



DISCOVER

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Eye Exams Target Service Dogs

This week, I received a news release concerning the ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam event, which provides free eye exams in May to service dogs throughout the United States and Canada. Registration for service dog owners begins April 1.

I don't know how many service dogs and their owners are in East Texas, or even how many veterinary ophthalmologists are in this area. But I hope that I will hear from some of them - so that people who depend on their service dog can be assured their dog's eyesight is in perfect working order.

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Lisa Davidson, of Warminster, Pa., has been blind for 13 years, and she relies on her guide dog, Eagle, for assistance.

"I think it's great these animals are being represented because they have a very special job to do," she said in the news release. "Eagle has opened many doors for me, to allow me to become independent. It's so important that his eyes are working."

Guide dogs, handicapped assistance dogs, detection dogs and search and rescue dogs selflessly serve the public. For this reason, the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists is launching the third eye exam event to serve these dogs.

Ms. Davidson took Eagle to the Center for Animal Referral and Emergency Services in Langhorne, Pa., during 2009's event to get his free eye exam. Board-certified veterinary ophthalmologist Dr. Robert Peiffer, examined the 6-year-old black lab/golden retriever mix and gave Eagle a clean bill of health.

"In these exams, we hope to identify any health issues in their early stages," he said.

Stacey Daniel, executive director of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists said, "If we can assist more dogs, then the dogs can better assist people."

For additional information, visit the Web site at www.ACVOeyeexam.org.

You can contact Joyce Turner at jturner@tylerpaper.com

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