

THE CANINE LISTENER

Magazine

Dogs for Better Lives
Fall 2019 • NO.135



Dr. Danielle Rose:
Life with Hearing Assistance Dogs

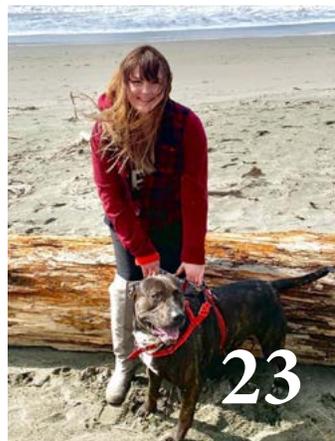
DBL Begins West Coast Expansion

Pepper's Purpose



FEATURES

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On the Cover

The front and back cover photos features Dogs for Better Lives client, Dr. Danielle Rose, with her Hearing Assistance Dog Delight. Photo taken by Anne Zirkle Photography.

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PRESIDENT & CEO

LETTER FROM BRYAN WILLIAMS



In my short time with Dogs for Better Lives, I have been struck by the generosity of the supporters who are dedicated to our mission. Whether it is with dollars, volunteering to walk dogs, or lending expertise as a board member, everyone who contributes is positively impacting the lives of the people we are committed to serve. This work is not possible without you. So, from the bottom of my heart, I'd like to thank you for your commitment and passion.

In the not too distant past, this organization committed itself to many lofty goals: expand the programs we offer, change our name, and build a new training facility, to mention just a few. With the leadership of an amazing Board of Directors and the support of so many people, these all came to fruition. The organization is now ready for a future where we significantly scale what we do in an effort to impact more lives. With expanded kennel space, we can get more dogs, train more dogs, and place more dogs. And we want to do it in a cost-effective way, maximizing the return on investment of critical donor dollars in our care.

As I think about the vision for the future of the organization, I know it cannot be done without the continued support of those reading the Canine Listener. We hope you will join us on this adventure and help spread our mission to the people in your life. We now have staff in two new locations, Seattle and San Francisco, who are working hard to find dogs from shelters, recruit foster puppy raisers, place dogs with new clients, follow up with existing clients, and build our base of volunteers and donors in those areas. We are already experiencing the impact and efficiencies of the changes in our programmatic model and we are excited about what is to come. And it's all because of you.

In this issue, you will find many heartwarming stories about the mission of Dogs for Better Lives and you will hear an update on our expansion efforts. You will also see the founder's daughter, Robin Dickson, recall the rich history of the organization and the early struggles to get it off the ground. We're here today because of people like Robin, who dedicated her life to growing this organization. And we'll be around for another 42 years because of people like you, our Dogs for Better Lives family.

This Canine Listener is dedicated to all those who make our work possible, especially our amazing donors. Thank you for having faith in this organization both now and in the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bryan Williams".

WE GET LETTERS



I think it is so wonderful how you train these animals to help those in need of assistance. It is a truly worthy cause.

-*The Dietrichs, Medford OR*

We made a donation in memory of Newton Alsarraf who lost his battle with cancer. May his spirit live on in the dog whose life this donation has helped to rescue someone in need.

- *Dorene, West Orange NJ*

We've been donating for several years, usually by mail. We were attracted to you by your mission and especially because you save shelter dogs by training them for an important job. Please don't quit that aspect of your work.

- *Roger and Diane, Morrow Bay CA*

I am an audiologist and a huge lover of dogs. What your organization does for both people and dogs is wonderful. I have been a big supporter since the days of Dogs for the Deaf

- *Lisa, Larchmont NY*

I heard about Dogs for the Deaf when I was in college many years ago. I've always loved dogs, and I dreamed of one day having a dog that would help me feel safer and less isolated as a person with significant hearing loss. Having profound hearing loss can be exhausting, especially as a professional, and the potential for misunderstanding is high. I am so grateful to finally be able to share my life with a certified hearing dog.

- *Suzanne, Hearing Assistance Dog Client, CA*

Most dogs love to please us, and what better way for them to do this! Your organization does such good work, so I'm happy to give my support (albeit in a small way).

- *Ruthann, Alexandria VA*

We have several hearing-impaired members in our family, and one just passed away. We love that this charity does a great job of giving back and rescuing dogs.

- *Karri, Black Diamond WA*

A dear friend and colleague recently passed. Kurt and I both have rescue dogs. Kurt was a very kind man, so his family asked that we make donations to this organization in his honor.

- *Keith, Sunbury OH*

I love DBL and have been volunteering as a dog walker for almost 10 years. Their commitment for the dogs to have a better life is seen through their compassionate care for them. Staff is friendly, helpful and very professional. Ron and I adopted Ranger, our career change dog, in 2012. He's very much cherished.

- *Carol and her hubby Ron, Medford OR*

I have been donating to Dogs for the Deaf (Dogs for Better Lives) for several years. I think this is one of the best charitable organizations in the US.

- *Patricia, Salem OR*

My friends donated to your program for me, after the dog I lost. The personal message and the goals of your program were so touching that I wanted to share with others.

- *Dorothy, Glendale AZ*

I love dogs and have adopted three dogs! They've improved my life!

-*Alan, Downers Grove IL*

PLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS



KELLY

Hearing Assistance Dog Kelly, a 2-year-old yellow Lab, was recently placed with Medora (Dory) in Colorado. Kelly came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind and is alerting Dory to the oven timer, telephone, smoke alarm, door knock and name call. Dory is looking forward to feeling more comfortable when she is home alone and to the extra awareness Kelly will provide when they are out in public together. Kelly fits in with Dory's family perfectly, and they are thrilled to have him.



CAIRO

Hearing Assistance Dog Cairo was placed with Jane in Washington State to help her with sound awareness and give her a sense of security at home. Cairo, a 1.5-year-old shepherd mix, came to us from Kern County Animal Services. Jane and her longtime Hearing Assistance Dog, Ozzie, shared a special bond. So when Ozzie passed away last year, Jane was hesitant to bring a new dog into her home. That is, until DBL placed Hearing Assistance Dog Cairo with her. Now with Cairo by her side, Jane's confidence and independence have returned. Congrats Jane and Cairo on your new partnership!



OTIS

Hearing Assistance Dog Otis was recently placed with Bridget in Nevada to alert her to the oven timer, smoke alarm, door knock, alarm clock, and name call. Otis, a 2-year-old black Lab, came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind. He will accompany Bridget while she teaches ASL classes at the state college and will be by her side while she's working on her PhD program. Congrats Bridget and Otis on a perfect match!



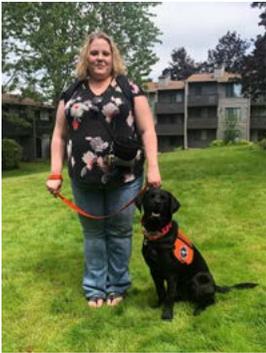
CARLISSA

Hearing Assistance Dog Carlissa (Carli) was recently placed with Mary in Alabama to provide companionship as well as sound awareness at home and in public. Carli, a 3-year-old yellow Lab, came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind and she is already making friends with Mary's Sunday School kids, warmly greeting them all and getting hugs. Congrats Mary and Carli on your new partnership!



NORTON

Hearing Assistance Dog Norton, a 2.5-year-old black Lab, was placed in Oregon with Chris. Norton came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind, and he is working the alarm clock, cell phone, smoke alarm, door knock, door bell, and name call. Chris lives directly on the Pacific Ocean so Norton is enjoying lots of beach time. Chris is thrilled with his new companion! He and his fiancé Narayan love to go crabbing, and now Norton loves it, too!



ACE

Hearing Assistance Dog Ace was placed with Andrea in Washington State. Ace is one of the puppies in our 'A' litter and has grown into an amazing Assistance Dog. Ace is helping Andrea by working the phone and name call in her cubicle at her job. While at home, he is working the phone, alarm clock, oven timer, smoke alarm, and door knock. Andrea is extremely happy with Ace as her Assistance Dog and companion—they are a match made in heaven!



VENICE

Hearing Assistance Dog Venice, a 2.5-year-old black Lab, came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind and was placed with Sue in Oregon this summer. Venice is Sue's second Hearing Assistance Dog from Dogs for Better Lives. She is helping Sue by working the door knock, smoke alarm, oven timer, and phone. Sue is very active with her grandkids, bingo, and local Moose Lodge activities. Venice is Sue's constant companion: "Just having her with me makes me feel better. I don't lose my patience or get as frustrated as I used to, and maybe seeing her will help people understand that I experience hearing loss."



WESTON

Hearing Assistance Dog Weston was placed with Elaine in California as a Home Hearing Dog. Weston, a 3-year-old terrier mix, came to us from Central Valley Rescue Railroad shelter and is the perfect dog for Elaine. Weston is working the smoke alarm, phone, and door knock for Elaine. The rest of the time, Weston makes Elaine laugh and play fetch with him. According to trainer Brittany, "Weston loves toys, and about every 10 minutes during placement, Elaine was off to the closet to get him a new toy. By the time we left the first day, there were 10 toys spread throughout the house. He's going to be one spoiled boy!"



VANILLA

Autism Assistance Dog Vanilla was placed with Julian and his family in Oregon. Vanilla, 2.5-year-old yellow Lab, came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind. Julian was diagnosed with autism when he was one and a half years old. At the time, his parents spoke very little English. For Julian’s mom, Rosa, it was especially devastating to not understand how to care for and help her child become independent. Rosa now advocates for children with disabilities in the Latino community and with the Oregon Council for Developmental Disabilities. Venice helps calm Julian by laying on him and gently applying deep pressure. He also keeps Julian safe by preventing him from darting into traffic when they’re out in public.



HILDAGO

Hearing Assistance Dog Hidalgo, a 2-year-old black Lab, was placed with Suzanne in northern California to help her with sound awareness and companionship. Suzanne is an avid swimmer and an outdoor enthusiast. She plans to take Hidalgo poolside with her where she swims in a master swimming class, as well as on other outdoor adventures. Suzanne is incredibly thankful for Hidalgo and everything that comes with having an Assistance Dog.



ADAMA

Hearing Assistance Dog Adama, a 2.5-year-old black Lab, was partnered with Barb in Arizona this summer. Adama came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind and is working the doorbell, work phone, alarm clock, oven timer, fire alarm, and name call. Barb is very active and Adama enjoys accompanying her on hikes, visits to the gym, and swimming in the pool. After a five-day family reunion in Lake Tahoe, Barb’s concerns about how Adama would react with others were relieved, “Everyone was so impressed by how well he behaved and how attentive he was to me. He thoroughly enjoyed our daily hikes, all the smells, and attention he got.”



RAMBLER

Facility Dog Rambler was placed with Winifred, a successor DBL client. Winifred previously had Facility Dog Jackson, who went to work with her daily before his passing from cancer. Winifred works as a psychologist with many different populations. Some of her patients are children on the autism spectrum and adults with chronic pain issues. Rambler will go to work with her four days a week to provide comfort and a friendly face to her patients.

FOLLOW UPS



HAMISH

Hearing Assistance Dog Hamish (Hammy) has helped Stephen in California for five years, and they're still going strong! "Hammy is one of the best things to happen in my life... he is a precious gift, and I am forever grateful and indebted to all who made this possible!"



OCEANA

Hearing Assistance Dog Oceana (Oshi) and Teresa have been a team in Missouri for more than a year, and they are doing great! Teresa says that Oshi is "invaluable for the service she provides" and that she enjoys how Oshi makes fans everywhere she goes. "Everyone loves her!"



GENESIS

Hearing Assistance Dog Genesis and Wayne are partnered in Illinois. Wayne describes Genesis as his best friend and says, "Gen is so dependable, you don't have to worry. She's so loving and absolutely perfect!" Wayne appreciates the security Genesis brings to him, knowing he won't miss things, especially at night.



MAZDA

Hearing Assistance Dog Mazda has partnered with Laura in Nevada for five years. Mazda came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind and continues to be a great help to Laura with sound awareness. Earlier this year when Laura started a new job, Mazda jumped into action during a smoke alarm test. He immediately responded and alerted Laura to the sound. "I am so thankful to have Mazda and his help...I fully rely on him to know what is going on around me."



MONTESSA

Hearing Assistance Dog Montessa (Tessa) has been partnered with Julia and Ryan in Michigan for more than a year, and they are doing great! Both Julia and Ryan are Deaf, and Tessa works and alerts for both of them. Julia and Ryan were recently married, with Tessa as the "flower girl" at the wedding. The love that Julia and Ryan have for Tessa is incredible—Julia said she is like their daughter.



NOVI

Hearing Assistance Dog Novi and Samantha have been a team in Oregon for a little more than one year. Novi, a 4-year-old yellow Lab, came to us from Guide Dogs for the Blind. Since Novi became Samantha's partner, her life is livelier and more enjoyable. "I used to stay in the house all the time, and now having Novi has helped me go out and enjoy things."



HARRISON

Hearing Assistance Dog Harrison (Harry) has been teamed up with Bob in Florida for two years. “Harry is everything we could have ever wanted and more! I am much more relaxed now knowing I have Harry—he is exactly what I needed. Harry is flexible and adaptable and has changed my life in every way possible. He is a bright, shining member of the family and we love him!”



OLLIE

Hearing Assistance Dog Ollie and Joan have been a team in Michigan for 14 years—amazing! Ollie is semi-retired, and although he has slowed down some and doesn’t go to as many places, he still works and alerts Joan to sounds. Ollie and Joan are aging beautifully together—they are a perfect pair!



FANCY

Facility Dog Fancy and Catherine have been partnered in Medford at the Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) for several years. Fancy continues to comfort children going through difficult times, and she is loved by one and all at the CAC.



HORTON

Hearing Assistance Dog Horton and Sue have been partnered in Florida for a year and a half. “Horton has increased my independence and willingness to connect with others. I am more comfortable with sharing that I am deaf—I would never do that before I got him.”



RAYLENE

Hearing Assistance Dog Raylene and Chris have been a team in Florida for five years, and they are perfectly paired! “Raylene has enriched my life in far more ways than I could have imagined. Raylene woke me up one morning, and I went back to bed still not knowing why she alerted me until I watched the news the next morning. There was a tornado that hit only a few miles away with at least two souls lost. I remember looking at the clock at 3:04 a.m. when she alerted me—and that is exactly the time the news said the tornado hit!”



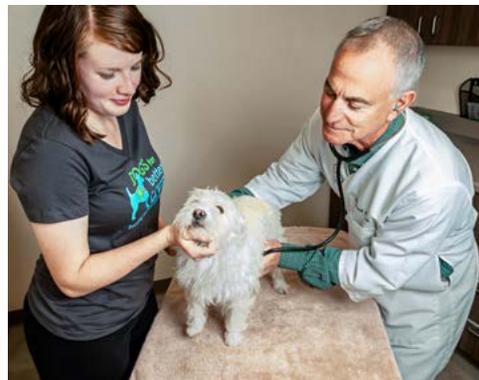
BELLE

Hearing Assistance Dog Belle and Lacie have been together for one year and are doing great! Lacie adores Belle and says what she loves most about her is her constant companionship. Lacie added that when they go out to eat alone, Belle lays under the table and keeps a very close eye on her. But when they go out with friends or family, Belle lays under the table and falls right asleep. Lacie feels like Belle knows that when they are out alone, she needs to keep an eye on Lacie, but when they’re with friends, Belle knows she can relax and not keep watch quite as closely. What an amazing team!

Businesses Do Make a Difference, A Positive One

In 2017, twenty-five local business leaders answered a call and created a partnership with Dogs for Better Lives. These business leaders appreciated the organization's dedication to rescuing, breeding, and professionally training Assistance Dogs. They witnessed the life-changing difference Assistance Dogs make and knew they could help.

These are uncertain economic times. One thing, though, is certain: the businesses in this partnership remain committed to supporting DBL's mission. Now entering the third year of this partnership, the business leaders are determined to grow their impact.



Canine Exam Room



Bryan William, Dogs for Better Lives CEO, with Matt Burkholder, Owner of Mercedes Benz of Medford and Co-Chair of Dogs for Better Lives Corporate Partners

During fiscal year 2016-2017, members gave \$25,000 to provide a Canine Exam Room in the new Training Facility. The following year, the group went on to raise more than \$31,000 to place an Autism Assistance Dog with a very special boy in our community.

Seeing the life-changing impact of their support has inspired them to raise the bar. This year's goal of \$40,000 will support the renovation of the original kennel and training facility. Built more than 30 years ago, outdated kennel doors and lighting create hazards for staff and volunteers.

Dogs for Better Lives invites you to join them in making a difference in the lives of individuals who experience hearing loss and deafness, families whose children have been diagnosed with autism, and licensed professionals.

For more information about Dogs for Better Lives, or to join this very special partnership, contact Development Manager Wanda Cockey at 541-826-9220 or by email at wanda@dogsforbetterlives.org.

Partnerships for Better Lives. Applaud them. Support them. Join them!

Executive Level

Brown & Brown Northwest Insurance
Coming Attractions Theatres
Ecluse Wines - Lock Vineyard
Harry & David
Jerry and Donnis Lausmann
Foundation
Kogap Enterprises
Little Caesar's Pizza
Mercedes Benz of Medford
Paul Smith, Nelson Maler and Norman
Fincher at Morgan Stanley

Senior Level

Ascentron
Banner Bank
Centria Healthcare LLC
Dixie Hackstedde, Principal
Broker, John L. Scott
Rogue Benefits Planning
RKD Alpha Dog Marketing, Inc.
Master Stitch Inc.
Pacific Office Automation

Partner

Advocate Insurance Services
BBSI
Cornelius Matteo Photography
DANCIN Winery
Elemental Graphic Design
Northwest Retirement Plans, Inc.
Pet Essentials
SkyOak Financial
Star Body Works
The Brand Build

Celebrating Founder's Day - Robin Dickson Remembers



Robin Dickson is founder Roy Kabat's daughter and successor CEO of Dogs for the Deaf. This past spring, Dogs for Better Lives celebrated Founder's Month. Robin shared stories of her father's early days before Dogs for the Deaf was formed and her involvement with this award-winning Assistance Dog organization.

Where it Began: Roy Kabat's Early Days

My father, Roy Kabat, was a handsome small-town boy from Winona, MN. He married my mother and, after being a radio operator on a ship in the Pacific during WWII, the lure of California drove them west. They lived on Catalina Island and in Santa Monica while Roy worked as a photojournalist.

Finances necessitated a move back to Winona for a few years where they both worked in a "soda fountain." Soon they were drawn back to California where Roy met Jimmy Wood, a successful event promoter in Southern California. Roy began working with Jimmy, promoting fairs, parades, and other events in the area. Through connections made from this work, Roy got involved with Louis Goebel and other people associated with Jungleland in Thousand Oaks, California. Roy eventually became the General Manager and part owner of Jungleland.

This was when he became involved in the animal industry. In the mid 50s, television was starting to "take hold" and the movie industry was growing. Jungleland was where most of the exotic animals used in movies and television lived and were trained. Animal trainers from all over the world worked there. Trainers and animals performed in daily shows for the crowds of visitors, and the



1978 Jeremiah & Roy Kabat

animals were also trained for specific scenes that were needed for movie and television work.

By the later 60s, Jungleland couldn't compete with Disneyland and other growing theme parks. The animals were auctioned off and Jungleland closed its doors.

Roy retired and moved to Oregon in 1971, taking two trainers and a few of the retired animals with him. Dr. John Sullivan from Southern Oregon University approached Roy about using his ranch to help with some research on taste aversion studies in wolves. The goal was to see if they could find a way to lessen the number of sheep being killed by wolves. Soon after, Roy formed a non-profit organization, Applegate Behavior Station, and the wolf research began. This work continued until the concept of Hearing Dogs came along.



Roy in Jungleland

The American Humane Association reached out to Ray for help training a dog to assist a deaf woman in Colorado. Roy returned to Oregon inspired by the freedom and independence the dog brought the woman. He pledged to bring those benefits to others and opened Dogs for the Deaf soon after.

Robin Joins Dogs for the Deaf

When my daughter and I moved to Oregon in 1981, Dogs for the Deaf (DFD) was in its infancy (4th year). Kennels had been added to the ground floor of an old dairy barn, and the hay loft had been turned into a training apartment with a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and living room. A double car garage had been converted into an office area. Former Jungleland trainers Don and Madeline McClennon, plus a trainer apprentice, were training dogs they found at local shelters. Finances were extremely limited. We did not even have a copy machine. When we needed to make any copies, we had to go to the local elementary school and use their copier. We were blessed to have a few volunteers who helped with typing letters and bookkeeping. Things were very primitive, to say the least.

I began training dogs, helping in the office, and doing demonstrations for groups who might be interested in helping DFD. It was amazing that so many of the skills I had learned during my life were able to be utilized within one mission—animal training, communication, business management, and public speaking. The early years were filled with struggles and



40th Anniversary in the Applegate

times of being laid off due to lack of funds, but also filled with the excitement of seeing another dog finish training and of finding a new donor or group interested in supporting DFD. I quickly adopted the philosophy that I was not “fundraising,” I was “friend raising.” When people heard about how these specially trained dogs made life-changing differences in the lives of the people who received them, they wanted to get involved—especially when these dogs had been rescued from shelters. It was a true win/win situation.

DFD participated in the first-ever Hearing Dog Symposium in 1983. This was the precursor of Assistance Dogs International (ADI). Prior to this, there was virtually no communication among various Assistance Dog organizations. The increased communication over the years has greatly improved the quality of Assistance Dog organizations worldwide. The quality of dog training and client care plus the overall professionalism of member organizations has improved exponentially because of ADI’s required standards. For me personally, it has been an honor to be involved in ADI, serving on the board and on various committees from the very beginning until just recently.

In 1984, Ethel Whittaker became the first non-family member of the DFD Board of Directors. Ethel had been a bookkeeper for Guide Dogs for the Blind and, after retiring to Oregon, had started volunteering at DFD. It was a positive business step to add Ethel to the board.

In 1985 we received our first large bequest. I was doing an out-of-town demonstration for a Good Sam Club event when my father called to tell me that DFD had received a \$50,000 bequest. Wow! That was huge and an epiphany for me at the same time. I realized that at the time, other than universities and hospitals, very few other types of non-profit organizations promoted bequests as a way of supporting their organizations. In discussing this with my father, he didn’t think it was a good idea. Not to be dissuaded, I decided to begin developing a program to “plant the seed” of bequest giving in our donors’ minds. This was done in a very low-key, sensitive way and eventually became the DFD Guardian Angel program. I have no doubt that this is one of the major reasons DFD has been able to succeed as it has, and the numbers stand for themselves.

My father died in 1986. At that time, we needed to either purchase his ranch or move so I began searching for property that would be more suitable for our needs. We were blessed to find the property outside of Central Point, Oregon and purchased it with funds from the 1985 bequest. Entering a period of huge growth, we determined that we would not borrow any money in the process. After building plans were developed, we started a capital campaign. When we raised enough for the first building, we started construction, moved in and worked out of that one building. When we had enough money for the second building, we began construction on it, and so on. Thanks to our board commitment and our donors' generosity, DFD never wasted any money paying interest on any loans. During this time, we were still training and placing the highest quality Hearing Dogs and providing lifetime support to every team we placed.

In 2002, DFD was one of the first five Assistance Dog organizations in the world to earn ADI Accreditation, complying with all ADI standards for dog training, support of clients, business practices, safety standards, etc. In 2003, DFD received its first 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator. This is the highest possible rating and is based on wise use of funds.

None of this progress would have been possible without dedicated staff, extraordinary volunteers, and faithful donors. The growth of DFD from a primitive "mom and pop" business to the professional and financially sustainable organization it became could not have been accomplished without many wonderful, hard-working people. There are two volunteers from my 32 years at DFD who stand out so much that I must recognize them. **James Wickre** is an attorney who helped my father form the organization that became DFD. From the very first paperwork until today, Jim is still helping DFD. For many years, he did this for no compensation at all. As we were asking him to do more and more, I finally talked him into accepting a \$100/month retainer. Over the years, I gradually increased that retainer, but the tiny amount he has been paid is a drop in the bucket for all he has done for DFD. **Dr. Brad Frank** opened his veterinary practice in Oregon in 1985. The next year I talked him into being the primary veterinarian for DFD. Brad agreed, but only at a greatly reduced rate, with lots of donated time thrown in. This greatly improved the veterinary care the dogs received. DFD is indebted to these two men, and I am blessed to have made two good friends, too.

It was truly a privilege to have been able to lead DFD for so many years, helping countless shelter dogs become highly trained professionals, seeing our clients gain so much confidence and joy, and being blessed with making so many good friends along the way. I was always committed to making sure that our mission was accomplished in a professional business-like manner and in the most cost-effective way possible.

Community Club Summer Highlights

For more than forty years, Good Sam chapters across the country have been close partners with Dogs for Better Lives. They have donated nearly \$5 million to support Dogs for Better Lives' mission, and we are forever grateful. Here are some fun highlights from Good Sam summer gatherings this past year—a great time was had by all! At the NorCal Rally held in the beautiful Casa de Fruta Resort in Hollister, Elvis and Marilyn truly shook things up! And at the Idaho Good Sam Rally held in Lewiston, DBL's Grants Associate Mary Rosebrook had the honor of presenting awards to the Idaho state and local chapters who gave the most to DBL.



Good Sam costume contest contenders at the Oregon State Good Sam Rally.



DBL's Corporate and Foundation Grants Associate, Mary Rosebrook, presents top awards to Idaho State Good Sam leaders.



Elvis is in the house with the "Lucky One's" GS Chapter at the NorCal Good Sam Rally.

DBL BEGINS WEST COAST EXPANSION

“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.”

-Benjamin Franklin



When Bryan Williams became Dogs for Better Lives' new CEO in August 2018, he came to realize that some changes needed to be made in order to meet the growing demand for Assistance Dogs. While we have always placed dogs with people in need nationally, we have remained with a single facility in southern Oregon for 42 years—until now. July 1, 2019 marks the beginning of the organization's growth with DBL's first-ever satellite office in the greater Seattle area.

"It quickly became apparent that the Board's directive to cost-effectively scale our program while not sacrificing the quality of the services we provide our clients created some unique challenges," stated Bryan. "We knew we couldn't rely on the status quo. The model we've identified, with staff closer to the population we serve and the volunteers who play a critical role in our success, will allow us to serve more people and drive down the financial burden of training and placing dogs. This is an incredibly exciting first step to a long journey of growing our programs which have been proven to change people's lives in a positive way."

Training and placing Assistance Dogs with their new partners is a lengthy process. It typically takes six months to complete Assistance Dog training and five to seven days to complete placement. The time required for placement ensures the new team is comfortable working together. However, when trainers are away from their other dogs in training, it lengthens the amount of time it takes those dogs to complete training. Having satellite offices throughout the country will eliminate this lost training time as satellite staff will now complete the placements. The trainers' sole focus will be on their dogs in training. This will also reduce the cost of travel, as dogs will be placed by satellite staff nearest to the location of the client.

DBL plans to introduce additional training facilities strategically located in different regions throughout the United States. Three to four satellite offices will accompany each of these regional training facilities. DBL anticipates the Seattle satellite office will prove itself as a scalable model and plans to replicate its success in several phases. First, additional satellite offices will cover the West Coast, then moving across the nation throughout the Midwest, South, and East Coast. This expansion is expected to take place over the span of many years.

With the addition of DBL's Autism Assistance Dog program in recent years, we have begun a foster puppy program. As we aim to help more children throughout the United States, we need dogs that can meet the strict requirements necessary to keep a child with autism safe. This type of dog cannot always be found in a shelter, which is why we need volunteers to assist in the upbringing of these puppies. Satellite offices in larger cities will allow us to reach more people willing to dedicate their time to raising a future Assistance Dog.

"As the Field Representative of the greater Seattle area, I'm most excited to grow our foster puppy program," says Jess Reichmuth, DBL's first satellite employee. "It's a joy to meet new people who are willing to commit a year to raising a puppy to help someone they will likely never meet."

The job functions for each satellite employee will vary slightly depending on the resources most available in each region, such as volunteer puppy raisers, dogs in shelters, and Assistance Dog teams. Jess continues, "In addition to expanding our puppy program, I've been enjoying making connections with local shelters to continue Dogs for Better Lives' mission of training rescue dogs and placing them as Assistance Dogs with our clients. My previous position with Dogs for Better Lives was as a trainer, so I'm excited to carry over some of my experience in working with clients to now support clients locally through progress reports and in-person follow-ups."

Jess moved with her partner and their four dogs to the greater Seattle area after training Assistance Dogs at Dogs for Better Lives for four years. She was chosen as DBL's first satellite employee because of her experience with training Assistance Dogs, raising future Assistance Dogs for much of her youth, and for her dedication to changing people's lives for the better.

We are so grateful to all those who have supported this expansion and have been a part of making it a reality. We hope you'll continue to follow us on this exciting journey.

- Nicole Tallman, Staff Accountant

Your Chance for a Better Life



Although it is something she did on a regular basis, Susan was again anticipating feelings of stress and anxiety. When your child has autism, the

weekly trip to the grocery store is no small task. However, this week it wouldn't just be Susan and her son, Luke. Chance, an Autism Assistance Dog, would be with them

as well. Chance has been trained to act as an anchor in the event that Luke bolts, yet he is so much more than that. With Chance by his side, Luke feels more calm and confident. Simply put, with Chance's help, the shopping trip was better. Life is better. Call to learn how an Autism Assistance Dog can help you.



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COVER STORY: DR. DANIELLE

LIFE WITH HEARING ASSISTANCE DOGS

I learned my hearing was a problem as a five-year-old doing a face-to-face hearing screen with a white-haired lady at my kindergarten class. Her expression and repeated commands of “be sure to raise your hand when you hear the beep,” told me that I was not doing it right. The teacher later gave me an envelope to take home to Mom. The letter said I needed to have further testing.

Being “sure about hearing the beep” would become a recurring theme for the rest of my life. Instantly replaying what was spoken, scanning my surroundings and brain for supporting or negating information and doing it faster to respond correctly in that window before my questioner made supporting or negating assessments about me became my life. I perfected it enough to make it through medical school with hearing aids though my hearing loss progressed from mild to moderate-severe by my mid-twenties.

Then at the beginning of residency, my apartment building burned down. Fortunately, my landlord lived there too and knew of my hearing problem. He banged on my window to get my attention. Even so, I was the last one out of the building and I knew I needed some help. I went with a friend from my local chapter of Self Help for the Hard of

Hearing (SHHH), now called Hearing Loss Association of America, to a national convention. There, I learned about Corky—a hearing dog trained by Dogs for the Deaf for Theresa Nelson. From that point forward, I wanted a hearing dog. But I needed a yard and time to train and bond. New problems came up first: going deaf and getting my first cochlear implant.

After finishing residency, I bought a home and applied for my first Hearing Assistance Dog. Chuckie, a border terrier cross, became my home hearing companion, quickly alerting me to fire alarm, buzzers, phone ring, name call, and doorbells. He was smart, quick, and loved being a team. I quickly realized he and I wanted to be a fully certified hearing dog team, and by the end of our first year we passed certification after moving from Statesboro, GA to Mooresville, NC.

Chuckie alerted me to calls to attend C-sections that I would have missed, kept me from burning lots of food, and helped my husband by doing name call alerts regularly. He quickly learned new sounds: the dryer and washer buzzers, boiling water, and the tea kettle. Chuckie’s hardest job, though, was



teaching me to advocate for our team and the needs of the hard of hearing. I was used to getting by without talking about my hearing loss or much else in public. Chuckie changed all that. He patiently waited while I explained to the grocery manager that he was not a pet and was licensed to be there, contrary to the older patron's complaints. Chuckie's chest out, nose high prance and "come-say-hi" expressions eased my jumble of embarrassed, angry, and sad emotions with these challenges to our public rights. Soon I was able to enjoy public conversations and dog stories—topics I could predict and thus hear and respond better to. We chaired the North Carolina Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing appointed by the NC Governor. In addition, Chuckie flew all over the country to medical



conferences championing the cause of Universal Hearing Screening for infants. I think Chuckie knew how much I would grieve him, and he carried on through a three-year training program called Somatic Experiencing about trauma healing during his golden years. Chuckie's intuition about me and that of my patients was amazing. He helped me learn the fine art of intervening to calm without adding more anxiety.

After his passing, I applied again to Dogs for the Deaf and received Ginger, a beautiful, calm black Labrador retriever who loved children and worked wonders with my autistic patients. She naturally helped me calm anxious nervous systems, which made her a favorite with the patients and medical offices where we worked. She would engage and play with toddlers down the hall while not moving from her lying position—wagging when they opened the door to peek-a-boo with her. Autistic patients who never talked asked all about Ginger, her vest, her leash, her nose and tail. Like Chuckie, Ginger soon picked up laundry buzzer sounds

and tea kettle alerts in addition to door knocks, name calls, buzzers, and fire alarms. She also took it upon herself to alert me to the office overhead paging system which I couldn't understand. Eventually, with her alert, I was able to understand what the overhead paging messages were. Ginger and I also trekked across state and country as Ambassadors for Dogs for Better Lives. She was unflappable with the travel and a natural entertainer. The bustle of O'Hare Airport at Christmas, the Saturday NYC Subway, and the Museum of Natural History didn't faze her calm and gentle nature. One of our favorite gigs was serving as a demonstration team for the Holly Woof Fundraiser sponsored by Betty White. Ginger became a well-loved staff member at the Salisbury Pediatric Associates, too. When she passed, our whole office grieved.

On my third dog application, I explained how Salisbury Pediatric Associates needed a dog, too. Our office of roughly fifty employees anxiously awaited my third Hearing Dog. Delight was our 2018 New Year's present. We all joyously participated in Delight's training to be my new Hearing Dog. She has risen wonderfully to the task. She alerts me to exam room knocks when the nurses knock, because I don't always hear them when changing cochlear implant stethoscope programs. My reluctant patients often warm up to an invitation to help me check Delight's ears. She is my trusty alarm clock and a model of good behavior for our families when her vest is on, and playful stress relief for all of us at vest-off break times. Now she too accompanies me across the state and the nation to our work as Ambassadors and Board Members for Dogs for Better Lives.

Dr. Rose completed her undergraduate studies at Salem College and medical studies at Medical College of Georgia followed by the completions of her internship and residency at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. Dr. Rose is an MD Physician and joined Salisbury Pediatric Associates in 2012. She has a special interest in special needs children and integrative medicine. Dr. Rose has studied with several Naturopathic physicians and integrates supplements, herbs and homeopathic treatment into her pediatric treatment plans. Dr. Rose lives in Mooresville, NC with her husband Cameron, Hearing Assistance dog Delight, and their cat Earl Gray.

FOSTER PUPPY PROGRAM

PEPPER'S PURPOSE

There's this moment when you look into the eyes of a puppy and just know: this puppy is going to do great things. Pepper, of course, was no exception. From the moment she arrived and throughout her puppy training, anyone who came into contact with her knew she was special.

Laurie, a volunteer puppy raiser, did a wonderful job raising this beautiful little girl. Once she graduated the puppy program, it didn't take long to determine that Pepper would be a perfect fit for our breeder program. After she cleared her health tests, Laurie's friend, Cat, offered to foster Pepper. It was the perfect situation for Pepper, as she was already familiar with Cat, her family, and her home. Everything just fell into place and we couldn't have asked for a better home for this special girl.

Laurie often stops by for a visit with her current foster puppy, Bliss. Together, Bliss and Pepper play around the yard and have a ball. Breeder caretakers and breeder dogs make it possible for us to continue to expand our ever-growing Autism Assistance Dog program. We couldn't do what we do without all of our amazing breeder caretakers and foster puppy raisers. They are an integral part of what we do and we appreciate all of their hard work and dedication. Along with Cat and Laurie, we are all very excited to see Pepper's puppies



- Hannah Crane, Foster Puppy Program Coordinator

"When I first met Pepper, she was fresh off the truck from California. She was tired and apprehensive, but I was in love. She was the cutest little black Lab butterball I had ever seen. She is such a lover and wants to please. As she began to grow and mature, I knew she was something special. She loves everyone she come in contact with. Since she was my second puppy to raise, I felt like I knew what it would be like to give her back for her extended training. Was I wrong. It was one of the hardest weeks of my life. She had a special place in my heart and she was taking part of it with her when she went back to DBL. When I found out that she was going to be part of the breeding program I was so excited. Why wouldn't you want 10 more just like her? I went to work on those that she had already touched so deeply. I texted with Cat for a bit about the possibility of her fostering Pepper and she was very excited about it. When I found out she was accepted as a foster for Pepper I was overjoyed. Not only would I still be able to see Pepper, but I would also be able to foster one of her puppies in the future. I am so excited about how this turned out. I know that Cat is going to love her with all her heart and so will the family. This process of raising puppies has been such a wonderful experience and I can't wait to raise one of my "grand-dogs!"



"I met Pepper when she was a few months old. Laurie was her puppy raiser. She was such a good little pup, and I knew she was going to make someone really proud one day. When I found out that Pepper needed a foster home because she was going to be the new breeder dog for DBL, I KNEW it had to be me!!! I couldn't wait to be her mom!

I am so excited to be a part of the Dogs for Better Lives family. I have made lifelong friends and I get to witness the amazing things these great people are doing for our community.

Oh and it was me, I am the one (one of many) who is so PROUD of Pepper. I am so blessed to be her foster mom!"

- Cat Q.

- Laurie T.

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

Brent's New-Found Freedom with Hearing Assistance Dog Floyd

In December 2018, I was teamed with a Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) Hearing Assistance Dog. Life really has not been the same since receiving Floyd. When DBL trainer Laura Encinas parked in our driveway and opened her back door, out bounded 72 pounds of well-trained Labrador retriever.

We met. He slurped. And it's been a wild but enjoyable ride ever since! This is our story since that chilly December day when Floyd traded the warm Pacific breezes and wet days of Oregon for the humid weather of Kentucky.

Up front let me tell you this—you become a dog handler by handling a dog every day, from arising to bedtime. You are going to make mistakes. Don't fret, the dog will catch each one of them.



But you will become a dog handler—which is entirely different from a pet owner.

Your mistakes will start when your DBL trainer hands you the leash. Recognize that a trainer has a finite amount of time during your placement visit and a long list to cover. A trainer expects to be worked hard during that time and you will need every minute of it.

But the in-home placement training is priceless. You can read the recommended books and a dozen others. You can (and should) talk to everyone you know who has a dog. But living with an Assistance Dog is simply not the same as a pet and it's the trainer's job to get you off on the right foot. Luckily for me and Floyd, my trainer did an excellent job at doing—well, her job! No sugar-coated praise for slipshod handling. No glowing “attaboys” for the human. Just good, unbiased feedback about how to live and work with an Assistance Dog.

As for the little things

When do you use “sit”? When do you use “stay”? Isn't “stay” implied by “down”? What's the difference between “come”, “free” and saying “here, Floyd” when trying to work through a doorway? The hand signals for “down,” “sit” and “stay” are different—I used a verbal “down” and gave the visible command for “sit” together interchangeably for two weeks after Laura left. Floyd obediently did what seemed natural which, about 70 percent of the time, was (lucky for me) what I wanted. Honestly, it's a wonder I didn't deprogram Floyd in those first few weeks.

By the end of January, Floyd and I had worked things out pretty well in terms of hand signals, verbal commands and our individual preferences between the two. But what Floyd worked out by the time my trainer departed our driveway was that he knew a lot more about being an obedient dog than I knew about being a dog handler.

But with priceless emails, phone calls, and the fantastic video conference sessions with DBL trainers and client services personnel, we made progress. In March, DBL personnel suggested it was time for Floyd and me (with an emphasis on me) to attend a six-week obedience class. That class proved to be a huge step forward—I was reminded what was expected behavior by someone trained to handle a dog. And Floyd figured out that I was almost as good a student as he—and he liked it. Dogs thrive on consistency and until I went through that class with a trainer one-on-one, my consistency was sometimes lacking.

As my consistency in giving and using commands and my rewards to Floyd for reinforcement of good behavior solidified, Floyd's performance improved daily. While you might think I'm saying Floyd's behavior was ever bad, it was not. I simply didn't know what to expect, nor how to elicit good performance day-in and day-out. However, from day one, Floyd's sound work was simply fantastic. He almost instantly restored a great deal of freedom to my lifestyle. That's what should be expected of well-trained Assistance Dogs. They give their handlers freedom to go about their lives with greater confidence at home and in public.

And I enjoyed that renewed freedom to move around the house without fear of a missed call or the unheard door-knock. For instance, the visits of two service people one week would have meant hovering within hearing distance of the outside doors—which would have confined me for some period before their anticipated arrivals until they actually made the scene. Even with hearing aids, door knocks were something I had to be close by to catch. But Floyd handled the knocks of both workers without issue. A tree removal team ran an hour late; I went about my normal housework back in the bedroom. They knocked; Floyd responded by touching me with his muzzle and off to the door we went. The second service man was more timely, hitting the door at his appointed time, but I chose to piddle with my ham radios in an adjacent room before his arrival. After only a short time with Floyd, I had complete confidence in Floyd's response to his trigger sounds and he did as trained. That's the performance level DBL dogs bring home. Before Floyd, I'd have parked myself in the front room and waited—not so patiently, as I'm a person who views being on-time as 30 minutes early.

The landline phone was a no-brainer for Floyd 98 percent of the time from day one and remains so today. The failures come if we're in my room in the house with the radios or noisemakers on and the phone rings 100 feet,

two French doors and four rooms away. But I'm learning to watch Floyd a bit out of the corner of my eyes, even if I'm on the indoor bike trainer with the TV blaring at my level. Floyd might not hear the phone ringing distinctly, but at times his ears will twitch, he might sit up and cock his head. I hit mute and then we are off to the races to the phone in the far end of the house. It's kind of interesting to chase a Labrador in four-paw drive on hardwood floors while wearing cleated bicycle shoes, but then he's comical on the wood floors anyway. I just add to the comedy and thankfully there's no hidden DBL cameras!

Again, that's freedom of not having to listen or worry about missed calls, door knocks and timers.

With my mother recuperating in our house from surgery this spring, she slept on the couch in front of the fireplace. Floyd sleeps in our bedroom some distance and a pair of French doors away. I worried about hearing Mom if she called out during the night. We tested Floyd's response to name calling by Mom twice, and he nailed both incidents. Done deal. Mom was instructed to call my name two or three times repeatedly if she had needs during the night. Floyd dutifully got me up, giving me the freedom to sleep in my bed rather than in a recliner in the room with her.



Again, that word—freedom. To not have to worry about her in that regard. Is he trained to respond to Mom in that fashion? Certainly not, though he's trained for name call by my wife. Does he do good enough? Well, two tests and subsequent trial runs and he was good enough to suit me.

And then there's the always ready run/walk partner with no phone calls or texts to juggle schedules. Now I get

myself dressed, get Floyd to the door, potty, load and find a place to park, either near the park trailhead, or in town. We unload and then we're off at whatever pace we choose to set. The three-, four-, or five-mile outing only takes a couple of tugs on the leash, a handful of "leave-its" and we're back at the car all the better for it. Floyd's contribution is his attention to our surroundings. There are no sounds to work, but watching his eyes, ears and shoulders tunes me into what's going on around us. Again, I have the freedom to get out and go with fewer concerns.

Maybe I have my hearing aids in during these outdoors outings and perhaps not, if the wind's playing heck with the microphones. Either way, I know Floyd will be listening to everything that comes within hearing, eyesight or nose range and I don't worry about anything till it comes inside our little sphere. Draw a 50-foot circle around us—inside that, Floyd misses nothing. After nine months, I've learned to pay as much attention to Floyd's body language as he pays to mine.



Floyd has meant one truly huge change for me—dropping my cloak of invisibility in public.

In public, I've discovered a dog in a blaze orange service vest instantly strips away my ability to blend in. There's

nothing unnoticed about entering a room with 75 pounds of black Lab in an orange vest at your side. Nothing. Period. And poof, instantly we're the conversation topic of the room. It's the first time in my life I've ever turned heads on entry!

But there's a side benefit—people do give way slightly in many cases. More courtesies are extended as people offer to hold doors or carry a tray. There are a lot of dog people out there and they all want to know about Floyd, so you strike up some new conversations and relationships. But go unnoticed? Not likely!

Despite a heavy public agenda during my placement training, I still had concerns about taking Floyd in public. And we had some exciting moments, to say the least, as I learned how to handle Floyd. But those days are past and today we go everywhere together. Doctor visits, library outings, sporting goods stores, the grocery, Walmart, camping—you name it, we go together. Want me? You get Floyd along for the ride.

But at the end of the day, while counting your blessings to have an Assistance Dog, while offering up thanks to the thousands of puppy raiser hours and the DBL trainers' work, remember that an Assistance Dog, no matter how well-trained, is not a robot. They can only be as good as the polishing work with their handler. It's a daily thing—you work the dog and you both get better every day. You get the restored freedom, the sound notifications, the affectionate looks and nuzzles with that big, wet nose.

And the dog? Well, he gets the love and affection for a job well done along with treat rewards. He gets the security of a good home, a food bowl and, at the end of the day, a human to call his very own.

Truthfully, I'm not sure who's on which end of the leash.

- Brent, Hearing Assistance Dog Client and DBL Ambassador

Brent and Hearing Assistance Dog Floyd became a team in December 2018. They travel quite often and Brent's wife Peggy reports that "Floyd is the most laid-back dog I've ever been around - he just goes with the flow no matter what Brent asks him to do." DBL Ambassadors Brent and Peggy are active volunteers in their community and are committed to sharing the Dogs for Better Lives story.

STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

Kaylynn Shaw

I'm Kaylynn Shaw, a kennel technician here at Dogs for Better Lives. I help with the daily cleaning and care for all of the DBL dogs and even our two resident cats.



Kaylynn with Gunner

I learned my unconditional love for animals from my late mother. I remember being maybe five or so and hearing that my mom had a surprise for me. When I arrived, I met my first love, Chance. He was a sweet dalmatian boy with one blue eye and one brown eye. From then on, my love for animals

exceeded my love for anything else. Most of my life, I have had pets—dogs, cats, hamsters, even a bunny.

I know my destiny in life involves working with dogs in some way or another. I've worked for restaurants, gas stations, as a nanny, and in a clinic. I never felt like I was doing what I loved, so I continued to search for a new career. When I came across Dogs for Better Lives, I instantly knew this was the place for me. My dream has always been to buy my own property and rescue dogs that would otherwise sit in shelters or worse, be let go due to overcrowding. This organization takes that dream so much further by training them to become service dogs. If they don't successfully complete the training, they still get a forever home and never end up back in the shelter.

I love this organization and my new goal now is to work my way up to become a trainer so I can experience the next step of bringing a life-changing friend to a client and watching their bond grow. It is so amazing to know this is a true non-profit organization that runs solely on donations from amazing people. To top it all off, because of those donations, we don't charge our clients a cent.

Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life!

Danielle Cloutier



Danielle with Chester

I'm Danielle Cloutier, Kennel Technician at Dogs for Better Lives. I work my hardest to put the dogs' health and safety first. I was born in Salem, Oregon and for most my life I have lived in Medford, Oregon. I have always loved and cared for animals and growing up I had several pets. Currently, I have a 6-year-old Rottweiler/border collie mix named Chester and an 11-year-old cat named Smokey.

I knew I wanted a career working with dogs when I got my first job at a dog boarding business. I came to Dogs for Better Lives with three years of experience working with dogs, including bathing and grooming. Being with dogs every day really touched and opened my heart. The impact they have on my life is so powerful and outstanding that now I dream of becoming a Certified Assistance Dog Trainer. I am blessed to be a part of this journey and career. My biggest goal in life is to change a dog's life—and a person's life—forever and working at Dog for Better Lives is fulfilling that goal!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Pat Spohn

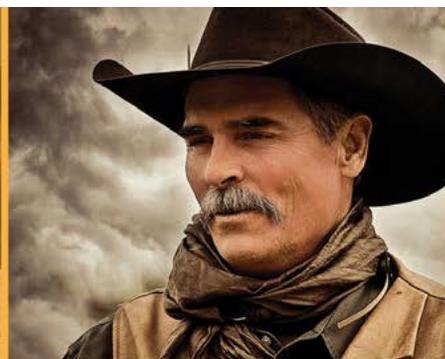


I was born and raised outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I ended up on the West Coast by way of Texas, Georgia, and California. After losing my job in the Bay Area, I decided to make southern Oregon my retirement home. I bought a house and moved to Oregon in 2003. I worked for a financial firm until I reached my full retirement age in 2014.

I was familiar with DBL from magazine ads and from an acquaintance who was a volunteer dog walker. I decided that when I retired, I would volunteer as a dog walker. I love dogs, spending time with them and taking them for walks. Watching them with their trainers as they become awesome Hearing, Autism Assistance, or Facility dogs is so rewarding. I love to follow up with the trainers to learn about the success the dogs have with their new owners.

In 2016, I started fostering for DBL. I fostered a dog that was returned at 14 years old. I loved giving her a loving, quiet home until we had to say goodbye to her in 2018. I've fostered several other dogs since then. In October of 2018, the dog I was fostering (named Toddles) was released from the program, so I adopted him. It gives me so much joy to give these dogs a happy, loving home, whether it is temporary or permanent.

Getting to know the dogs, the trainers, and the wonderful kennel staff is all part of the experience at DBL. It's a wonderful feeling to know the contributions made as a volunteer help DBL achieve their mission.



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CLIENT'S CORNER

Never Be Shy About Traveling with a Service Dog

While planning a cruise with a port of call in Cartagena, Colombia, I emailed the National Aviary of Columbia to see if they would allow my hearing dog, Trooper, to visit on a guided tour from the ship. Ordinarily, I'd avoid taking a dog to such a biologically sensitive venue, even though I'm an avid bird photographer. Comments on the internet, however, suggested to me that the park featured several small protected enclosures with a path winding around them. It seemed that Trooper might be able to wait outside the enclosures with my wife, Debby, while I went in with a camera. The encouraging Spanish-accented response:



"We are happy that you are coming to visit us and we want to offer the best possible experience for you and your service dog. You will be the first person with service dog that visits us, and since dogs are predators to birds, the behavior of the birds will change. We have three immersion aviaries where the dog will have to stay outside. We will make sure one of our employees is with you at all times. If you can tell us what is your disability so we can plan something to help you, that will be great.



We want to know your expectations, and what kind of experience you want to have during your visit so we can fulfill them the best of our ability."

That certainly was friendly. Even friendlier was the reception when Trooper, Debby, and I finally arrived.

A tall Colombian veterinary student named Bernest Castro Arrieta was assigned as our minder, to yank us out of trouble if trouble appeared. It turned out that a single long

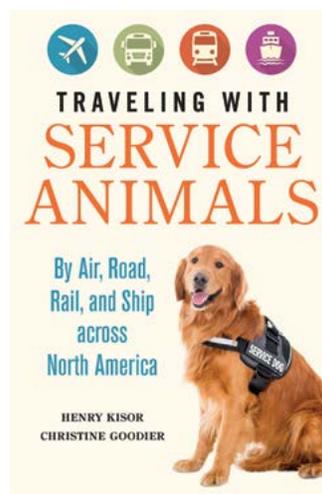
path wound through, not around, the linked "immersion aviaries" through which visitors could walk, but we were not asked to stay outside.

Bernest was as solicitous of Trooper as he was of the birds. The temperature was in the humid mid-90s and the gravel path reflected the heat, so the young vet hopeful not only made sure Trooper had plenty of water but also examined the pads of his paws to make sure they were not burned.

As for the birds, they ignored Trooper, and Trooper ignored them...until the party arrived at an outdoor pen, protected from tourists by metal webbing, where several huge emus ruled the roost. Upon spotting Trooper in our party, the emus erupted in anger and followed, honking all the way, as Bernest hustled us down the path out of sight.

Afterward, many photographs of us were taken, some by delighted aviary staff, the latter presumably for publicity purposes. The staff was not bothered by the emus' reaction to Trooper—those birds can be cantankerous—but were more concerned about the dog's well-being. (He didn't seem to mind.) The lesson: Even if a visit somewhere may not at first sound like a good idea, investigate. You might be surprised.

- Henry Kisor, *Dogs for Better Lives Client*



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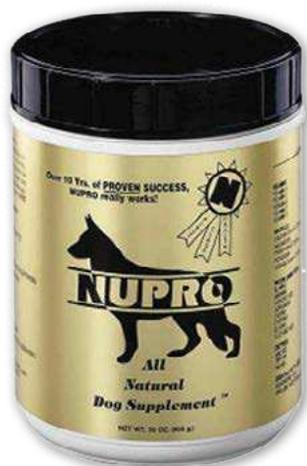
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“I want to help people

who are Deaf or who have hearing loss to know a greater freedom and sense of safety and independence.”

Ila is a retired gym teacher who worked with children with special needs. She experienced first-hand the profound impact a Hearing Dog can have on people’s lives and knew she wanted to support Dogs for Better Lives.

That’s why Ila has decided to leave Dogs for Better Lives a gift of charity in her will.

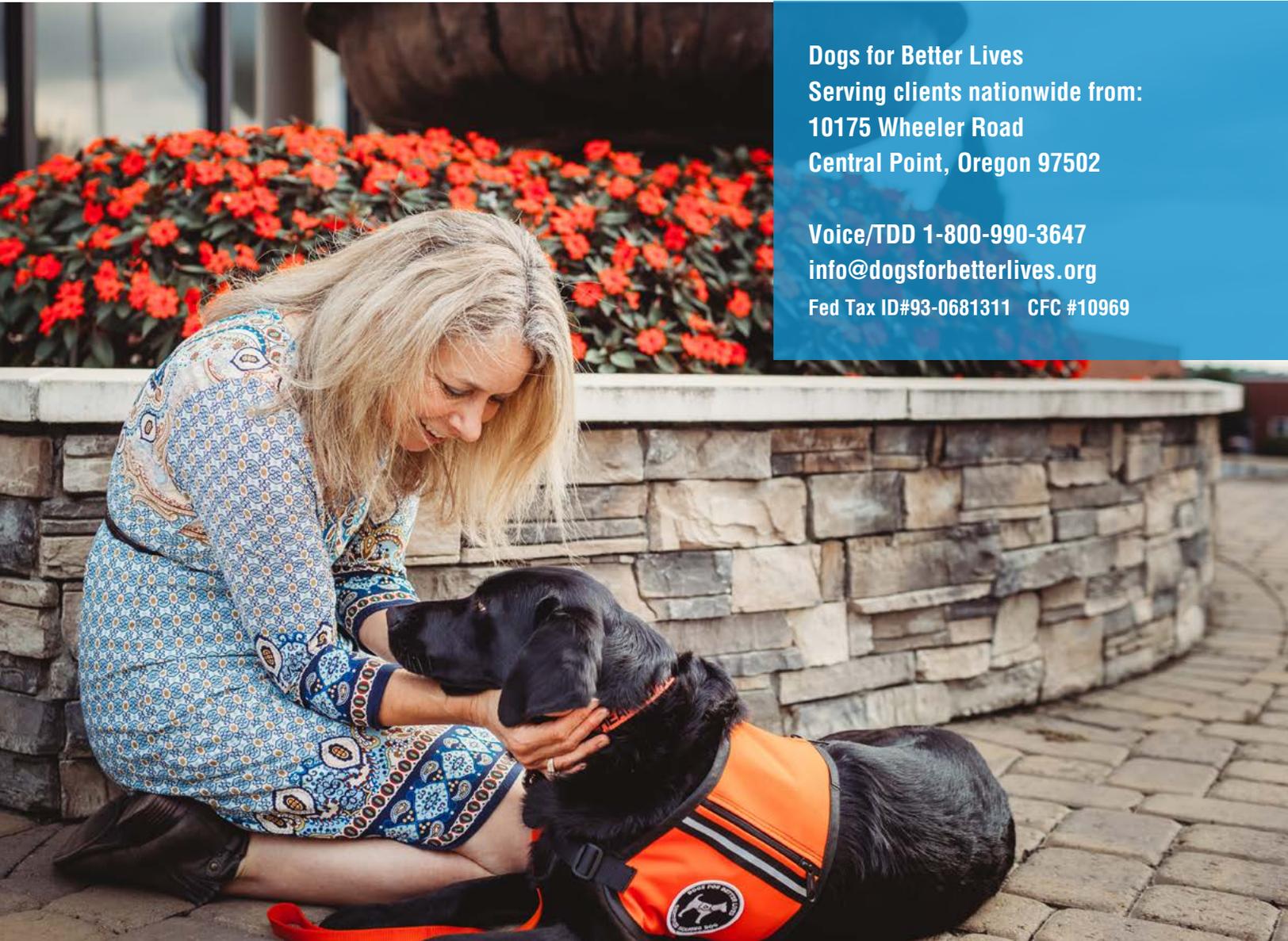
Please consider including Dogs for Better Lives in your will or future plans.

Contact Wanda for more information, (800) 990-3647.





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