# Note from the Editor

Hello CAGDU Family,

Well, it’s finally here! No, I don’t mean the rain-although that is certainly true. I mean the first CAGDU Newsletter. This newsletter is a collection of articles and tidbits that I think might be relevant to the interests and needs of guide dog handlers. Of course, I plan to include news on CAGDU activities and events: but I also want to provide a space where we can share helpful information about all sorts of guide dog related topics. So, if someone sends me the name of a resource such as a website or social media group or an article about a new place to find guide dog related products, I plan to pass those tips on to everyone who receives this newsletter. Maybe we should call this the CAGDU Scrap Book or collage. If you find guide dog related articles or information that you would like to be included in our newsletter, please send your submissions to CAGDU Vice President Allison Depner at [adepner1425@gmail.com](mailto:adepner1425@gmail.com). This time around, I’d like to give a special thanks to our President, Tina Thomas who provided most of the articles in this first issue. Thanks Tina!! Happy Reading, everyone!

# February CAGDU Meeting

From CAGDU President, Tina Thomas

Hello Cagdu Community,

We hope everyone and their furry friends are doing well. We invite all of you to our monthly CAGDU Conference call on Tuesday February 21 at 7:30PM. The call in information is as follows:

Phone Number: (605)475-4700

Pin: 405682#.

**Important Note:**

CAGDU meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of every month  unless rescheduled by Board members. This month, Valentine’s Day fell on our meeting date. Therefore, we agreed to postpone our meeting until this Tuesday.

Between meetings, feel free to check out our Face Book Group, California Association of Guide Dog Users.

# What To Do If You are Denied by Uber Based on Having a Guide Dog

**By Lisa Irving**

I have found the following steps to bring quick results when I have been denied an Uber ride on the basis of disability.

First, call the uber Emergency number. That number is 1-800-285-9481. You will be asked to define the problem. emphasize the significance of the denial. Most of the folks who answer the phone or understanding; some are not. Your call will be recorded. State the pick-up address, your destination, the time, the name of the driver if you know it, and what happened. Additionally, ask for a callback. Jessica or another manager from the Chicago-based accessibility team will call you back. Furthermore, you will also receive an email. For documentation purposes, respond to that email and document everything that you stated on the recorded conversation. The driver will be immediately suspended. The suspension, if I am correct, will last two days. Here is one more thought. Remember, the National Federation Of The Blind is working to implement stops to eradicate this issue

# What does a dog want more - "good boy" or treats?

**Seeing Eye**

***Aug. 17th, 2016***

Sometimes the best dog treats aren't edible.

Every night when I walk my 6-year-old Boxer, he knows exactly what to expect once he's unleashed. His tail wags furiously, his body wiggles, and glistening drops of saliva drip to my kitchen floor.

Then it comes: a high-pitched "good boy" or a pricey, meaty treat.

Typically, Beau gets both.

New research shows that my effort may be overkill.

According to the study, published online in the journal Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, more dogs prefer praise over food. The finding by Emory University neuroscientist Gregory Berns followed a novel method of

investigation: He used an MRI to scan a dog's brain while the dog was awake and unrestrained.

New research shows that most dogs prefer praise over food, but not Ozzie. The short-haired terrier mix was the only dog in the experiments to choose food. (Courtesy of Gregory Berns) The "Dog Project" began five years ago. Berns, the author of "How Dogs Love

Us: A Neuroscientist and His Adopted Dog Decode the Brain," talked to dozens of dog owners in the Atlanta area and persuaded some to have their pooch's brains scanned. The goal was to learn whether food is what dogs "really care about," Berns said.

"Is social reward on the same footing as food, or is it potentially more valuable?" he wondered.

Berns selected dogs that would lie still for 30 minutes while awake and with the MRI running. High-energy canines didn't make the cut; couch potatoes did.

"These are not super-athletic, high-drive dogs," he said. "Lots of retrievers."

He and his team conducted a trio of experiments with about 15 dogs scanned each time. Every dog had to go into the MRI and stay in a down position for three, 10-minute scans.

In the first experiment, participants were shown a hairbrush, a toy car and a toy horse. They were given a hot dog following one object, praise after another and nothing for the third.

The results showed that for 13 of the 15 dogs, their brains were stimulated by the praise just as much, if not more than, the food.

The second experiment sought to confirm the initial pattern. But this time, a subset of dogs didn't get praised. The results were "almost identical" when looking at their brain activity, Berns said. "The dogs who responded more strongly to praise in the first experiment were more disappointed for not getting praise.”

The third experiment took place outside of the MRI to see if the dogs' response in a maze mirrored that during their MRIs. Once inside the maze, they had to choose between finding a bowl of food and getting praise from their owner. Researchers determined that the outcomes of the first two tests were a "strong predictor" of a dog's choice.

So what does this mean for the average pet owner? Ultimately, Berns said this week, the research shows that dogs are primarily motivated by praise. That insight can greatly impact how they get trained, both as pets and potentially as service dogs.

And with many owners today focusing on "positive training," the study suggests that social rewards are as effective a motivator as food treats, he said.

The findings could also help identify which dogs might be most successful as service dogs. "A dog with high preference for social reward might be best suited for certain therapeutic or assistance jobs," the study notes. "While a dog with less of a neural preference for social reward might be better suited for tasks that require more independence from humans, like search-and-rescue dogs or hearing-assistance dogs." How can you tell what your dog prefers without an expensive MRI? "I think people have an intuition of that," Berns said.

For me, the big takeaway is that I might save a few bucks at the pet store and potentially make Beau happier just by opening my mouth. & Dog prefers owners praise vs food

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/national/health-science/do-dogs-really->

# 8 Potentially Hazardous People You Meet as a Guide Dog Owner

**By Holly Bonner**

***12/19/16***

[**https://themighty.com/2016/12/potentially-hazardous-people-you-meet-as-a-guide-dog-owner/**](https://themighty.com/2016/12/potentially-hazardous-people-you-meet-as-a-guide-dog-owner/)

When you’re working with a guide dog, you will encounter many different kinds of people. While most of these individuals have the purest of intentions, few of them realize how their actions can pose a serious safety hazard for both you and your canine partner. Here are eight potentially hazardous types of people I’ve frequently encountered as a guide dog owner.

1. The Kissing Bandits.

You’ll never actually see these people, and not because you’re blind or visually impaired. These sneaky characters like to lurk amidst the shadows. The only indication of their presence comes in the form of the annoying kissing, smooching and other face-sucking sounds they make in a persistent effort to get your guide dog’s attention. A “Kissing Bandit’s” misguided display of affection is dangerously distracting for both you and your guide dog! Trust me, my dog does not want to kiss you. I don’t want to kiss you! Neither she or I have any idea exactly where your mouth has been. Please go home and smooch your own pooch and let us get back to work.

2. Nostalgics.

Prepare yourself for story hour! Seeing your beautiful guide dog will undoubtedly cause some lovers of your breed to take a stroll down memory lane. “Nostalgics” will stop you dead in your tracks enthusiastically wanting to share stories about their dearly departed “Buddy” or “Lassie” or “Spot.” They will spare no small detail from the time they first laid eyes on their canine companions to every gut wrenching moment leading up to their passing. As someone who has owned and lost many dogs prior to being matched with Frances, I feel for these people, really I do. But when you’ve got a toddler crossing their legs in desperate need of the potty, you’ll need to gently cut these conversations off and keep it moving.

3. Ninjas.

They may not be dressed in black, but “Ninjas” definitely know to sneak up on a blind person. You won’t “see” them coming. Chances are you won’t even hear them coming. They will ignore any “do not pet”

markers on your guide dog. They won’t care they are in harness. These people believe they are above asking permission when it comes to touching your dog. What “Ninjas” want most in the world is to lay their hands on those furry faces or kiss you working dog’s wet nose.

The best way to combat a ninja is by giving them a dose of their own medicine. Once bent over or on their knees talking to your dog, grab your harness and maneuver around this perpetrator. “Sorry, my dog is working, got to go!” Evaporate into the night and never look back.

4. The HR’s.

Do guide dogs get sick days? How about vacation time? “HR’s” (short for Human Resources) are overly concerned with labor laws relating to your canine’s work responsibilities. These people will inundate you with questions, sometimes deferring right to your dog for a response.

(FYI, Frances won’t answer.) “Are you getting enough rest?” “Is momma’s route too stressful?” “Do you need a spa day at the groomers?”

“HR’s” are relentless and won’t give up until you’ve convinced them your guide dog is well-fed, loved and respected as your partner. When I come in contact with an HR, I quickly whip out my cellphone. My screen saver happens to be a picture of Frances in a tiara; proving once and for all that my dog is absolutely treated like royalty when she’s off duty.

5. Smartphone Zombies.

Get off your cell phones, people! While guide dogs are trained to help the blind avoid obstacles on the street, nothing is more unpredictable than a bobbing and weaving “Smartphone Zombie.” Zombies like to walk face down, noses pointed towards their smart phone screens. They rarely look up at the world around them, preferring texting and emoji’s to human contact.

One memorable smartphone zombie incident occurred on a cold, December night as my guide dog Frances and I were in route to my local hospital for a doctor’s appointment. As Franny lead me towards the front door of the building, she stopped midway, indicating something was in our path. I extended my hand to find she was alerting me to a wheelchair that had been left outside. That’s when it hit me. Literally. A woman walking with her cell-phone crashed right into me. The phone falling into my coat, right down my cleavage. Yeah, how’s that for awkward.

“You didn’t see me coming?” she snarled.

“No, I didn’t see you; I’m blind.” In my head I was thinking…. Umm.

Hello? Woman with a guide dog here.

There was no “I’m sorry,” or “Are you OK?” All the young woman said was, “Well, give me back my cell phone.” I removed my glove and fished out her phone from inside my jacket. She grabbed it from my hand as if nothing had happened, and went right back to texting. I looked down at Frances and shook my head.

Despite your dog’s years of training, be prepared to walk into a couple of these hazardous individuals during your partnership. Don’t worry about apologizing for the mishap. Zombies will usually ignore you and your dog entirely and continue focusing on their digital world. Take a page from their book and blog, tweet or Facebook about their deplorable behavior later! (How do you like me now, hospital parking lot Smartphone Zombie lady?)

6. Interrogators.

You’re walking with your guide dog when your cell phone rings. You remove your phone from your coat pocket and take the call. That’s when the interrogator appears. “Excuse me, did I just see you answer your phone?” Yes, yes you did. “But how can you do that if you’re ‘supposed’ to be blind?” If you’re feeling patient that day, feel free to subject yourself to a lengthy discussion with this “Interrogator “about variations in visual acuity and accessibility features on smart phones. Some will appreciate your candor and may even become more educated as a result of your efforts. But prepare yourself! Other “Interrogators” will continue to question the validity of your disability and why you need a guide dog in the first place.

Excuse yourself from these conversations. Take the high road, stay classy and remember there are some folks out there who choose to make it their job to interrogate the world.

7. The Flea Circus.

When groups of small children see me working with Frances, they usually begin to bounce up and down. Enter the “Flee Circus.” Kids have two reactions to dogs. They either love them, anxiously trying to pet them, or they are completely petrified, running away in sheer terror. As a blind mom of two toddlers, I know kids can be difficult to manage. They will absolutely test your patience with their overabundance of tenacity and curiosity. However, it’s up to a child’s parents to teach them proper dog etiquette, and I’m not just talking about guide dogs.

No child should be permitted to run up and touch a dog they don’t know. Every dog is different and not all of them can be trusted to tolerate children. As a guide dog handler, I know my dog has been trained to work around kids. That does not negate the fact that I don’t want my dog touched when we are working together, especially when I am trying to manage my own two daughters in public.

8. Puppy Play-daters.

Let me set the scene. You’re about to cross an extremely busy intersection. You and your dog are in sync, intently focused on the sounds and flow of traffic. All of sudden you hear yappy barking headed in your direction. Enter the “Puppy play-dater.” “Oh, hey. Can you see me? This is my dog Precious, she just wants to say hi to your dog.” “Precious” has now snapped to the end of her leash, dragging her overzealous owner behind.

“Can you please hold your dog back?” I ask.

Badly offended, the owner continues to babble, “No, no really, she’s just playful.”

“Puppy play-daters” fail to realize the immense importance of a guide dog’s health and safety. The blind rely on our canine partners to get us where we need to be on a daily basis. If Frances gets hurt, my entire family suffers. Please control your “precious” dog and pretend my canine partner and I aren’t even here. If we’re in the mood to play, we’ll head to the dog park!

Being a guide dog handler is a delicate balance requiring an immense amount of concentration by both handler and dog. Working with Frances has made me extremely mindful of her safety and my own. While I’m always open to educating others about Franny and my work together, there are times when people’s interactions with us can potentially put my family in danger. Don’t become that hazardous individual for a guide dog team. Respect the working relationship and remember your actions, however well-intentioned, could inadvertently cause us harm.

And please, if you’re walking, stay off the cell phones!

# Is That Dog on Your Flight Really a Service Pet?

**More fliers are trying to bring their pets along as carry-on animals.**

**By  Scott McCartney**

***Feb. 1, 2017  Wall Street Journal***

Three hours into the five-hour flight from Philadelphia to California, Bobbie Fields was wheezing and using her inhaler, allergic to the long-haired dog one row behind her. It’s becoming a frequent problem for her–more passengers are dogs and cats.

“For all other allergies, like peanuts, airlines go out of their way to make sure it’s not a problem. But not for animals,” she says.

Airlines and passengers say more animals are coming onboard. And more are easily evading expensive airline fees by declaring their pets as service dogs or emotional-support animals. Cute poodles and terriers toddle through airports with ill-fitting vests. There’s no specific data telling us how many animals are in the cabin, much less which belong to owners who really need them versus those trying to game the system.

The Transportation Department is trying to crack down and says it hopes to propose new rules later this year. A 2016 effort to get airlines and disability groups to recommend new standards failed. But the DOT says this issue remains an area of concern and it plans to come up with something on its own.

Service animals are dogs with special training. Emotional-support animals are different and are defined as animals that provide comfort to help their owner with a mental disability. PHOTO: BRANDON WADE/GETTY IMAGES

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines service animals as dogs with specific training, with a few other exceptions such as trained miniature horses. But the Air Carrier Access Act that governs airlines is much broader. It allows for both service animals and emotional-support animals—pets that provide comfort to people with mental disabilities. Both kinds of support animals are allowed out of pet carriers and exempt from airline fees.

Mental-health advocates say emotional-support animals can be necessary and useful for many people, from veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder to people with severe flying anxiety. In theory, the law doesn’t allow for everyone who is calmed by their cat: Passengers with emotional-support animals are supposed to have a medically diagnosed disability and have a verification letter from the past 12 months from a mental-health professional.

Groups that support people with disabilities who rely on highly trained service dogs complain household pets take spots on planes they need--airlines sometimes limit the number of cabin dogs and cats on each flight.

FARES FOR PETS

Carrying dogs and cats on flights can cost as much as another seat. A sampling of one-way pet fares

•              American $125

•              Delta $125

•              United $125

•              Spirit $110

•              Alaska $100

•              Allegiant $100

•              JetBlue $100

•              Virgin America $100

•              Southwest $95

•              Frontier $75

Another worry: Service animal users “are too often forced to come into contact with inadequately trained and over-stressed animals whose owners exercise insufficient control,” says Bradley Morris, government relations director of Psychiatric Service Dog Partners in Rock Hill, S.C., and a member of the DOT’s advisory committee on accessibility. Service dogs, meticulously trained for several months to behave in public settings, must sometimes be retired if bad behavior is triggered by one of these encounters.

Denny Leary, president of the Gateway Warrior Foundation in Fenton, Mo., which raises funds for service dogs for disabled veterans, says when he sees “service poodles” at airports, he asks in a friendly way what the dog can do. “People stumble all over themselves. Most say the dog is for protection, but every dog protects its owner,” he says. “You’re just taking advantage of the system.”

When airlines pushed fees for in-cabin pets higher, up to $125 each way on several carriers in 2009, a cottage industry sprang up of tools to save money, such as donning a $40 service dog vest or buying an emotional-support animal letter for $99.95. Diagnosis is made over the phone.

Another incentive: People are wary of transporting animals as cargo, which can be both expensive and hazardous. In the most recent 12 months reported by the DOT, 26 animals died during airline transportation and 21 were injured.

When airlines pushed fees for in-cabin pets higher, up to $125 each way on several carriers in 2009, a cottage industry sprang up of tools to save money. PHOTO: ANDREW KELLY/REUTERS

DOT says wearing a service-dog vest “may not be sufficient evidence that the animal is, in fact, a legitimate service animal.” Airlines can ask passengers what tasks or functions the animal performs, but they can’t ask about a passenger’s disability. For emotional-support animals, airlines can only ask for the required letter. There are few other rules, though Delta prohibits hedgehogs, ferrets, insects, rodents, snakes, spiders and farm poultry from flying as emotional-support animals.

DOT formed a study group under its accessibility advisory committee to make recommendations on the appropriate definition of service animals and ways to reduce false claims. Participants say the airline industry pushed for adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act definition, limiting service animals mostly to dogs. Disability advocates pushed for removing medical-certification requirements, which they see as a hassle and promoting classification as patients.

Several groups got together recently and submitted a compromise recommendation to DOT, supported by service-dog, disability and veterans groups, plus some airline and flight-attendant union representatives. It would require passengers to fill out a questionnaire that warns of penalties. The form could be stored in a passenger’s airline frequent-flier profile.

Mr. Morris thinks it will cut down on fraud and ignorance and still allow for necessary support animals.

As for allergies, airlines say they try to reseat affected passenger like Ms. Fields. Limits onboard can be generous: American’s limit is seven per flight, not including service animals. But Ms. Fields would like airlines to track where pets will be on planes as well as where people with allergies have reserved seats and keep the two separate. She and her husband fly frequently to visit their children on the West Coast and always select extra legroom seats in coach. When a long-haired dog is nearby, moving to another seat typically means trading down to less room.

So far, she hasn’t had to use the EpiPen she carries in-flight. “It’s just uncomfortable,” she says.

Service Animal Relief Areas at Atlanta Airport

**Marj Schneider**

Atlanta's Hartsfield Jackson International Airport now has service animal relief areas inside the secured zone of the airport.

The first one is located at gate B-33 on the right side. It is 20 feet past the gate.

The second one is at C-19 on the left side straight across from the Starbucks.

They are actual rooms and have braille signs. Each space offers a concrete relief area, as well as AstroTurf. Pickup bags, garbage cans and sinks are provided.

By the first of December there will be a relief area in every concourse in the secured zone. To find out when the other five will open go to atlairport.com. Soon there will also be audio directions through way finding apps that will help you locate the areas.

# Dog cookie recipe

Becky Frankeberger

[becky@butterflyKnitting.com](mailto:becky@butterflyKnitting.com)

## Ingredients:

2 cups whole wheat flower

1 cup peanut butter

1 Tsp baking powder

1 cup skim milk

## Directions:

Pre heat oven to 375 degrees. Greece cookie sheets.

Combine: flower and baking powder in a bowl

In another bowl combine: peanut butter and milk

Combine slowly the flower into the milk peanut butter, it will thicken .

When ready, flour cutting board and knead mixture together.

Cut into quarter inch thick shapes, spacing them 2 inches apart.

Bake twenty minutes until golden brown, smile.

# New Guide Dog Products store at info@blindmicemegamall.com

The Mice are proud to Welcome our newest Blind Mice Mega Mall Merchant, On The Go!

"On The Go is dedicated to providing quality, affordable, handmade, custom and manufactured guide and service dog products.

Products that will assist you in being the best service dog handler you can be!"

Hi, I am Julie, the founder and owner of On The Go and I have been a guide dog user for many years. I located many products that made working my dog a lot easier and What I could not find, I created!

All our products have been tested and used by blind and visually impaired individuals.

I started On the Go so I could share these great products with everyone!

WE  focus on comfort, function and color.

All the nylon webbing products are created and produced by me and used

with my own guide dogs.

custom orders on the nylon webbing product line is available.

If you need modifications made  to any of the webbing equipment that I personally sew,  I am willing to make them at no additional charge.

Please be aware custom orders do take extra time to ship.

Manufactured products are tested before being offered. Only the best get past my inspection and make it into On The Go