



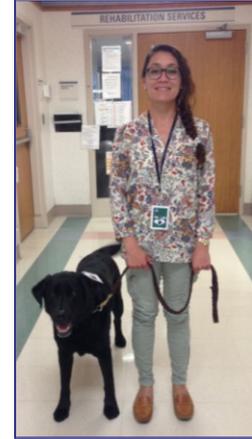
Talk to the Paw

Support Dogs, Inc. Volunteer Newsletter
Spring 2016



Maria and Inchanga

Growing up in Mexico, Maria always enjoyed having dogs in her life. She appreciates that special bond between humans and their canines and knew she eventually wanted to do something with one of her dogs. A few years and countries later, when it came time to choose a puppy, she found a calm black lab. She named him Inchanga, which means 'shield' in Zulu. In fact there is a hill in South Africa named Inchanga.



Some of her work colleagues were involved with Support Dogs and told her about the TOUCH program. After a few conversations and a little investigation, she had Inchanga tested and enrolled in the program when he was 2 ½ years old. While Maria found the program highly structured, she appreciated the range of scenarios presented to prepare her for real-life volunteer situations. They graduated in November 2014 and have been happily volunteering ever since at the St. Louis Rehabilitation Center.

Inchanga may be one of a very few TOUCH dogs in the program who is bilingual – he understands many words in both Spanish and English. Maria says that she and her husband have to be creative about the use of certain words they don't want Inchanga to react to (like 'cat'). Like many Labs, Inchanga loves playing in the water – at the ocean, the lake and the river! Of course he is also a consummate and kind beggar for bananas, carrots, potatoes and apples. When you visit their home, Inchanga will greet you by presenting you with his favorite toy. At the park, he is the good will ambassador for all dogs, patiently allowing adults and children to pet him and talk to him.

In addition, Inchanga enjoys sitting next to patients so he can be loved on and help 'calm people down.' Maria taught Inchanga to 'bow' to the staff upon entering the facility. What a talented boy he is! Maria is a hugely proud doggie mama who is fulfilled to bring happiness to others in this service.

TOUCH Dog Team - Retired

Bentley (Judy Dubelman)

TOUCH Teams – Rainbow Bridge Dogs

Nikki (Patti Teper)

Bodhi (Shirley Peschke)

Austin (Deb Garbo)

Trudy (Geri Auger)

Mia Ham (BJ Okenfuss)

Clancy (Kathy Wakefield – retired team)

New Facilities needing TOUCH Teams

• Adult Memory Care, Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living

- 1st & 3rd Friday/mornings
- Kirkwood/270 and Big Bend
- Rob Verbarq/314-780-7028

• Adult Memory Care

- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays/afternoons
- Edwardsville
- Cindi Blanke/314-997-2325

• *We have 20+ unlisted sites needing teams and there are current sites requesting additional teams. As you know, it might be their only 'hug' that day. If your schedule permits, please consider adding an additional site.*

2nd Request for this New Facility

Senior and Assisted Living
Visits in common rooms & some room to room visits
2nd & 4th Tuesdays/3 pm
Creve Coeur
Jan Knoche/314- 576-3685



Upcoming Events at Support Dogs

May 24th - New Volunteer Orientation at 6:00 pm

June 7th – TOUCH Graduation at 7:00 pm

June 20th – Assistance Dog Team Training Begins

June 23rd - Open House 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

July 1st – Assistance Dog Graduation at 6:30 pm

July 23rd – TOUCH Temperament Evaluations

July 30 – New Volunteer Orientation at 9:30 a.m.

August 8th & 9th – TOUCH Prep Class begins

August 20th - Trivia Night

August 25th – New Volunteer Orientation at 6:00 p.m.

Please contact the Support Dogs office at 314-997-2325 or info@supportdogs.org for more information and to RSVP for the listed events.

TOUCH Handlers at A Fetching Affair



L to R: Linda Rau (Lucy), Karen Bellville (Beck), Cindy Perez (Pepper), Allison White (Chip), Rob Verbarg (Raina)

Volunteer Advisory Council Corner

Coming Soon: RESULTS from the Volunteer Survey.

Is there someone with whom you volunteer that you would like us to write about? Or, do you have a photo you would like to share? Send us an email at VAC@supportdogs.org.

Volunteer Advisory Council Members

- Jo Ann Bane (Vice Chair)
- Jan Boyle
- Debbie Caplin
- Sharon Dozier
- Jim Ellis
- Christine Figge (Chair)
- Barbara Harris
- Candace Metcalf
- Shelley Newman (Secretary)
- Kay Schmidt
- Bob Snyder
- Sue Weick
- Patty Zubal

Contact the Volunteer Advisory Council at the following email if you are interested in joining the team.

VAC@supportdogs.org

The goal of the Volunteer Advisory Council is to grow the volunteer team, improve the volunteer experience, and support the staff to be able to provide more services to more people in a professional and safe manner.

TOUCH teams – please send us your pictures!
We want to show you off!!



SPRING 2016 TOUCH TEAMS

Back row from left to right: Karen Czmarko (Brandy), Jessica Platt (Murphy), Katina Truman (Riley), Lori Roth (Teddy), Dennis Patterson (Riley), Judy DeMarco (Mardi), Steve Dedrickson (Henry), Jackie Gross (Kirby)
Front row from left to right: Michelle Kappesser (Lincoln), Elizabeth Richter, (Dustin), JoAnn VanDeven (Pippin)



SDI Volunteer Puppy Raisers Have Been Busy



Kateri Akers and Gibson



Karman Parker and Fran



Daniel Schraeder and Diva



Chrissy works with Kelly and Christmas puppy Faith



Susan Weick and Otis



Deb Sears-Brown and Homer



Gai Kranz and Lady



Daryl Figge and Stan



Jo Ann Bane and Junior



December Puppies are growing, playing and snoozing



Nick



Merry



Puppy Bowl Huddle



Tired Puppies

SPOTLIGHT ON: Marty Seiffert Volunteer Puppy Raiser Currently raising SDI puppy #15 (Waylon)



Why I volunteer at SDI

To teach our children that even at a young age they can help someone else and make a difference in their lives. It doesn't always have to be monetary.

Best dog I raised

All dogs have been like my kids, each one has a special place in my heart.

Best dog toys I have used

Nylabones for sure have been the best toy and saved my furniture at home. Another toy many of the dogs have loved is a large, hard plastic ball with holes and a smaller plastic ball inside. The ball has gone with some to their new home.

Most unusual experience with your dogs

Many years ago, I went into a restaurant and asked if it was okay to bring in a service dog. They said yes, so I went out to the car to bring the dog in. As we sat down to order they brought me a Braille menu.

Best public outing I had

There are many but now as my hair color gets whiter, I have more assistance when we are out in public!

Emotions I feel when returning my dogs to SDI

This is of course the hardest part of the program but as I turn in a puppy I try to take a new puppy home. It is truly more rewarding to see your puppy graduate and do what he has been trained to do and know that he knows this is what he is meant to do.

Released dogs I have adopted

We have adopted one service dog, who is now 9 years old. The person she was with had medical issues and could not keep her; as such, she was too old to be reassigned. We were happy to have her back and hopefully gave piece of mind to the client's that his trusted companion will be well cared for.