New ADA Service Animal Definition

by Joan Froling

It may not be the biggest news story of the decade but it is certainly one of the most important to those of us who work with guide, hearing and service dogs in the USA.

On March 15, 2011, the long awaited regulatory update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will take effect. It will include a new definition of a Service Animal and additional regulations that will govern the use of assistance dogs in the United States in all places of public accommodation.

It will mark the end of the trail…the final result of an advocacy campaign begun by IAADP a decade ago. We knew that Congress had mandated the U.S. Department of Justice review the ADA regulations once every ten years, when it passed this enormous piece of civil rights legislation in 1990. Very troubled by certain problems that ensued after the publication of the original Service Animal definition in the Federal Register in October 1991, IAADP’s board hoped this mandatory review could be an opportunity for constructive change.

Discussions with other organizations in the assistance dog field on this topic led to a historic meeting early in 2001 between consumer advocacy groups representing the handlers of guide, hearing and service dogs and the umbrella organizations representing non-profit assistance dog training programs. Delegates from IAADP, Guide Dog Users Inc. (GDUI), Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and the Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools (CUSDGS) drew up a sample definition of a service animal, one that addressed what we saw as weaknesses in the original definition. The definition we worked on also contained proposed language that better reflected the terminology used by the assistance dog field in North America.

IAADP and other participants decided to form the Coalition of Assistance Dog Organizations (CADO), which would allow our respective organizations to present “an united front” on issues of concern to our diverse constituency. The first order of business was a meeting with the Disability Rights Section at the U.S. Department of Justice.

As IAADP’s chairperson, I was one of the delegates who traveled to Washington D.C. in April 2001 and in the years ahead to meet with John Wodatch, Chief of the Disability Rights Section and other officials on behalf of the assistance dog movement. We let the officials know our constituents sought a definition that would promote the responsible use of access rights in the disabled community.

The DOJ had long ago taken the position that it would be the dog’s TRAINING, not the equipment, certification papers or a licence that would determine if an animal is a service animal for public access purposes. We believed it was essential for the DOJ to at least retain the ADA re-

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quirement in the original definition for an animal to be in-
 dividually trained to do work or perform tasks for the ben-
 efit of a disabled individual. However, something more was
 needed. Too many persons were ignoring the fact a dog or
 any other animal had to be trained to perform disability
 mitigating tasks to qualify as a service animal. Some organ-
 izations and individuals sought to water down the ADA def-
 inition on the training issue until there was no perceptible
difference between a service animal and a pet. Numerous
 articles had been published in newspapers and magazines
 and on websites which blurred the line between a service
 animal and an emotional support animal or companion ani-
 mal, confusing the public and health care professionals.

CADO’s sample definition contained a sentence which
 clarified the mere presence of an animal for comfort or for
 guard or defense purposes did not qualify said animal as
 a service animal, since the animal lacked the necessary
 training to do something specific to mitigate the effects of
 someone’s disabling condition. We urged the DOJ to adopt
 similar language to end the confusion and debates and out-
 right abuses of the ADA service animal definition.

In addition, we asked John Wodatch to please consider
 issuing interim guidance on the ADA, emphasizing that
 training to perform disability mitigating tasks is manda-
tory, if the review process was going to take several years
 or more before a new definition came out.

Published in January 2002, the DOJ’s ADA Business
 Brief: Service Animals defined a service animal as any
 animal individually trained to perform tasks for the benefit
 of disabled individuals. Furthermore, businesses could not
 inquire about a person’s disability or demand a special ID
 card, but if uncertain whether an animal is a pet or a service
 animal, they could ask “what tasks has your animal been
 trained to perform?”

CADO also made it clear that our opposition to people
taking pets into places of public accommodation for emo-
tional comfort, passing them off as service animals, had
nothing to do with the disability involved. It was the ani-
mal’s lack of appropriate training that we found objection-
able. We believed service dogs could be trained to perform
beneficial tasks for individuals with a psychiatric disability
such as panic disorder, depression, post traumatic stress dis-
order or other kinds of mental illness or cognitive deficits.
We passed out an article titled “Service Dog Tasks for Psy-
chiatric Disabilities,” to the officials at our first meeting.
We urged the DOJ to provide the same recognition under the
ADA for those with mental disabilities who make the com-
mittance to work with a task-trained service dog as the DOJ
granted to wheelchair users who work with service dogs
schooled to perform disability mitigating tasks.

Another goal was to address the problem with a cer-
tain task example in the original definition. We asked the
DOJ to eliminate the task, “minimal protection and rescue
work,” as we knew of trainers, programs and disabled indi-
viduals who were grotesquely misinterpreting the mean-
ing of “minimal protection.” Some were peddling the idea
that protection trained dogs who put on displays of aggres-
sion on command or even attacked on command were ADA
sanctioned service animals, a view which shocked officials
in the Disability Rights Section when we first brought it to
their attention. They immediately labeled that “maximal,
not minimal protection.” Other individuals mistakenly ra-
sonalized that since the presence of a dog is a crime deter-
rent, any pet dog whose presence made a disabled person
feel safer qualified as a service animal, as it was allegedly
performing the ADA task of “minimal protection.”

The new definition published in the Federal Register on
September 15, 2010 does not eliminate the word “protec-
tion,” entirely. However the DOJ took note of the serious
problems caused by the word “protection.” They explain
in their Response to Public Comments on this topic in the
Final Rules on Title II and Title III of the ADA that they
believe they have resolved the problem. The new defini-
tion changes “minimal protection” to “non-violent protec-
tion.” They also added a crucial sentence at the end of the
new definition for further clarification. It states: “the crime
deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and the provision
of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companion-
ship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this
definition.”

Two years ago when the DOJ issued its Notice of Pro-
posed Rule Making (NPRM) which included a proposed
definition of a service animal, IAADP and other CADO
members had less than two months to formulate position
statements and seek the support of those who work with
guide, hearing and service dogs and the non-profit pro-
grams that train such dogs. We also did outreach to friends
and supporters through several e-mail blasts.

For years, the officials at the DOJ had repeatedly
stressed to us how important public comments could be to
the outcome. It was to some degree “a numbers game” to
determine how many American citizens were in favor of
certain changes and how many opposed such changes.

IAADP is very grateful for the tremendous response to
our call for public comments. We salute each and every
IAADP member who took the time that summer to submit
a comment on various topics to the U.S. Department of Jus-
tice. We also applaud the members of our CADO allies and
others who sent in public comments in support of our posi-
tion before the cutoff date.

It was not a cakewalk. In addition to individual com-
menters, there were a number of disability rights organiza-
tions that came out in favor of the DOJ including non-task
trained emotional support animals as a service animal.
Fortunately, the DOJ lawyers who reviewed all the public
comments and drew up the Final Rules in 2008 just before
the Presidential election, sided with those of us who wanted
the ADA to maintain a clear cut difference between service
animals and pets.

Only a few individuals argued that the DOJ should keep
“minimal protection” as part of the new definition, as I recall.

The question posed on whether there should be a size
limit on assistance dogs or other “common domestic ani-
mals” was answered with a resounding “NO” by the as-
sistance dog field. The DOJ agreed with those of us who
protested that a size limit could prevent tall or heavy-set
adults from being able to work with a service dog whose
large size would be the most appropriate match for their
height, weight and disabling condition.

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To learn more about the reasons why the DOJ made the decisions it did about the new definition and ancillary material in the updated regulations, read their “Section by Section Analysis and Response to Public Comments” in the DOJ’s Final Rules on Title II and III of the ADA. It is fascinating. I compiled the excerpts from the Final Rules concerning service animals in one document for your reading convenience on IAADP’s website. The link is presently located in the box at the top of our homepage.

In that section I actually found the answer to a question I have often been asked. It was not even discussed in the NPRM. The DOJ announced it has adopted the legal position that “dangerous breed bans” passed by cities or towns do NOT apply to service animals.

The most unexpected development is the DOJ’s decision that in the future, dogs are the only species that qualify to be a service animal under the ADA. The new definition states: “Service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.”

The NPRM definition took a giant step in that direction when it proposed banning non-human primates, farm animals including miniature horses, reptiles, ferrets and wild animals as service animals, allowing only what the DOJ termed “common domestic animals.”

In the 2010 Final Rule, in the DOJ’s Response to Public Comments, the Department explains that they learned that the term “common domestic animal” means different things under different state laws. They dropped the idea of utilizing it because the potential for confusion was too great. They ultimately decided the best way to alleviate the concerns expressed that the use of other species could lead to an erosion of societal tolerance for service animals in public places would be to limit the species permitted to dogs only.

CADO delegates had let the DOJ know they were not opposed to access rights for blind individuals who were working with miniature guide horses, when the subject of miniature horses came up at a meeting in 2007. In response to the NPRM question on a limitation on species, CADO’s position remained the one adopted years before. CADO’s public comment in 2008 had stated that CADO would not object to the use of another species if that animal could be housebroken and trained to the same high behavioral and training standards as an assistance dog.

When you read the material to follow, you will discover that access for a disabled person working with a miniature horse will continue, even though this species is no longer considered to be a service animal after March 15, 2011. The DOJ has decided to give businesses more leeway in deciding whether or not access would be a reasonable accommodation.

Overall the efforts of IAADP and other CADO members to preserve the assistance dog concept and to gain recognition for those with mental disabilities who choose to work with specially trained service dogs out in public rather than a pet for companionship or emotional support did bear fruit. The new ADA Service Animal definition and additional guidance material formally incorporated into the ADA regulatory update should go a long way to end abuses of the ADA or distressing misunderstandings on the part of individuals, trainers and several programs that led to CADO’s formation in 2001. It is to be hoped that when the ADA Final Rules take effect on March 15, 2011, there will be plenty of media coverage to help us educate society about the changes and clarifications in the new service animal definition that emerged from this review process. In closing, I would like to thank everyone who supported our advocacy campaign to update the ADA service animal definition first published in October 1991. The final version may not include every wording change we recommended, but it is definitely a significant improvement.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
28 CFR Part 36
CRT Docket No. 106; AG Order No. RIN 1190-AA44
Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities
AGENCY: Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
ACTION: FINAL RULE

ADA Title III
ADA Subpart A 36.104 Definitions

Service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler’s disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

ADA Subpart C 36.302 Final Rule - Title III

Subpart C—Specific Requirements
1. 5. Amend § 36.302 as follows--
a. Revise paragraph (c)(2); and
b. Add paragraphs (c)(3) through (c)(9) and paragraphs (e) and (f) to read as follows--
§ 36.302 Modifications in policies, practices, or procedures.
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1. (c) * * *

(2) Exceptions. A public accommodation may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:
   (i) The animal is out of control and the animal’s handler does not take effective action to control it; or
   (ii) The animal is not housebroken.

(3) If an animal is properly excluded. If a public accommodation properly excludes a service animal under §36.302(c)(2), it shall give the individual with a disability the opportunity to obtain goods, services, and accommodations without having the service animal on the premises.

(4) Animal under handler’s control. A service animal shall be under the control of its handler. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler’s control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

(5) Care or supervision. A public accommodation is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.

(6) Inquiries. A public accommodation shall not ask about the nature or extent of a person’s disability, but may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal. A public accommodation may ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. A public accommodation shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Generally, a public accommodation may not make these inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person’s wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).

(7) Access to areas of a public accommodation. Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of a place of public accommodation where members of the public, program participants, clients, customers, patrons, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

(8) Surcharges. A public accommodation shall not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge, even if people accompanied by pets are required to pay fees, or to comply with other requirements generally not applicable to people without pets. If a public accommodation normally charges individuals for the damage they cause, an individual with a disability may be charged for damage caused by his or her service animal.

(9) Miniature horses.
   (i) A public accommodation shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.
   (ii) Assessment factors. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, a public accommodation shall consider—
      (A) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
      (B) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
      (C) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
      (D) Whether the miniature horse’s presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.
   (iii) Other requirements. Sections 36.302(c)(3) through (c)(8), which apply to service animals, shall also apply to miniature horses.

A Law with Real Teeth

dear IAADP Members:

For those outside of Wisconsin, while we who work with these magnificent dogs prefer the term “assistance dog” the legal term in the Wisconsin statutes is “service dog.”

Wisconsin has perhaps the strongest law protecting service dogs and dogs assisting public safety officers. Recently, on the near west side of Madison, WI, a man was walking/exercising his wife’s service dog. The dog was off duty and not wearing an identifying vest. A pit bull attacked the service dog. The man was able to protect his wife’s dog from harm. Police soon arrived on the scene. The man informed the officer that this was his wife’s service dog and that the dog was registered as a service dog with the city housing authority as they lived in public housing. (Public housing does not allow dogs except for service dogs and therapy dogs, per Fair Housing law; in Madison you must register your service dog with the housing authority.) The police officer issued the pit bull owner a citation for $1000 on the spot.

If the dog had been injured, the action would have been a felony and there may have been jail time plus a stiffer fine.

Marcia Carlson
IAADP Member
M y husband Ed and I were among the cofounders of IAADP, and since his death, I’ve had to take on the difficult task of functioning as half a team. But I know IAADP needs leadership, so I stay involved.

Every few months, I open my home to the dedicated folks who raise guide dog puppies. Its fun to meet the young puppies and it’s important to let raisers know how their efforts impact the lives of future partners. The rules often seem daunting, but having dogs who relieve on command on any surface, sit when greeted, no barking at the door, no scavenging, not getting on furniture and other good manner practices, makes my life with a graduated guide dog so much more pleasant. The time, work and love they put into this project is invaluable. The greatest gift these folks do is giving up a beloved puppy.

Fresno puppies learn cat manners quickly at my home. Kizzy, my seventeen-year-old Siamese, trains puppies in cat manners. He marched over to the youngest pup to test her behavior around cats. Predictably, the puppy energetically attempted to greet Kizzy. Kizzy hissed and bopped the little canine on the head. As soon as the pup sat quietly, Kizzy roamed over to the next candidate for training. In the course of the evening, Kizzy taught three guide dog puppies how to quietly greet cats! The trainers at San Rafael must be impressed with the Fresno dogs that come in for training. They are so well cat socialized!

I am so pleased Hill’s Pet Nutrition sponsored my presentations at Veterinary schools in 2010. In May, Beth Shea drove me to Davis, California. This was my first trip away from home since Ed’s death. Dr. Barry Watson, the Hill’s veterinary liaison, with his warmth and concern, made this first solo presentation smooth and seamless.

The big trip for me came in mid-June. Ed’s retired guide dog Latrell stayed with friends.

Since I am having spinal issues and use a wheelchair for long distances, I travel with a companion. Debbie Prieto accompanied me this time. Before traveling to the Assistance Dog International conference in Toronto, we visited friends in Niagara Falls where we did some sightseeing.

Joan Froling with service dog Spirit and Devon Wilkins with guide dog Vestor were also attendees at the ADI conference. On the first day, ADI held a moving memorial service for Ed. Pictures of Ed flashed on a large screen, while several folks spoke about his impact on the assistance dog movement. I managed to speak without breaking down. The next day, Devon, Joan and I were joined by Tim McCallum from Australia for a panel on what it is like for the disabled partner to train with a successor dog.

After closing ADI sessions, Joan came to my room for a serious discussion about IAADP. I was so involved, I barely noticed the sofa shaking. Joan’s wheelchair was also shaking. It was a genuine earthquake, later reported to be a 5.0 on the Richter Scale, but we kept on talking without thinking of the possible safety implications. Actually, I thought it was funny, leaving California to experience an earthquake in Toronto!

The next stop on our trip was to Montreal to visit a friend and to give Debbie several more days of sightseeing. At the Montreal Airport, I was faced with a huge dilemma. The flight was overbooked and we were offered two free future trips on Delta if we’d change routing. The problem was we were scheduled to meet Helene Tepper during our scheduled three-hour layover in Atlanta. I could hear Ed in my ear urging me to take it, but I hadn’t seen Helene in awhile. I vacillated for only a few minutes, but decided not to put a price on friendship and turned down the offer.

Everything went as planned, and we had a lovely lunch with Helene. It was then back through security and over to our gate. In past travels, I have always been taken aside and hand-scanned by the TSA agent. As a diabetic, I didn’t want Ed to walk without his shoes, even for a short distance. On this trip, I tried it the other way. I took off my shoes and placed my carry-on luggage in the containers provided. Keebler guided me to the walk through, I put her on a down stay, took the hand of the agent, and walked through without the dog. I did not alarm! If then called Keebler who ran through and did alarm. The agent checked her harness, and we were on our way! No fuss, no bother! I plan to do this kind of scanning in the future.

Unfortunately, weather problems caused us to miss the Fresno flight, so Delta put us up in a hotel for the night. Bright and early the next morning, Keebler was thrilled when she got sausages and scrambled eggs for breakfast, her dog food having stayed in the checked luggage. We were back in Fresno by 9:15 A.M., so it really wasn’t so inconvenient. The temperature that day was 108°F, so welcome back to a Fresno summer day.

On September 8 it was bittersweet when Debbie Prieto dropped Keebler and me at the Fresno Airport. It was my solo trip without Ed. Keebler and I were off to do presentations at Kansas State Veterinary School. Arriving in Dallas after an on-time, comfortable flight, I was told the flight to Manhattan, Kansas was cancelled due to the storms battering Texas. I was appalled to learn the next flight was almost six hours later.

The Advantage of flying American Airlines is that I know Squeaky Jackson, the coordinator for severely disabled travelers. Squeaky invited me back to her office where a quiet room was available to rest between flights. I was most unhappy with the thought of spending seven hours in the Dallas Airport, but Squeaky made things comfortable. Knowing about my inability to walk far, she took Keebler out for relief. Squeaky suggested I might want to fly into Kansas City, and as luck would have it, Dr. Ronnie Elmore, the associate dean who invited me to speak, had an evening meeting in the Kansas City area. After only 4 hours, it was off to KC where Ron picked Keebler and me up and drove us to Overland Park for his evening meeting. It was fascinating. Kansas State does a major recruiting campaign for high school students. The spiel was so good; it almost encouraged me to sign up for another college stint!

My presentation the next day was to a class on diversity where I concentrated on clients with disabilities. It was great fun.

The return flights to Fresno on September 10 were uneventful. Squeaky met my flight in Dallas, took Keebler out for relief and got me on the connecting flight.

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A Tail to Tell
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September 11 is a day I always celebrated until the awful events in 2001. Since all my cats were adopted with no known birthdays, I assigned September 11 as their birthdays. In that way, I wouldn’t have to remember lots of different dates. Kizzy, the only one of the four adopted as a very young kitten, is now 17. Bonzie is 16, Nifty 15 and Bambi 13. With each having medical issues, I feel like I’m running a feline nursing home!

Debbie and I set off for the State of Washington on September 20. I took my wheelchair because I didn’t want to hold up my friends on the sightseeing part of the trip. We flew from Fresno to Spokane where we were met by Barry Watson, who had arranged my presentation at Washington State Veterinary School. We were given a tour of the veterinary teaching hospital and everyone was impressed when Keebler had no reaction to the camel in residence!

Before going to the IAADP/ADC conference hotel, we did a bit of sightseeing at Theos Chocolate Factory, and then took a narrated boat tour.

After the conference, we enjoyed another tour day, this time to Whidbey Island. We lunched at a restaurant on the bay where I could hear the water lapping and the seagulls calling. It was a calming scene.

Beth was the driver for another road trip. It took us about five hours to get to Woodland Hills and the home of IAADP Board member Glen Gregos and his wife Ellen. They were wonderful hosts and Ellen prepared a lovely dinner for me. Beth had dinner with her cousin who lives in the next town. Latrell made the trip with us and my silly citified dogs think of a large yard as a place to relieve, and then come into the house to chase and wrestle!

Before my presentation at Western University, Dr. Watson arranged for me to spend time with the dean and later with several of the professors. My lecture was advertised to the entire university body and among the 200 folks in the audience, many disciplines were represented.

My last air travel of the year was on November 9 to Portland, Oregon. The day before my presentation at Oregon State, Mary Post and I spent several hours with Michele Pouliot, trainer extraordinaire at the Oregon campus of Guide Dogs for the Blind. After a great lunch, we went to the school and worked with clicker training to teach Keebler to find empty seats and counters in bathrooms. Keebler is good at finding an open stall in a public restroom, but she rarely finds the sinks. As a friend pointed out, when Keebler relieves, she doesn’t stop to wash her paws before leaving the area!

My next stop was Salem to visit former Fresno friends Alicia and Andy Bone. Alicia was my driver for the ride to Corvallis where we met up with Dr. Watson. After the presentation, Alicia and I stopped for an Indian buffet, which meant we weren’t hungry for dinner!

Andy was my driver back to the Portland airport. United Airlines allowed him to escort me to the gate, and the rest of the trip home was as smooth as the trip there.

In the next issue of Partners’ Forum, I’ll tell you about our exciting trip to Japan.

Legacy of a Service Dog

I used to want to hide from view
I’d wish I was somebody else
With you my looks never mattered
Pretty soon I forgot them myself

You gave me the courage to travel
You brought me out of my shell
Together we saw distant cities
Together we conquered them all

You were there in my darkest moments
You helped me to weather the pain
You helped me forgive the cruelty
And learn how to love, not blame.

There were many moments of laughter
And many joys we shared
It broke my heart to let you go
When the vet said you should be spared

No medals are given to service dogs
for taking away the fear,
for giving us a brand new lease on life,
a life of dignity and cheer.

I now have friends, a purpose in life
and confidence in myself
That’s the legacy you leave behind, old friend,
As a tribute to yourself.

—Anon
What to expect if you are blind or visually impaired and use a Service Dog?

If you are blind or visually impaired and use a service dog, both you and your dog will have to go through screening.

What choices, if any, do you have in the screening process?

You will not be eligible for screening using Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT). You can choose to undergo Walk Through Metal Detector (WTMD) screening, or request a pat-down. A pat-down may be conducted in a private screening area by an officer of the same gender.

If you and your dog go through the WTMD together and the Alarm goes off, BOTH of you will have to undergo additional screening.

1. To resolve the passenger alarm, the Transportation Security Officer (TSO) will conduct a pat-down to verify that no prohibited items are present.
2. Since your dog’s harness most likely contains metal, the TSO will need to physically inspect your dog and its belongings (collar, harness, leash, backpack, vest, etc.) in order to resolve the alarm. Although the dog’s harness will not be removed, it and other items that s/he may be carrying such as a backpack are subject to screening.

If you and your dog walk through the WTMD individually and one or both of you set off the alarm:

Additional screening will be conducted as described above on whoever causes the alarm.

What You Can Do To Facilitate the Screening Process

1. Inform the Security Officer that the animal accompanying you is a service animal and not a pet, and carry appropriate identification to verify this fact.
2. Inform the Security Officer how you and your dog will walk through the WTMD (walking together or with the service dog walking in front or behind you).
3. Keep control of your service animal while the TSO conducts the screening.

What Else Should You Expect

The TSO should:

* Offer to assist you in placing your accessible property on the x-ray belt.
* Provide you with verbal instructions regarding the screening process.
* Allow you to stay with your dog throughout the entire screening process.
* Allow you to go to the front of the screening line if you choose to do so.
* Allow you to go to the front of the line to be re-screened when you have to leave the checkpoint to take your animal to a service animal relief area.

What Are Some Other Important Things To Know?

A. If you leave the sterile area to relieve your dog, you will have to undergo the entire screening process again. When you return to the security checkpoint, however, you are entitled to move to the front of the screening line to expedite the process.
B. Medication for service animals is permitted through security checkpoints once it has undergone x-ray or visual inspection screening. All liquids, gels, or aerosols will have to undergo Liquid Container Screening.

Partners In Independence is a fascinating film scripted by Ed and Toni Eames. It introduces the audience to the guide dog movement, the hearing dog movement and the service dog movement in the USA. There are beautiful shots of many assistance dogs at work during this action packed twelve minute documentary.

A number of Assistance Dog training programs donated their best film footage and we also set up some great scenes utilizing IAADP member teams at our conference in Anaheim, CA in the year 2000. IAADP has two versions, one that would make a great gift for veterinarians, the other one for educating general audiences, thanks to a grant from Hill’s. Each features a song by an assistance dog partner.

The film won “Best Video of the Year” from the Dog Writers Association of America, the year of its debut.

About five years later, the Eames received another grant from Hills so they could enhance the film, with a special focus on showing some small service dogs at work, additional hearing dog scenes and unusual breeds. Converted from a VHS video format to DVD, it is available for a donation of $20 to IAADP through our website and at our conferences.

It is also available for your viewing pleasure through our website, at no charge, from a link in the box at the top of the homepage www.iaadp.org. Alternatively you can view it directly on the Veterinary Information Network. Make sure your “volume” is not on mute. Just type the following into your browser: http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Contentpx?P=A&A=3096
Share this url with your friends, family members and others who could benefit from and enjoy this educational outreach effort.
Canine Studies: Go to college, play with dogs!

by Pam Hogle - August 9, 2010 at 12:41 pm

I recently received an unusual academic degree: a Master of Science in Human-Canine Life Sciences. There is only one accredited university that offers such a degree: Bergin University of Canine Studies in Santa Rosa, California. The university also offers bachelor and associate of science degrees.

What does one learn in a dog-focused university?

Well, in the associate degree program on service dog education, students learn to train puppies starting when the puppies are only four weeks old. Students assist with the birth of litters of puppies, teach the dogs to enjoy being petted and handled, and teach them all the skills that a mobility assistance service dog needs to know. Students learn about creating a healthy and enriching environment for puppies. They learn that early experiences have a lasting impact on puppies and that socializing puppies to all kinds of people, places, sounds, and smells is important for any puppy but critical for a dog who will work as an assistance dog, accompanying his human partner to public places like malls, restaurants, and airports. Students train several dogs of various ages and take a dog everywhere they go. Students also learn about the clients who will ultimately partner with the service dogs they are training, studying the various disabilities that service dogs help mitigate.

When I was in the associate degree program, we taught our dogs to perform their tasks by responding to words printed on flashcards. We also raised and trained puppies from birth. Watching a 12-week-old puppy perfectly perform a dozen tasks that I had taught her was incredibly rewarding, and inspired me to work as a puppy and service dog trainer.

Students in the bachelor and master’s degree programs delve into academic research about dogs and how dogs learn. Courses apply learning theory and cognitive development research to dogs and study the evolutionary and biological roots of canine behavior. Bergin University offers the first accredited programs that bring the study of the dog into mainstream scholarly study.

The master’s class is a series of one- and two-week seminars taught by top researchers and experts including Dr. Marc Bekoff, Dr. Pam Reid, and Dr. Stanley Coren. A survey class presents a range of training and teaching approaches and students then devise their own ideal method for educating dogs. A genetics class explores heredity and its effects on both health and behavior. An ethics class analyzes the way humans and dogs interact and work together and explores the responsibilities of both dogs and humans in these partnerships. The seminar format of the master’s degree program means that students can live anywhere and commute to the university for courses once or twice a year. Students complete a culminating research project or thesis that contributes to and advances the body of knowledge about dogs.

Jana attended nearly all of the master’s degree classes with me and was the inspiration for my culminating project, a book I am writing that is called, “No Bad Dogma: Connecting Thinking Dogs and Their Families.” Jana also got to participate in classes on freestyle dancing with dogs, agility, scent tracking and disc (or Frisbee) dog training.

Bergin University offers a short summer seminar, in addition to the college degree programs. Find out more on the university’s website: www.berginu.org.

Reprinted with the author’s permission from The Thinking Dog Blog, published by Creative Loafing Tampa Bay. For more articles by Pam Hogle, visit her website at www.pamhogle.com.

Blockbuster Video Settlement Announced

by Joan Froling

A long standing IAADP member filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) against Blockbuster Video. Her complaint detailed the pattern and practice of service dog access denial in several Blockbuster stores as a customer accompanied by her service dog. The complaint included the letters she had written over the years to Blockbuster, documenting the access problems encountered when she sought to rent videos with her service dog at her side. In each letter to the corporation, she had asked Blockbuster to please educate their employees about the access rights of customers with disabilities. Unhappy with the corporation’s last response and the fact she continued to run into rude, ignorant store managers, she finally requested that DOJ formally investigate Blockbuster’s failure to adhere to the ADA re: Service Animal access.

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We are impressed by the settlement the DOJ negotiated, one that can help other assistance dog teams in the USA. Some highlights from the DOJ’s lengthy press release follow:

**Justice Department Reaches Settlement with Blockbuster, Inc. Under the Americans With Disabilities Act.**

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department today announced a settlement agreement under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with Blockbuster Inc. to ensure equal access to its stores nationwide for individuals with disabilities who use service animals.

The settlement agreement, which resolves a complaint filed under Title III of the ADA by an individual with a disability, requires, among other things, that Blockbuster provide comprehensive training to employees at more than 3,000 retail stores throughout the United States to ensure individuals with disabilities who use service animals have full and equal enjoyment of its goods, services and facilities.

“The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees equal access to individuals with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals, but too often those individuals are subject to discrimination because of misconceptions or a lack of understanding of the law,” said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division.

The agreement, which will remain in effect for three years, requires that Blockbuster:

1. Implement a comprehensive nationwide nondiscrimination policy regarding service animals for people with disabilities;
2. Distribute the policy and train employees across the United States on the rights of service animal users and employee obligations to ensure full and equal access to Blockbuster goods, services and facilities;
3. Provide the same training to new staff during the hiring process;
4. Post its service animal policy on its website and in its stores, and post a “Service Animals Welcome” sign in each of its stores;
5. Create a toll-free ADA complaint line;
6. Establish, implement, and monitor a grievance procedure for ADA-related complaints from customers;
7. Pay $12,000 in damages to the individual who filed the complaint resolved by this settlement; and
8. Pay $10,000 as a civil penalty.

“The ADA’s 20th anniversary is July 26, 2010,” said Assistant Attorney General Perez. “As we celebrate the anniversary of this landmark civil rights law, we are pleased that Blockbuster has affirmed its commitment to ensuring that individuals with disabilities benefit fully and equally from its goods, facilities, and services, including individuals who use service animals.”

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**Canada**

**Store Ejects Disabled Woman, Dog**

**Mac’s Faces Rights Complaint**

by Trevor Wilhelm, The Windsor Star, March 19, 2010

A wheelchair-bound woman who was kicked out of a convenience store says that ordeal was just the most recent discrimination she’s faced in Windsor.

Mac’s Convenience Stores Inc. has apologized after a clerk ejected Julie Holmes from a Windsor store because she had a service dog with her, but she’s not dropping the issue. She’s filed a human rights complaint.

“They have apologized and I appreciate it,” said Holmes, 24, who has muscular dystrophy. “But if I accept sorry from them, I have to accept sorry from everybody. Then everybody can treat me like garbage as long as they say sorry. I have to get the point across and educate.

“It makes me feel horrible. I have every right to have my dog with me. She’s an extension of me. I can’t do things without her. It makes me feel like I’m less of a person. It’s sheer discrimination.”

Holmes takes Fancy, a two-year-old Labrador Retriever, everywhere. Fancy is a certified service dog worth more than $20,000 because of her training.

The dog picks objects off the ground including keys, cell phones, loose change and even its own leash if Holmes drops it. Fancy also opens doors, pushes elevator buttons and moves objects out of Holmes’ way. If she falls, Holmes need only say “help Fancy” and the dog will bark relentlessly until help arrives.

Holmes said she and Fancy went into the Mac’s at College and Campbell avenues Wednesday afternoon, and the clerk told her to leave.

“They have apologized and I appreciate it,” said Holmes, “I questioned what’s wrong. He kept saying ‘no.’ I said the dog has a harness, he’s a working dog, he has every right to be here. He just kept saying ‘no.’ We ended up leaving.”

Undaunted, she returned later for a slushie. When she went to pay, the counter was too high and she couldn’t reach, so Fancy jumped up to give the clerk some money. He wouldn’t take it, said Holmes.

“He said ‘take your stuff and leave,’ ” she said. “I said ‘no, I want to pay for my purchase. I didn’t come here to get something for free.’ ”

He still wouldn’t take it, and Holmes’ friend ended up giving the clerk money. Mac’s apologized to Holmes after she complained.

“The store staff is absolutely in the wrong,” Bruce Watson, Mac’s director of customer relations, told The Star. “We have taken steps. The local market manager is in contact with the store now to correct this individual. Their actions were inappropriate and not in line with Mac’s policy.”

Watson said it’s corporate policy to allow service dogs

**IAADP WEBSITE:**

www.iaadp.org

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in stores, which falls in line with the Ontario Blind Persons Rights Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code. He added store operators receive training on the issue.

Holmes said this wasn’t the first time she faced discrimination. She said people regularly question her on whether Fancy can be in public places. An area taxi company has repeatedly told her some drivers won’t take her with the dog and that she must pay an extra $10 because of her wheelchair, Holmes said.

She said she was also discouraged from studying early childhood education at St. Clair College because of her wheelchair.

“They said that if I can’t pick a child off the ground, then I couldn’t pass their program,” said Holmes. “I had to fight to stay in the program. Now I’m graduating this summer. I’ve met all their expectations, but I haven’t done it without fighting.”

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Battling DMS in My Service Dog

by Margie Gray

After spending three years training my rescued German Shepherd, it was time for a HUGE celebration when he passed his public access test. Neither his trainer nor I was really sure Lucas would ever get over all his issues, but he became a rock-solid mobility dog for me. He went everywhere with me and made friends wherever we went. His primary tasks were retrieving, bracing and using a mobility harness so I didn’t have to use my crutches all the time. He did them well!

It was puzzling a few short years later when he seemed to stumble over nothing or suddenly sit down. I had had his hips x-rayed early on and knew they were sound, but the news was as devastating – degenerative spinal myelopathy. DMS is a degeneration of the spinal cord comparable to multiple sclerosis in people. Internet research didn’t offer much encouragement saying most dogs are euthanized one to three years after diagnosis because of paralysis in the hindquarters. I was comforted by the fact that in three years, Lucas would be 11, elderly for a shepherd; we were going to aim for that.

My regular vet admitted he had nothing to offer as far as treatment options, so increasing instability in the hindquarters and fecal incontinence was in his future. Not encouraging for a service dog. I did more research and came across one mention of the use of acupuncture to stimulate the nerves in hope of helping spinal cord injury. Would that help Lucas?

I happened to know Dr. Sandi Leonard, a veterinarian, through my work with wildlife at the Lakeside Nature Center. I remembered seeing her van with a sign that mentioned acupuncture. I called her immediately and she agreed to meet with us. Sandi told me from the beginning she wasn’t sure if it would help, but she had a greyhound with a similar condition who had done well for six years with treatments. She was willing to give Lucas treatments to try to stave off the effects of this condition although it would not cure or stop it.

I was worried about using my dog as a pincushion, but was amazed when Lucas fell asleep during his first treatment in July of 2006. Sandi started his treatments at once a week and then increased the time between them as he showed some improvement. She also suggested the supplement Missing Link, which is high in Omega 3 fatty acids and glucosamine for anti-inflammatories and aid in joint movement. She suggested I get vitamins containing Vitamin B, zinc, selenium and kelp not available in commercial dog food, but thought to be beneficial for nerve function.

I stopped using his mobility harness right away to prevent any strain on his back. He continued retrieving, carrying a light backpack and helping around the house, putting out the trash and emptying the clothes dryer. He thrived on working and learning new things. Sandi also said a major factor for keeping him walking was exercise. I immediately started walking him around the neighborhood using my power chair.

After a few weeks of treatment, he actually was more stable and we scheduled him every two weeks, then every three weeks and then monthly. She added mild electrical stimulation also, similar to a TENS unit, but attached directly to the acupuncture needles to increase their effects.

We kept up this routine and Lucas was able to work for about two years, but then began bouts of fecal incontinence. I had to be extremely careful about taking him in public then, but successfully avoided any accidents.

The last year his incontinence and instability increased, but very slowly. A bit of arthritis in his shoulder was quickly soothed with acupuncture and he could still walk around the house.

Around the new year, 2009, Sandi made a pronouncement that I already knew – “we are losing ground.” Again we increased treatments and he did well except on his nemesis—tile floors. He took a couple of bad falls, but immediately got up and moved on in true stoic German Shepherd fashion. I had to rest him during his walks as his hind legs would just stop working after about 20 minutes.

Because we lived in the Midwest, winters can be brutal in the really cold, snowy and icy weather, so he learned to walk on the treadmill if we couldn’t get outside. During the time his condition started deteriorating, he fell on the treadmill and refused to get on it ever again.

Lucas continued to walk with increasing difficulty and
was unable to work in public. My elderly mother is home most of the time and he became very attentive to her, even retrieving items she dropped. On June 30th, Lucas fell and was unable to rise even with help. My neighbor helped me get him to the car and because I had promised him I would always take care of him, he died in my arms and amid my tears that day.

While it is impossible to tell if the acupuncture prolonged his ability to work, he did remain fairly stable for the first two years instead of showing the more typical steady decline of dogs with DSM. This disease is always progressive, removing the myelin sheath, which insulates the nerves and keeps them firing. Once enough of the sheath is gone, the nerves can no longer function. Sandi believes the acupuncture acted like physical therapy for the nerves’ electrical function, keeping their efficiency up even as their insulation disappeared. However, once enough of the sheath was gone, even the acupuncture was no longer effective.

I also believe that acupuncture helped him stay active longer. He continued to walk three years and three months after diagnosis and continued to retrieve the newspaper from the driveway and close the dishwasher for me the day before his collapse. He was a working dog up to the end, just like he wanted.

IAADP Writing Competition
Offering Annual $50 Prize in each of 3 categories:
Best Article
Best Opinion Piece
Best Short Story or Anecdote
Entries accepted year round. Unpublished and published material welcome. Photo may accompany article, but not required.

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“For the Dogs”
by Avi Foster, Labrador Retriever

This article is ONLY for the dogs out there who read or listen to this newsletter when their humans are not around – OK OK, Mommy says I should say that humans and other kinds of animals can read it too, but I’ve never seen another working animal other than a dog. My cat, for example – she trained the humans to work for her, she would never work for them, but my humans seem ok with this.

Now the important things. My name is Avi, I am a girl, I am six years old (Mommy gave me a birthday card that said Happy Sixth Birthday, so I guess that is right), and I am a Labrador Retriever. I am not very big because I fit in Mommy’s lap perfectly, but Mommy says I should mention that I weigh 80 pounds and am 24 inches tall, but I don’t know what any of that means – some kind of human secret code I think.

My name is short for Aviator, but someone once said it should be short for Aviatrix – I don’t understand this at all because I don’t know any tricks. At least, Mommy has never said I do. My Mommy is called “Ashley” but sometimes people accidentally call her MY name, I don’t know why, but it is funny. Maybe we look alike.

I do things like telling Mommy when her phone rings and she can’t hear it, or getting things for her when it hurts her too much, or she is too tired to get them. I go places with her too, even places that don’t smell like other dogs, but for some reason she only puts my pretty blue dress (that she calls a vest) on me when I go to the places that don’t smell like other dogs. I have heard that this is called work, but I think it’s all a great game. And it’s even more fun when I get to dress up!

Now, what I want to tell you dogs – OK OK, everyone – is about some fun things to do while you are helping your people. I now will let you in on my ideas!

A long time ago, when I was first learning about going places in my blue dress – OK OK Mommy, my blue VEST – I decided I was going to help Mommy. Back then, I was little, I must have weighed only 50 pounds, and I was so happy to get to go through these big sliding doors and into the no-dog-smell place. While Mommy talked to the store manager – who, of course, adored me – because I am the center of the universe…OK sorry Mommy, back to the story – Mommy was looking at the store manager as he talked to her. She wasn’t looking at me, and I noticed this. So, I pulled my head and neck back really, really far and grabbed the black strap of my vest that goes across my chest and oh, was it good to chew! It felt so good in my teeth! And of course I was only trying to help – I thought my dress would be prettier if this strap was not there. Soon, Mommy was done talking, and looked down at me, after I had kept my down-stay the entire time, and she saw my sweet, innocent yellow Lab face smiling up at her – with half the chest strap in my mouth, the other half still attached to the vest! Yes, I chewed right through it! I was so

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proud, but Mommy did not think my vest looked better this way; she looked embarrassed, like I do when I do something I shouldn’t. But, Mommy didn’t do anything wrong – I was just giving my fashion advice. The next time I saw my vest, the chest strap had grown back and looked like I’d never even touched it. Are our vests alive, that they can grow parts back that way?!

Sometimes, Mommy asks me to pick up and carry something to her or for her, in my mouth. Oh this is fun, I love to do this! I will pick up her keys, her water bottle, the remote control, a brush – oh just about anything! She still tells me sometimes not to bring her things she doesn’t ask for, but since it is so much fun, I just can’t help this. There was one day when Mommy let me carry her wallet for her at my pet store (Yes it is mine – they adore me there, because I am the most beautiful, wonderful…OK Mommy, I’ll keep writing!) After carrying it to the “checkout” place, she let me stand up on the side of the counter where she gets out her money, and I handed her wallet over to the pet store worker perfectly nicely. Mommy was happy, I could tell, because after everyone nearby said something like “awww” or “wow,” Mommy smiled at me, said I was a good girl, and I got a treat. But all it really takes is her smile for me to know Mommy is happy.

Another time, I was helping Mommy at home. She had left her mostly-full plastic water bottle (that makes a wonderful crunchy sound) on the ground outside, and she asked me to pick it up and carry it for her – “Get it and bring it,” she said to me. I thought, I can do that! And I did! I went to the end of my leash, quickly picked up the bottle, and “got it,” but I couldn’t help making it crinkle a little (but it’s ok because Mommy doesn’t always know I make plastic bottles crinkle until she sees the teeth marks). But, this day was special because I was really, really hungry and I really, really wanted to go inside so I could eat. (Mommy says to tell you that I had just eaten my dinner about an hour before, and that I am ALWAYS claiming to be hungry, but I vehemently disagree). So, needing very much to get into the house, I decided to help Mommy make the door open faster by staging a protest. After I “brought it” – the water bottle – with us to the big garage door (which takes forever to open and I hate it), Mommy touched the thing that makes the door open, and then looked down at me, as I was holding the bottle so nicely in my mouth. So, I looked right at her with my gorgeous brown Labby eyes, and proceeded to fling the bottle onto the ground as hard as I could, and then made a point of turning my head, watching it roll partially down the driveway. If the door opened faster, I would not have had to do this. I do not know if my protest made a difference, because Mommy didn’t say or do a thing; so, I just waited until the door was open, and then walked the few feet away to where the water bottle had stopped rolling, picked it up, and followed Mommy into the house as usual. Only after we got into the house did Mommy laugh; if I could talk in human language I would have said, “that was not funny, I am HUNGRY and it was a serious protest!” But, really, I thought it was sort of funny too.

Finally, I will tell you about my newest way to help Mommy. To explain, Mommy likes to stare at her computer and type; Mommy’s computer is called a “laptop” – and this makes sense because when she stares at the computer, it is on her lap and I am not. Really, it’s not fair. Mommy usually sits on the floor, using my (OK sorry Mom, “our”) bed to lean her back against – this is good for me because then I can either lie next to her on the ground, or sleep up on the bed if I am really tired. But sometimes, Mommy stays on the computer too long, in my opinion. She keeps tapping on the keys even though I want to go to sleep, and I can’t really fall asleep until she does – I might try, but I can’t sleep soundly until Mommy is next to me on my…oops, our bed. (Mommy says I should say here that I often can be found snoring, alone and upside-down, on the bed, but I debate the credibility of this report). So, one night I thought of something to solve this problem. Mommy had no idea what was coming, I’m sure!

I went over to my smaller toy box and got my big, solid, Pink Ball that smells like something…I’m not sure what; Pink Ball is a lot like my Jolly Ball, except it has no handle for me to shred, so it doesn’t get thrown away like my Jolly Ball (Mommy says to add, “multiple Jolly Balls”)

Well I carried this heavy, plastic ball across the room and jumped up on the bed; I turned around once, got all cozy, and, when I was done, I just happened to be lying so that my ball was right behind Mommy’s head. So, to tell Mommy to stop typing and come to bed, I made Pink Ball roll into her head as she sat at her laptop. She turned around, she seemed to think it was an accident, and turned around, staring at the computer again. I thought, she didn’t listen! Well, Pink Ball then somehow rolled into Mommy’s head repeatedly for about two minutes. Mommy ignored Pink Ball, until finally she thought she could make Pink Ball stop. She moved Pink Ball down the bed and I could tell she expected me to move and play with it there, instead. Quickly, I retrieved Pink Ball from that spot, and brought it right back – boing-boing-boing went Pink Ball on Mommy’s head! I know she was trying not to laugh but guess what? It worked! She finally got up and put away the lap-stealing computer, and went to bed! Victory!

But it was short-lived, for a few nights later the same thing happened: I was so, so, so tired, and Mommy just kept staring at her computer. This night, I again went to my toy box, but I got my plush toy “Duckie.” And then, after jumping up and getting comfy on the bed, somehow my head lined up right behind Mommy’s. Then, push-push-push went Duckie into Mommy’s head! It was, after all, time for her to go to bed, because it was time for ME to go to bed – and Duckie simply enforced that rule. AGAIN, Mommy listened, and she went to bed. The next time she doesn’t listen, I think I will try my Nylabone – if that doesn’t get her attention, nothing will!

I hope some of my ideas will help you other dogs – and other animals too – think of new and interesting ways to help your humans. I know Mommy has truly appreciated all of my help, and I am sure your humans appreciate yours, as well. Just don’t tell them that we can read and write – it would spoil the fun!
For newcomers unfamiliar with Assistance Dogs International (ADI), it is a worldwide coalition of nonprofit programs with a code of Minimum Standards and Ethics that each program is obligated to follow. After many years of growth and holding annual conferences in North America, the establishment of numerous programs overseas led ADI’s board to develop a plan for future governance. They divided the globe into regions. Those regions with more than a certain number of programs can apply for the status of regional membership in ADI. Regional members are semi-autonomous, in charge of their own budgets, affairs, access laws or customs in their respective areas and able to hold regional conferences, but all follow the same ADI standards and accreditation protocol.

According to the last census in their newsletter, Assistance Dogs of Europe has 55 members, ADI of North America has 82 members, ADI Asia has 7 members, ADI Latin America has one member and ADI Australia/New Zealand has 11 members, giving ADI 156 members total. 118 are full voting members and 38 are candidates for membership as of June 2010.

Delegates from each region are elected to an International Board, which puts on an international conference in conjunction with one of the regional area conferences once every two years. The first was held in the U.K. in 2008, along with IAADP’s conference and the International Guide Dog Federation conference.

The second international ADI conference which I attended with my Samoyed service dog, “Spirit,” in June 2010 was held in the cosmopolitan city of Toronto. The Federation held theirs right afterwards and IAADP scheduled one for September in Seattle.

ADI’s conference has been a big part of my life over the last two decades. I have not missed one since attending their Montreal conference in 1992, where I first met Ed and Toni Eames. This intrepid couple with their Golden Retriever guide dogs were already involved in providing consumer input to ADI on the standards and ethics being developed and proposed legislation. After hours, they did interviews to profile interesting people and programs they came across for their award winning “Partners In Independence” column in Dog World Magazine that introduced dog lovers to the assistance dog movement in the 1990’s.

Following IAADP’s inaugural meeting in 1993, at the ADI and Delta Society Conferences in St. Louis, we were invited to hold a conference with ADI in 1994. We continued that tradition on an annual basis through 2008. Our board also participated as guests to give consumer input on ADI committees and at business meetings, as well as working with ADI on joint projects from time to time.

This year’s gathering of ADI programs was truly international in scope. Over the course of three days I had the delight of conversing with old acquaintances from Japan, Sweden, Australia and Great Britain in addition to many from the USA and Canada. I also learned that program reps from Spain and Chile had traveled to Toronto to participate in the event.

The staff at the downtown Marriott hotel couldn’t have been nicer. The sunny June weather added to everyone’s enjoyment.

One of the highlights of the conference for many people who had appreciated Ed’s warmth, humor and insightful observations, came at the end of the first full day. For the first time in its history, ADI held a Memorial Service to honor a colleague who had passed on. IAADP’s President Emeritus, Ed Eames, Ph.D. had been a tireless, innovative champion of the assistance dog movement. His remarkable career was ended by a sudden, massive stroke in October 2009.

Among those who came to the podium on stage to pay tribute to what Ed had accomplished since obtaining his first guide dog more than a quarter century ago, were Corey Hudson, President of Assistance Dogs International’s North American Regional Board and Peter Gorbing from the U.K., President of ADI’s International Board.

Toni Eames and I, as IAADP’s cofounders, closed the ceremony by sharing some of our favorite memories of Ed. I spoke about his late night calls to me on certain advocacy issues that seemed impossible to win at the outset, ones he insisted were too important not to give it our best shot. It took a tremendous amount of work, but it was amazing what we accomplished on those occasions, by enlisting other IAADP members and our friends in the assistance dog field and larger disabled community to write, fax, email and/or phone various officials who had decision making power. Toni is a wonderful speaker and she had everyone chuckling with some of her anecdotes, ending things on a very upbeat note, which is just what Ed would have wanted. A slide show presentation of photos of Ed collected by ADI members over the years appeared on two movie screens during these tributes so that everyone in the large ballroom who participated could view them.

The next day, at ADI’s invitation, IAADP put on a ninety minute workshop. Titled “The Successor Dog Challenge,” we held a panel discussion to cover certain aspects of going through the long dark tunnel of partnership transition. We explored how a program might help graduates or applicants for a successor dog at various stages. IAADP Board member, Devon Wilkins, like Toni Eames, had gone through several partnerships with guide dogs in her lifetime. Spirit, my third Samoyed service dog, was nearing retirement age. Tim McCullum, a singer from Australia who had just emigrated that month to Canada with his first successor service dog and his wife, had much to contribute during the question and answer period.

Workshop guests took away five hand-outs we prepared for them to share with other staff members and graduates at their respective programs. Topics included, among other things, a graduate evaluation sheet, a list of health and behavior problems to be alert for in geriatric assistance dogs and some important ways to help your service dog adjust to a successor, if you decide to keep your retiring dog. The

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ADI Conference Trip
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greatest obstacle to minimizing the hardships of a long waiting period for a successor dog identified by both the panel members and the programs in our audience is the reluctance of most assistance dog partners to begin to think about the retirement of their aging guide, hearing or service dog, thus failing to plan ahead.

ADI had two tracks of workshops, one for administrators, the other for trainers, with three to five workshops to choose from during some of the afternoon sessions. They scheduled a field trip to Niagara Falls and a tour of a Canadian guide dog school on the afternoon of the last day.

Every workshop was interesting, but top honors in my opinion go to Al Peters, founder of Hearing & Service Dogs of Minnesota, [renamed Canines Can Do about a year ago] for his outstanding presentation on the selection, training and placement of diabetic alert dogs. I plan to provide more details about this special workshop in a future article.

As if to ensure that none of us would ever forget Toronto, there was an earthquake on the last day, shortly after lunch. It was the first of my experience, as I live in Michigan, but Toni Eames, who lives in California, immediately identified what was happening when the floor of her room began to shake. The scooter chair I was seated on trembled like a roller coaster car, quite startling, then a bit alarming when it went on for more than five seconds. I don’t recall how long it lasted, probably not more than a minute or two. Our assistance dogs acted as if it were no big deal, so I took my cue from their calm behavior. About fifteen minutes later, Toni’s traveling companion, Debby, returned from her shopping trip to tell us the police and fire brigade were evacuating some of the nearby office buildings to check for gas leaks. Fortunately, damage was minor. The worst thing I heard about on the news afterwards, as I was packing my suitcases that evening for the trip home, was that a church steeple had collapsed in a village outside of Toronto, with no human casualties. By the next morning, some entrepreneurs were peddling T-shirts that seemed slightly humorous, bragging “I Survived the Toronto Earthquake!” as we left the city. May such events always be so benign!

The location of the 2012 ADI Conference has not yet been decided.

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ADA Mediation Highlights

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Online News
March 2010 – Issue Thirty Five

The ADA Mediation Program is a Department-sponsored initiative intended to resolve ADA complaints in an efficient, voluntary manner. Mediation cases are initiated upon referral by the Department when both the complainant and the respondent agree to participate. The program uses professional mediators who are trained in the legal requirements of the ADA and has proven effective in resolving complaints at less cost and in less time than traditional investigations or litigation. Over 78% of all complaints mediated have been resolved successfully.

In this issue, we highlight complaints from people who use service animals that have been successfully mediated:

1. In Texas, an individual who is blind alleged that a chain fast food restaurant refused to serve her because she uses a service animal. The company agreed to expand the scope of the mediation to cover all of its 120 restaurants in Texas and California. The company developed a service animal policy, included a copy of the policy in its training manual for distribution to all employees, and installed signs in its stores stating “Service Animals Are Welcome.”

2. In Nevada, an individual with a mobility disability alleged that a medical transport organization refused to allow her to travel without providing written documentation that her dog was a service animal. The organization changed its policy and established procedures to ask only the nature of the service provided by an animal.

3. In Arkansas, a person who is blind complained that a Mexican restaurant refused to serve him because he uses a service animal. The restaurant agreed to serve custom- ers who use service animals and posted a “Service Animals Welcome” sign. Additionally, the restaurant owner wrote an article on service animals and the ADA which was published in a Spanish language newspaper and donated $1,000 to an animal shelter.

4. A husband and wife who are blind and use service animals alleged that a Pennsylvania cab driver refused to provide service to them. The cab company highlighted its existing nondiscrimination policy, added a statement to its training manual requiring all drivers to transport individuals with service animals, and distributed the revised manual to its drivers.

5. In Georgia, a person with a disability complained that security personnel forced him to leave a shopping mall because he uses a service animal for mobility assistance and seizure detection. The mall reaffirmed its policy of allowing service animals, trained its security personnel
about service animals and the ADA, added materials on service animals to its employee manual, and paid the complainant $7,000.

6. In Michigan, an individual who has a seizure disorder complained that she was denied access to a doctor’s office because she uses a seizure alert animal. The practice modified its policy to allow service animals to accompany individuals throughout the medical practice, trained its employees on the new policy, and wrote a letter of apology to the complainant.

7. An individual with a mobility disability complained that she was denied access to three mental health hospitals because she uses a service animal for balance. The company that operates these hospitals, located in Missouri, Louisiana, and Texas, changed its policy and developed procedures to allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities throughout its facilities.

8. In North Carolina, an individual with a mobility disability complained that he was denied access to a grocery store because he uses a service animal for balance. The company agreed to expand the scope of the mediation to cover all stores in the grocery chain nationwide. The company changed its policy, developed procedures to allow service animals, posted them on the nationwide employee website, and incorporated them into its corporate policy manual. Additionally, the company posted signage stating “Service animals welcome, no pets please” in more than 1,300 stores in 11 states.

T his audit evaluated VHA’s progress in providing guide and service dogs to qualified veterans. The absence of implementing criteria imposes challenges to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) for the implementation of the Guide and Service Dog Program. Although VHA has assisted visually impaired veterans in obtaining guide dogs for several decades, they only started assisting mobility and hearing impaired veterans with service dogs in 2008 – 6 years after being authorized to do so. Since FY 2009, VHA provided financial support to over 230 veterans for guide dogs. However, VHA provided financial support to only eight veterans for service dogs. VHA personnel told us the actual demand for service dogs is unknown. VHA has not provided sufficient guidance to VA medical center personnel to ensure consistent decisions on veterans’ requests for service dogs. Also, VHA has not made their personnel fully aware of these potential decisions on veterans’ requests for service dogs. Also, VHA has not developed clinical criteria to determine whether a veteran would benefit from a service dog. The Under Secretary for Health agreed to develop clinical criteria to determine whether a veteran would benefit from a service dog. The Under Secretary also stated that immediately after the formal regulations exercising VHA’s authority are published, scheduled for July 2011, VHA will issue a directive defining VHA’s policy on issuing service dogs.

VA – Audit of Guide and Service Dog Program

July 10, 2010 17:27
Audit of Guide and Service Dog Program (PDF)
Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General

IAADP 2010 Writing Contest Winners

Best Article
“Adventures in Access”
By Stephanie Smith Ph.D.

Best Opinion Piece
“The Quiet Courage of Conan”
By Michael Schiavo

Best Short Story or Anecdote
“Final Tribute to a Gentle Giant - Sasquatch d’Otterhound”
By Norma Ramirez

A Prize of $50 is awarded to the author of the winning piece in each of the three categories, published during the previous calendar year. Entries may be submitted year round for possible publication to Editor@iaadp.org. Word count of 1,500 words or less preferred, but longer pieces will be considered. Partners, trainers, parents, anyone may enter! A previously published piece can be entered if reprint permission from the publisher is furnished. Photos are optional. We hope you will submit a piece to Partners Forum soon…we love reader contributions!
**Partner Member Benefits**

*Free benefits unless otherwise noted*

**All Members Worldwide**
- “Partners Forum” Newsletter
- Muttulks - 50% discount on boots, 50% discount on shipping in North America
- International Help-line [call or write]

**Available in United States**
- Advantage Multi from Bayer Animal Health (includes heartworm preventative, flea control)
- 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
- 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
- Advantix from Bayer Animal Health Canada

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

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**Who Do I Ask? Where Do I Send It?**

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**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/iaadp-membership-application.html to IAADP, P.O. Box 235, Troy, Michigan 48099-0235. 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? You must notify us to update your dog’s name in our 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