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### Informational packet for the 5th 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.

*Sponsored by:*



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VCA Sequoia Valley Animal Hospital

*Margie Cantwell & Jack are in the picture above. Thanks also to our anonymous donors whose gifts have made a striking difference, and to our invaluable volunteers whose passion lights the way.*

## **LOCATION**

The 2017 PSDP Convention will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Activities are planned starting on Friday night, March 31st, through Monday morning, April 3rd. We also will have the convention room open for informal hanging out between scheduled activities. Many people are arriving on the 30th or 31st and leaving on the 3rd or 4th, so there may be additional chances to get together with other PSDP members around the time of the convention.

The Hilton Garden Inn in Rock Hill, SC is in walking distance of a breadth of eateries, a movie theater, and a large park. Breakfast is not included in the room rates. You are responsible for your own food, but we will go in groups to restaurants within walking distance.

## **TRAVEL**

Rock Hill, South Carolina is just over the Carolina border from the very active Charlotte, NC Airport. It's about a 25-mile drive from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport to the Hilton Garden Inn at 650 Tinsley Way in Rock Hill. Without heavy traffic, this trip usually takes a half hour or so.

The cost (in January of 2017) of a one-way Uber or Lyft\* ride is around \$23–\$31, and a taxi is roughly \$66–\$86. Download the Lyft or Uber app and sign up to use either of these services. The rideshare (Uber/Lyft) pickup area is on the Arrivals (lower) level outside of Zone D. The taxi area is nearby, outside of the baggage claim area as well.

The hotel is just off Highway 77 at the Dave Lyle Blvd. exit (79), set back on a small road loop behind the Manchester Village Shopping Center. The hotel shuttle operates between 8:00 a.m. and 10 p.m. within five miles of the hotel ((803) 325-2800), but restaurants etc. are walkable from the hotel for most folks. Convention-goers staying on site usually don't find it necessary to have a car during the convention.

\*PSDP is not endorsing or recommending Uber, Lyft, or any ride service.

## **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!

## **PSDP CONVENTION 2017 SCHEDULE**

*Please note that the schedule and activities are subject to change without notice.*

All activities on this schedule (unless otherwise indicated) take place in the Manchester meeting room at the Hilton Garden Inn in Rock Hill, South Carolina, on evening of March 31st through the morning of April 3rd. We also have the meeting room available as a social room when activities aren't scheduled.

Convention-goers must sign in upon arrival at the convention meeting room—at the latest during the mandatory welcome meeting. In case you want to print just the schedule, it is on the next full page so you do not have to print the entire info packet.



## Friday, March 31st

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

## Saturday, April 1st

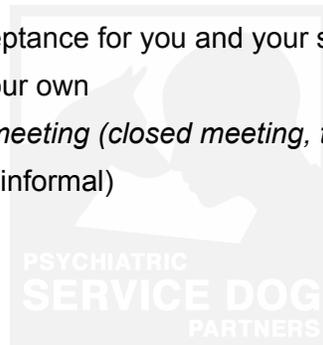
8:30–10:30 CGC & public access test (*mandatory breakfast at 8:00, cost not included in PAT fee*)  
9:00–10:30 Social breakfast for non-testers  
10:30–11:00 *Committee meeting (closed meeting)*  
11:00–12:30 Training spotlight: Out on the Town seminar (interactive presentation, Courteous Canine)  
12:30–2:00 Lunch on your own (optional at Mellow Mushroom + video)  
2:00–3:00 Overcoming training setbacks (circle discussion)  
3:00–3:30 Break  
3:30–5:00 Finding acceptance for you and your service dog (circle discussion)  
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 2nd

8:30–10:30 CGC(A) & CGC(U)  
9:00–10:30 Social breakfast for non-testers  
10:30–11:00 *Committee meeting (closed meeting)*  
11:00–noon Work and tasks: Brainstorm and show off how your dog can help you (circle discussion)  
noon–1:30 Lunch on your own (optional at Mellow Mushroom + video)  
1:30–3:00 Training with first responders (interactive presentation)  
3:00–3:30 Break  
3:30–5:00 Nosework for fun (interactive presentation)  
5:00–7:00 Dinner on your own  
7:00–8:00 Decompression and closing thoughts

## Monday, April 3rd

9:00–10:30 Social breakfast and room cleanup



## 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 for non-testers**

This is an informal time to hang out and bring your breakfast to chat. The hotel offers a nice breakfast for a decent price.

### **Interactive presentations**

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

**Training spotlight: Out on the Town seminar:** Jill Beitel from Courteous Canine teaches attention behavior and ways to help keep your dog focused on you and behaving appropriately around distractions.

**Training with police officers:** Talk with local police officers about how both parties can get their needs met when police officers and people with service dogs work in close proximity.

**Nosework for fun:** Dr. Veronica Morris leads this fun introduction to nosework, which involves letting your dog use their nose to search things out.

### **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.

**Overcoming training setbacks:** How do you handle it when you have a training setback with your dog? Allison Brooks will elicit our group wisdom to strengthen our resolve together.

**Finding acceptance for you and your service dog:** Elaine Malkin facilitates an important discussion. What methods have helped you go beyond mere tolerance to gain acceptance of your partnership from those in your life?

**Work and tasks:** Elaine Malkin will lead the group as you have the chance to brainstorm and show off how your dog can help you.

**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.

**Videos for fun and advocacy**

Help us create some videos for PSDP over lunch! This will be an easy way to help the cause.

**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!

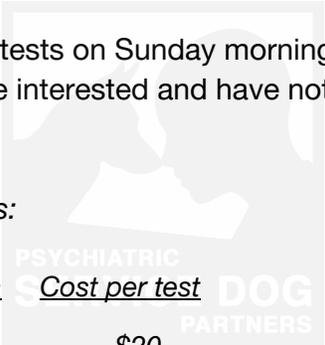
**CGC & Public access test**

Allison Brooks 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 Allison.

**CGCA & CGCU tests**

Dr. Veronica Morris 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 Veronica.

*CGC, CGCA, CGCU, and PAT fees:*



| <u>Number of tests</u> | <u>Total cost of tests</u> | <u>Cost per test</u> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                      | \$20                       | \$20                 |
| 2                      | \$35                       | \$17.50              |
| 3                      | \$45                       | \$15                 |
| 4                      | \$55                       | \$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.*

## **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](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. In circles, if your dog is disruptive or destructive for any reason, we expect you to remove your dog and resolve the situation before returning.

### **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 [info@psych.dog](mailto:info@psych.dog).

### **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, the closest emergency vet is Rock Hill Animal Hospital at 803-324-7585. <http://www.rockhillanimalhospital.com/>

If you have a medical emergency, the closest hospital is the Piedmont Medical Center at 803-329-1234. <http://www.piedmontmedicalcenter.com>

### **WEATHER**

History-based predictions for Rock Hill put the temperature range at 48°–74° F. Precipitation is expected 35% of the time in April, with about a third of this consisting of thunderstorms. Check the weather forecast before you go, and bring layers.

### **PACKING LIST**

This list is only a suggestion of items you may want to bring to the convention. Wear clothes suitable for walking around. The packing list is on a single page below in case you want to print it without printing the whole info packet.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 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.**

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