

Sunriver Spotlight:
**Dresden Parsons,
 Service Dog Trainer**

By Ginger Enrico



**Dresden Parsons and her
 specially-trained Lab, Oakes**

I just “met” our neighbor, Dresden Parsons, on the Sunriver e-Group last month, despite the fact that we have lived around the corner from each other for over two and a half years! In the e-Group she gave her credentials as a Pet

Sitter, mentioning that she was a former volunteer Puppy Raiser/Trainer of Companion Service Dogs. I was eager to learn more about her work with dogs to help people with physical limitations and invited her over. Dresden brought her dog, Oakes, with her to tell me about the companionship, assistance and service these specially trained dogs bring to their human companions.

Imagine not being able to reach a light switch, pick up your keys when you drop them, or get something out of the refrigerator. Then imagine having a dog that could do all of that for you, and more.

Imagine not being able to hear a knock at the door, the alarm clock, the smoke detector, or your baby crying. Then imagine having a dog trained to come and alert you to all these sounds.

Imagine being a school child who looks different - maybe even odd - and who is unable to participate

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**Phase III for Truckee
 River Median Project**

By Ray Fox

In a long-term beautification effort that spans multiple years, the Truckee River Median will soon undergo the final phase of its facelift. Long neglected by Sacramento County, Sunriver residents took it upon themselves to beautify the south western entrance to our neighborhood. Drought-tolerant Chinese Pistache trees were acquired and planted in the median. In the project’s second phase, a volunteer crew weeded and cleaned up the area and spread a thick layer of bark to help prevent weeds and spruce up the island. The final phase of this enhancement process will be to add drought-tolerant California native plants to the island. The County provided no irrigation to the median, so all plant material must get by solely on winter rainfall and the occasional soaking by the Sunriver Tree Team (a group of volunteers who take turns watering the trees in the median to get them through the hot days of summer).

On Saturday, September 22, a variety of plants will be purchased at the California Native Plant Society’s fall sale. The following morning, volunteers will congregate at the median to plop ‘em in the ground.

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**Join us at the next
 Neighborhood Meeting
 Tuesday, Nov. 27**

The next Sunriver Neighborhood Meeting will be held at Sun River Church, corner of Trinity River and Klamath, from 7 to 9pm. Watch the Sunriver Online website for more information as the date approaches.

Dog Trainer (Continued from Page 1)

in many child activities. Imagine being both ridiculed and left out. Then imagine having a dog who goes to school with you and becomes a bridge between you and the other kids.

Assistance and Companion dogs provide all these services and more.

Some years ago, Mrs. Parsons, a retired pharmacist, decided to channel her love of animals toward helping make more of these Assistance Dogs available to people who need them to lead fuller and more independent lives.

Dresden Parsons learned about the local Sacramento program when she was attending a Multiple Sclerosis support group. She has lived with MS for over 20 years, although it is not much evident. One day a support group speaker brought a service dog from Canine Companions for

Independence (CCI), the internationally renowned Service Dog program headquartered in Santa Rosa. CCI provides dogs at no charge to people who can use them.

Mrs. Parsons didn't need a service dog, but she wanted to help those who do. She applied to be a "Puppy Raiser" for CCI. CCI approved Dresden, her husband Jeff, and their fenced yard on Trinity River Drive. Mrs. Parsons agreed to raise and train a puppy the CCI way, take it to CCI's Sacramento Puppy Class every week, and pay for its routine vet bills (or take the dog to Santa Rosa for free care). After being accepted into the program, they drove to Santa Rosa to pick up a ten-week old bouncing Labrador puppy. Sixteen months later they gave back a socialized and trained dog, ready to be evaluated for eligibility for the final six to nine months of advanced training at a regional center. Mrs. Parsons

repeated the process three more times, providing four dogs to CCI.

Dresden explained that CCI puppy training uses rewards - no yelling, no hitting, no choke chains. "The results are quite amazing," she said. I had to agree with her that Oakes, her Lab/Golden Retriever cross, is the best-mannered, calm, yet self-confident five-year old Lab I have ever met.

Mrs. Parsons is available not only for pet sitting but for training consultation as well. A member of PetSitters International, her business email is **PetKeeper@comcast.net**.

I asked for her help with my German shepherd, Anna. Mrs. Parsons related to me that Anna winked at her and confessed she was fooling me by occasionally playing dumb when I gave her commands. I asked how to stop Anna from always pulling on the

leash. She told me a slightly different way to correct Anna using her head collar (Halti)
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Median Project (Continued from Page 1)

While there are never any guarantees in the world of landscaping, native plants are the best bet for surviving our brutal Sacramento summers. With a little luck, these plucky perennials will greatly enhance the Truckee River median for years to come.

In order to complete this task, we need your help. Much of the money raised during last year's median fund drive went toward the purchase of several yards of redwood bark. Some funds remain, but we're in need of more contributions to fully plant the median. We also need volunteers to help plant the greenery as well as help keep them watered during their first crucial weeks. And if you know a little something about native plants and would like to help pick them out, by all means, join us for the selection process!

To make a monetary contribution to the median fund, either stop by the Sunriver Online website at www.sunriveronline.org and make a donation via PayPal, or make out a check to **Ray Fox** and send it to:

The Sunriver Neighborhood Association

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If you would like to join in on the selection of the plants on September 22 and/or want to be a part of the planting process on Sunday the 23rd, drop an e-mail to rfox@sunriveronline.org or mail a note to the address above. With your help, we can make this little corner of Sunriver a whole lot more pleasing to the eye. ☺

Is Your House Bugged?

By Ray Fox

Next time you find a few creepy crawlies in your home, instead of jumping to call an exterminator, think again. While sometimes ya gotta call in the big guns, often you're better off using a less drastic -- and far less expensive -- approach to ridding your home of six-legged guests.

Most exterminators use a shotgun approach -- they spray a lethal concoction designed to kill anything that crawls. This can easily affect your natural allies as well. Lizards, birds, beneficial insects and spiders all play a vital role in keeping pest populations



down. By killing them, you often wind up with a more severe pest problem than you started with.

So how do you prevent pests from setting up shop in your home? First, keep 'em out by making sure your house is well sealed, filling any cracks or gaps with a silicone sealant. Make sure your screens and weatherstripping are in good shape. Vacuum often and keep your kitchen as clean as possible.

When it comes to doing battle, instead of the shotgun approach, target your specific pest. For example, give ants a knock-out punch with a tiny dish of sugar water laced with a teaspoon of boric acid (available for around \$3 at any drugstore). Use sticky traps in problem areas for pests like cockroaches and centipedes. And if you've got the guts, "relocate" spiders outside instead of killing them so they can assist in your battle of the bugs.

So give these methods a shot before you blow the dough on dousin' the house with insecticide. ☺

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Dresden Parsons -- Sunriver resident
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Dog Trainer *(Continued from Page 2)*



Oakes poses in his CCI service cape

or Gentle Leader). I tried it and Anna immediately fell into the loose leash heeling that she had never done in obedience class or in the five years since.

If you're a dog lover, Mrs. Parsons has a special message for you: "We need Puppy Raisers!" To apply go to CCI's website, www.caninecompanions.org, or call 1-800-572-2275.

Another volunteer job is that of "Breeder Caretaker" or person who takes in a Lab, a Golden Retriever or Lab-Golden mix and oversees about 6 litters of puppies. Caretakers typically keep the dog throughout and after her breeding career.

And of course CCI welcomes donations, which you can make by mail, through the website, or through the United Way. If you golf, consider entering the local fund raising Dawgs in the Ruff Golf Tournament on Monday, October 1, 2007 at Lincoln Hills Golf Club. ☼

Welcome to Sunriver!

By Jessica Ocenosak

Got a new neighbor? Contact the recently-formed SNA Welcoming Committee to welcome new residents - both owners and renters alike - to the neighborhood and have a welcoming package hand-delivered to their home. The contents will orient newcomers to what our fine neighborhood has to offer, from Sunriver Park and the American River Parkway to local restaurants. It will also contain items from the City, Chamber and local businesses as well as important contact info like trash pickup, electricity, emergency and non-emergency numbers. The Welcoming Committee will also introduce newcomers to the SNA itself, the Sunriver e-Group, and the Sunriver Online website and what it has to offer, such as the Contractor Reviews and Business Connection pages. A link on the Sunriver Online home page where residents can report new members of our community is now available at www.sunriveronline.org. That info will then be forwarded to the wonderful team of volunteers: Christiane Becker, Virginia Hazard, Diane Velten, Sharon Clark, Traci Canfield and Jessica Ocenosak. (As in all of our SNA programs and events, we operate on very limited funds so donations are always appreciated!) So get your new neighbors off to a great start via the SNA Welcoming Committee. ☼



Sunriver Cinema on the Green

Join your neighbors for a night full of fun, food and film at the first ever Sunriver Cinema on the Green, Friday, September 21st at 6:00pm. Come mingle, have dinner and for the first time in Sunriver history, enjoy a movie under the stars! Jasper's and Bel Air are donating portions of our meal; Costco will have dessert along with sign-up specials; and as usual, we'll have a bounce house for the kids. A big Thank You to Trinity Woods condos for their generous donation to help make this event happen. If you're able, we're asking for a \$2 donation per person to help with costs for the movie presentation. Bring along lawn chairs or a blanket and please RSVP to our SNA Events Coordinator, Jessica Ocenosak, at 638-8110 or at jocenosak@sunriveronline.org. Don't miss this one! ☼

