



SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

Empowering people with disabilities to greater heights

2009 Annual Report

2009: The springboard to our second decade

Four more graduate pairs in 2009 brought our total to 46 lives changed with the gift of independence during Summit's first decade in business. We're proud of that record, but we know there is so much more to be done to meet the needs of almost 35 people still waiting for that miraculous gift as we enter our second decade.

Our four new graduate pairs for 2009 are pictured on the back panel. Taysen Langstraat & Jackson, GJ Leptien & Zoey and Eric Rae & Titus all attended our two-week spring Team Training, complete with lectures, exercises and field trips, to help them bond with their new canine partners and prepare for their wonderful new lives with them. In the fall, volunteer trainer Jan Hemme traveled to Spokane Valley to do a custom training with teacher Lynne Kovacich and her Professional Therapy Dog Adams in Lynne's classroom for students with developmental disabilities.

The skilled tasks our dogs perform do much more than help our graduates reduce care-giving and equipment costs. They help build bridges and new friendships, create independence and hope-filled lives, reduce depression and anxiety, and give unconditional love.

Also in 2009, we pursued a new partnership with the Washington State Penitentiary at Monroe to provide short-term housing and training for dogs we bring out of shelters for assessment as service dog candidates. While our trainers put these dogs through an hour-long evaluation at the shelters, we can't be certain a dog will work out until we have had it out of the shelter setting for awhile. This program will provide that needed interim housing plus initial training to help with our assessment of these dogs. It will also provide temporary homes for dogs we decide we can't use until we can find them loving, permanent homes.

Working with the staff at the prison, we are developing a win-win situation where we gain the ability to acquire and assess more dogs than we can with our own limited facilities, and inmates learn new skills to enhance their future lives. Longer term, we hope to provide enough training to well-qualified inmates so that they will be able to help us with assessments of shelter dogs and initial training of those who appear to be good candidates.

Other highlights of 2009 included:

- Many new puppies and the support of the wonderful foster families who care for them (see page 3).
- The donation of new training space at The Whole Pup in Edmonds for classes for our graduates and puppy raisers in the Seattle metro area, compliments of owner Cindi Howell.
- The revitalization of our volunteer network, thanks to our enhanced newsletter and regional meetings for volunteers hosted by Lydia Oakes in Anacortes, Vicki DeCant Corliss on Lopez Island, Melissa Barran in Edmonds and Linda Fleming in Auburn.

And last but not least, our 2009 successes were made possible by the continuing generosity and support of our many donors and volunteers. See the story of Taysen and Jackson on the next page to read just one account of the lives you have helped change. Your continuing commitment and involvement will help make it possible for applicant Susanna Smith, also featured on the next page, and so many others to know the joy of life with a highly skilled service dog.

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Message from the Founder/Executive Director

As was the case for all non-profits, 2009 was a particularly challenging year for Summit, but I am proud of the work we accomplished. Now I look forward to the year – and the decade – ahead as opportunities to rise above the current economic challenges and grow this wonderful organization to meet the needs of so many who are waiting for the life-changing partnership of a highly skilled service dog.

I am most grateful for the incredible generosity of more than 3,200 donors who have supported us financially through the years. Without them, we would not have been able to change the 46 lives we have touched in our first decade.

It takes a lot to make this happen, and the number is much bigger than 46. To find 46 great service dogs, we have rescued more than 200 dogs and raised more than 150 puppies. We couldn't have done it without the hundreds of volunteers who have given countless hours to raise, train and socialize puppies, help us around our office and volunteer for events.

I am amazed as I look back over this first decade since I founded Summit in March 2000. It has been an incredible ride, and I am so excited to move into our second decade. The success stories of our 46 graduate pairs energize me, and the needs of the many applicants waiting for the same gift of independence inspire me to go to work each day.

Two of our graduates serve on our Board of Directors – President Michelle Munro, 2006 recipient of Hayden, and Alex Stone, a Seattle University student who was paired with Fraser, also in 2006. Taysen Langstraat (below) was the darling of our spring 2009 Team Training, when he was paired with Therapy Dog Jackson. His is just one of the many inspiring stories that have shaped our first decade. I hope applicant Susanna Smith will be among the next graduating class to inspire us as we venture into our new decade.

Thank you all for your generosity and support.



Graduates Taysen Langstraat & Jackson

5-year-old Taysen Langstraat of Lynden, a 2009 graduate with Therapy Dog Jackson, developed spinal muscular atrophy before the age of 2, resulting in diminished motor skills. But that doesn't stop Taysen, who zooms around in a power wheelchair and charms everyone he meets. Although Jackson was intended as a therapy dog, Taysen has been teaching him many of the skills he observed service dogs Titus and Zoey performing in team training. Jackson cheerfully opens doors, pulls off socks and performs other traditional service dog skills for his little partner, along with providing unconditional, loving companionship.



Applicant Susanna Smith

Susanna Smith of Edmonds is one of almost 35 applicants Summit longs to pair with a life-changing service dog. This sweet and lively 6-year-old was born with a chromosomal anomaly, giving her muscular weakness, coordination problems and delayed development. In spite of this, she is a busy and exuberant little girl who likes to take control of her environment. She is waiting for a service dog that will provide assistance, such as balance support and alerting her parents if she needs help, not to mention that all-important companionship that means so much to a person living with disabilities.



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It Takes a Village to Raise a Service Dog

At the end of 2009, we had 29 dogs in our training program, thanks to the generosity of volunteers who give so much time, energy and love in providing foster homes for puppies and dogs being evaluated. We couldn't do it without them – or without the financial support of our many wonderful donors.

We were blessed with 10 more Collie/Lab mix puppies through our breeding program. The E Litter, born in June, produced Elias and Everest, who were whelped by Founder/Executive Director Sue Meinzinger. In September, eight puppies in the F litter arrived and were whelped by volunteer Barb Clark of Bow. These feisty pups – Feather, Ferris, Fiji, Finnegan, Fisher, Frailey, Freddy and Freedom – are now in their foster homes where they will remain until they are old enough to be evaluated for further training.

We also had three puppies and an adult Yellow Lab donated to us; bought eight Golden Retriever pups, one Black Lab, and one Lab/Golden mix; and took many dogs out of shelters to assess them as service dog candidates.

While we are hopeful for all of the puppies and dogs who come into our program, we know that not all of them have that special something that lets us mold them into great service dogs. Countless families have adopted those who didn't quite make the grade and have told us over and over again what wonderful family pets they are.

A big wag of thanks to our 2009 foster families

Andrea Baer, Snohomish
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Elaine Montgomery & Zoey



Jan Hemme & Adams



Lori Sprague & Wagner

Donors Make Our World Go Round

Summit Assistance Dogs relies on the generosity of our donors to do our work of changing lives four paws at a time by providing independence and companionship for people living with disabilities. Donations of any size are welcome and may be made on-line at www.summitdogs.org/donate or via mail at P.O. Box 699, Anacortes, WA 98221.

You might consider making a memorial or tribute donation for a beloved pet, family member or friend. Or sign up for payroll deduction at work. We also welcome stocks, bonds, mutual funds and vehicle donations. Consider naming Summit in your will, providing a gift that can continue to make a difference for years to come. Contact us for details at (360) 293-5609 or info@summitdogs.org.

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We are most grateful to the following donors who made gifts between January 1 and December 31, 2009. Thank you for your generosity. If we missed you, please let us know so we can acknowledge you in our next newsletter.

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2009 Financial Results (FY 1/1/09 – 12/31/09)

Income

Corporate Donations and Grants	275.00
Employee Giving Campaigns	101,372.84
Event Income	70.00
Foundation Grants	6,750.00
In-Kind Donations	7,629.64
Individual Donors	94,885.47
Investment Income	54,152.53
Organization Donations	2,766.50
Program Service Revenue	5,675.00
Sale of Merchandise	539.25
Uncollected Pledges	-3,836.60
Total Income	\$270,279.63

Expenses

Advertising/Marketing	1,013.48
Dues and Subscriptions	578.88
Employee Expenses	204,712.06
Equipment	1,345.36
Fees for Stock Sales	25.95
Fundraising Events	3,212.96
Insurance	1,968.31
Interest & Bank Charges	176.05
Licenses and Permits	20.00
Meals and Entertainment	1,992.73
Occupancy	23,706.23
Outreach Events	1,208.62
Postage and Delivery	3,784.87
Printing and Copying	15,173.25
Professional Services	63,472.57
Supplies	25,142.31
Telephone/Communication	4,369.79
Training	2,665.19
Travel	7,969.51
Vehicle	3,527.03
Total Expenses	\$366,065.15

2009 Accomplishments

- Graduated four new service dog pairs, bringing our total to 46 lives changed.
- Provided continuing support for our earlier graduate pairs.
- Placed 21 new puppies with volunteers to begin socialization and basic training.
- Took 20 dogs from shelters or other re-homing situations to assess their potential as future service dogs.
- Entered into negotiations with staff at the Monroe Correctional Facility to have inmates provide basic training for shelter dogs being assessed for our program.

2010 Goals & Objectives

- Train and place six to eight new assistance dogs.
- Provide on-going follow-up support for our current graduates to assure success of the teams.
- Begin a prison program May 1 at the Monroe Correctional Facility, where inmates will provide basic training for our dogs rescued from animal shelters.

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SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

Empowering people with disabilities to greater heights



2009 Graduate Teams



GJ Leptien & Zoey



Eric Rea & Titus



***Taysen Langstraat,
Mom Melodie &
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***Lynne Kovacich &
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