NJAGDU Division Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2014

The agenda will cover:

    1. Reports

    2. “Dusty’s Law” and Advocacy Discussion

    3. NFB National Convention

    4. NFBNJ State Convention

    5. Questions and Discussion time

Call to order:

Meeting of NJAGDU was called to order on Monday, June 16, 2014 at 8:01 p.m. by President, Vincent Chaney.

Roll call:

Vincent Chaney, President

Trisha Ebel, Vice President

Alice Eaddy, Secretary

Lyn Reynolds, Treasurer

Michele Chaney

Jerilyn Higgins

Jack Truehaft

Angela Perone

Les Camerone

Lydia Keller

Joe Braz

Ginger Kutsch

Pat McKenna

Vinnie asked Ginger if guide dog schools receive training for fire safety. Ginger stated that any responses on a guide’s part are strictly due to natural instinct. Alice’s guide has received additional alert training due to her hearing loss.

Treasures Report:

Lyn Reynolds our balance as of May 31st is $430. A $25 dues check for 5 years of membership was deposited on June the 2nd. Michele motioned to accept the treasures report and I, Alice seconded. It carried unanimously.

NAGDU report:

Fundraising: The ponchos will have the NFB logo on the left breast front or back. The colors are yellow, orange, royal blue, and white. The logo will be in black and will be white on the royal blue ones. There was a presentation by Carl Jacobson about the NFB live chat project that now has 12 sponsors. Q&A followed. There are individual memberships available without room charges. This topic will be considered after convention. The Secretary and treasures reports were tabled. The tickets for the tech bundle raffle will be $1 each or 6 for $5. NAGDU now has 205 face book followers and word press gained 3 more followers. The next meeting is June 29th 2014.

<http://harnessup.wordpress.com/> is the NAGDU newsletter. NAGDU has an election in such a way as to split the officers and the board members elections each year.

Dusty’s Law and Advocacy Discussion

When the Dusty’s Law flyer is available, Vinnie will work with Ginger to coordinate distribution (they will initially be sent out to Seeing Eye graduates). Ginger noted that the flier in PDF does not read accurately with screen readers. The Seeing Eye will include a letter to be sent to local animal control and police. The letter will document the existence of the law along with its 2C:29-3.2 New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice document. Police can use the flyer to educate the public about guide dog considerations and why it is important, what the dangers of interference are etc. Ginger stated that one could include a personal note about where you live and typical routes that you frequent for the local police to concentrate on instead of entire city or town. The Seeing Eye and their marketing company are working on a 30 second elevator speech suitable for social media and videos.

NJAGDU advocacy efforts should not be just about Dusty’s Law but include about access to theatres, concert halls, sporting events, restaurants and the like. More discussion followed. The police cannot enforce the ADA, they can make suggestions. You can file a complaint later about access issues rather than calling police to intercede. Often problems are due to poor staff training by management. Ginger suggested NJAGDU work to change the New Jersey statues as they are not in compliance with ADA\*guide dogs do not have to come from recognized schools alone.

National and state convention

Vinnie suggested that in the doggie relief areas you go to the backside furthest from the front for an area of least usage. Further for new dogs it can be stressful with all of canes, people etc. so give them more playtime. For younger dogs, playtime or massages are calming. The play and massage time was noted to work well for all dogs. Be careful of guide ponies in the elevators. We NJAGDU will deal with relief area issues in October’s meeting for the NFBNJ state convention.

Next meeting will be in September.

Question and Discussion time

Vinnie asked: How can we approach the true definition of a service animal? Unfortunately the call was dropped by the server at 8:57 p.m. so the meeting was never officially adjourned.

**Minutes submitted by Alice Eaddy, Secretary**