



...A Diabetic's Best Friend!

Inaugural Class Graduation By Terry O'Rourke

Welcome to the premiere edition of the Scentinel, Early Alert Canines' newsletter!

On August 18, 2012, Early Alert Canines (EAC) joyfully celebrated its first ever team graduation. The California-based nonprofit proudly recognizes the successful efforts of four Full Access Service Dogs, one Skilled Companion Alert Dog and all of their human partners during this milestone event, which also represents a culmination of the collective efforts of EAC's founders, staff, volunteers, friends and financial supporters. It is with a great sense of accomplishment and pride that we now celebrate the fruits of our labor and cheer on five new teams: Nathan and Oakley, Stephanie and Ozark, Nancy and Hoops, Nancy and Kade and Chrystal and Leslie. We look forward to sharing more about the amazing people and dogs that make up these teams in future *Scentinel* issues.

EAC gratefully acknowledges the selfless generosity of the individuals and organizations that offer their career-change dogs to this life-changing service, including Canine Companions for Independence and puppy raisers from Guide Dogs for the Blind.



EAC has achieved many important goals in its short 21-month history. While the initial chapters in EAC's history have been written, we look forward to widening our reach to show many more people with diabetes and their families how an Early Alert Canine is, indeed, "A Diabetic's Best Friend!" Congratulations to our first five teams to earn the title of EAC graduates!

Donor Highlights



Every now and then we have someone very special to wag our tails for...!

A big thank you goes out the Rotary Club of San Ramon Valley for their generous donation. On January 23, 2012 the Rotary presented EAC with a check for \$500 in order to purchase

x-pens, cushy dog beds and fun toys for our canines-in-training. The gift came with a beautiful commemorative sign that is now proudly displayed in our training room.

Wag 'em if you've got 'em!

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Carol's Corner by Carol Edwards



Notes from the desk of EAC's top dog

On a rainy afternoon in December 2010, a small group of people gathered around my kitchen table to discuss creating an organization that would allow us to use our particular talents to help insulin-dependent adults and children face the challenge of living with diabetes.

Understanding the never-ending demands of this chronic disease, we sought to provide trained low blood sugar alert dogs to diabetic clients, including children under the age of 12.

I don't think anyone around that table expected that twenty months later we would be celebrating the graduation of our first five teams. During that period, the collective efforts of many took us on an event-filled whirlwind ride. In that brief time frame we incorporated, searched for a new home, found it, fundraised to renovate it, gathered loyal volunteers who tirelessly supported the EAC mission and partnered with donors who generously contributed to our cause.

Together, as a community, we made a significant impact not only on our first five graduates but also on those around them. The act of placing one of our trained alert dogs with a diabetic client is like throwing a pebble in a pond; when the pebble hits the water it produces a ripple that radiates out from the center and positively impacts all that it touches. If you have been touched by one of these dogs, you know exactly what I mean. If you haven't yet witnessed firsthand the positive transformations of our program and would like to get involved, please step forward. We'd love to add you to the EAC community!

[Click here to email us](#)

Meet Our Recruits



Lucy, formerly known as Tuvi, came to EAC through Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). She is a medium-size yellow cross (Labrador/Golden Retriever mix) weighing in at 53 pounds. A spunky addition to our training team, Lucy showed up eager to learn and ready to work!



Bender is an easy-going, gentle soul. He came to us from CCI and enjoys belly rubs and a good romp in the yard. Bender is a black cross with beautiful brown eyes.



Introducing EAC's first Labradoodle: Brooks! Brooks is a mere 37 pounds, but full of experience. He comes to us through the California Canine Academy and is a fully trained service dog whose handler could no longer care for him. Brooks is eager to complete scent training and begin taking care of one our clients.

Client Spotlight



Nancy Harrison and Kade

Though she's been on insulin for over sixteen years, it took only one blood-sugar drop while driving to scare Nancy Harrison into rethinking her diabetes care regime. Already a dog lover with two canines in her home, Nancy was elated to hear about low blood sugar alert dogs. Since she and her husband, Richard, have welcomed Early Alert Canine Hypoglycemic Medical Alert Service Dog Kade into their home in Pleasanton, California, Nancy reports that Kade is "nailing" her lows. We caught up with her recently to find out a little bit more about the new partnership.

How has your life changed since you received your EAC dog?

The biggest thing Kade has done for me is that since having him he has caught me way more lows than I have caught without him. He's just way more accurate. Also the peace of mind and assurance it gives my husband when he travels just to know that Kade is here with me.

Can you tell us about your dog's most dramatic alert/save?

I was sleeping...nothing abnormal—before bed sugars at 130. Then around 2 A.M. Kade is on my chest licking my face and he won't get off... I ask him if he wants me to check and he finally lets me up. I check and I am at 25! He sits on his bed and just stares at me until I am up to the mid 90's... 'Til this day when I have issues, he will wait until I am over 85 before he will let me move out of his sight.

What advice would you share with someone considering getting one of these dogs?

Your life is not yours as it was before... it's better and different all at the same time.

Continued on page 4

In the News

Early Alert Canines' first Partner Training Class was highlighted in the Contra Costa Times May 5, 2012. The informative story written by Jennifer Shaw is now available in the CCT Online Archives and can be viewed for a small fee at: <http://tinyurl.com/8cgew6p>



June 20th, 2012, *The Los Altos Town Crier* writer Diego Abeloos wrote an article about Hilary and her Alert Dog Raine.

Go to this website or click below for a link to the complete article about this amazing pair.

http://www.losaltosonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=43388&Itemid=128

Client Spotlight Continued from page 3

You have a 2-year-old toddler life again. If you have never had that life, well, let me explain:

When you get up in the morning you have someone wanting something to eat and needing to go out before you even get to go to the bathroom. When you go into your bathroom, you have someone sitting there watching and in the way as you get ready for your day. You go shopping and you have a body on your left leg as you look and check things out and they watch your every move with their eyes asking "are we done yet?"

When you eat dinner, you have someone watching every bite...hoping some of it's for them. so wonderful! And when they tell you, "Mom/ Dad, you need to take care of yourself!" it's SO much more.

But the *LOVE* you get out of every look as they watch you get ready for your day, or shop for your stuff or eat is more than you will ever know...the help that no one or anything has been able to do to help you from losing control over something you don't even know is happening ...It's such a WONDERFUL FEELING!



The assurance that they will take care of you and get to you ahead of the trouble...it's worth learning to live with someone who's with you for every moment of every day--SO WORTH IT!

Aside from alert work, what is the best thing about having your dog?

The LOVE that they give you just for being you is so much more than I can ask. And I have two other dogs in my home and they love me, too, but Kade is just so much more... He is a clown when he is playful and a love bug when he wants to cuddle, but he is always wanting to know "Mom, are you okay?" Even when my sugars are good he is just wanting to know where I am and what I am doing. It's different than anything I have ever known and I just love the feeling of him being there for me as much as I am for him.

Vet Notes by Dr. Kim Bercovitz

Doggie Diets: What to look for and what to avoid

With so many new dog foods on the market, each with a buzzword or gimmick, it is difficult at times to pick the right food for your dog. Here are a few guidelines.

First, always look for the AAFCO label. AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) is a non-profit organization that sets standards for pet foods in the United States. In order for a dog food to be labeled as "complete and balanced," it must meet the nutritional

standards established by AAFCO. It can meet these standards through laboratory testing of its food ("formulated diet"), or laboratory testing and feeding trials ("tested diet"). I usually prefer tested diets to formulated ones.

Second, check out the food's protein content. The debate between veterinary nutritionists about how much protein should be in dog food is hot. What we do know is that if kidney disease is present and we stress the kidneys by making them deal with the byproducts of protein metabolism, the With so many new dog foods on the market, each with a buzzword or gimmick, it is difficult at times to pick the right food for your dog.

Third, stay away from raw foods. Why? Your dog's safety, your safety, and community safety. Let's start with dog and human safety. Dogs can be susceptible to many of the same food-borne pathogens we are. When a large number of raw food diets were tested, 6% were contaminated with salmonella, and 50% with e.coli! If your dog is carrying harmful bacteria, he is at risk of becoming sick.

Any human coming in contact with the saliva, through licking, touching the food bowl, etc., would be susceptible to infection. Even without licking, your environment can be seeded with potentially harmful bacteria. Your dog is also an ambassador in the community. It is your job to protect that community from disease. Raw food is best avoided.

Tail wags 'til next time!
Dr. Kim Bercovitz



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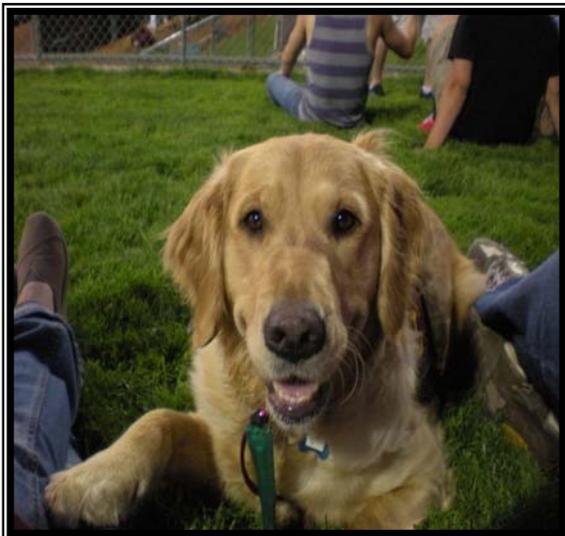
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Save the Date!

2nd Annual **Spooktacular**

Join us at the EAC training facility
on Saturday, October 20, 2012:
Service dog costume parade (4:00pm)
Pasta dinner (5:00pm)
Live and online auction (5-7:30pm)
Fun for the whole family!

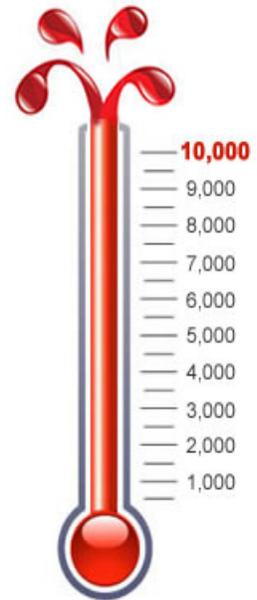
\$10K Today Challenge Drive a Huge Success! By Rick Freeman

May was an exciting time for the EAC community. A generous private donor offered to match our fundraising efforts dollar for dollar, for up to \$10,000.

The **\$10K Today Challenge** was born. Our dedicated community rose to the task, contributing over \$12,500 to take full advantage of the matching funds.

Together, we raised \$22,500! The money will enable EAC to continue obtaining training and placing our life-saving and life-changing Diabetic Alert Dogs. Since we don't charge our clients for these dogs, we depend upon grants and donations to fund our operations and allow us to continue serving the community.

Our warmest thanks go out to everyone who participated. Your efforts fully funded two new dogs for the upcoming training class, with a little left over for other essentials.



Great job!