



CANINE HEROES

and the Jobs They Do

As we learned last month, dogs have a highly developed sense of smell. In fact, they can detect some odors in parts per trillion! That has made them invaluable for such working dog functions as finding bed bug infestations, doing drug searches, sniffing out bombs, and detecting human scent in search and rescue missions.

Because of the strong bond that has developed between humans and dogs over many generations, dogs can perform many invaluable jobs to aid their humans. Chief among these canine heroes are service dogs – guide dogs for the visually impaired, hearing dogs for the hearing impaired, dogs who can alert people to migraine headaches or other ailments, even dogs who assist people with mobility issues or who can provide support for veterans and others suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders. These dogs are not considered pets, but rather are essential partners to their handlers, and this special distinction allows them entry into places where animals are otherwise prohibited, like restaurants and stores.

Emotional support animals (ESA) provide for the emotional support and comfort of their owners. An ESA can help his handler by easing his anxiety or giving him



Amazingly, dogs have been working alongside of humans for thousands of years! Their jobs have become no less important in the modern day, as their presence spans from police and armed forces work to working beside us in everyday life.

a focus in life. A licensed mental health professional must deem that an ESA is necessary for the mental health of his owner. While ESAs

may live in residences where animals are otherwise prohibited, they are not allowed in all the places that service dogs can go.

Finally, there are animals who provide services as therapy pets. These pets are trained by their owners to provide affection and comfort to people in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, even disaster areas. They have no special access to places other than the individual facility accepting their visit.

Pets are our everyday heroes! If you have a pet of your own, I am sure you will agree that he or she is a comforting presence to you, providing unconditional love and devotion.



A behavior specialist and trainer living in southern NJ, Laura Garber, CPDT-KA, CC, FFCEP, CBC, led behavior departments in animal shelters for over a decade. Her company, WoofGang, LLC (www.myWoofGang.com), is committed to deepening the bonds between dogs and their people through positive training and behavior modification techniques, and it is these same topics that inspire her writing. You can contact her at laura@myWoofGang.com.