



Quest

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSISTANCE DOG INSTITUTE

Helping Dogs Help People

Fall 2007

Volume 17 No. 1

Autumn offers a paw-of-thanks to John, an Iraq War combat veteran. John, who provided key insights for our program, is no longer on active duty.



Paws for Purple Hearts

Healing our returning servicemen by teaching those with PTSD to train service dogs for those with physical disabilities.

BY: RICK YOUNT, DIRECTOR OF THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

A newfound urgency has led to the creation of our Paws for Purple Hearts (PPH) program. More than 1.5 million servicemen and women have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan to face the perils of warfare. According to the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), over 29,000 of those troops have been wounded in action.

The problems do not end with physical wounds. At least 45,521 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans had been treated for possible Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at a VA hospital or Vet Center. PTSD can be devastating for veterans and their families. Anger, sleeplessness, depression, hypervigilance, emotional isolation, family problems, alcohol and drug abuse and even suicide can be the ramifications of PTSD.

A NEW MISSION FOR OUR DOGS

Building on the time-honored tradition of veterans helping veterans, Paws for Purple Hearts engages servicemen diagnosed with PTSD in a mission to train service dogs as part of their rehabilitative therapy. Training service dogs provides a way for veterans with PTSD to practice emotional regulation and give their days focus and purpose. The dogs help to facilitate social relationships with members of the community since a critical element of training is properly socializing the puppies and practicing their training skills in public.

The military ethos of holding oneself responsible for the wellbeing, health, and safety — even the lives — of fellow soldiers and marines is deeply ingrained in servicemen who have seen battle. Soldiers returning from Iraq or Afghanistan are

see PPH page 6

INSIDE

IN QUEST OF	2
TRIXIE'S CHALLENGE GRANT	3
GRADUATES	4 & 5
ADI TEAMS WITH RED CROSS	5
COBY RICHARDS' LEGACY	6
MEOW MOMENTS	7
CHILDREN'S VILLAGE	8

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In Quest Of

BY: DR. BONNIE BERGIN



Of late I have been asking myself what am I in quest of. One answer continues to hold me hostage these many years later — *the dog and his potential*. No end to that potential seems to be in sight.

Thus I try and fail to come to terms with the adult (2+ years of age) dog's strong, lithe, energetic, coordinated, neuro-muscularly developed body; his responsible, responsive, self-aware, self-restrained, mature mind; his well-developed, finely honed instinctual reactions; his unsurpassed ability to "fit-in" to our lives; all encasing the reasoning mind equivalent to that of a human 2-3 year old's cognitive ability.

Is this a dichotomy? The adult dog's amazing physical capabilities far surpass the clumsy, awkward body of a toddler still working on bowel and bladder control. And a comparison with the adult dog's maturity of mind leaves the impetuous and self-involved "terrible two-year old" at a distinct disadvantage. A child that young is certainly not a candidate to be left home alone to "take care of the household" responsibilities often handed to an adult dog.

So how do we blend, meld, link or integrate the concept of an adult dog's equivalent

human 2-3 year old cognitive-reasoning mind with all the expectations, responsibilities and roles we've pressed upon the dog over the last 14,000 to 100,000 (whichever is to be believed) years. One thing seems certain, we must divorce *cognitive-reasoning ability* from *maturity* (mental, physical, psychological, perceptual, instinctual and emotional). While a mature mind and body enjoy the privileges of individual evolution and experience, strategic thinking is a product of those experiences coupled with cognitive-reasoning ability.

That would suggest that an adult dog is not a child-like animal with a child's mind, but rather an adult mind with limited reasoning power that works in concert with his mature sensibilities — intermixing each and all. To what extent and of what percentage each is blended is undoubtedly determined situation to circumstance.

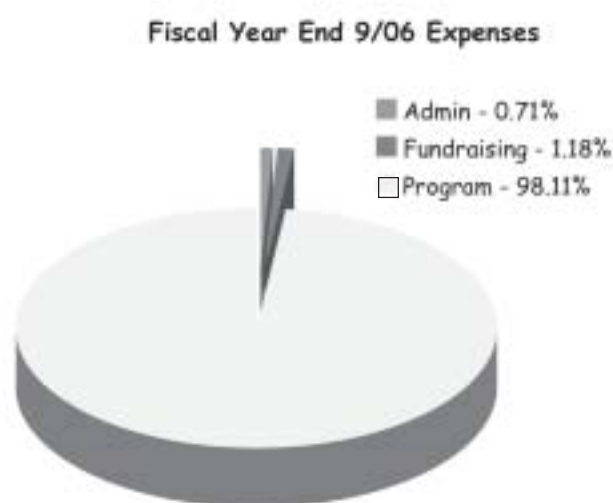
My quest, then, may be one of trying to discover the means we humans can employ to facilitate this intermixing in order to orchestrate a desired outcome.

Yikes, it is beginning to sound like personnel management.

In dogs we trust,

"...an adult dog is not a child-like animal with a child's mind, but rather an adult mind with limited reasoning power that works in concert with his mature sensibilities..."

News from the Institute



Our low administration and fundraising expenses ensure supporters that over 98% of their contributions go directly to fund programs.

The Assistance Dog Institute received welcome news from four institutions over the summer with grant awards in support of our programs:


A \$10,000 grant in support of our High-schooled Assistance Dog program from the **Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Inc.** has been used to develop a cooperative program with the Becoming Independent organization. Becoming Independent provides services for adults with developmental disabilities. Through our cooperative efforts, Institute graduate Stefanie Schreier brings clients from Becoming Independent to the Institute several times per week to socialize with and groom our service dogs in training.

Expressing enthusiastic support for our new initiative, Paws for Purple Hearts, the **Help America Foundation** awarded us a \$15,000 grant for startup costs associated with this program. Part of this grant has been used to award a scholar-

ship to a veteran who is studying in our A.S. degree program and plans to become an instructor in a Paws for Purple Hearts program upon his graduation.

The **DeLong-Sweet Family Foundation** added to their generous support of ADI with a \$3,500 grant for our Paws for Purple Hearts program.

The **Doris Day Animal Foundation** has awarded a \$7,000 grant to the Kids and Dogs Reading Together program. This grant will be used to produce a formal curriculum for training our students and volunteer teams to participate in the reading program and to produce educational materials.

Our local **Target Stores** continue to support ADI's Kids and Dogs Reading Together program. Target, one of the earliest supporters of this program, awarded the Institute a \$3,000 grant for this year. 

WELCOME NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Judi Rallies Support for ADI




“...the time has come for ADI to reach out to the community and for the community to recognize the incredible asset it has in ADI.”

The newest addition to the ADI staff is not unknown in the service dog world. Judi spent eleven years with Canine Companions as their Regional Director in San Diego. She explains that everyone thought that she was attracted to CCI because of her love of dogs, but, in fact, she was equally interested in the issues of people with disabilities and what incredible independence their service dog offered to them. Judi had previously worked at an Independent Living Center and a Vocational Rehabilitation Center so she was well acquainted with the challenges of people with disabilities. Thus she embraced the service dog concept with absolute passion.

Judi began her non profit career with a YMCA in Los Alamos, New Mexico, her hometown. The Y was small but was a tremendous asset to a small New Mexican town that was filled with scientists and PhD's. It was during this time that Judi was raising two young children as a young single mom. But she realized that the only way to assure their future was to go to a university. The University of New Mexico had just opened a campus in Los Alamos and Judi found herself doing triple duty raising children (Billy and Holly), running a YMCA and being a full time student taking night classes. “The real sacrifice was made by my children,” says Judi. “They just didn't have their mom around very much for four years. But, I think it may have helped them to realize the importance of an education to watch me struggle with my studies while making dinner or cleaning the house.”

Billy and Holly have long been on their own and have their own families (much to Judi's delight). And now her family consists of three dogs and three cats. All rescues and all with some sort of disability. With the children gone, it was easier to make decisions about moving and taking on new opportunities. So when Bonnie Bergin found that Judi was looking for a new challenge (having just left a position of Executive Director of a Humane Society in San Luis Obispo), she invited her to join the Assistance Dog Institute. Since Judi had known Bonnie's role as the pioneer of the service dog industry, she jumped at the chance to work for her true hero.

Judi took on the position of Director of Development with gusto. She has created some exciting challenges for herself and for ADI. “What I see at ADI,” she recently commented, “is an organization that has spent so many years looking outward at what they can do for others, that they haven't spent enough time on taking care of themselves.” But the time has come for ADI to reach out to the community and for the community to recognize the incredible asset it has in ADI. I've spoken to so many people who agree that it is now time for the community to rally on behalf of the Assistance Dog Institute.” 




In honor of their beloved dog Trixie, best-selling author Dean Koontz (pictured here with Trixie) and his wife Gerda have established a \$250,000 challenge grant to support ADI and honor Trixie's memory.

HELP SEND TRIXIE'S CHALLENGE GRANT OVER THE TOP

BY: JUDI PIERSON, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Thirty two years ago, Bonnie Bergin conceived an idea that has changed the world, especially for people with disabilities. Bonnie began training dogs to use their natural instincts to help people with mobility challenges. Twelve years later, Author Dean Koontz added a golden retriever to a list of characters in his book, *Watchers*. Bonnie, being a Dean Koontz fan, read his book and contacted him to let him know that she has been in the midst of training dogs to do exactly what Moose (the dog) was doing in *Watchers*. Dean is always eager to learn about new and exciting programs and asked for more information. Bonnie was delighted to supply him with articles about her efforts in Santa Rosa with Canine Companions for Independence. They stayed in touch and Dean never wavered from his interest in and support of service dogs. Dean agreed to be on the founding board of trustees for the fledgling ADI.

In 1998 Dean and his wife Gerda brought a released service dog, Trixie, into their home. Trixie became the center of Dean and Gerda's world. And a favorite pal of the staff that worked in the Koontz offices. Through her loving spirit, Trixie brought out so many loving and nurturing instincts from all that met her. In fact several times, people of different religions found something very angelic in Trixie — commenting on her gentle spirit, her very wise demeanor. On June 30 of this year, Trixie passed to another realm, one that Dean and Gerda could not follow. While deeply grieving their loss, they felt that they had to honor Trixie's spirit in an enduring way. They put her name on their foundation and decided to use her foundation to rally support for the Assistance Dog Institute. We received a letter from Dean and Gerda committing to challenge all our supporters with a matching grant up to \$250,000. They both have every faith that the supporters of the Assistance Dogs Institute will rise to this Trixie's challenge and help to match the Koontz's generous gift. 

Congratulations Graduates

SUMMER 2007



Susan Armstrong &
Social /Therapy Dog Hickman
Prescott, Arizona



Richard Gambord &
Service Dog Quinn
Los Gatos, California



Travis Morgan &
Service Dog Mitchell
Grants Pass, Oregon

A PROUD FATHER SPEAKS

Hi Bonnie,

I have been meaning to contact you almost since the day we returned home. Our experience at the ADI was so very special, and I just wanted you to know how much it meant to all of us.

As I said in my comments at the graduation dinner, I am so grateful for those wonderful students, and for the staff you have gathered at the ADI. I learned so much just being able to watch Travis as he learned, and to be able to be there as he went through his own process.

My conversations with your staff and with the students were fascinating and marvelous. You have the kind of operation that people just want to be a part of, at least I strongly felt that way.



Travis and Mitchell enjoy a walk together on a sunny Oregon day.

Coming home with Mitchell has been so fun and wonderful. Travis loves him so much already, as do the parental units, as Travis will at times call us. We are working to be diligent regarding Mitchell's care, and I assure you he is getting the most attention of any animal we have ever had in our home, and we are all loving it. We are mindful, as well, of the importance of interacting appropriately to enhance the relationship between Travis and Mitchell, and yet really enjoy our own relationship with Mitchell too.

I guess I really wanted to just say thank you, Bonnie, for what you are doing there at the ADI. You have made a tremendous impact on our lives, and our hearts are collectively grateful and joyous at what you have given our family. Speaking for myself, I have much love in my heart for everyone I met there, and especially want you to know how much I admire, respect, and appreciate the person and the professional that you are, Bonnie.

Thank you for having us at the ADI, and we will enjoy seeing you in about six months. You take care of yourself, as I know how very hard you work. Bob Morgan 

Our Seminar Graduates



Melanie Case & Graduating Service Dog Mitchell Sebastopol, California



Vickie Clarke & ADI Dog Mulder Salem, Oregon



Shirlene Kitchen & ADI Dog Judy Santa Rosa, California



Sue Phelan & ADI Dog Jennings Tuscon, Arizona



Masako Yazawa & ADI Dog Jud Iida Nagano, Japan

MAY 2007



Back row (left to right): Jennifer Brayton & Seneca, George Cronin & ADI dog Mitchell, Patricia Cronin & Sophie, Ouliana Bonnet & Zoe
Front row (left to right): Heidi Adler & Maggie, Barbara McKenna & Bently-Gomez, Jamie Kubota & Bella

JULY 2007



Back row (left to right): Shirlene Kitchen & ADI dog Pamela, Susan Kokke & Molly, MaryPat Plottner & Gracey, Melanie Case & Lucky, Sue Phelan & ADI dog Judy
Front row (left to right): Elizabeth Beak & ADI So/Th dog Kim, Gala Goodwin & Zeke, Pamela Rosenthal & Blair, Virginia Bertlesen & ADI So/Th dog Isiah

SOCIAL/THERAPY TEAMS

ADI PARTNERS WITH AMERICAN RED CROSS

BY: NANCY PIERSON, K-9 SUPPORT PROGRAMS MANAGER

The Assistance Dog Institute's K-9 Support Programs has expanded to include disaster response teams partnering with the American Red Cross. To date, we have eight trained handler and dog teams ready to respond to local and national disasters. Training includes ADI's 17 hour social/therapy class, several American Red Cross classes and disaster drills in Santa Rosa, Elk and Ukiah. These disaster response teams will give much needed emotional support to victims and responders in the aftermath of a tragedy. At this point in time, each handler is responsible for their own travel, lodging and food expenses. You can assist these disaster response teams in fulfilling ADI's mission of "Helping Dogs Help People" through monetary, frequent flyer mile or hotel point donations. Please specify K-9 Support Programs when making such a generous donation.



Left: ADI K-9 Support members Carla Scolieri, her dog Sabrina and Nancy Pierson's Peyton were eager participants in the Red Cross disaster drills.

Above: Peyton's "medical prowess" and easy-going ways help relieve stressful situations.

IN LIFE AND DEATH

Coby Gave His All to the Dogs

BY: JUDI PIERSON, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Raising service dog puppy, McCallum, was the beginning of Coby Richards' devotion to the service dog concept. His legacy of devotion to these special dogs lives on through his generous bequest to the Institute.


In the opinion of everyone who knew him, Coby Richards was an outstanding person. He grabbed every opportunity to enjoy new experiences, and these new experiences always involved helping others. That is how, almost twenty years ago, he became a puppy raiser for a Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) puppy.


Coby's pup McCallum went on to graduate as a service dog. He remembered that experience as one of the most rewarding of his life. And he credited Bonnie Bergin, CCI's founder and now the founder and President of the Assistance Dog Institute with making that possible.

After raising McCallum, Coby moved on to other life adventures but his love of the Service Dog concept stayed with him for the rest of his life. When he learned that he had brain cancer, Coby told his life partner, Tami, that he would leave a part of his estate to 'the dogs.'

"He wanted to be very clear about where the money went. It was to be to the Assistance Dog Institute," said Tami Lemley, Coby's significant other. He never was one to want a lot of recognition which is why the Institute was so surprised to learn that Coby had left us a \$100,000 bequest.

"Through his generosity, Coby has demonstrated that he believed deeply in our mission," stated Bergin. "Such faith renews our own enthusiasm. Coby is telling us that he has faith that we will use his bequest to further our mission of Helping Dogs Help People. And we will!"

Coby died on June 26th of this year. He was too young, a man enthusiastically looking forward to what each day would bring. But in his passing, he has become a part of the Institute's future — a tribute to the life that he lived for others. 

A bequest is one way to ensure that the Institute continue its mission to educate and promote people's understanding and appreciation of our most vital helpmate – the dog. For more information call Judi Pierson, Development Director at 707-545-3647. 

PPH CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

dealing not only with their own physical or psychological scars, but must simultaneously cope with the loss of the camaraderie and brotherhood of their fellow soldiers. Paws for Purple Hearts provides that opportunity, replacing the brotherhood of the military unit in the field with a brotherhood of shared purpose and caring for their fellow injured soldiers.

IT'S HAPPENING NOW!!!

On August 20th, 2007 we welcomed two veterans to the Institute. George came to begin his studies in Assistance Dog Education. George was diagnosed with PTSD as a result of his service in Vietnam. ADI was able to offer a scholarship to George thanks to a grant from the Help America Foundation. Mike, also a veteran of the Vietnam conflict, came to ADI to receive a service dog. Mike had both of his arms amputated as a result of an accident. Mike also plans to participate in agility with his new service dog, Joyce, as well as have her help him with his efforts to teach children about disabilities.




John, a powerful and gentle man, sees the power of service dog puppies like Underdog.

FUTURE PPH PROGRAM SITES

Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Wash. DC has approved the PPH program through the Occupational Therapy Department. A site has been confirmed at Fort Meade, MD for the patients with PTSD at Walter Reed to train service dogs for fellow veterans needing the assistance of a trained dog.

The Veterans Administration's Palo Alto Health Care System provides some of the world's finest cutting-edge technology and medical services. Directors and staff in the Recreational Therapy program are proposing to have the PPH program as part of their treatment options. This is especially exciting since Palo Alto is one of the three PTSD research sites in the country. Demonstrating success with our dogs here will lead to replication of the PPH program at other VA centers.


Veterans Home at Yountville, CA, The largest veterans home in the country is located in the Napa Valley and recently became the site of the Pathways Home program, a new effort to help returning servicemen struggling with PTSD. We were asked to submit a proposal to include the PPH concept in the treatment program that will be offered at Yountville.

Senior administrators in the Department of Defense and the VA healthcare systems are recognizing the valuable role that dogs can play in healing our heroes. Helping our dogs help veterans is a mission that we are taking very seriously at ADI. We need and appreciate your support to expand this program and rally around those who have paid such a high price in service to our country. The U.S. Marines' motto is Semper Fi, meaning "always faithful." It's not just a coincidence that our dogs live by that same creed! 



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 Edwina Ryska, Scent Detection Manager/Faculty
 Anne Stark, DVM, Veterinarian/Faculty
 Mary Venuto, Maintenance
 Rick Yount, Director of Therapeutic Interventions



MEOW MOMENTS

Musings from our Top Cat

The pups are forever asking my advice. I try to catch a nap in secret places. But, with their noses, they always track me down.

Hi, my name is Riley. I have been on staff here at ADI since March 17, 2006. I was found wandering along a highway when Dr. Stark brought me here to take care of all these dogs. She told me tales of the great Dr. Bergin and her superb dog training skills. HA! Just let her try to train me! My days are spent paper shredding, fly catching and keeping towels warm. I do have two cat assistants, my best buddy Jerry and our pesky little sister Tula. Our job is not so bad, teaching dogs to have reverence for the supreme species. It is our little way of giving back to the community.

Usually Fridays are our slow days, however, on Friday July 13, things got exciting! I was just lying there getting my cat-nap when all of a sudden people came into my office (the vet room) and started running around like crazy. They were doing something with that dog Zora who was really fat. I kept telling her that she shouldn't be eating so much but she didn't listen. Her belly was HUGE. I saw Dr. Stark put her hand somewhere that I would never want a hand put. That Zora sure is nice for not biting her. She pulled something out. It wasn't moving but Rick and Jorjan were putting a funny thing on its face and rubbing it really hard. They had very worried looks on their faces. It seemed like they worked on that puppy for a long time. I was impressed by their perrsistence.

It wasn't long before I heard news from the operating room. Dr. Stark had Zora's belly opened up and was handing out puppies like Christmas presents. Sounds like somebody should have made sure that those puppies' batteries were charged before they took the pups out of Zora. One, later named Underdog, needed some help to get started. Rick gave one big breath right in the puppy's face and the puppy started to make noise! He thought it was a miracle moment...then he remembered he had Al's garlic bread for lunch. I heard Sae say "Mine is working!" Pretty soon there were seven squeaking puppies.

Gee, now they have so much energy that they try to use my tail as a tug toy. Of course, I've got a training technique for that...just watch! 🐾

RILEY'S "HOW TO" TRAIN A PUP



Sniffing me is ok



Approaching my tail is NOT, and gets a stern look



And then a soft bop

COLLEGE REUNION

JOIN CLASSMATES ON INAUGURAL CRUISE!

The Caribbean Princess

Invitations have been mailed to all ADI alumni to attend our fabulous Caribbean cruise February 24-March 2, 2008. If you know of a class member who has moved please contact us with their new address. We want to send invitations to our ADI seminar, college, certificate program and client graduates so they know about our upcoming reunion!

Your staff, volunteers and significant others can also join you on the cruise. They will be included in some, but not all of the workshops we will be having. However, there will be plenty of other activities for all to enjoy.

If you have any questions, call Jorjan at the Institute at (707) 545-3647 or e-mail: info@assistance dog.org.

We're looking forward to seeing you aboard the Caribbean Princess!



CHILDREN TEACH PUPS WHILE

Learning Life Lessons

BY: RICK YOUNT, DIRECTOR OF THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS



Top: ADI pup savors a warm hug.
Middle: After training, there's time to relax.
Bottom: Field trips are frequent and challenging.

The Children's Village of Sonoma County (CV) began as a vision to create a village that would provide a stable, nurturing environment for children and sibling groups in foster care. Maintaining consistency for children that are often moved from foster home to foster home is one of the critical aspects of helping children who have endured abuse and/or neglect.

Children and their house parents now occupy the four houses in Children's Village. Volunteers serving in the roles of surrogate grandparents live in nearby apartments. Add four wagging tails to this environment and you have a paw-sitively spectacular opportunity to reach the hearts and minds of children who need to experience healthy relationships.


In March of 2007, ADI board member Pam Ingalls secured a grant through the DeLong Sweet Foundation to develop a High Schooled Assistance Dog (HS A-Dog) program at Children's Village. Four boys, ages 12-15 were selected by the staff at CV to participate in the HS A-Dog program. Four pups from the S litter were placed with the kids based on their personality matches.

Only sixteen weeks old, the pups arrived on their first day of school eager to explore the new environment, anxious to meet their new teachers and as distracted as any child with Attention Deficit Disorder could be. The kids at CV were as prepared for this day as any substitute teacher ever was, eager to have their pups be the first to complete a down, roll or sit.

Before the lessons begin, the instructor gives a short lecture that covers an aspect of learning or behavior management from the BASICS and ABC'S of the SMARTEST DOG TRAINING. This first day's lecture is B for Bonding, the foundation of the student-teacher relationship. The kids, distracted by the new four-footed-tail-waggers, will soon realize how important a relationship is when trying to teach a puppy. "He won't look at me," "I can't get him to do it" and "this is hard" echo through the room. The instructor smiles and realizes that the kids are ready to hear about the B in BASICS again with an increased motivation to learn. Experiential learning has just occurred as kids see the importance of relationships through the eyes of a puppy.

Days go by and now the pups are having a hard time resisting the impulse to leap from the ADI van to greet their favorite humans at Children's Village. The kids also have to control their urges to bypass the ritual of "come" and "sit" for a safe exit from a vehicle. The kids can't wait to give their dogs a hug and start another training session.

Still in the stages of puppy hood, Stuart, Sullivan, Starkey and Seymour continue to challenge the kids to learn new training concepts. Learning that *emotions can be contagious* is easy when taught through a leash attached to a gentle Golden Retriever. *Success breeds success* is a concept that comes to life as the pups build their confidence. *Praise is the key to being successful*, and it soon becomes clear to the kids that the pups don't learn the commands without encouragement. *It's important to keep your cool when correcting an unwanted behavior* and anyone who has been around a puppy knows that they can be very clever at inventing unwanted behaviors.

We hear the CV staff say that the first time that they saw one of the boys smile was attributed to his dog. The relationships are strong after five months and the kids are now performing demonstrations for the CV board of directors, showing the results of their patience, practice and persistence. As I sit in the audience at the latest demo, I can't help but to think about the importance of what the kids are learning. If only their parents could have had this opportunity...would these kids be here? 

HS A-DOG CONFERENCE

BALTIMORE, MD
DECEMBER 6-7, 2007

This year's HS A-Dog conference will be held in conjunction with the The Humane Society of the United States and the Center for Prevention of Youth Violence of the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

A National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs for Youth-At-Risk will be held. By bringing together researchers, program leaders, and shelters, the conference seeks to enhance the field of animal-assisted interventions for emotionally-troubled, at risk, and adjudicated youth.

Register online at <http://www.humanesociety.org/nationaltechnology> 