



SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

Empowering people with disabilities to greater heights

November 2009

Graduation

It's almost time for one of Summit's biggest celebrations - graduation! Graduation will be held in Redmond, as that is a more central location for this year's graduates who come from as far away as Spokane and Portland. Please mark your calendars and plan to help us celebrate the achievement of our 2009 graduates.

Sunday, Dec. 6, 4 p.m.

Redmond Senior Center, 8703 160th Avenue NE, Redmond, WA

Meet Our Latest Graduates

Lynne Kovacich and Professional Therapy Dog Adams are our latest 2009 graduate pair. They will be honored at our Dec. 6 graduation ceremony along with spring graduates Eric Rae and Titus, GJ Leptien and Syndi, and Taysen Langstraat and Jackson.

Lynne is a teacher for students at a Spokane Valley high school who have developmental disabilities. She applied more than a year ago for a dog who could interact with, comfort and calm her students. Golden Retriever Adams fits the bill perfectly. He began his new career on Oct. 26, when Summit volunteer Jan Hemme helped Lynne introduce Adams to the students and staff at the school. Jan raised Adams and took him through his advanced training. When it was time for him to be placed, she and her husband, Jerry, drove Adams to Spokane, where Jan spent five days working with Lynne both at home and in the classroom, training her how to work with Adams and help him work with her students. Jan reported that Adams was an instant hit with school staff and that he had a big positive impact on Lynne's students from his very first day. When he's not working in his classroom, Adams lives with Lynne, her husband and two children and their Golden Retriever, Rocket.



Graduate News

Graduates Melissa Mitchell and Shiloh have been together since October 2008. Shiloh helps Melissa every day with various tasks, but on Tuesday, Oct. 20, Shiloh got the opportunity to prove that she will be there when it really counts. Read Shiloh's success story, submitted by Melissa.



This morning I woke up with severe pain in my neck and right shoulder. At first I wasn't even sure I could get out of bed. As I tried to transfer into my chair, my shoulder gave way, and I ended up on the floor! I tried a few times to get up, but quickly realized my right shoulder was not going to bear my weight at all, so even using Shiloh to brace was out. I tried plan B - yelling for my roommate Leslie. No dice, since she sleeps like the dead.

Time for plan C - get Shiloh to roust my roommate from her bed. I have been working on getting Shiloh to find her by name, so it was time to put it to the test. I asked Shiloh, "Where's Leslie? Go get Leslie!" She went to my roommate's door and found it closed. I cued her to touch the door with her paw again and again until she finally succeeded in waking my roommate's guide dog, Cammy, who went over and stuck her nose in Leslie's face, finally waking her! Then she heard Shiloh pawing at the door, and being a wonderful friend and good roommate, she came in to fish me off the floor.

Even if Leslie had not been there and I had to wait for someone to come help me, I knew Shiloh was there for me and could get the phone and show someone where I was. That knowledge kept me calm so I could think things through clearly. Shiloh is my constant companion, and between the two of us, we can figure out some difficult predicaments! I am not so vulnerable with Shiloh around.

The Holiday Season

For many, the next couple of months mean get togethers, shopping and wrapping gifts. Following are some options you might consider that can also help Summit in the process.

Summit Open Houses

People are invited to visit our training facility at 12549 Christianson Road in Anacortes on the following dates. You will learn about the organization, see dog training demonstrations and meet dogs and puppies.

Wednesday, Nov. 4
1 - 4 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 2
4 - 6 p.m.

Gift Wrapping Fundraiser

Volunteer Lydia Oakes will once again be doing holiday gift wrapping as a fundraiser for Summit. She managed to score a prime location this year, right next to Santa at the Cascade Mall in Burlington. Since the mall sponsors this, there are set prices for wrapped packages of \$5 per small item, \$7 per medium item, \$9 per large item and \$15 for oversized items. No boxes will be provided, so if you want your gift wrapped in a box please request one when you purchase your item. Otherwise, Lydia considers any gift shape a challenge and has come up with some very fun and interesting ways to wrap them.

Check the following schedule that Lydia (and friends) will be wrapping gifts, and see if you can help her reach her personal goal of raising \$2,500 for Summit by letting her wrap your holiday gifts. Lydia donates the gift wrap materials, so your entire donation is tax deductible and will be acknowledged with a letter from Summit, as long as you provide your contact information.

Saturday/Sunday, Dec. 5 & 6, 3 - 8 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 20, 3 - 8 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 24, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday, Dec. 12 & 13, 3 - 8 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 23, 3 - 8 p.m.

NOTE: If you enjoy wrapping gifts and want to help Lydia, she could use two or three helpers at each shift. If you are interested please e-mail Rita at rita@summitdogs.org, and we will put Lydia in touch with you to work out the schedule.

Holiday Shows

Local Anacortes artist Darlene Klister will be presenting her artwork at two local holiday shows in November and will donate a percentage of her net sales to Summit. Here is a great opportunity for you to do some holiday shopping and help out Summit. Darlene's company is called FireLight Designs and you can check out her paintings and jewelry in advance of the shows at www.firelightdesigns.net. Then, check her out in person at:

Potpourri of Art
November 7 and 8
Sat. 10 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.; Sun. 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Sacred Heart Church Hall, 14th & Knox
Fairhaven, Bellingham, WA

Nutcracker Holiday Gift Show
November 12 - 15
Th. - Sat. 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Depot Arts Center, 611 R Avenue
Anacortes, WA

Dessert Auction and Silent Auction

The DECA students at Burlington-Edison High School will hold a dessert auction and silent auction as a fundraiser for Summit Assistance Dogs on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. at the school's Performing Arts Center. Please RSVP by Nov. 30 to behsdeca@live.com and join Summit and the students for a fun and festive evening and see a service dog demonstration as well. Senior Micah Evans is leading the planning, assisted by Junior Melody Van Pelt.

Summit is very grateful to Lydia, Darlene and the DECA students for their efforts on behalf of Summit. Here's a thought - buy a painting or jewelry from Darlene, or an auction item from the DECA students, then take it to Lydia to wrap.



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From Puppy Raiser to Advanced Training

Many people wonder how our puppy raisers can raise a dog for 16 - 18 months, then hand it back over to Summit for advanced training and placement. Cadet, Crocker and Cloud have recently returned to Summit for the next phase of their training. Our volunteer puppy raisers are very special people and even though they say the reward of knowing they are enhancing someone's life is well worth their efforts, it's still not easy. There is no "thank you" big enough for the contributions our puppy raisers make to the success of Summit. Following are excerpts from messages we received from Crocker and Cloud's foster moms.

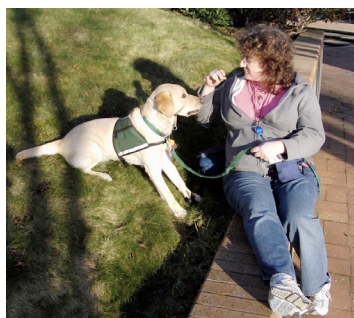
From Donna Vaquer (Crocker's foster mom)

Hello everyone. Our house is feeling a little empty right now as our Summit trainee, Crocker, has gone off to college, or advanced training, in Anacortes. Before he left, we had a special dinner for Crocker and Chloe (our own dog) - regular kibble topped with a little canned food, and I fed it to him a few bites at a time in his dish so hopefully he would notice what he was eating. This is not easy to do when you eat at the speed of light!

So, he is gone now, but there are many mementos around the house and yard. The vacuum is taking care of some of the hair, but I fear we will always have a bit of Crocker with us. And out in the yard, there are the various logs and branches that he lugged around - big ones. He didn't seem to have much sense of space. One day he came charging into the doorway with a 6' long branch in his mouth. This did not work well. I suspect we're missing him more than he is missing us. He's the kind of guy who is always happy and gets along with everybody. His needs are minimal - food and love. He is up in Anacortes with his brother and sister, having fun I'm sure, and gaining many new skills for what will hopefully be a life of service to someone who needs him. I know he will be loyal, obedient and always ready to please. That's just the kind of guy he is. We miss you Crocker! Donna and Chloe



From Deborah Darsie (Cloud's foster mom)



There are little reminders all over the place - car, carpet, toys and chewy things everywhere! Cloud went on to puppy college the weekend of September 11th. I had grad school classes the days after turning Cloud in, and I was a basket case with my box of Kleenex and a bruised, yet pleased, heart. My classmates had all met Cloud and felt for me and thanked all the raisers for their gift to the community.

I miss her a lot, and my cats, Toes and Marbles, were funny to watch as they came to the realization that the occasionally rowdy, big yellow thing with a very fast moving tail is not coming back. Cloud is asked after by numerous people who spend time in my building at work. Sadly, I keep getting asked why I don't have her with me, and when they find out she "graduated" to college, they are sad to realize how big a spot she had in the heart of our department of 180-some people in the area.

The weekend she left for Summit I celebrated her success to that point with a big ice cream, a leisurely treat in the late afternoon sun. I am wondering when my next pup will come along and what adventures we will end up having together. I am a glutton for puppy "punishment". Deborah, Toes and Marbles

Puppy Raisers Needed

Puppy raisers are responsible for raising, training and socializing their puppies from 2 - 3 months old until approximately 16 - 18 months of age. This volunteer position requires a commitment to attend a 4 hour orientation session and taking obedience classes for the time that the puppy is in your care. You must have a fenced yard or kennel, devote at least 20 - 30 minutes each day to training, socialize the dog by taking it on field trips, and care for the dog's routine needs and health care. Your financial commitment to raising a puppy for Summit is tax deductible. This can be a very rewarding experience. If you think you may be interested in this, please contact Wendy at 360-293-5609 or wendy@summitdogs.org.



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We Rely On Our Donors

It is only through the generous support of our donors that we are able to continue to do our important work of changing lives four paws at a time. To make a donation, you may send a check to our mailing address at P. O. Box 699, Anacortes, WA 98221 or on-line at our website www.summitdogs.org/donate.

Summit also welcomes stocks, bonds and mutual funds, as well as vehicle donations. You might consider naming Summit in your will. Your bequest can make a difference in the lives of others for years to come. Please contact us for details.

You can also assist Summit by using Goodsearch.com and/or iGive.com while doing any on-line shopping.

Thanks

Summit would like to thank the following businesses for displaying our brochures:

Mud Bay Granary, Greenwood Antioch University, Seattle Fairhaven Vet Clinic, Bellingham

Summit Career Change Dogs

Thinking about adding a dog to your family? Check out the Summit career change dogs on petfinder.com. We currently have Dash and Cosmo looking for homes.



Volunteer Central

Thank you to the following volunteers for their assistance during the month of October.

For providing respite care:

Andrea Crispin

For putting ribbon on bookmarks:

Donna Erlandson & students

For providing trainer assistance:

Noel Blair, Mckenzie Harrison, Nina Mann
Dawnelle Bomer, Nancy Ptacek

For assisting at the King County CFC event:

Dyan Edison, Grant Richardson, Michelle Munro

For hosting a booth at the Bellevue Arthritis Walk:

Becky Novelli

For assisting at the Bremerton CFC event:

Donna Vaquer, Andrea Crispin

For assisting with the care of the F litter puppies:

Jan & Jerry Hemme; Sue & Bob Levin; Caryl, Cara & Kyle Greenwood;
Lisa Freshour; Wendy McDougal

For caring for and raising the F litter puppies:

Barb and John Clark

For assisting with the Microsoft Giving Campaign event:

Grant & Jeanne Richardson, Victoria Mulholland, Scottie Kuper,
Donna Sellers, Deborah Robinson

For assisting at various events:

Eric Rae & Titus

We apologize if we inadvertently missed anyone.

Volunteer Need

We have been approached by students in the DECA Club at Burlington-Edison High School who are planning a dessert auction and silent auction as a fundraiser for us Dec. 5 at their school. If you own a business and might be willing to donate a dessert or auction item or know someone who does and are willing to ask, would you please contact Micah Evans and Melody Van Pelt at behsdeca@live.com to let them know? We would also like to know so we can acknowledge you, so please copy Rita on your message at rita@summitdogs.org. We also hope you might consider attending. It will be in the school's Performing Arts Center, starting at 7 p.m. If you can, please use their same e-mail address for your RSVP. Thank you very much!

Some Of Our F Litter Pups



Exploring!



Nap time. Always!



There is a food bowl in there.