



Spring 2007 Issue: Director's Chair, February 2007 Graduates, Chapter Highlights, Upcoming Events

## Disneyland® Resort Spreads Magic to CCI

by Karyl Carmignani

What began with a fan letter to bestselling author and generous CCI supporter, Dean Koontz, has morphed into a wonderful corporate partnership with Disneyland Resort, CCI and the planet. A few years ago, Jill Bolton, Director of Community Relations at Disneyland Resort, was dazzled by a novel written by Koontz and sent him an appreciative letter. She soon received a response from the writer

along with a copy of *Love Heels*, a compilation of CCI Graduate stories to which Dean Koontz wrote the foreword.

"I got the book on a Friday and literally could not put it down," said Bolton. "By Saturday I had read it cover to cover and knew CCI was an organization I wanted to be involved with. The stories were just incredible!"

Fortunately, Disneyland Resort has a civic-minded culture and its Cast Members (a.k.a. associates) are committed to making a positive difference in the community. One highly successful program is the Disneyland Resort Cast Member Recycling Program for bottles and cans, with the redeemed monies going to a nonprofit organization they have chosen—CCI.

"Canine Companions for Independence is a great fit for us, as many of us have a real passion for animals and we are determined to make Disneyland accessible for all," said Bolton. "We all feel good about the fact that both children and adults with disabilities benefit

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## Director's Chair

by Linda L. Valliant

I always knew it could happen. I dreamed about it happening. I watched with delight and awe as it happened to others. But this time it really and truly happened to me. On February 24, 2007 I became the proud puppy raiser of CCI Graduate Hearing Dog Garnie.

What an amazing experience. From the moment I got the call that Garnie was matched to the instant of handing the leash over to Garnie's new partner Lucille, I floated on a euphoric high of excitement. I shared the news of Garnie's impending Graduation with everyone I knew or thought I knew. And I made several new friends. When someone would comment on my CCI apparel or my puppy handbag, I took that as the cue to launch into a quick two minutes on puppy raising in general and Garnie Graduating in particular.

On my trip up to Santa Rosa for the Graduation, I made a mental list of all the hands and hearts that were responsible for Garnie's accomplishment and the list stretched to dozens including co-workers, puppy sitters and CCI's incomparable training staff. The moment of unsurpassable joy that came with handing over the leash was shared with each and every one of Garnie's special circle of friends.

Graduation's ebullient afterglow is sure to be with me forever. Puppy raising is an adventure not to be missed. If you have always said, "someday...I'll puppy raise" why not now? When it happens for you and you have the distinct privilege of handing over the leash to a CCI Graduate you will wonder why you waited so long. I will be embracing a new puppy on June 13 and we will be looking for you in puppy class!

*Linda Valliant*



## CCI Information the Best Bet

At The Rio, one of the most prestigious and elegant casino-resorts in Las Vegas, CCI Service-Team LadyHawk Freeman and Scarlett recently provided a seminar addressing protocols and courtesies around Assistance Animals to performers and senior security personnel.

The purpose of the seminar was to share with attendees the role of assistance animals in our society, along with the reasons behind many of the "Do's" and "Don'ts" when around them. The team also provided a series of demonstrations of how Scarlett facilitates LadyHawk having a normal and high-quality life and lots of fun.

### Arizona Puppy Raiser Receives Grant

A Prudential CARES Volunteer Grant was awarded to Bonnie Sposato, of Scottsdale, AZ who devoted 6,205 hours to CCI last year. We applaud her commitment to CCI and appreciate Prudential's valuing the work of volunteers in the nonprofit sector.

**February Graduates**



**April Cadena**  
with Facilitators Gilbert & Mabel Cadena  
Skilled Companion Dog Jesper  
Laredo, TX  
Jackie Jelen  
Irving, TX



**Sean Haynes**  
with Facilitators Richard & Laurie Haynes  
Skilled companion Dog Cusack  
San Diego, CA  
Richard & Deborah Tompson  
Salt Lake City, UT



**Adam Wolf**  
with Facilitator Ali Wolf  
Skilled Companion Dog Kiki III  
Irvine, CA  
Todd Murnan & Michelle Norman  
San Diego, CA



**Denise Murrietta**  
with Facilitator Jackie Murrietta  
Skilled Companion Dog Wyka  
Scottsdale, AZ  
Sharla & Robert Purnell  
Yorba Linda, CA



**Rual Zenteno**  
Service Dog Gable III  
Granada Hills, CA  
Susan & Tiffany Spicer  
Yorba Linda, CA

**February Graduates**



**Suzanne Butler**  
Service Dog Darren  
Las Vegas, NV  
Jackie Jelen  
Irving, TX



**Terri Hlava**  
Service Dog Pakuna  
Phoenix, AZ  
Susan & Dave Calvano  
Colorado Springs, CO



**Judy McCarthy**  
Service Dog Rosen  
Prescott, AZ  
Patricia Bird  
Denver, CO



**Richard Radtke**  
Successor Service Dog Liberty  
Kaneohe, HI  
Sharla & Robert Purnell  
Yorba Linda, CA



Teresa Woods and Helena share a moment at the February Graduation.  
Photo by Chris Kittredge

# CCI Dog Days of Summer Sale

**P**erk up your pooch during the Dog Days of Summer while raising funds for CCI!

Moe Toys is having a warehouse-wide sale the weekend of August 25-26 to benefit CCI, with Moe Toys contributing 10% of the total sales to CCI. The warehouse, located in Santa Ana, CA will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on August 25 and 26. Everyone is invited to come shop 'til you drop for all kinds of dog toys, treats, gear bags, car seats, soft-sided crates and gift items. Shoppers will receive a 15% discount on their

purchases! The warehouse is located at 630 S. Grand Avenue, Suite 115, in Santa Ana.

You can also invite family, friends and neighbors who are out of the area to shop online at [www.moetoys.com](http://www.moetoys.com), during the event. Online purchases made on Friday, August 24 through Sunday, August 26 will receive a 10% discount when you enter the discount code "CCI," and CCI will also receive 10% of the total purchases. Online shoppers receive free shipping on orders of \$100 or more. Thank you Moe Toys for this fetching offer!

# Highlights from Volunteer Chapters

## San Diego

### Two, Four, Six, Eight, Who Do We Appreciate...CCI Volunteers!

It was a banner day last February for the Super Bowl Volunteer Appreciation bash at CCI. Guests were treated to football fare: hot wings, hot dogs, chips 'n salsa and chili created by nine CCI staff teams. The Chili Cook Off had some hot competition! Our trusty volunteers played a rousing game of *Name That Tune* with songs pertaining to each of the 10 states Southwest serves. Then there was the highly anticipated game of Doggie First Down and Doggie Dress Up which entailed wearing team fan attire and creating a cheer! The dogs were good sports and exceedingly well-behaved, of course.

The Awards Ceremony honored eight volunteers for their devotion and commitment to CCI in 2006. The people receiving the Most Valuable Player awards in eight categories were: Outreach—Dusty Bergmans; Office—Betty Makowski; Kennel—Elnora Chambers; Puppy Program—Cyndy Carlton and Katie Brown; Youth Volunteer—Morgan Tucker; Campus Grounds—Brad Grimm; Graduate Ambassador—Mary Hill.

We applaud you all for your hard work! You are the wind beneath our wings and the grass under our paws. Thank you.

## Arizona Chapter

by Pat Lawson

The Valley of the Sun Chapter held elections for new board members in January with Cathy Peterson taking over the helm as President, Kerry Saxby—Vice President, Pat Severance—Secretary Treasurer, Rhonda Faul and Sharon Higgins—Puppy Raising



Coordinators, Andy Harper and Christa Federico—Event Coordinators, Michael Connors—Member at Large and Pat Lawson—Golf Committee Director and Public Relations Chair.

February was a very busy month in the Valley of the Sun! The inaugural “Ryan Elementary Fun Run” generated over \$800 for CCI on Valentine’s Day in the school’s first ever Fun Run. Next up was the annual Animal Fair at the University of Tucson campus. Puppy Raisers Cecile McKee, Jenny Schultz, Jen Badik, Renee Cooperman, Graduate Shannon Pierce and Breeder-Caretaker Chris Kitredge handed out CCI information and

answered questions at the CCI booth. Puppies were on hand to lend a helping paw. Later, CCI was the beneficiary of a new business grand opening—Valley of the Sun Puppy Raisers and Graduates were on hand to help “Entrées Made Easy” open its doors. An estimated \$1500 that represented half of the profit for the day was donated to CCI. What a yummy way to fund raise! Phil Gordon, the Mayor of Phoenix, even presented an official proclamation that the 28th of February was to be named “Canine Companions Day in the City of Phoenix.” Special thanks to Puppy Raisers Pat Severance and Penny Parella for helping to make this happen.

Get ready for the 4th Annual Dog Days of Summer Golf Classic being held on September 21 at Ocotillo Golf Resort. Anyone interested in playing in the Dog Days of Summer Golf Classic can visit our website at [www.cciarizona.org](http://www.cciarizona.org).



February 28th was declared Official CCI Day in Phoenix by Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon. Left to right: Penny Parella, CCI puppy “Ona,” Pat Severance, Gary Frandino and Mayor Gordon. Photo by Pat Lawson

## Utah

Wishing Puppy Raiser Becca Stanford a pleasant journey to China in February, Utah's CCI puppies gathered at the Salt Lake International Airport and created



an uncommon sight. Puppies and Puppy Raisers are now anxiously awaiting the "Welcome Home" event in July.

Our puppies stepped out again as ambassadors for CCI during the recent Family Links North Conference. The Utah Parents Center sponsors this event for educators and families of children and youth with disabilities. As CCI puppies always do, they attracted attendees to the CCI exhibit, allowing us to introduce them to the Skilled Companion program. None were familiar with CCI so it was heartwarming to watch as parents considered the possibilities. One mother who had been searching for a service dog for her child was quite discouraged by the high cost. When she heard that CCI dogs are provided at no cost to the Graduates, her eyes filled with tears. What a touching reminder of why we are Puppy Raisers.

## Oklahoma Chapter

by Dawn Ransey

The Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Sulphur, Oklahoma will be the home of the Red Earth Champions' largest fundraising event of the year: the Snoopy's 10km Challenge. Along with the Snoopy's 10km Challenge we will be kicking off the inaugural Crooked Horn Bike Tour. There are two tours, both winding their way through the foothills of the Arbuckle Mountains. Get in gear October 13, 2007 for this spectacular fundraiser. Register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) and make plans to join us for a howling good time.

One of Oklahoma's largest dog shows is at the Expo Center in Shawnee,

Oklahoma, so we decided since we would have all those fur loving people in one place we would tell them about CCI and the Puppy Raising Program. We will be setting up a vintage military type recruiting booth with "We Want You!" posters and tons of brochures and pictures of our pups and their Puppy Raisers.

The annual Shawnee Mall Mutt Strut took place April 7, 2007 and everyone in attendance had an ear scratchin', foot thumpin', throw-your-head-back-and-howl good time. There were approximately 40 dogs that strutted their best Easter attire through the mall. The event, sponsored by the Shawnee Mall and organized by the members of the Red Earth Champions, included games, contests and Easter Bunny photo opportunities.

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## Disneyland *continued from page 1*

from CCI assistance dogs, and that our 'green environmental efforts' support CCI's mission and benefit the environment." To date, Disneyland Resort has donated \$90,000 to CCI from this recycling program.

*Disneyland Resort also has a Volunteer Leadership Council (a.k.a. Volunt-Ears) that provides volunteers to meet the needs of nonprofit organizations' special events. Last year, these cheery Cast Members worked 100 volunteer projects (including several for CCI) and logged 104,000 volunteer hours to the community.*



Disneyland Resort management recently made a visit to CCI. From left to right: Mike Sweeney, Mike Hart, Bill Hillis, Frank Dela Vara, Matt Grey, Larry Vick, Linda Valliant and CCI puppy Thad. Front row: Adonis Reeves, Betty Appleton and Jill Bolton.

# WOOFSTOCK Rocked!

There is nothing quite so gratifying as working with a small but mighty committee to create an event that is so fun and successful that you leave the park thinking, "I can't wait until next year's fundraiser!" So it was after WOOFSTOCK: A Festival for Dogs & People in Balboa Park.

With the leadership of Cheryl Crawford, event Chairperson, the committee of Willie Crawford (no relation), Linda Comunale, Davielle Huffman and Candy Keily rose to the challenge with great aplomb. The Peace, Love and Walk 'n Roll fun



CCI Skilled Companion Team Gemma Grealy and Bennett woofing it up! Photo by Karyl Carmignani



dog walk prior to the Festival got people (and dogs) in the groove for a day of live entertainment (Jackson Patrick was excellent!), good food, cool vendors, canine demonstrations and fun "fur" the whole family!

Top Dog fundraisers were Lavonne Gudmundsson and Raymond and Team Adam, made up of Adam Wolf and Kiki and Adam's mother Ali. Both of these enthusiastic fundraising teams cleared \$4,000 for CCI—wow! The Kyjen Company (makers of Outward Hound products) was kind enough to provide the top prize of getting your pooch on a new product package. Plenty of other folks earned various levels of prizes for their fundraising as well and CCI is grateful to each and every WOOFSTOCK participant.

We would like to sincerely thank our generous sponsors Viejas Enterprises, Ruff Haus Design, The Honest Kitchen, Chipotle, Nutro and PETCO. All told, this wildly successful event raised nearly \$30,000 for CCI, and for that our current and future Graduates will be wildly thankful. See you at WOOFSTOCK next year! I can't wait...

## Looking Ahead

by Chuck Contreras

Wow, I can't believe we are into the second quarter of 2007. It feels like yesterday we were celebrating Paws to Remember, the 20th Anniversary of the Southwest Region. Now as we enter our 21st year as a region, we look forward to achieving the fundraising goals set before us. 2007 brings a budget target of more than two million dollars, and while this number sounds daunting, we tackle this challenge with a confidence and enthusiasm matched only by the commitment of our trainers, volunteers and supporters. And why not? The year started out with a bang as Southwest presented WOOFSTOCK: A Festival for Dogs & People in Balboa Park, which drew over 1,000 participants and raised nearly \$30,000 for CCI! Kudos to the WOOFSTOCK committee for this great success.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to two new members of the development team bringing our department to full capacity. It is my great pleasure to welcome Amber Sliffe as our new Volunteer Coordinator sharing the position with Lance Weir, and Annie Scott as our new Development Associate. Welcome to the team!

### Regional Board

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## Golf Tourney Raises Green

**T**he Colorado Wyoming Petroleum Marketers Association (CWPMA) once again hosted the Annual Glen and Lynn Ann Balenseifen Memorial Golf Tournament to benefit CCI. Over the past nine years, this event has raised over \$224,000!

This year's event was held at the beautiful Perry Park Country Club in Larkspur, CO. The golfers not only enjoyed the lush fairways, amazing red rock formations and beautiful winding streams, but also appreciated having a record number of CCI volunteers (17) and CCI puppies (11) there to offer support and beverages along the way.

The tournament was followed by a buffet and live auction that were enjoyed by all, but nothing could top the inspirational testimonials given by Janette Lawler with Service Dog Justin and Cory Saldana with Service Dog Rickey. These two amazing ladies made it clear how much of an impact their Assistance Dogs have made in their lives, and how much they appreciate wonderful supporters like the CWPMA.

## Free Cone Day Melts Hearts

Canine Companions for Independence was once again the happy recipient of the generosity of Ben & Jerry's Free Cone Day at both stores in Seaport Village, San Diego. CCI trainers had a field day, bringing advance training dogs to socialize and show ice cream fans what CCI dogs can do. This annual event benefits local charities and CCI is always happy to be selected as a recipient of donations made in lieu of paying for ice cream. Councilwoman Donna Frye joined in the fun by being a celebrity scooper on her lunch hour.

Many thanks to the CCI Graduates and Puppy Raisers who enthusiastically worked the CCI information booth and helped spread the word about CCI! This event garnered \$1,800 for CCI and made countless connections with the public. Thank you Ben & Jerry's for your philanthropic business recipe. It's a real winner!

## Wish List

- Three automatic over-bed tables on wheels
- Matte finish photo paper
- CD labels
- Stainless flatware

## Upcoming Events

**June 29**

American Girl celebration,  
Los Angeles, CA

**June 30**

CCI Night at Dodger Stadium,  
Los Angeles, CA

**August 13**

Journey to Independence  
Fundraiser, Cordillera, CO

**August 18**

CCI Graduation, Oceanside, CA

**August 19**

Good Times Car Show,  
Colorado Springs, CO

**August 24-26**

Dog Days of Summer Sale  
[www.moetoys.com](http://www.moetoys.com)

**September 21**

Dog Days of Summer Golf Classic,  
Chandler, AZ

**October 13**

Snoopy 10km Challenge and  
Crooked Horn Bike Tour,  
Sulphur, OK

**October 27**

Journey to Independence Gala,  
Anaheim, CA

*Please call 760-901-4308 for more information on the above events. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated to help at booths and special events.*



*Save the date!*

October 27, 2007



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**Mission statement:** CCI is a nonprofit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships.

## CCI Night at Dodger Stadium

Please join CCI on *Saturday, June 30, 2007* for a game to remember...Los Angeles Dodgers vs. San Diego Padres.

A pre-game on-field parade featuring CCI Graduate Teams and Puppy Raisers begins at 6:10 p.m. The game begins at 7:10 p.m.

You can support CCI by purchasing these tickets: • *Left Field Pavilion*—special CCI section; \$8 per ticket (not wheelchair accessible). • *VIP Event Suites*—special CCI reserved suites; \$250 per ticket; includes premium seating with suite amenities, Dodger Dog feast and no host bar (fully wheelchair accessible).

Special celebrity guests and Dodger alumni include Ron Cey, Jim Gott and Gary Cole. For tickets please call 760-901-4306 or e-mail [AScott@cci.org](mailto:AScott@cci.org). All proceeds benefit CCI.

