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Informational packet for the 4th annual PSDP Convention

The annual Psychiatric Service Dog Partners Convention is an event where people with mental health disabilities can learn more about working with their service dogs, have public access training and testing, and celebrate the freedom of going out and having fun with other service dog teams.

PSDP CONVENTION 2016 SCHEDULE

The 2016 convention meeting space is the 1763 square foot Legion Wing of the Veterans Memorial Hall at 1745 Mission Drive, Solvang, CA 93463. We also have the meeting room available as a social room when activities aren't scheduled, from 8:00 p.m. Friday through 8:00 a.m. Monday morning (the room may be locked overnight if no one is present).

Convention-goers must sign in upon arrival at the convention meeting room.

Friday, April 1st

7:30 p.m. Sign-in and welcome meeting (mandatory), convention meet & greet

Saturday, April 2nd

8:30–10:30 CGC & public access test (*mandatory breakfast at 8:00, cost not included in PAT fee; meet at Veterans Memorial Hall*)

9:00–10:30 Social breakfast on the lawn for non-testers (bring your own meal!)

10:30–11:00 *Committee meeting (closed meeting)*

11:00–noon Interacting with gatekeepers

noon–1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30–3:00 Training spotlight: Heeling seminar

3:00–3:30 Break

3:30–5:00 Preparing for service dog transitions

5:00–7:00 Dinner on your own

6:30–7:00 *Committee meeting (closed meeting, tentative)*

7:00–8:00 Social hour (informal)

Sunday, April 3rd

8:30–10:30 CGC(A) & CGC(U)

9:00–10:30 Social breakfast on the lawn for non-testers (bring your own meal!)

10:30–11:00 *Committee meeting (closed meeting)*

11:00–noon Mitigating your disability: How does your dog help you?

noon–1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30–3:00 Training with first responders

3:00–3:30 Break

3:30–5:00 Service dog advocacy

5:00–7:00 Dinner on your own

7:00–8:00 Decompression and closing thoughts

ACTIVITIES

Sign-in (mandatory), welcome, and meet & greet

Check in, socialize with other teams, hear convention policies, and be welcomed by Dr. Veronica Morris. The welcome on Friday night starts at 7:30 PM. Say hi to old friends, meet new ones, and share in the excitement of the convention! Sign-in will be available and is required to use the room. If you cannot make this event and sign in on Friday, get in touch with Deanna to sign in before using the meeting space.

Social breakfast on the lawn for non-testers (bring your own meal!)

This is an informal time to hang out and bring your breakfast to chat.

Interactive presentations

Interactive presentations are designed to promote practical understanding of a focused topic that is best learned about in person.

Interacting with gatekeepers

Carol King, an experienced leader in the service dog community, facilitates this event on how best to interact with gatekeepers.

Training with first responders

Local firefighters guide participants through what they need to know to be emergency-ready in this particularly unique interactive experience.

Service dog advocacy

Alicia Smith, a longtime service dog advocate, leads this workshop on creating your own advocacy story. By the end of the session, you will have a short blurb you can use describing who you are and what is important to you. This can make it easier to stand up for yourself and others when the opportunity arises!

Training spotlight: Heeling seminar

Andrea Bratt leads a seminar on getting that effortless heel we all desire in our service dog relationships.

Andrea Bratt has been using positive reinforcement to train dogs in the Santa Barbara area for over ten years, continuously studying dog training and behavior through a breadth of professional opportunities. She is a member of multiple professional trainer organizations and is one of only 146 Certified Professional Dog Trainers, Knowledge and Skills Assessed (CPDT-KSA) worldwide. Since 2004, she has worked with over 1,000 dogs and has over 5,000 hours of dog training experience. Andrea and her therapy dog, Oli, participate in many therapy-related activities, from helping children to read to cheering people up at retirement homes.

Circles

Circle discussions are guided discussions of service dog related topics. Questions, stories, advice, and support are key parts of our circle discussions. The convention will have three circles.

Mitigating your disability: How does your dog help you with your disability? Can others help you brainstorm new service dog work or tasks?

Preparing for service dog transitions: It's never too early to prepare for how your next SD will fit into your life. Talk with others about everything involved in the transition.

Decompression and closing thoughts: Share what this convention has meant to you, what you've

learned, and what you'd like to see next time.

Social hour

Saturday night is a time to relax and have fun with other PSDP convention-goers. We will have art supplies available, as well! Hang out, chat with peers, and possibly enjoy some informal musical stylings!

CGC & Public access test

Dr. Veronica Morris facilitates two tests on Saturday morning: Canine Good Citizen (CGC) and a public access test (PAT). If you are interested and have not signed up, get in touch with Veronica.

CGCA & CGCU tests

Allison Brooks facilitates two tests on Sunday morning: Community Canine (CGCA) and the CGC Urban (CGCU). If you are interested and have not signed up, get in touch with Allison.

CGC, CGCA, CGCU, and PAT fees:

Number of tests	Total cost of tests	Cost per test
1	\$20.00	\$20.00
2	\$35.00	\$17.50
3	\$45.00	\$15.00
4	\$55.00	\$13.75

A note about AKC fees: In order for your dog to have any AKC title/certificate (CGC, CGCA, or CGCU in this case), your dog must have an AKC number (for which the AKC charges a fee). The AKC also charges for CGC, CGCA, and CGCU certificates and titles. While you and your dog can qualify for the CGC, CGCA, and CGCU certificates simultaneously at the convention, in order to get the CGCA or CGCU certificate/title, you first must get your dog's CGC certificate/title on record.

LOCATION

Good times and good friends await you in Solvang, California! Our 2016 Convention returns us to a village we visited and loved in years past. Our main convention activities will take place throughout Saturday and Sunday on **April 2nd and 3rd** in the Legion Wing of the Veterans Memorial Building at the end of the main drag at 1745 Mission Drive **Solvang, California**. We will have this room starting the evening of the 1st for social time. Visit our [2016 Convention Registration](#) page for details.

The quaint, walkable Danish town of Solvang features a diverse choice of eateries and shopping opportunities, with green spaces at regular intervals for nature lovers (and the canine call of nature). Solvang is flagrantly tourist-oriented and a mild-weathered, international vacation destination, sporting Nordic-seeming architecture, neo-Nordic culture, and cosmopolitan consumers. The area is reminiscent of a theme park, but without an admission price, all with a splash of wine country thrown in!

Solvang sits roughly eight miles inland from the Pacific Ocean amid a region halfway between the major coastal California population centers, making it drivable for several prospective attendees. For those not able or inclined to drive the whole distance, minor and major airports and train stations dot the region.

Since our convention location this year is not also a lodging facility and there are many hotels in Solvang, we haven't reserved a block of rooms. You are free to lodge anywhere while attending our convention; just keep in mind the distance to the meeting space!

You can't get closer than "Svendsgaard's Danish Lodge" (an "America's Best Value Inn"), which abuts our meeting space. Those interested in keeping the cost of their stay down may consider Svendsgaard's; reviewers

claim the property is clean and merely in need of an update. Other fine establishments abound, including the familiar Royal Copenhagen Inn—the location of our previous Solvang conventions—with its popular “secret garden”.

For those disinclined to drive, popular airports in the region include the [Santa Maria airport](#) (33 miles away), the [Santa Barbara airport](#) (35 miles away), and [LAX](#) (130 miles away). An [Amtrak](#) train/bus combo can also be an enjoyable way to get there!

UPON ARRIVAL

The stress of travel is not only felt by you, but also your dog. We highly recommend that when you arrive, before joining in with whatever the group is doing, you take a minute and relax with your dog. You have no obligation to check in with any social groups you may see on your way in, and everyone understands if you don't. Water yourself and your dog, maybe take a quiet walk together, or enjoy a power nap. Make sure that you and your dog are relaxed. This will help you and your dog have a better time, and will make it easier for your dog to focus on you instead of on the many other service dog teams there!

WEATHER

In Solvang, the average high in April is 75° F. The average low is 43° F. Check the weather forecast before you go, and bring layers.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This is a low-fragrance event. Bring your least-scented personal care products as many are severely allergic.

This is a completely nut-free event. Do not bring any human or dog products containing nuts.

No weapons or illegal drugs will be permitted at this event (pocket knives are OK, as are any medications for which you have a prescription).

The consumption of alcohol or illegal substances is prohibited in PSDP spaces. Convention-goers are welcome to do what they want to outside of our convention spaces.

Disruptive or inappropriate behavior from any cause may result in being asked to leave PSDP spaces, for a length of time in proportion to the situation.

Food

We will have optional times to gather and eat meals together, but you must provide/buy your own food. You can bring food from home if you prefer.*

There are a lot of restaurants within walking distance, and some grocery stores within a drivable distance. We suggest you use google maps to explore these options. On regular overhead view (non-satellite), just zoom in close enough and the names of the restaurants will show up on the map.

***As a reminder, this is a completely nut-free event. Do not bring any human or dog products containing nuts. Also, alcohol consumption is prohibited in PSDP spaces.**

Dog behavior policy

This is a convention for handlers with service dogs and service dogs in training. As such, we expect that all dogs in attendance will be friendly with other dogs and people. Dogs displaying aggressive behavior will be asked to leave. If you prefer your dog be given extra space, we encourage you to signal this to others by tying yellow ribbon (available at the convention) to your dog's leash or collar.

When deciding whether this convention is appropriate for you and your dog to attend, look over the basic behavior standards of the Canine Good Citizen test (http://www.akc.org/events/cgc/training_testing.cfm). Dogs attending the convention should be able to perform the items on this test with treats, and/or be able to complete all but one item on the test. If your dog is unable to do more than one thing on this test, or has been known to be uncomfortable around other dogs or people, this convention may not be appropriate for your dog.

Before embarking on this trip, it would be wise to ensure that your dog is comfortable in the following situations: traveling on public transit, walking in a mall or crowded store, visiting restaurants, being in close quarters with other dogs and people, etc. If you have two service dogs, or a service dog and an SDIT, be aware that you will not be allowed to leave any dog tethered or unattended, even in your hotel room. You must be able to handle both dogs safely yourself, or bring a human helper who can handle one of the dogs for you at the event.

When you are around other service dogs, keep your dog within 2 feet of you, and keep at least 2 feet between dogs at all times unless people say it is OK. Be sure to ask first before you or your dog greets another team. It is the job of the handler to ensure their dog is not invading another dog's space. This is an on-leash convention, and dogs should never be left unattended at the activities.

All dogs must be kept leashed to a collar, vest, or harness at all times, and the leash must always be held by a person. There are no exceptions, apart from disability-required situations that are approved in writing by Veronica Morris at the time of registration. This includes when your dog is relieving itself, unless in a gated/fenced area designed for this purpose (and then only if others present explicitly agree). This rule includes *all* PSDP activities. If you use a shoulder leash and it is not long enough for your dog to lie on the floor next to you while it is around your shoulder, please remove the leash from your shoulder and maintain a secure hold on it so your dog is never untethered from you.

Please be prepared to clean up after your dog. Bring appropriate bags and products to ensure that we leave the facility in the same condition that we found it or better. We are representing PSDP and all other service dogs by our behavior in public at this event, so it is important that we all obey these behavior standards. There will be a trainer on site to talk with if you are having any issues upholding these standards.

If you witness a dog grossly misbehaving (e.g. biting or fighting with another dog, repeatedly eliminating inappropriately, etc.), please report it to at least one of the people in charge as soon as possible.

Elimination policy

For sanitation reasons, we ask you to prevent your dog from eliminating on any building, vehicle, or structure. All solid waste must be picked up immediately. Potty pads and litter boxes are not to be used. If a dog has elimination problems in indoor spaces, it will be asked to leave.

In addition, we ask participants to be conscientious in adhering to our P.U.P. policy—"Pick Up Poop". If you see any dog waste in addition to your own dog's and you are able to pick it up, please do so! Our efforts to leave the area better than we found it are a great way to spread good will around our convention and toward our community.

Minor policy

This is not a family vacation type of event. The convention is for handlers of psychiatric service dogs (PSDs) and psychiatric service dogs in training (PSDITs), and the activities will be geared towards these individuals. Children with PSDs or PSDITs are welcome to attend with a guardian, but please keep in mind the convention is a chance for people to speak freely about their mental illnesses and this may include discussions of self-injury, abuse, nightmares, and flashbacks. It is up to each parent to ensure their child is either OK with these discussions, or to remove the child from these discussions. If you have any questions, please email us at psdpinfo@gmail.com.

Sales Policy

PSDP may offer products or services for sale at the convention.

People sometimes bring gear to swap or sell on their own at the convention. Any offers by convention-goers of products or services for sale cannot be conducted in PSDP spaces during organized activities. Consistent with List Rules 7 & 8, personal requests on the listserv for information to facilitate sales are prohibited.

Anyone selling items is personally responsible for security, financial transactions, and customer satisfaction.

PSDP is not responsible for anything involving sales to which PSDP is not directly a party.

Emergencies

If your service dog has a medical emergency, we recommend Solvang Veterinary Hospital at (805) 688-6484.

If you have a mental health emergency, we recommend contacting Laurie Colson-Young in Lompoc, CA. Her phone number is (805) 735-7068.

PACKING LIST

This list is only a suggestion of items you may want to bring to the convention. Wear clothes suitable for walking around.

Clothing, including layers, long pants, shorts, t-shirts, and long-sleeved shirts (PSDP logowear is encouraged!)	Medications, including prescriptions, over-the-counter pain meds, and motion-sickness meds
Extra underwear and socks	Games/cards
Pajamas	Water bottle
Sweatshirt or jacket	Emergency contact & medical info for you and your dog
Hat for warmth	Dog dishes
Sunglasses/hat/ballcap to protect from sun	Dog food
Comfortable shoes to walk or hike in	Dog medication
Soap and shampoo (unscented, please!)	Towel for your dog
Deodorant—unscented	Poop bags
Sunscreen—unscented	Service vest if you use one
Toothbrush and toothpaste (human & dog!)	Collar and leash
Brush or comb (human & dog!)	Dog treats
Camera & film/storage, charged batteries	Charging cords: camera, phone, etc.
Bag for dirty items	Dog toys
Doctor's letter for flying	Portable dog watering bowl

Psychiatric Service Dogs Partners' purpose is to promote the mental health of people using service dogs for psychiatric disabilities by educating, advocating, providing expertise, facilitating peer support, and promoting responsible service dog training and handling.

ACCIDENT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM

I HEREBY ASSUME ALL OF THE RISKS OF PARTICIPATING IN ANY/ALL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS EVENT, including by way of example and not limitation, any risks that may arise from negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons or entities being released, from dangerous or defective equipment or property owned, maintained, or controlled by them, or because of their possible liability without fault.

I certify that I am sufficiently fit, have sufficiently prepared or trained for participation in this activity if appropriate, and have not been advised to not participate by a qualified medical professional. I certify that there are no health-related reasons or problems which preclude my participation in this activity.

I acknowledge that this Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form will be used by the event holders, sponsors, and organizers of the activity in which I may participate, and that it will govern my actions and responsibilities at said activity. In consideration of my application and permitting me to participate in this activity, I hereby take action for myself, my executors, administrators, heirs, next of kin, successors, and assigns as follows:

- (A) I WAIVE, RELEASE, AND DISCHARGE from any and all liability, including but not limited to, liability arising from the negligence or fault of the entities or persons released, for my death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft, or actions of any kind which may hereafter occur to me including my traveling to and from this activity, THE FOLLOWING ENTITIES OR PERSONS: Psychiatric Service Dog Partners (PSDP) and/or their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, representatives, and agents, and the activity holders, sponsors, and volunteers;
- (B) INDEMNIFY, HOLD HARMLESS, AND PROMISE NOT TO SUE the entities or persons mentioned in this paragraph from any and all liabilities or claims made as a result of participation in this activity, whether caused by the negligence of release or otherwise.

I acknowledge that PSDP and their directors, officers, volunteers, representatives, and agents are NOT responsible for the errors, omissions, acts, or failures to act of any party or entity conducting a specific activity on their behalf.

I acknowledge that this activity may involve a test of a person's physical or mental limits and carries with it the potential for death, serious injury, and property loss. The risks include, but are not limited to, those caused by terrain, facilities, temperature, weather, condition of participants, equipment, vehicular traffic, lack of hydration, and actions of other people including, but not limited to, participants, volunteers, monitors, and/or producers of the activity. These risks are not only inherent to participants, but are also present for volunteers.

I hereby consent to receive medical treatment which may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident, and/or illness during this activity.

I understand while participating in this activity, I may be photographed. Unless I make it clear otherwise to anyone engaged in the recording of my likeness, I agree to allow my photo, video, or film likeness to be used for any legitimate purpose by the activity holders, producers, sponsors, organizers, and assigns.

The Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form shall be construed broadly to provide a release and waiver to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT AND I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

_____ Participant's Signature	_____ Date	_____ Participant's Name (Please print legibly.)	_____ Age
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature (If under 18 years old, Parent or Guardian must also sign.)			