

UPCOMING EVENTS

- DOG WASH
July 15, 2012
- GRADUATION
Aug. 17, 2012
- CHAMPIONS MEETING
July 28, 2012
- DOG WASH
Sept. TBD

CHAMPIONS MEET THE WOLF FAMILY

By: Vicki Boynton

With over 40 people in attendance, the SoCal Champions hosted the Wolf family in the first meeting of the year in Irvine. The Wolfs are an extraordinary family including twins and quadruplets who have CCI skilled companion dog, Kiki for their son Adam. They provided us with

insight into team training as well as Kiki's role in Adam's daily life. Ali (Adam's mom) told us how overwhelming team training can be at times but that in the end when she and Adam received Kiki, she knew it was worth it. At times it was emotional as Ali relayed how during a

recent illness, Kiki stuck by Adam's side at the hospital, even laying next to him as he prepared for an MRI. While Adam chose to defer to his Mom during the presentation, it was obvious to all, the bond that he has with Kiki.

As if having a houseful of kids and animals weren't enough, we discovered that the Wolf family decided to raise a puppy for CCI. As puppy raisers they follow the same path that all puppy raisers follow including the ups and downs of advanced training. Puppy raisers often get asked "how can you raise a dog and then give it away". If

you were to ask the Wolf family how they can raise a CCI puppy, they will tell you that it is their way of giving back for the gift of Kiki who helps Adam every day. While we all took a lot away from this event, clearly the one thing that everyone took away was that this family puts a whole new meaning into the words "volunteer" and "extraordinary".



SW Drill Team and Parade Walkers Make History

By: Pattie Urie



On March 24, 2012, the CCI SW Drill Team and Parade Walkers participated in the 54th Annual Swallows Parade in San Juan Capistrano. The festivities celebrate the annual return of the swallows from their winter home in Argentina to the San Juan Capistrano Mission. The theme of

the event this year was “How the West was Fun” and our team joined in that mood wearing red cowboy hats with blue paw prints and yellow neckties. This event, known for being the “nation’s largest non-motorized parade” excluded all motorized vehicles including wheelchairs. Thanks to

Herb and Heidi Langefeld, electric wheelchairs were included for the first time in 53 years. Herb was able to fulfill his dream of being in the parade! Team Langefeld led our group carrying a beautiful CCI banner and a big smile.

WOW!! Your Audience at your next CCI Presentation

By: Sondra Thiederman

Don't miss Sondra at our July Champions Meeting. You're sure to pick up a lot of great speaking tips.

When was the last time you were really moved by a speech? I'll bet it was when the speaker found a way to relate the topic somehow to your life, your interests, or your needs. Keep that

experience in mind when you design your next presentation for CCI. Irrespective of who your audience is here are some tips that will help you create a talk that connects to the listener.

Tip #1 – Arrive early to meet people.

Tip #2 – Link the CCI Mission to the purpose of the group.

Tip #3 – Tell stories and anecdotes that relate to the interests of the audience.

Dog Wash to be held in Lakeside on July 15, 2012

On July 15, 2012 from 10:00 -2:00, the Champions will be holding a dog wash at Angelica's Pet Grooming at 12113 Woodside Avenue in Lakeside. All the

proceeds for the dog wash will go to CCI. We have some people already signed up to volunteer but we can always use more. It is sure to be a fun time, so even if

you can't attend encourage your friends, neighbors, and family to attend and support CCI.

My Journey For a Successor Dog – By Roz

The interview and working with another dog went very well. My thoughts of leaving Brenda behind are becoming less and less as she stays home with my husband and gets the rest and care that a senior dog needs. I need her but I understand her need to be allowed to slow down and sleep more. The next step is waiting to get the call for Team Teaming to begin.

Its September, 2011....I've waited 11 months for my Successor Dog. I received a phone call from CCI letting me know that I will be a "side placement" because I've already worked with a Hearing Dog for 9 years. I suppose they felt I only needed a week of training. Can you imagine what that week is going to be like? I'd better go buy a new pair of roller skates; I'm going to need them!

One was Pippen, the other Horton. I fell in love with Horton. When we walked together, he leaned into my leg and sniffed and kissed my hand, even as we walked together. He had me from the words "let's go!" I worked with both dogs the rest of the day and by Tuesday morning it was decided by Ken and another trainer that Horton would be mine. He was everything I wanted in my new dog.

Horton, Ken and I worked very hard for the five days. Ken said that I could come back in January when the next Hearing class would have their Graduation, and I could graduate with them. My picture was taken and Horton and I headed for home. I stopped along the way to visit my children, allowing them to meet Horton. Like me, they loved him.

Brenda and Morey were waiting for me and I was so anxious to see Brenda's reaction to this big boy. I was told that meeting on neutral turf would be the best, so we met outside. Both dogs took to each other with ease.

We've fallen into a great routine, my fellow workers love him and he's comfortable on my job. Life is looking very good. I've gone to the mall, the grocery store and on long walks. I'm feeling so much younger and happier. Horton will be the promise of wonderful tomorrows for me and for him.

In the mail I got a "notebook" – the one with all the information about dog behavior, grooming, feeding and just plain living with a Service Dog. Amazing how there's always something new we can learn about dogs in general. I'll be staying in the dorms and will be using the CCI facilities for my meals, etc. The last time I was there it was with lots of other people and there was always a bustling feeling around me. I wonder what it will be like this time. I think I'm going to be by myself and an instructor - I can't wait to meet my new partner who will share my home, my family and be Brenda's buddy. I can start to live my life again. I went to Team Training. I cried most of the way to Santa Rosa, Ca, where

the Hearing Dogs are trained. I cried for the loss of Brenda not being with me, I cried knowing that I would be able to do all the things I loved again and I cried knowing that soon I'd have a new partner with me.

I started on a Monday and left on Friday. Talk about abbreviated. It was me and Ken, my trainer. Except for the work involved, that was not so abbreviated. Ken made sure that we put in a full day's work every day. At the end of each day I was exhausted and literally fell into bed. On the first day of training I was introduced to two beautiful, male black labs. One was tall, and pranced like an Arabian stallion, while the other was really tall and looked like a grizzly bear.



Life with Shirley, a CCI Facility Dog By Val Valentine



Shirley and I started our life together in November 2007 when we completed our training with Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). We became partners in order to bring happiness and love to adults and children that could use a bit of “dog love”. When a person graduates with a facility dog from CCI, it is with the understanding that they will attempt to use the dog in a working capacity for approximately 20 hours per week. Now for a person that works at a health center, school or some other type of facility on a daily basis, this is fairly easy. But for Shirley and me, we have several facilities that we go to.

Our path has led us to assisted living facilities, hospice, volunteering in public schools with children who have learning disabilities, a foster home for children who have been abused, volunteering in a school that helps children with autism, an adult school for people who have various disabilities, a

physical therapy department in a hospital, and in a woman’s resource center. I tell people that I am Shirley’s Chauffer and it is my job to drive her around, she is the one that does all the work (if you would like to call it that). Each time we enter a place, I really have no idea of what to expect. Every time is different. But the one thing that is always constant is the joy and happiness I see and feel when we enter a room and people say “Shirley is here!!!” Shirley is a “rock” in all situations, from having a child with autism shaking Shirley’s leash while we are going for a walk, standing patiently while a person who has had a stroke brushes he or doing a “lap” for a person in a wheel chair who would not be able to reach her and love on her otherwise. From putting on bunny ears for so a child can talk about problems to comforting a family who’s loved one is in surgery, Shirley is there to break the tension or ease the pain.

Shirley’s impact is so subtle that it often goes unnoticed by me. I only know that Shirley can do a “visit” and look into a person’s eyes and they feel loved. A child can put a couple of pieces of kibble on her front paws and they have to tell her “OK” before she will eat them, and they are thrilled. She can get up on the big tables in physical therapy and lay beside a person that is having a leg stretched out in pain, and they put their arms around her and the pain feels like it has lessened a bit.

I feel so very blessed to be “Shirley’s Chauffer”. And share in the miracle moments that she gives to people just by being an amazing CCI Facility Dog!!

Golf Tournament rapidly approaching

On Friday October 26, the Canine Companions Invitational Golf Classic will be held at the Monarch Beach Golf Links in Dana Point. It is a fun day of golf followed by a celebration dinner and silent auction at the St Regis Hotel. You'll get to hang out with exceptional dogs and people. For more information go to www.ccigolf.org



Golf and Dogs...It doesn't get any better

Thank you Champions

A week before graduation, the Champions received a call from CCI requesting that the Champions bring cookies to the event. One email was sent out to our members and we were overwhelmed by the response. From the simple brownie to the beautifully decorated dog shaped cookies from Janice Flynn, the sheer volume of treats

were a testament to what it means to be a volunteer. Thank you to everyone who took the time out of their busy day to bring all those wonderful treats.



Didn't get your own copy of the newsletter?

JOIN THE SOCAL CHAMPIONS TODAY

Email us at Socalchampionsmail@gmail.com

Don't forget to check out our new blog www.socalchampionsblog.blogspot.com

The SoCalChampions are a group of volunteers for Canine Companions For Independence. Our group is dedicated to spreading the word about CCI while at the same time exchanging ideas and just having fun.

KEEP THE IDEAS COMING

This is YOUR GROUP. We can't do all this by ourselves and we want to hear from you with thoughts and ideas for fundraising, speakers, and get togethers.....

