

THE FREEDOM PRESS

Quarterly Newsletter of Freedom Service Dogs, Inc.



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Stryker, a service dog in training, is eager to serve a military client. He will be placed as we make progress toward our \$100,000 fundraising goal!

Vietnam veteran Stephen is, “Always at war.” He’s lucky, though. With his name on the Freedom Service Dogs waiting list, help with his PTSD is in sight—particularly with the generosity of The Broe Group. **For every dollar you donate that is targeted to Operation Freedom, The Broe Group will match it up to \$100,000!** That means your giving combined with this match will allow us to **place eight dogs for military clients through this grant alone!** This opportunity is made possible by The Broe Group on behalf of its owners, associates and their families. **“I’m deeply grateful for the service and sacrifice of our military veterans,”** said Pat Broe, founder and CEO of The Broe Group. **“What Freedom Service Dogs provides is tremendous and we want to support their mission.”** For a look at the benefits of Operation Freedom, take a look at Stephen’s story:

Stephen, a Navy Seabee, served in Vietnam from 1968–1970 and is no stranger to war. “We were fighting the whole time,” he says. “I got shot off of a 35-foot telephone pole. The splinters from the pole turned into shrapnel. The creosote burned.” In addition to combat wounds, heavy use of Agent Orange in the area left him with many medical problems,

Help Veterans **ALWAYS AT WAR**

DOUBLE YOUR DOLLARS WITH THE BROE GROUP’S CHALLENGE GRANT INITIATIVE!

including a PTSD diagnosis in 2005. Today, Stephen is 100 percent disabled according to the Veterans Administration.

“I’m at war. I’m always at war,” says Stephen, who is nervous in public places and doesn’t sleep well because he always feels threatened. “I never know when the bad stuff is coming back, and there’s no defense against it.” He admits that his PTSD and anxiety have cost him relationships and says, “I just want to get to a calm, healthy place.”

Stephen was diagnosed with kidney cancer in October and underwent surgery in January. Now cancer free, he has moved to Cheyenne, Wyo., to escape the hustle and bustle of Denver. He receives therapy through the VA in Cheyenne, but must travel to Salt Lake City for checkups—and would like a dog to accompany him on these stressful trips.

BROE

A 1-year-old Yorkshire terrier pup, Grizz, introduced Stephen—who has never found a medical solution to his anxiety—to the calming effect of a service dog. “Grizz is a great protector. I love that little dog. I needed something to occupy my mind. He made all the difference, but he’s not a service dog.” He believes a larger dog, that can go anywhere with him, would give him a sense of security. “He will have my back,” he says, evoking the “battle buddy” concept.

You can help Stephen transition from the waiting list to a life of greater independence by making a contribution to FSD today (be sure to **indicate Operation Freedom with your donation**). “Your efforts are never in vain,” he says to our valuable donors. “This makes a difference. A dog improves the quality of life in different ways. Even if it makes one month of someone’s life better, it is worth it.”

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The Tall End of the Leash

As you can see from these numbers, our success is not measured by the money we bring in, but by the people and dogs we help to better this community. As a fully donor-funded nonprofit, we owe all of this success to you, our loyal supporters. We truly appreciate your faith in us and belief in our mission.

For FSD, however, 2011 is a whole new year with no guarantees. We need to stay on pace to set records again—because **injured soldiers** are still coming home from war, people in our community are still subject to **illness and injury**, and people are still born with **disabilities**. Not to mention that **dogs are still found abused, abandoned and unwanted**, particularly with the economy still affecting families and shelters. Meanwhile, we have increased the visibility of FSD, producing a **continual stream of potential clients**. Every year we need to keep up—and step up—all our efforts to keep saving dogs and chipping away at our waiting list.

Your ongoing support is absolutely critical to our mission of changing lives, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you do.

Thank you,

Sharan Wilson
Sharan Wilson, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This year, I'm actually looking forward to the potentially dry job of producing Freedom Service Dogs' 2010 annual report—because this year, all the numbers are good news. In fact, 2010 was the most successful year in our 23-year history! Take a look at these impressive numbers:

- Thanks to your valuable donations, FSD provided custom-trained dogs to **27 clients**—our most ever—and a **42 percent increase** over 2009.
- In the process, we **rescued 114 dogs** from a bleak existence, bringing our lifetime total to more than **1,000 rescued dogs!**
- Despite the ups and downs of the local and national economy, we raised the most money ever—while simultaneously **slashing expenses by 10 percent**, ensuring that every dollar you donate is used wisely.

ABOUT FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS

Freedom Service Dogs, Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt 501 (c)(3) organization founded in 1987. FSD rescues dogs from shelters and trains them to assist people with disabilities, enabling them to lead more independent lives.

FSD donates trained service dogs to clients, teaches clients to work with their dogs, and provides lifetime support for the team. FSD educates the public about the legal rights and etiquette for all assistance dogs.

The Freedom Press is the newsletter of Freedom Service Dogs, Inc. It is distributed free of charge to all supporters.

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Sharan Wilson
Executive Director

Alan & Pilot Featured on Nickelodeon's "Nick News"

The great work you support at Freedom Service Dogs continues to **reap national attention**. Recently, our client Alan and his service dog Pilot were featured on **Nickelodeon's "Nick News" in a spot called "Service Dogs."** (Visit www.youtube.com/fsd1987 and click the "FreedomServiceDogs_NICK.mov" at right.) In the video, you'll meet several service dog clients, including FSD's Alan.

Alan, a 14-year-old who has Down Syndrome, and his family worked closely with FSD for several years to find the perfect service dog. In October, they were blessed with a border collie named Pilot. Pilot is beneficial to the family in many ways, including keeping Alan safe, encouraging him to speak clearly and helping him learn necessary life skills. Above all Pilot serves as Alan's best friend.

"I wanted a dog for safety, to let me know if Alan wanders off," Alan's mother Darlene says, "Pilot is trained to bark when Alan puts his hand on the knob of an outside door." Alan tries to be independent, but has walked off several times. "He doesn't know stranger danger," Darlene says. "For the first time, I am able to sleep at night and not worry about Alan because I know Pilot will let me know if he tries to slip off."

FSD Evangelists

Whenever the family goes out, they carry FSD brochures and newsletters because they want to do their part by spreading the word about what a great dog Pilot is and how the volunteers, donors and everyone at FSD help people every day. While out in public with Pilot, Alan is also experiencing the best speech therapy he's ever had—because Pilot is a great icebreaker. When people see them together, they ask questions and Alan loves to talk about Pilot. The interaction requires that Alan speak clearly so that people can understand him.

Learning Experiences

Pilot helps Alan learn important life skills in an environment that is more fun than a therapy session. "Alan has some sensory issues, so we use dog care to show him that hygiene like brushing his teeth and clipping his toenails doesn't hurt. He helps me with Pilot. We say, 'no hurt.' If it's OK for Pilot, it's OK for Alan, too," Darlene says.

Alan is responsible for feeding Pilot and ensuring that there is water in Pilot's bowl. He takes pride in working with Pilot, and spends time each day keeping up his training. Darlene watches over the pair, but allows Alan to take the reins.

Alan, who is working on a dog care merit badge in Boy Scouts, also cuts up treats for Pilot. "Using a knife is a life skill he will have to learn. This way, it's not like being in an occupational therapy session," Darlene says.

Alan and Pilot are inseparable friends—Pilot even goes into the locker room with Alan at basketball practice and basketball games. Alan wants to take Pilot to college with him as well.

"Many people don't think of someone with Down Syndrome going to college," Darlene says. "But Alan wants to and Pilot will help."

— Lindsay Allen



Avalanche All Access! The Feb. 21 "Avalanche All Access" show on Altitude Sports Network featured hosts Kyle Keefe and Julie Browman working with service dog candidates Mansfield, Rumba and Dallas at the FSD headquarters in Englewood. FSD Trainer Sarah Keyes instructed the hosts in basic dog training techniques through a hockey move—teaching the dogs to put a puck in the net.

RUN THE COLFAX MARATHON FOR FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS!

You supported us on Colorado Gives Day this winter, so think of FSD again this spring!

Spring, summer, winter, fall, our loyal supporters are here for us. On Dec. 8, 2010, **nearly 100 donors** selected Freedom Service Dogs as the beneficiary of their Colorado Gives Day donations, which were generously increased by Community First Foundation and FirstBank. That single day brought in **\$15,100**—more than **60 percent of what we need to place a dog with one client**.

We're hoping for similar results this spring as a **Charity Partner of the Kaiser Permanente Colfax Marathon, Half-Marathon, 5-person Marathon Relay and 5K on May 14–15**. As an official Charity Partner, 100 percent of the pledges you raise go directly to supporting the mission of FSD. Our goal is to encourage **50 runners to each raise \$250**—for a total of

\$25,000—in pledges for FSD. With this amount, we can **fully fund one client-dog team**. This is your chance to transform the life of someone who cannot participate in such an event.



With **options for various fitness levels**, this is a fun, easy way to help FSD. Your support, whether through donations or active event participation, is always appreciated! For details, visit www.runcolfax.org. Please confirm your registration with Perry Jowsey at 303-922-6231 or pjowsey@freedom servicedogs.org.



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