

# The foundation



for

**SERVICE DOG SUPPORT, Inc.**

## **A message to our Readers**

**Commitment to education-** The FSDS training program began as a youth based training program on the campus of a local high school. As we look ahead to 2012, we are delighted to be starting up a new class in the Fall on the campus of yet another school, with plans for expansion to four additional schools in the next few years.

In keeping with our commitment to quality education, the FSDS has made several unprecedented moves to ensure the quality of our program. Our program, from the start, has been aligned with the AZ State Education Dept. standards for Career and Technical Education (CTE), and we are building on this early effort to strengthen our program. The FSDS has recruited an additional trainer, who will be certified as a CTE teacher through the AZ State Education Dept.

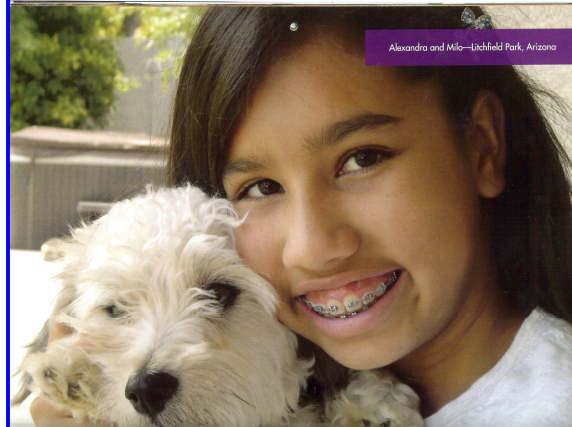
Additional requirements that have been put in place are fingerprint clearance, canine first aid and CPR certification requirements for all teachers and a requirement for ongoing professional development.

We have a belief that in order for our program to not only endure, but to thrive, meticulous attention must be given to details. There is a striking difference between the notion of hiring a dog trainer, and hiring a teacher. As we are a training program, and training implies education, we have set in place the most stringent educational requirements for our staff. It is our hope that this will translate into a program that is second to none in ability to meet the needs of student trainers and recipients alike.

More information on our new partnership will be forthcoming.

*(continued in column two)*

February 2012



Congratulations to **Alexandra Cockett and Milo** on being selected as the February **Team of the Month**. Alex is 12 years old, and has a dream of sharing her love for animals with other children her age. She started the Pets and Caring Kids (PACK) Club, which has been slowly but surely gaining popularity here in the greater Phoenix area. The FSDS was asked to be mentors to this program and we are proud to do so. Alex is as passionate about teaching children to give back to the community as she is about animals, and the FSDS applauds her for sharing her enthusiasm with others. See page three of the newsletter for information on how to get involved.

**The American College of Veterinary Ophthalmology (AVCO)** is hosting the 5th annual AVCO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam Event during the month of May 2012. Registration begins on April 1st. If you are a working service dog team, you can obtain information on how to schedule an appointment for your service dog by contacting AVCO at: [www.ACVOeyeexam.org](http://www.ACVOeyeexam.org).

Visit our web site at: [www.servicedogsupport.org](http://www.servicedogsupport.org)

### **Classroom News– The Making of a Service Dog**

The new year has started off to be a busy one, as the prospective recipients of our service dogs have arrived in the classroom for their classroom observations. This is an integral part of the application process and allows both program staff and recipients some time to get to know each other.

Recipients are each required to make three class visits. This allows them to meet all of our trainers and dogs and determine whether or not they believe that any of our dogs will be a good fit for them. FSDS staff are given the opportunity to meet recipients and begin the process of determining if there is a good fit between recipient and dog that will allow them to become a successful team together. Service dog training is not just about dog training, but the emphasis is on the success of the team.

The next step in the process will be home visits, and after that time the recipients will begin to attend classes regularly to gain certification in canine first aid and CPR, and to learn all required verbal and hand signal commands. Field trips will be arranged to allow the student trainer the opportunity to mentor the recipients in public and teach them to navigate public places and respond to challenges in the community with their service dog.

Many thanks to the **American Legion Post 61 in Avondale**, who will be hosting a **Pet Fashion show on April 14th** to benefit military veterans who will receive service dogs from our current class. Check the main page of our website for additional information on exact location in the next month.

Graduation is scheduled for April 21, 2012 at the Glendale Civic center from 10 a.m.—1 p.m. If you are interested in purchasing a ticket for yourself or for one of our student trainers, contact us at: [cjb@servicedogsupport.org](mailto:cjb@servicedogsupport.org) .

**The FSDS is accepting inquiries** from individuals interested in a substitute teaching position for the Fall. The ideal candidate should have at least 3 years of experience in working with dogs , a familiarity with service dogs and a Class I fingerprint clearance card. Interested individuals can learn more by contacting the FSDS at [cjb@servicedogsupport.org](mailto:cjb@servicedogsupport.org). Future opportunity to become an instructor in future classes are possible for teachers motivated to obtain AZ State Certification.



**Emma** is a Canine Ambassador for the FSDS, and is hoping that you will support her canine friends who are nearing graduation. Please consider a tax deductible donation to the FSDS that will allow us to provide for transition needs of our dogs as they are transferred to their new owners.

**Volunteers needed**– the FSDS is always looking for volunteers, and we are currently in need of individuals with skills in the following areas: Public Relations, Legal Professional, Accounting, Fundraising and Event Planning. Please use the contact form on our website to contact us if you are interested.

**Youth Education**– the FSDS offers Canine Safety Training to individuals as young as 8 years old. Contact us to learn how you can get your youth group involved.

**Safety Corner** - by Andrea Patten, Director of Training.

Valentines day will be here before we know it and you might be trying to think of ideas of a gift to give to your furry loved one. Here are some guidelines to help you choose an appropriate toy for your dog.

- If a toy is small enough to be passed through the center of a roll of toilet paper, it is too small for a dog and can present a choking hazard.
- Plush toys with stuffing and or squeakers that can be chewed out are dangerous and must be avoided.
- Toys with small pieces that can be separated or broken off are not considered safe.
- Soft rubber toys, or hollow balls that can be chewed up should be avoided.
- Rope toys, depending on the level of chewer you have they can chew the rope apart and it can pose a choking hazard.
- Toys that are designed to stand up to the most vigorous chewers are generally safe.

Remember to keep decorations, candles and gift wrapping up and away from your dog. Even the most mature of dog can sometimes become curious and could hurt themselves.

**Pets and Caring Kids (Pack) Club-** If your children are interested in learning more about animals they may be interested in learning more about the PACK Club. This club is open to children ages 7-16 and the new term starts Feb. 26th. Enrollment is now open and there is an enrollment fee of \$35/child. This includes two trips/speakers per month from February to June. For more information contact advisor Arminda Cockett at [PACK-Club@groups.facebook.com](mailto:PACK-Club@groups.facebook.com) or by phone at 623-451-4672.

**Upcoming Events**

**April 14, 2012**– Pet Fashion Show at noon at the **American Legion Post #61 on Dysart Rd.**, Avondale. The event will benefit veterans who are receiving service dogs from the FSDS.

**April 21, 2012**– FSDS Graduation Ceremony at the **Glendale Civic Center, 10 a.m.—1 p.m.** Tickets are \$35 and can be reserved by contacting the FSDS at: [cjb@servicedogsupport.org](mailto:cjb@servicedogsupport.org) .



We are pleased to announce that **Becky Brooks**, seen here with her second SDIT Bailey”, will be serving as intern instructor with our upcoming Class #3.

**Our thanks to the Arizona Humane Society** for their recent offer to provide hip x-rays for all of our dogs in training. This will allow us to ensure that all dogs placed by the FSDS are free from hip dysplasia or other joint problems. The ongoing support of AZHS is appreciated.