

SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

7575 Chestnut Lane, Anacortes, WA 98221 • (360) 293-5609 • info@summitdogs.org • www.SummitDogs.org

A "Peak" At What's Happening December, 2006

MUD BAY & MICROSOFT TEAM UP TO CREATE WORLD'S LARGEST DOG BISCUIT

In October 2006, staff from Mud Bay, an Olympia-based retailer of healthy food for dogs and cats, worked with Microsoft families to raise over \$7,000 for Summit Assistance Dogs by baking the world's largest dog biscuit. At 9 feet long and 159 pounds, it's certified for The Guinness Book of World Records. This wonderful idea to create the world's largest dog biscuit belongs to Rick Morelan, a Microsoft employee who serves on Summit's Board of Directors. Summit Assistance Dogs gratefully acknowledges the very generous support provided by Mud Bay and Microsoft!

8 NEW GRADUATES IN 2006!

On October 22nd we celebrated the graduation of 8 new assistance dog partnerships. Congratulations to the following teams who will be featured in upcoming newsletters.

- Skye Gerke & Carmel of Covington, WA
- Michelle Munro & Hayden of Seattle, WA
- Alex Stone & Fraser of Seattle, WA
- Gia Gavino & Torrey of Everett, WA
- Michelle Carpenter & Prescott of Stanwood, WA
- Chris Venemon & Kirby of Chehalis, WA
- Ethel Wilson & Chance of Litchfield, CA
- The Creech Family & Rocky of Ferndale, WA

GRADUATE PROFILE: MICHELLE & FITZ

In October 2005 Fitz was found wandering the streets of Everett. He had lost most of his hair due to a skin infection from a flea allergy and he had a bad case of conjunctivitis in both eyes. He had no place to call home, no one to snuggle up to. He was taken into the local animal shelter and then

transferred to SPOT, a rescue group in Skagit County. SPOT volunteers worked hard to clear up his infections. When we met Fitz, we could see by his gentle and easy-going nature that he might just have what it takes to be a

service dog. Soon after adopting him, we realized that he was the perfect dog for Michelle Carpenter, a woman with Multiple Sclerosis who had been waiting over 2 years for her canine companion.



Michelle needed a dog that walked nearly perfectly on a leash as her balance is very poor and any sudden movements could cause her to take a tumble.

Fitz and Michelle graduated in October 2006. About a month after graduation, we received a call from Michelle. She had fallen at home in the middle of the night and broken her hip. She needed help right away. She asked Fitz to get the phone for her and he did. She was able to call a neighbor for help. She is now recuperating well with Fitz by her side.

APPLICANT PROFILE: GARRET LATHROP

Applicant Garret Lathrop started Middle School this fall and he has been very nervous about the change. There are many new kids that he does not know. A change like this is difficult for any pre-teen, but for Garret, a bright, active, 12-year-old living with a disability, it is even more difficult. Garret was born with a muscular disease which causes limited mobility and coordination, as well as muscular weakness.

When Garret found out that he had been accepted by Summit to receive a service dog, many of his concerns about school were alleviated. His canine friend will be able to open doors and retrieve dropped items for him so he doesn't have to ask his friends for help. Most of all, though, a service dog will take the attention off of his disability and serve as an "ice-breaker" with the new kids.

With these problems solved, Garret will be able to focus more on his school work and being a typical 7th grade student. In his spare time, Garret plays wheelchair soccer and participates in the Adaptive Ski Program at Mt. Baker.

When the right canine companion comes along, Garret will receive the independence that he yearns for and the self-confidence that he will need as he gets older. He can't wait to begin this new chapter of his life.



SUMMIT IN THE NEWS

<http://www.goanacortes.com/articles/2006/04/13/living/living03.txt>

<http://www.goanacortes.com/articles/2006/11/01/living/living04.txt>