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Informational packet for the 6th 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.

2018 bronze sponsors:



Banfield Pet Hospital (both Rohnert Park & Santa Rosa, CA), The Bark magazine, CalmWave Productions, Holden Scott's Dog Gear, K9sBehave dog training, Margie Cantwell, Raley's grocery store (Rohnert Park, CA), Santa Ynez Valley Transit, VCA Westside Animal Hospital (Santa Rosa, CA), VIP Petcare (Windsor, CA). See <https://www.psychdogpartners.org/sponsorship> for more information on becoming a convention sponsor.

LOCATION & DATE

Good times and good friends await you in **Solvang, California!** Our 2018 PSDP Convention returns us to a village we visited and loved in years past. Our main convention activities will take place in the 1763-square-foot Legion Wing of the Veterans Memorial Building at the end of the main drag, at 1745 Mission Drive in Solvang.

Official activities are planned starting on Friday night, **April 6th**, through Sunday night, **April 8th**. We will also have the convention room open for informal hanging out between scheduled activities. Many people are arriving early on the 5th or 6th and leaving later on the 9th or 10th, allowing more time to relax and more chances to get together with other PSDP members around the time of the convention. There is a tradition of having breakfast together on Monday morning (optional).

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!

TRAVEL & LODGING

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.

For those disinclined to drive, airports in the region include [Santa Barbara Municipal Airport](#) (SBA) at 39.7 miles away, [Los Angeles International Airport](#) (LAX) at 130 miles, [San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport](#) (SBP) at 62 miles, and [Santa Maria Public Airport](#) (SMX) at 32.6 miles. An [Amtrak](#) train/bus combo can also be an enjoyable way to get there, or you can try to figure out how/whether you can get from one of the local airports to Solvang using the [local commuter bus](#) for \$7.

The cost (in October of 2017) of a one-way Uber or Lyft* ride from the Santa Barbara Airport is around \$49–\$67, and a taxi is roughly \$140–\$170. Download the Lyft or Uber app and sign up to use either of these services. Consider coordinating ahead of time and sharing a ride!

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".

*PSDP is not endorsing or recommending Uber, Lyft, or any ride service, or any airport or hotel

listed above.

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!

At the welcome meeting and throughout the convention, take advantage of the unique opportunities available. You will be surrounded by helpful, friendly, and experienced people who also want a great convention experience. Make friends and get contact info to continue to benefit from your shared adventures! Try to squeeze in working together on training during convention downtime. Sometimes training takes two people; consider training such things as alerting to the presence or approach of others, responding to being “down and out”, etc.

PSDP CONVENTION 2018 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 Legion Wing of the Veterans Memorial Building in Solvang, CA, on the evening of April 6th through the morning of April 9th. We also have the meeting room available much of the time 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 (rather than have it on your mobile device), it is on the next full page so you do not have to print the entire info packet.

Friday, April 6th

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

Saturday, April 7th

8:30–10:30 CGC & public access test (*mandatory breakfast at 8:00 at Birkholm's Bakery, 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 opportunity: A bus at our pace (interactive activity)

12:30–2:00 Lunch on your own

2:00–3:00 Re-thinking what it means to be a service dog advocate (circle discussion)

3:00–3:30 Break

3:30–5:00 Setting yourself (and your dog) up for success (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 8th

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 Living with your disability and embracing your service dog use (circle discussion)

noon–1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30–3:00 Training spotlight: Teaching retrieve (interactive activity)

3:00–3:30 Break

3:30–5:00 Handling the general public, with practice (interactive activity)

5:00–7:00 Dinner on your own

7:00–8:00 Decompression and closing thoughts, room cleanup

Monday, April 9th

9:00–10:30 Social breakfast on the town (Birkholm's Bakery)

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 eat, if you're not taking a test that morning. Coordinate with others to decide whether you want to meet at the convention space before heading over to Birkholm's Bakery (or wherever you prefer).

Interactive activities

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

Training opportunity: A bus at our pace: Santa Ynez ("ee-NEZ") Valley Transit is generously providing a bus and driver for us to train around, both while in the parking lot and in motion. The driver will be operating the wheelchair lift. This is a great opportunity to train around public transit at our own pace.

Training spotlight: Teaching retrieve: Andrea Bratt and her team from K9sBehave will join us for a fun and positive training session, primarily on how to teach and refine retrieve. Not to be missed, even if your dog already knows retrieve!

Handling the general public, with practice: Dr. Veronica Morris leads this practical discussion on interacting with people who are *not* gatekeepers when you're out and about. Participants will have the opportunity to role-play and learn from each what works and what doesn't, based on your goals.

Circle discussions

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.

Re-thinking what it means to be a service dog advocate: PSDP works hard to advocate in traditional ways and at a large scale—but is that the only way you can work to improve lives for service dog users? Brad Morris will lead a discussion that promises to unveil some surprising insights into what it means to be an advocate, helping participants tailor their advocacy to what works best for them.

Setting yourself (and your dog) up for success: Chanda Hagen and Dr. Veronica Morris facilitate a discussion with a lot of opportunities for participant growth. What does it mean to set yourself up for success—or your dog? What practical tips and tricks has the community discovered to make things easier for service dog teams' training and lives?

Living with your disability and embracing your service dog use: Elaine Malkin will lead the group to explore how community members come to grips with their disabilities and how to mitigate them. Handling the feeling and thoughts on this topic is no small deal, but sharing with others—or even just listening—can give participants invaluable perspective.

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 and pictures for the PSDP community

Throughout the convention, PSDP volunteers will take pictures and occasionally record video to help the cause. Be sure to catch one of our photographers for a portrait shot during the convention! (Let us know clearly if you'd prefer we don't identify you by name.)

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). 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 (service dog in training), 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.

Sales Policy

PSDP may authorize products or services to be offered at the convention, such as team testing.

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, contact Solvang Veterinary Hospital at (805) 688-6484.

If you have a non-emergency mental health situation during the convention and cannot contact your healthcare provider for assistance, contact Laurie Colson-Young. She will be on call via phone, and her number is (805) 232-5300. If you have a mental health emergency, please call 911.

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.

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 (and you don’t just want it on your mobile device).

| | |
|--|--|
| 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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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

Date

(If under 18 years old, Parent or Guardian must also sign.)