

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2005



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A Message From Our President

The year 2005 was an exceptional year for Fidos. The local chapter of The Sisters of Pythias selected Fidos as its recipient of their fundraising efforts for 2005 and we were warmly welcomed into their community and at all of their fundraising events. In addition to attending their fundraising events, Fidos volunteers were busy planning and hosting our own three major fundraising events which drew a large turnout of participants and generated revenue for Fidos.

Our Assistance Dog Program continued on its upward growth. At any point during 2005, there were 30 dogs in various stages of training. We were fortunate to have obtained full sponsorships for the majority of these dogs in training. Our list of applicants for our hearing and service dogs continued its growth and Fidos is committed to making it possible for those applicants on our waiting list to receive a service or hearing dog as soon as possible. In order to keep the record number of applicants' files and records up-to-date, our Client Services Department developed a new procedure for keeping the applicants on the right tract during their training for a dog. Our Therapy Dog Program remained very active during 2005 and it also grew in numbers. Our Junior Volunteer Program continued its growth as well during 2005. The juniors, for the second year in a row, volunteered their services to assist at an agility trials event and earned money for their Program in the process. In addition, the juniors created many items that our Therapy Dog Teams were able to present to residents in the Nursing Homes and Hospitals that our Therapy Dog Teams visit on a regular basis.

As is the case with an old building, there is always work needed on Fidos training facility. After many hard storms during 2005 (both snow and rain), our roof continued to give us problems with leakage. We have temporarily fixed the problem with patching, but that is just the short-term solution. We have come to the realization that a complete new roof will be necessary in the coming year if we are to continue to have a place to train the dogs and applicants. The cost for a new roof is quite high so more fundraising efforts will be in the works for Fidos in 2006.

December, 2005, ended my term as President of Fidos. It has been a pleasure to serve in this position and to have made so many friends during my years on the Board of Directors and during the many presentations that I have attended on Fidos behalf. What I believe has made Fidos the warm and caring organization that it is today is the dedication and commitment of our Fidos volunteers. They are extraordinary individuals with various backgrounds and they are the backbone of this organization. Without our volunteers and you, are supporters, Fidos would not be able to provide the services that we strive to provide to our community. Our goal for the future is to continue with the same commitment and drive as we have during 2005. Thank you to everyone who



provided support to Fidos during 2005 and we look forward to your continued support in 2006.

Ann L. Dunn, President
Fidos For Freedom, Inc.



Development Department

The Development Department continued to conduct our most successful fundraisers for FY2005. A total of approximately \$18,800 was generated from Fidos sponsored events for FY2005. The golf tournament, Stroll 'n Roll and the tattoo clinic/CGC/TDI testing showed profits of \$10,200, \$8000, and \$620, respectively. These were increases over the previous year. The calendar sale fundraiser was handled by the Volunteer Services department.

On October 17, 2004 Fidos hosted our sixth annual Fall Stroll 'n Roll at Centennial Park in Columbia. This was the first year that the clients of Fidos took on a leadership role in running the event. About 70 people participated in the fundraising effort to obtain sponsors with approximately \$8000 collected. The cost of the sweatshirts and t-shirts were covered by a sponsorship from Land America Corporation.

On February 6, 2005 the annual tattoo clinic, Canine Good Citizen (CGC) testing and Therapy Dog International Testing were held. Thanks again to Tom and Nancy Mantlo for doing a wonderful job of tattooing the dogs. 40 dogs were tattooed (same as previous year) and approximately 50 dogs were tested for CGC and TDI. The net proceeds from this event were \$220 for tattooing and \$400 for CGC and TDI.

On May 21, 2005 Fidos hosted its sixth annual charity golf tournament at Bowie Country Club in Bowie. Dave Cogott of Oliver's Old Towne Tavern in Laurel hosted the post tournament cook out and happy hour at the course. This event, again, drew a full field of 144 golfers with 28 sponsors contributing money or prizes, and realized a net profit of \$10,200. Approximately 25 volunteers helped during the day.

The web page continued to strive for improvement in FY2005. A new photo page was incorporated to allow for up-to-date photos of recent Fidos events to be posted within a week of the event. The Assistance Dog pages and the Puppies in Training pages were extensively redesigned to allow for a more complete look at our Working Teams and Puppies as well as easier navigation through the pages.



Training Department

One of the high points of each year is the formal graduation of Assistance Dog Teams. The 2005 Graduation banquet was the largest graduation year to date. Hearing client teams are Jessica Gupta and Golden Retriever Lucy, Paul Paoliello and Cardigan Welsh Corgi, Harry, Michelle Petrini and Labrador Retriever, Charlie. Service clients teams to graduate were Linda Pybas and Golden Retriever, Frankie, Donna Napolitano and Golden Retriever Jason, Joe Swetnam and Labrador Retriever Ace, Karen Howard and Golden/Lab Retriever Oliver and Doris Matchette and Golden retriever Linus. All four Golden Retrievers were donated by one breeder Ellee Neilands out of four separate litters.

There were a total of thirty three dogs in all stages of training during FY2004. Four dogs were released from the program in FY 2005, due to heir inability to adapt to changing conditions. Three were returned to their breeders/donators at their request for placement and one was adopted by the trainer. All achieved successful re-placement as pets.

During the Fiscal Year, fifteen dogs were donated to the program. Fourteen of these dogs remain in the program. Four of these dogs were donated by current Fidos volunteers and breeders. All but two of the dogs were donations from breeders or rescues who had previously donated to Fidos. Sister Pauline Quinn, a pioneer in Prison Puppy Raising programs facilitated the donation of three of these dogs. Several breeders we have kept in touch with over the years have donated this year. The Fidos for Freedom Web Site has continued to help us reach breeders interested in donating dogs.

Eight teams finished their probationary year and obtained ownership of their dogs in FY 2005.

Five new teams finished their team training and started their probationary year .in the Fiscal Year.

Eleven dogs progressed from the puppy program into Red Harness during FY 2004. These dogs were Augie, Beamer, Bucky, Cooper, Brody, Ellie, Gracie, Izzy, Judge, Reese, and Randi. Red Harness status moves the dog into a Trainer's home and the dog progresses to working in public with public access. More dogs in training were progressing towards Red Harness status the end of FY2005.

Personnel in the Training Department in FY2005 remained stable. Ann Dunn remained the Assistant Director of Training position. Annette Deitrich continued as the puppy coordinator, answering inquiries about dogs to be donated, testing puppies and recruiting and training puppy raisers. Barbara DiSimone undertook the Puppy and Puppy Raiser training position with the help of Gretchen Strecker. Kam Comastro took over as the



Vacation Home Coordinator Rebecca Kendrick continued maintaining the databases for the department. Client Services worked closely with the training department on those activities that involve the training of the clients. The Client Services Department and Training Department continued to work on some developing some joint policies and procedures. The revised team handbook was issued by Client Services during the year. This updated the original version of five years ago with additional, changing and new information.

Recruiting and retaining puppy raisers continues to be a challenge. By providing a more structured training program and more feedback we are hoping to attract and retain puppy raisers. We did retain some puppy raisers and had other puppy raisers progress in the training department as trainers. This area is a challenge to many of the Assistance Dog organizations. We did experience some repeat puppy raisers in the past year which gave us some more resource people and more experience in the program. Our new prison partnership may also help. We may develop another group of temporary puppy raisers to house and train puppies prior to their entry into the prison program.

Ann Dunn, Julie Tune, Annette Deitrich and Laurie Hardy represented the training department at the Assistance Dog International conference in January in Phoenix Arizona. There was a continued emphasis on early puppy training and imprinting. Assistance dog skill work is taught much earlier – giving the puppy raisers more work, but also rewarding feedback as the dogs master the skills. We continue to strive to incorporate more of this early learning into our program.

Apprentice trainer Allison Emmert guided her first dog through team training. This is a great accomplishment. Several new apprentice trainers were getting ready to do their first team training as the fiscal year ended. Mary Austin and Tracy Bowman have guided their dogs to be ready for matching. Several additional puppy raisers were working towards apprentice trainer status at the end of the fiscal year.

The training staff meets monthly offering a skills lesson with each meeting as well as updates on training. These skills lessons will be incorporated as part of a written training curriculum for both Hearing Dogs and Service Dogs. More training staff education is planned. Staff development in this area remains challenging with the time commitments, funds to attend conferences and the volunteer status, however progress is being made.

The Fiscal Year happened to contain two Spirit conferences. Eight trainers attended the ADI Spirit Conference in the late fall of 2004. Three trainers attended the 2005 ADI Spirit Conference outside of San Francisco in the early fall. The trainers brought back information we can use and incorporate into our training programs. The Harrisburg Conference contained information on client matching. The San Francisco Conference concentrated on puppy topics. Training staff is encouraged and financially helped in attending seminars, providing instructional materials and classes.



This year was the start of our affiliations with raising and training Assistance dogs within the prison systems. We received one Service Dog, Tommy, from James River Correctional Center in need of only his final training. We sent two intermediate dogs in cooperation with the Pen Pals program to James River Correctional Center Ellie, came back with strong obedience and hearing dog skills. Randi also returned with good skills, but unfortunately had to be released from the program due to her inability to work well around other dogs.

We started our own prison program in the summer of 2005 with the Federal Correctional Center Camp in Cumberland Maryland. This program was several years in planning and development. We started with 4 puppies in training and 8 inmates. The training staff is making bi-monthly trips to the prison to mentor the inmate trainers. The puppies started at the prison at about five months of age and plans are to have this first set of inmates to cover at least the beginning of the dogs skill work. We anticipate these pups returning to Fidos in FY 2006 and sending four more pups to grow up at the Federal Prison Camp.

The annual Client Certification Day was held in April of 2005. Due to a wonderful group of volunteers we were able to test over twenty Assistance Dog Teams. A total of twenty five teams tested throughout the year. All of the clients worked at keeping up their skills and all passed the written and skills test and the ADI Public Access Test. Significantly we had no overweight dogs, which evidently is a problem in the Assistance Dog community. Fidos stresses from early puppyhood on to keep the dogs in training at their proper weight and we are able to continue to stress this during the team's probationary year.

Ongoing work continues on developing a complete training manual to guide the trainers on training all of the skills involved in training service and hearing dogs. The puppy raiser guidelines book is updated on a continual basis. Continuing education for trainers and Assistance Dog Teams is being developed. We continue to develop ways to share the training techniques, equipment adaptations and dog information we all learn. Client Services has obtained a source to close caption some of the training tapes we'd like to use with all of the clients. Health information about dog's weight and longevity has been incorporated into our training of puppy raisers, trainers and clients with the goal being longer and more productive lives for our Assistance Dogs.

Sadly, two Assistance Dogs passed over the Rainbow Bridge this year. Hearing dog Radar died unexpectedly of a tumor on his heart after many years of faithful service with client John McCormick. Caleb, a Labrador Retriever succumbed to Lymphoma after a remission. Several dogs were retired after many years of service, Belle, a hearing dog after 9 plus years of Service and Windsor, a hearing dog after almost 12 years of service.

Ongoing health of our working dogs remains good. As the working dogs have aged, we have kept in touch with the teams to see how they are doing.

The training department will continue to work towards ADI voluntary certification.



Clients Services Department

Applications (Hearing Dog or Service Dog) Requested	93
No Response to Applications	31
Applicants Denied	2
Interviews Conducted	9
Interviewees Accepted	9
Interviewees Denied	0
Applicants/Clients Dropped Out	1
Applicants/Clients Delayed Start Dates	1
Monthly Client Support Meetings	
(Nov, Jan, Mar, May, Jul, and Sep)	5
Client Training Outings	3

Since its establishment in April 2002 the Fidos Client Services Department has made great strides in providing valuable assistance to both new and experienced clients. The Client Services department currently consists of 1 client volunteer, the director, a hearing dog client; the assistant director position is currently vacant. The mission of the Client Services Department is to ensure that applicants and clients progress through the application process and the training program with equal opportunity and at their own pace, and that throughout the process each individual's special needs are met. The department's responsibilities cover all aspects of the client indoctrination process from the processing of incoming applications and coordination with the Application and Client Review Committee through the graduation of each hearing and service Team. A key element of this support is the conducting of bi-monthly Client Support Meetings of which 5 were held during the past year.

Accomplishments of the Client Services Department during FY2004 include distribution and implementation of the Client Progress Record (CPR) and the updated version of the Client Handbook in February 2005. The CPR outlines the specific steps required by Client Services and the Training Staff, to insure consistency in the training of each client, beginning with a client's entry into the training program and ending with the mutual release and transfer of ownership of the assistance dog and Team graduation. The Client Handbook is designed to assist clients with every aspect of training, as outlined in the client contract and CPR.

Another important success of the Client Services Department during FY2004 was the coordination, in conjunction with the Training Department, of 3 public training outings. The outings are a vital element for the clients in training as they gain first-hand knowledge from the training staff and from observing experienced Fidos' assistance dog teams in attendance in real-life situations.



The most significant and fun outing of the year was the excursion in the spring by 7 clients in training, 1 new client, 5 experienced teams, 4 members of the training staff and a total of 11 dogs to the Walther's Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland.



Volunteer Department

Therapy Dogs:

20 new teams joined Fidos.

179 visits were made total: 72 DEAR visits and 107 healthcare (47 at nursing homes; 125 at hospitals).

5 new DEAR teams were added

No new visits were added in 2005

Juniors:

There are 25 Junior Volunteers in the program.

Juniors earned \$1200 through the agility trials in the fall.

General Volunteer Milestones for the Year:

A dogless handler program was created to match dogless handlers with multiple TD households.

Second annual calendar was produced, sold and generated about \$13,000 income for Fidos.

Banquet/Silent Auction generated about \$14,000 income for Fidos (??not sure of exact \$)

Photosite albums (public and private) were created and uploaded for each Fidos event. All photos are uploaded electronically in order to allow other departments open access.

Online FAQ information was put up on the web.

New Volunteer Opportunities/Job Descriptions were posted and put up on the web.



Fidos-vivor training was implemented to develop team spirit and get various groups to interact on different levels.

TD Testing notification email list was put on the web which reduces emails and phone calls to the department. TD Testing registration was also put up on the website with email confirmation. Again, this reduces workload of phone calls and emails.

