

2 CHPPM employees (and 1 puppy) help handicapped child

Story by
LYN KUKRAL
CHPPM

At the tender age of 16 many U.S. students take the Scholastic Aptitude Test to assess whether they will succeed in college.

At the even-more-tender age of 7 weeks, a German shepherd named Rainbow took the puppy equivalent of the S.A.T. during a sunny October lunch hour at U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion & Preventive Medicine headquarters.

"I was contacted by a single mom who wanted a dog capable of assisting her in caring for her autistic son, Garrett," said Tamie Ince, CHPPM operations' special security officer, who breeds and shows German shepherds as a hobby.

German shepherds possess characteristics that suit them to being service dogs, according to Ince.

"German shepherds are guardians, bred to protect and tend," she said. "They are pleasing dogs, and they want to please."

These qualities, along with their intelligence and loyalty, caused them to be developed in Germany as the original seeing eye dogs, she said.

Beyond the characteristics of her breed, though, the pup Rainbow demonstrated she might be a suitable companion to Garrett through her

performance on the Volhard Puppy Aptitude test—the S.A.T. of pups.

She came when coaxed, chased a towel and responded to noise from a metal spoon striking metal. Odd as it sounds, her reactions to these and other challenges posed by the puppy test are indicators of what her adult personality might be like, and thus what kind of family and work might suit her.

The copyrighted test, which must be given by a person the puppy does not know, is named for its creators, Joachim and Wendy Volhard.

In the spirit of service, CHPPM veterinarian Lt. Col. Carol Bossone agreed to administer the test to Rainbow.

"Dogs were domesticated and are bred for us, for service to us," Bossone said. "I like to see them excel in what they do. This is my way of serving—trying to ensure they are mentally capable and healthy, suitable companions for whomever they serve."

While no test is a guarantee of dog behavior, Bossone said the Volhard is the result of years of development. From observing puppies throughout their growth, the Volhards found correlations between certain behaviors on the test and what the puppies became.

Rainbow's performance led to a move from Ince's Cornerstone Ken-



Photo by CAPT JOE CROUCH, CHPPM HEADQUARTERS special security officer.
Rainbow stands at attention with breeder Tammy Ince, a U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine operations special security officer.

nels to a home with Garrett and his family in Florida.

Saying goodbye brought mixed emotions for Ince and her family, but the positive prevailed.

"I am just so proud to have been the breeder of such a wonderful animal," Ince said. "She went to a very loving home, and will be a great assistance dog. She is already making

a difference in Garrett's life."

Rainbow's progress as a service dog in training may be followed on the Web at <http://www.aservice-dogadventure.com>.

Newcomer

From page 7

For more information about ACS, visit the ACS Web site, <http://www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/services/acs/index.html>.

Gerri Merkel, director of Religious Education of the APG North Chapel, told attendees about the services the chapels offer.

She provided a schedule for both chapels.

Main Post Chapel, building 2485

- Catholic (Sunday Eucharist Mass) - 8:45 a.m.
- Protestant Sunday Worship Service - 10:15 a.m.
- Gospel Sunday Worship Service - 12 p.m.

- Jewish luncheon with Rabbi, Thursday - 12 p.m.

South Post Chapel, building E-4620

- Protestant Sunday Worship Service - 9:15 a.m.

- Catholic Sunday Eucharist Mass - 10:45 a.m.

For more information about the chapel, call 410-278-4333 or read the Chapel News section of *APG News*.

Renee Smith, a health benefits adviser, beneficiary counseling assistant coordinator and debt collection officer for Unified Business Office at Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic, invited newcomers to visit the TRICARE Services Center if they had questions about health benefits. The center is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and doesn't close for lunch, she said.

She also advised newcomers to make sure their information in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System is updated.

For more information about TRICARE, call Smith, 410-278-1719.

Eric Feustel, an installation attorney with the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate's Client Services Division, discussed the legal services provided such as notary services, powers of attorney and estate planning for Soldiers and their family members.

The office also works with claims if service members' household goods are damaged during a move or vehicles are vandalized while located at post housing.

For more information on legal services, call

410-278-1583.

In addition, newcomers learned about nonpublic school options from Sue Cathell, a spokesperson for the Harford/Cecil Nonpublic School Council.

Pat Beall, a representative from the Maryland Feline Society Inc, talked to newcomers about the importance of spaying and neutering their cats.

"The spring season unfortunately brings lots of kittens and there are not enough homes for all of the animals out there," Beall said.

For more information, visit <http://www.mdfelinesociety.org>.

Newcomers also found out how to give back to the Harford County community from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Maryland.

Carley Thimmesch, director of Outreach, said a few Soldiers who were at last quarter's orientation are in the process of volunteering with the organization.

"If you're permanent party, Big Brothers and Big Sisters is a great way to have fun and do kid activities like bowling or watching movies," Thimmesch said.

For more information about BBBS, call 410-243-4000 or visit www.biglittle.org.

One newcomer talked about how the orientation was beneficial for her.

"I like this activity a lot," said Staff Sgt. Wilnette Perez, a line leader for the Joint Personal Effects Depot. "You get a lot of information that is not in the welcome packet and get a chance to

ask people questions."

Perez said she came to APG a month ago from Puerto Rico and is a member of the reserves.

Brian Wright, a network engineer for the Directorate of Information Management's Communications Management Division, was another attendee at the orientation.

Wright said he came to APG a month ago from Fort Leavenworth, Kan. He talked about how he feels about working on the proving ground.

"It's pretty exciting," Wright said. "The new job is going to be a challenge with learning new technologies but I'm excited for it."

For more information and a schedule for future newcomer orientations, contact Ethridge, 410-278-2464.