

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

August, 2010

Welcome

This August celebrates companion animals in their role as human helpers. Most people sharing a life with companion animals agree that pets provide a certain level of emotional comfort. Some pets can be trained to respond to the deep understanding between animals and humans to recognize what their caregivers need in specific, measurable ways. In this issue we focus on companion animals trained to aid humans. In particular we will share the story of Lane Phalen, a member of the board of directors and PR manager at TAILS Humane Society, and her dog Beau. Please read on to discover the life of a service dog and the person he loved. Any questions can be addressed to a member of our staff at (630) 365-9599, or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

August: Service Dog Month

Beau and Lane

Many different kinds of pets have been trained to help their human caregivers in different functions. Some act as therapists, helping to pull depressed teenagers and children out of themselves and involve them in a healthy outlet for their emotions. Others act as confidants, listening to children struggle to read without judging their lack of ability to be a weakness. Still others act as eyes, ears, and hands, allowing their caregiver to enjoy many of the freedoms most people take for granted. Following is a story submitted to Elburn Animal Hospital by Lane Phalen about her bond with her service dog, Beau. It is printed in her own words, and we hope you are as touched by this story as we are.

"I was diagnosed with MS in 1980 and began using a wheelchair in 1990. Beau was trained by Paws With a Cause in Michigan. He was rescued from an animal shelter there and trained as a service dog. He was chosen for me and it was a match made in heaven."

"Beau became my arms by picking things up that I dropped (he could pick up a dime!), carrying things

(sometimes in the basket in the photo), opening the fridge by pulling on a strap on the handle, getting me a soda, then closing the door--he even recycled



the can. For this he knew the commands take it, hold, give it."

"Beau was my legs because he pulled my wheelchair when we were in public and knew the commands right, left, slow. Checkout counters are often above the head of a person in a wheelchair. I could give Beau my credit card, say up, and he would stand up at the counter and give the card to the clerk. When she was done, I would say up and he would take the card from her."

"Beau was *always* at my side, except when my husband took him for walks. Whenever we rode on an airplane, we always had the bulkhead (first row) where there was extra room for him to lay down. When my ears popped, I gave him a treat to pop his ears. Our first trip was to a service dog convention in Las Vegas. All those dogs were by their owner's sides and didn't pay attention to each other! We went to Cirque de Soleil and Beau watched the whole performance. At Caesar's Palace he watched the white tigers in their outdoor setting. People were more intrigued watching Beau watch the tigers than watching the tigers themselves!"

"Beau and I spoke on behalf of Paws and did demonstrations to big conventions and small groups of people for United Way. We once spent a whole week in New Orleans giving talks to the military and government offices during their kickoff for their Combined Federal Campaign (which is like United Way). We did demos for small classrooms of

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

August, 2010

pilots and huge airplane hangars filled with Navy personnel. Our escort was a Marine Major who was promoted to Lt. Col. while we were there and I pinned his new insignia on his uniform and he pinned his Major insignia on Beau's backpack. Beau always gave me a high five whenever I said, "Semper Fi," the Marine Corps motto."

"One year we attended the Marines Ball at Camp Lejeune. I left Beau under our table when my Marine friend and I left the table. Beau didn't move! The General of the base told me he was "an outstanding dog." Beau also went with me to summer writing workshops three times at ivy league Dartmouth College. He watched out the window to see the squirrels run or laid next to me. We went to the finals of the Professional Bull Riders in Las Vegas at the MGM Grand one year and ended up on TNN for a month during their promo."

"When I was in the hospital twice, Beau stayed with me in my private room! He was allowed to because I told them that the bond between service dog and person was so strong that he would be under great duress if he wasn't with me. My husband and family cared for him and it was hard to keep the nurses from petting him."

"Beau came to me in the days when service dogs weren't seen in the public very often. One rule is for people not to pet him or distract him while he worked because he concentrated on his job. This was very difficult. I'd tell people not to pet him and they would ask why which sent me into a whole take and demo. Beau would wait for me to say, "OK, say hi," and he would go to the people to be petted. When I said, "Beau, heel," he returned to my side and was on duty. Sometimes I wouldn't see people petting him, I'd turn toward him and he would look at me as if to say, "They're not supposed to do that!" Whenever we went shopping, I always planned an extra 1/2 hour to do our mini-demos for people."

"Beau also knew safety commands such as, "Go get help," and he would find someone in the house and nudge their hand and bring them to me. He knew, "Find phone," and would bring me a cordless telephone that was always kept in one place."

"Beau was a true star and appeared on the Chicago news stations ABC, NBC & CBS as well as 1/2 hour cable television shows in Chicago and Naperville.

The Associated Press did a story about service dogs and called Paws who called us for quotes and a photo. The story appeared in more than 100 newspapers from the New York Times to small town newspapers."



"I was a freelance writer and wrote about Beau for several magazines. Woman's World magazine and the Elburn Herald did stories about us. When I didn't need him to do something for me, Beau was a regular golden retriever carrying a stuffed toy around, chasing balls I'd throw him in the yard or rolling in the snow making doggie-angels."

"Beau was diagnosed with hypothyroidism in 1996, was put on meds and never had a problem. He retired in Jan 2003 and stayed with me. Most service dogs retire and go to a relative's home, but I was lucky and got to keep him with me. Beau was happy with retirement and made the transition easily. Radar, a purebred golden donated to Paws by a breeder, became Beau's successor. He came to me in March, 2003. Unfortunately, I had major surgery two months later which required a long recovery, and Radar became an in-house service dog. I wasn't able to go out on my own anymore."

"He's a happy dog and carries things and picks things up for me at home. In time, the MS progressed and I lost strength. Radar can put his head under my ankles and toss them into bed!"

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

August, 2010

"It was incredibly hard to see Beau age. He has been a part of my body and we had so much fun



together. He gave me a second chance at life just like Paws did when they rescued him from a shelter. When he was 14 1/2 years old, we had to euthanize him, which was performed at home, and had him cremated while we waited and he'll be buried with me."

"He truly was my once in a lifetime dog. A few weeks after he died, my husband, Rob Bresticker, and I became volunteers at TAILS Humane Society in Beau's honor. Rob walked dogs and I joined the PR Committee and took over managing their website and writing press releases. In 2008, I joined the TAILS board and Jan 2009 became the PR Chair. I work (volunteer) 40-hours each week. I've made many friends and taken on a new life thanks to Beau."

Lane's and Beau's story is just one example of how dogs and other pets provide assistance to humans. Service animals are not always dogs. There are cats, rabbits, and other animals that act in different functions to assist their caregivers. Many of these animals are adopted from shelters--there is no rule that says a service pet must be a purebred. They must be outgoing, tolerant of other animals and activity, and love people. For more information on how to train your dog as a therapy dog, or how to help train a dog for service work, see the following websites.

Paws With a Cause:

<http://www.pawswithacause.org/Home/tabid>

[d/616/Default.aspx](http://www.pawswithacause.org/Clients/AssistanceDogs/tabid/700/Default.aspx)

Types of dogs trained & skills:

<http://www.pawswithacause.org/Clients/AssistanceDogs/tabid/700/Default.aspx>

Therapy Dog International: www.tdi-dog.org

Therapy Dogs Inc: www.therapydogs.com

Now let's take a look at the featured animals available for adoption from TAILS Humane Society in DeKalb. The pets are spayed or neutered (except the rabbits), have up-to-date vaccinations, dogs tested for heartworm and cats tested for FIV and feline Leukemia, are dewormed if necessary, have microchips, come with 1 free vet visit and 1-month free pet insurance. Millions of pets are left in shelters throughout the U.S. each year. These are just a few of those animals waiting for a forever home.



Charlie: He's 13-years old and a purebred Lhasa Apso whose owner had to move to assisted living and couldn't take

sweet Charlie. He loves to cuddle, be petted, go for walks, will softly jump into your lap. He is looking for a quiet, mellow home.

James: Someone looked at James and said, "You'll never be able to adopt him out because he's so ugly." What a mean thing to say--prove that person wrong and adopt James. He's a 6-year old



Brussels Griffon who is a small guy. He's lived with cats and small dogs but he nips at the legs of big dogs to let them know he's there. James is fearful of children. When his family had a baby, they brought James to TAILS. He enjoys

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

August, 2010

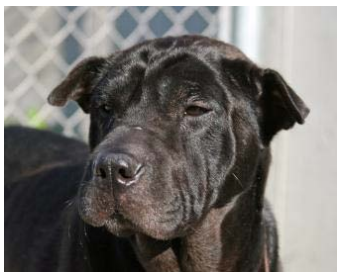
squeak toys and walks on the leash. He's a sweet, calm, well-mannered lap dog but James does have one problem: he's lost control of his bladder and wears little doggie diapers. James will give you lots of love and appreciate you for adopting him even though some say he's "ugly."



Missy: She's a mellow 6-year old Miniature Schnauzer/Lhasa Apso mix. She absolutely adores people and cuddles. Missy was rescued from a high-volume shelter and they were about to euthanize her.

TAILS rescued her, knowing she has many good days ahead and she's such a sweetheart. Missy would love to step into your heart and home.

Libby: She's a large 7-year old Chinese Shar-Pei mix who lived with another dog. The owners had to move and gave Libby to TAILS. She's only had one owner and would love someone else to give her a home so she can love them.



It's also kitten season in shelter-land. These kittens were either abandoned at TAILS or brought in because they were from "unwanted" litters.

Lambert: A sweet, active kitten who loves to play. He's sure to grow into a very handsome cat.



Mallory: An endearing young female kitten, Mallory wants to cuddle on the couch as often as she wants to run around.



Owen: He was left at TAILS with his littermates. He's inquisitive and loving.



Fergie and Blueberry: These outgoing rabbits were left with TAILS because their owners are moving and cannot take them to the new



home. Fergie is 3 years old and Blueberry is 2 years old.

In September we will discuss the wildlife of our area – what is out there, the risk posed by coming in direct contact, and the proper procedures for handling and helping injured wildlife. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like more information, visit our website at www.elburnanimalhospital.com, or give us a call at (630) 365-9599. If you would like to opt out of receiving our newsletter, please send an email to us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

August Special: Get 20% off all vaccinations all this month. Make sure you mention this ad to get the discount! ☺

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

August, 2010

Upcoming Events: Mark the calendar for this year's annual **Open House!** This year, our open house is scheduled for Saturday, September 25th, from 1:00pm until 4:00pm. We are featuring games, treats and area rescue groups.

Do you have an idea for a newsletter? A question you'd like answered about caring for your pet? Email us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net and let us know! We are always interested in what you have to say and what you want to know.