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We provide training for our human volunteers to advise them about how to best help and relate with disabled people. We remind volunteers of upcoming appointments and are available to help with any issues they may be facing.

Other programs do not train their volunteers.

Ongoing Supervision

We don't simply test dogs and then certify them. We constantly monitor our dogs to make sure they are serving your patients well and that there are no unexpected behavior problems. We receive regular feedback from the facilities we work with.

In other programs, dogs are overseen by their owners, with no oversight by qualified professionals.

Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy, Inc.

639 Route 112 • Patchogue, NY 11772 • (631) 207-9325 • <http://www.PRAATInc.org> • e-mail: PRAAT@optonline.net

Reliability

We are a comprehensive program, sponsored by the Patchogue Rotary. Staff and volunteers work as a team. So if a person or a dog cannot make a particular visit—or needs to leave the program—we have backup.

In other programs, volunteers work as individuals.

Insurance

In the unlikely event of a mishap or accident, PRAAT is fully insured.

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Donating to your community

PRAAT charges a nominal \$30 fee for each visit. The net proceeds go right back into the community to support local charities through Rotary.

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GA - PRAAT - 2010 Insurance Summary

COVERAGE TYPE	COVERAGE DETAILS	COVERAGE LIMITS	DEDUCTIBLE
Property	Contents, Monies, Computers, Business Income, Identity Recovery	\$6,400, \$5,000, \$25,000, 12 Months, \$15,000	\$500 per occurrence
General Liability	For Facility visits, including patient bodily injury or facility property damage	\$2,000,000 per Occurrence & \$4,000,000 General & Product Liability Aggregate	
Automobile	Coverage for non-owned vehicles used in PRAAT operations, plus vehicles that we hire to do PRAAT related work;	\$2,000,000 per Occurrence, no Aggregate	
Umbrella	Excess liability coverage above both General & Auto Liability	\$1,000,000 each occurrence, \$1,000,000 General aggregate, \$1,000,000 Completed Operations Aggregate	\$10,000 Self Insured Retention, per occurrence
Worker's Comp	Employee or Volunteer medical coverage for on the job injuries or sicknesses, plus Employer's Liability	Medical is paid per Statutory limits, and Employer's Liability is Unlimited for New York State operations	
Professional Liability	Errors or Omissions coverage for Pet Training or other related professional services	\$1,000,000 each claim, and \$1,000,000 aggregate	\$1,000 per Claim

Cautionary message from Dr. Dave Hensen, president and founder of Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy, Inc..

Animal Assisted Therapy programs have become very common place the past five years. When we started in 1993 it was very difficult to get any dog into a human health care facility. But the benefits of human dog interaction became apparent and today such dog visits to human health care facilities are common and accepted. However, today most programs are not monitored and there is no oversight. The news story below was regrettable but it was also very predictable. People, especially owners, do not evaluate their own dogs objectively. I run across this all the time. This is illustrated in the recent news story below. Owners make excuses for their dogs, not because they are lying but because they just don't see it. This is what we are guarding against with our program. No other program meets our standard of monitoring and oversight. Our dogs are overseen by neutral third party experts, not by the dog's owner.

Service dog bites neighbor's child
Friday, April 22, 2011
By Scott Curkin; Eyewitness News

NEW JERSEY (WABC) - The fate of a quarantined German Shepherd is in the hands of a judge in New Jersey after it bit a neighbor's daughter.

The dog bit the young girl in the face.
The pet's owner's daughter is a 9-year-old girl battling brain cancer.
The German Shepherd is her service dog, and she wants it back.

One year ago today, 9-year-old Molly Kimball got the dog, Ava. Molly has had six surgeries, and receives chemo every Monday. Three weeks ago, Ava was taken away by animal control after the incident at their neighbor's house. Molly's dad says he was holding the leash when Ava lunged at the 6-year-old girl living next door.

"I believe that her jaws involuntarily snapped and one of her teeth caught the little girl's nose," said Paul Kimball. The little girl was Isabelle was rushed to the hospital. Paul says it was an accident, and Ava wouldn't hurt a fly, however there are always two sides to every story.

When Eyewitness News spoke to the victim's family, we got a different story. "It is not a peaceful dog at all, to attack when it's on a leash is disgusting," said Liz Gernhardt. The little girl needed 100 stitches to close the wound to her face, and now has trouble sleeping and doesn't want to go outside.

The Gernhardt's say they love Molly and don't want to see her suffer anymore. They don't even want to see Ava put down, they just don't want the dog living next door. This coming Tuesday night a judge will decide if Ava can come back to the neighborhood. Even the neighbors say they feel for Molly but have to worry about the safety of their own children too.

Comments:

4/21/11 9:27 PM EDT

i am very sorry about the little girl but in my experience the little girl might have done something like step on the dogs foot and hurt it with no one looking. they dont bite without provocation. i have owned 4 service dogs and know them well. most dogs have to be hurt before they bite Mark As Violation

4/23/11 12:44 PM EDT

The dog also knicked the neighbor's son on his cheek before. I'm wondering why the neighbor still let the dog come around her children? Mark As Violation

4/23/11 3:23 PM EDT

The DOG RAN ONTO THEIR PROPERTY UNLEASHED while the little girl was outside and the owner came over to get it. They are neighbors and were friendly even after the nip on the little brother. They gave the dog a pass the first time because it's supposedly a service dog and belongs to people they know. How can you blame the parents? The girl wasn't petting or playing with the dog. She was standing still. Mark As Violation

4/26/11 2:11 PM EDT

tough call. Maybe they can get shorter leash and muzzle the dog while walking it.. One of the better muzzles, the cage hard plastic kind so dog can still open mouth and pant etc but still not be able to bite. I can see the parents not wanting to take away child's dog with all child has been through and I can also see the neighbors concern for their children. Tough call, hope it works out for all.. Euthanizing the dog is not the answer. Mark As Violation

PRAAT – A local Rotary program

Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy (PRAAT) started in 1993 as a simple community service project of Dr. David Hensen's first Rotary club, the Rotary Club of Patchogue. It was a huge success right from the start and expanded rapidly. Within a couple of years it became its own not for profit 501-C charitable organization. However, the basic philosophy of PRAAT has stayed the same: to involve regular people and their dogs with a program that facilitates the interaction of people and dogs to enhance the lives of everyone. This program is run professionally with guidance and oversight.

PRAAT is but one example of many service projects that Rotary is involved with. Worldwide there are approximately 1.2 million Rotarians, more than 29,000 Rotary Clubs in 168 countries. For all of us our common motto is: service above self.



Benefits of Dogs

General benefits of dogs

comfort of physical contact with animals,
reducing loneliness, and increased opportunities for meeting others, via their pets.
caring for pets encourages nurturance,
caring for pets encourages responsibility and adherence to a daily schedule



Benefits to children

Owning a pet enhances a child's self-esteem.
Having pets teaches children responsibility and respect towards other living beings.
Children owning a pet are more involved in activities such as sports, hobbies, clubs or chores. Having an animal present during therapy sessions or other animal-assisted activities/treatment results in significant improvements in the outcome of treatment procedures of children suffering from a variety of ailment, both physical and psychological.



Health benefits of dogs

Increase longevity after heart attacks
Lower cholesterol and triglycerides
Decrease blood pressure and reduce stress
Walking a dog is good exercise
Increase physical activity and functioning



Dogs in medicine

Reduce medical appointments and minor health problems
Predict seizures
Control 'freezing' in Parkinson's Disease
Diagnose cancer
Alert to hypoglycemia
Pet owners have a higher survival rate after serious illness
Pet owners have fewer doctors' visits
Pet ownership reduces loneliness
Facilities that have pet visits report lower need to administer drugs



Benefits of dogs in mental health

- Pet ownership fights depression
- Pet ownership helps us cope with stress
- Pet ownership aids childhood development
- Pet ownership enhance family life
- Increase verbal interactions between group members
- Increase attention skills (i.e., paying attention, staying on task)
- Develop leisure/recreation skills
- Increase self-esteem
- Reduce anxiety
- Reduce loneliness

Educational benefits

- Children improve their reading skills in a unique and fun environment
- The program can be implemented in many settings
- The program promotes another positive way that animals can make a positive difference in children's lives
- R.E.A.D. can potentially be successful with older children, as well.
- Increase vocabulary
- Aid in long- or short-term memory
- Improve knowledge of concepts such as size, color, etc.
- Reading assistance dogs

Benefits in physically disabled people and rehab

- Improve fine motor skills
- Improve wheelchair skills
- Improve standing balance

Motivational

- Improve willingness to be involved in a group activity
- Improve interactions with others
- Improve interactions with staff



The PRAAT process

1. Screening: A disposition test and physical examination.
We test the dog's basic personality. We want friendly interactive dogs. Previous training is helpful but we provide and oversee our own training for those dogs that pass.
2. PRAAT Training: For those dogs and their owners who pass. This is basic obedience with a slant toward animal assisted therapy.
3. Final Examination: We want to see how the dog and volunteer do in a real life situation. A supervised visit is arranged at one of the facilities we visit.
4. Disability Etiquette course for people – to instruct volunteers how to deal with people who are physically, psychologically or emotionally compromised.
5. Monitor all aspects of the program before and after certification. We get feedback from everyone,



Types of Facilities we visit

Hospitals

Psych wards
Pediatric
Cancer wards
Geriatric

Hospice

Half way homes

Nursing Homes

Adult Homes

Substance abuse treatment facilities

Children Education and reading

Handicapped facilities

Day care centers

Psychiatric Treatment Facilities

Rehabilitation

Correctional Facilities

Women and children shelters

Libraries

Schools

Alzheimer and dementia units



How we are different

1. We just don't test a dog and certify him or her. We monitor everything.
2. We train our dogs.
3. We provide training for our human volunteers to advise them how to deal with disabled people.
4. We arrange for visits to our facilities and get feed back.
5. We monitor the pet's health care.
6. We follow up with the facilities to make sure things are going well.
7. We are a program. So if someone can not make a particular visit we have back up. Likewise if a person leaves, a dog dies or something happens such that a particular dog can not make a visit, we are set up to quickly fill the void.
8. We are a resource of information for people contemplating a career using animal assisted therapy.
9. We are fully insured.
10. We are overseen by a board.
11. We do charge a fee, generally \$30 per visit. However the net proceeds above and beyond what it cost to run the program is donated back to the community through Rotary charities.
11. We have PRAAT outings. We are trying to create an "extended family" atmosphere amongst our volunteers and facilities. This could be an appreciation event or a town parade.
12. If a dog is under one year of age at the initial screening they will always be re-screened when they are over one year.
13. If a PRAAT dog stops making visits for longer then two months they get a leave of absence (LOA) designation. Such dogs need to be re-screened before they can restart visits. This is similar to the initial screening test. However the dogs are also expected to be obedient and well trained. During the initial screening we are lenient. We know those dogs that pass will receive training. We are more interested in the dog's basic personality.
14. No other program meets our standard of oversight and monitoring.



Comparison between PRAAT and Therapy Dogs International (TDI)

TDI: Owners self screen their dogs. If a dog owner believes they have a good dog they can apply. They get their own training or do it themselves. Once they feel they are ready they have their dogs evaluated by a certified TDI evaluator. There is a nominal fee for this examination. In order to keep their TDI status they have to pay a fee of \$30 per year and send in their dog's health information. For those dogs that pass the TDI evaluation and in this way become certified, they get a card so stating this. Then the owner calls up facilities they think might be interested and arrange their own visits. They have insurance coverage so long as they maintain their membership.

TDI human volunteers are not trained.

TDI visits are free.

TDI volunteers act as individuals not as a program.

TDI is large. As of 2009 over 21,000 dogs were TDI certified.

TDI dogs are overseen by their owners – there is no oversight by outside qualified professionals.

There is no accountability if the dog misbehaves or develops a problem.

The TDI web site indicates TDI dogs and their dogs are insured.

TDI volunteers pay an annual fee to TDI to keep their good standing.



PRAAT dogs are screened for temperament and disposition. Those dogs that pass go into a training class and are evaluated throughout.

PRAAT hooks up dog and volunteer to facilities we feel are a good match.

PRAAT reminds volunteers of upcoming visits and gets feed back.

PRAAT monitor health care history and make sure dogs are current.

PRAAT gets feed back from the facilities on a regular basis.

PRAAT goes out to the local community and talks about the program.

If PRAAT learns that a certain dog has not kept up with obedience or otherwise behaves detrimental to our program they are removed.

There is a donation fee of \$30 to the facilities for PRAAT visits. However all the money raised goes back to support local charities through Rotary.

PRAAT is relatively small at least compared to TDI. Over the years we have had 300+ active volunteers. We have 44 active right now.

PRAAT dogs are cared for by their owners. However, their animal assisted therapy visits are overseen by veterinarians, trainers, human health care professionals. We also have input from attorneys, accountants, educators and other professionals most of whom are Rotarians.

PRAAT and all its components are fully insured.

Only PRAAT meets or exceeds the gold standard for animal assisted interventions as outlined in the journal article Guidelines for animal-assisted interventions in health care facilities by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.



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