



Tails and Tales

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EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS

by Gina Melasecca

Lori Breece has been with UDS for 14 years and wears many hats. She is the Program Manager for the Service Dogs, Executive Assistant to Bill Kepner, provides support to the Board of Directors, provides leadership to the administrative staff, and sometimes even fills in at the front desk.



Lori doesn't do it alone. She believes that UDS wouldn't have its growth or continued success if it weren't for the dedicated employees and volunteers. "I have strong teams, they know what needs to be done and they do it. I start my day around 6:30am until 5pm; there is always something that needs attention, responding to emails, returning calls to a prospective client or working with people on a new event," she says. Lori also attends interviews for Facility Dogs and says she enjoys talking to prospective clients. "I enjoy hearing how they think a Service Dog will help them, while I know a Service Dog will change their life and then being part of that amazing process. I have seen miracles through this amazing program!"

In her 14 years, Lori has seen a lot of positive changes in the Service Dogs program. Just in the past few years alone, she says the program has doubled in size thanks to the Pups in Prison program. "United Disabilities Services has changed incredibly over the past 14 years, however, our mission continues to be helping people with disabilities and the elderly by enhancing abilities and changing lives," she says.

When asked what she enjoys most about her position, she said, "Our mission and the fact that every single person in this organization is tied to changing the lives of someone in need. That is a pretty powerful reason to come to work each day. I respect the people I work with and I love our mission. I hope UDS is the place I retire from one day."

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for your pet loving friends?**

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Services – click link to order**

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SAFETY!

FIRST!



Some Unexpected Holiday Pet Hazards To Watch Out For

Article provided by wikiHow

Some pets, particularly young, energetic ones, will make merry with the Christmas decorations. Glittery, dangling, sparkling ornaments and other decorations can be too much for a curious pet to resist. Here are some suggestions that will allow your pets to join in the holiday fun this year, while avoiding any trips to the emergency vet.

1. Holly, mistletoe, and poinsettia plants are poisonous to dogs and cats. So these plants may be best kept in an area that your pet cannot reach.
2. Burning candles should be placed on high shelves or mantels, out of your pet's way.
3. Any exposed indoor or outdoor lighting wires should be taped to the wall, staked to the ground or moved out of reach of your pets in order to prevent any accidental electrocutions or fires.
4. Curious pets may attempt to climb or play around the bottom of your Christmas tree. To avoid injuries and to prevent it from falling, you may want to place the tree in a corner or tether it to the wall.
5. Tinsel, ribbons, bows, tree needles and garlands can be enticing to pets. If ingested, they can potentially block a pet's intestines, which is generally only remedied through surgical means.



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Lorrie Snyder Trainer

By Gina Melasecca

What is your favorite part about training service dogs?

My favorite part in a service dog's training is when a service dog makes the transition from doing skills just because he learned them, to doing the skills because he "gets it"- the understanding that his person *needs* him to do it. That never gets old for me.

What are your favorite commands to train?

Some of my favorite commands to teach are Back, Hold, Tug, and of course, My Lap/Snuggle!

Do you have a favorite story or moment about a time a dog helped their consumer, or how a consumer's life changed when they got their dog?

I have so many favorites, yet I think one of those favorite stories is still in progress. We have a young man who waited 3 years for his dog and was so patient in the waiting.. He gained a useful mantra over that time that most everyone he meets will hear him say – "It's a process!" He lives by that with his service dog even now and with life in general. He is an inspiration to me.





Our Gracious Donors

By Jen Beattie

Don Moore is a member of the Central Pennsylvania Region Porsche Club of America. He is one of 10 members of their Charity Committee. In 7 years the Porsche Club has sponsored 5 dogs: Renner, Rader, Trooper, Axel, and most recently, Kolben. Renner and Rader are currently placed, each helping an individual in their daily lives. Trooper has been matched with a young man and is currently finishing the last steps of Service Dog Training. Axel is in transition to secondary training, and little Kolben is just beginning his journey as a service dog in training.

What is Porsche Club of America?

Porsche Club of America is an organization comprised of Porsche and car enthusiasts. An individual must own a Porsche to join. Nationwide there are approximately 80,000 members, 400 of which are members of the local chapter.

When did you get involved with the Porsche Club of America?

Don joined the club over 10 years ago. He is the current chair and founder of the Central PA Regional Charity Committee.

What attracted you to this organization in particular?

Don's love of cars, specifically Porsche, and racing drew him to the club.

What are some of the club activities and what do they involve? The Central Pennsylvania Regional Porsche Club holds many activities annually. Each April they hold the Worlds largest Porsche swap meet at the Hershey Giant Center Parking Lot. The event is host of 7,000 to 10,000 car lovers and enthusiasts. The club also attends races, holds an annual crab fest, in addition to concourse shows to display their cars.

What motivates you to stay involved? Being able to see the dogs they sponsor, get updates on their progress, and the impact they have on the individuals they are placed with encourages ongoing involvement in the UDS Service Dog Program.

Why does the Club sponsor service dogs in training? Is there someone or something specific that has attracted the club to UDS Service Dogs? Don's step-daughter, Kristie suggested the contribution to UDS Service Dog Program. As an employee of UDS Kristie knew the impact Service dogs have on the lives of individuals. Kristie is the current puppy raiser of Kolben.

What other organizations or causes do you support? The Club breaks down their charitable support into 4 main categories:


- Auto School Scholarships
- Disease and Research Support
- Service Dog sponsorship
- Homeless and Underprivileged

Each year the Club chooses 9-12 organizations from a list comprised of member suggestions.

What do you hope the organization will achieve in the near future? In the long term?

The hope is continued support of worthwhile organizations such as UDS Service Dogs.

Thank you to Don Moore for taking the time to discuss the Central Pennsylvania Porsche Club's generous support of UDS Service Dogs.





	Pressure	<p>In some way, the handler is trying to insist, force, compel, coerce, or cajole the dog into performing. This can be a significant stress on the dog, causing her to either become inhibited and shut down, or frustrated and increase her activity.</p> <p>The use of food, praise, lures, and “cheerleading” can be meant kindly as support and encouragement, but for many dogs becomes PRESSURE.</p> <p>Generally speaking, too much PRESSURE makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for a dog to learn</p>	
	Body Language	<p>At all times, your body language provides important information for the dog. When offering feedback (praise or discouragement), be sure your entire body, voice and actions tell the dog how pleased (or displeased) you are with him. For hand signals, be sure the only body language used is what you intend.</p>	
	Compression	<p>A dog who is feeling pressured, unsure, anxious, or afraid will compress his body. The dog becomes lower to the ground, may hunch his body, tighten or even tuck his tail, lower his head, and pull his ears back. This may be very mild or severe. Compression is a sign that the dog needs help.</p>	
	Inhibited	<p>passively avoidant – avoidance, compression, withdrawal, displacement activity such as avoidance sniffing and/or quitting as a response to stress</p>	
	Scavenging	<p>investigating or picking up random small items on floor such as crumbs, pills, leaves, food, trash</p>	

How often to bathe a dog depends on his breed, coat quality, skin needs and activity level. So, how often should you bathe your dog?



Rub a
dub dub!

1. When he smells. It's an easy rule of thumb. If your dog smells bad, beyond just normal dog smell, it's time for a bath!
2. Consult the professionals. Talk to a professional groomer. She has the knowledge and experience with different breeds and pups so she can help you understand what schedule will be best for your dog's health.
3. Medical reasons. If your dog has skin issues, he may be prescribed medicinal shampoo. Riggins used this for a couple of years and it was an amazing solution for his itchy skin. Follow your vet's directions when using medical shampoo. It will usually require washing more frequently than you are used to and spending more time with a wet, soapy dog as the medicine works its magic!
4. Pay attention to your dog's skin. If your dog's skin gets dry and flaky, you are most likely bathing too often and stripping out important oils from his coat.
5. Double-coated breeds. Pups with double coats like Samoyeds, Alaskan Malamutes and Chow Chows, will most likely need less frequent bathing but more brushing to keep their coats healthy and clean.
6. Oily-coated breeds. Basset Hounds, for example, tend to have oily coats. These pups may require bathing as frequently as once a week.
7. Short-haired dogs and dogs with water repellant coats. Weimaraners and Dalmatians tend to need very few baths as they can regulate their natural oils without much help.



Dogs that Save People

IdaMae Devers

A dog is an owner's best friend. Our dog's love is unconditional and they seem to know when we are in danger, when we are happy, and when we are sick. Our dog's loyalty is incredible and some of our pups instinctively help others. Dogs are brave we have all seen the heroics of dogs such as Lassie on television how she saved her adopted family from many sticky situations. But the heroics of dogs are not confined to just your television screen. A hero is defined as "someone who selflessly comes in with a helping hand-or paw – for anyone who's facing a peril." The relationship between dogs and humans goes back millennia. The remains of the earliest traceable domesticated dog were found during World War I, though it wasn't until scientists revealed that this mandible was a direct ancestor of modern domesticated dogs that lived around 14,500 years ago. After centuries upon centuries of selective breeding, dogs are now the most abundant terrestrial carnivores on the planet and come in all manners of shapes, sizes, and colors. Whether young, elderly, blind, scared or hurt, dogs have repeatedly taken split-second action to rescue people. Most times, the very person who rescued them is the person the dog has rescued. Dogs have saved people from car accidents, house fires, near-drowning and overseas combat; countless humans owe their lives to the bravery and determination of their dog, a neighbor's dog or at times a four-legged stranger.

I could not begin writing this article without first sharing the ways our pup Wyatt has touched lives as a working therapy dog at Philly Family Life Counseling, LLC in Philadelphia, PA. A little bit about Wyatt, Wyatt is a gentle, responsive, and highly trained Golden Retriever, born December 28, 2015. Shortly after his birth, Wyatt began his training in the United Disabilities Services (UDS) Dog training program in Lancaster, PA:
<http://www.udservices.org/services/service-dogs>

"UDS Service Dogs are trained from pups for over two years by a team of dedicated volunteers and professionals to help people who have a mobility disability live fuller lives, and also trained to work in schools with children who have Autism." Wyatt brings a reassuring calming presence, a tactile experience, laughter, and emotional connectedness in the counseling/coaching relationship and often functions as a co-clinician with Dr. Gene Devers.

In order to share some of PFLC's client experiences with Wyatt, Dr. Gene and I discussed my speaking to some clients of the practice with their permission. Over the Thanksgiving Holiday I had the pleasure of being able to speak to a wonderful group of young folks to discuss how Wyatt has affected their lives.

As this group and I sat in the waiting room and I began speaking with the folks present I observed what Wyatt does for this group of folks that come to speak with and gain guidance not only from Dr. Gene but also from the gentle presence of Wyatt. I watched Wyatt as he interacted with all the folks in the group while I was speaking with them with his gentleness and his sense that at that moment the person speaking needed him by their side applying gentle pressure to a leg or his being available for petting as these folks were speaking to me.

As I went around the room many of the comments were similar, there was a clear common theme among the responses I was receiving from this group;

-- "I am afraid of dogs, all dogs but I love Wyatt. He takes my anxiety away and makes me feel safe. I would love for him to come live with me in 15 years. When I was looking for a therapist, I went to a different one first, that was not working out, I started looking online and found Wyatt. No matter how down I am Wyatt always puts a smile on my face."

-- "Wyatt is calmer than most big dogs, he's comforting"

--"Wyatt makes me happy"

--"Wyatt talks without words; he senses how you feel"

Wyatt is a hero due to the comfort he brings to so many that have taken the time to come to Philly Family Life Counseling, LLC to work with Dr. Gene and Wyatt.

As many remember 9/11 you may remember another Golden Retriever, Roselle, her owner Michael Hingson is blind. He went to the office on the 78th floor of the North tower of the World Trade Center and as Michael worked his guide dog, dozed by his feet.

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Many of us remember that on this day at 8:46 a.m., a boom rocked the building, and Michael grabbed Roselle's harness, trusting that she would lead him out of danger. As they navigated their way to a stairwell, "Forward." Michael instructed, and they descended the first of the 1,463 steps to the lobby. About 10 floors the stairwell grew crowded and hot, fumes from jet fuel were making it hard to breathe. During this descent a woman became hysterical, yelling that they would not make it, Roselle nudged the woman until she began petting the dog, the woman was able to calm herself and keep walking down the stairs.

Around the 30th floor, firefighters encountered Michael on their way up, each stopping to offer assistance, Michael declined but let Roselle be petted, thus providing many of the firefighters with what would be their last experience of unconditional love. It took about 45 minutes for Michael and Roselle to reach the lobby and another 15 minutes to emerge outside to a scene of chaos. As the South Tower began to collapse, police yelling for everyone to run, Michael kept a tight grip on Roselle's harness, using a gentle voice and hand commands as they ran to the street opposite the crumbling tower. Hours later, Michael and Roselle made it home safely and, in the months, following Michael became a spokesperson for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Together he and Roselle spread their message of trust and teamwork. In 2004, Roselle developed a blood disorder; she retired from guiding and touring three years later and died in 2011. After Roselle's death Michael wrote "I've had many other dogs, but there is only one Roselle."

Finn a German Shepherd Mix that was adopted from a shelter in North Carolina was riding in his owners' car when they were involved in a bad accident. Finn's owner suffered a broken pelvis, foot and ribs and Finn broke his leg. Despite this, Finn managed to crawl out of the wreckage and run to the highway where he grabbed the attention of passersby who he led back to the wrecked car. The owners' boyfriend tried to carry Finn to safety but he wouldn't let them until his person was in the ambulance. Both Finn and his owner survived this accident and when they were able to see each other for the first

time both hobbled to one another his owner sobbing and Finn whining, they are still together today.

Kelsey is a golden retriever; in the winter of 2017 a man slipped in the snow in the Michigan wilderness and broke his neck. As he lay paralyzed he believed he was fated to freeze to death. Kelsey his golden retriever was determined to save him. Kelsey lay on top of her owner to keep him warm for 19 hours, barking incessantly until help arrived. Her owner had lost consciousness, Kelsey did not give up and her owner is alive today due to her persistence. In the spring of 2018 a Yorkshire terrier named Jazzy made the leap from rescue dog to rescuer. When Jazzy's diabetic owner fell unconscious, she tried to wake him by nudging his chin barking frantically. This alerted the man's mother, who was able to wake him before he went into diabetic shock; Jazzy's owner is alive because of this sweet little pup who he rescued.

Then there is Peanut, Peanut endured appalling abuse before being adopted into a loving home, in 2017 Peanut went from rescued to rescuer. That year Peanut's frantic barking alerted her owners to something outside their Michigan home. Following Peanut out into the cold, they found a hypothermic, 3 year old girl, a stranger near death; she had wandered away from an abusive home of her own. When first responders arrived at the house, the traumatized girl reportedly mouthed the word "doggie." Peanut saved this little girl from both freezing and her abusive home once first responders took her to safety.

Heroic dogs are not limited to specific breeds or specific training; there are many stories that have touched my heart as I researched to write this article. In their staunch devotion to their owners, dogs tend to be protective of their entire family, as well as having instincts to help human beings, they save lives as well as comfort strangers. Scientists have acknowledged that most animals have the ability to feel emotion in some way. A tremendous amount of research has been focused on how animals think and feel and the possibility that they possess reason and morals. We may never know what motivates animals when they go out of their way to save people, but in these moments, it's hard not to see striking evidence of empathy, love, and perhaps a basic understanding of life.



Fun Ways To Include Your Pets In Your Holiday Activities This Year

Many people consider their pets to be part of the family, so when it comes to Christmas festivities you might want to include your pet as well. Here are some simple ways to include your pet in the Christmas celebration. (Results: Google search)

1. Include them in your family's Christmas photo or card. Just have a member in your family hold the animal or get the animal to stand next to someone in the picture.
2. Hanging up some stockings with their name on it can also be a nice addition.
3. Dress your pet to make them appear more festive. For example, you could have your dog wear a Christmas collar, a festive bandanna or put a red ribbon around your fish tank.
4. Give your pet a gift. While everyone is opening presents, give your pet a gift, such as a bone for a dog or a toy for a cat. It is also fun to wrap your gift for a dog, sometimes they will even unwrap it themselves. When wrapping a gift for your pet, make sure the wrapping doesn't have anything that they may be able to swallow. Tissue paper can be a safe alternative.
5. Have your children create an ornament with their pet's picture on it. Take a photo of your pet, then find a small frame with a hook so that you can hang it on the tree, or make one from scratch. During the holiday season, craft stores have small decorations that you can glue to the frame.
6. Make a donation to UDS Service Dogs in memory of any past pets that you wish to honor.



the joy of



giving

There are many opportunities to volunteer with the UDS Service Dog Program. Consider donating some of your time today.

- **Puppy Homes** – Give us a few months of your time, patience and love to raise and help train a puppy.
- **Dog Sitters** – Provide a short respite for Puppy Home people by keeping their pups while they're away from home.
- **Puppy Pals** – Assist a Puppy Home by playing with, exercising and training a puppy.
- **Special Events Volunteers** – Help out at Service Dog special events, shows and fundraisers.
- **Volunteers in training classes**- Assist with training one time per week
- **High School Senior Projects**– The perfect community service senior volunteer project for dog-loving high schoolers – raising a UDS Service Dog puppy! This rewarding project can actually be started in your Junior year.
- **Kennel Care Program**- Help exercise our dogs; take them for a walk, throw ball with them or brush them. Parents and children are invited and encouraged to get involved. Complete an application and then attend our next scheduled Volunteer Orientation. Contact: Marlise Mellinger Marlisem@udservices.org (717) 397-1841
- **Charitable Giving**- Contact Lori Breece, Program Manager, UDS Service Dogs Office (717)715-8753

UDS Service Dogs thanks you for all of your support! Happy Holidays!