



Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association
2801 Crossroads Dr. Suite 1200 Madison, WI 53718
608.257.3665 608.257.8989 fax
wvma@wvma.org www.wvma.org

- Media Release -

Contact:

Sarah Young
sarah@wvma.org
608.257.3665

Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association Announces 2010 Pet Hall of Fame Inductees

The Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association is proud to honor three inductees for the 2010 Wisconsin Pet Hall of Fame.

In its 16th year, the Wisconsin Pet Hall of Fame celebrates pets that exemplify the affection, loyalty, and value of the human-animal bond. Each year the WVMA honors this special relationship in three categories: hero, professional, and companion. The 2010 inductees have contributed immensely to the lives of their owners and their communities.

These three extraordinary canines will be honored during a noon luncheon ceremony held on Feb. 27 at the KI Convention Center, 333 Main Street, in Green Bay.

Professional – Mato

Mato is a 6-year-old German Shepherd that was born in the Czech Republic and currently serves as an Appleton Police Department K9 unit. He was trained as a working dog in the Czech Republic and imported to the USA by Adlerhorst International Police K9 Academy in Riverside, Calif. in 2006.

Mato's partner, Officer Matt McQuaid of Appleton, trained with Mato in California from September-December in 2006. Mato is trained in subject detention, tracking, and illegal drug detections.

Police service dog (PSD), Mato, has been on duty with officer McQuaid at the Appleton Police Department since December 2006. Officer McQuaid has a history of working with service dogs as he served in the U.S. Army as a military working dog handler from 1994-1999; he also served with the Army National guard Military Police Unit from 1999-2005. He graduated from UW-Platteville with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 2004 and with the Appleton Police Department since 2005.

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What is most impressive about the pair is the bond that Mato and Officer McQuaid share. They are more than fellow officers, they are true partners. Mato puts his life on the line for Officer McQuaid on a regular basis and is able to do things that we humans can't. Mato knows when it is "time to work" and is a true professional in every sense of the word.

Mato was nominated by Drs. Lisa Peters, Bruce VanEnkevort of the Fox Valley Animal Referral Center, Appleton, and Dr. Jay Peters of Countryside Veterinary Service, Appleton.

Hero - Bud

Bud, a black Labrador Retriever, saved the life of his long-time friend and owner – Carol Heule of West Bend - during a horrific accident.

Cleaning her boat and preparing for winter storage, Carol fell onto her paved driveway on Oct. 7, 2008, breaking her neck on impact. Conscious, but unable to move, Carol knew she needed help quickly and said "Bud, you have to get me help."

Immediately Bud began howling and barking. Bud's consistent barks alerted Carol's neighbors who found Carol and called 911. She was transported to St. Joseph's Hospital in West Bend and then via Flight for Life to Froedert Hospital in Milwaukee.

At her arrival at Froedert, a team of 20 doctors were awaiting Carol's arrival and said rarely, if ever, has anyone arrived alive after breaking the second cervical vertebrae.

After Carol was released from the hospital, she was in a brace from the top of her head to her waist. Bud continued to be of instrumental help; including aiding and guiding her up and down the stairs.

Bud has also been very active as an American Kennel Club (AKC) Hunt Test Dog. Bud was the youngest dog to achieve the Master National Retriever Club Plate in 2001 in Oklahoma and has qualified to attend the Master National every year since 2001.

Bud has also given demonstrations at the Safari Club International Youth Day and for the Turkey Federation.

Bud was nominated by Dr. Eric Stephenson, Mayville Animal Clinic, Mayville.

Companion - Mac

The companion inductee is more than that to Harry Bublitz, Lake Geneva. His Golden Retriever, Mac, has been instrumental in making his life a little easier and more joyful. Harry was struck by a drunk driver over 20 years ago leaving him paralyzed – with minimal use of one arm. Confined to a motorized wheelchair and well known in the Lake Geneva community, Harry and his two dogs - Mac, his trained assistant, and Sage, his companion, can be found strolling on the sidewalks all year long.

Harry first met Mac after his initial service dog lost her battle with cancer. Devastated Harry realized he needed a companion, but Mac turned out to be much more. Recognizing his

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"natural talent," Harry worked with a local trainer to have Mac trained as his service dog.

Mac is not only Harry's service dog, but constant companion. Mac opens doors, turns on lights, picks things up for him, gets items off the shelf in the grocery store and more. But more impressive is the bond between Harry and Mac, the human-animal bond is strong and fulfilling for both. Mac lives to please Harry – both helping him and loving him.

Harry and Mac volunteer at a local school and have for many years. Over the years, Harry and Mac have helped students with their reading, personal growth and self-consciousness. Weekly, students look forward to Harry and Mac's arrival.

Mac was nominated by Drs. Scot and Mona Hodkiewicz of the Lake Geneva Animal Hospital, Lake Geneva.

The mission of the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association is to advocate and promote veterinary medicine, while enriching animal and human health. Founded in 1915, it has more than 2,400 members.

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