



New Initiatives in Congress to Provide Service Dogs to Veterans

By Joan Froling

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U.S. Senator Al Franken of Minnesota drew national attention to the benefits of service dogs for veterans, in particular those who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in July 2009. He told the press that he was profoundly moved after meeting an Iraqi intelligence officer with PTSD who is partnered with a program trained service dog, a Golden Retriever named Tuesday, at President Obama's inauguration. Further research included a visit to Hearing and Service Dogs of Minnesota, where he witnessed traditional tasks performed by a service dog for a wheelchair user. He decided the first piece of legislation he would introduce as the newly elected senator from Minnesota would be a bill to substantially expand the number of service dogs available to disabled veterans.

Senator Franken eloquently defended his proposed bill in an open letter to the *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune* on July 20th. The following excerpt summarizes the impassioned views he shared with the public and later with his fellow senators:

"Service dogs like Tuesday can be of immense benefit to vets suffering from physical and emotional wounds. Yes, they provide companionship. But they can also detect changes in a person's breathing, perspiration or scent to anticipate and ward off an impending panic attack with some well-timed nuzzling. They are trained to let their masters know when it's time to take their medication and to wake them from terrifying nightmares. Service dogs raise their masters' sense of well-being. There is evidence to suggest that increasing their numbers would reduce

the alarming suicide rate among veterans, decrease the number of hospitalizations, and lower the cost of medications and human care."

This bill authorizes a three year pilot study with no less than 200 placements of service dogs from accredited programs, of which 50% must go to veterans with mental disabilities including post traumatic stress disorder, while the other 50% will go to veterans with physical disabilities.

The bill requires the Secretary of Veteran Affairs to conduct a scientifically valid study of the costs and benefits associated with the use of service dogs for the treatment or rehabilitation of veterans with mental or physical injuries. Instead of leaving it up to the VA, the bill spells out the benefits to be studied, in three points: (1) the thera-

continued on page 2...

Features You Shouldn't Miss

Benefit News Page 2

Farewell to Our Sponsor Page 3

Access Case Garners \$105,000. Page 3

Newsletter Format Changes. Page 9

Editor: Joan Froling
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Service Dog in Action: Teamwork enables "Kira," trained by Sterling Service Dogs, and her mobility-impaired partner, Stacie, to gain entry to malls and other buildings which have push-button operated, handicapped accessible doors that can be opened with "paw power!"

New Initiatives in Congress

Continued from page 1

peutic benefits to such veterans, including the quality of life benefits reported by participating veterans. (2) the economic benefits such as a savings on health care costs, as well as measuring productivity and employment gains by veterans. (3) the effectiveness of using service dogs to prevent suicide. The National Academy of Sciences is charged with delivering a report to Congress within six months of the ending date of the three year study. On July 26, 2009, Senator Franken received unanimous support from his colleagues in the Senate for his proposed legislation. It was officially added as an amendment to a much larger bill they passed on defense spending.

However, this may not be “the last word.” Congressman Klein of Florida introduced a bill in the House of Representatives calling for the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Veteran Affairs to jointly establish a program known as the “Wounded Warrior K9 Corp.” It seeks an appropriation of five million in funding for each of five years, 2010 to 2014. This bill would award competitive grants to non-profit organizations with accreditation comparable to that offered by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) to assist such organizations in planning, designing, establishing and operating programs to provide disabled veterans with assistance dogs.

If Klein’s bill passes in the House, a compromise bill will have to be worked out. It is necessary for members of the U.S. House and Senate to hold a meeting to reconcile the differences between two bills passed by their respective houses on the same subject. The final piece of legislation jointly supported by the House and Senate could differ in some respects from the two well intentioned bills detailed in this article.

Publicity in the *New York Times* this summer about a

veteran who received a dog trained to mitigate the effects of PTSD from the Puppies Behind Bars’ Dog Tag Program and an appearance on the popular television program, Oprah, by a veteran with PTSD and his service dog is sensitizing the public to this invisible disability suffered by an estimated 300,000 soldiers who served in Afghanistan or Operation Iraqi Freedom. New articles quoting Senator Franken on this topic seem to cross my desk at least once a week. Not surprisingly, the media attention has created a huge groundswell of interest among veterans with PTSD in obtaining a service dog to help them cope with their disabling symptoms.

Several assistance dog training programs in the USA such as the Guide Dog Foundation, NEADS and Freedom Service Dogs have already set up a program under their auspices to try to raise funding to provide service dogs to veterans. As an aside, at least two have placed service dogs with veterans whose primary disability is PTSD and plan to train more. However the collective efforts of these and other programs cannot begin to meet the demand. For the most part, it is the shortage of funding that limits the availability of service dogs to disabled veterans. These exciting initiatives in Congress could result in a new era. Nothing will happen overnight, but thanks to Senator Franken and Congressman Klein and other well wishers in Congress, there is reason to hope the VA and assistance dog field could begin a fruitful collaboration that would dramatically improve quality of life for hundreds of disabled veterans and their families in years to come. It is bound to be very challenging to pioneer this road, and we can’t really judge the viability of the proposal until we see the final draft, but it has been uplifting to learn of these new developments in the House and the Senate. It has also been uplifting to see how Senator Franken champions the use of service dogs by veterans who are battling a mental disability like PTSD, not only when he speaks to the press but also in the first piece of legislation he introduced in the Senate.

BENEFIT NEWS!!!

Bayer Canada

We are pleased to announce that Bayer Canada has extended the availability of its family of Advantage products at no cost for IAADP partner members to include Canine Advantix. This monthly topical provides protection against both fleas and ticks.

Rabies Titer Testing Discount

Dr. Gary Anderson, DVM, Ph.D., Director of the Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (KSVDL), wrote to IAADP that the discount program for Rabies Titer Testing for IAADP Assistance Dogs will now move from being a pilot project to a “Program” for IAADP.

The KSVDL and its Rabies Laboratory are committed to the following points of understanding and practice for the IAADP Program:

- 50% reduction in testing costs for all IAADP member samples
- Continue to move samples to the “front of the line” for known assistance-dog status
- Discount period will begin immediately and be evaluated annually
- Discount will apply only to confirmed IAADP members
- Discount will apply only to samples properly identified at submission, which must include a copy of the IAADP member card with the submission paperwork

He closed his letter by saying “We are enthusiastic about contributing in this way, and look forward to working with you and your fellow IAADP members.”

Farewell Fort Dodge, our Sponsor and Friend!

By Toni and Ed Eames

Fort Dodge Animal Health has been a major supporter of diverse IAADP programs over the years. Our assistance dogs have been kept healthy by Fort Dodge vaccines, and we have benefitted from Wyeth/Canada and Fort Dodge rebate programs. The Veterinary Care Partnership Program has been enriched through years of contributions from this caring company. Those beautiful VCP brochures were designed and produced by Fort Dodge. Not only have they helped finance our annual conferences, but also provided funds for member scholarships to attend them. As you read this issue of *Partners Forum*, make note of the fact it is sponsored by this innovative and creative member of the animal health care community.

In early 2009, Fort Dodge was purchased by Pfizer Animal Health. In October, Fort Dodge and Wyeth will close their doors and be absorbed into Pfizer.

Therefore, it is with deep sadness we must say goodbye to this long term friend and the staff who have been so good to IAADP over the years! They will be sorely missed!

Memorial Gifts as Tributes to Loved Ones

By Toni Eames

When my beloved guide dog Escort died in 2004, I was devastated. I wrote an emotional eulogy to him and sent it to friends and family. Cards, letters and e-mails poured in with expressions of sympathy. However, it didn't occur to me at that time to ask for financial support of IAADP, the organization I love and value, to honor his memory and our relationship.

Like me, many of you will face that dreaded time of loss and grief. What a wonderful tribute to your faithful companion to have IAADP and its mission supported by donations memorializing your unique partnership!

IAADP's Memorial Fund can also be part of your honoring of deceased friends and relatives. Our friend Eve's spouse died recently and she asked that contributions to IAADP be made in memory of her husband.

As a founding member of IAADP serving as treasurer, I am concerned about the organization's ability to continue providing its outstanding services to all of you, our members. It is only if we have the financial resources to do so that we can survive. Therefore, memorial giving, donations, bequests, in addition to your membership dues are vital to keep us going!

The Price of Discrimination

By Gregg Welch with the assistance of Margie Gray

On June 22, 2007 my wife Carolyn and I, accompanied by my guide dog, Fella, headed to Wheeler, a small town located about 90 miles from our home in Portland, Oregon on a 3-day getaway. It ended up being the journey of a lifetime that spanned almost 2 years of my life!

After driving about 70 miles, we decided to stop in the small town of Garibaldi to eat at a local restaurant as we are both diabetic. On entering, we were told by the waitress that my guide dog wasn't allowed in the restaurant, even though she admitted that she and the owner were aware it was illegal to ban him from the premises. The waitress was apologetic, but had no way to contact the owner. I told her we would return in the morning to talk to the owner.

The next morning, we arrived at the restaurant and left Fella in the car so as not to provoke a confrontation. I used my white cane as we entered the restaurant and I asked the owner to step outside to discuss the incident. I handed her a card quoting the Oregon statute regarding assistance dog access. She read it and responded that she didn't know if the card was legitimate and would have to call the Department of Health and her attorney. I explained access to service dogs was State law in all 50 states and federal law, but

she insisted on contacting her attorney for advice. I advised her to do so because we planned to return in the evening for dinner. She said we could come back in the evening and eat, but the guide dog would not be allowed inside. She abruptly turned and walked away.

We were able to find a Sheriff's deputy to take a civil complaint and he commented in surprise that he had never heard of anyone having such a problem locally. He assured us he would investigate our statements. The officer struck us as a person who took his job seriously and, indeed, he called me a few days later and said he found our report accurate, but I should contact the Oregon State Attorney General's Office as they apparently had jurisdiction. To my surprise, the State Attorney General's Office showed no interest in this situation and referred me to the United States Department of Justice.

Shortly after returning to Portland, we contacted attorney Jon Egan who assured us our complaint held a great deal of merit. He pressed the District Attorney in that county to prosecute the business owner for violation of numerous Oregon statutes involving disability discrimination.

continued on page 4...

The Price of Discrimination

Continued from page 3

The District Attorney's response was to order a second police investigation which resulted in a claim by the owner that she didn't know the law, contrary to what we were told by her employee. The District Attorney decided that ignorance of the law was sufficient excuse for taking no action against the business. He conceded that his office would notify other restaurants of the requirements of the law. The business owner later testified under oath that she had a discussion with the deputy who took my complaint and claimed she was reassured that if the complaint was pursued, his office and the District Attorney would make sure nothing would come of it.

In early August 2007, Mr. Egan filed a lawsuit on my behalf under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Oregon Revised Statute 659A.885(1) for disability discrimination (Case Number 07-CV-1185-AC). After receiving legal notice of intent to sue, we discovered the restaurant owner began dumping assets. (I also filed a complaint with the Department of Justice in spite of their initial warning that prosecution was extremely unlikely. I heard nothing for months, until they finally outlined a mediation process.) Mr. Egan meanwhile was pressuring the defendant's attorney for information about the defendant's assets of which she seemed to be quickly disposing. He pursued a remedy in court and he was successful in getting a temporary restraining order demanding the defendant not spend or transfer assets exceeding \$500 without receiving permission, from my wife and me. (Mr. Egan also had filed suit on behalf of my wife as she had been also discriminated against because of her being denied access as a result of her association to me which violates the ADA.) The defendant ignored the court order and as a last ditch effort filed for bankruptcy protection. During the bankruptcy hearings she finally admitted under oath that once she saw we were going to sue her, she began a campaign to liquidate all of her assets.

The defendant also began a smear campaign alleging that my wife and I caused a disturbance at the restaurant about a week after the initial incident, demanding the owner allow a Jack Russell terrier on the premises and claimed my wife and another man tried it again soon after, even though we lived 90 miles away. When this allegedly occurred, I was in North Dakota with my son! She also alleged that the Health Department told her she didn't have to allow a service dog on the premises. Both allegations were false.

The case went to trial in the court of the Honorable Anna J. Brown of the United State District Court for the District of Oregon on September 9, 2008. It was complicated by the declaration of bankruptcy by the defendant, to be sure. In the end I was awarded \$45,000 in compensatory damages and \$45,000 in punitive damages by Judge Brown. It is doubtful we will see a penny of this judgment, especially since the defendant has now disappeared from the area. Her contempt for the system in her efforts to liquidate her assets and refusal to negotiate a settlement undoubtedly contributed to her downfall. Judge Brown also gave Mr. Egan the opportunity to justify financial damages for my wife also who was excluded from the premises because she was with me. He broke new legal ground by successfully arguing in support of monetary damages. My wife was awarded \$15,000 in compensatory damages to her.

The beauty of this lawsuit is that we didn't let a business owner get away with violating our civil rights. In addition, the awards by the court for damages, which is a matter of public record, are a real deterrent to discrimination. All guide dog and service dog users can use the precedent set in this case to force stubborn business owners to realize that such discrimination can cost them dearly.

If you want a good outcome in similar circumstances, my advice to you is to handle any discrimination carefully: control your emotions and speak kindly while attempting to educate people about the law; remember witnesses are important and you need contact information for anyone present; and immediately contact the authorities to attempt to gain access but also to document the situation.

A Tail To Tell

By Toni and Ed Eames

On hearing Fort Dodge Animal Health had been purchased by Pfizer Animal Health, we were apprehensive about the impact of this news on us and IAADP. Unfortunately, our apprehension was warranted! Not only did IAADP lose its major sponsor supporting VCP, *Partners Forum* and a variety of other projects, we also lost the support of the caring company that has underwritten our lectures at veterinary schools. We are now scrambling to find other sources of funding for both us and IAADP.

As you will see elsewhere in this issue, IAADP has established a Memorial Fund Program to help raise money to maintain the organization. Your membership dues provides only about 50% of the annual operating budget! Therefore, we need your help.

The first of June is a sacred day for Toni, it is her birthday! This year was a special one, since she turned 65 and is now eligible for all those senior discounts! We plan a birthday party every year with a lunch we host for 30 friends and volunteers, followed by a performance of New Wrinkles, a senior citizen cabaret. This year's luncheon was held at a Basque restaurant within walking distance of our home. Since it was pretty hot that day, we did not walk! Basque restaurants are known for the abundance of their food and serving family style, and the Santa Fe followed this tradition.

During June, we made three trips within California. IAADP member Beth Shea was the designated driver for all three.

Santa Rosa was our destination in the early part of the

month. We were guests of Canine Companions For Independence and were treated like royalty. After a drive of 250 miles, we were part of a great dinner hosted by CCI CEO Corey Hudson. Several members of his staff also joined us. That night our guide dogs, Latrell and Keebler, had the rare opportunity to play with other canines in a big fenced in doggy recreation area on campus.

The next day we did presentations for the CCI staff about access issues and the partnership between CCI and IAADP. The two organizations have a long and mutually rewarding relationship. On the way back to Fresno we stopped in at Guide Dogs for the Blind in San Rafael and met with some of their staff, including CEO Nancy Gardner.

A week later, the drive was to southern California to speak at the Pacific Veterinary conference in Anaheim. Although it would have been fun to stay for the entire conference, we left for home immediately after our presentation, since we had been given tickets for an Andre Rieu concert. This flamboyant Dutch band leader conducts the musicians with his violin. We particularly love the release of hundreds of rubber balloons at the end of the concert, which float down on the audience who enjoy popping them. Luckily, our Golden Retrievers are not bothered by the sound of bursting balloons.

The third car trip had a more serious theme. Toni has been experiencing leg pain again and we fear she may need additional spinal surgery. The initial fusion was done in San Francisco three years ago and we wanted that surgeon's opinion. Unfortunately, his opinion is an additional fusion will be needed to alleviate the pain. However, he suggested consulting a classmate of his in Fresno, who has suggested an alternative approach. Stay tuned to see what happens!

In July, the summer heat hit Fresno with many days over 100 degrees. But we had a temporary reprieve with a trip to Seattle where the temperatures were mostly in the 70s. Our mission was to attend the annual conference of the American Veterinary Medical Association to solicit support for IAADP.

Prior to the conference, we visited Jeanne Hampl, former director of the Prison Pet Partnership Program in Gig Harbor. Jeanne entertained us and several members of the Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound at her home. After a brief rest in our hotel, it was off to meet the Puget Sound folks for dinner. There is a close relationship between IAADP and ADC since the club purchases membership in IAADP for all of its members.

Gratefully, ADC member Wayne Terry, accompanied by his hearing dog Daisy May, drove us from Gig Harbor to Seattle via a ferry. Our friend Debbie who accompanied us on the trip loves ferries and it was a big treat for all of us. Wayne drove us right to the Homewood Suites Hotel where we had adjoining rooms with Kevin and Becky Frankeberger. Kevin is a recently appointed member of the IAADP Board. Kevin's Labrador guide dog Tomasso and Becky's Golden Retriever guide Jake had fun interacting with Latrell and Keebler.

Becky had been in an accident a few months earlier and was using a wheelchair to get around. Debbie, as always, was invaluable in assisting us to and from the convention Center for the AVMA meetings.

It was a bustling three day stay in Seattle, and much to our delight we had only one brief rain shower to mar the



otherwise wonderful weather! Aside from the welcoming weather, we did face some access issues, one related to the dogs and the other to Becky's wheelchair. We had arranged for a taxi to pick us up at the hotel for a lunch meeting with the staff of Fort Dodge. When the driver saw us approaching with Latrell and Keebler, he shouted "I'm not taking two dogs," and locked the back door of the cab. After some heated discussion, the driver reluctantly unlocked the door and drove us to the hotel for our meeting. We filed a complaint with the taxi commission which fined the driver \$100. He is appealing that decision and we will be involved in a telephone deposition in late August.

Later that afternoon we were scheduled to attend a reception celebration honoring veterinarians who were recipients of the prestigious Bustad Award. Leo Bustad was one of those rare universally revered leaders in the veterinary community for his fostering of the significance of the human animal bond. We met Leo when we lectured at the Washington State vet school during our early vet educational career.

After walking and wheeling over to the Sheraton from the convention center, Becky was faced with a three step entrance. Not to worry, there was a wheelchair lift right there. However, it needed to be operated by an employee, and it took many phone calls and a visit to the front desk by our friend, Dr. Caroline Schaffer, before a not very friendly security guard deigned to help us.

Kevin has taken the lead on dealing with the Sheraton concerning this absolute breach of access. Becky was embarrassed, Toni was feeling considerable knee pain, Kevin was furious at getting no response to his four calls to the front desk and our friend, Dr. Caroline Schaffer of Tuskegee University Veterinary School, was incensed at the insensitivity of the staff. When we finally arrived at the reception a half hour late, we had a wonderful time and were able to toast all past recipients of the Bustad Award, including Caroline.

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

Letter to the Editor

Benefits Thank You!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the IAADP board, my local vet's office staff, and most importantly the companies who support assistance dogs through the benefits offered to IAADP Partner members. My hearing dog, Tashi, and I were partnered together this past October (2008) through Canine Companions for Independence. One of the benefits we have recently taken advantage of is the AVID microchip and PetTrac registration. Should some unforeseen emergency cause an unthinkable separation to occur, we're prepared. Thanks to IAADP and AVID, it's free of charge and takes only a minute during a routine vet visit.

Since the winters in the area where we live can be anywhere from brutal to a bit of a cold snap with a snow shower or two, I decided to be prepared for the worst and ordered a set of winter Muttluks through the Woof Wish Program. Turns out this past winter wasn't much in the way of snow and ice so we only used the Muttluks once or twice. It's only a matter of time before we get a lot more use out of them, though. More recently, I ordered a set of the all-weather Muttluks. In order for us to get to my office every day we have to walk a considerable distance on asphalt surfaces. There is very little grass around my office, so getting our usual walk during the day for exercise involves exposure to hot surfaces for a period of time. If a surface is too hot for the callouses on my hands, then it's probably too hot for her pads. It is so nice knowing her pads are protected.

During a recent vet visit, I took my IAADP member packet with me so I would have a handy list of the flea, tick, and other parasite preventative medications available as a no cost benefit to discuss with the vet. After review-

ing the available choices, the vet decided that for our area Advantage Multi offered by Bayer Animal Health would work best. However, there was one problem. My vet's office (Canyon Crossroads Animal Hospital) doesn't normally carry or dispense that particular item. The vet said that she would ask a member of her staff to contact the Bayer representative on my behalf to see what options we might have since the program works by Bayer replacing the supply at no cost to the vet's office. When the vet's office called me back, they said the Bayer representative was familiar with the IAADP program, but they weren't sure how to handle the situation since their office didn't stock that product. It was at this point that my vet's office staff really stepped up to the plate and went above and beyond typical customer service. The member of the office staff on the phone with me asked if there was some particular reason why I wanted that specific product instead of the Frontline and Heartgard they normally dispensed. I explained to her about the benefit through IAADP, so it was simply a matter of choosing to purchase what they had available or taking advantage of my benefit. She then offered to contact Merial on my behalf and ask them if they would match the IAADP benefit for me. Whomever she talked to at Merial agreed to provide Tashi a year's supply of Frontline Plus and Heartgard. So, the lesson learned here is talk with and work with your vet. Not every vet's office may go above and beyond like mine did, but if you demonstrate to them how important your assistance dog is to you by talking with them about your dog's health, good things will happen.

Sincerely,
Stan Sander

“Alive Day”

Book Review by Joan Froling

Fiction for adults that includes partnership with a guide dog is a rare commodity. For that reason alone, those with assistance dogs and other dog lovers may like this new release by Tom Sullivan, titled *Alive Day*. This is his first solo venture into fiction, though a previous novel titled *Together*, co-authored with actress Betty White, featured the same characters, Brendan, who lost his sight in a mountain climbing accident and went on to become a psychiatrist and his high energy guide dog, Nelson.

In this novel, a friend prevails upon Brendan to take on a pro bono case at the VA hospital in Seattle due to the acute shortage of psychiatrists available to work with wounded soldiers. The patient Brendan is assigned is a young marine with PTSD, devastated by the news he is the only survivor of an enemy attack in Iraq and that he's permanently disabled by a spinal cord injury. Not surprisingly, Nelson's presence in the therapy sessions is an asset as Brendan struggles with his own angst about being disabled and tries

to help the veteran adjust to his new circumstances.

While the patient's situation seems grim, the story is intentionally upbeat and a testament to the love that can exist between husband and wife. As for Nelson, this black Labrador Retriever is “all dog” whenever off duty with Brendan and his family. The public's admiration for guide dogs will be preserved and enhanced when they read about Nelson's flawless performance as a working guide and his heroic efforts to save his master's life when a tragic accident puts both their lives in grave danger.

Tom Sullivan who has been blind from infancy, earns his living as an actor, singer, author and producer. He has been nominated for Emmy Awards. His book, *If You Could See What I Hear*, was made into a movie. His autobiographical account of retiring his first guide dog and adjusting to a successor, *Leading Lady*, co-authored with Betty White, remains one of my all time favorites.

Is Your Work Going to the Dogs? Or are You Taking Your Dog to Work?

By Jane Biehl, PhD, PCC, CRC, MLS, Professional Clinical Counselor, Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, Master's in Library Science

She has a “soft” look. People mention this when meeting my yellow lab mix named Sita. Her gorgeous amber eyes look right at you with a soulful expression. The fact I own this gentle spirit is no accident. I received her from Circle Tail in southern Ohio. The director, Marlys Staley, does a heroic job in training assistance dogs and partnering them with the right person. She is careful to match the owner and his/her lifestyle with the dog. I work as a therapist in a private practice with young children. Sita was actually considered for a couple of other owners, but Marlys wanted a gentle person for Sita. I am a marshmallow so Sita and I bonded immediately.

I was concerned what would happen at Northeast Ohio Behavioral Health where I work. I talked at length to the executive director there before I went to Circle Tail. Dr. Robin Tener is a dog lover herself and was supportive. She contacted the entire staff about Sita and kept everyone informed.

The key words are EDUCATION and COMMUNICATION. Sita was immediately accepted by my colleagues and the “do not pet while in vest” rule was carefully followed. Since she and I have 10 hour days, I do take her out of vest part of the day and allow her to be petted. A couple of people keep treats in their desk for her, but never give them to her without my permission. I constantly watch Sita's weight. They also understand she needs to obey a command such as picking up something, shaking a paw or shutting a drawer before getting a reward. Sita quickly became a therapeutic assistant in the office to help people feel better. It truly is in her nature. I work with abused, neglected, disabled and foster children who have unimaginable things done to them. I will never forget the day I had to break terrible news to a child. The only father he ever knew (foster) had died suddenly. Tears welled in the eyes of his adoptive parents and me as he hugged Sita and sobbed for 15 minutes. Sita was absolutely still, allowed the tears to fall in her fur and knew exactly what to do for him. Just be there.

Sita has an innate sense when people are upset. A client was sobbing uncontrollably while Sita was apparently asleep. She stood up, pranced over to the tissue box, pulled out a tissue with her teeth and gave it to the client with her mouth. She had seen me do this so many times she figured she would do it for me! We both started laughing as the client petted her and said “Sita, you made my day!”

Not everything has gone smoothly. I can't counsel anyone who is allergic to dogs. We have certain rooms at the practice Sita is not allowed in. I also had one person tell my director she was not an assistance dog, but a pet, because I am not deaf. I do very well with my hearing aids and people fail to realize how severe my loss is. My director defended me and told the complainer Sita is a hearing dog

and I shouldn't be criticized for overcoming my disability!!

I also have to protect Sita. Some of my children are autistic and fail to understand dogs have feelings too. I've had children throw things at her and had one teenager kick her. Sita is so gentle it startles her and upsets me. I have a cubby hole under my desk and she goes under there. I then sit between the client and Sita. The thoughtless clients aren't allowed to interact with her. Interestingly, the offenders often behave better after that. The teen that kicked her cried two weeks later, because Sita had a bandaged foot where she had torn a toenail. This was a breakthrough on feelings for the teen. Sita forgave her and the teen now pets her under my watchful eye.

I teach part time at a community college. My students are educated from the first class and told about assistance dogs and their training. I observed a student one day whistling to Sita (I couldn't hear but saw her lips moving). I asked her if she wanted to ruin \$10,000 worth of training. It never happened again.

Persons allergic to dogs always need to be accommodated. Students with dog allergies are assigned another instructor. We have an office for faculty, and one of my coworkers suffering from allergies asked me not to bring Sita there. She files my reports for me and I do my work at home. We are good friends, talked it out and made it work.

Again, Sita's long days have to be considered. The office staff consists of true dog lovers. I take Sita in between classes and they give her treats. She is allowed out of vest and petted and spoiled by everyone from the dean on down. She is then placed back in vest, trots off to another class with me and quietly sleeps in her “place” (blanket) throughout the class.

In summary, the five following items are key to success with your assistance dog in the workplace:

- If one is considering a dog – communicate at the workplace first
- Educate your supervisor and coworkers about assistance dogs
- Be considerate of other persons with allergies and work around these issues
- Remember to protect your dog from any potential harm
- Be sensitive and give your dog breaks throughout the day – this is a live creature not a machine

I have been very fortunate. Sita is a gem and I have supportive coworkers. With the proper education and communication, both the owner and the dog are more productive in the workplace. Best of all, Sita loves to go with me to work. Ultimately my colleagues and I are better persons for having her there.

Twins Speak Up on Partnership

Introduction By Ann MacLaren

One of the hardest challenges as a mother with four kids with various disabilities is when people ask me for a “quick” glossy explanation of one of my kid’s disabilities and its associated challenges. I cringe because it is an impossible task and I fear any hurried attempt on my part would leave an almost trivialized, unjust explanation. It’s an innocent request yet hard to fulfill since most challenges confronting a person with a disability as most IAADP members know, are the barriers and misconceptions imposed (unknowingly) by the general public. Autism is no different and interestingly, my boys are old enough now, that people are braver approaching my boys than the mom hanging in the background watching and listening with casual vigilance. My sons, Matt and Mark are identical twins with autism. They each have a Canine Companions for Independence dog. It would take volumes to chronicle our autism dog journey and our efforts over the years to systematically rebuild those foundational skills that were missed due to autism. However, here is a glimpse of autism from two boys who have worked hard to achieve independence with their faithful companions, Pace and Logan.



Hi My name is Mark and I am in high school. I have autism. Most people don’t understand autism. They think autism means that you are stupid and you can’t learn. I’m not stupid. I have good grades and I am planning to go to Purdue University to become an engineer. I also play clarinet and piano.

Autism is a spectrum disorder. Among many things, it affects communication and social development. The cause of autism is unknown but it affects the immune system. When I was younger, I drank tons of milk. My mom noticed that when she stopped the milk, my autism got a little better. I also take antifungal medicine. When I have too much yeast growth, I have a hard time focusing and I feel tired.

For me, I didn’t speak words until age 6. I could not explain events or express myself until junior high. I used to rock a lot. It was easy for me to go on sensory overload. Smell, taste, texture and sound were more intense for me. Movie theaters were too loud, smells were too powerful, and I preferred crunchy, bland food. To this day, I cannot drink pop because it feels like an explosion in my mouth. Growing up, the average things that families took for granted were milestones for me.

Let’s talk about school. I’m a very social guy. I love people and I wish I had more friends. I’m learning how to initiate friendships. Sometimes I miss some social cues and that is when people make fun of me. When you make a mistake past elementary school, it is total SOCIAL SUICIDE. No one gives you a second chance. You’re branded. Social rules can be very confusing for me. People say one thing but they really mean another. I wish everything was spelled out in a manual.

It’s tough going to school everyday day knowing that people think you are different. They snicker and do things behind the teacher’s back. People would call me names at recess, kick my books down steps, bump me on purpose and then say “sorry.” Sometimes when I would go for help,

the teachers tell me to just sit down and ignore it. Some kids pretended to be my friend and then used things against me. I didn’t understand how people could be mean for no reason. I was an easy target. I just wanted a friend. There are no rewards for people with autism, no opportunities to learn leadership, no forgiving environment. What people don’t understand is I have worked ten times harder than the average person my age. While neighbors played outside after school, I went to speech therapy, worked on homework because it took me longer, or worked with a behaviorist to understand social conversation. I also attended Lindamood Bell which made school work and problem solving so much easier.

Now, Logan is my CCI canine buddy. On a personal level, Logan is my life skills partner. I’m learning things I missed when I was younger. Logan and I work as a team. Most autistic kids never get a chance to learn team building skills either. I do with Logan. I need to be sensitive to his needs and balance time and priorities. He also teaches me unconditional love with no teasing. He is a tool used to teach me how to build and maintain a relationship. Most people think autistic kids want to be alone. That is not true. I want companionship so bad. Dog handling skills have also given me confidence and leadership. When I have confidence and believe in myself, I succeed at other things too. I used to think I was a loser. I am a winner and Logan proves it. I never had that before my CCI dog came along. Logan is my partner and I learn all the management and planning skills needed for me to be independent.

Through Logan, the school has learned about autism. Autism is no longer a mysterious secret. People hear about autism all the time but now they understand through my dog that I am just like them. People are more willing to be patient and help me. That takes a load of stress off my shoulders.

Hi My name is Matt and I am an identical twin. I am five minutes older than Mark: I have autism. Autism affects me just like Mark. What people don't realize is kids with autism can improve. I am living proof.

Being a twin with autism is a challenge. My brother and I developed our own language when we were younger. We had no problem communicating with each other. Our problem was communicating with everyone else. Organizing thoughts and putting them into words was so hard. The teachers knew I was smart because I was able to do things that didn't require communication. I couldn't describe a picture even though I knew what it was. I was frustrated because the only thing I could say was "I don't know." I really did know. I know a lot of things. I read books, I play video games. I search for information on the internet. I also like YouTube. Pace is my CCI dog. We love agility class. I also play piano and saxophone.

I have a twin story. One time in 1st grade, the teachers mixed us up and they couldn't figure out why I was upset. The teacher called my mom. They figured out by the clothes we were wearing that the wrong kid was in the wrong class after recess. HELLO you got the wrong kid here! I was just trying to get back to my classroom but I couldn't use my words!

Sensory Issues. I am not brave trying new foods but I am getting better! I am sensitive to tastes and textures. I also used to have a hard time with thunderstorms and wind. I could recite every cloud formation and their altitude. My thunderstorm anxiety is almost non-existent now because I don't want that anxiety transmitted to Pace. I have no problem walking in the rain with Pace. I also have a particularly good memory with numbers and maps. My parents never needed a map because I always remembered street names and locations. So, as you can see, autism has nothing to do with the lack of intelligence. I receive straight A's and I like robotics. I want to be an engineer and go to Purdue University. Social interaction is hard especially with kids my own age and I am working on that. I try to play it safe. I am a loner because I don't want people to hurt my feelings.

The one thing people need to know about autism is STRESS. Most kids with autism are constantly stressed. Think about it as having to navigate in a foreign culture and you are trying to fit in and yet you don't understand all the pieces that are thrown at you. Now, think about everyone teasing you along the way. There is no self esteem. It is hard going to school everyday for six hours struggling with homework. Then, add the stress of kids knowing you are different. Then, add teachers who misinterpret stress as something else and totally don't understand you. The average adult would not like that for one hour and yet a kid with autism endures that everyday of every year. I learned in social studies class how isolation and segregation had terrible historical consequences. Yet, kids with disabilities are both isolated and segregated in many ways. I felt isolated and segregated and you just don't forget those things.

Every kid with autism needs patience. Every kid with autism is stressed. Every year my coping skills get better. When things become confusing for me, I want to cry but I know I can't because people will make fun of me. I am learning to break things into small steps so I don't

get overwhelmed. Dog handling has taught me that skill.

My CCI dog helps teach me many things in very concrete ways. I can relate to that. When you are a dog handler, you also have to control your emotions and be accountable for your actions. Pace responds to me and I get instant feedback. Simple. I also have learned about corrections. My whole life I have been prompted with people telling me what I am doing wrong because of my autism. I had no self esteem. Stress and more stress. I learned that a correction has no emotion attached to it. When I correct Pace, it is simply to make a change in behavior. I can relate to that. Pace also gives me the opportunity to earn leadership and life skills. I never had the chance in school because of my autism. I have a voice and I am in command. That's a tool you need in your pocket if you have a disability. I make an excellent dog handler because people with autism are good rule followers. When you don't follow the rules, you can create bad habits and patterns.

I am also learning to trust people because now students want to talk to me. It feels weird after years of teasing. I still have lots to learn. Pace brings understanding of autism and better acceptance. I'm a nice guy and I have a good sense of humor. Some kids think they know more about service dogs than me. I am learning that nonverbal cue of just nodding my head and smiling. My dog is my life skills partner and my parents are my coaches. Being accepted among my peers allows me to grow and have the same experiences as other teenagers. It really doesn't matter what disability you have, everyone wants to feel like they belong.

Newsletter Format Changes!

IAADP's newsletter, *Partners Forum*, has now become available via **E-MAIL** attachment by popular request. Our PDF version with photos is identical to our print version. It can be saved to your computer for permanent storage and/or printed out if you wish. Would you like to switch?

Please notify our Membership Coordinator, Carol Schilling, by phone 888-544-2237 or e-mail her at Membership@iaadp.org if you wish to receive our publication via the internet.

The Disk version has been discontinued. Members will receive a data CD-ROM as a substitute. Disks hold so little data, we cannot provide our PDF version to members or the new Word doc version either with photos. If a member would prefer a print, cassette or e-mail copy, instead of the data CD-ROM, please contact Carol Schilling as detailed above, to let us know your preference.

You Win Some, You Lose Some

By Lynn Overtree

I have had a hearing loss all my life. It has slowly worsened to the current moderate to severe level, which makes it a disability under the definition of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

I have also had pet dogs all my life. When I was a child, I wandered the mountains in Southern California with a small pack of dogs. At nine, I decided I wanted to “save wild animals.” At every opportunity I did my school projects about wildlife. In 1987, I obtained my bachelors degree from Humboldt State University in Zoology and began working for the Federal Endangered Species Program in Hawaii and then California. In 1990, I began working for The Nature Conservancy in the southern Sierra and from then on focused on natural resource management. I moved to Monterey in 1998 to co-manage a private ranch, which is now owned by two public agencies, one for whom I was an independent contractor for 5½ years.

My dogs frequently accompanied me on the preserves. They responded to sounds, and by noticing their reaction, I saw the bird, the rabbit, the car, the hiker.

In August 2007, an employee’s dog snapped at someone, so the agency for which I was working passed a policy that prohibits staff or contractors from bringing “personal animals and dogs” to work.

Initially, I assumed I could take my dog when I worked alone in areas closed to the public, but I was told “No.” This change disturbed me. I felt I depended on my dogs to help me hear. Or did I? Was I just disappointed that I could not have my buddies with me? This had been one of the benefits of my work; it offset the odd hours, the stickers and the poison oak. After receiving that “No,” I felt that if I used the dogs to help me hear, then it was my responsibility to determine whether I qualified for a hearing dog and train with one. I applied to Canine Companions for Independence.

Concurrently, I spent hours reflecting on the role of dogs at work. I wrote a letter to the agency requesting they consider implementing mitigating measures for those staff who feel they are safer with the dog’s accompaniment at work. Again, I was told the agency would not compromise.

Upon my acceptance to CCI’s March 2009 class, I announced at the agency’s February 2nd board meeting that I was complying with their policy by getting a hearing dog. At the time, I thought ADA guaranteed me access, but I hoped the agency would also be proud to have a trained hearing dog on staff!

On the first day that I brought my hearing dog Seaton to work, I was told that I couldn’t bring him back until we discussed other “reasonable accommodations,” such as the agency providing staff to accompany me in the field. I was broad-sided by the employment exceptions to access. I had entered the realm of ADA Title I. This section of ADA states:

“An employer does not have to provide the accommodation the employee or job applicant wants. If more than one accommodation works, the employer may choose which one to provide.”

The agency staff asked what accommodations I wanted and I told them none. As an independent contractor, I provide my own office, equipment, and vehicle. My dog is an auxiliary aid and no reasonable accommodation is needed.

The agency wanted to avoid compromising their “no personal animals or dogs” policy. They, however, are not compromising their policy – 1) Seaton is not a “personal dog” but a working dog, and 2) precedent abounds for service animals accessing places not open to pet dogs.

I felt I had to negotiate because I’d been told that I could not come to work with Seaton. I did not want to be confrontational, and I feared my contract would not be renewed. By entering into negotiations, however, I accepted the premise that an accommodation was needed.

When I spoke to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for clarification, they provided two statements that conflicted with one another. They said that a hearing dog could only be denied for one of 4 reasons:

- 1) I was not disabled,
- 2) the dog was not trained,
- 3) it imposes an undue burden on the employer
- 4) there is a direct conflict with the mission of the business.

Furthermore, the burden of proof lies with the employer. None of these situations existed, so Seaton could not be denied.

The EEOC, however, also referred to the above quote that states the employer may, if several alternatives are available, determine the accommodation that works for them.

The negotiations occur in an unequal footing. I spent over 40 hours of my own time researching and defending myself. The General Manager is paid to spend his time and the agency’s money fighting my right to have Seaton.

At the April board meeting, my contract was extended to the end of the fiscal year, June 30th. I signed an agreement that compromised my rights, but permitted me to work effectively – I won some, I lost some. In summary, it stated:

- 1) I may have Seaton in all parks where the public is allowed to bring pet dogs
- 2) I may have Seaton in the park where I do the majority of my work, even though it is not open to public access with pet dogs
- 3) I may NOT take Seaton in other parks where the public is not allowed to take pet dogs.
- 4) I may take Seaton into offices, since I seldom go to the offices, but this may be revisited if circumstances change.

On May 18th, I was told my contract would not be renewed due to projected budget cuts of up to 20%. The board received dozens of protest letters from constituents. I have spent another untold number of hours fighting for my job, rather than doing the needed conservation work and providing income for my family.

I still attend board meetings to speak during the public comment period about the importance of natural resource

management and to correct staff reports that skew the finances and other facts.

I am discussing my situation with many attorneys, the EEOC and the state Department of Fair Employment and Housing. If there is sufficient evidence, I will take action. Meanwhile, I am documenting the Park District's actions that relate to my issues.

CCI, IAADP, and the local Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC), are tremendous resources of information, encouragement and guidance. I am indebted to them and the many associated people to whom they have directed me.

CCI listened to my situation, counseled me and provided

the agency with a letter on the credentials of CCI, Seaton's skills and the impact leaving Seaton at home would have to our partnership.

The staff at the DHHSC accompanied me at the negotiation meeting to explain the perspective of someone hard of hearing and the benefit to the Park District of Seaton's service to me.

Ed Eames President of IAADP provides me advice, direction and advocacy. As most of you know, he is highly respected and widely known in the assistance dog and disability community. I could have never come this far without his guidance.

Thank-you IAADP & VCP Sponsors!

Dear Mr. Eames,
How does one say, "Thank you," for saving a life? I have asked myself this question a great many times over the years. In many ways I cannot say what is in my heart. When I look at my Service Dog laying at my feet and see her belly fur beginning to grow back and starting to hide the surgery scars, all I can think about is a very good Vet and your VCP program. Without both I wouldn't have my partner and without Treasure I don't know what would happen.

A few days ago I was in a creative mood and I wrote a very short story that says it all. I guess you have heard everything that could be said about things that go wrong. Well, I am more used to having problems with myself not my wonderful dog. I don't know too many things that can grab me and ring out my emotions but with Treasure and almost losing her, I have found one that scares and drains me both inside and out.

Again, thank you for everything and please pass both my thanks and the following short story to those people who helped me save my dog's life.

More than just Sincerely,
Conrad and Treasure Gordon

Our Story

"Get used to touching your dog all over," said Susan Bass, the senior instructor and manager of AIM HI (Animals in the Military Helping Individuals) in Leavenworth, Kansas. I took her advice to heart and almost every day touched Treasure all over to check for changes.

In 2000, I was partnered with a half Golden Retriever, half Labrador Retriever named Treasure. She was perfect. When my classes were finished I went with my service dog to Kansas City International Airport to return home to California. While waiting for our flight home, Treasure and I met a Russian Orthodox bishop. After speaking with him for awhile, he took out his bible and asked God to bless Treasure. I was touched by his deed, but I never thought it would come true.

Treasure and I have been partnered now for almost nine years. Last month I noticed her belly was a bit bigger. At

first I thought she was just eating too much, but a few days later her abdomen seemed full and distended, and I was sure something was wrong. I made an appointment for Treasure to see our vet and found out that something was indeed wrong. An x-ray of her abdomen showed a large tumor. Treasure's vet thought it was growing off her spleen. He made an appointment for surgery the next day. Needless to say I was scared. Treasure is a part of me, and I am not ready to have that part taken away.

The next morning my wife and I brought Treasure in for her surgery. I was told that she would be spending the night and I wasn't allowed to stay with her. Needless to say, this distressed me as we had never been apart since first being partnered, but because her vet was among the best, I agreed. Yet it still bothered me that Treasure could stay with me when I was in the hospital, but I couldn't be with her when she was.

The surgery went well, and the tumor and her spleen were successfully removed. It wasn't a cancerous tumor, but a small lump on her side that was also biopsied at the time of surgery turned out to be cancerous and it would need to be removed. Treasure was scheduled for surgery two weeks later. Much to my relief, she would not need to be hospitalized overnight for this surgery.

Because the surgery was so very expensive, our vet initiated a request to Nutramax regarding a Veterinary Care Partnership (VCP) grant. As administrator of this wonderful program, Nutramax quickly authorized a grant to help pay for the operation. I cannot thank the IAADP and the sponsors of the VCP program enough for this much needed assistance.

Treasure is lying at my feet as I sit here writing this note. She is still recovering from her surgeries, but she is alive and almost back to her normal self. She is expected to recover fully. The stated goal of the VCP Program is to "Save a Partnership." Well, Treasure's and my partnership with her has been saved.

Susan Bass long ago taught me to always be willing to touch my dog all over, and because of this, I still have my service dog. Thank you, Susan, for this wonderful advice, and thanks to IAADP and the sponsors of the VCP program for helping to ease the financial burden.

Halifax Leads the Way with Service Dog Park

By Helen McFadyen

I have been a member of the HRM (Halifax Regional Municipality) Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities for the past two years, and its chair for the last 11 months. I try to work the topic of service dogs into the discussion as often as the opportunity presents itself. I have done so with the taxi industry representative in order to foster better awareness by taxi drivers of the service dog access law. The same holds true for our transit company. Urban planners seeking disability/accessibility input for the Regional Plan have come to this committee and I provide them with plenty to consider; a need for more and better sidewalks, trash cans near city-owned buildings (for disposal of you-know-what), and the installation of more APS (audible pedestrian signals). I have introduced strategies for ferry crews and employees to deal with potential emergencies on boats carrying passengers with disabilities, some of whom have service dogs. I insisted that the safety policy be changed; when ferry operators perform the mandatory count of 'souls on board' the departing ferry, they must also include and record the number of service dogs. After all, if the ferry goes down, Rescue Operations needs to know that one or more valuable dogs are overboard and must be located and rescued too. The ACPD initiated a report to Council about the danger of hybrid vehicles (approved) which would force manufacturers of such vehicles to come up with a car design that includes a minimum and standard sound emission.

By far, my favourite personal victory of the last two years has been the proposal for a service dog park. It started at a meeting in 2006, when I first brought up my desire to have a location for service dog handlers to safely exercise our dogs. I pointed out that these dogs are valuable, and not everyone who handles one, has access to a back yard, or is comfortable with letting them free-run off-leash in the one off-leash dog park in Halifax. My 'plan' was vague and mostly a lot of wishful thinking. In the back of my mind, I was thinking of the 'paddock' at the CGDB training centre, a rectangular, fenced, grassy area which allows a blind person to free-run their dog with the confidence that the dog is safe and not wandering away. I suggested to HRM that we use an existing park, and fence off a small area.

Simple, right? Not so much! What ensued was a proposal that went through many incarnations; first, I was asked to consider a fenced park for all types of dogs, including pet dogs. I was fine with that. The city lawyers, however, were worried about liability arising from any potential fracas between unruly pet dogs and service dogs ('pit bull tears up guide dog' – their example). They were ready to ditch the idea altogether. I acquiesced and re-worked the proposal into one for a park designated for service dogs. I was hooked up with the manager of HRM'S Off-leash Strategies, the Manager of Asset Management and other urban planners and developers who work for HRM. They wanted to look at a model example. There were no existing models

in Canada, so I went to the USA and beyond for specifications. I called New York and spoke to the folks who create urban dog runs there. This is when things got a little nutty. The city guys dreamed up with a bunch of 'must haves' for the proposed service dog run, including; high fencing around a large plot of land, access gates for mowers, holding area with double gates for handler and dog entry, water access, video security cameras, seating, trash bins, and so on. It was developing a price tag that required a 'needs assessment.' How many service dogs are in HRM?, they asked me. Who would use it? I had no hard statistics for them. I explained that while I DO know a dozen or more guide dog handlers and a few other service dog owners, we are not a formally connected group. There is no single organization to track this information.

I asked for their patience as I started my informal analysis. I called all 37 veterinarians in HRM to ask how many service dogs they had within each or their client base. My reasoning was simple; if you have a service dog, you must have a vet. Numbers emerged. I discovered that there were at least 80 service dogs in HRM, excluding the police dogs, which have their own exercise facility. I launched an informal appeal to people with service dogs to call me with their thoughts. In the meantime, our city council announced that \$200,000.00 was going to be made available to improve accessibility in HRM buildings and other locations for persons with disabilities and that the Advisory Committee would be the disseminators of this money. We began to take in requests from the community for retrofitting all kinds of stuff. As chair, my suggestion to the committee members was that we should try to maximize the spending of the 200K and accomplish as much change as possible with this relatively small amount of money, and impact change for as many people with disabilities as possible.

To date, we have approved funding for swimming pool lifts, accessible washrooms in Point Pleasant Park and at a cultural information centre, money to retrofit a local arena for a sledge hockey team, door openers in several locations, audible departure signals at the ferry terminals and more.

The HRM asset management guy suggested that I look for a sum of money to create the service dog park. Coincidentally, we found an existing piece of land, located centrally on several bus routes which also has parking nearby. It is unused and unwanted because it is too small for development. This little triangle of land is not much to write home about, however, once the grass is cut, the rocks removed, some fill added to even the ground, the remaining fencing erected (it's already partially fenced), some trash bins added and the signs put up, we service dog handlers will have a centrally-located, safe area to free-run our dogs.

I have been assigned a city public relations officer to work with. We will develop a public awareness campaign over the winter months and into the spring. We want to ensure that everyone understands that this will be a designa-

ted location, not a public space for pet dogs. I think that by using a gentle approach, it will be well-received.

Scheduled opening for this service dog park is tentatively set for early May of 2009. Much media attention has developed already. My guide dog, Opal and I have already done an interview on site, and we have been asked to do more on opening day. We will oblige very happily. I'll be the one explaining to reporters that we are standing in the first designated park space for use by service dogs in Canada. I will add that Halifax is a model to watch. Opal

will be busy running around, "blowing the stink off," as we say in Nova Scotia, with joy in her little canine heart.

(Reprinted with permission of the author from the May, 2009 issue of *Two By Four*, the quarterly publication of Guide Dog Users of Canada).

Editor's Note: This park is now open, according to recent newspaper articles in early September. Helen estimated the cost of building the park to be \$25,000. Congratulations to Helen for her persistence in establishing this wonderful amenity for assistance dogs in Halifax!

Indiana Advocacy Effort

By Joan Froling

IAADP was contacted by Gary Johnson for help in getting a bill passed that would grant workplace access to assistance dog partners in the state of Indiana, as well as clarify that assistance dogs are allowed on school property. Another goal was to spell out the term, "service animal," to include many more kinds of assistance dogs than just guide dogs in places of public accommodation.

IAADP's Advocacy Alert system went into action. We contacted every member in Indiana who had provided us with their e-mail address to let them know of this legislation and to give them the opportunity to get involved.

IAADP also strongly recommended adopting the Coalition of Assistance Dog Organization's (CADO) definition of a Service Animal to clarify the difference between a service animal and a companion animal [pet] in the state law. We were disappointed to later learn the timetable for passing the bill did not allow for amendments at that stage.

The coalition which called itself on its business cards, "Partners in Policymaking Academy, graduate class of 2009," succeeded in their lobbying efforts. We asked one of the leaders in this advocacy effort to provide an article for *Partners Forum* on this legislation. Ann MacLaren graciously sent the following piece to us for publication.

Indiana Service Dog Bill Becomes Law

By Ann MacLaren

A new Indiana assistance dog state law will go into effect July 1, 2009. If you need to cite the bill for any reason, please direct the public and law enforcement to 2009 Indiana Engrossed House Bill 1603, which affects (Indiana Codes) IC 16-22 and IC 22-9.

This law was passed unanimously by both legislative houses. While this law does not broaden the scope of the ADA, it does add clarification to avoid misinterpretation of the law and lengthy and costly legal action. There were three main goals and focal points of the law. The first goal was to update and use similar nomenclature as the ADA to avoid confusion at the state level. For example, most stores have the signage, "service animals welcome," but many in the general public meant this only applied to guide dogs. For public clarification, the definition of service animal in

Indiana law now includes the following:

1. a hearing animal
2. a guide animal
3. an assistance animal
4. a seizure alert animal
5. a mobility animal
6. a psychiatric animal or
7. an autism animal

The second area of focus was prompted by individuals who had previous public access problems with educational entities. The law now specifically states that individuals are entitled to be accompanied by an assistance dog on school property. These include the following:

- a nursery school
- an elementary school
- a secondary school
- an undergraduate or postgraduate or private institution
- other places of education

The third area of the law where clarification was added was regarding assistance dogs in places of employment. Many partnered individuals had previously been denied access to their employment after receiving an assistance dog. Indiana law now specifically states that an employer must allow an employee with a disability to keep a service animal with the employee at all times.

Lastly, Indiana law also states that a covered entity may not interfere, directly or indirectly, with the use of an animal that has been or is being specifically trained as a service animal.

**MEMBERSHIP QUERIES?
CHANGE OF ADDRESS?**

Contact Carol at 888-54-IAADP
or at carol@iaadp.org

Travel to Peru With An Assistance Dog

By Hilary Relton

I am partnered with hearing dog Ryan, a yellow lab. We have traveled to Peru together seven times, twice accompanied by JoAnn Amann and her hearing dog, Hope. I was born in Lima and lived the first 20 years of my life there. I am bilingual so no language problems – I am a late deafened adult with a cochlear implant. After my mother died my father chose to live in Peru so Ryan and I try to visit once or twice a year to “recharge his batteries!” After so many visits we are now familiar with the requirements.

1) ONLY fly on an American airline (Delta, American and Continental all have daily flights). This will guarantee that your partner will fly in the cabin with you. If you risk flying a non-American airline (not under ADA) any assurances you were given (that your partner will fly on board with you) when booking will probably not be honored when you check in, thereby putting you in a horrible dilemma. I have never tested this (and don’t intend to) but I am familiar with the Latin mentality and their fear of being faced with new challenges and making a decision that could cost them their job.

2) About ten days before travel take your dog to a USDA vet. When making the appointment let them know you need a travel certificate so they can have the paperwork ready. If this is not your regular vet make sure you have up-to-date copies of your partner’s inoculations. You will also need an address and phone number of where you will be staying in Peru. Once the paperwork is completed it needs to be sent with a check for \$24 and a return stamped envelope (overnight is best) to your state USDA-APHIS vet. To find the address of yours click on this link: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/area_offices/. If the vet is experienced in issuing travel certificates they will help you through these steps, otherwise be prepared to do it on your own. Save your paperwork for the return trip – technically you don’t need it but I have been asked for it.

3) If you can, find out beforehand what type of plane you will be flying. If you are assigned a non-acceptable seat when you book you will most likely be able to change it when you check in (airlines always reserve choice seats for passengers with special needs). Delta uses 767s which provide a nice amount of room at the bulkhead. We flew Continental once out of Houston and were given the bulkhead area. To my shock it was a small plane (737) and the bulkhead area was tiny. We had a horrible flight, poor Ryan had to travel in an almost sitting position as our neighboring passenger complained that he took up all the floor space. Seven hours of that is no fun! When you check in with the airline have your paperwork handy – they may or may not ask for it (I have had it both ways). And of course, be ready for all the security checks.

4) When you arrive in Lima you can get through immigration fairly quickly as you can use the Diplomatic Corps and special needs line. You will not be questioned about the dog. When you reach the luggage pick-up room and are facing the carousels (they are not round!) look to your left and behind a jutting wall you will see a sign that says

SENASA. This is where you have to register your partner and pay a fee (about \$35). Do this first as it takes a while for the luggage to appear. They do not speak English but are generally helpful and will ultimately take a sheet from your documentation and give you a certificate saying your partner can be in Peru. Outside the main concourse doors (it is a chaotic scene – lots of people, and it will probably be dark as most flights from the US arrive close to midnight or around 4 AM) keep going straight (less than 100 yards) and cross the immediate roads. You will see a building just ahead – it is a hotel and there is a grassy area where you can take your partner to relieve him/herself.

5) In Lima there are no laws to protect you or give you access to stores and restaurants. Don’t attempt going in to a grocery store (people leave their dogs tied up outside) with your partner. The number one reason they give is that they will be fined by the health department. Restaurants are different – they will allow you in based on their goodwill.

Cafés with outside areas are usually safe. Ryan (and Hope) is now welcomed at Pescados Capitales (a top fish restaurant in Miraflores), TANTA (coffee shops) and at Granja Azul (a fabulous chicken place about 30 minutes east of Lima). Even American chains don’t ensure access – I complained to Starbucks and they assured me it would not happen again but I haven’t tested it because I found a local coffee shop with better coffee and access for Ryan (Chef’s Café on Avenida Larco in Miraflores). Ryan has also been welcomed at a couple of department stores but again it depends who is on duty when we arrive! If you want to get access try this (but also be prepared for “no”). Go to the restaurant, ask for the head waiter and explain that the dog will behave, that if patrons complain (one of their worries) you will leave. The first time they are nervous, put them at ease, accept a corner table. When they see that the patrons in fact are all smiles when they see the dog they will welcome you the next time. You will also have several visitors and lots of questions! Don’t expect accessible bathrooms – usually restaurant restrooms are tiny, be prepared to leave your partner with your travel companion (remember this is not the US so you are not under ADA). Also, dogs in restrooms will cause a negative reaction.

6) Where to stay. There are several American hotel chains so if you choose this type of accommodation you should not have access issues. There is also The Hotel Antigua Miraflores (do a google search and it will come up) where Ryan and I stayed a couple of times. The owner is American and we were given a wonderful welcome. We now stay at my apartment across the street from the hotel! Miraflores is a good choice for accommodations because it borders the ocean. Although the beach is at the bottom of the cliff all along the cliff side there are fabulous parks where you can exercise your dog. Parque Maria Reich is specifically designated a dog park and sits below street level but you can go to any of the parks. Early in the morning the parks are used by joggers and bikers so you can let your dog free if you choose. You can find many places to

stay on craigslist.com - <http://lima.en.craigslist.org/vac/>

7) Getting around Lima. You can rent a car (all the large chains are there – the AVIS stand is on the other side of the airport when you exit baggage pick-up). Taxis may or may not take you – if you are staying at the Hotel Antigua Miraflores ask for Jesus. Taxis are inexpensive and an easy way to get around. And you can walk depending on where you stay. In Miraflores there are lots of restaurants and places to see, all in fairly close proximity. There are also the outdoor “Mercados Indios” where you can buy souvenirs – your partners will be fine at these. The center of Lima is okay if you walk – there is a TANTA just off the main plaza where the government palace is.

8) Outside Lima. My first inclination is to dissuade you from taking your partner. If you do, make sure you have

private transportation (rental or driver) and the hotels are okay with your partner. It is a different world outside the modern hotels (you will find these in the larger cities – Arequipa, Cuzco, Puno, Trujillo, etc.). The Lazy Dog Inn outside Huaraz welcomes dogs but I don't know of any others. This part of your trip will require meticulous planning on your part to ensure the safety and well being of your partner. Peru is a third world country and outside Lima it is easy to understand why.

I think I have covered most of what you might encounter should you decide on a trip to Peru. It is a lovely country with friendly people. Please feel free to e-mail me if you have any further questions! hilaryan@charter.net

What On Earth Is ‘Good Temperament’ and Is It Important?

By Neil Ewart, *Guide Dogs for the Blind, UK*

I am the first to harp on about dogs needing to have a ‘good temperament’ and, of course, this is absolutely true particularly with a guide dog that usually works in very busy urban areas with loud noises, unusual smells and even unusual people!

But when asked to write about “Good Temperament,” I find putting thoughts into words quite difficult.

All dog owners will have in their mind what they regard as a temperament they like and this, quite rightly, will invariably be “good.”

I have often been asked to actually give a definition and my first thought is that this should be quite simple. However, as I plunge the depths of my thoughts, (do not go too deep!) I find it is quite difficult to actually come up with one, which can be understood, and, most important, is accepted by everyone.

In my opinion, one of the worst mistakes any breeder can make is to consistently produce ‘nervy’ puppies: that is the types which remain frightened of their own shadows even if socialised thoroughly.

I do not believe that the perfect dog has ever been bred. Look hard enough and you always find something wrong!

If a dog is bred genetically sound for temperament and taken out and about during its formative months then you have every chance of owning a dog that will be friendly and sound in virtually all conditions. Certainly, there is always something that will ‘spook’ a dog but they should recover quickly and not go to pieces. I am always wary when I see dogs that are continuously worried and the owner attributes this to some possible unfortunate experience during its earlier life. Perhaps, this is the case but I have seen many rescue dogs that have endured the most horrendous experiences be placed in lovely new homes and bounce back to acting as dogs should. Is it because they are actually genetically sound for temperament and others simply are not?

So, the question remains. What is good temperament? I have asked lots of respected dog people and one reply which did give me food for thought and could open a few debates... “Your dog has good temperament if it does what you want it to do.” Basically, if you have a thoroughly aggressive dog and that is what you want then as far as you are concerned he has good temperament. However, in the eyes of virtually everyone around you he has not!

However, if his aggression is not based on nervousness and has been acquired and, he does not bat an eyelid at loud noises, etc, then is he any better, or worse than a shrinking violet living next door? I hasten to add that I am not advocating in any way encouraging this type of dog but from a breeder's point of view, it does raise some interesting questions.

I have known many dogs used extensively at stud that were not averse to a punch up with other dogs when a suitable situation arose. However, virtually all of these were very friendly with people and most dogs when no challenge was made. Sound in all environments, should this type of dog be marked down as having poor temperament when the problem was probably acquired through poor control by its human partner?

A few years ago, the late Derek Freeman and I decided to list the attributes required in the ideal guide dog both physically and mentally.

I do not see why the average dog of any breed should not be looked at in the same light, so below are the temperamental traits we would hope are to be seen in our guide dogs which are also, probably appropriate to all dogs:

- To be stable
- To be of happy pleasing disposition
- Not to be neurotic, shy or frightened

continued on page 16...

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What is 'Good Temperament'

Continued from page 15

- Not to be hyperactive
- Not to be aggressive in any of its forms – pure, protective or apprehensive
- To be confident with children and also tolerant
- To be confident with other animals and also tolerant
- Not to be sound shy
- Not to be too dominant
- To have the ability to change environment and handler without undue stress

There are others for example 'low chasing instinct' which would be more peculiar to us than other organisations.

Everyone can debate these issues forever and quote the characteristics of individual breeds.

In conclusion, a definition is not simple but the fact remains that our dogs are living in an increasingly hostile and unforgiving environment so we should all aim, for the dogs sakes, to breed and rear dogs that we all honestly believe to have 'good temperament.' Also, to try and improve the lot of those which may have naturally weak temperaments or simply require more exposure to the outside world.

I think all breeds should consider formal assessments of temperament but, in reality, certain ones are more vulnerable to the attentions of the media, etc., than others.

Is temperament as important as 'looks' and conformation? The answer has to be a resounding 'Yes!!'

I believe this to apply to all dogs – irrespective of the breed.

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