



Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound

NEWS

September 2017

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ADC's Next Meeting will be held in October 2017

ADC's October meeting will take place at TACID on Oct. 28, 2017. We'll see you there at 12:00. This is our annual meeting and we hope you join us to plan for 2018.

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The Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Our tax ID# is 91-2080563.

WA Secretary of State Charities Program Registration Number is 24995

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Website

<http://www.assisteddogclub.org>

E-Mail Address

assist_dog_club@hotmail.com

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2522 N. Proctor Street, #459
Tacoma, WA 98406

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Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound Board of Directors

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Jeanne Hampl

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Editor's Corner

by Jack Pearce-Droge

Rachel Wright of Summit Veterinary Referral Center joined us at our September meeting and talked with us about a very serious subject, dealing with the loss of our partners in life. I have lost two assistant dogs and it is a very difficult situation. This is something that none of us wish to deal with but one that is inescapable.



We might not feel the dramatic life change that this loss causes us to face right away. But the first time that we have difficulty picking up an object that we've dropped, socks or gloves that need to be removed, open or close a door or so many other tasks that our assistance dogs perform for us every day we are shocked by the fact that to

some degree, we have lost our independence. Rachel's presentation was not only directly connected to this difficult topic but she was able to engage our members, helping all of us to process the many aspects of this very tough subject.

The Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound is now in its planning stage for next year's activities and discussions. This is where we discuss the types of things we think would help our SDs while they are out and about with their human partners. This helps to make our annual meeting a discussion of ideas and collaboration. We are encouraging all of you to join us.

It is also the time for the planning of our Holiday Party, once again to be held at The INN at Gig Harbor. This year has been moving along so quickly and it might be helpful to think of some new and different things for us to do.

Activities and meetings will be held at TACID unless otherwise noted.

TACID's address is:

6315 S 19th St, Tacoma, Washington 98466

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound is to provide a safe, supportive, educational environment for persons with disabilities partnered with assistance dogs and to provide educational opportunities for the local business community and the general public, including persons dedicated to the raising and training of assistance dogs

Retirement and Successor Dogs

By Jeanne Hampl

Most of us look forward to retiring. If we have planned well retirement gives us a chance to pursue old and new interests, work when we choose as well as volunteering our time with charitable organizations. We



hopefully will retire when our health still allows us to enjoy a physically and mentally active life.

When I speak to clients about retiring their service dogs they defend their right to still use their dog because it is still healthy, as long as it takes its medication, wants to work or rather wants to be with its person because it is the only life it has know. Inevitably the dog is always at the veterinarian for lameness, is pushing ten years old, is overweight and should be retired.

So why is the decision to retire a service dog such a difficult one? The purpose of a service dog is to increase a person with a disability's independence. Service dogs perform tasks that a person with a disability has difficulty performing without assistance. People who choose to use service dogs as a medical assistive devices need to keep in place all the alternatives to a working dog. They need to regularly practice life without their dog. On the other hand they need to

allow their dog to practice life without being attached to a human.

Retiring service dogs are plagued with separation anxiety. They can't understand why after 8 years they are suddenly being left behind. But the same dog given regular days or nights off, and sleepovers at a friend's would quickly get use to working less and enjoying the peace and quiet of retirement.

Being a service dog is a stressful job. First a dog has to be willing to give up the natural instinct of following a strong healthy self-confident leader. The dog has to be willing to follow and work for a disabled person. The dog is constantly exposed to a high level of visual and auditory stimulus. It is not allowed to appropriately meet and greet dogs that it encounters on its daily rounds. It is not allowed to mark territory or to give verbal warnings. The average service dog does not get enough exercise and seldom gets to run and play with other dogs.

All too often the decision to retire occurs when the dog is no longer able to work because of poor health, vision or hearing problems or temperament problems secondary to the stress of being a service dog. The client has not prepared for retirement but is rather faced with a crisis. Where to get a new dog? What to do with the retired dog?

The decision of whether to re-home the retired dog or to keep the dog while training with a new dog is not an easy one. In the old guide dog model dogs were retired and re-homed before a new dog was placed. Programs had clients lined up to provide homes for retiring dogs. Clients frequently shy away from applying to a program that will not place a trained service dog in a home with other animals.

Retirement and Successor Dogs (Continued on page 3.)

Retirement and Successor Dogs (Continued from page 2)

By Jeanne Hampf

Owner trainers frequently place retiring dogs with family members or friends. Persons with disabilities who do not own their own home will have to abide by rental agreements. Service dogs are exempt from pet clauses but retired dogs or dogs in training may not be depending on the state laws.

Some persons with disabilities choose to overlap dogs, training a new dog while slowly retiring the older dog. The competition that occurs in those settings can have detrimental effects on both dogs. Neither dog receives sufficient one on one time. Clients have frequently felt that their second dogs did not receive sufficient training citing lack of time and stamina to devote to the new dog.

Handlers will say it is wonderful that they have such a routine their old service dog knows exactly what they need. The new dog then appears to be untrained, confused, stubborn or just plain bad because the poor dog doesn't know what their handler wants it to do. I was working with a new team and the handler kept forgetting to tell the new dog to stay at the top of her lift. It was quite obvious that both the handler and the dog were getting very frustrated with the lesson. When I pointed out that a "Stay" cue would be helpful the handler realized that she no longer had to tell her old dog to stay. So now not only does the handler have to teach the new dog her routine but she also has to constantly remind herself to use the correct cues in all situations.

Preparing early for the retirement of an older dog can help assure a smooth transition. The handler can put applications in to service dog programs. They can start to look for a new dog to have trained. If the person really wants to start with a puppy the overlap will have to be at least 2 years if the pup they chose has the correct temperament and is physically sound. If on the other hand a young service dog must be quickly retired for health or temperament issues the handler can expect at least a 2 year time lapse between dogs.

Persons with disabilities should not be afraid to begin thinking early about a successor dog. Teach your dogs the joy of down time. Service dogs should help improve the independence of a person with a disability but it is important that that relationship not foster dependency on both dog and handler. Allowing a dog to retire is a handler's gift to a dog for a job well done.

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President's Corner

By Jeanne Hampf

At our meeting on Saturday, Sept 23 we were gifted with a presentation on grief as it pertains to the loss of a service dog due to illness, retirement or end of life. Rachel Wright, MSW from Summit Veterinary Referral Clinic (www.summitvets.com) in Tacoma took us through the many stages of grief and stressed first that the feelings of loss are very real and secondly the importance of preparing ahead of time so we will know what is important in the process for both the dog and the handler. The Social Services available at Summit include:



- Grief counseling (outreach bereavement calls, individual and family support)
- Facilitation of weekly drop-in pet loss support group for clients and community, Thursdays 6:30 – 8 pm at Summit.
- Help with making and processing difficult decisions (quality of life assessment, treatment decisions, end of life care)
- Act as liaison between the pet owner and veterinarian team
- Be present before, during, and after euthanasia
- Provide referrals to community support services, as needed
- Provide educational resources, memorial and ritual ideas

Our annual meeting will be held on Saturday October 28, at 12pm at TACID. The meeting will be a potluck. Please plan on attending, as we need to discuss the future direction of our club. Agendas will be sent out before the meeting to all members.

This year only one current board member will be rotating off the board. If you are a member in good standing and are interested in serving on the board please contact me at <praise_luke@hotmail.com> for a Board Application. A board term is two years.

Our annual Holiday Luncheon will be held on December 9th at The Inn at Gig Harbor. We will keep the cost the same as previous years and invitations will be sent out to club members.

Future Meetings and Events Mark Your Calendar 2017

This is our calendar of meeting dates for the 2017 year. The Board has begun to organize meetings and activities that were discussed at our annual meeting. Please understand that we normally meet on the 4th Saturday of the month. There could be additions or changes depending on the schedules of our speakers or the availability of a venue.

October 28, 2017 - Annual Membership Meeting
November 25, 2017 - Off! Happy Thanksgiving!!
December 9, 2017 - Holiday Celebration

Navigating Canine Illness, Retirement and End-of-Life Issues

by Rachel Wright, MSW, LSWAIC, CDP

Veterinary Social Worker, Certified Grief Recovery Specialist ®



WHAT SERVICES DOES RACHEL PROVIDE IN HER ROLE as a VETERINARY SOCIAL WORKER?

- Grief Counseling
- Pet Loss Support Group – Thursdays, 6:30
- Animal Caregiver Support Group
- Help With Treatment (QOL/EOL)
- Advocate-Liaison Between Owner and Veterinary Team
- Be present Before, During, After Euthanasia
- Referrals to Community Resources
- Educational Resources, Memorial, Ritual Ideas

QUESTIONS FOR TODAY

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- What Grief is and What it Isn't
- How Animal Loss is Unique
- Retiring Your Partner
- Navigating Health Changes in Your Partner
- End of Life Care
- Coping and Healing from Loss

5 MAJOR MYTHS OF GRIEF

- Don't Feel Bad
- Replace the Loss
- Grieve Alone
- Time Heals All Wounds
- Be Strong
- Keep Busy

GRIEF IS...

- A Normal, Natural and Necessary Reaction to Significant Emotional Loss (or Anticipation of Loss) of any Kind
- Conflicting Feelings Caused by the End of, or Change in, a Familiar Pattern of Behavior or Experiences
- A Shift of Different Responses and Reactions – in Different Areas of One's Life
- No set "Stages" or Timeframes
- No "Right" or "Wrong" Way to Respond
- Individualized to each Person and Each Loss – Because Each Person is Unique and Every Relationship is Different



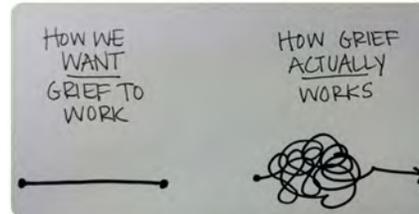
Navigating Canine Illness..(Continued on Page 6.)

GRIEF IS MESSY!

Waves Of Grief

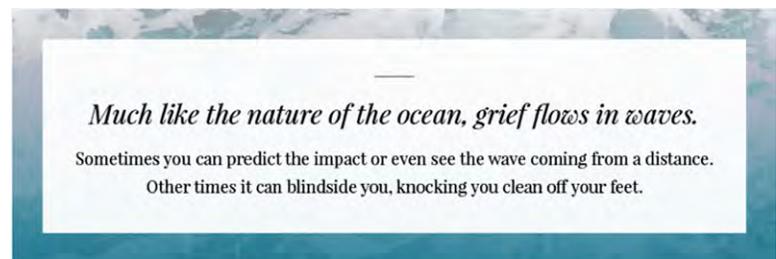
GRIEF IMPACTS KEY AREAS of OUR LIVES:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Social and Familial
- Behavioral
- Spiritual and Existential



GRIEF IS EXPERIENCED WITH...

- Aging
- Anticipation of Change
- Change or Loss of Health
- Death
- Retirement
- Divorce
- Moving
- Financial Change (Increase or Decrease in Wealth)
- Legal Issues
- Empty Nest
- End of Addiction Starting School



ANIMAL-RELATED LOSS IS UNIQUE

Animals Offer Us:

- Responsibility
- Caretaking
- Unconditional Love
- No Judgment
- Daily Interactions & Routines
- Ongoing Teachable Moments
- Social Support
- Help With Life Skills & Tasks

...and so much more!

GRIEF CAN BE DISENFRANCHISED

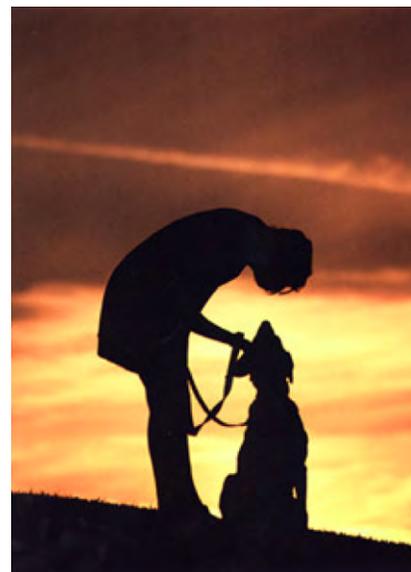
Animal-Related Loss is Oftentimes Disenfranchised

Disenfranchised Grief is...

A Loss that is Often Ignored and Denied

Public Support on These Levels:

1. It is Not Acknowledged
2. It is Not Recognized
3. The Griever is not Acknowledged or Recognized



KEY AREAS OF ANIMAL-RELATED GRIEF

- Retirement
- Health Changes
- End of Life
- All of the Above Also Result in Secondary Losses

RETIRING YOUR CANINE PARTNER

Signs to Consider:

- Is Your Partner Still Happy?
- Slowing Down
- Less Responsive?
- Have Your Partner's Sleep Needs Drastically Increased
- Is Your Partner Showing Health Issues?
(mild, moderate, severe)

SOLICIT OBJECTIVE FEEDBACK

Consider Your Options for Transition and Retirement

- He/She Remains With You
- Returns to the Program he/she came from
- Is Re-homed
- New Partner?

NAVIGATING HEALTH CHANGES

You are Your Dog's Best Advocate – You Know Him/Her the Best

- If the Medical Information is Unclear or Confusing – Ask Questions
- Give Yourself Time and Space to Process and Assess (Ongoing)
- Determine Your Information Preferences
- Develop and Write a Working “Care Plan”
- What is Your Goal for Care?
- What are Your Dog's Needs? What are Your Needs?
- What is Your “Deal-Breaker” for Quality of Life?

END-OF-LIFE CARE

What Are Your Wishes for Your Dog?

- Connect With Your Dog (Have a Conversation)
- What Do You Think Your Dog Wants?
 - ~ Palliative, Hospice Care
 - ~ Euthanasia (In-Clinic or At-Home)
- Be Aware of Your Own Triggers
- When You One Day, Reflect Back on this Time, What do You Want to Remember?
- What is Most Important to You?
- What Will be Your Path “Path of Least Regrets?”



COPING

Understand Your Grief Process

- Common Grief Reactions, Waves, Areas of Your Life Affected

Know Your Support System

- Listeners, Doers, Respite
- Seek Out Other Resources if Needed

What We Need

- Time, Rest & Relaxation
- Exercise and Nourishment
- Diversion (It's Okay to Take a Break)
- Security
- Grounded Hope
- Goals
- Small Pleasures

HOPE AND HEALING

- Trust
- Ritual
- Memorialization
- Community of Like-Minded Individuals
- Memories are Legacies
- Purpose for Bouncing Forward



Summit Veterinary Referral Center
2505 S. 80th St.
Tacoma, WA 98409
253-983-1114 x116
rwright@summitvets.com

Check out our Blog!

<http://www.summitvets.com/blog.html>

Pet Memorial Art Therapy

Hosted by Summit Veterinary Referral Center

Please join us in creating unique and personalized mementos in remembrance of your beloved pet.

When: Sunday, October 29th
Time: 2:00 pm-4:00 pm
Where: Summit Library
5107 112th St E, Tacoma, WA 98446

Led by Rachel Wright, MSW, LSWAIC, the event is free and open to the community. Donations are always welcome.

There will be three projects to choose from: picture frame, mug or ornament. Supplies are included, just bring photos of your pet to incorporate into your project.

Space is limited, please RSVP to Rachel Wright: rwright@summitvets.com by October, 23rd.

We believe that memorializing your beloved pet through art therapy can have a great impact on the healing process.



Animal Caregiver Support Group



This group is for those who are caring for a beloved animal who is aging, has chronic or special needs, or is facing a life-threatening illness. Rachel Wright, our veterinary social worker, leads the group to help support you through the triumphs and challenges of caregiving.

Starting June 17th, the 3rd Saturday of every month, 10 - 11:30 am.

Summit Veterinary Referral Center
 2505 S. 80th St., Tacoma, WA 98409

Please contact Rachel for questions: 253.983.1114 or rwright@summitvets.com

Support ADC While You Shop

If you are interested in supporting the Assistance Dog Club of Puget Sound there are a few options that are available to you! ADCPS has entered into a partnership with both Amazon.com and Fred Meyer. If you would like more information about both options offered by these two corporation you will find it on ADC's website, [<http://www.assistedogclub.org/home/support>] complete with links that will guide you through the process.







When You Lose a Young Service Dog

By Linda Alberda



When I decided to owner-train a service dog 11 years ago, I thought I considered and planned for everything, including my partner's retirement and bringing in a successor. I recognized from the beginning that this was going to be a difficult, emotional transition and didn't want to be blindsided when that day came.

As it turned out, the process of transitioning my oldest, Laurel, to less public access, more at home help and puppy training has gone more smoothly than I ever would have anticipated. She has handled the change better than I would have expected and I feel very fortunate that she is still here with me.

What I didn't consider was the possibility of losing a young, seemingly healthy working service dog. But that's exactly what happened in the Spring of 2016 when we had to say goodbye to Chaplin who was one week shy of his 3rd birthday. When he was 7 months old, while outside in the dark, Chaplin was bitten or stung by something on his muzzle. He developed an oozing lump the size of a baseball on the site which we treated with ice and Benadryl. When we returned home, we showed it to his veterinarian who

agreed that he was bitten or stung by something and would be fine. What no one realized at the time was that instead, it had introduced a virus or bacteria into his body. Chaplin ultimately developed a syndrome in which his immune system attacked all the pigment throughout his body.

Despite having episodes of steroid responsive meningitis, Chaplin's specialists cleared him to continue training, working and playing with me. And he packed an entire lifetime of activities into his three short years! Besides doing three medical alerts and typical mobility tasks, he did therapy/crisis response work and competed in a variety of dog sports with me. I still hear regularly what a special dog he was and how many different people he touched!

When our veterinary dermatologist was finally able to diagnose Chaplin's syndrome and we realized the only thing we could do was to make sure he didn't suffer, we had some time and took the opportunity to create a "bucket list" for him. Our friends added items and participated in different activities with Chaplin. Additionally, the small "birthday" party I wanted to have for him after one of our training classes turned into something that 25-30 people showed up to. When I look at the photos from that day, I am most struck by the big smiles on everyone's faces! I am grateful we had the time and took the opportunity to include friends in our celebrations of Chaplin's life.

That is not to say, however, that losing Chaplin was easy or pain-free. I still don't understand how or why this could have happened and used to feel guilty that we "allowed this bad thing to happen" to him because he was outside with us in the dark. And, yes, I knew that rationally it wasn't our fault but grief does funny things to you!

Adding to my difficulty, a week after we let Chaplin go, I had spinal surgery which meant I didn't have time to deal with my grief. While I was able to prepare for an eventuality without Laurel, I didn't have that opportunity with Chaplin. Instead, I just went from having a beautifully working young service dog to not having one. I also lost one of my best friends and beloved family member!

Losing a Young Service Dog..(Continued on Page 11.)

Losing a Young Service Dog...(Continued from Page 10.)

At that same time, I had an impossible decision to make because our breeder was working with several national service dog organizations to intentionally breed and do the early training for 4 litters totaling 24 puppies. Everyone was in agreement that I needed to get my next service dog prospect as soon as possible since I needed a partner to work with my 5 year old, Hardy doing the three medical alerts. I, however, thought the idea of trying to “replace” Chaplin was a terrible one but I understood the idea so I reluctantly participated in the process of finding my next puppy.

We found a large black male who did very well with all the evaluations and seemed to have the traits and abilities I was looking for in my future service dog, therapy/crisis response K9 and dog sports partner. So, Dion came home three weeks after my surgery and despite his feelings of connection to me, if I’m being honest, I have to confess that there were times I would look at him and think, “you are not the dog I want here”! Although I understand that, I also realize that it wasn’t fair to an innocent puppy. Now, although there are many times I wish Chaplin was here with me, I want it to be in addition to Dion and not instead of.

A year and a half later, I have another Lab doing three medical alerts, public access and a variety of dog sports. I can’t imagine life without Dion, I am also very grateful for Laurel’s and Hardy’s continued presence in my life and for the time I had with Chaplin. When you lose a young service dog, you mourn for their future, all the things you won’t ever do together and I continue to feel that loss.

I think one of my lessons from this experience is the realization that the loss of any service dog, whether one or three or fifteen years old is going to be a major grief-filled event. People often mourn the loss of a pet as much as they do any other family member and because of our connection and relationship with our service dogs, we are bound to feel that loss in profound ways. What has helped me was to ask for the support and help of my family and friends and to move forward onto the next part of my service dog journey even when that was the last thing I wanted to do. I would recommend that handlers take the time to go through the stages of grief but also work to focus on the future. It takes time and I have found that it continues to be a work in process.

Linda Kresge Alberda is the founder of the Lake Erie Assistance Dogs, a service dog club as well as co-founder of a national therapy/crisis response K9 organization, Paws with Compassion. Prior to becoming disabled, Linda trained and competed successfully in AKC Obedience with her Standard Poodles, Corey and Pruf and a neighbor’s Sheltie, Katie. Linda has used clicker training with her three owner-trained service dogs, Laurel, Hardy and Chaplin. Besides doing typical mobility tasks, they perform three different medical alerts which have profoundly changed Linda’s life.

Informational Websites On Behalf of Service Dogs

Given that the partnership of a person with a disability with an assistance dog is governed by legal requirements it is beneficial that each of us have access to as much material as possible. The discussions at the January meeting included suggestions that can be misleading, inaccurate or legally correct and helpful. It is critically important that each of us become our own best advocate.

Here are some websites that are accessible to you that will provide you with valuable information. Many of these websites are also available on ADC's website on the Favorite links page. The link for our website is: <http://www.assisteddogclub.org/home>

Legal Description of Service Dogs: http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

Legal Clarification on Rules for Assistance Dogs: <http://www.workinglikedogs.com/2011/03/u-s-department-of-justice-rules-on-assistance-dogs-to-become-stricter-march-15-2011/>

Medical information: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions>
<http://www.summitvets.com/blog.html>

Veterinary questions: <http://www.merckvetmanual.com/pethealth/index.html>
<http://www.carecredit.com/vetmed/> (credit card for veterinary care, people have 1 year to pay, use it if you have no other credit card for emergency surgery.)

Service Dog Information: <http://www.iaadp.org>
<http://www.assisteddogsinternational.org>
<http://www.servicedogcentral.org/content/>
<http://www.assisteddogclub.org/>

Service Dog Gear: <https://www.bridgeportequipment.com>
<https://www.sitstay.com/>
<http://www.boldleaddesigns.com>
<http://www.kurgo.com/>

Service Dog Training: <http://www.lakeerieassisteddogs.org/>
<http://www.cooperativepaws.com>
<http://www.riverdogk9.com/>
<http://marthahoffmanhearingdogs.com/>

Also remember that the Assistance Dog Club has a facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/Assistance-Dog-Club-of-Puget-Sound-155317554486927/>
Be sure to friend us for the latest information about all things service dog.

Additional Information: <http://www.anythingpawsable.com/>
<http://www.allthingspawssible.com/>