it put them on notice?

The judge observed that even if Costco had a copy, what the psychologist had to say was so general in nature, no layman reading it could possibly have inferred there was any risk to the patient of a dangerous injury if they asked ordinary questions of her in a public place. Contrary to what had been attested to in the Plaintiff's second amended complaint, in actuality that letter from the psychologist never warned Costco that Rebecca had panic attacks. He said, "The Court need not doubt the veracity of Plaintiff's suffering to find that it would have taken more to put Defendant's employees on notice that ordinary conduct would cause extraordinary emotional harm to Plaintiff. Accordingly, this falls into the category of an act which caused harm without resulting in liability, and therefore Plaintiff's NIED claim fails as a matter of law."

The fact the dog wore a vest and the fact the plaintiff had answered the first question as to what task her alleged service animal performed was not sufficient in this case to make further inquiries illegal. The judge said, "Under these circumstances, it was not unreasonable or illegitimate for Defendant to have expressed doubts about Dilo's status, or to have sent a follow-up letter seeking further clarification."

He went on to comment about the kind of answer that may have brought closure to the matter raised in the letter sent by the business. He stated, "had Plaintiff responded by affirming that the dog was her service animal and that it was individually trained to alert her for panic and anxiety attacks, it is not clear on what basis Defendant could object in the future."

What does this mean for others? Given the fact we still have "an honor system" in the USA in 2009 which does not require a person to prove they have a disability or prove their dog has the proper training to be a service dog through documentation to gain access, the judge seems to be saying a store which sends a follow-up letter would have to accept a written statement from the customer that a dog meets the statutory requirements under the ADA for service animal status as credible enough to require the company to grant access henceforth. In the meanwhile, though, a business will not automatically be in violation of the ADA, subject to fines or other penalties, if an employee does not accept a certain customer's verbal assurances about the dog's training to perform a task as credible and bans a dog as "a companion animal" [e.g. pet] from returning to its place of business.

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Proving Your Dog is a Service Animal

Continued from page 15

Conclusion

From the way these courts have interpreted federal and state laws, it appears we better not count on state law, store policy, certification ID cards or our dog's equipment to exempt us from being questioned about our dog's training to perform a task. It seems sensible to prepare an answer in advance, especially if you or a loved one has an invisible disability of the sort you prefer to keep private. Those with a speech or memory impairment could print the answer out and tuck it in the dog's vest pocket or backpacks with other access tools like our brochure.

I think it always helps if a handler acts friendly and confident, not hostile, if queried. Let the representative know you are familiar with the ADA Business Brief on Service Animals and don't mind a question about how your dog is trained to assist you or the disabled loved one whom you are accompanying. If the representative of a place of public accommodation seems uncertain if your answer passes muster, suggest they visit IAADP's website to see our Minimum Training Standards for Public Access and Task training information. Let them know your dog had to finish all that schooling before you were eligible to join as a member. You might also suggest a call to IAADP's Information & Advocacy Center in a pinch, providing them with my phone number: 586-826-3938, if you do not have a program to contact for access help. This is not the response a pet owner would give and it may go a long way to reassure "the gatekeeper" that your well behaved adult dog is a legitimate service animal.

NOTE: For those who would like to read a verbatim transcript of court's opinion in Thompson v. Dover Downs and/or Dilorenzo v. Costco and/or Grill v. Costco, to better understand every issue examined, a copy of each can be found at the website url: www.servicedogcentral.org

Who Do I Ask? Where Do I Send It?

Ed Eames Ph.D., IAADP President eames@iaadp.org 559-224-0544	Legal Questions
Joan Froling, Chairperson joan@iaadp.org 586-826-3938	Editor - Newsletter Advocacy Center
Devon Wilkins, Vice President, Canada devon@iaadp.org 705-444-4512	Canadian Issues Canadian Benefits
Jill Exposito, Vice President, USA jill@iaadp.org 913-469-6063	New Projects
Toni Eames, Treasurer toni@iaadp.org 559-224-0544	Grief Counseling Thank you notes
Kevin Frankeberger Ph.D., CFRE, Board Member kevin@iaadp.org 360-426-8389	Fundraising Development
Carol Schilling, Membership Coordinator carol@iaadp.org 888-544-2237	Database, VCP Member Benefits

Membership Information

Membership Dues: Partner Member \$30; Renewal \$30; or join/renew, 3 years for the price of 2 years! \$60; Partners outside North America \$20 per year or \$40 for 3 years; Friend \$30; Provider \$35.

Send check with signed application from website at <http://www.iaadp.org/membership.html> to IAADP c/o Carol Schilling, 378 Ottawa Drive, Troy, MI 48085. You may also obtain membership application with S.A.S.E., or send a letter with your signature affirming you're partnered with an assistance dog and who trained it. Credit Cards accepted online! Specify newsletter format - Print, Cassette, Data CD or Email. Renewal notices may or may not be sent out. Please renew 45 days in advance of the Expiration Date on Partner Membership Card to maintain your eligibility for benefits. Change of dog? Must update your dog's name in your database file!

IAADP Information & Advocacy Center

Call (586) 826-3938 or email joan@iaadp.org or see contact info on IAADP Website: www.iaadp.org

You can also contact us by mail at IAADP, P.O. Box 1326, Sterling Hts., MI 48311

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