

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE DOGS

ISSUE 3

FEBRUARY 2010

Our Mission

To improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and others through the use of trained assistance dogs. We work with people to provide assistance dogs matched to their individual needs as well as obedience and skills training.



**Disability
Assistance
DOGS**

SUCCESS STORY

Kara and Randi Graff are the caregivers (although they consider themselves more like parents) of Tanner a Facility Dog trained by Disability Assistance Dogs. Kara is a certified recreational therapist and teams with Tanner at Genesis Hospital in the “In-Patient Rehab” department to facilitate faster patient recovery. Tanner is well known throughout the hospital as his work often takes him outside the walls of the rehab area as he guides patients who need assistance with walking. Tanner also helps patients improve their hand eye coordination by volleying a ball or balloon back and forth (see photo below). Simple tasks like feeding him, brushing him or simply patting his head help these patients regain or improve critical functional skills. Kara calls it “cold nose therapy” and her patients respond quickly to Tanner’s sweet demeanor and gentle touch.

*Partners for Freedom
Partners for Life*

“Dogs are better than humans because they know but do not tell”
Emily Dickinson

See Tanner in action at: www.genesishealth.com/news.video.aspx

The Rehab department at Genesis acquired Tanner via the help of the Genesis Foundation.



Tanner volleys a balloon with a patient

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CEO CORNER

Happy New Year!

We have had an incredible year in 2009. We are looking forward to an even better one in 2010.

We placed 3 working teams in 2009: You read about Kevin and Reese's (DesMoines) in our last newsletter. Kara and Tanner are featured on page 1. Luke (from Davenport) was partnered with Oley in September. We also have 5 new puppies in the program this year who will be entering training in 2010 and partnered late in the year or early 2011.

In Dec Kara and Tanner were featured on Paula Sands Live on KWQC and as part of the Channel 8 10:00 PM Newscast. See both clips on-line at www.kwqc.com and www.wqad.com We held a trivia night fund raiser in October and our second one on January 23rd 2010.

On a sad note, Tamarr my own long time Service Dog partner, companion and friend passed away in September. He served not only myself, but touched the lives of many people and served Disability Assistance Dogs demonstrating Service Dog skills and behavior as ambassador. He is sorely missed. Please see the article on him in this newsletter.

Our next puppies are arriving this month.! We held a "Name the Puppy" contest and winners will be announced on our website soon!

We have many more plans coming up this year. We'll have more trivia event fundraisers throughout the year! We will be moving to a new facility giving us more room for housing dogs in training as well as an office where clients and donors can visit. Thank you for your support, we appreciate everything you do to help us fulfill our mission to improve the lives of people with disabilities through the use of trained assistance dogs.

Once again, Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Rosina Bignall, MS



*"We give dogs time we can spare, space we can spare and love we can spare. And in return, dogs give us their all. It's the best deal man has ever made."
M. Facklam*

February through June 2010 Calendar of Events

Monthly Socialization Outings are held on Saturdays
time varies based on outing—call 563-505-2182 for specifics the Wed prior
February 20th (Southpark Mall)
March 13th (St. Patrick's Day Parade—Davenport)
April 16th & 17th (Garage Sale to benefit Disability Assistance Dogs)
May 8th - (Beaux Arts Fair—Davenport)

Private lessons by appointment
Call 563-505-2182 and talk to Rosina

Monthly Lunches – Meet us for lunch at 12:00 to learn more about our organization!

Feb 11th	Bennigan's	909 Middle Road	Bettendorf, IA
Mar 18th	Waterfront Deli	1020 State St.	Bettendorf, IA
Apr 15th	Chili's	4020 E. 53rd St.	Davenport, IA
May 13th	Café Fresh	1231 5th Avenue	Moline, IL
June 17th	Old Chicago	3030 Utica Ridge Rd	Bettendorf, IA



Meet Eileen and Cooper

Eileen Schull is a new puppy raiser with Disability Assistance Dogs. Eileen is retired and teaches a class in anatomy and physiology at Scott Community College. She happened to run into our board members at HyVee one day when she had already been thinking about getting involved with service dogs. "It was serendipity!"

she says. She had a friend who was blind and received a guide dog. She saw the changes in her friend's life and what a dramatic impact service dogs can have. "I know how valuable they are." She also has worked with Therapy Dogs in the hospitals and sees how well people respond to animals.

Eileen is raising Cooper, a male yellow lab breed by Jeff & Janette Voss at JNJ Kennels. Check out their website at <http://www.jnjkennels.com>



Meet Terri, Julie & Brinkley



Terri is the President Board of Directors for Disability Assistance Dogs and this is her third time as a puppy raiser. Brinkley joined her on the 9th of November and he comes to her from breeder Rich Glenn of Olin, Iowa. Brinkley is the third pup Disability Assistance Dogs has received from Rich and we received a fourth pup on this month. Watch for his picture in the next Newsletter.

Check Rich's website at: (www.glennsgoldenretrievers.com)

Terri has two dogs of her own and they became fast friends with Brinkley. He keeps them active! As the Manager of Sales and Marketing, John Deere Reman, Terri's job involves heavy travel so she and her sister Julie agreed upon a shared puppy raising experience.

Julie and her husband Tim own Camp McClellan Cellars in the East Village of Davenport so Brinkley gets lots of socialization as the store mascot. He gets additional dog socialization with Julie and Tim's two dogs.

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE DOGS

With Tamarr getting older and no longer able to perform his work as he used to, it became clear that it was time to find a new dog for our CEO and Head Trainer, Rosina Bignall. It took a while to find a puppy to fill Tamarr's shoes. This new puppy will not only be Rosina's Service Dog, but will learn the jobs of many other types of Service and other Assistance Dogs as well so that he can be an example and demonstrate the skills these dogs learn.

We finally found Show Me Shepherds in Fulton MO. The breeder, Mary Beth DeBrodie, also runs their own Service Dog program so they were familiar with the qualities we were looking for in a service dog candidate. In August, Rosina traveled to Missouri to look at the puppy and brought home one little male German Shepherd Dog (Merlyn).

Tamarr passed away about a month later hopefully leaving a large impression on the puppy of what his task would be. Merlyn has a lot to learn, but he's doing well, being raised by Rosina. He is already starting to learn some Service Dog tasks, but mostly he's learning the socialization and basic obedience skills just as all the puppies in our program.

Meet Merlyn



RECENT DONATIONS

Our sincere thanks to the following for their recent donations:

Wanda Behrendt (Furry Friends Pet Sitting of Port Byron, IL) on behalf of her pets

Jan Earnest

Jodi Faeth

Robbi Hutchins

Joe Hutter

Rhonda Miller

Joan Schultz

Total Detailing Auto Spa

Gary Woolsey

Robert Zimmerman

Thank-you

Thank-you

Thank-you

We appreciate the donations!

"Tamarr's loyalty to you was no accident of fate, it was natural for both of you and drew its strength from the best each of you could give to the other." - Duke Reiber

Tamarr was a very special dog. He and I have been together for 12 years since I rescued him. The shelter called me up and asked if I wanted him since otherwise he would be euthanized. I could see he was an incredible dog and was surprised his owners had not come to retrieve him. Their loss was my gain. He proved to be even better than I could have imagined. He had the most gentle soul that loved everyone and wanted only the best.

He began training with my pack of dogs and I planned to place him with a client of mine. However, such was not to be. I was offered a job at Guide Dogs for the Blind prior to finishing his training. I placed my other dogs and took him with me to become my own dog.

Upon becoming disabled myself, I retrained him for the skills I needed - reminding me of medication, knocking my hand for attention when I needed it. He learned to alert to my panic attacks and knew when they were coming well before I did. He was able to soothe me and get me through them by keeping me focused on him.

He was an insatiable learner - he learned nearly every skill a service dog does - guide work, hearing work, mobility - as well as agility, carting and anything else I was able to dream up. His favorite toy was a tennis ball which he carried at every opportunity. He would chase it for as long as I would throw it and then settle down to sleep with it. He also enjoyed swimming, carting, long walks and just going places.

Tamarr was one of the main reasons that Disability Assistance Dogs started. People would come to me, asking how they could get a service dog around here. I'd tell them there was no local organization and they would have to apply to one of the national ones. As people found out my background and after much encouragement, I started teaching people who were interested to train their own Service Dogs. We formed a club, then an association and finally Disability Assistance Dogs to help people who needed Service Dogs. He continued to serve as ambassador and example until the day he died.

In June 2009 he turned 14 years old and age was making him weaker and weaker. It became very difficult to go up and down stairs, get in and out of the car, and sometimes even to stand. In August we went to Missouri to choose a replacement puppy to start training. (See Merlyn on pg 4).

I thought he'd have longer to mentor this new puppy. But he was very tired and started letting me know it was time to go. We sent the puppy to stay with a friend for the weekend and spent the days together. We took long walks, went swimming, played quiet games of ball and enjoyed each other's company. Letting him go was the hardest thing I have ever done. On September 21st, 2009, Tamarr passed quietly through the Last Door while I held him in my arms.

You may be familiar with the poem Rainbow Bridge. I look forward to seeing him running toward me and passing over the Rainbow Bridge together.

Please read more about Tamarr and see a video I made from pictures of him at <http://www.tamarr.org/> where I am also raising money to support and train my new Service Dog, Merlyn. Gifts to the Tamarr Memorial Fund are not tax deductible. If you wish to make a tax deductible donation in Tamarr's honor, please do so to Disability Assistance Dogs in his name to help support the training of all our assistance dogs, including Merlyn.

Rosina Bignall



WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

Please check out all the updates to our website and give us feedback!

www.disabilityassistancedogs.org

If you have a website, please link us to yours and send us an email request to link yours to ours.



Would you like to get this newsletter via email?
Send us an email at: INFOADogs@aol.com and say "subscribe to newsletter"
A great way to contribute to our cause is by saving us the postage!

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