NJAGDU Division Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2014

The agenda will cover:

    1. Reports

    2. Follow-up information and Review of “Dusty’s Law”

    3. 2014 Membership

    4. Question and Discussion time

Call to Order:

Meeting of NJAGDU was called to order by Vincent Chaney, President, on Tuesday, March 18th at 8:07 p.m.

Roll Call:

Vincent Chaney, President

Trish Ebel, Vice President

Alice Eaddy, Secretary

Lyn Reynolds, Treasurer

Anna DeSantis, Board

Michele Chaney,

Angela Perone,

Sue Tillett,

Steve Rutch,

Ginger Kutsch,

Lydia Keller,

Jack Truehaft,

Rick Fox,

Jerilyn Higgins

Treasures Report by Lynn Reynolds:

Lyn Reynolds deposited $430 received from the Diabetes Division account. Vinnie stated that previously NJAGDU funds were comingled with the Diabetes Division in the “Reserved” status and now they are separate and NJAGDU now has a non-profit status checking account with TD Bank. Michele motioned to accept the treasures report, Trish seconded. The report was accepted unanimously. Regarding members with outstanding dues Vinnie will send private e-mails out with Lynn’s address and how checks should be made out.

NAGDU report by Alice Eaddy:

None given as the next NAGDU Board Meeting will be March 31st at 8p.m. It is typically the last Sunday of the month except for holidays.

Follow-up information and review of Dusty’s law

Ginger stated that the Seeing Eye was creating a draft in hopes of a press release with the Governor’s office at some future date. Ginger explained that the drafted letter could be used in communities to go along with leash laws already in place to facilitate better enforcement. This letter would go out to Seeing Eye Graduates and should be available in a few more weeks. For more information, contact The Seeing Eye Advocacy Council toll-free at 1-800-539-4425 or email advocacy@seeingeye.org.

There was discussion about how we can be advocates promoting Dusty’s Law at our local libraries, police stations etc. NJAGDU will create our own with help from Tara. It will address animal control and police efforts relevant to the Law. It would be general explaining the importance of guide dog teams and perhaps be paired with a flyer. The flyer can also go to veterinarians or Petsmart any place that the handlers frequent or work. The Seeing Eye flyer is more for self advocacy for guide dog graduates and puppy walkers to bring to the police and animal control. It was suggested that each guide dog team give police a heads up regarding areas that they frequent within 30 minutes of their homes as this was the average distance that most reported attacks were occurring. This approach is more personable, in the first 12 months to bring Dusty’s Law into the public eye. All would be exploiting the Seeing Eye reputation as a recognized name with the expertise and knowledgeable source with more leverage in New Jersey. Go to your town hall, maybe the flyer could be sent out with the dog license renewal notices. Trish said that she could spread the word through her adjustment group that reaches 14 counties in north and central New Jersey and 41 low vision groups.

Discussion and question time:

Rick brought up accessibility issues at a bed and breakfast hotel that he used and what to expect on an upcoming vacation at St. Johns. Michelle said that this region is most difficult for guide dog teams, on their four different encounters during cruise port dockings Vinnie and Randolph were not allowed to get off the ship regardless of paperwork or on board clearances. Similar problem would arise in Jamaica with not being authorized to work a guide dog. In Nassau you are allowed admission when you pay $25 for a pet and or guide dog permit fee. Ginger: National Parks do not follow ADA guidelines.

I (Alice) discussed concerns about going to national convention alone on Spirit Airlines as a deaf-blind consumer in light of the numerous problems encountered by persons with dual disabilities and other blind convention goers last year. Lydia explained our reception during last year’s flight with the same air carrier. Ginger recommended contacting TSA Cares around my departure date and speaking with a CRO (complaint resolution specialist) they are in place relative to each airline onsite or via phone. She will forward a link to NJAGDU list serve concerning how to contact spirit Air prior to your travel to explain your situation and arrange for special assistance at the airports provide the email contact for the CRO at Spirit Air.

Vinnie reminded us that Growing Up Fisher would be on tomorrow at 9:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m. The next meeting will be April 21st 2014.

**Minutes submitted by Alice Eaddy, Secretary**