

Service Dogs for America

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Neighbors

SDA and James River Correctional Center build beneficial program

Sometimes things just click. Don Redmann, James River Correctional Center (JRCC) warden in Jamestown, N.D., was conducting an audit at a prison in Ohio with a dog training program. He saw the potential for an assistance dog program at JRCC.

He went on the Web and found Service Dogs for America in neighboring Jud, N.D. Redmann called Joni Brandenburg, executive director at Service Dogs for America. Brandenburg knew a good opportunity for the school had come to her doorstep. She and Mitch Doyle, head trainer, both want the dogs to have intense, positive training and this was a new avenue.

The SDA staff was enthusiastic about developing a program to benefit both the school and the inmates at JRCC. SDA staff keeps an eye out for opportunities to build its program of training dogs for people with special needs. Inmates were carefully interviewed by the staff, answering questions they compiled. Those inmates chosen for the program know they have extra responsibilities, along with the opportunity to learn new skills and ultimately help someone in need.

Redmann said when inmates first encountered the dogs the reactions were interesting. Many were excited to see them but others clearly changed their demeanor for the better while interacting with the dogs.

SDA provides on-site training and supervision of the inmates. Inmates were taught how to train the dogs in five basic commands: sit, stay, heel, down and come. Nine inmates rotate in training three dogs so that dogs will not become dependent on any one person. The dogs are with one of the handlers 24 hours a day.

The intense training the JRCC inmates provide means dogs are trained faster, enabling SDA to help more people. It also means the inmates learn how to be around dogs. Redmann had some apprehension about how inmates would



Photo courtesy Jamestown Sun

James River Correctional Center inmates train SDA dogs.

react to having dogs in the facility.

“Many of the inmates say it’s the best thing that’s happened to them. Progress is steady. Inmates are excited about the program. It’s still new but we expect it will help,” Redmann said.

One of the handlers said the atmosphere in any room changes as soon as a dog comes in. The dogs receive positive reinforcement. The hardest thing for many of the inmates is the same as in many homes – no people food for the dogs.

The dogs also need training in public places, something the inmates cannot do. JRCC staff is being trained to take dogs out around Jamestown to expose the dogs to different things. The SDA staff has been bringing dogs to Jamestown and other cities for years, to teach the dogs to adjust to many environments and situations.

Dogs need to be ready to calmly attend a rousing basketball game, sit quietly in a doctor’s office, pick up a dropped object, do seizure alerts, flip on a light switch or offer balance – among many other things. The dogs do much more for people, too, just by being there and being a friend.

Perhaps the dogs knew best, before anyone else, what it is to be a neighbor.

See additional JRCC stories on our Web site at: www.greatplainsdogs.com

“Training is play and play is training.”

‘Puppy Moms’ rule



by **Stephanie Currens, MSUM student**

A “Puppy Mom” provides training for puppies to become service dogs for individuals with disabilities. Training puppies to become service dogs starts when they are born.

Certain criteria such as being healthy, vaccinated and dewormed are some of the requirements for canine mothers before they are bred. X-rays are taken to make sure that the dogs are structurally sound.

Newborn puppies are monitored daily to make sure they are gaining weight. As puppies grow and begin to walk, they have access to shavings to prepare for potty training. At approximately five weeks old, the puppies have soaked food with milk three times a day to prepare for weaning. Puppies are handled gently and are touched all over, including ears, mouth and feet.

At six to seven weeks old, the puppies are given regular baths and brushed daily. Puppies are taught to sit before receiving their food. At seven weeks of age, puppies have the brain waves of an adult. They are able to learn but have short attention spans.

Puppies spend lots of time “underfoot” in the large grooming room. The puppies are under supervision throughout most of the day. If the puppies become rough, the puppy

mom will gently discipline the puppy by holding the scruff of the puppy acting out. The puppy instinctively knows what this discipline means. There are puppy toys and other household items such as spoons and plastic bottles that are used for play. Puppies are taken outside to become accustomed to unfamiliar territory.

For a service dog candidate to become accustomed to noises and movements, they are involved in different activities. Puppies play hide and seek with different items such as chairs or tables. They pair commands with good behavior. One SDA puppy mom, Sharon Raugutt, said “training is play and play is training.” It is important that service dog candidates are observed so the staff knows how they interact with other dogs, humans and siblings. Rules are consistent with these puppies. Puppies and dogs become stressed if there is something that is inconsistent.

Puppy moms observe and log the training process over time. Dogs will tell the puppy mom if they are being cared for and handled appropriately by their behavior. If a dog is placed in foster care, the puppy mom has regular visits to provide training, problem solving and consulting. Puppy moms play a significant role in making sure these dogs are trained to provide excellent care and a better life for individuals who are disabled.

May 2 is the day to come and help

Mark your calendar for May 2 – the annual volunteer work day at Service Dogs for America in Jud. Come early, stay late and enjoy the fun of getting things done. We can accomplish a lot when we work together.

The entire staff is gearing up for the students to arrive this spring and summer so students can receive their service dogs. During that first week in May, the two student apartments need spring cleaning. The main building needs ceiling fans and light fixtures installed, equipment cleaned and general housekeeping. We'll spruce up and clean the flower beds, and plant flowers, trees and shrubs, many donated in memory or honor of a loved one.

This year there are three playpen areas that need to be fenced. Last year everything was measured and poles were placed in the ground before volunteers ran out of daylight. The LaMoure Lions Club will head up completing the fencing project.

Boy Scouts from Jamestown will be building dog houses.

Kids and youth are encouraged to come and help walk dogs, give baths and play with the dogs — it's an exciting day for the dogs, too.

Refreshments and food are provided through the day. And, about 5 p.m., the Davenport Lions Club serves a steak fondue and homemade potato chips for the hard working volunteers.

The following weekend the first student arrives. Only one student, and sometimes family members or other attendants, is at the school at a time so the new student and dog can have one-on-one teaching each day. Students stay here for three weeks, training and bonding with their service dog day and night. Both student and dog stay in one of SDA's two student apartments.



The "Newbies" want to say Thank You!

These apartments are fully furnished and are handicap accessible. Many people and organizations have donated furnishings to these apartments.

The staff and board thank everyone who donates their time, support and gifts to SDA. Every donation says you care about the people we can all help through SDA. We could not be here helping people without you!

The past and soon-to-arrive students at SDA will likely never know your names but they will know your care and service.

A doggone good collaboration

by **Anna Rempfer, MSUM student**

The first time Service Dogs for America and Minnesota State University Moorhead collaborated, it was with pickles; the second involved an artistic endeavor; and the third tells a story of all three.

SDA is a non-profit organization that trains service dogs and matches them with a human partner. SDA's mission "...to assist physically challenged individuals living with disability to gain greater independence and opportunity by use of a trained working assistance dog" made it qualify for student help.

In the fall of 2008, an MSUM public relations class was asked to help raise awareness for the organization by com-

ing up with new campaigns and brochures. The instructor, Liz Conmy, and students took this a step further after realizing they could raise money to help SDA and raise awareness at the same time. Their campaign, "Pickles for Paws," raised more than \$2,100.

In the spring of 2009, Fly Paper, a student-run ad agency at MSUM designed new art for SDA. This involved capturing what the organization represents. The heart is a representation of compassion for people living with disabilities and goes back to the mission statement. The paw is an obvious homage to the dogs.

Another group of students teamed up with SDA to write this newsletter. This



is another class from the spring 2009 semester at MSUM. The learning process extends beyond simply putting words on paper but combining images and words to form a coherent story that represents the organization.

One dog school, one university and three classes of students dedicating time and talent to support the important work of Service Dogs for America.

GREAT PLAINS ASSISTANCE DOGS FOUNDATION GIFTS

SEPTEMBER 2008 – JANUARY 20, 2009

GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF PEOPLE

In Honor Of:

Mr. and Mrs. Dave and Lela Hatley
 Lisa Leirmo
 Mr. and Mrs. Bill and Brenda Acebes
 Joe Camaya and Kay Parks
 Karen, Steve and Danielle Rossman
 Paul and Cil Jarrett
 Melodee and Ron Fenno
 Mertl and Bert Carpenter
 Tess and Kris Carlson
 Bob and Renelle Fenno
 Doug and Kim Schmit
 Rich and Kelly Fenno

Given By:

Jimmie Luna and Bill Smith
 Jimmie Luna and Bill Smith
 Jimmie Luna and Bill Smith
 Jimmie Luna and Bill Smith
 Arelen Kaplan
 Ryan and Annie Keffeler
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne
 Richard Bourne

LOST PET MEMORIAL

To: Ray Hoffman From: Les Larson In Honor Of: Old Muggy

GIFTS RECEIVED IN MEMORY OF PEOPLE

In Memory Of:

Shannon Gilbertson
 Floyd Pfaff
 Walter and Phebe Kirmis
 Louise
 Roy Gilmore
 Ivan Glimore
 Viola Stickler
 Sanfred "Sandy" Ostlund
 Robert Mankoff
 George Jack Wilson
 Luther Holland
 Ervin Miller
 Duane Miller
 Bob and Arlene Kirby Family
 Henry and Kate Stevens
 William Holmes
 LaVerne Hellem
 Marvin Bullinger
 Ervin A Sackmann
 Ed Bocko
 Karen Ritter
 Robert Mankoff
 Ron Schuster Jr.
 Richard Fergein
 David and Susan Gardners

Given By:

Doyle Family
 Edwin Elhard
 Lyle Kirmis
 Clifford Goodrich
 Deloris Kingston
 Deloris Kingston
 Deloris Kingston
 Katherine Tweed
 Mrs. Beverly Mankoff
 Don and Nancy Ellingson
 Don and Nancy Ellingson
 Marjorie Flegel
 Marjorie Flegel
 David and Ronnie Weingert
 Florence Culp
 Mary Carte
 Mary Carte
 Richard Sandness
 Hilda Sackmann
 Ann E Miller
 Patricia Walz
 Beverly Mankoff
 Coralee Schuster
 Irene and Glen Gilmore
 Tom Gardners

OAKES VET MEMORIALS

In Memory Of:

Precious
 Tony
 Mya
 Trixie
 Sheldon
 Cedar
 Casey
 Eddy
 Bootsie
 Winston
 Tony
 Stitch
 Fluffy
 Tasha
 Baron
 Girbaud
 Chance
 Pooch and Chex
 Hobo
 Brutus
 Penny
 Ollie
 Gabby
 PeeWee
 Lucy
 Tabby
 Baily
 Sheldon
 Abner

Given By:

Kathy Erickson
 John Kelly
 Susan Smith
 Wayne Hoff and Family
 Don Patterson
 Wendy Johnson
 George and Jodi Johnson
 Sue Lutgen
 Tamara Johnson
 Jude Peterson Garland
 Julie and Randy Entzminger
 Kerk Flieks
 Onis Poehls
 Shannon & Pat Young
 Walt Abus
 Tim and Linda Christianson
 Terry Anderson and Jeff Anderson
 Dawn and Jerry Dill
 Alan Welker
 Rob and Shari Waterman
 Mary Running
 Doug and Karen Nelson
 Jess and Jason Quandt
 Lynette Monroe
 Becky Wood
 Jeff Wrek
 Dusty Hollingsworth
 Wilma Lloyd c/o Darrel Lloyd
 Walter Ruthmiller

PET MEMORIALS

In Memory Of:

Chancey
 Brutus
 Brian
 Jamie
 Tuffy
 Hooter

Given By:

Nancy Kelly
 Thomas and Diane Jones
 Jordan, Cheryl and Chris Tesar
 Don and Nancy Elingson
 Sheldon and Rene Homola,
 Melissa and Alex, Shawn and Kevin
 Amy Jo, Kim and Don Barnett, Shari LaBine



Thank you Prairie Rose Lions

Prairie Rose Lions gave a "shower" for the apartments. Gifts are welcome and needed to make students comfortable. The North Star Lions have also worked on the apartments and other projects. Thank you to all the clubs who serve.



No chocolate bunnies

by George Heinert, MSUM student

“Everyone got chocolate Easter bunnies, but I got a chocolate puppy!”

The comment was made by Ruth Klemz about her chocolate Labrador retriever, Shelby. The two have been together since Easter 2008. A fundraiser was put together in the Dilworth, Minn., area in order to raise money for Ruth to receive Shelby.

Ruth lives with multiple sclerosis. Her dog, Shelby, is trained to assist her when needed. Shelby can pick objects off the floor and can brace herself in order to help Ruth get up from the chair or off the floor if she were to fall. Shelby helps with balance.

Shelby came from a litter of 13 puppies, of which 11 survived and were trained by SDA.

Shelby loves to lie on her back and get her belly rubbed. She’s quite friendly, mellow and loves shaking hands with people to say hello. She even attends church service with her person on a regular basis.

But her number one priority is Ruth, who Shelby keeps a watchful eye on. “I couldn’t have asked for a better companion, or best friend like Shelby,” said Ruth.



Loved twice over

by Nichole Seitz, MSUM student

Man’s best friend can not only provide someone with company when they are lonely but they can also help someone recover from a seizure. Such is the case for Tammy Hovet and her black Labrador, Geko.

Tammy is no stranger to service dogs and all of the help that they can provide to someone.

Her first dog Blondie, a yellow Labrador, had to be retired after eight years of service. “I was really attached to Blondie. It put a lump in my throat,” said Tammy.

She received Geko in April 2008 and is loving every minute. “I have been really lucky so far. He’s been really good,” said Tammy.

Geko’s responsibilities include picking something up if Tammy drops anything and following her around the house with a watchful eye. He even arrives at her side to help her if she falls.

The life of a service dog isn’t all work though. “He’ll hit my husband up for treats really often,” said Hovet. While her husband will indulge Geko’s appetite, Tammy says she doesn’t offer treats so quickly and both are careful to not give Geko people food.



Annie

Service dogs come from lots of places

Sometimes people wonder where our dogs come from. Many are born at the school, many are donated and many are rescued or from shelters.

A sampling of some of our recent dogs includes chocolate Labrador, Chakka, who was born Nov. 4, donated by Brad Jobe, Rugby, N.D.

Marley was born Nov. 7, a yellow Lab male, he was purchased from Lance Pederson, Valley City, N.D., by the VFW Club in Valley City and donated to us for a service dog. He’ll be ready for 2010-2011.

Annie was born Nov 13, 2008. She’s the yellow Lab female on the left, born at SDA.

Charlie was born on Nov. 17 and is a rescued mix-a-lot hound.

Thank You for checking the appropriate designation of your gift.

___ General Donation ___ Memorial ___ Honorarium ___ Endowment Fund [perpetual fund]

\$_____ Payment enclosed **DO NOT SEND CASH IN THE MAIL**

Your name (PLEASE PRINT)

Gift given in the name of: (if applicable)

Your address (PLEASE PRINT)

Send acknowledgement to: (if applicable)

City State ZIP

City State ZIP

Please bill my credit card in the amount of \$_____
___ VISA ___ MasterCard ___ Discover ___ American Express

Name as it appears on your card

Exp. Date

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We always need:

Pet Toys & Treats; Towels & Wash Cloths; Blankets; Laundry Detergent; Bleach; Paper Towels; Copy Paper; Stamps; Tissues; Trash Bags; Frequent Flyer Miles for Follow-up

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