

THE FREEDOM PRESS

News from Freedom Service Dogs of America

FALL 2018

Hansen hits home run with service dog

BROGUE HELPS CLIENT WHO SUFFERED PRE-BIRTH STROKE



Hansen and Brogue, 2015 Freedom Service Dogs graduates

Next time you're at a Colorado Rockies home game, watch for a smiling young man accompanied by a happy yellow Labrador in a Freedom Service Dogs vest. That'll be Hansen and Brogue, one of FSD's most visible client-dog teams.

Now age 28, Hansen started life the hard way: He suffered a stroke in his mother's womb that wiped out parts of his brain's speech center and frontal lobe. The stroke left him with a nonfunctional right hand, a limp in his right leg, and poor peripheral vision in his right eye. The damage to his left brain also makes it difficult for Hansen to initiate actions such as getting out of bed in the morning and transitioning to a new activity.

Despite these challenges—and with his mother's support—Hansen grew up to be a smart, funny, and active young man who is an avid Rockies fan. When Hansen learned about Freedom Service Dogs, he began to envision a life where he was not as dependent on his mother and even dreamed of getting a job at Coors Field, something he had never thought possible due to his disabilities.

In 2014, Hansen was matched with Brogue, a 3-year-old Lab who came to FSD from Colorado's Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program. Since then, Brogue has become a constant companion and helper to Hansen, opening the apartment door when Hansen is carrying laundry, pulling off his jacket,



All-stars Hansen and Brogue at Coors Field



retrieving his hand brace and other items, alerting Hansen when people are on his right side, and more. Brogue also has another important task, which Hansen describes as "getting me going when I am stuck." He barks at Hansen when it's time to wake up, ensuring that Hansen gets out of bed to feed Brogue, let him outside, and start his own day.

Thanks to the increased confidence he feels with Brogue by his side, in 2015 Hansen applied for his dream gig. "Brogue helped me get my job as an usher at Coors Field," he says with pride, adding that Brogue helps him break the ice with strangers and is a "star" at work.

This spring, Hansen and Brogue landed a second job as ushers at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Says Hansen, "Brogue has gotten me to try new things I never would have thought of. He has expanded my world."



FREEDOMSERVICE DOGS.org

About FSD

Freedom Service Dogs of America is a Denver-based nonprofit organization that unleashes the potential of shelter dogs by transforming them into custom-trained, life-changing assistance dogs for people in need. Clients include children, veterans and active duty military, and other adults. Their disabilities include autism, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Since being founded in 1987, Freedom Service Dogs has paired hundreds of client-dog teams at no cost to the client. For more information, visit freedom servicedogs.org.

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Special thanks to Patty's Pet Photography and Terri Watson Photography.



Tom Scanlan with his Australian shepherd, Kodi

Challenge calls for fresh ideas and new partnerships

A MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR TOM SCANLAN, RETIRED, BRIGADIER GENERAL U.S. AIR FORCE

If you ever need a heartwarming reminder of why Freedom Service Dogs is worthy of your support, just attend one of our graduation ceremonies, as I did on June 23. The stories of our clients and their new assistance dogs brought smiles to many faces, tears to many eyes, and made me incredibly proud of our graduating teams and of FSD for the life-changing work we do.

I left the event wanting to see more lives transformed by Freedom Service Dogs—and that's why, during the first half of 2018, the FSD board and leadership team laid the foundation for some exciting changes at the organization. First and foremost, we are exploring new and innovative ways to address FSD's biggest challenge: finding an adequate supply of appropriate service dog candidates. Colorado's high adoption and spay/neuter rates have created a scarcity of dogs in shelters, and many of the dogs being transferred into Colorado from out of state have health or behavior concerns that disqualify them for service dog work.

But with approximately 90 veterans, adults, and children with disabilities on our waitlist at any given time, we are determined to increase the number of service dogs that graduate from our training program so we can impact more clients, more quickly.

To that end, we recently launched a Puppy-Raising Pilot Program as an extension of our partnership with Colorado's Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program. Puppies diverted from shelters by their owners or donated to FSD will live with specially trained inmates 24/7 and learn basic commands before returning to FSD for specialized training. We plan to evaluate the program's success a year from now, so stay tuned for "pupdates" along the way.

We're also working hard to strengthen partnerships with local, regional, and national shelters and rescues that can supply us with potential service dogs, and to establish relationships with organizations that have career-change dogs that may be suited for service dog work, such as Leader Dogs for the Blind, a guide-dog training school in Michigan.

All of our programs and partnerships have one goal in mind: to serve the most clients in the best possible way, and to continue providing assistance dogs to those clients free of charge.

We're so grateful to you, our community of supporters, for your generosity in helping us pursue that goal. Thank you for all you do, and I hope to see you at our next graduation on Dec. 6!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Scanlan".

ZIPA beer raises more than \$23,000 for FSD

In May 2017, Breckenridge Brewery launched a new IPA (India Pale Ale) called “ZIPA”—named after our service dog-in-training Zipper—to raise funds to help offset the cost of training for Zipper and other service dog candidates. During the following year, Breckenridge Brewery donated \$1 to FSD for every ZIPA pour at the Farm House restaurant at its Littleton brewery and at its brewpub in Breckenridge. On July 11, Breckenridge Brewery presented a check for \$23,278 to FSD on FOX31—that’s 23,278 beers sipped in support of our life-changing work! Deepest appreciation to Breckenridge Brewery for this fantastic, foamy fundraiser. Stay tuned to see what they brew up next to support FSD ...

A CAREER CHANGE FOR ZIPPER

SERVICE DOG HOPEFUL OPTS FOR FUTURE AS FAMILY DOG

Zipper—the chocolate Labrador who became a TV star when his puppyhood and service dog training were chronicled on FOX31 Denver—was released from FSD’s training program in April. If you were one of the many fans who followed Zipper’s progress on television, you’ll be happy to know that he was honorably discharged from his training duties and has been adopted by the family who fostered him since he was 12 weeks old.

Zipper began his stint as a celebrity pup at the age of 13 weeks, when he first appeared on “Problem Solvers: Serving Those Who Serve,” a series spotlighting organizations that support veterans, active members of the military, and their families. Over the next nine months, Zipper regularly joined FSD staff members and trainers in the FOX31 studio to raise awareness of the lengthy and rigorous process FSD canine candidates go through to determine whether they will make a successful service dog.

According to FSD Dog Training Manager Morgan Karol, “Not every dog is fit for the rigors of a working life, and at FSD we want our dogs to ‘wag while they work’—to be happy, eager, and comfortable doing their job. Zipper’s heart was simply not in becoming a service dog.”

For career-change dogs like Zipper, FSD’s adoption program allows them to stay in our care as we help them find a loving home. Zipper now lives with Nadine and Andrew, the couple who fostered Zipper from the start. Says Nadine, “It’s been quite the journey with Zipper, and although his release from the program was not the outcome we had planned for, we are thrilled to have him as a permanent part of our family.”



Zipper with his new forever family



Interested in adopting a career-change dog? Browse adoptable dogs at freedomsservedogs.org.

2018 EVENTS

For more information about all our events, visit freedom servicedogs.org/events.

FACES OF SPORTING CLAYS TOURNAMENT FREEDOM

PRESENTED BY 

On June 29, 240 enthusiastic supporters participated in our Faces of Freedom: Denver Sporting Clays Tournament, presented by PowerShift, at Kiowa Creek Sporting Club in Bennett, Colorado.

IN ITS SIXTH YEAR, THE EVENT RAISED MORE THAN

\$170,000

TO SUPPORT OPERATION FREEDOM, A PROGRAM OF FSD THAT PLACES SERVICE DOGS WITH VETERANS.

If you missed Colorado's friendly competition, there's still time to join us in Texas for Faces of Freedom: Midland on Sept. 21. For more information, visit freedom servicedogs.org/faces.



DIAMONDS IN THE RUFF

presented by 

OCTOBER 20

Wings Over the Rockies Exploration of Flight in Englewood

Join us for the seventh annual Diamonds in the Ruff! The night is spent honoring our service dogs and their human partners, mingling with friends, eating delicious food, and bidding on our many wonderful silent and live auction items. The funds raised on this special evening will help Freedom Service Dogs provide even more service dogs for people in need, forever changing their lives.



For more information or to purchase tickets, visit ruff2018.givesmart.com.

Operation Full Circle going full steam

THIRD CLASS OF VETERANS START DOG TRAINING PROGRAM

In mid-August, we welcomed our third class of veterans to Operation Full Circle (OFC), a unique program specifically designed for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma. The veterans work with their new FSD service dogs over a 16-week period as they develop comprehensive training skills and bond with each other over shared experiences. Once they have completed the program and graduated, participants are invited to volunteer to help fellow veterans train their service dogs in the OFC program. The current OFC class will graduate in December.



Freedom Service Dog CIPHER

“Since graduating from the OFC class, CIPHER and I have done well together. He goes with me everywhere and is very attuned with what I need. My anxiety is very bad, but I know when I am out I can just pet him and keep him close, and I feel safe. He is life changing, and when he isn’t working we enjoy downtime together. I think FSD is a great organization and I am fortunate to receive such an amazing dog.”

-Jessica

U.S. MARINE CORPS VETERAN
WHO GRADUATED WITH CIPHER
IN DECEMBER 2017

CAREER-CHANGER CROFT FINDS FOREVER HOME



Michael and Kim Field with Croft

FORMER SKILLED COMPANION DOG NOW HAS “SERVICE PEOPLE”

Three years ago, a big, black Labrador named Croft graduated from Freedom Service Dogs as a skilled companion dog for a client with mobility challenges. Croft assisted his human partner with retrieving items and other tasks, but he had a difficult time adjusting to small children in the family and was returned to FSD after a year. Croft was fostered by FSD volunteers Kim and Michael Field until he found a new home, but one year later, he was returned to FSD in need of some increased exercise and a bit of a diet.

Once again, the Fields took in Croft, only this time, they decided to make him a permanent family member. Says Kim, “Croft needs a lot of exercise and attention, plus he’s a big dog. When Michael and I found out he was available, we knew he’d worked hard for somebody and needed a forever home. So there was no way we could not adopt Croft.”

Today, 7-year-old Croft is a svelte shadow of his former self, having lost 15 pounds since last spring thanks to a healthy diet, daily exercise, and fun-filled camping and fly fishing trips with his active new owners. “He’s led a very sheltered life, and now he’s experiencing so many new things and having great fun,” says Kim. “We take him everywhere we go, and he’s loving just being a dog. Croft is truly retired. He was a service dog, but now we say he has service people!”

Congrats, grads!

MEET OUR SUMMER 2018 GRADUATING TEAMS

On June 23, eight client-dog teams graduated from Freedom Service Dogs during an emotion-filled ceremony at Parker Arts, Culture & Events Center. Families and friends of the honorees joined FSD staff, volunteers, and other guests to celebrate the graduates, among them two young boys with autism from our Disco's Dogs program, a U.S. Army veteran with PTSD, and a young man with muscular dystrophy.

Another graduate, Chuck, survived a terrible car crash in 2002 but found his life forever changed. He suffered a traumatic brain injury that forced him to relearn how to talk and walk, and he was diagnosed with PTSD and depression. Chuck's mobility remains limited due to balance issues caused by his brain injury, so we matched him with skilled companion dog Bowser, who is assisting Chuck with brace and balance, retrieving dropped objects, and providing companionship and a sense of purpose.

Although Chuck and Bowser couldn't attend the ceremony, Bowser sent an email that was read by Chuck's daughter, Emily. Wrote Bowser, "Chuck is very appreciative of everyone involved with us finding each other. The generosity of donors to Freedom Service Dogs is helping make an incredible contribution to changing people's and dogs' lives, both physically and emotionally. Thanks to all of you, Chuck and I will start a new 'leash' on life, supporting and loving each other for years and years to come."



View the entire graduate gallery at freedom servicedogs.org/grads.

In addition to Bowser, six service dogs and one professional therapy dog received diplomas. Together, they represented the wide range of sources that FSD relies on to acquire service dog candidates, including a rescue, a local shelter, and a private donor. Three of the furry graduates came from Colorado's Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program, a longtime FSD partnership that we are grateful to Principle Business Enterprises for sponsoring.

Many thanks to Wag N' Wash Natural Food & Bakery for sponsoring this graduation.



Isaiah & Baja

"... Chuck and I will start a new 'leash' on life, supporting and loving each other for years and years to come."  - BOWSER



Chuck & Bowser



Jonathan & Solar



Kim & McGee

SPONSORED BY PETSMART CHARITIES

Winter 2018

GRADUATION
DECEMBER 6 6PM
8PM

THIS UPLIFTING GRADUATION CEREMONY IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

freedom servicedogs.org/event

Save the date!

Julie Arnold does it all for FSD

SUPER SUPPORTER ADOPTS, DONATES, VOLUNTEERS, AND FUNDRAISES



Julie and Doug Arnold with Lacey and Brie

When Julie Arnold believes in something, she believes in it 100 percent, no holds barred. Fortunately for Freedom Service Dogs, Julie believes in our mission wholeheartedly and has spent almost two decades supporting FSD in pretty much every way possible.

Seventeen years ago, Julie and her husband, Doug, were dining out when their waiter mentioned she was volunteering at Freedom Service Dogs. After the Arnolds said they had recently lost their dog, the waiter told them about Tuxedo, a rescued border collie/Labrador mix at FSD who needed a permanent home—and the rest is happy history.

Following Tuxedo's adoption, the Arnolds started learning more about FSD, and Julie fell in love with the organization. "Freedom Service Dogs fits everything I believe in: You rescue dogs. You give them new opportunities and they never go back to a shelter. You train them to help people of all ages with all kinds of disabilities. What more could I ask for?"

That passion inspired Julie to change the beneficiary of her employer's (CH2M at the time; now Jacobs) annual employee golf tournament, with the proceeds benefiting FSD. Over the next five years, Julie brought sponsors on board, sold tickets, organized and promoted the event, and was instrumental in raising over \$100,000 for FSD.

That was just the start of Julie's steadfast support for her favorite nonprofit. In addition to being a member of our Kibbles Club for monthly donors, Julie has volunteered at FSD events, launched a holiday Giving Tree at work where employees buy wish-list gifts for FSD dogs, donated a pre-lit holiday tree for our new lobby, and donated a park bench to FSD in memory of Tuxedo (who was with the Arnolds for 11 years). And, for a milestone birthday this year, Julie's family surprised her with a party benefiting FSD.

To top it all off, Julie and Doug are enthusiastic fans of adopting career-change dogs from FSD. After both Tuxedo and Tula, their other dog, crossed the Rainbow Bridge, the Arnolds contacted FSD to request a bonded pair of dogs that could keep each other company, as they both work. A few months later, they adopted a brindle-colored duo that had come to FSD from two

"Freedom Service Dogs fits everything I believe in...What more could I ask for?"



-JULIE



Lacey patrolling the backyard from her perch



If you or your company would like to learn more about fundraising for FSD, please contact Nadine Pace at npace@freedom servicedogs.org or 303-922-6231 X216.

Texas rescues and been released from our training program: Lacey, a retriever/coonhound mix, and Brie, a Labrador/chow mix.

"The kinds of things FSD looks for in a dog are exactly the same as our requirements for a dog," says Julie. "When you adopt a dog from FSD, you're getting a lot of background information on them: things that FSD has discovered during training and also things the foster volunteers see in their homes. Adopting FSD dogs has made me a better pet owner, knowing that I'm getting attributes—and quirks—that I can live and work with. There's always a learning curve with any new dog and you have to be patient, but choosing FSD dogs makes the process so much easier to create a happy home for all!"

JOIN THE KIBBLES CLUB

Monthly giving that makes an impact

Did you know?

By donating to FSD on a monthly basis, you:

- ✓ Help fund the most urgent needs of our mission, such as emergency veterinary care for a dog in training, supplements and supplies, or training and support needed by our clients.
- ✓ Make the most efficient donation to our programs by reducing the costs associated with postage and mailing.
- ✓ Provide consistent, ongoing support that we can count on.



Becoming a member of the Kibbles Club is easy!



Visit freedom servicedogs.org/donate/kibbles or contact Kate Goble at 303-922-6231 x215 or kgoble@freedom servicedogs.org.