New Benefit: Heartworm Preventative!

By Joan Froling

We are thrilled to announce that Novartis Animal Health, Inc., in its support of the assistance dog movement, has established a unique program to provide Sentinel Flavor Tabs® for members of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP) working with assistance dogs. Sentinel Flavor Tabs® provides protection for dogs against canine heartworm disease, as well as controlling fleas and several important intestinal parasites.

Dr. Robin Downing, DVM, CVA, DAAPM, a member of the IAADP Animal Health Care Advisory Board and the Director of the Windsor Veterinary Clinic, will be coordinating the distribution of this product to our members. The way the program works is that the veterinarian treating each assistance dog, must fax a completed form to Dr. Downing. This is a prescription product and there must be evidence of a doctor/client relationship. There must also be documentation of a current, negative heartworm antigen test, which the form will convey.

After receiving the form, the Membership ID Number will be checked to see if that individual holds a current membership or not. Partner members in good standing in the USA can receive a one year supply of Sentinel Flavor Tabs®. It will be sent to your home by mail from Robin’s clinic.

Partners should utilize the special form we provide for that purpose in this newsletter. Every question must be answered. **Incomplete forms will not be processed.**

As is customary, those in the unusual position of having more than one canine assistant may only receive the benefit for one dog.

If you think you may want this extremely valuable benefit in the future at no charge, don’t forget to make photocopies of the IAADP Sentinel Request Form BEFORE you fill it out. Put your copies in a safe place. We suggest you ask the vet to keep one in your dog’s file. Otherwise you will have to send a self addressed stamped envelope to IAADP to obtain one next year. The form in the back of this issue is designed as a tear-out sheet. There is a perforated edge.

Members will receive a 12-month supply of Sentinel as per the recommendation for year round protection from specialists on heartworm disease in the USA.

**Editor’s Note:** We have a column in this issue listing all the benefits for Partner Members in the USA and Canada for those who want to become more familiar with our efforts to reduce the financial burden of partnership on disabled persons. In addition, you can read about some other new benefits we are very pleased to announce in this issue.

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*Editor: Joan Froling*

*Date of Issue: May 2006*

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Victory In California re: Prescription Pets

by Joan Froling

At the last minute we discovered a highly objectionable piece of legislation well on its way to becoming law in the state of California. It was Friday, April 21, 2006 when I talked to Ed Eames about AB 2278. Could we possibly mobilize enough people over the weekend to protest this bill and influence the politicians on the Human Services Committee before the scheduled hearing on Tuesday? The bill already had two readings and it been amended three times. If the Committee members approved the latest version, it could soon be on the floor for a vote. Unfortunately we only had three days, not three weeks or three months in which to take action.

IAADP sent out an Emergency Action Call to all IAADP members who had furnished us with their email address. In addition, I alerted Guide Dog Users, Inc., and Assistance Dogs International and the Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools to this shocking proposal which had been initiated by proponents of what we call “the prescription pet movement.” Viewing themselves as noble crusaders, there are advocates who are determined to secure public access rights, not just housing access rights, for pet owners who can get a note from their doctor, therapist or a social worker that says the patient has a problem that disables them in some way and would benefit from a companion animal.

This is not the first state in which legislation to do an end run around ADA’s task training requirement has been introduced, but the bill in California takes the cake for sheer audacity.

When I read an earlier version of AB 2278 on the legislative website, I discovered the word “seniors” had been crossed out and the word “disabled” was substituted in numerous locations. It enabled me to better understand how this bill snuck in under the radar of the disabled community. This bill to amend the existing service animal statute had been proposed under the Older Americans Act rather than the Civil Rights section of the state law code. It appears the original intent of this bill was to make public access with service animals already have the guarantees provided by state and federal law to be accompanied by guide, hearing and service dogs. As IAADP’s President, I want to voice our organization’s strong opposition to AB 2278 which would establish a new program which issues identification cards.

AB 2278 would have the state appoint a non-profit agency and its affiliates to set up a program to issue Service Animal Identification Cards to citizens who submit a letter from their doctor. The preamble tried to convince legislators that this state authorized Service Animal ID Card was urgently needed right a wrong. Those behind this bill contended businesses were refusing to admit disabled Californians with a service animal because they don’t look disabled or out of ignorance of the law. Without the official state authorized ID Card, this discrimination would continue to blight the lives of citizens with disabilities.

While the bill did not specify PAWS LA (a chapter of Pets Are Wonderful Support) would be the designated agency, this non-profit was instrumental in the bill’s drafting. PAWS LA serves AIDS patients and low income disabled individuals and seniors who apply for their assistance to feed and care for a pet. I’m sure everyone would agree that this part of the PAWS LA mission is admirable. However, this bill they were backing would negatively impact the assistance dog movement and we had no choice but to protest its passage.

IAADP President, Ed Eames, composed the following widely circulated letter to the chair of the Human Services Committee.

Assemblywoman Noreen Evans,
Chair of the Human Services Committee
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Madam Chairperson:

April 23, 2006

The International Association of Assistance Dog Partners respectfully requests you consider our concerns about AB 2278. IAADP represents and advocates for more than 2,000 disabled members who work with guide, hearing and service dogs. As IAADP’s President, I want to voice our organization’s strong opposition to AB 2278 which would establish a new program which issues identification cards.

Establishing a program to sell identification cards to us so we can obtain access to stores, restaurants, hotels, entertainment centers, and other places of public accommodation would be a step backward in the struggle to guarantee the civil rights of people with disabilities who have decided to increase their independence, safety, mobility and improve the quality of their lives through partnering with assistance dogs.

AB 2278 also duplicates an existing California non-fee based program issuing assistance dog identification tags part of the Food and Agriculture Code, Part 3.5, Section 30850. IAADP members have found that a thorough educational approach is far more effective in assuring gatekeepers and managers of public accommodations about the behavior and legitimacy of our assistance dogs.

In the preamble to the legislation proposed, constant reference is made to companion dogs. There is no disputing the evidence that animals can have a beneficial impact on the lives of their guardians in terms of emotional support and health. However, please try to understand the important difference that exists between a pet which provides companionship and a service animal. The latter has the legally required training entitling a disabled handler to access rights. Service animals, generally assistance dogs, must be specially trained to perform tasks to mitigate the impact of their handler’s disability. Those of us working with service animals already have the guarantees provided by state and federal law to be accompanied by guide, hearing and service dogs in all places open to the public.

AB 2278 would extend these federal and state guaranteed rights, through the proposed assistive animal identifica-
tion program, to individuals living with pets (e.g. companion animals) if they obtain a prescription from a medical professional citing the fact they have a disability. We don’t dispute the fact that a companion animal can be a comfort. Ownership of a companion animal [pet] may result in additional therapeutic benefits like the owner getting more exercise to decrease stress and improve his or her physical and mental health. However, most persons who own a pet have no knowledge of the special temperament testing assistance dogs go through for reasons of public safety, nor of the socialization and training an assistance dog is supposed to receive. IAADP therefore strongly objects to giving public access rights to pet owners whose animals frequently lack any training.

The assistance dog movement has worked for more than 70 years in the USA to win societal tolerance for the precious laws that give disabled persons with highly trained assistance dogs the right to enter stores and other places where pets are not allowed. IAADP does not want poorly behaved animals eroding the tolerance of society for the presence of disabled persons with properly trained assistance dogs.

We ask you to recognize there is a categorical difference between a companion animal and an assistance dog. Assistance dogs have been trained to perform disability mitigating tasks such as guiding the blind, alerting the deaf to specific sounds, pulling a wheelchair, assisting with balance support, retrieving dropped objects or alerting to and providing assistance during a medical crisis. Pets do not receive that special task training and therefore, don’t legally qualify as a service animal under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

The sponsoring organization, PAWS LA, according to its website, has no experience in the training and placement of guide, hearing or service dogs. The dogs they have placed are referred to as pets or companion dogs. This organization would be in no position to evaluate service animals, and, therefore, their issuance of identification cards to become the mechanism for legitimizing service animals for hotel managers, store owners, restaurant staff, etc., is entirely suspect.

Some other points underlying IAADP’s opposition to AB 2278 are:

1.) Under Title Three of the ADA, no identification is required by guide, hearing and service dog partners to bring their task trained dogs into places open to the public. Establishing a state wide identification card system is in direct violation of the federal law. Please review the U.S. Department of Justice’s position on this matter. See the “Business Brief” on Service Animals at www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/svcanimb.htm

2.) California attracts tourists from other states and countries, who will not be able to present a California ID card.

3.) As Californians, our right to be accompanied by our assistance dogs is guaranteed in the civil code and does not belong in an older Americans act.

4.) What existing non-profit organization has the knowledge, staff and resources to administer the program, develop an application and issue the cards, collect fees, maintain a list of participants and establish affiliates? PAWS LA, based on our knowledge of the organization, is in no position to carry out these functions.

5.) The bill gives medical practitioners the responsibility for writing a letter indicating that their patients need the assistance of a dog. Medical personnel are in no position to know if an assistance dog is needed and in most cases have little knowledge of the extensive training necessary for the work performed by guide, hearing and service dogs. Furthermore, medicalizing disability, clearly a civil rights issue, is a step backward in a state where the independent living movement began! People with disabilities have fought hard and long to have the right to make their own decisions about whether or not to work with an assistance dog.

I strongly suggest that AB 2278 be dropped from consideration by the Human services Committee.

Sincerely,
Ed Eames, Ph.D., President

Joan continues: Board member, Tanya Eversole, provided us with the contact information for all the members of the Human Services Committee. Along with our appeal for help, a copy of IAADP’s letter, the preamble and the bill, this valuable contact information went out to IAADP members online, a number of email lists and to fellow CADO members [GDUI, ADI, CUSDGS] by Saturday morning.

I subsequently emailed IAADP’s letter to each politician on Sunday. First thing Monday morning, Tanya faxed IAADP’s letter to all the committee members. Board members Lynn Houston, Carol King and Devon Wilkins sent off letters of their own. Ed Eames and board member Jill Exposito telephoned the legislators to urge the bill be withdrawn from consideration. This was just the tip of the iceberg, though.

Thanks to the overwhelming support from those we networked with, the California State Assembly’s Human Services Committee capitulated by 1 p.m. I received the wonderful news from three sources that afternoon: IAADP Treasurer, Toni Eames, and Sheila Styron, President of Guide Dog Users Inc. and Corey Hudson, Executive Director of Canine Companions for Independence. Each had been contacted by the staff of a different assembly member, who reported their offices had been flooded with emails, faxes and phone calls. Because this bill was obviously so objectionable to so many persons in the disabled community, they wanted us to know that Tuesday’s hearing had been canceled and the bill was deader than a doormat. A little later, we learned the bill’s sponsor had officially withdrawn the bill from consideration.

This victory was exhilarating and it still has me amazed. I never thought we could gather enough support in just in three days time. All who participated should take a well deserved bow. Guide Dog Users Inc. of California and ADI programs like Pawsitive Teams, Canine Companions for Independence, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Loving Paws Assistance Dogs were among those who contacted the committee. Members of a number of email lists in the partner community online rallied fast and went into action. IAADP members who were kind enough to copy us on their continued on page 4...
Victory in California
Continued from page 2
letters or faxes to the legislature let us know that quite a few of our readers are activists too, willing to defend our civil liberties. It was heartwarming to read the passionate letters they had written to the Committee.

At the same time, it is ominous that we only heard of this proposed state law so late in the game. Could this get passed in another state? I’m afraid the answer may be “yes.” PAWS LA has affiliates in quite a few states and supporters throughout North America and Europe. Other groups seeking public access for emotional support animals may have bills in the planning stages.

Please stay vigilant. Check your state legislature website for new bills with the key words “service animal,” “companion animal,” and “emotional support animals” and let us know about it when you do. For us the issue is training. Without training, an animal is a pet under the ADA and it should not be taken out in public under the guise of being a service animal!

Terrific New Canadian Benefits!

Prescription Diet and Heartworm “Multi” Product

Clayton Mackay, CEO of Hills Canada, is pleased to announce that Hills Canada will provide a new benefit to Canadian IAADP assistance dog partner members. If the veterinarian recommends a Hills prescription diet for an IAADP partner member’s guide, hearing or service dog, Hills will provide the prescription food at no charge. Canadian board member Devon Wilkins will facilitate the program. Please contact Devon at home, 705-444-4512, cell 705-446-7824 or email theharness@rogers.com with your name and ID number, your veterinarian’s name, address and phone number and the name of the prescription diet. Hills will then arrange with your veterinarian to replace the product.

Another Canadian benefit has been extended by Bayer Canada. The flea preventative Advantage has been provided at no cost for the past several years. Don Wilson, Director of Technical Services, was happy to extend the free benefit to their new product Advantage Multi. As the term multi implies, this product does more than prevent and control flea infestation. It also prevents heartworm and parasitic infestations and treats ear mites and mange.

IAADP salutes Hills and Bayer Canada for their help in maintaining the health of disabled person/assistance dog partnerships.

IAADP Responds To the

The U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Responds To Consumer Concerns About Air Travel With Service Animals!

EDITOR’S NOTE: the following position paper issued by IAADP’s Board of Directors was published on IAADP’s website in March 2006. It will update you on what has taken place with respect to IAADP’s efforts to persuade the U.S. Department of Transportation to reconsider some of the language in their Notice of Proposed Rule Making pertaining to the Air Carrier Access Act. For new readers, IAADP is deeply concerned about the potential impact of the language in Appendix A of the N.P.R.M. which addresses seating for disabled people who travel by air with large service animals. We believe this language, if not amended, could result in a substantial curtailment of access rights under the Air Carriers Access Act for disabled individuals who are matched with large canine assistants due to their physical size and/or disability related needs. We began this advocacy campaign in November 2004. The Department of Transportation recently responded to consumer concerns with widely circulated statements on the internet that claim it was all a misunderstanding and no such proposal is on the table. We replied by circulating this position paper to “set the record straight.”

The International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP), a consumer advocacy organization representing over 2,000 disabled persons working with guide, hearing and service dogs, believes it has finally seen a “light at the end of the tunnel!”

In November 2004, the Department of Transportation (DOT) published its Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), which specifically invited comments on whether there should be any modifications to Part 382, Appendix A, concerning the transport of service animals by air.

IAADP submitted a letter of Public Comment that points out the proposed language in Appendix A could have a devastating impact on individuals whose disability requires the use of an assistance dog large enough to perform tasks like guiding blind people, wheelchair pulling and providing balance support.

IAADP took particular note of three sections in Appendix A of the NPRM. Two of them proclaim it would be an undue burden for the airlines to ask a passenger to share foot space with a service animal [e.g. the space on the floor in front of the non-disabled passenger’s seat]. The third, in response to the question: “What if the service animal is too large to fit under the seat in front of the customer?”, declared “If no single seat in the cabin will accommodate the animal and passenger without causing an obstruction, you may offer the option of purchasing a second seat, traveling on a later flight or having the service animal travel in the cargo hold.”

IAADP’s President, Ed Eames, Ph.D., stated, “if ac-
accepted and implemented, these rules would threaten the right of disabled people with large assistance dogs to travel by air. In response to the first two statements, IAADP members have always found neighboring passengers willing to share leg room with our guide dogs, or have someone else volunteer to shift seats. Most distressing, however, is the third item in which the DOT authorizes the airlines to give disabled passengers the choice of three unconscionable options if their assistance dog cannot fit in the space in front of a single seat. Having to pay for an extra ticket would make air travel prohibitively expensive for all but the wealthiest disabled passenger with a large assistance dog. The idea that we would be willing to ship our canine assistants in cargo disregards the bond between us and undercuts the concept that our dogs provide greater independence, mobility and safety. Finally, the last option, making us take a later flight demonstrates a view toward disabled people indicating we do not have to get to places on time to meet work and social commitments.”

IAADP subsequently shared the news about its efforts to have the language in Appendix A modified with others. During the NPRM public comment period, DOT received more than 1,100 letters supporting IAADP’s request for changes. Other organizations, including Assistance Dogs International, Guide Dog Users Inc. and the National Association of Guide Dog Users got involved. GDUI and NAGDU passed resolutions condemning this language at their 2005 conventions. Many guide, hearing and service dog training programs also went on record seeking a modification of the language to preserve the access rights of their graduates, most of whom are partnered with large retriever-size assistance dogs. Following the public comment period, many assistance dog partners contacted their federal elected representatives for support.

In opposition, Atlantic Southeast Airlines, a subsidiary of Delta Airlines, submitted a public comment stating “ASA supports the department’s position that, if no single seat in the cabin will accommodate the service animal and passenger without causing an obstruction, the carrier may offer the option of purchasing a second seat, traveling on a later flight or having the service animal travel in the cargo hold. Bulkhead space on regional aircraft is limited and providing additional seating at no charge would result in a significant revenue loss.”

The other U.S. airlines did not choose to issue a statement publicly on this particular matter during the public comment period.

In January 2006, Mary Harris, a producer for Channel 4, KNBC in Los Angeles heard about the issue and came to the IAADP conference in San Diego where she interviewed several assistance dog partners. The story, aired on February 22, was also shown by a number of NBC affiliates across the country. The public outcry generated by this story, in addition to the previous advocacy efforts, resulted in a response from the DOT.

In a widely disseminated message from Robert Ashby, the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulation and Enforcement at the U.S. Department of Transportation, we learned the DOT will rewrite the language about the seating of disabled passengers with large service animals in the airplane cabin to address the concerns that have been raised by our community.

Mr. Ashby stated in his letter of March 4, 2006, to Ginger Bennett of the Seeing Eye, Inc.:

“We got 1,100 or so comments protesting the paragraphs of the service animal guidance concerning options for handling situations in which a large animal impinges on a space that must remain open. In my view, these comments (and subsequent letters and statements to the media along the same line) were largely based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the guidance and the wording of the language itself. We were not proposing a rule change to impose new restrictions, costs, or burdens on service animal users, and the language does not, in my view, have that effect. That said, I think there are probably some clarifications of the language of the guidance that we can make to avoid the kinds of misunderstandings that have arisen, and as we work toward a final rule, I will be suggesting some word-smithing changes to this effect.”

IAADP welcomes Mr. Ashby’s clarification that this language which air carriers like Atlantic Southeast, a number of journalists and just about everyone in the assistance dog community took at face value, has been misunderstood with regard to the intent of the DOT in putting it in Part 382, Appendix A. We hope Mr. Ashby’s remarks can be taken as a promise to the assistance dog movement and the American public that disabled passengers will not face a second seat charge, be bumped to a later flight or have to put their dogs in cargo if their assistance dog’s body occupies part of the floor space of an adjacent seat. IAADP does understand the DOT’s position that a service animal should not obstruct a main aisle for reasons of safety and we would not have a problem with those three options if applied only to that very rare situation.

In closing, we would once again like to urge the DOT to adopt the substitute language recommended by IAADP’s President, Ed Eames, Ph.D., as official advice to in flight crews and counter agents. This language was endorsed through letters to the DOT and to members of Congress by hundreds of individuals, a number of disability related organizations, assistance dog training programs and the Resolutions passed by GDUI and NAGDU in July, 2005:

“You may offer the passenger sitting in a seat adjacent to the disabled passenger traveling with a large service animal a seat in the same class of service in another part of the cabin. If no seats are available in that class of service, you may ask for a volunteer willing to occupy the seat next to the disabled passenger requiring sharing of leg room. If no volunteer is forthcoming and seats are available in another class of service in another part of the cabin, you may ask the adjacent passenger or the disabled passenger to occupy a seat in that other class of service.”

continued on page 6...
IAADP Responds to DOT
Continued from page 6

Using this approach would not be a financial burden for the airlines or an inconvenience to other passengers. It would simply formalize current air carrier policies and be a reasonable accommodation. We believe it would clarify the issue in a way that is very much needed.

IAADP’s Board of Directors
March 8, 2006

EDITOR’S NOTE: It appears the language in the N.P.R.M. will be amended to protect assistance dog teams from being charged for a second seat or being forced to take a later flight if an assistance dog’s body intrudes into the floor space of another passenger’s seat. We won’t be sipping champagne and celebrating this as a victory, though, until we can study Mr. Ashby’s wordsmithing in the final rule.

I created a “box” on the IAADP website homepage to attract attention to this issue. It now contains a link to this response from our Board to Bob Ashby’s comments. Below our position paper, you will find Mr. Ashby’s letter reprinted in its entirety.

In addition, the box on our homepage features links to some of the media coverage this issue received in February 2006. One is a link to the KNBC website where you will find a transcript of the television broadcast and 19 photos from video portion. The second link is to one of the newspaper articles generated by Leader Dogs for the Blind and others about how the language in the N.P.R.M. that could negatively impact our ability to travel by air with large assistance dogs.

This topic never would have generated favorable media attention if not for all of our readers who took the time to write a public comment last year. I can’t tell you how much it meant to IAADP’s board to have had your support!

We are also deeply indebted to those of you who answered our call to action after the public comment period closed. You kept this issue alive last summer and through the fall and winter months, by writing letters to your elected representatives in Congress. Dozens of phone calls from the offices of Congressmen and Senators reminded the DOT of how important this issue was to our community.

We do appreciate the DOT’s decision to rewrite the language. As a result, we did not generate more publicity on the issue when other journalists contacted us in March and April, presenting us with an opportunity for additional coverage.

IAADP will keep you posted as to future developments.

Exciting New Benefit in USA
Friend and Provider Members Eligible Too!

Ruff Wear, designer and manufacturer of high quality performance dog and human gear, has established a generous relationship with ALL of our IAADP members in the United States providing up to a 50% discount on all catalogue items. Partner members, Friend members and Provider members will be eligible to register for this. Shipping costs are additional.

Ruff Wear features a product line of sporting gear for hiking, swimming and other outdoor activities. Among their exceptional and outstanding products are leashes, collars, harnesses, packs, dog beds, toys, grooming and training equipment, treats, first aid kits and a variety of gear for the human end of the leash.

IAADP salutes Bill Mintiens for initiating this relationship and extending its benefits to all IAADP members and supporters. The discount is typically 50% off their retail price.

To view items, request a catalogue or place an order, go to www.ruffwear.com or phone customer service at 1-888-783-3932 or email luckydog@ruffwear.com.

In order to obtain the discount, you must fill out an application and mention that you are a member of IAADP.

Please refer to the instructions below for using the online application form. If you want to enroll by phone, call Jennifer at 1-888-783-3932.

Go to the Ruff Wear website at www.ruffwear.com click on the Customer Service link at the top of the website. Then scroll down and click on the Pro Purchase Program link. Click on the Pro Purchase online form link and fill out the online form.

Under the Classification Field, choose “Service or Assistance Dog Organizations.” Under group business name and address, enter “IAADP and your name. Submit your online form and wait for an email approval from Ruff Wear.

Please keep in mind this is a one time application process, and be patient. It’s a great deal!

Benefit News To Write Down

KV Vet Supply – NEW SOURCE CODE For Getting Your 15% Discount on Merchandise for Partner Members. Provide this Source Code when you place an Order: [source code] and 15% will automatically be deducted from the prices shown in their catalog and on their website for all non pharmaceutical products.

IAADP WEBSITE
www.iaadp.org
The Alice In Wonderland Solution

Are you worried about what the U.S. Department of Transportation’s ruling will be on the question of large assistance dogs in airplane cabins? Do you sometimes wish you could shrunk your guide, hearing, or service dog down to the size of a Chihuahua?

Announcing the Alice In Wonderland Solution!

It’s simple for you, and painless for your dog. Just before you attempt to tuck your best friend under the seat of a jet, or worse yet, a Greyhound bus, squirt a little of the amazing Alice In Wonderland Solution into his mouth, and presto! Your faithful pooch will shrink to a size that would make breeders of toy dogs beam with delight. Just one squirt of this revolutionary innovation for each hour of flying time will take the stress out of travelling for you, your dog, and your fellow passengers, and give DOT officials good reason to breathe a humongous sigh of relief.

For fast, fast relief of cramped quarters, it’s the amazing new Alice In Wonderland Solution! And that’s not all. If you purchase a bottle within the next 30 minutes, you’ll receive a miniature harness, vest, or cape so that members of the general public will still know what your dog does for you, and it’s absolutely free! So don’t delay. Get the Alice In Wonderland Solution today, and make cramped quarters for you and your assistance dog a distant memory forever.

But this innovative product isn’t available in stores. To take advantage of this fabulous offer, complete with your choice of a miniature harness, vest, or cape absolutely free of charge, click or call author Lewis Carrol.
A Tail To Tell
By Toni and Ed Eames

The overriding issue in our lives for the past several months has been Toni’s ruptured disc problems manifested in pain localized in her left leg between the ankle and knee. The MRI showed problems in the lower back and significant stenosis, a narrowing of the spinal column. So far, she has tried physical therapy, acupuncture, chiropractic, cortisone shots and is now undergoing treatment in a decompression machine developed by NASA. We’re hoping the next step won’t be surgery!

Toni can only walk short distances without extreme pain, so her Golden Retriever guide dog Keebler has not been an active guide for the last six months. When we travel or go for extended local excursions, Toni has been pushed in a wheelchair. Wanting Keebler to have some outside-the-home work, Toni, with the help of Guide Dogs for the Blind field trainer Emily Simone, has taught Keebler to heel next to a wheelchair. When the pusher follows directions, Toni is warned when approaching a narrow entry way, so Keebler can enter first then come back to heel when the chair goes through. Emily and Toni took the opportunity while working on wheelchair training to also work on Keebler’s scavenging propensity. It’s often said when trainers are around, problems magically disappear! Although Emily scattered enticing food bits on the floor of the mall and our local Petco, Keebler responded with apparent disgust at the thought of picking up food from the floor. She turned her head and acted totally disinterested in these delectable tidbits. Several days later, when Keebler licked crumbs from the floor under a restaurant table, Toni jokingly warned her that Emily was sitting in the next booth and would catch her in the act!

The week before Thanksgiving, Debbie Prieto drove us to northern California to attend the Cat Writers Association conference and Cat Fanciers Association cat show. Keebler and Ed’s guide Golden Retriever Latrell, like their predecessors Escort and Echo, took little interest in the cats. Unlike previous years, however, people exhibiting their cats were pretty loose about letting us touch and stroke them. We encountered the three rex breeds, Cornish, Celkirk and Devon, and met a Siberian and a Ragamuffin. Debbie was surprised at the thin sleek look of the show Siamese. Our Siamese Kizzy is the old fashioned apple headed type and is not elongated like the show cats. One of the kittens Toni was holding was so curious about Keebler, he reached down to meet her. At the moment they touched noses, a photographer took a picture.

A week before Christmas, IAADP board member Carol King and her Yorkie service dog Heart joined us at a consensus conference on emergency preparedness and disaster relief for people with disabilities in Washington, DC.

Our initial destination was Edgewood, Maryland, where Nutramax Laboratories, one of IAADP’s sponsors, is located. The two in-service presentations we gave at Nutramax the next day were great, and our host, Dr. Barbara Eves, read a letter at the presentations from an IAADP member about how important the Nutramax product Cosequin was to maintaining her service dog’s ability to continue working for her.

The next day it was off by taxi to the Watergate Hotel, where the conference was being held. It was well organized and was attended by an interesting mix of medical doctors and nurses, government officials, emergency responders and disabled people. Wanting to relax during the last night of our stay, we arranged to attend a performance at the Kennedy Center. When the Watergate Hotel doorman flagged a taxi, the driver, seeing us approaching with the dogs, sped away! When the next driver was about to refuse, we opened the doors, and against his protest, got in. To add to our aggravation, he dropped us at the wrong entrance necessitating a painful walk for Toni. The play Shear Madness was a farce, and if it weren’t for the audio-description provided by the Kennedy Center, our enjoyment of the play would have been greatly diminished. Getting back to the hotel was easy since the theater manager secured a taxi for us.

Despite needing wheelchair assistance for Toni, we were back to our usual hectic travel schedule in January. Our first trip was to participate in the North American Veterinary Conference (NAVC) in Orlando, Florida. On the evening of our arrival, a NAVC reporter and camera man met us at the hotel to do a short interview about the presentations we would be doing the next morning and the book signings for Fort Dodge Animal Health, sponsor of our conference participation. The 10 minute telecast was shown at various times and people frequently recognized us and the dogs in the exhibit hall.

Our Saturday 4 hour presentation, “Veterinarians as Healers, Helpers and Humanitarians: Supporting the Assistance Dog Movement,” was well received by those attending. The session titles were “My Patient Has a Job and Needs to Stay Fit!,” “Making Clients With Disabilities Feel Welcome!,” “Supporting the Assistance Dog Movement with My Time and Expertise!” and “Consumer Support and the Animal Health Care Community!.” The last session focused on IAADP and its relationships with pharmaceutical and dog food companies. The evening was spent with Dr. Guy Hancock, a member of the IAADP Advisory Board.

One of the things we especially love about veterinary conferences is cruising the exhibit hall where we pick up goodies and make contacts benefiting IAADP. Of course, Latrell and Keebler got lots of attention and petting from many of the vets who face canine deprivation when they are away from their practices for more than 24 hours! The NAVC conference planners provided two lovely escorts who helped us negotiate the crowded exhibit area. Having Toni in the wheelchair made it easier to carry our gathered booty! As participants in many veterinary conferences over the years, we’ve gotten to know several of the vendors and were greeted like long lost friends and given lots of take aways!

It was at a conference several years ago that we stopped...
off at the Barx Brothers booth and met CEO Ceil Moore. Last year she featured Latrell and her cat Mercer on a line of sympathy cards for the veterinary market. This year Latrell and Keebler are the poster kids. Ceil takes photos of her subjects, then paints exquisite pictures. The 2006 offering shows both dogs in harness lying on a grassy plain. In addition to the cards, prints will be sold to the veterinary community and the profits donated to IAADP.

After a full day in the exhibit hall, Ceil, her assistant Terry and we were exhausted, so opted for Chinese delivery at our hotel that evening.

Monday was another full day. It began by meeting Dr. Carin Smith for breakfast, another member of the Advisory Board. We first met Carin at the cat writers seminar and she’s been a fun date at many veterinary conferences since then.

Most of the rest of the day was spent at the Fort Dodge booth signing and giving away our *Partners in Independence* books. Fort Dodge generously purchased several hundred copies to distribute to NAVC participants. Ed was busy at the booth and unable to join Toni when she had lunch with Dr. Karen Overall. Karen will always hold a special place in our hearts for her intervention with Toni’s former guide dog Escort when he was overtaken by anxiety. We met Karen, a world-renowned pharmacological behaviorist, several years earlier at a veterinary conference. On observing Escort’s behavioral breakdown, she prescribed an antianxiety drug that kept him working until his death several years later from cancer.

The last day of our Orlando stay started with breakfast with Mike Gendreau and Steve Hoffman of Fort Dodge. This company has been incredibly generous with IAADP and we are most grateful. Ceil joined us and we worked out arrangements for the distribution of her prints as an IAADP fundraiser. Before catching our flight home, we had lunch with relatives. Toni’s Aunt Stef was delighted with her introduction to fried plantains, one of our Caribbean favorites!

With only three days at home, we were off to San Diego in a rented van with IAADP database manager Kathi Diaz, Debbie Prieto and her daughter Nellie. With all of us chatting and socializing, the seven hour trip flew by. That night we had dinner at a great steak restaurant located on the Town and Country Hotel grounds, site of the IAADP/ADI conference. We were joined by Joan Froling, her friend Cindi Fleishans, Carol Davis and Charly King. Carol and Charly, San Diego residents and co-directors of Pawsitive Teams, a service dog training program, graciously stored the more than 40 cartons of donated items provided by various companies for the conference.

Sunday was set aside for sight seeing. IAADP scholar-ship winners Wendy Morrell from England with Golden Retriever service dog Caesar and Tanya Eversole from Cincinnati with Labrador Retriever service dog Brooke, flew in early to join these fun outings. Completing the touring group were Cindi and IAADP board members Carol King with Heart and Devon Wilkins with Labrador Retriever guide dog Oak. Devon flew in from Toronto Canada, while Carol had a one hour drive from her home in Oceanside.

Sunday morning’s excitement was a behind the scenes tour at the San Diego Zoo. In addition to touching an alligator, an emu and a pacarana, a large South American rodent, the zoo staff wanted to see how the resident giraffes would interact with six dogs. Primarily interested in the alfalfa biscuits we offered them, the giraffes ignored the dogs and the dogs reciprocated! Each species enjoyed the food, not on each other!

The afternoon adventure was a ride on an amphibian bus/boat. After a brief narrated tour of Old Town San Diego, the vehicle drove down a ramp into the bay and we motored to a nearby island inhabited by sea lions. Despite the loud vehicle motor, we thrilled in listening to the barking of these marine mammals, while our friends took lots of photos. Back on land and returning to the starting point, we needed to negotiate a steep open step ladder to get off the bus. It wasn’t a problem climbing up, but it seemed rather daunting on the descent. Toni’s fears were unfounded, and she made it down without incident. Surprisingly, the dogs showed no fear and scampered down without a second thought.

Tuesday was the first day of board meetings devoted primarily to conference planning. After getting to know Tanya and Wendy, the board was thrilled to invite this awesome twosome to join us in directing the future of the organization! That evening, we set up an assembly line to package the many fantastic dog toys and equipment donated by the wonderful sponsors.

The beauty of having a suite was the dogs’ ability to unwind and play with one another. It wasn’t uncommon to have 8 off-leash pooches gamboling together.

Wednesday was more business meetings, some of which Ed missed for an exciting reason. KNBC Channel 4 Los Angeles had arranged to talk with him about the Department of Transportation issue of large assistance dogs fitting in the leg space in front of a disabled passenger in the cabin of an airplane. Mary Harris, the producer, interviewed Ed for more than an hour. The television crew spent several hours at that night’s hospitality reception speaking with others. Although the reception, like all large noisy gatherings, give us the opportunity to say hello to many old friends, it is also a source of frustration because it is hard for us as blind people to circulate in the crowd and difficult to hear conversations with the buzz of so many voices.

One of the new voices this year was Bob Walker and his wife Frances Mooney. At the cat writers conference in November, we recruited Bob, a San Diego-based professional feline photographer, to attend the IAADP conference as our official picture taker. Jazzed by his conference experience, Bob is now planning a photographic book portrayal of assistance dogs! He admits to being a cross-species convert!

IAADP conference day, six months in the making, got off to a smashing start with a moving keynote speech by scholarship winner Wendy Morrell. For the second year in a row, planned speaker actor/singer Tom Sullivan canceled at the last minute when Hollywood called. Wendy graciously took on the challenge and had the audience enchanted by her story. As an athlete in her late 20s, Wendy had a wonderful life and a job she loved. Exercising at a gym one day, she was the victim of a thoughtless accident, when a discus hit her in the head causing brain damage. After months in a coma, she lived for years as a recluse, depending on several unreliable and dishonest helpers. Then Caesar, trained by Dogs for the Disabled, leaped into her life, changing the story forever. Wendy graciously took on the challenge and had the audience enchanted by her story. As an athlete in her late 20s, Wendy had a wonderful life and a job she loved. Exercising at a gym one day, she was the victim of a thoughtless accident, when a discus hit her in the head causing brain damage. After months in a coma, she lived for years as a recluse, depending on several unreliable and dishonest helpers. Then Caesar, trained by Dogs for the Disabled, leaped into her life, changing the story forever.

continued on page 10...
A Tail to Tell
Continued from page 9

course of her existence! This Golden Retriever boy literally and figuratively opened doors for her. She has now traveled to several European countries, telling her story and becoming a spokesperson for the impact of assistance dogs on the lives of their disabled partners. At the end of her presentation, those in the audience able to stand, rose to their feet in a spontaneous ovation.

We have a knack of finding magic genies when the bottle becomes uncorked! Tim Joniec, customer relations officer at the San Diego airport, came to our rescue by suggesting a speaker. Tim arranged for Maria Younker, Director of Customer Services, to speak about what the airport does to make passengers with disabilities feel welcome. They’ve already installed an area for traveling dogs and plan to expand this service. On conference day Maria quipped that Wendy was a hard act to follow, but the audience was delighted to learn that concerns about travel with their dogs were being addressed.

Other interesting presentations were made by staff at Paws With A Cause®, Guide Dogs for the Blind and a professor from the University of Pennsylvania. Steve Hoffman from Fort Dodge presented the scholarships and Barbara Eves of Nutramax talked about her company’s supportive relationship with IAADP.

Board members Lynn Houston and Jill Exposito ably distributed the fantastic array of door prizes provided by our many supportive companies. Audience members thrilled when their names were announced to receive magnificent gifts.

It was a truly fabulous week of communalism and we hated to leave. However, we continued the camaraderie when Devon extended her time away from frigid Canada and returned with us to Fresno for a week. On the last day of her stay, about 20 people and 10 pups from the local puppy raising group descended on us and it was marvelous! Keebler, Latrell and Oak loved the dog party! We showed the families some of the devices we use in daily life such as the computer screen reader and braille writer. Then Devon joined us in speaking about the impact of their dedication to rearing well adjusted puppies on our future lives as guide dog partners.

On February 22, Channel 4 KNBC Los Angeles aired the piece they filmed in San Diego at the IAADP conference. Subsequently it was shown in many cities throughout the United States. The power of the media, added to IAADP’s other efforts, can be seen elsewhere in this issue.

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

New Workplace Access
EMPLOYMENT LAW < 1/11/06 Americall to

A

Naperville, Illinois, telemarketing company will pay $200,000 to settle a disability discrimination lawsuit filed by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency announced. The EEOC alleged in its lawsuit that the Americall Group violated the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) when it refused to hire a qualified applicant because she was blind and used a guide dog. Americall employs over 3,000 employees and has locations in four states and two foreign countries.

The EEOC filed the lawsuit on August 24, 2004, on behalf of an applicant who had applied for a position at Americall as a telemarketing service representative. She had come to the interview at Americall’s Lansing, Illinois, facility with her guide dog. After the interview, the company sent her a letter telling her that they could not accommodate her guide dog.

The ADA requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Richard Mrizek, the EEOC trial attorney leading the government litigation effort, said that the EEOC was prepared to present an expert on guide dogs who had inspected the call center and found it suitable for use by a guide dog and user. The case was set to go to trial in January 2006.

The consent decree entered by US District Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow of the Northern District of Illinois in

Your Assistance Dog Nee
By Dan Knox, Avid Identification System, Inc.

W

hy should I identify my assistance dog with a microchip? He will never run off, she will never be stolen, I will never be involved in an accident or we will never be faced with a natural disaster”…These statements were probably made by many disabled people in the last year and, unfortunately, for some, circumstances made a mockery of these statements!

Don’t let loss or separation happen to you or your beloved assistance dog. Collars and tags can come off, tattoos can fade. Most animal shelters do not look for tattoos or know where to call if faced with a lost assistance dog. The microchip implant is safe, fast, involves little pain and is the most permanent identification marker. Most animal shelters have microchip readers, so identification is immediate. Under current guidelines, microchip identified animals involved in a disaster receive immediate veterinary care.

Although it is hard to imagine, guide, hearing and service dogs DO get separated from their disabled partners and are sometimes stolen. Without permanent identification, your dog may never be reunited with you. Your dog is uniquely valuable. Without your dog you feel bereft and incomplete! Without identification separation may mean permanent loss!
Victory!

pay $200,000 for refusing to hire blind job applicant

Chicago on December 1, 2005, provides $200,000 in monetary relief for the blind applicant and enjoins Americall from discriminating against applicants and employees on the basis of physical disabilities for the three-year duration of the decree. The decree also requires that Americall post a notice of the consent decree in its Illinois and Indiana locations; train all its managers, supervisors, and human resources employees on the ADA; report any complaints of disability discrimination to the EEOC; and distribute or make available its antidiscrimination policy to all employees and applicants.

In addition, Americall has offered and agreed, as part of the decree, to work with the Chicago Lighthouse for People who are Blind or Visually Impaired to seek out additional qualified applicants for employment.

Mrizek said, “It is illegal to deny reasonable accommodations to people with service dogs. This case is an important victory for service dog users across the country. The ADA requires employers to make reasonable accommodations and that includes reasonably accommodating service animals.”

John Rowe, the EEOC’s district director in Chicago, said, “I am pleased that the parties reached an agreement that will work to educate Americall employees about the importance of the ADA and the employer’s obligation to provide reasonable accommodations. Discrimination not only hurts those who are victimized, but also denies all of us the skills and services of good, capable people who have so much to offer.”

EEOC Supervisory Trial Attorney Gregory M. Gochanour said, “Though guide dogs may not be appropriate in all conceivable circumstances, there is no good reason why employers cannot readily accommodate service animals many office environments like call centers.” The EEOC Regional Attorney in Chicago, John Hendrickson, added, “Guide dogs are trained to be non-disruptive and serve an important role in helping some disabled individuals function both in and out of the work place. This case should send a message to employers to not close their doors to disabled applicants and the service animals they use.”

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ds to be Microchipped!

Every microchip implanted by an Assistance dog training program is immediately traced back to the group. AVID Identification Systems, Inc. donates microchips at no cost and lifetime registrations in PETtrac to every dog certified as a member of the assistance dog family. Dogs can be traced in PETtrac 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

As a result of recent events, Avid has discovered it is important to have alternate contact information for someone from another city, state or a different area on the microchip. Don’t make the only contact in the microchip information a neighbor who may be involved or displaced in a common disaster. It is ok to have multiple numbers and especially use cell phone numbers as back up.

A great New Year’s resolution and lifesaving gift for your special friend is a microchip and a commitment to keep registration data current. DO IT NOW!

If you or your veterinarian have questions, please call

Corporate office: 1-800-336-2843 ext. 3
Service and support: 1-314-487-5842
Website: www.AVIDID.com

Peter Friss, an IAADP Member, receives a demonstration on how easily a scanner can read the Avid microchip number after it was implanted in his hearing dog at the IAADP Conference.
ERIE — Jamie Carley was hoping a judge would decide Monday to remove a neighbor’s chow chow accused of attacking her guide dog, Racer.

She started crying when the judge set an April 10 trial date instead.

“I was angry. I was very hurt, knowing this is going to drag out another three months,” said Carley, who has been blind since 1991. “I don’t want to bring another (guide) dog in here until that dog is gone.”

In December, Carley returned Racer to the nonprofit Guide Dogs for the Blind in California. Because of its injuries and its fear of other dogs, the 2-year-old yellow Labrador has been retired, she said.

Racer had been recovering from knee surgery at the California school when the chow chow, named Bear, escaped from his owners’ garage Oct. 12 and bit Racer’s leg, according to Erie police. Police cited Bear’s owners on suspicion of having a vicious dog and allowing the dog to run loose.

After Racer visited the veterinarian Nov. 14 to have stitches removed, Bear again was loose and tried to attack Racer, police said. Carley’s son, who was between the two dogs, carried Racer into the house. Bear did not actually contact Racer in that incident, police said.

In municipal court Monday, Robert Arnold, who owns Bear with his wife, pleaded not guilty to having a vicious dog and no contest to allowing the dog to run loose.

Emily Arnold later said the couple will not comment on the incidents until the court case is over.

The maximum penalty for having a vicious animal is a $1,000 fine, one year in jail or both, according to Fred Diehl, assistant to the Erie town administrator. The judge also could order the dog destroyed.

Carley knows what she wants, though.

“I want the dog removed so I can move on,” she said. “I feel safer with a guide,” she said.

Not having a dog affects Carley’s independence in ways most sighted people cannot imagine.

“(A guide dog) gives her independence, total independence,” said Kim Davalos, Carley’s sister. “She doesn’t have to rely on a sighted person.”

Guide Dogs for the Blind breeds and trains service dogs at no cost to the blind people who need them, according to its Web site. After dogs are matched with handlers, the two undergo three to four weeks of training at the organization’s campus. Training a guide dog costs about $72,000, according to the organization.

“Jamie’s been very fortunate; she’s had great dogs,” Davalos said, but Racer was special.

“He picked up on things so quickly,” Carley said. For example, Racer needed only one trip to Carley’s mailbox - located a block away, between two other mailboxes - to take her directly there.

“He’d stop and sit in front of that center box,” Carley said, while other dogs needed to repeat the trip several times to learn it. “He was just something different.”

Follow Up Article

Judge Orders Dog Out

Blind women to get new canine guide after neighbor removes Lab

Published May 6, 2006, Victoria A.F. Camron

The Daily Times-Call

ERIE — Jamie Carley gave up her guide dog, Racer, in December after a neighbor’s dog attacked and injured it.

Now that neighbor has to find another home for his Labrador/chow mix, so Carley can receive another guide dog, a judge ruled this week. If that’s not possible within 30 days, Bear must be destroyed.

Erie Municipal Court Judge Fred Steele’s order contradicts what he said in court April 11, when he decided Bear was a vicious dog because of the Oct. 12 attack on Racer.

Then, Steele said he would not order Bear be euthanized.

However, as long as Bear lives with Robert and Emily Arnold, their next-door neighbor cannot get another guide dog.

Steele also fined the Arnolds $250, plus $50 in fees and court costs. If Bear commits another violation within one year, though, the judge will add $500 to the fine.

Steele’s order noted that placing Bear elsewhere would only be temporary because Carley is trying to sell her house. He “hopes Ms. Carley will use her best efforts to relocate in order to minimize the time that Bear is placed outside the defendant’s home,” Steele wrote.

Carley has lowered the price on her home to increase its chances of selling quickly, she said. She wants to move from Erie so she can be closer to public transportation.

Meanwhile, Carley, who has been blind since 1991, is getting ready for a new guide dog.

After receiving the judge’s order, Carley faxed it to Guide Dogs for the Blind, a California nonprofit agency.

“Not even 15 to 20 minutes later, admissions called me,” Carley said. “They thought it was awesome.”

Guide Dogs for the Blind breeds and trains service dogs for blind people at no cost, according to its Web site. After dogs are matched with handlers, the two undergo three to four weeks of training at the organization’s campus. Training a guide dog costs about $72,000, according to the organization.

Even though Carley has had other guide dogs, she must
I work, to make sure there’s no problems,” she said. “It gives you time to make sure this dog’s going to undertake three weeks of training with a new dog.

While in California, Carley will say goodbye to Racer, who is retired and lives with the family who raised him. Victoria Camron can be reached at 303-684-5226, or by email at vcamron@times-call.com.

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About My Guide Dog “Indy”

By Leonard A. McHugh

I am frequently asked questions about Indy, my Freedom Guide Dog. People want to know where he was trained and if I had any difficulty learning to work with him. I had always used a cane to get around and never saw the need for a dog guide in the first place. After all, my cane was extremely low maintenance. It never needed to be fed, or cleaned up or taken to a vet.

I always liked dogs, but I was a little skeptical about trusting one with my life. It wasn’t until after being discharged from physical therapy following my surgery which resulted in paralysis, that I even entertained the idea of acquiring a dog guide. Because of all the complications during my surgery and after it, I lost a great deal of strength and coordination in my arms and hands. Even after intense physical therapy, I only regained about forty percent use of my left arm. The cane that I had relied on for so long was now totally useless for me. If I were to regain any amount of independence and self-reliance I had two choices: either wait for others to assist me or break down and look into a dog guide. I chose the latter. It turned out not to be as easily accomplished as I had imagined.

Because of my physical limitations, all of the well-known schools for training dog guides that I had contacted turned me down. It wasn’t until I came in contact with Eric Loori, the trainer for Freedom Guide Dogs, that my hope of independent travel was restored. He assured me that he could find a dog that could be trained to work with my limitations.

In April 1998, Eric came to my house with Indy to begin the two-week home training program. It didn’t take long for Indy to work his way into my heart and life. Six months later, we were a great working team, and I now regret that I didn’t look into dog guides thirty years ago. Now I can’t imagine what my life would be like without Indy.

Before I had Indy, I needed someone to drive me to the barbershop and after getting my hair cut, I would sometimes walk the mile or so trip back home using my cane. The walk home would take me about an hour. Now, Indy and I can make the trip in fifteen minutes. Since I no longer need to have someone drive me to the shop, we make it a round trip excursion. We even made it there and back during a snowstorm. With several inches on the ground and more falling, it would have been an impossible task using only my cane. Indy and I made the trip in forty minutes.

I have my lighthearted moments with Indy too. As part of his training, Indy follows commands such as “find outside” where he will look for a door with a handle, or “find a seat” leading me to an available chair. Unfortunately, he is indiscriminate in his selections of either. At a restaurant located in a mall, the “find outside” command led me to a freezer with a handle and “find a seat” found me in an empty chair at a table of strangers having dinner. Even buying a lottery ticket caused a few chuckles when Indy, not knowing the concept of waiting your turn, given the command to “find the counter” did just that. The people waiting in line just laughed about it and told me to go ahead of them when they realized what had happened.

Indy also possesses a keen sense of awareness. A friend’s mother had passed away and my friend was having a difficult time dealing with the loss. At the funeral, Indy kept watching her from across the room because she was crying and so upset. When it came time to pay final respects, Indy took me straight to her instead of following the line up to the casket. It was like he wanted to let her know that we both came to express our sympathy and support.

When I walk down the street I often can hear people saying, “Here comes Indy” — somewhere along the line I lost my identity. People open doors for Indy; something they seldom did when it was just my cane and me. With Indy, I don’t need as much outside help and I’m getting it in abundance. When I did need the help, I didn’t get enough of it.

In talking about Indy and other dog guides, either to individuals or to groups, I stress how important it is not to approach a dog guide while he is “working.” People are constantly coming up to Indy trying to give him a treat or pet him while he is in harness. In fact I joke about changing his name to “Babe Magnet” because of all the females he attracts. They all want to pet him or talk to him. There are even some who try to hug and kiss him when he is supposed to be working. A dog guide has an awesome responsibility to the blind person he is with. Their lives literally depend on that dog’s judgment and concentration. Being distracted in any way could result in horrific consequences. Most of the general public is not consciously aware of this and need to be educated in this regard.

I believe that Indy is truly part of God’s plan. He was born about two weeks prior to my surgery and was in training about the time I decided that I truly wanted a dog guide. Also it was a strange circumstance that I found Freedom Guide Dogs and their wonderful timing to expand into Pennsylvania. I don’t believe that the timing of these events are just a coincidence but part of a master plan.
Advocacy

Mandatory Certification Proposed

By Joan Froling

In February 2006, guide dog users appealed to IAADP for help in defeating a bill in Maryland which would require mandatory recertification each year. It also would limit access only to teams with ID from service animal training programs certified by Assistance Dogs International, depriving owner trainers and those with privately trained assistance dogs and guide dog teams from schools that don’t belong to ADI of their access rights. No disabled persons could have trainer access rights unless they were able to prove they were a trainer certified by ADI. Furthermore, all ADI member programs would be liable for personal injuries as well as any damages caused by a certified assistance dog. Each program would have the expense of administering an annual recertification test to graduates residing in that state.

IAADP’s board deplores the abuse of access rights by disabled persons with non task trained pets. We understand the trainer access rights provision of a state law can be exploited by unscrupulous individuals. At the same time, after careful examination of all the issues, we concluded far more harm than good would come from the passage of HB 1457. IAADP’s board sent the following letter to the bill’s sponsors, all members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee, the President of the State Senate and to the Secretary of Disabilities before the March 15 Hearing, urging them to reconsider.

February 18, 2006


Dear Sponsors: I’m writing you on behalf of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners. Founded in 1993, this non-profit organization represents and speaks for over 2,000 members who work with guide, hearing and service dogs. IAADP carries out its mission to foster the assistance dog movement through its Information and Advocacy Center, award winning quarterly publication “Partners’ Forum,” educational website, member benefits and the annual conference we hold in conjunction with Assistance Dogs International, a coalition of guide, hearing and service dog training programs.

IAADP would like to comment on bill HR 1457, in particular the provisions that violate the civil rights granted to Maryland residents by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

While this proposed bill was undoubtedly well intentioned, it is apparent its sponsors did not take into account the current status of the assistance dog field, federal court decisions and the document issued by the National Association of [state] Attorneys General and the U.S. Department of Justice in July 1996. That document, titled “Commonly Asked Questions About Service Animals in Places of Business” was designed to answer questions posed by business operators.

Under federal law it does not matter who trained the dog. As long as a guide dog, signal dog or any other animal has been individually trained to perform tasks of benefit to a disabled individual, it is legally a service animal. Certification cannot be required, even if a state has a program to certify dogs. Businesses are supposed to treat a service animal like a wheelchair or oxygen tank, as a necessary medical aid, not as a pet. Under ADA it is illegal for places of public accommodation to require “identification papers” to show the service animal is certified or licensed as a condition of granting access. The ADA provides greater protection for individuals with disabilities so it takes priority over local or state laws or regulations, according to this document. For your information, I have attached a copy of this Q & A document which your Maryland State Attorney General so graciously disseminated to hotels, restaurants and other businesses in July 1996 on the 5th Anniversary of the signing of the ADA into law.

If in doubt whether the animal is a pet or a service animal, businesses now have the right to ask, “What tasks does your service animal perform?” See the ADA Business Brief on Service Animals issued in 2002 at www.ada.gov

According to the latest Assistance Dogs International (ADI) census, the non profit programs belonging to ADI collectively train less than 700 service dogs per year worldwide. Service dogs work for individuals with disabilities other than blindness or deafness. Thousands of people eagerly apply for these dogs after watching heartwarming success stories broadcast by the media. They are excited about the tremendous improvement in quality of life that can be achieved through partnership with a canine assistant. Unfortunately, they soon learn the demand far exceeds the supply. Eligibility for acceptance into a service dog training program can depend on income, geographical distance, type of disability, fundraising concerns and other factors that are no reflection on a disabled person’s good character or ability to benefit from such partnerships. Many programs have long waiting lists of approved applicants and a qualified individual may have to wait several years before receiving a service dog. Hearing dogs are also in short supply, due to funding and staff shortages.

Unwilling to give up their dream of having a service or hearing dog, a number of disabled persons turn to other options such as hiring a professional dog trainer or studying how to train one themselves with the help of “how to” books and videos, like those developed by the ADI accredited service animal training organization, Top Dog, in Arizona, to teach disabled persons how to train their own service dog. They may also take community obedience classes and/or join Internet support groups where professional dog trainers answer questions and provide advice to
empower List members to achieve a successful outcome. Additional resources include, but are not limited to, websites like IAADP’s and ADI’s which teach visitors about training standards, selection criteria, access rights and many other aspects of assistance dog partnership.

IAADP urges the legislature not to restrict the right of Marylanders to improve their safety, mobility and quality of life through working with a canine assistant. Restricting who can train an assistance dog in Maryland only to ADI certified service animal trainers with identification from ADI certified service animal training organizations is a step backward in meeting the needs of Maryland residents with disabilities.

There is only one ADI program in your state. It graduates fewer than 15 service and hearing dog teams a year. Technically none of their volunteer trainers can qualify under HB 1457 as an ADI certified service animal trainer. This small program can’t possibly begin to meet the needs of many thousands of citizens in Maryland who are entitled to work with a service animal under the Americans With Disabilities Act.

IAADP is not insensitive to the concerns of those who believe legislative action is needed. We suggest you follow the lead of other state legislatures if worried about fraud and make it a criminal misdemeanor for a non disabled citizen to bring a pet into a store by pretending to be a disabled person with a service animal. A huge fine could be imposed as a deterrent for such fraudulent behavior.

Recertification testing is unnecessary, if the goal is to exclude poorly behaved assistance dogs and other service animals from public accommodations. The ADA already empowered businesses to exclude any team from its premises if the service animal acts unruly, behaves in a threatening way or exhibits disruptive conduct, such as a dog barking in a movie theater.

IAADP supports Guide Dogs Users, Inc. (GDUI) and Guide Dog Users of Maryland in protesting mandatory recertification testing. If this provision is enacted, a tremendous burden would be placed on all assistance dog partners in the state.

We salute the provision in bill HR 1457 that requires public safety officers to receive an education about service animals and access rights under ADA. IAADP participated in the project, “We Welcome Service Animals,” with ADI and GDUI to make a professional video for law enforcement on this very subject. Senator Bob Dole introduces the ADA and its requirements to police officers in that film. This great educational tool can be found on ADI’s website.

In closing, IAADP thanks you for the opportunity to provide this input. If you have any questions or wish to have additional input on this matter, please feel welcome to get in touch.

Sincerely,
Joan Froling
IAADP Chairperson
(586) 826-3938

cc: House Health and Government Operations Committee
Speaker of the House, Maryland
IAADP Board of Directors
Coalition of Assistance Dog Organizations

Author continues: At the request of the Coalition of Assistance Dog Organizations, I composed another letter tackling some of the issues. I’d like to give a special thanks to Wells Jones, CEO of the Guide Dog Foundation and the delegate from Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools, for taking on the job of faxing CADO’s letter to the bill’s sponsors, the Committee members and the Secretary of Disabilities, Karen Cox. I also sent an individually addressed email letter to all of these politicians we hoped to influence. I subsequently learned we made an impact, for when the bill’s sponsor tried to propose some last minute revisions, the Committee’s Chair told him it was hopeless, as the Committee wanted nothing more to do with the bill.

A few days later, Karen Cox’s deputy chief assistant who had earlier thanked us for our input informed us via email that the March 15 hearing had been canceled as the bill had been withdrawn. We subsequently learned the Secretary’s office will be putting together a different bill. Gary Norman, head of the Maryland State Chapter of Guide Dog Users, Inc. and Joe Swetnam, a service dog partner who is the Executive Director of Fidos for Freedom, whom I put in touch with each other to discuss strategy for defeating the bill at the upcoming hearing, will now be working with Secretary Cox’s office to help ensure the next bill is actually helpful to the disabled community.

On April 5th, the bill’s sponsor, Christopher Shanks, contacted IAADP to thank us for our input and to let us know our participation would be welcome in designing a new bill for the next session to allow for wider access for service animal users and allow for comprehensive education for law enforcement and security agencies on the complexities of handling service animal issues.

2007 Conference

The 2007 Conference will be held at the Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards. Marriott wants to be known as the Assistance Dog Friendly Hotel chain.

January 27th is the date of the IAADP Conference. The ADI Conference will be held from January 28-30, 2007. Join us for a wonderful time! Be sure to call early for hotel reservations, especially if you need a wheelchair accessible room. Rooms $129 per night. Phone: 1-410-962-0202; Toll-free: 1-800-228-9290. Contact IAADP@aol.com to request a Conference Packet no later than October 2007. Make plans now to join us for a spectacular event!

See highlights of the 2006 Conference starting on page 13 of this issue
IAADP’s Conference attendees enjoyed a cool but sunny day on January 19th in San Diego, California. Over two hundred guests filled the elegant ballroom to capacity. It was our largest turnout to date, with so many walk-ins, we had to send for extra chairs! We had pre-registered representatives from 41 ADI member programs. There were 75 disabled handlers with assistance dogs of every description. Among the handsome Labs, Goldens and Shepherds, I spotted an Otter Hound, a Collie, a Great Dane, several Standard Poodles, a Doberman, a Greyhound, a Sheltie, a Whippet, an Australian Shepherd, a Yorkie and some interesting looking mix breeds large and small.

Wendy Morrell, an advocate from the U.K. with a wry sense of humor gave the keynote address. She received a standing ovation for her speech about how the partnership with her Golden Retriever, Caesar, trained by Dogs for the Disabled, empowered her to achieve considerable measure of independence. (See page 24 for her story)

Maria Younker, Director of Customer Services at the San Diego Airport, was the second speaker we drafted to fill in for Tom Sullivan, the advertised keynote speaker. The guide dog user had canceled at the last minute due to the opportunity for some television work. Maria was also a delight. She brought a video tape featuring an amusing TV news personality who introduced the public to the new doggy relief area at San Diego’s airport. She spoke about other ways in which the airport tries to make passengers with disabilities feel welcome.

From Puppyhood to Placement was the unofficial “theme” behind the next few workshops.

Speakers shared details about the exciting work they were involved in, which taken altogether, provided partners and programs in our audience with insights into the different stages in the life cycle of an assistance dog candidate.

Puppyhood was covered by two excellent speakers from Paws With A Cause. The first speaker, Renee Schulte, who is in charge of the school’s breeding program talked to the audience on the subject: “Evaluating Puppies for an Assistance Dog Career.” Her video began by showing us eight week old Golden and Lab puppies interacting with the evaluator in a room with few distractions. It was amazing the differences in personality this revealed. Renee confided their program prefers to see a pup who is socially needy, inclined to look to their human for reassurance rather than a very bold pup who acts self sufficient and goes off exploring his surroundings with no interest in what the human is doing.

She took questions from the audience as she discussed various the temperament tests she administered in the film. She advised anyone picking out a pup to raise for this career to look for one who is socially attracted to humans, one who wants to follow the evaluator and be petted by her. Another important trait to look for is the willingness to forgive. After an unpleasant experience like the toe pinch test to determine body sensitivity, it is the puppy who immediately forgives the tester for the discomfort and hangs out with her or comes back into her lap to seek petting that should be chosen over the puppies who leave the area.

Renee also detailed what kind of structure to look for, especially if assessing a dog for mobility assistance work or the ability to work for many years. The video she made used both puppy and adult models. Front legs should be fairly straight, for example, if you are facing the dog head on. A dog whose front paws are definitely turned out to the right and left or which turn inward has a poor conformation for a job like wheelchair pulling assistance. If looking at the dog from the rear, you want to see the lower part of the hind legs nice and straight, instead of the hocks turning inward, almost touching, a deformity termed “cow hocks.” Dogs with a good structure can work long hours with no problem. Dogs who have poor conformation may suffer undue fatigue or pain from tasks requiring strength or stamina. One adult dog in the film was labeled “a disaster” in terms of structure. She used him to educate the audience about a number of conformation flaws, observing he could still be trained as a service dog but the kind of tasks he could perform should be limited to ones that would not impose any strain on his body.

Aimee Brumleve, was the presenter of the workshop on ideas for “Enhancing the Upbringing of Puppy Candidates.” Like Renee, Aimee prepared a nice handout that could be shared with others on her topic. She introduced herself as a staff trainer involved in curriculum planning for the volunteer families who become puppy raisers for PWAC. She briefly described how PWAC offers obedience classes and organizes outings to malls, fairs and other interesting places every month for socialization and training purposes.

Space limitations here only permit me to highlight some of the ideas she shared.

She reported that she urges anyone raising a pup to tether the pup to their ankle on a six to twenty foot leash while doing housework and cooking. Reward him with a food treat every time he makes eye contact, to encourage him to make frequent eye contact, something that will enhance the bonding process during the first few weeks.

Aimee advocates exposing a pup from 8-16 weeks old to everything possible including elevators, before he goes through “fear periods,” rather than doing it gradually over
the next year. They really inundate the 8 week old pup. Then when he encounters an elevator or some other things as a 4-6 month old adolescent, it is “old hat” to him. He won’t be spooked and develop a problem that could require many outings to overcome. Since most states do not give access to puppy raisers, Aimee told us that puppy raisers are instructed to ask first, before taking a puppy into an establishment for socialization.

She said PWAC considers stairs to be a top priority. They want to ensure the pup will learn over the course of a year to confidently handle all kinds of staircases, indoors, outdoors, enclosed or open stairs. The dog should be exposed to stairs with different surfaces like carpet, linoleum, metal, wood and concrete. They scatter food and toys on the stairs so the pup will stop to investigate and become more comfortable with the footing.

Teaching a pup to toilet on different surfaces like a black-top, snow, wood chips etc. is another high priority. Puppy raisers are instructed to insist the youngster get right down to business and not be fussy as a client in a wheelchair won’t be able to indulge the dog’s desire to roam a large area in search of the most perfect blades of grass on the lawn to eliminate on.

Something else all raisers are told to do is to teach their puppy to relax and accept being rolled onto his back for a belly rub, every night if possible. They also should clip the nails and examine the dog’s teeth while he is in that position. In the PWAC class, the handlers trade pups and sit down, spread their legs apart, have the pup lie flat on his back with his head in their lap, paws in the air, giving him a belly rub for up to ten minutes while the staff talks to the group. This is an important trust building and leadership building exercise.

With regard to training, her department instituted a “back to basics” approach two years ago, concentrating on basic obedience rather than introducing task skills. They proof older pups against distractions like tennis balls, cats, remote control operated cars, children with squeaky toys and trainers scattering food on the floor in their puppy raiser obedience classes. Their goal is to deliver well socialized, obedient candidates to headquarters when the pups reach fourteen months of age.

Aimee concluded with the observation that PWAC is always open to new ideas for enhancing those formative months of a young dog’s life. There is no hard and fast rule on how it must be done. The ideas she shared were things that their program had found to be of value in preparing a young dog for a future career as someone’s assistance dog.

The next stage in the life of an assistance dog candidate is a formal assessment period to determine whether or not the dog in question has “the right stuff” for this career. IAADP invited Dr. James Serpell, Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania to give a talk about the exciting project he initiated to develop a new temperament testing protocol. Already renowned for his work with guide dog schools, he’s now deeply involved in research that could benefit the whole assistance dog field.

Dr. Serpell noted that while a health screening with x-rays and lab tests yield results that are pretty straightforward, the tests utilized by most programs for temperament and aptitude assessment may not be yielding reliable data. In his workshop titled “Investigating Temperament & Behavioral Tests for Assistance Dog Candidates,” the distinguished scientist described his collaboration with four guide dog schools and Canine Companions for Independence, which breeds hearing and service dog candidates. He acquainted us with his prior work in the field, the inadequacies of puppy tests, the serious challenges to be overcome in developing valid tests for the traits or problems we want to identify, plus the long range goals of this project. Rather than attempt to summarize in a few sentences everything we learned, I have published the five page handout he provided at our request on page 29 so readers who did not have the opportunity to attend his presentation can also benefit from this knowledge.

The video presentation showed dogs going through three of the six tests on the IFT (In For Training) Test. Dr. Serpell credits Michele Pouliot, Director of Training Research and Development at Guide Dogs for the Blind, with developing most of this test.

Dr. Serpell took questions at the end and referred some to Michele Pouliot. The most controversial revelation was a recent decision to experiment with using a stuffed dog to test a dog’s reactions to another dog. Michele explained how difficult it has been for organizations in five different parts of the USA to get valid results utilizing a live dog when testing 25 dogs or more in one day. They all use a different dog, so the breed and size may differ which could skew the results. Another problem is the live dog’s behavior. At first the live dog jumps up, tail wagging, happy to see an assistance dog candidate on leash come around the corner. After the tenth time or twelfth time, however, the live dog is likely to become bored and his demeanor changes and soon he won’t even bother to get to his feet. Scoring a candidate on how he responds to a sleeping dog in the distance compared to another candidate’s reaction to an excited dog in the distance fails to yield reliable data for internal use. It makes it impossible to create a tutoring tape to demonstrate to other programs how to accurately score this part of the IFT.

One member of the audience suggested using a tape recording of a dog barking along with the sight of the canine figure [a huge stuffed dog] in the distance, to get a more realistic idea of the candidate’s response to other dogs. An-
other individual suggested having Honda build a stuffed robot dog that could move, imitating canine behavior, rather than using a motionless artificial dog. Michele said she’d take these suggestions under advisement.

Dr. Serpell reported he’d like to see two of the IFT tests which could evoke a fear or aggressive reaction repeated the next day. One test utilizes a black garbage bag full of newspaper falling off a wall at the precise instant the dog is passing by. Would the dog’s startle reaction be less the next day, showing the dog can habituate to this kind of incident after a first encounter? Or would the dog anticipate and try to fearfully avoid that area where a falling object scared him the day before while he is guiding a blind person?

Dr. Serpell also thinks it would be valuable to repeat the test where the dog is approached by “a threatening figure.” (currently they are utilizing a gender neutral human dressed up in a Halloween mask, wrapped in cloak, who shakes a stick and yells at the dog, rather than using someone a dog can identify as a man. They wanted to eliminate the problem of a dog’s gender bias skewing the test result.

Also this decision reflects the reality that many programs primarily rely on female trainers, so requiring all programs to use a man educated to exhibit the same behavior with every dog, year after year, would be problematic. As an alternative to the figure Michele came up with, the collaborating programs are also considering the ghost figure in the Danish police dog temperament testing protocol that CCI adapted for their use a few years ago, something many in the audience recalled from the presentation by Paul Mundell of CCI at our conference in San Antonio.) Dr. Serpell would like to see programs find out what would happen the next day. Would the candidate take the sight of the threatening figure in stride, knowing it won’t harm him, demonstrating he can adjust to such phenomena? Or on the contrary, would a dog show increased fear or hostility? Repeating the test within twenty four hours could be a scheduling hardship for programs, so its importance will have to be weighed against the costs involved in collecting this additional information about the dog’s temperament.

In the early days, most students were young men blinded in World War II. Today, the majority of students lose their sight in middle to old age and often have secondary health problems. They prefer a dog who is willing to walk at a much more sedate pace, one who can be content with a much more sedentary life-style. The challenge of providing such dogs is largely addressed through the breeding program, then by a careful personality assessment of each dog prior to placement. Another consumer driven change is the school’s new focus on finding ways to accommodate students with additional handicaps, such as weakness on one side of their body or the need to use a wheelchair.

Perhaps the most controversial change to date has been the introduction of food treats while the dogs are prepared for placement. The school finds the use of treats with praise has made training a much happier experience from the dog’s point of view. They discovered the click and treat method could enable trainers to do things like teach a guide dog to find an empty chair in five minutes, as opposed to days of work to try to communicate to the dog what the blind partner wants in that situation. It can speed up teaching a guide dog trainee to avoid overhead obstacles, one of the most difficult tasks to master. A third example is that it improves their ability to teach a guide dog to more precisely line up a blind person’s wheelchair with the foot of a ramp.

At the same time, preventing problems for their students arising from the use of food treats merited extensive analysis and the development of techniques to enable the team to function as well as it did without food treats. In addition, we learned that much more emphasis is being placed on food avoidance training by the staff than the subject received in the old days.
Video footage gave the audience the chance to observe some interesting changes to the kennel environment. The staff wants the young dogs turned in by puppy raisers to view their new indoor kennel as “home” rather than viewing it as a prison. Each dog is given a bed and toys. These toys have to be collected every morning for sterilization and redistribution. It requires more staff time to keep things sanitary, but it is an investment GDB thinks is worthwhile. Volunteers called “cuddlers” frequently sit with the dog inside his kennel and play with him there and pet him so he will associate his kennel with pleasurable human contact. The overarching goal is to cut down on the loss of good dogs due to kennel stress.

Agility equipment has been experimentally added to the exercise yard. It not only provides mental stimulation and increases the dog’s fun, it also can aid dogs in becoming more comfortable with different kinds of surface footing. We learned it is essential to handler safety for a guide dog to be willing to work on different surfaces including walking across metal grates or sewer plates in a sidewalk. Something else GDB began doing is putting out bones to chew on in some exercise yards, though our audience was warned this must be introduced cautiously and the group of dogs must be well supervised to avoid quarrels.

The video raised some eyebrows when it showed how the new recruits receive their introduction to guiding in harness. Instead of a trainer trying to lure or force the dog to lead out, the school now puts the dog on a treadmill for three sessions. This teaches proper guiding position and how to lead out on command and to halt on command, all of which readies the dog for advanced work much more quickly, most of the trainers agreed when surveyed.

Another clever idea is a new way for a trainer to teach the dog to Back Up. We were told it is a behavior dogs don’t do naturally. However, it is a vitally important skill the dog must master in order to keep the blind person safe when crossing roads. At GDB, the trainee is placed into a skinny chute built out of cyclone fencing. A bowl of food sits at the end of this unusual kennel run. The dog is permitted to run forward and eat the food. After the bowl is empty, the trainer calls to the dog, urging him to return. The only way for the dog to leave the chute is to back up, since the gap between the fences is too narrow to permit the dog to turn around. The dog figures out how to back up of his own accord, instead of being forced to back up through the use of a choke chain and a trainer’s brute strength. This exercise only needs to be done a couple times, then the guide dog trainer can put the newly learned behavior to good use, teaching the dog intelligent disobedience.

This workshop expanded our knowledge of challenges that guide dog users face. Among other things, we learned a blind person will quickly lose their orientation to their sur-

continued on page 20...
San Diego Conference Highlights
Continued from page 19

IAADP’s Veterinary Care Partnership program when Bayer discontinued its staff support. Barbara Eves also let the audience know that Nutramax is proud to be one of the substantial contributors to our VCP fund to “save a partnership.”

In addition we had the pleasure of welcoming Steve Hoffman, the representative from Ft. Dodge, which is a major sponsor of IAADP’s Conference. He came to award the scholarships funded by Ft. Dodge to the three scholarship winners, Tanya Eversole, Wendy Morrell and Joyce Grad.

Ft. Dodge has been a steadfast supporter of the VCP fund since its inception. In addition, this splendid company will give each IAADP partner member a rebate check, up to twenty dollars per year, to reimburse a good part of the cost of vaccinations if their veterinarian inoculates the dog with a Ft. Dodge vaccine.

Our final workshop was the popular “What’s New? Sharing Tasks, Training Ideas, Equipment, Products etc.” Conference guests had the opportunity to do a “show and tell” demo of various items. Christie and her Golden “Sydney” trained by Pawsitive Teams, volunteered to demonstrate a clever lightweight [collapsible] cart the size of a large milk crate with detachable shafts built by Sydney’s trainer, Chris Marckese. She did a tour of the ballroom with Sydney pulling the cart with several large purses in it to give it some weight. Groceries, a briefcase, school textbooks, etc. can be transported from your vehicle to the house or office or around a college campus with ease. Carol Davis, the Executive Director, is willing to share the plans for this inexpensive, innovative mobility aid with anyone who requests them at www.pawteams.org.

I told the audience about the bet Paws With A Cause made me that I couldn’t find a dog their specially designed hook device couldn’t open. Since then I’ve been trying every commercial door I have come across in Michigan with the help of my service dog. Incredibly, over the last five years, I have not found one commercial door handle that this five inch long molded plastic hook couldn’t get a grip on. It never fails me, unlike earlier devices I experimented with. I just clip one end of a six foot lead to the swivel at the bottom of the hook, the other end to the D-ring on the back of my dog’s harness. I test the slits of that three pronged hook on the handle till one of them catches, tell my dog to Stay, then move my wheelchair to a spot where I can call the dog to Come. As he comes towards me, he hauls the door open behind him, a la sled dog fashion! Once it is fully ajar, I tell him to Stay. It does take a couple weeks of training to get a service dog to reliably hold that Stay while you return to the door. I back my wheelchair up to the door sill. After putting on my brakes, I call the dog to return. My wheelchair is positioned to block the door from closing till I get the dog in and put away this clever device. Ambulatory individuals can block the door from closing with their back or shoulder till they get the dog inside. PWAC is willing to make this device available to any disabled person, trainer or programs at their cost, $5.30 ea. plus shipping, at: www.pawswithacause.org.

The audience was generous in its willingness to share other items, from harnesses to a wide variety of specialty leashes to collars to devices that made it easier for a dog to pick up items like keys or a remote control you don’t want “slimed” with doggy drool. One nifty invention was a flexible type device built into a hollow tennis ball fastened to the arm of a wheelchair so someone with no use of their hands or arms could still take their service dog for a walk without an attendant along. The speaker told of prior experiments with bungee cords or other things that failed so others in the audience wouldn’t have to make the same mistakes.

Wendy Morrell demonstrated the kind of harness required by the British if flying your dog to and from the U.K., with a leash that can be run through the passenger’s seat belt to anchor the dog on take off and landings. It is similar to the idea of a harness to be used with a seat belt in a passenger vehicle.

PWAC once again brought it’s Research [idea] Book to share with the audience, loaded with photos of various kinds of equipment they had invented over the years to address the needs of severely disabled clients. They also demonstrated several items, including a personal alarm from Radio Shack which could be set off by a service dog if the owner had a seizure. They attach a tug strap to the device and train the dog to perform that task.

A lively discussion took place when Al Peters, Hearing & Service Dogs of Minnesota, expressed his concern about one painful lesson of Hurricane Katrina. An emergency caregiver’s phone number on a wallet card or in a microchip database is no good if it is a local number and the whole region suffers a catastrophe. We definitely need to change our info in the database(s). Al said he would be proposing ADI set up a 24 hour dedicated phone line to help in a crisis. Ed Eames reminded partners we would have a free microchip clinic the next day, thanks to Avid’s generosity, so those who fill out the emergency caregiver info card there should consider making one contact someone who lives in another part of the USA. Schools might want to think of this lesson of Katrina too, if they do the microchipping themselves.

Devon Wilkins, a guide dog user from Canada who serves on IAADP’s board, demonstrated a type of massage therapy called Reflexology with her guide dog, Oak. She offered to provide a free massage and instructions to the dog’s owner the next day during the lunch hour for anyone interested in learning more about the special techniques of this discipline. My Samoyed service dog, Spirit, is one of the lucky ones who had a new spring to his step after Devon’s
gifted hands spent a few minutes on each paw the following afternoon.

The business meeting gave IAADP board members the opportunity to make announcements about the new benefits cited in this newsletter. We also updated the audience on the advocacy work we’ve done over the past year (for some of the details, see the CADO Report in this issue). We took a moment to thank Bob Walker, a professional photographer who had generously volunteered to take photos of assistance dogs at our conference. Excellent work can be seen throughout this issue [with the exception of two photos in the article titled “My Journey.”] To view more of his copyrighted photos of the conference, you can visit his website at http://www.pix.tv/html/bfriends/index.htm.

For the Grand Prize Drawing, we offered three charming stuffed dogs, a large Labrador Retriever with a service dog vest donated by SitStay.com, a darling Australian Sheepdog wearing an orange hearing dog vest and a Golden Retriever guide dog puppy.

In addition, we were able to offer a surprise GRAND Grand Prize, thanks to Arnie Epstein, of Circle E Ranch, who was a vendor at this year’s conference. He presented IAADP with a gift certificate worth up to $285 for a custom made balance support harness with a folding handle and other amenities like a pressure relief saddle that goes over the withers and a special pressure relief girth. This is one of the lightest weight, most comfortable balance support harnesses designs I have tested since 1992. While it comes in leather, the option of having nylon straps is also available. As luck would have it, a gentleman with a hearing dog trained by CCI won the Grand Prize Drawing for the harness. Pete Friss generously donated the Gift Certificate back to IAADP, asking us to provide this harness to someone in need, someone who could not otherwise afford one. (If you have a condition like MS which causes balance problems and a suitable dog and wish to apply to IAADP’s Board for this gift certificate from Circle E [www.circle-e.net], contact Joan for details at 586-826-3938 or iaadp@aol.com).

Then it was time to bring this exhilarating day to a close. Everyone left with a gift. IAADP gave each guest a cute refrigerator magnet, a small stuffed dog wearing a blue sweater with our initials “IAADP” in white. Quite a few guests carried off doorprizes donated by the caring companies listed in our Thank you column. Assistance dog partners were invited to pick up “a Goody Bag” for their assistance dog on the way out. These bags were loaded with toys and other items donated by a number of companies like Multipet and Hartz Mountain to enhance the conference experience for all of our guide, hearing and service dogs in attendance.

The next conference will be held in Baltimore, January 27-30th, 2007, at a hotel known as the Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards. We look forward to meeting partners on the Eastern Seaboard at this event, as well as those who may come from farther afield.

Fort Dodge Animal Health was a major sponsor of IAADP’s 2006 Conference! Their generosity is greatly appreciated. Among other things, it enabled us to give a scholarship for travel, hotel and conference fees to each of three assistance dog partners, Wendy Morrel from the U.K., Joyce Grad from Michigan and Tanya Eversole, Ohio.

IAADP also wants to salute the following companies for making the 2006 conference a great success for both dog and human attendees!

Hartz Mountain: dog toys
Kong Company: kongs
Multipet International: dog toys
Nylabone: nylabones
Our Pets: groovy stick key chains, molecuballs, buster cubes and treat dispensers
Premier: groovy stick key chains, molecuballs, buster cubes and treat dispensers
S & M Nutec: greenies
Sun Maid: raisins
Vetgate: identity cards

IAADP was thrilled by the nice door prizes donated by the following companies:

Bramton Co: thermal dog cushions
Cherrybrook: $15 gift certificate
Chewbars: toys- rubber disks
Fort Dodge: mugs and toys
Hartz Mountain: dog vitamins
Iams: tote bags
J and J Dog Supplies: SD leashes
Magic Zoo: Lab. Ret. necklace
Muttluks: Muttluks
Our Pets: elevated dog feeders
Petco: dog bed
Premier: safety collars
Purina: disposable cameras
Royal Canin: Dog Encyclopedias
Scrub Factory: scrub w/dog pictures
SitStay: patches, service dog vests, fleece jackets, Easy Walk harnesses, Muttluks, clickers

You can thank these companies for their support of IAADP by patronizing them in the year to come!
Photo Highlights

Pictures courtesy of Bob Walker
Good morning everyone, I would like to thank IAADP for the opportunity to speak to you today and would like to start by sharing a little about myself and how I come to be here with you at all. I hope those of you who were expecting a blind male American actor, will forgive the IAADP Board for producing a brain injured female British Access Advocate!

As you can see, Caesar, my assistance dog is a Golden Retriever, he is six years old and has been with me since he was 17 months, so we’ve been a partnership just over five years.

I think that sometimes, it helps to look back on a journey to fully appreciate exactly where you are, and exactly how far you have come. My journey as a disabled person began back in 1989. I was a teacher and lecturer, I had a flourishing career in mathematical education, I was involved in writing the new syllabus for our 16+ examinations, writing the exams and lecturing to other teachers on how to teach this new syllabus that I’d help develop. It was an exciting time to be at the cutting edge, and I’d also been involved in writing and publishing a handbook for teachers. At 28 years of age, I was travelling the country teaching teachers with over 30 years experience how to teach new materials and use new methods.

In my spare time, I enjoyed archery and had achieved some success nationally, holding two national records. I also had gained my private pilots licence in the school summer holidays and very much enjoyed the intellectual challenge of flying as a hobby. In the autumn of 1989, I’d been promoted at work, was planning to study for my masters at Cambridge and had just started flying twin engine aircraft.

Life was fulfilling and successful for me both personally and professionally.

Then one Sunday, while I was at a Great Britain archery squad training weekend, where selections were being made for the European Indoor Championships, I suffered severe brain and neck injuries in a sports accident, resulting in unconsciousness and 11 months in hospital and countless years of rehabilitation.

There is no doubt, that in a split second, my life changed forever.

Literally, everything I valued in my life had gone, the ability to do virtually everything had simply disappeared. I didn’t know what day it was from one minute to the next and even at 17 months after my injury my free vocabulary stood at just 4 words, yes, no, a rude word beginning with F and off. I am sure if I’d had any inkling of how severely disabled I was, I would have been appalled! It took weeks and months to see tiny improvements and it seemed that the only thing I was any good at was being stroppy and refusing to accept the status quo.

By the time I left hospital and rehab I was left with poor speech, balance, memory, mobility, organization, rather un-controlled epilepsy, sight and hearing problems, PTSD, loss of self confidence and self worth and an attitude that most people would cross the street to avoid.

It was impossible to establish a daily routine, or indeed have any purpose to get up in the morning. Life was really very daunting for me. I’d gone from being one of life’s great copers, to being totally dependent. And so it was that I was despatched home with a care regime that was costing the government some £98,000 ($165,000) a year in order that I could live independently! Believe me, I was not a willing candidate for that set up, and my vocabulary rapidly expanded to include the words “you’re sacked” when I felt that carers were taking advantage of me.

I was really in a catch 22 situation, I needed the carers to remain at home, but one or two dishonest ones had made me distrustful of everyone. Just about the worst thing that can happen to someone with a poor memory is for someone charged with caring for them to steal from them and then suggest that they never had the missing item in the first place. Things got so bad at one stage, a friend came and photographed the entire contents of my home to keep on record with my lawyer, so that when things went missing he had the evidence that I did actually own them in the first place!

I became an expert in keeping people at arms length, if they never got close, they could never hurt me. I had become security conscious and began locking things away, however, I’d put the keys in such a safe place I often couldn’t remember where I had put them, and then I would become frantic trying to find them, often turning the house upside down in the process!

My efforts at independence often ended in failure.

One day I struck out on my own, gave the carer the slip and called a taxi to take me to the town centre. The driver helped me load my wheelchair and we were soon in town, only for me to discover I had forgotten my purse to pay him. I had to get him to drive me home, only to discover that I had also forgotten my front door keys! I just wanted the earth to open up and swallow me. Thankfully, the driver noticed I had been consistent in my forgetfulness and spotted the open kitchen window. Moments later, he was climbing through, over the sink and made his way through to let me in the front door. By this time, embarrassment and frustration had the better of me and I simply paid him to go away.

So it was just simpler not to go out.
One evening I saw a clip on a television program about a woman with an assistance dog, and started to wonder if such a dog might be able to help me. The more I thought about it, the more focussed on the idea I became, and quickly realized that at least a dog would never lie to me! I remember thinking, if I could have a dog to look after my keys I would be so much better off.

I waited until I was able to move house to be closer to my family and applied to two assistance dog programs on January 1st, 1999. One was honest but blunt, the waiting list was closed, but if I would still like a dog in 6 months I should get in touch again then. The other invited me for interview and assessment almost immediately, I spent the day with them, it all appeared to go very well, they were very positive and I was hopeful a dog would be arriving imminently. About two weeks after the assessment, my case manager got in touch, it was bad news, the assistance dog program had turned me down, the reasons stated that my memory was too poor and my speech too halting and monotonous to ever be able to be partnered successfully with an assistance dog.

Just my luck, to have my life wrecked by an accident, and be left with a disability that was apparently the wrong type of disability and it meant I couldn’t even have a dog… I felt like I had been hit by a train and spiralled into depression for the spring and much of the summer.

Come September, I pursued the other program (Dogs for the Disabled) and was interviewed and accepted onto their waiting list. Finally, in December 2000 Caesar arrived! He came trained to do wheelchair assistance and memory based tasks but it wasn’t plain sailing right away. I was a complete novice and after a couple of weeks wanted to send him back as he appeared to be misbehaving and taking advantage right at the very times when I needed him most, on the days when I was having seizures. We persevered and it became evident that Caesar was anticipating my seizures well, but simply didn’t know what to do about an alert. I had to stop telling him off and start praising him, and sure enough a solid alert developed.

Naturally enough, during the first year or so I was on a very fast learning curve, with Caesar and I learning to trust each other as a partnership and for me personally learning to let my barriers down and allow the freedom Caesar brought to expand my comfort zone. Together we saw the transition from my being virtually housebound with poor speech and no confidence to facing life and all its challenges with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.

Something as simple as losing my keys would cause me to panic and literally throw the day into turmoil, by the time I had expended energy finding my keys, I often was too tired to then go out! Caesar carries out an orderly search of the most likely places in my home where I leave the keys, and retrieves them. To him it is all one big game. If they are in a coat pocket or on a high shelf and he cannot reach them, he is trained to sit and face the keys and bark, thus alerting me to their whereabouts.

I used to be hyper vigilant, always looking over my shoulder, and lying awake at night listening to every noise, imagining the worst. I sleep so much better now knowing that Caesar will wake me if anything untoward happens… although just occasionally, I do wish he would understand I don’t need to know about a fox in the garden at 5 am!

Other inevitable positive gains from life with my assistance dog are improved speech, confidence, organization, and establishing and maintaining a daily routine, and involvement within the community. I’d like to share with you a couple of quotes from people who know me…

Neurologist… “This dog has done more for your speech in 12 months than we have managed in years of speech therapy.”

Neighbor… “During the first 18 months you lived in our street, I often wondered if you were agoraphobic. I saw you so little, and when I did see you, having a conversation with you was like walking through thick treacle…slow, sticky and awkward. Nowadays, I see you three or four times a day most days, and on days when I don’t see you, I KNOW it is because you are off doing something exciting with Caesar.”

The change in me must have been apparent to others and also to Dogs for the Disabled, the program Caesar comes from, as they asked me to help in small ways with fundraising and explaining how Caesar had helped me to small groups of people. Things quickly moved on and I became passionate about three main issues: education, disability awareness and access.

For the past four years Caesar and I have taken part in demonstrations for schools, clubs, organizations and at dog events, in particular at Crufts for the last 3 shows. I visit schools on a regular basis giving assemblies for youngsters aged anywhere between five and 18 years. Among other things I explain the important role of assistance dogs in our society and how to behave appropriately towards a partnership in public.

My love of travel has been rekindled during this time and as soon as Caesar had his Pet Passport we were off to Europe - this was a real eye opener with regard to access for assistance dog partnerships.

Every so often we can be thwarted as a partnership by a refusal of access. I became interested in promoting knowledge about assistance dog partnership to access refusers, and rather than immediately threaten to sue, I discovered peaceable success can be achieved in many cases if one educates, negotiates and accommodates issues of real concern, of which there are very few.

Patterns of access refusal have emerged and I have enjoyed the challenge of having a role in the removal of barriers. I have been actively working with Dogs for the Disabled on access issues for the past four years, and occasionally have had the opportunity to help on a more broader basis when ADUK pursue access and education issues. It was particularly enjoyable helping inform the staff of Eurostar, the high speed train company that runs from London to France how to assist passengers using wheelchairs who are also accompanied by a service dog.

Way back in the early years in hospital after my accident, I was fortunate enough to meet Princess Diana when she came to a conference at the medical school of the hospital I was in. She was at that time a Patron of Headway our national brain injury charity. So, it was only natural that on my first trip to London after the opening of her memorial fountain I would go and visit.

I got to the entrance and was asked if Caesar was a Guide Dog, I explained he was a registered assistance dog.
from Dogs for the Disabled and moved to go in. The gatekeeper stopped me and insisted that as he is not a guide dog we could not go in. I explained that in UK law Caesar has the same legal status when working as a working guide dog, but that cut no ice. Eventually, the guy let me in reluctantly as I was causing a queue to build up. When I left he warned me not to return with the dog. I was furious and felt this was not in the spirit of Princess Diana at all. I sat outside and sent a text message to my Member of Parliament, and this is when you really know your MP is listening to you, when they text you back! On her advice, I got all the details and photos needed, and within 6 weeks we had an apology from the Royal Parks Dept., the signage was duly changed and the staff retrained. Result!

In 2004, Caesar and I did some “undercover” investigative journalism to expose the frightful treatment upon trains in south west England, the issue was taken up my MP, national disabled persons organizations, and the local tv station gave us 4 minutes 55 seconds at the top of the news to expose how I (and many other wheelchair users) are expected to travel in the dismal conditions of guards brake van when travelling by train. Afterwards I wondered if it would be awkward travelling from the same station as the staff might be hostile, but they were very supportive and now often joke with me about which bag has the hidden camera in!

I have spoken at Parliamentary level about the benefits of assistance dog partnership, as well as on behalf of The Kennel Club, The Countryside Agency, The Countryside Council for Wales, The Welsh Forestry Commission. More recently I have given speeches for The Kennel Club on responsible dog ownership and access for people with disabilities to the countryside.

In July 2005, I travelled with Caesar to Croatia to help the Croatian Guide Dog and Mobility Association promote their work and assistance dog partnership to not only the disabled community but their whole country via the national television and press. Caesar was a very real part of this work too, assisting with demonstrations and allowing others to see how assistance dogs from western Europe are trained and behave. I was able to learn at first hand the difficulties being experienced in Croatia and the Balkans and helped by giving a workshop to their staff in addition to my main presentation. Subsequently, I have assisted their organization in various ways by providing equipment, contacts and encouraging them in joining ADEu. I have been invited back to Croatia to speak at a national conference for people with disabilities about the benefits of assistance dog partnership.

During the summer and autumn of 2005, I conducted a pan European access survey for assistance dog partnerships for and on behalf of Assistance Dogs Europe (ADEu). This has involved close cooperation from ADEu Board members and representatives from assistance dog programs throughout Europe. I collated the replies and jointly presented the findings with Peter Gorbings, President of ADEu, at the ADEu annual conference in Salzburg in late October 2005.

The survey involved writing a 36 point questionnaire, refining it in order that those whose first language is not English would find it manageable, liaising with the president and Board of ADEu, writing the form based web page for people to fill in their answers, collating the results, liaising with regard to non respondents and drawing overall conclusions to present to conference. Of course, this is just the beginning of this work and not the end! It is to gain an greater insight into the status quo in order to draw up proposals for further work in the future, and gain greater insight into the issues affecting assistance dog partnerships in Europe and help formulate plans to achieve greater access for all partnerships.

There were several surprising details revealed by the survey, notably that Croatia, a small country with 55 guide dogs, 10 therapy dogs and 4 service dogs had the most progressive access law in the whole of Europe. Those working in the field of assistance dogs had their minds focussed on their own access and laws with regard to disability discrimination, and were able to see how they fared against the provision in neighboring countries. It’s an exciting time to be involved in access work, it is a battle where right is on our side and everyone knows we will win eventually; it is just how we go about achieving our goals more quickly.

Having been very involved with access in my own country and in Europe, it was of course natural that I would be interested in access across the U.S. and have followed people use the ADA to back access refusals with regard to assistance dogs online. It is a great pleasure to be here and experience access in the United States at first hand.

I am delighted to be the first British assistance dog partnership to attend this conference with their dog; of course this has been made possible by the work of the International Travel Group in producing the Policy Guidelines for Guide and Other Assistance Dogs when carried by UK airlines.

Many thanks are also due to Michael Osborne of the IAADP Board for securing our tickets from British Airways. Partly at my own choosing, and also upon the advice of Dogs for the Disabled, Caesar and I travelled from London to Washington D.C., where we stayed a few days before we flew out here to San Diego. I think the 8½ hour flight form London to D.C. was far long enough, and still meant that Caesar had to tolerate 11 hours 5 minutes without a toilet opportunity. In D.C. we were met by friends and treated like royalty, we even got to tour the Senate as guests of Senator John Warners’s staff, where we had lunch
on the next table to the chairman of the Alito hearings, we entered the House of Representatives, saw the old Supreme Court and even made it out onto the balcony at the front of the Capitol Building, to savor the amazing views of D.C. normally reserved for Senate staff. I believe I am right in saying that last week Caesar became the first assistance dog to attend dinner in the restaurants of both the British House of Commons Members Dining Room and the Senate dining room! He even got to meet Senator Ted Kennedy’s two Portuguese Water Dogs and shared some time with them and a couple of tennis balls on the lawn!

It was very interesting taking the second stage of our journey to California; we flew from D.C. to San Diego by Jet Blue. This was probably the first opportunity where someone could really challenge our status over access; but at the check in, I presented Caesars Pet Passport and his ID cards from Dogs for the Disabled and all was well, no further questioning and the comment that if only everyone had such clear ID and suitably attired dog then their work would be so much easier. Interesting, huh?

Of course, when travelling any journey, one doesn’t travel in isolation. About the same time Caesar came to live with me, my father became very seriously ill and was taken into hospital, not expected to last the weekend. Much to his delight he defied medical expectations, and several weeks later was allowed home, on the proviso he moved into my single story accessible home. Oxygen was installed and Dad moved in, with the expectation that he had about three months to live. Here we are some five years later, Dad is still with us, Caesar has willingly expanded his job description and works for Dad too, and without really noticing it, my role changed from being the totally dependent one to the one managing and coping as main carer for someone else. Yes, I employ someone to help run the house, I mean who wants to do the washing up anyway?

Of course, this has all been possible because of the love and willingness to please by just one dog, and of course one assistance dog program willing to take a chance and place a dog with me in the first place.

Bit by bit, step by step, we are making a difference in the area of access, just imagine what a difference it would make if every one of us in this room was working in the same direction for the greater good of the whole assistance dog movement.

So that’s our journey so far. I hope your journey will be an equally safe and fulfilling one, and would like to thank you so much for listening and hope that you enjoy the rest of the exciting day IAADP has planned for us.

Approaches to Measuring Behavior and Temperament in Assistance Dogs

By James A. Serpell, PhD, and Marie A. Moore Professor of Humane Ethics & Animal Welfare, University of Pennsylvania, School of Veterinary Medicine

Behavioral or temperament problems of one sort or another represent the most common reason why prospective assistance dogs are released from training programs. Yet compared with health problems, such as hip dysplasia, they have attracted far less attention and research funding. In part, this is because behavior problems tend to be less immediately distressing from an animal welfare perspective than health problems, and therefore demand less immediate remedies. However, another important barrier to addressing temperament issues in the assistance dog world is the lack of consensus among the different experts and organizations regarding the best ways to evaluate and characterize canine behavioral phenotypes.

Although they share essentially the same goal - e.g. the production of ideal canine assistants - organizations that produce assistance dogs have traditionally worked more or less in isolation, each developing its own unique methods for identifying, selecting and training the ‘best’ dogs, and each believing that it is doing a better job of this than the other groups in the field. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a process of ‘balkanization’ in which each organization has evolved its own culture and language for describing canine behavior and training that is not necessarily intelligible to members of other organizations or, for that matter, behavioral scientists. For health problems we have a set of reasonably well-established diagnostic criteria that can be applied to the ailments of any dog belonging to any agency. But when it comes to behavioral problems, we are faced with a wide range of competing definitions and diagnoses, and almost no objective means of judging which of them is the most accurate and reliable.

The primary goal of assistance dog selection and breeding should be to reduce or eliminate behavior/temperament problems either by modifying a dog’s developmental environment and experience, or via genetic selection of sound animals. But before this goal can be attained, the industry must first:

1. Develop appropriate and practical methods for measuring behavioral phenotypes in the assistance dog population.
2. Establish the validity and reliability of these measures, and throw away the ones that are inaccurate, insensitive or unreliable.
3. Standardize these behavioral measures across organizations/agencies so that information can be shared, and meaningful comparisons can be made.

This presentation will describe a unique new program of research sponsored by a consortium of national guide and service dog organizations that seeks to accomplish these continued on page 28...
Approaches to Measuring Behavior

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goals. Specifically our aim is:
• To design and develop practical measures (questionnaires and tests) of canine behavioral phenotypes.
• To determine the reliability and validity of these measures.
• To create a ‘standard’ descriptive classification of canine behavior/temperament based on these measures.
• To identify the main genetic and environmental determinants of variation in behavioral phenotypes.

The C-BARQ questionnaire

The keystone of this research program has been the development of the Canine Behavioral Assessment and Research Questionnaire (C-BARQ). The C-BARQ is a reliable, standardized method for evaluating and screening dogs for the presence and severity of behavioral problems. It is simple to use, takes about 15 minutes to fill out, and can be completed by anyone who is reasonably familiar with the dog’s typical responses to ordinary, day-to-day events and stimuli. The C-BARQ is unique because it is currently the only existing behavioral assessment instrument of its kind to be thoroughly tested for reliability and validity on large samples of dogs of various breeds. This testing process has enabled the identification of eleven distinct temperament factors or traits that are common to the majority of dogs, regardless of breed, age, sex or neuter status:
1. Stranger-directed aggression (a dog’s tendency to respond aggressively or threateningly to strangers approaching or invading the dog’s or owner’s personal space, territory, or home range)
2. Owner-directed aggression (a dog’s tendency to respond aggressively or threateningly to the owner or other members of household when challenged, manhandled, stared at, or stepped over or when approached while in possession of food or objects)
3. Stranger-directed fear (a dog’s tendency to respond fearfully or warily when approached directly by strangers)
4. Nonsocial fear (a dog’s tendency to react fearfully to sudden or loud noises and to unfamiliar objects and situations)
5. Dog-directed fear/agression (a dog’s tendency to respond fearfully or aggressively when approached directly by unfamiliar dogs). NB: In practice this factor can also be broken into two semi-distinct additional factors: dog-directed aggression and dog-directed fear.
6. Separation-related behavior (a dog’s tendency to vocalize or engage in destructive behavior when separated from the owner, often accompanied or preceded by behavioral and autonomic signs of anxiety including restlessness, loss of appetite, trembling, and excessive salivation)
7. Attachment or attention-seeking (a dog’s tendency to maintain close proximity to the owner or other members of household, to solicit affection or attention, and to become agitated when the owner gives attention to third parties)
8. Trainability (a dog’s willingness to attend to the owner, obey simple commands, retrieve objects, respond positively to correction, and ignore distracting stimuli)
9. Chasing (a dog’s tendency to engage in predatory pursuit of cats, birds, and other small animals)
10. Excitability (a dog’s tendency to react strongly to potentially exciting or arousing events, such as going for walks or car trips, doorbells, arrival of visitors, and the owner arriving home)
11. Touch sensitivity (a dog’s tendency to react fearfully to potentially painful procedures, including bathing, grooming, nail-clipping, and veterinary examinations).

With the exception of touch sensitivity, all of these factors were found to be highly reliable (both internally consistent and consistent between raters), and the first seven were found to be valid in the sense that they discriminated well between dogs independently diagnosed as either displaying or not displaying corresponding behavior problems (Hsu & Serpell, 2003). The validity of the remaining four factors could not be assessed by this method. However, based on previous work with guide dogs (Serpell & Hsu, 2001), it is likely that these factors are also valid.

The C-BARQ online

The C-BARQ is now web-based. Assistance dog raisers with internet access can complete the questionnaire online, and the data are automatically stored in an interactive database. This arrangement not only streamlines data collection, but also allows organization administrators immediate access to the results of each dog’s C-BARQ assessments, either for viewing online or as downloadable Excel files.

Evaluation of a 7 week puppy testing program

Many working dog organizations administer puppy tests (or puppy aptitude tests) to their pups when they are about 7-8 weeks old, and may release a proportion of pups at this age if their test scores fall below a certain critical threshold. Because of the relative immaturity of puppies’ neural systems at this age, however, considerable doubts surround the ability of such tests to accurately predict adult temperament and working performance.

Six-month and 12-month C-BARQ data from a population of guide dogs puppy-tested at seven weeks of age enabled statistical comparisons of behavior differences over time in dogs that were either retained or released following puppy-testing. The results indicated that released pups obtained significantly worse scores for a number of C-BARQ factors, specifically: stranger-directed aggression, attachment/attention-seeking and energy at six months; and stranger-directed aggression, dog-directed aggression/fear, touch sensitivity, excitability, attachment/attention-seeking, chasing and energy at 12 months. Conversely, released pups obtained better scores for the trainability factor than retained pups at both six and 12 months of age. Although such findings might tend to suggest that puppy tests are reasonably good at discriminating between successful and unsuccessful puppies, the nature of the behavioral differences between retained and released pups indicate that these effects are probably due to environmental differences between the households rearing these two categories of puppies.
To test this hypothesis, a cohort of puppies that failed the 7-week puppy test will be retained as prospective guide dogs, placed with puppy-raisers and reared in the normal way, and their puppy-raisers will be kept unaware of their test results. C-BARQ assessments of these pups at six and 12 months will be used to determine if the failing pups are still different in behavior when reared in identical circumstances to those that pass the test.

**Development and testing of a standardized In-For-Training (IFT) test.**

Many assistance dog organizations conduct temperament tests of their dogs when they are turned in for final training. At the moment there is little or no consensus among organizations regarding the most effective and informative test formats. The goal of this part of the study is to design a standardized test to be given 1-2 weeks after dogs return to their parent organizations for training. The aim of the test is to measure the dog’s responses to a range of potentially distracting, startling or threatening stimuli, as well as the speed with which they recover ‘normal’ behavior following exposure to such stimuli. The test consists of six components:

1. Response to invasive physical examination.
2. Response to strange, looming object.
3. Response to sudden loud noise.
4. Response to fleeing ‘prey’ item.
5. Response to unfamiliar dog.
6. Response to threatening stranger.

A total of 69 dogs have been run through the test procedure, and their responses have been recorded on videotape. These records have been used to develop a standardized method for scoring dogs’ responses to the different test components. Although the first three components of the test work well, the last three have been difficult to standardize and will require further modification to reduce the variability in test routines. Once a reliable test procedure has been developed, the IFT test will be validated by implementing it at two or more organizations, and then comparing dogs’ test scores with appropriate components of their C-BARQ and final training outcomes.

**Development and testing of a Mid-training Assessment Questionnaire**

Most assistance dog organizations perform some sort of post- or mid-training assessment on their dogs. These assessments tend to be subjective and relatively global, expressing an overall likelihood that a particular dog will or will not become a successful guide or service animal. As a result, detailed information regarding each dog’s individual behavioral strengths and weaknesses may be lost.

The goal of this aspect of the study is to develop a relatively simple itemized questionnaire that can be used by trainers and instructors to quantify assistance dog performance during the training period. With this aim in mind, the five participating organizations were canvassed for the 20 most common behavioral/temperament reasons why dogs failed their training programs. This information was then used to generate a 28-item checklist that incorporates all of these common behavioral reasons for rejection:

**BEHAVIOR**

1. Lacks confidence
2. Loses focus under pressure
3. Fear of strangers
4. Fear of unfamiliar dogs
5. Fear of traffic
6. Fear of stairs
7. Fear of various walking surfaces (slippery floors, gratings, etc)
8. Noise sensitivity
9. Body sensivity; fearful and/or aggressive when groomed, towed, having nails clipped, or being examined by vet
10. Sensitivity to correction
11. Submissive/emotional urination
12. Inability to settle in kennel
13. Separation anxiety
14. Attachment; oversolicitous
15. Aggression towards strangers
16. Aggression towards dogs
17. Protective of space
18. Aggression when challenged, corrected or food/objects taken away
19. Excitable
20. High energy
21. Distraction - dogs
22. Distraction - other
23. Scavenging/coprophagia
24. Response inconsistency
25. Lacks initiative
26. Inappropriate elimination
27. Pulling on leash
28. Barking

The next step will be to convert this checklist into a series of rating scales with clearly defined parameters that can be employed midway through the training period in all five organizations. Eventually it will also be possible to validate the instrument using C-BARQ and IFT data, and final field service outcomes.

**The Future**

We are on schedule to complete all of the primary goals of this project within the next two years. Assuming we are successful in this effort, the outcome should be a reliable package of standardized measures of canine behavior and performance that could be implemented and employed by any assistance dog organization in the world. With such measures in place, the goal of producing the ideal assistance dog may at last become attainable.

*This report was prepared at IAADP’s request by James Serpell, Ph.D. We distributed this report as a handout at IAADP’s Conference and we are sharing it through Partners Forum with our members who could not attend. Please note that it is copyrighted by Dr. Serpell and it may not be reprinted or reproduced by any means for further distribution without the express written permission from its author. Thank you for respecting this notice.*
**Partner Member Benefits**

_Free benefits unless otherwise noted_

### All Members Worldwide
- “Partners Forum” Newsletter
- Emergency Recovery Kit - Bayer funded
- International Help-line [call or write]

### Available in United States
- Sentinel [heartworm preventative] - Novartis
- Advantage or Advantix from Bayer
- Cosequin from Nutramax Laboratories
- Welactin from Nutramax Laboratories
- Denosyl from Nutramax Laboratories
- Avid Microchip - Avid ID System Inc.
- Registration in Pet Trac and/or the AKC Companion Animal Recovery
- Veterinary Care Partnership Grant (eligibility guidelines on website)
- KV Vet Supplies offers 15% off all non-pharmaceutical products
- Veterinary Care Centers - 10% discount
- Ruff Wear toys, products - up to a 50% discount
- Ft. Dodge - vaccine rebate up to $20
- Access & Education brochure

### Available in Canada
- Advantage-Multi from Bayer (heartworm, fleas, other parasites)
- Advantage flea control from Bayer
- Hills’ Prescription Diet food
- Cosequin from Nutramax
- Rebate check for Wyeth vaccines
- Avid Microchip

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

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### 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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### China to have its first seeing-eye-dog

**China Daily, Wednesday, May 17, 2006**

CAPTION: After seeing the Japanese movie “Quill”, you may have been touched by the cute seeing-eye-dog. The good news is that the seeing impaired in China may have their own “Quill” in the near future. Photo: sina.com

A seeing-eye-dog training center was recently established in the coastal city of Dalian.

A Labrador dog named “Shitou”, which means stone, will graduate from the center next month to become China’s first seeing-eye-dog.

Shitou and another five dogs, who have been in training for over six months, are the center’s first batch of graduates. 12 puppies have now also been selected and will enter the training program shortly.

The recent graduates will now be put up for adoption. People with impaired eyesight can fill out an application and wait for approval from the China Disabled Persons’ Federation. The only requirement is that candidates are productive and truly in need of a seeing-eye-dog. They must also be able to afford to raise their new pet, which costs about 300 yuan per month.

Besides working for ordinary disabled people, the dogs will also serve at the 2008 Paralympic Games.


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### ADI Conference

Programs from Japan, Australia, the U.K., Canada and the USA came together for three days of business meetings, committee discussions, workshops and trainer roundtable discussions. A separate track of workshops was held the first day for programs interested in dog breeding.

The ADI member voting programs did not pass the bylaw changes requested by the ADI Board, but after a second meeting, agreed to let the ADI Board continue its work to set up regional ADI organizations under the authority of an international board. ADI of Australia and New Zealand, ADI of Europe and ADI of Asia may now be developed so delegates can be elected to an international governing board, along with delegates from the future ADI of Canada and the USA. Elections to the board of directors were postponed to let the current board members finish their work on this restructuring proposal.

Members were allowed to put up a sign up sheet for topics of interest, such as Service Dogs for Autism. This proved to be a popular alternative to sight-seeing on Saturday afternoon. Break out rooms were assigned to permit interested guests to get together to discuss these topics.
Joan Froling, Chairperson and IAADP’s Delegate to CADO, gave the following report highlighting some of CADO’s activities during 2005 to the Assistance Dogs International Conference attendees on January 22, 2006, at ADI’s request.

The Coalition of Assistance Dog Organizations held its SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING on January 18th in connection with this conference. Better known by its initials as “CADO,” this coalition gives the assistance dog field the ability to speak with one voice when and where this is advantageous for our community.

Delegates from Assistance Dogs International, the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners, Guide Dog Users, Inc. and the Council of U.S. Dog Guide Schools tackle a number of issues as they arise. We believe programs and assistance dog partners should work together whenever legislation or regulatory language is proposed that can affect the rights of disabled persons with assistance dogs.

In the USA, we have a federal civil rights law, the Americans With Disabilities Act, that gives access rights to disabled persons with a task trained service animal. This law is often referred to by its initials, ADA.

A year ago, I asked ADI programs and IAADP members to support CADO’s efforts to persuade the U.S. Department of Justice to revise its definition of service animal. The ADA regulations had finally come up for review.

I’d like to thank those programs and partners which took the time to submit a public comment urging the Department of Justice to consider CADO’s position. CADO would like to see minimum standards of training and behavior adopted for ALL service animals. We want the DOJ to continue to require service animals to be task trained. Since the outset, the special training to perform tasks to mitigate the disability has been the fundamental difference between a legitimate service animal and a pet. We also want the DOJ to clarify that the mere presence of an animal for comfort or personal protection does not constitute a trained task that mitigates a disability.

This year we expect the DOJ to come forth with a Notice of Proposed Rule Making.

When we talked to the officials at the Department of Justice before the CADO meeting, we were informed the DOJ is still debating whether or not the NPRM should include questions and new language about service animals. They know it would be a very hot topic. There is a possibility they will try to avoid the whole issue by not mentioning it. We will keep you informed.

Another issue which CADO member organizations worked on during the year was the issue of how to accommodate assistance dog teams in the plane cabin on domestic flights. The U.S. Department of Transportation published a Notice of Proposed Rule Making 14 months ago with highly objectionable policies regarding travel with a Labrador Retriever size assistance dog in the plane cabin. Thanks to your efforts and IAADP and GDUI, the Department of Transportation was flooded with public comments urging a more humane policy be adopted, one that would accommodate large assistance dogs in the plane cabin. We have kept the pressure up with letters to Congress.

Right before the CADO meeting, IAADP President Ed Eames talked to Bob Ashby, the official who is supposed to write the language for the Final Rule. Mr. Ashby would not release a draft copy of the language. He would only indicate that he’s aware of these concerns and the matter will be addressed in the Final Rule.

It was wonderful how the assistance dog field in the USA came together on this issue. We wish we could tell you the outcome today, but it may be six months or more before the Final Rule is published.

We recently learned the DOT plans to issue a new guidance document on service animals sometime this year. It addresses travel to the U.K. but could affect domestic and international air travel for assistance dog teams in the future. We will take a good hard look at the language, as there will be a short time for Public Comment.

Canada does not have a federal law like ADA. Each province has its own disability related laws. It is my understanding that visitors to Canada with assistance dogs and disabled citizens who rely on hearing or service dogs do not have the same kind of protection on paper that guide dog users receive in some provinces. We do hope to see this situation improve before the end of the decade.

A new danger facing the assistance dog movement in the USA is the legislative agenda of those who want pets to receive the same status as a service animal. Legislation was introduced in the State of Vermont to create a new class of animal, one known as a disability aid animal. Originally the bill wanted to give public access as well as housing access to any assistive or companion animal that provides a service like companionship. All that was needed would be a medical professional or social worker to say the patient would benefit from the animal’s presence in some way. CADO burned a lot of midnight oil, vigorously opposing giving public access rights to pets with phone calls and letters. To make a long story short, we recently learned our efforts did make an impact. The bill will not be coming up for a vote in this particular session. However, it may be back on the table in Vermont before the end of the year. We do suspect it will be introduced in other states if it is succeeds in getting passed in Vermont.

CADO learned of the Vermont legislation only because the Vermont Human Rights Commission happened to call IAADP to ask its opinion. This gave us the opportunity to influence the Commissioners who would vote on whether or not to recommend the legislature pass the bill.

We hope that you programs and partners will alert us to any legislation involving assistance dogs, service animals, therapy animals or emotional support animals in your state or province as soon as you become aware of it. Give ADI, IAADP and other CADO Members the opportunity to educate the legislators or other parties involved as to the assistance dog movement’s concerns and the premium we place on training and temperament testing. Thank you very much.
Second Notice of Election

Partner members interested in nominating themselves to serve a four year term on IAADP’s Board of Directors [including incumbents] must send a biographical resume and two references to the IAADP Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 1326, Sterling Hts., MI 48311 in the USA. Your letter must be postmarked no later than August 15, 2006. (the deadline has been extended due to this being a double issue, coming out later than originally anticipated)

The Nominating Committee will review the resume, check references and choose a slate of nine candidates to recommend to the membership for election to the board. The others will be offered the opportunity to have their name on the ballot too, as per our bylaws. The election will take place when ballot packets are mailed to partner members in the autumn in 2006. The new term starts on January 1, 2007.

Prospective board members must commit to attending the two day Annual Meeting in January, usually held in conjunction with an annual conference. Board members must also attend a three day mid-year board retreat in Michigan at IAADP headquarters, with some travel expenses reimbursed if it would be a financial hardship. Other business is conducted by email and conference calls throughout the year.

IAADP relies on its volunteer board to carry out the work and fundraising necessary to keep IAADP viable, so a willingness to take on some of these responsibilities is more important to IAADP than the length of time someone has been an assistance dog partner. This is an opportunity for someone interested in taking on a leadership role in the assistance dog community or a more active role to nominate themselves.

If you have a question, please call IAADP or email Joan at joan@iaadp.org. Alternatively, you may email one of the other board members whose email addresses are listed on the website and in the print version of the newsletter.

Addresses for Where Do I Send It?

How To Reach Us By E-mail

eames@iaadp.org IAADP President, Ed Eames, Ph. D.
carol@iaadp.org IAADP Vice President, Carol King
toni@iaadp.org IAADP Treasurer, Toni Eames
devon@iaadp.org IAADP Secretary, Devon Wilkins, Canada
joan@iaadp.org IAADP Chairperson, Editor, Joan Froling
jill@iaadp.org IAADP Board Member, Jill Exposito
lynn@iaadp.org IAADP Board Member, Lynn Houston
tanya@iaadp.org IAADP Board Member, Tanya Eversole
wendy@iaadp.org IAADP Board Member, Wendy Morrell
database@iaadp.org Changes of Address; membership Questions
editor@iaadp.org Articles, poems, photos for newsletter, website

New Address & Phone Number for Renewals, Other Membership Matters

IAADP c/o Kathi Duran-Diaz
808 E. Pontiac Way, Fresno CA 93704
Phone: 559-226-3453

Membership Information

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

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

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

International Association of Assistance Dog Partners

% Tanya Eversole
P.O. Box 531086
Cincinnati, OH 45253

Return Service Requested