



Paw Prints

Fall 2008

My First Year with Merlin - Nothing Less Than Magic

By Service Client Akiji Koiwalakai

As an accomplished tennis instructor, father and family man, a second degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do, and a career computer tech, my life changed overnight after I was hit by a truck that rendered me a paraplegic. I had a new life style to deal with - new problems and new challenges. I needed a drastic change of attitude as well as an action plan when it came to being disabled. I didn't want to depend on anyone for my everyday care. I refused to let any conversation veer toward sympathy that my wheelchair status often attracted. At first, I didn't believe that I was disabled and that it was just a temporary setback. But as time went on and the reality of my disability set in, I gained a new respect for people who are disabled. My doctor then suggested that I look into getting a service dog to support me.

I knew that dogs are known for their affection and loyalty, but I also learned **a trained service dog can offer greater independence and self-confidence.** I talked to many people and, after deep thought, I decided to start the process of getting a service dog. I



Akiji and Merlin in the store

learned that some places charge thousands of dollars for an assistance dog. Fortunately, I came across Support Dogs, Inc.'s website which seemed to be the answer to all of my questions and they

didn't charge for their service dogs - just the cost of an application fee and optional supplies. I had many questions. I wondered about the quality of training that a "free" dog received. I was aware that some organizations used rescue dogs but were they more difficult to train? Some organizations start training dogs when they are puppies and the puppies learn early the proper attitude toward working.

I was impressed with what I found out about Support Dogs so I started the application process. The process consisted of an application, medical information, personal references, plus a brief financial review to ensure that I was able to care for a dog. I had to plan for veterinary care and also have an emergency plan in place in the event that either I or the dog should get sick. I sent in a video to Support Dogs about my life,

sharing why I needed a service dog. Once Support Dogs accepted my application, I was put on a waiting list. It was about eight months later that I received a call from SDI asking me to come for training. I needed to make travel and accommodation arrangements and was given enough time to save enough money needed for the trip. Finally, the day came and I



Merlin helping open a door

was on my way to meet my new dog.

My first day at Support Dogs was exciting even though I was a little scared. I was happy to see the care and love that the dogs receive from the staff. The staff was friendly, knowledgeable, and willing to answer any questions that I had. I asked them which dog was going to be mine and their reply was somewhat of a surprise. They told me they didn't know just yet which dog would be placed with me. This wasn't the answer I expected, to say the least. In my mind, I believed that a dog had already been picked out for me.

Next, the trainers and I reviewed my original application, we created a schedule for taking care of the dog, and I learned the commands necessary to manage a service dog. I had the pleasure of working with several dogs to see which one would better suit my needs before it was decided that my teammate would be Merlin.

continued on page 11

Board of Directors**Scot Seabaugh**

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By Robyn James

Two years ago, I presented to the Board of Directors that as members of Assistance Dogs International, all member agencies would need to be accredited by the year 2010. ADI is an international coalition group with members that represent assistance dog training programs with the mission to: establish and promote standards of excellence in all areas of Assistance Dog acquisition, training and partnerships, and to facilitate communication and learning among member organizations. The Board of Directors approved the suggestion that SDI should seek accreditation and turned the oversight of this process over to the Program Committee of the Board of Directors, who would formally report their status to the Board. The Program Committee consisted of Stan Zimmerman, committee chair, Carol Holmes, Jo Reily, Bill Dahlkamp and me.

Accreditation packets were reviewed, timelines were created, and Carol and Jo worked with staff to make sure staff understood the process and what was going to be required of them. The pre-packet that was sent to the ADI Accreditation Committee was prepared and sent in the Spring of 2007. During the summer, mock surveys of the organizational processes were done by the Program Committee and then by the Board of Directors. Finally, in September, 2007 we received our survey date of December 20, 2007.

ADI accreditation assessors conducted an on-site survey of Support Dogs, Inc. on December 20, 2007, which included interviews of SDI staff, volunteers, applicants, and recent graduates. The international group evaluated SDI's programs, administration, facility and commu-

nity activities. The standards that ADI sets are essential to the entire assistance dog industry, and professional standards help ensure that dogs are treated humanely, clients are treated with respect and dignity, and that the training is professional.

On December 27, 2007 SDI successfully met all the professional standards and requirements to achieve full accreditation from Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI). SDI's accreditation remains in effect for five years. I have always believed that we have always held our organization to the highest standards, and I can tell you that we are proud to be recognized for maintaining Assistance Dogs International's standards of excellence in all of our areas.

This has been a huge and fulfilling undertaking for Support Dogs, and I am proud of the Board of Directors and staff for understanding the importance of accreditation from ADI, in addition to pulling together a very successful site visit. What comes next? The Board of Directors has entrusted the Program Committee to ensure the standards of excellence that have been established by SDI in the accreditation process continue. They will monitor the organization's programs, administration, facility and community activities to make certain that SDI continues to meet and exceed the standards established by ADI and the accreditation process.



Announcing New Board and Fundraising Committee

by Rochelle Brandvein and Ann Weinerth

Support Dogs recently announced its Board of Directors, who serve a three-year term. Executive Board members are Scot Seabaugh, attorney at Polsinelli, Shalton, Welte, Suelthaus, P.C., as President; James Woodward, clerk of the court for the U.S. Circuit Clerk, as Vice President; K. Beth Johnson, CFA, a senior consultant at Hammond Associates, as Treasurer; and Jo Reily, a community volunteer, as Secretary.

Board members include Michael Boyle, CPA (Smurfit-Stone); Jeanne Dee, CPA (Kiefer, Bonfanti & Co.); Valerie Dowling (TALX Corporation); Steve Gordon (Renaissance Financial); Mark K. Holly (The Boeing Company); Suzanne Hooper (community volunteer); Connie McKee (Bender, Weltman, Thomas, Perry, & Co., CPAs); Dr. Lisa Ring (dermatologist); Jenny Sontag (Pulaski Bank); Kevin Williams (Waddell & Reed); and Stan Zimmerman (Zimmerman-McDonald Machinery, Inc.)

Additionally, the organization welcomed a new fundraising committee called the "Friends Committee." Friends Committee members include Joe Dolan (Swift Print Communications); Susan Fischer (Experient); Judy Kennedy (BJC Health); Susan Kottler (Travel Masters); Claudia Noe (community volunteer); Tanya Pereira (McCord Design Group); Gigi Strauss-Dieckgraefe (community volunteer); Dr. Brian Dieckgraefe (VAMC); Dom Ribaud (community volunteer); Alice Yawitz (community volunteer). Members-at-Large include Edie P. Kirk, Kristie Hempstead, Elinor Pullman, and Linda Read. The Friends Committee meets once a month at Support Dogs.

The Board of Directors is responsible for governance issues involving the organization while the Friends Committee is charged with increasing funding from existing sources and the development of new ideas. Along with key staff members, both the Friends Committee and Board of Directors will officially meet in December.

Support Dogs Named BBB Accredited Charity

by Robyn James

Support Dogs, Inc. is pleased to announce that we have been named a Better Business Bureau Accredited Charity. What does that mean? The Better Business Bureau serving Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois Charity Information Service evaluates local charities for compliance with the BBB Wise Giving Alliance ("BBB WGA") charity accountability standards ("the Standards"). The BBB WGA is the national charity watchdog affiliated with the BBB system. The charity reports are provided for the same reason it provides business reports, to help the public make informed decisions and encourage ethical behavior. The BBB Charity Review includes the mission, programs, and finances of local charities and evaluates these organizations according to their Standards for Charitable Accountability. Support Dogs is proud to receive the Accredited Charity Seal from the BBB.



In the News...Again!

by Ann Weinerth

This year has been a banner news year for Support Dogs. Here's the short list of what you might have seen, read, or heard.

KSDK Newschannel 5 aired stories about our TOUCH Program, "Raising Indy" at the West Overland Fire Department, and about Volunteer Puppy Raiser Sarah Murphy.

KDHX 88.1 FM VetNet radio interview about assistance dogs for disabled veterans.

The Ladue News ran several stories about SDI, including a wonderful piece with photos that announced us as one of the nine finalists for the Ladue News Charity Awards. The story highlighted our 25 year history and Volunteer Puppy Raiser Carol Holmes.

There was ample press about our newly created Disabled American Veterans Assistance Dog Fund.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch featured our ADI Accreditation, a story on the TOUCH Program at St. Louis Children's Hospital as well as calendar listings of our activities and programs.

Stay tuned for more good news!



Service Dog in Training Dayton (as a puppy)

Development Updates

by Ann Weinerth

Green Dog Project

It's time to go green at SDI and we want you to join us! It's so easy, anyone can do it. It's all about the environment. Do you recycle? We recycle at the office and want to save even more money with your help.

Our next Green Dog project is the mailing list. We mail to over 6,000 households at least six times a year—that's a lot of paper and postage. We mail three newsletters, an invitation, and two appeal letters. In 2009, the USPS will begin charging for returned mail, and we get plenty. Current postage rates for non-profit bulk mail is about 23 cents but with this new regulation will add to our costs because of returned mail. So, how can you help?

By going greener, we want to use email more. Let us know your email address so we can add it to our growing email list. Soon, we will be sending news blasts about SDI upcoming events and more. And, if you use email, we can let you know when the next newsletter is ready for viewing online from our web page. Rest assured, your email will be used for SDI business ONLY! Our goal is to send no more than 2 email blasts a month to constituents.

So, with your help, we'll be saving money by recycling, updating mailing addresses, and soon, email blasts. The savings will get passed on to other important things like dog food and programs. To update your information, call 314/997-2325 or email aweinerth@supportdogs.org.

2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT

We're constantly looking for ways of spending less of your donations on mailings and more on programs. You may have noticed the Annual Report was not included in this newsletter. We're printing a smaller quantity this

year to save postage and paper. The report will be ready in December and available to anyone who requests a copy. Contact us by email or by telephone to request a copy. The Annual Report, just like our newsletter, is available at www.supportdogs.org. We hope you will agree with us that spending more of your donation dollars on programs and less on paper and postage is a good idea! As always, thank you for your continued support!

Win-Win Giving Tips

Prior to going to press, it appeared all was in order for the sale of Anheuser-Busch to InBev and that the sale would create some unique opportunities for shareholders. For instance, if you own any AB stock, you will be subject to a capital gains tax at the time of the sale. If you prepared ahead of time under the direction of your financial planner or tax advisor, you may have looked into creating a Charitable Remainder Trust or Charitable Gift Annuity which might benefit SDI. Did you know that the same tactic is possible with any stock? You can gift stock directly to us as well and your gift to SDI is tax deductible. Be sure to consult your tax advisor or financial planner on your options. If you would like to make a contribution to SDI of stock, please call us at 314/997-2325.

As of Oct. 3, 2008 the \$700 billion economic bailout bill was made into law and included a two-year extension of the IRA Rollover provision. The IRA Rollover provision will be made retroactive to Jan. 1, 2008 and applies to gifts through Dec. 31, 2009. The provision exempts from taxable income any funds transferred ("rolled over") from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a charitable organization. The earlier provision expired at the end of 2007 but it was recently reinstated. The

following limitations apply but, as always, consult your tax advisor:

- Donor must be age 70½ or older.
- The cap on annual IRA rollovers is \$100,000.
- The contribution must be a direct gift to a charity (no planned gifts).

Support Dogs is a cash recipient from the **eScrip Program** with Metro St. Louis area Schnucks stores. With one quick swipe of your Schnucks eScrip Community Card prior to check out, up to 3% of your purchase goes to SDI. To sign up, obtain a card at Schnucks, activate the card by calling the 800 number provided, and swipe the SDI registered card prior to each time you make a purchase at Schnucks (certain purchase restrictions apply - see store for details). Contributions are made to SDI on a monthly basis depending on usage. For example, a \$625 monthly purchase could earn as much as \$10.50 for SDI. Just think of how much money SDI would earn if 250 people participated each year at \$10 a month. Start swiping for SDI each time you shop!

Looking for a fun way to start your holiday shopping and help Support Dogs? Saint Louis Galleria is hosting **The Giving Spree** on Saturday, November 15. Shoppers are encouraged to make a donation to their favorite non-profit (Support Dogs, Inc.) on TheGivingSpree.com web site. Shoppers will then receive a shopping pass to use for special retail offers at Saint Louis Galleria. Cost for this special shopping pass is only a \$5 minimum donation per person and 100% of the donations benefit the charity. So choose SDI and shop away! Be sure to pass this information to your friends and family.

A Meaningful Gift

by Ann Weinerth

Over this past year, two Support Dogs office volunteers and my dear friends, Alice and Claudia, had the misfortune of loosing their beloved pets, Humphrey and Field respectively. Both dogs left after having lived good long lives at my friends' homes as well as providing their now grown children with an immense amount of unconditional love, memories, and comfort. I know exactly how hard it is to let go of a beloved pet. Having grown up in the country, I've had my share of losses due to age or illness or accident. It is never easy no matter the circumstances.

Yet, despite their loss, both of my friends expressed sincere appreciation after each received a personalized Tribute in memory of Humphrey and of Field. Both Alice and Claudia expressed how touched they were when reading the memorial card from SDI's office.

It was shortly after receiving their heartfelt thanks that I really started to pay attention to the many Tributes received by SDI on a daily basis. Many are for the loss of pet; Some are for loved ones who had passed while others acknowledge a milestone like a birthday, retirement, a graduation, or receiving an assistance dog. Tributes are made with an accompanying monetary donation, from \$5 to \$1,000. Even an occasional in-kind contribution fulfilling a wish list request is used as a tribute.

Even though gift giving in the form of a Tribute is a year-round fact-of-life for us, the season of gift giving is fast approaching. We invite your family, coworkers, and contemporaries to consider giving a gift that will touch the heart of its recipient for a long time – a Tribute Gift to Support Dogs in their name. A Tribute Gift not only supports our mission, it is a unique expression of your feelings, appreciation, and love for others.

As the holiday fever begins to take hold of our senses, remember that Support Dogs is here to help fulfill some of the wishes you intend to grant this year. Call us early (314)997-2325 so we can mail your special gift Tribute cards in time for the holidays.

P.S. See page 12 of this newsletter for another great holiday gift idea! Thank you!



YES, I want to make a Tribute with a gift to Support Dogs, Inc. Enclosed is my gift of:

\$50
 \$25
 \$75
 \$100
 \$150
 Other \$ _____

(Please Print)

Name _____ Please charge my: VISA MasterCard

Address _____ Amount: \$ _____

_____ Card # _____

_____ Exp. Date _____ Security code back of card

Email _____ Phone (____) _____

In Memory (Name _____)
 In Honor (Name _____)

(Circle One: Birthday, Anniversary, Other _____)

Is the gift being made in memory/honor of a person or a pet (please circle appropriate)

Please notify the following of this gift:

Name _____

Address _____

(If you would like to notify more than one person, please include that information on separate page and return with form).

Detach and mail completed form along with your gift to SDI, 11645 Lilburn Park Rd., St. Louis, MO 63146.

Your gift is tax deductible and will be used now and throughout the coming year to support the many programs and activities at Support Dogs, Inc. *Thank you!*

TRIBUTES

The Tribute Fund of Support Dogs provides a means of expressing your feelings of gratitude and recognition for service performed, significant anniversaries achieved or any glorious moment. It also offers you the opportunity to remember a loved one, either human or canid, who will always hold a place in your heart.

The following Tributes were received from April 1-June 30 and represent final quarter of the Support Dogs' 2007-2008 fiscal year. Although extensive effort has been made, errors and omissions occasionally do occur. If your donation for the time periods listed has been omitted or misattributed, or if your name is misspelled, please notify us of the error. We gratefully acknowledge the donations received.



Puppy in training learning to be a "stair master"

In Honor

Ms. Suzanne Brown
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Hans Droog
Mr. Elliott O'Reilly

Joe Flegel
The Chod Family Foundation

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Gidcumb
Ms. Susan E. Rainer

Marissa Glantz's Birthday
Mr. Andrew S. Gold
Ms. Lauren Schuver
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Ecker
Ms. Lexi Ecker
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory T. Berg
Ms. Laura Fedder
Ms. Janie Spirtas
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Glantz
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Kwiatek

Mr. Charlie J. Harris, Jr.
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Ms. Christine Hart
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Holly
Ms. Nancy A. Sachar

Carol Holmes
Ms. Carol F. Jones

Suzanne Hooper & Boot
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Howard

Ms. Mavis Kennedy
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Dr. & Mrs. Doug Meadows
Mr. & Mrs. James D. Moffatt

Ms. Katie Herbert Meyer
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Claudia Noe
Mrs. Jean Racowsky

Shirley A. Rapp's Birthday
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Rapp

Lisa B. Ring, M.D.
Mrs. Duffy Brodsky

Mr. Jim Reeves
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Cindy Sonnenschein's Retirement
Craig School

Mr. & Mrs. Francis Stokes
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert W. Littleford

Mr. Jerome Wallach
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Mr. Stanley J. Wallach
USA&M "Best Practice" Seminar

Honorable Michael M. Wolff
USA&M "Best Practice Seminar

In Memory of

August J. Baker, for Father's Day
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Wichmann

Rita Brumm
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas N. O'Donnell

Joseph Cornish
Jose R. Ruano

Marie E. Ernst
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Lindemann
Ms. June A. Schmitt

Warren Glickert
Ms. Sara Glickert

Altha Fern Hammock-Winford
Festus-Crystal Chapter
Conservation Federation of MO#102

Susan Buder Horan
Mr. Robert L. Blanke

Rae Lynn Lalumondier
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Wolfe

Jay Ring
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Bean

William (Bill) Saguto & Zeus
Ms. Patricia A. Hamilton

Steve Schmulbach
Mr. Kevin Pawlow

Sara Wald-Dickler's birthday
Ms. Jessica Wald-Dickler

In Honor of Pets

Boot
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Hooper

Hector & Ophelia
Mr. & Mrs. Gary T. Taryle

Jinx
Reverend & Mrs. Ralph D. Morris

Mona's graduation from TOUCH, birthday,
adoption & CGC
Ms. Julie Otto

Service Dog "Riley" Dowling
Mr. & Mrs. Don Dowling

In Memory of Pets

Boomer (Hudkin)
Ms. Stephanie Samuels

Clifford
Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Schill

Kikko
Mr. Ralph E. Waterman

Lucky
Ms. Susan Curry
Ms. Mary F. McDonough

Miss Sophie Tucker & Miss Sadie Lady
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Weston

Omni (Benecke)
Mr. & Mrs. John Ramsdell

Star
Mr. David G. Dimit

Tug, Griffin, Murphy
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Kersting

Gifts Received April 1 – June 20, 2008

Adams Place
Alphacare
Mr. Bill Anderson
Anonymous
AT&T (Matching Gift)
AT&T United Way
Employee Giving Campaign
Dr. Milagros R. Banton
Mr. & Mrs. Alvery Bartlett
Ms. Diane E. Beaver
Bellerive PTO
Benson Electric Company
Ms. Marie Bergmann
Ms. Barbara Black
Boeing St. Louis –
Employees Community Fund
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Bollinger
Ms. Becky Brady
Mr. Peter N. Breitman
Mr. & Mrs. Bart Brnjac
Ms. Carolyn M. Brown
Ms. Joan Bruggeman
Mr. & Mrs. Jay A. Buck
Mr. Richard J. Burke
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Burt
City of Bridgeton
Mr. Glenn H. Coffey
Mrs. Sally C. Coleman
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M. Colich
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis A. Coogan
Mr. & Mrs. Byron A. Davis
Dr. Steve R. Dedrickson
Designs for Tomorrow, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Dickinson
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dudley
Exchange Club of Belleville
Mr. & Mrs. Austin M. Fine
Mr. Howard Fischer
First Baptist Church of St. John
Ms. Susan A. Fluegel
FM Global Foundation
Mrs. Georgi A. Fox
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Frank
Gap Foundation Gift Match Program
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Georgen
Mr. & Mrs. Frank W. Gervascio
Mr. Angelo Giacini
Girl Scout Council of Eastern Missouri
Girl Scout Council of
Greater St. Louis Troop #1943
Girl Scout Troop #1024
Ms. Joan Glassman
Mr. & Mrs. William Glickert
Ms. Carla Goacher
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Grote
Ms. Laura J. Gys

Mr. & Mrs. Charles P. Hannon
Ms. Carol Harting
Ms. Sherry Hazel
Terry Heady
Ms. Tammy Hicks
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Hooper
Mr. Ronald L. Horstman
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Hume
Mr. & Mrs. Steve James
Ms. Betty Johnson
Ms. Carol Johnson
Ms. Kimberly B. Johnson &
Mr. Joel Northwall
Ms. Jeanne Jourdan
Kaberline Healthcare Informatics
Kevin's New Experience Tours
Ms. Melodie Klenke
Mr. Andrew Kostadine
Ms. Valerie Kroeck
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Lintzenich
Mr. & Mrs. Donald G. Ludwig
Mr. Robert Lupicki
Mr. & Mrs. David McKee
Dr. & Mrs. C. Douglas Meadows
Ms. Betty A. Melby
Mr. & Mrs. Michael T. Meyers
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Miller
Moneta Group Charitable Foundation
Ms. Pam Mundy
Ms. Debra Munro-Kienstra
Mr. Steven J. Nagel
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Noonan
Ms. Betty Jane Okenfuss
Mr. & Mrs. John R. Oldani
Mr. & Mrs. Elliott O'Reilly
Ms. Julie Otto
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis E. Pfaff
Pfizer United Way Campaign
Mr. & Mrs. Frank H. Plescia
Terry Powers
Ms. Helen E. Radina
Mr. Jim Radtke
Ms. Susan E. Rainer
Ms. Linda I. Rands
Ms. Linda Read
Real Mex Restaurants
Mr. Jim Reeves
Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Reid
Mr. & Mrs. Jerre A. Reily
Ms. Jean H. Reizman
C. W. Ritter
Ms. Nancy S. Robbins
Ms. Jeanne Rupp
Ms. Celeste A. Ruwwe
Mr. & Mrs. David Rychelewski

St. Louis Community College
Sappington Parent Teacher Group
Mr. & Mrs. Harland Scheibal
Mr. & Mrs. Scot J. Seabaugh
Ms. Denise Smith
Ms. Theresa Steininger
Ms. Sandra H. Stemmler
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Stevens
Mr. & Mrs. Greg A. Stocker
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Stokes
Ms. Genevieve G. Strauss
Sunnen Products Company
Mrs. Joanne R. Temperato
Tenet Healthcare Foundation
Tops Unlimited
United Way-
Special Distribution Account
United Way of Milwaukee
United Way of Treasure Valley
Variety the Children's Charity of
St. Louis
Mr. Timothy G. Virga
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Virgil
Ms. Kathleen K. Vogt
Wamhoff Financial Planning
Ms. Linda Warner
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Warshaw
WellPoint Associate
Giving Campaign (Matching Gift)
West County Phillips 66
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Williams
Ms. Louise H. Wilson
Ms. Barbara Wintemberg
Woman's Guild of St. Peter's
Episcopal Church
Mr. & Mrs. James G. Woodward
Mr. & Mrs. E. Andrew Zepp



What I Did This Summer

by Diego Brown, API
(Associated Pups International)

Summertime! Long sunny days, squirrels, rabbits, luscious green grass... I love the outdoors! My housemate, Dottie (a black "labradorable") and I take long walks in St. Charles, greeting dog-lovers - and their kids. I like kids. I grew up with six of 'em in my *first* rescue family. So that's why I jazzed when Mom said we'd visit Variety Adventure Camp.

I first met these terrific kids last summer...they're why I became a TOUCH dog! There they were, a



Variety Campers (l. to r.) Willie, Diego, and Jonathan

group of about 35 great kids who all wanted to pet me! Mom said when I moved right into the middle of them, tail swishing and gently greeting each child, she knew that I *HAD* to become an SDI TOUCH dog...I was a natural. All I know is that I loved being around those children, who were so sweet to me.

So *this* summer, when Mom said we'd visit camp again, I was thrilled! *This* time I could greet my young friends as a certified TOUCH dog! I'm always proud to wear my harness, but it was particularly special getting dressed this time!

Off to Creve Coeur Lake! Look...my friends! I was greeted with "Oh, Diego!" and more, rubs, hugs and giggles than you can imagine! We sat under a big shady tree for music class, where we were joined by Willie, John and Jonathan.

I met JT, whom I REALLY loved. It was his first day at camp and he didn't know anyone yet. He was all discombobulated but his counselor brought him to meet me. That's when I learned just how wonderful it is to be a TOUCH dog, and what a difference I could make. As JT petted me, I stood there quietly, absorbing his anxiety. I calmly reassured him that everything was all right and he began to relax.

Then we laid down beside each other in the grass, snuggling and becoming the best of friends. Mom got a picture of me giving JT a kiss, and emailed it to Jan Albus, the Executive Director of Variety, the Children's Charity of St. Louis. Jan asked, "Doesn't this just make your heart sing?" Well, MY heart sure sang!



Diego with camping buddy, JT

The rest of the morning, with JT nearby, the campers and I laughed, sang songs, danced and played rhythm instruments. Around noon Mom and I headed home. I fell asleep right away with happy memories filling my dreams and wagging my tail. Being a TOUCH dog is "*totally awesome!*" And this fall, I can tell my student friends in Wentzville all about camp when they ask, "Hey, Diego! What did YOU do this summer?"

About the author:

Diego, a 4 ½ year-old golden retriever/St. Bernard mix (a "Golden Saint"), is a rescue from Dirk's Fund. He lives with Dottie, a 4 year-old black lab, and two others, Rusty and Sage, all rescues. His humans are Dave Brown and Kathy Lawton Brown. Diego and Kathy are a TOUCH team at Boone Trail Elementary and Wentzville South Middle School, where they visit children with special needs.

PAWS for Reading

By Bill Dahlkamp

With the school year well underway, Support Dogs has been getting more requests than ever from area schools for the PAWS for Reading Program. The popularity of the program is outstanding and the benefits to area students are immeasurable.

At this printing, the PAWS program is active in ten schools in the Metropolitan area, serving almost 300 children in grades 1 through 8. There are more schools in the hall, so to speak, waiting for volunteers to staff classrooms.

The success is outstanding and the children and teachers love the program. As one teacher said, "Not only do the dogs encourage reading in the classroom, it plants the seed in the childrens' minds to go home and read to their own pets."

One PAWS for Reading volunteer, Rick Pourchot, with Newfoundland Olivia, states the children at Miriam School have a list of "Olivia's Rules" that they must go over before each session to ensure Olivia is treated with the same respect as she treats the students.

The schools are so grateful for the PAWS for Reading Program because, not only do the children have a canine classmate, they have a true friend that listens to them and is specifically there to listen to their progress over the school year.



TOUCH Program News

by Bill Dahlkamp

"I just received a lovely voicemail from the director of the Medical Oncology side of Siteman Cancer Center. She indicated her thankfulness for these special canine volunteers and their trainers. She has patients asking to switch their scheduled chemo days to "dog" days. Many thanks to you for leading an incredible organization making an impact on lives every day! Many specific thanks go to Dale Mara with "Roger" and Cheryl Edmiston with "Jack" too."

*-Suzanne Bell, MS, CTRS
Manager Volunteer Services
BJWC - Siteman Cancer Cntr.*

These are the words that everyone involved with the TOUCH Program loves to hear and thankfully hear often - how much the dogs and their handlers mean to the residents and patients in the facilities the program visits.

The TOUCH Program is winding down its year, just ending the fall class and graduating 34 new TOUCH Teams into the program. You may remember from the last newsletter, 2009 will be the 20th anniversary for the TOUCH Program and also when the program

reaches its milestone 1,000th TOUCH Therapy Team to graduate into the program.

With the anniversary, Support Dogs is also in the process of revamping the program, in a manner of speaking. When the new year begins and the Spring 2009 TOUCH class gets underway, the items and skills taught in class will change - change to meet the new climate of therapy work. The TOUCH Program not only caters to hospitals and nursing homes, as it did when it first started. Now, it also includes psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation centers, lock down units, hospice patients, and special school district facilities.

In 2009, the program will be reworked to meet these changes; new students will be taught skills and given information pertinent to today's therapy climate. Skills like visiting with special needs children, better knowledge of infection prevention methods concerning the dogs, and roll playing to meet the diverse patient/resident population the program serves.

Support Dogs will also add seminars and inservice learning opportunities for current handlers to get them up to speed with the changes in the pro-

gram. It will be an exciting and new face for the program.

As 2008 comes to a close, I would like to thank those volunteers who go above and beyond their normal TOUCH duties by helping with temperament evaluations on a continual basis - Karen Bellville, Pat Thayer, JoAnne Hauge, Ann McCormack, Jim Gernigin, Jo Reily, Kathy Hunter, and TOUCH volunteers and SDI staff Cindi Blanke and Gayln Bratcher.

I would also like to send a most gracious thank you to each and every TOUCH team who helps to make the program possible by donating their time and energies to visit well over 25,000 patients, residents, students, and facility staff members at over 70 sites in the St. Louis Metropolitan area. The TOUCH Program has set the standard in the St. Louis area, not only in its teaching methods and integrity, but by its tireless volunteers who give so much of themselves and their dogs to help people in a sometimes less fortunate position as themselves. As Suzanne Bell stated in the quote at the beginning of this article, the TOUCH Program makes "an impact on lives every day"! Thank you everyone and heres to an incredible 2009!

Wanted Volunteers for NEW Kennel Enrichment Program



SDI is starting a new kennel enrichment program. We are looking for 1 - 2 volunteers to help us Monday through Sunday with each of the following areas:

Morning Kennel Chores 7:00 - 9:00 a.m.
Individual Canine Morning Walks 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Playtime 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Individual Canine Afternoon Walks 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Playtime 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Canine Spa Time - Time is flexible

In addition, we are looking for a volunteer to coordinate this group. If you are interested in volunteering for the kennel enrichment program or are interested in the Kennel Enrichment Volunteer Coordinator position (unpaid position), please contact Robyn at 314-997-2325 or rkjames@supportdogs.org.

The Quest for the Best

By Katie Ruiz

Everyone at Support Dogs provides an integral part of placing dogs with individuals with disabilities. That placement comes in a variety of phases - Volunteer Puppy Raiser, staff's Advanced Training sessions and lastly, Team Training with a client. Before any of this can be accomplished, we begin by selecting appropriate puppies. Support Dogs works with breeders that provide a selection from their kennels that best match our program needs. It's up to staff to choose which puppies will likely grow into well rounded, socialized, skilled, and loving dogs.

When we need pups, we go to the breeders' kennels located across Missouri and into neighboring states. We may have to take a river ferry



Katie, Paige Snyder, Gayln, and breeder Roger Sievers

ride, drive past wheat fields and through small towns deep in the countryside to reach our destination. Other kennels are located in residential neighborhoods with freshly cut lawns and rolling land for the dogs to run. Driving to the various kennels is an adventure in and of itself but one part that I especially look forward to is when we first arrive and are greeted by five or six dogs. Little beats a greeting by a pack of friendly tail-wagging retrievers. Once we've made our way through the sea of dogs, there are even more eager and welcoming faces at the kennel.

There we sit down and chat with the breeders about Support Dogs, how many placements have taken place, and perhaps discuss how one of their own is now faring in the program. Eventually the breeder will share with us news of the latest litter

out of the parent, sister, or other relative of dogs that are currently in SDI programs. Our talks turn into walks around the kennel or yard where different pups are pointed out as someone's mother or brother, or even a recent show champion. We



Puppies checking out their surroundings

are made aware of dogs that might be potentials for our programs. As we continue the walking tour, we try to remember all of this information including looks, behaviors and where in the kennel the dogs were seen. The breeders know we're anxious to get started with our evaluations and usually wander off to some unfinished chore.

The pups to be evaluated tend to be off leash initially, being social with all the new people in their environment. This is a great opportunity to see first-hand how puppies follow us and interact with others in the yard. The rest of test is done while on leash and includes a sight and sound startle, a play retrieve, physical handling (i.e. touching feet, pressured petting) and some movement exercises while on leash.



"Pick Me! Pick Me!"

After evaluating many puppies, we discuss our notes and let the breeder know of our decision. Depending on the needs of the organization and program goals, an agreement is made with the breeder as to how many puppies are taken to begin life as an assistance dog, or pup, in training.

The car ride home is usually an eventful one. Some of the dogs have never ridden in a car or been away from the kennel. There are

those that lament leaving home and howl their opinions while others find the ride soothing and snooze the time away. Regardless of the ride, most tend to be cautious when they arrive at Support Dogs partially due to the mass of people and multiple staring eyes that greet them in the office and kennel.

As staff, we do our best to select



Armful of love

the most appropriate dog for our programs. While not all dogs succeed in our pro-

gram, they are chosen from the best, appropriately evaluated, given the best homes to grow up and learn in, and, above all, are loved through each stage of their journey. What more could these specially selected dogs ask for!

SDI Wish List!!

Kennel/Canine Care Needs

Laundry detergent
Garbage bags
Paper towels (lots!)
All size PLAIN Milkbone biscuits
White Nylabones

Kennel Enrichment

Little Tikes Large Cube w/slide
Peanut Butter
Lavendar Plug-ins

Office/Administrative Needs

20#, 8 1/2 x 11 copy paper
6 ft. and/or 8 ft. folding tables
Avery #5160 Mailing labels
Avery Postage Meter Labels #05288
Padded #4 envelopes
Toilet paper
Sewing Machine

Training Department

Shallow (4-5" deep) plastic tubs (i.e. Rubbermaid) with/ without lids

Gently used small or medium plush animals (no Beanie Baby style)

continued from cover

Merlin was the youngest and had lots of energy. We worked well together and bonded quickly. Thanks to the support and training that the staff provided, I soon started to feel more confident in my training and with Merlin. Merlin has been trained to carry my bags, ride in an elevator, and hold open a heavy door so that I may enter the building. I learned to discourage



Service Dog Merlin

people from petting Merlin while he is working. It can distract a service dog from performing his commands. It is a challenge sometimes because people are naturally curious and attracted to dogs.

Toward the end of the second week of Team Training, Merlin was allowed to spend the night with me. This is when I experienced my first challenge of having a service dog in public. The hotel said I was not allowed to have a (service) dog in the building. I mentioned the problem to Support Dogs' Program Director Bill Dahlkamp. He contacted the hotel and explained the ADA rules and laws concerning service dogs. After that, I had no problem coming and going with Merlin. In fact, after Bill finished speaking with the hotel, I believe that they would never challenge anyone with a service dog again. On his final testing, Merlin passed with flying colors. The staff was excited that we worked so well together.

It was graduation day and many people were there to celebrate including Merlin's Volunteer Puppy Raiser, Debbe Goldie. I was able to meet the person who raised Merlin and he must have remembered her by the way he wagged his tail. I thanked Debbe for doing such a

great job with Merlin. When my name was announced by Executive Director Robyn James, I received my certificate, knowing that Merlin and I were now an official team. We had made it!

Once home, Merlin and I began to adjust to our new life. No longer could I sleep in or just think about myself. Merlin wasn't just a companion- Merlin was a part of my life now. I began to understand his personality and realized that Merlin "talks" to me in his own way. Yet, when it comes to work, Merlin is a totally different dog. He stays close to my side at all times and is quick to respond to my commands. He looks after my needs and avoids distractions. Merlin accompanies me everywhere I go- work, shopping, and doctor visits.

Upon returning home from St. Louis, one of the first things I did was to find Merlin a doctor of his own. I looked at many veterinary clinics and finally decided on Dr. Mike. Merlin has regular checkups because it is important to keep him healthy so he can continue to assist my needs. One day during play time, Merlin jumped off the bed and couldn't put any weight on his left leg. Dr. Mike said Merlin had to slow down over the next two weeks



Dr. Mike with Merlin

and was to be off his feet. After some down time, Merlin was back to being his playful self, only we're a

little more careful about getting too excited.

I now work for an Internet company called Disaboom which is an online community for the disabled (www.disaboom.com). We support the rights of the disabled by edifying the ADA laws plus provide resources

and information to help the disabled. Everyone at the office loves that I bring Merlin to work. Merlin has a nice spot under my desk where I keep a bowl of fresh water. However, my third floor office posed a problem one day when a fire alarm sounded in the building. Naturally, the elevators shut down and I was unable to leave the building. I had to wait at the top of the stairs for help while watching Merlin wince from the loud fire alarm noise. Merlin wasn't trained to handle fire alarms that I knew of, so this was all new for him. Overall, he did well and didn't even want to run away. He stayed at my



Akiji and Merlin

side the whole time until two coworkers came to my aide. They carried me and my chair down to the ground level.

Despite the mad rush of people trying to leave via the stairs, Merlin continued to look out for my well-being while staying at my side.

These are a few of the wonderful and incredible events that have happened during our first year together. Merlin's birthday was last August and he is now 2 years old. Merlin has helped me to become fully independent and has magically uplifted my spirit toward life. Because of Merlin, I am a better person.

In 2007, we placed 19 Service Dogs like Merlin with individuals. Service Dogs cost SDI approximately \$15,000 each to raise and train. Because of the generous support of our donors, we can continue to place service dogs at no cost to our clients.

Hey Rupert...

Advice from the SDI Greeter

If you would like to ask Rupert a question, please send to rupert@supportdogs.org



We're thinking of surprising the kids this holiday season with a brand new puppy! What are your thoughts on this type of gift? Ms. Holly Day

Dear Holly: While there's nothing as cute and cuddly as a new puppy....and there's nothing as cute as the look on the kids faces when they see this bundle of fur....expertly speaking, this is one of the worst thought-out gifts that people give during the holiday season!

The problem is that people do not think long term and that the cute little puppy will grow to be an adult dog. And really - do you want to be taking the puppy outside to do its business when it is snowing and 10 degrees?

The decision to get a puppy should not be made on a whim. Discuss the idea with your entire human family first before adding this four-legged member. You owe it to everyone, especially the pup.

If you do decide to get a family dog, remember Support Dogs' obedience classes. The following is a list of classes offered on a regular basis:

Puppy Class: Duration 6 weeks and designed for pups 9-20 weeks. Socialization, basic cues, grooming, and behavior. Builds confidence plus addresses any problem behavior.

Beginning Adolescent Class:

Duration 6 weeks and designed for dogs 20+ weeks with no previous training. Learn basic cues, behavior, and leadership with positive reinforcement.

Intermediate Adolescent Class:

Duration 6 weeks and designed for dogs 20+ weeks with puppy training or previous class experience. Basic cues, behavior, leadership with positive reinforcement with distractions, duration, and distance.

Tricks Class: Duration 6 weeks and designed for dogs 20+ weeks with puppy or adolescent training. You will learn to teach your dog these positive reinforcement tricks: play dead, bow, balance a cookie on the nose, find it, circles, crawl, and retrieves.

Patio/Outdoor Dining: Duration 6 weeks and designed for dogs 20+ weeks with previous class experience. Go on field trips to different outdoor restaurants (weather permitting) and learn to manage your dog while dining. We will teach you and your dog how to greet people in public and how to get your dog to ignore dropped food.

For information, call 314-997-2325 or visit supportdogs.org.

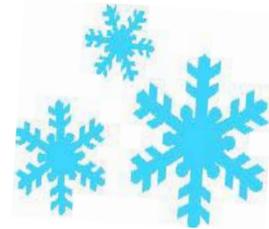
Holiday Open House December 2!

By Ann Weinerth

Last year we hosted a Support Dogs holiday get-together with such great applause that we decided to invite everyone over to come see our facility again on Tuesday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A special highlight this year will be a photo-op with Santa! The fee is \$5 per sitting (pet or human). There will be plenty of complimentary refreshments, kennel tours, enrichment activities with the dogs, demonstrations, and holiday cheer! Of course, our official greeter, Rupert, will be there and you can say "Hey Rupert!"

Bring your family, friends, and co-workers to Support Dogs Holiday Open House for a special holiday experience. We're looking forward to seeing you Tuesday, December 2.



Chances Still Available! Gas and Grocery Raffle

\$25 per ticket - Only 1,000 will be sold

Ticket sales will end on Friday, November 14, 2008

Drawing will be held Friday, November 21, 2008

1st Prize: \$1,000 Gas Card & \$1,000 Grocery Card (winner's choice)

2nd Prize: \$500 Gas Card & \$500 Grocery Card (winner's choice)

To purchase a ticket, call 314/997-2325

In the Community

by Bill Dahlkamp

Each year, a large part of the Support Dogs programming is dedicated to educational presentations within the community. Volunteers and staff come together to educate the public about Support Dogs as well as dog bite prevention to elementary-age children.

From January to September, 2008, Support Dogs staff and volunteers participated in 63 presentations and 11 fairs which included businesses, elementary schools, the MS Walk, Nestle' Purina PetCare, the summer LARK Program through the Girl Scout Council, and various Rotary Clubs throughout the metropolitan region, just to name a few. As a United Way Agency, Support Dogs is very busy during the months of September and October helping with fundraising efforts on behalf of the United Way. In the month of September alone, Support Dogs participated in 10 campaign rallies, speaking to over 1,750 people, encouraging area employees to donate to the United Way.

In total, Support Dogs spoke directly to 4,504 adults and 3,003 elementary children, which does not include the thousands who learned of our services through fairs, walks, and camps. Through September, volunteers and staff gave 442 hours to the Education Program. With October well underway, we expect to reach many more people, spending many more hours educating those in the community. Thanks to everyone who helps out with this huge undertaking!



Trivia Night & Silent Auction

by Ann Weinerth

Each August, Support Dogs hosts its Annual Trivia Night. Typically it's in the dog days of summer- hot and humid. This year was an exception because of the very pleasant weather which contributed to light-heartedness of the sell-out crowd.

Held at CBC High School, the room was wall to wall trivia players. Setup began Friday afternoon with delivery



The crowds roll in

of over 50 cases of beer AND soda, plus 100 auction items to CBC. On

Saturday morning volunteers helped set up the event. Guests arrived promptly at 6 pm and were greeted with smiles and opportunities to bid on auction items. Throughout the night, volunteers sold Gas 'n Grocery and Chinese Take Out raffle tickets, calendars, and served complimentary beverages. We again hosted an after-hours Trivia with over 40 people in attendance playing 3 more lightning rounds of trivia.

The event raised a much-needed \$23,000. We want to thank the silent auction donors, those who secured beverages for us and the many volunteers, staff members (Robyn James, Katie Ruiz & Mulligan, Nadine Wenig, Sarah Martin, Gayln Bratcher, Cindi Blanke, Amy Woolston, Janice



The James' table thinking real hard...

Brennan and of course, Bill Dahlkamp) plus the many participants who made the evening fun and profitable. Plan to join us in 2009.



Janice Brennan and Cindi Lewis

Thank you Trivia Night volunteers!

Allan & Jo Anne Travis
 Bob Eike
 Carol Holmes
 Chip Bratcher
 Cindi Lewis
 Claudia & Bob Noe
 Katie Conklin
 Debbie Spradling
 Debbie Wolff
 Denise Ford
 Donna & Bob Mills & Kamia & Dante
 Doug Jones
 Edie & David Kirk
 Eva Marsh
 Frank Scheithauer
 Gai Kranz
 Gene McMahon
 Jo Reily
 Julie Josias
 Karen & Ken Clark
 Karen Bellville
 Kathleen Williams
 Kathy Cooper
 Laura Bissonnette
 Lynn Sahrman
 Lynn Mobley
 Madonna Walker
 Margaret & Norman Pereira
 Marge & Larry Bratcher
 Mark Holly
 Patty Zupal
 Reggie Gahr
 Rose Mary Holmes
 Scott Fletcher
 Shelley Sieveking
 Stephanie Bockstruck
 Susan Fischer
 Susan Kottler
 Tammy Albrecht
 Tanya Pereira
 Tarrah Scherbring
 Mark Thibodeau
 Ellen Thibodeau
 (we apologize if we missed anyone)

Thank you donors and contributors!

Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.
 White Rocket Wine Company
 Butler's Pantry
 Jill Jackson
 Carol Holmes
 Pepsi Americas – Gateway Division



Support Dogs, Inc.

Support Dogs, Inc. 2009 Wall Calendar Order Form

To place an order, please complete the form in its entirety and return with your payment to:

Support Dogs, Inc. Attn: Calendar
11645 Lilburn Park Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63146



All proceeds will directly benefit the programs of Support Dogs, Inc.

I am ordering _____ calendars at \$ _____ each \$ _____
 Please mail my order. Shipping & handling \$ _____
 I would like to pick my order up at the office _____
 Please accept this tax deductible donation
 in addition to my calendar purchase \$ _____
 Total \$ _____

Number of Calendars
 1-9 Calendars \$15 each
 10+ Calendars \$13.50 each

Shipping and Handling
 1-4 calendars \$3.25 per order
 5-9 calendars \$7.75 per order
 10+ calendars please call for rates

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Phone (H): _____ (W) _____
 Email: _____

Additional Donations Are Welcome!

Any donation made that is separate from a calendar purchase is 100 percent tax deductible as allowed by law!

_____ I am enclosing my check payable to Support Dogs, Inc.
 _____ Please charge my credit card

Card Type (Please Circle): Visa MasterCard
 Card#: _____
 Exp: _____ 3 digit security code (back of card): _____

With every \$15 calendar purchase, \$10 is tax deductible
With every \$13.50 calendar purchase, \$8.50 is tax deductible

Because They Served

by Ann Weinerth

Quite by accident! That's how I describe meeting Pat Kessler from Amvets Post 55 Ladies Auxiliary. Last spring, SDI participated at the VA's 1st Annual "Welcome Home Ceremony" at Soldier's Memorial. Carol Holmes with Green Bean and me with Mitzi setup the SDI booth



Ann Weinerth, Mitzi, and Jan Ramsey

along with 75 booths that focused on services for active military and veterans. SDI's booth was the

most unique as it offered disabled American veterans an opportunity to learn how to regain independence with an assistance dog. Mitzi demonstrated how a service dog supports a disabled person by retrieving dropped items and rising to a table. Hearing dog Green Bean demonstrated how he alerts a deaf person to a knock at the door or even a baby crying.

Pat Kessler from Amvets Post 55 Ladies Auxiliary visited our booth, introducing us to another Pat (Collins) from Wounded Warriors, a VA agency that supports returning wounded and their families. The three groups converged in front of Soldier's Memorial in what was to become the beginning of SDI's efforts to place assistance dogs with disabled American veterans. It just so happened that Wounded Warriors knew of a disabled veteran who desired a service dog and the ladies of Amvets Post 55 had been raising money for a service dog agency. As a result, Support Dogs established the Disabled American Veterans Assistance Dog Fund where contributions to the fund might come in the form of tributes or memorials or even direct donations from veterans in our community.

We're excited to say that since that meeting, we received our first official disabled American veteran client application. Amvets Post 55 Ladies Auxiliary provided the money for the application which is now being processed. Additionally, the same Ladies Auxiliary donated \$1,200 to the new SDI fund and plans to host other fundraising events for us in the future.

You might be interested to know that they will co-host a Veterans Open House at Support Dogs, Inc. on Tuesday, November 18 plus they are having a Christmas Bazaar in their north county neighborhood on December 13 to benefit SDI. We encourage crafters to consider participating or even donating items for SDI to sell at the bazaar. Support Dogs will be accepting a limited number of craft items, priced to sell at our booth, through December 8. Your in-kind contribution of craft items would be tax deductible (check with your tax advisor) and we'll enjoy the benefits of your donation at the bazaar. Call 314/997-2325 for details.

We look forward to working with both veterans organizations in the future. We greatly appreciate their efforts to support us while we support the troops in our own very special way.



Silver Anniversary Celebration

by Ann Weinerth

Step onto the red carpet and into the spotlight for your screen test! Celebrate Support Dogs Silver Anniversary at its annual tacky-chic party with a salute to the silver screen Saturday, March 28, 2009.

The fun begins at 6:30pm at the Kemp Auto Museum in Chesterfield and includes a "Puparazzi" Live Auction and Silent "Movie" Auction featuring to-die-for items; dancing to the tunes of *The Spectrum Band*; and our special "Woofgang Pack" catered supper that's sure to rival the Academy's famous Governor's Ball. The evening includes specialty drink bar and other complimentary beverages (while supplies last; must be 21 years of age with a valid state ID). And, of course, we'll have our version of that famous gold statue-the Tacky Dogscar Award for the King and Queen of Tacky.

Sponsorships are available from \$2,000-\$3,000 and include award winning amenities. There's still time to reserve your own VITT place (Very Important Tacky Table) for \$1,199 (table seats eight guests). And, in celebration of our 25th Silver Anniversary, individual reservations are available this year for \$79 per person. That's \$20.99 off the regular tacky price of \$99.99 but you must reserve your seat by March 10 to take advantage of this special offer. Make your reservation today for this exciting celebration by calling 314/997-2325.

Join the fun and help celebrate 25 years of excellence at the Tacky Ball 2009. It's YOUR night to walk the red carpet dressed to the nines, smiling for the puparazzi!



Support Dogs, Inc.
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St. Louis, MO 63146
314-997-2325
www.supportdogs.org

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DATED MATERIAL

TO DO LIST AND SAVE THE DATE!

DO IT TODAY- If you wish to modify our communications with you, email aweinerth@supportdogs.org or call (314)997-2325 with your request. We appreciate your support.

Tuesday, November 18, 2008 Veterans Open House at Support Dogs - 10a - 4p (Refreshments served)
Co-hosted by Amvets Post 55 Ladies Auxiliary

Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28, 2008 SDI office closed in observance of Thanksgiving

Tuesday, December 2, 2008 Holiday Open House 10a - 4p at Support Dogs (Refreshments served)
SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY! Photo with Santa (1p - 4p) for pets, kids, families! \$5 per sitting

Saturday, December 13, 2008 Christmas Bazaar hosted by Amvets Post 55 Ladies Auxiliary 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
at Bell-Ridge City Hall, 8920 Natural Bridge Road. All proceeds to benefit Support Dogs.
For details and location call SDI (314)997-2325 or Jan Ramsey (314)560-0077

Wednesday-Friday, December 24, 25, & 26, 2008 SDI office closed in observance of Christmas Holiday

Thursday-Friday, January 1-2, 2009 SDI office closed in observance of New Year's Holiday

Saturday, March 28, 2009 Tacky Ball 2009 Hooray for Doggiehood!
6:30p – 11p at Kemp Auto Museum in Chesterfield

Saturday, August 15, 2009, Trivia Night & Silent Auction - 6p – Midnight at CBC High School at Hwy. 40 & Mason Rd.