

Senator Al Franken Introduces New Legislation for Funding to Train Service Dogs to Assist Veterans Wounded in the Line of Duty

Actress Glenn Close to Appear on 'The Oprah Winfrey Show' in Support of Puppies Behind Bars' Efforts to Provide Inmate-Trained Service Dogs Free to Wounded Veterans

PORTLAND, Maine, NEW YORK CITY and NORTH BROOKFIELD, Mass. — August 5, 2009 — [FetchDog](#), a Portland-based company dedicated to serving the comprehensive needs of passionate dog owners and offering high quality [dog supplies](#), today applauded proposed legislation by Senator Al Franken to provide funding to train service dogs for military veterans wounded – physically and emotionally – in the line of duty. “Service dogs...can be of immense benefit to vets suffering from physical and emotional wounds,” Franken commented in the July 18, 2009 Minneapolis Star Tribune. “Yes, they provide companionship. But they can also detect changes in a person's breathing, perspiration or scent to anticipate and ward off an impending panic attack with some well-timed nuzzling. They are trained to let their masters know when it's time to take their medication and to wake them from terrifying nightmares.” The legislation will fund training for hundreds of dogs – and provide vital assistance to hundreds of veterans.

In recent months, FetchDog has teamed with Vibram Pet Products to support Puppies Behind Bars (PBB) and its initiative, *Dog Tags, Service Dogs for Those Who've Served Us*. Through this program, prison inmates are trained to raise puppies to become service dogs for wounded veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. And on August 6, 2009, Award-winning actress, avid dog lover and author of FetchDog.com's “Lively Licks” blog, Glenn Close, will appear in a re-broadcast of the Oprah Winfrey Show to give viewers an inside look at the organization's efforts. During the program, she will present host Winfrey with FetchDog.com's special edition Chewy Shoe dog toy. For every toy sold, FetchDog and Chewy Shoe's manufacturer, [Vibram Pet Products](#), will both donate \$1 to support Dog Tags. The toy is available for purchase at FetchDog.com or through FetchDog's catalog.

During the segment, viewers will meet Sgt. Allen Hill and his service dog, Frankie. Glenn Close will reunite the two with Frankie's inmate trainer at the Fishkill Correctional Facility in Beacon, N.Y. Frankie lived at the facility for 18 months before moving on to other locations for additional

training — ultimately being placed with Sgt. Hill free of charge. Sgt. Hill also met with other inmate trainers at the facility.

“I have been aware of Puppies Behind Bars for a long time and am proud to support their Dog Tags initiative,” said Close. “It’s totally a win-win situation for all involved. On one hand, the inmates who qualify for PBB are given a chance to give back to society and learn invaluable skills that will prove vital if they ever re-enter life outside prison. On the other, wounded soldiers are given a chance to rebuild their shattered lives — to be released from the prison of their wounds. What unites both inmate and soldier is the love, loyalty and talent of a PBB dog. PBB truly changes lives.”

Puppies Behind Bars launched the Dog Tags: Service Dogs for Those Who’ve Served Us program in 2006 to help injured veterans cope with the challenges of their daily lives. The specially trained Golden and Labrador Retrievers can perform tasks such as opening and closing doors, assisting with grocery shopping and retrieving food from the refrigerator. For veterans suffering from the signature injuries of the war — Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) — and those who are physically disabled, the dogs are trained to remind their companions to take medications and to help them cope with the new challenges they face as they proceed through their daily routines.

“Sergeant Hill is just one example of the many soldiers who are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and need help adjusting to life back at home,” said Gloria Gilbert Stoga, founder and president, Puppies Behind Bars. “PBB is a powerful resource and we are so grateful for the generosity of FetchDog and Vibram — their donations from sales of the Chewy Shoe toy will enable us to continue to provide those who’ve served our country with the support and resources they deserve.”

The Dog Tags Chewy Shoe features a real red, white and blue shoe sole with a tough throwing/pulling cord for maximum playtime fun. It is made of rugged natural rubber by Vibram Pet Products, made exclusively in the United States by Quabaug Corporation, the company that provides the majority of the shoe soles currently in use by the U.S. military.

Gilbert Stoga founded Puppies Behind Bars in 1997 to raise guide dogs for the blind, adding the training of explosive detection dogs following the events of Sept. 11, 2001. In 2006, the group

started raising dogs to assist disabled and autistic children and disabled adults, expanding to launch the Dog Tags program for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan the same year.

Related photos, logos, videos and other materials are available for download via FetchDog's press room at: <http://www.fetchdog.com/fetchdognews>.

About FetchDog.com

FetchDog is an emerging market leader for catalog shopping and Internet media in the rapidly growing \$38 billion pet products category. FetchDog was created to offer passionate dog people a place to find the highest-quality [dog supplies](#), credible advice on their dog's health and wellness, and an online community of fellow humans who love their dogs.

More than just a shopping site, FetchDog.com has thousands of ad-free pages of deep information about health issues, training, behavior, breed selection, puppy care and dog adoption. Always current and fresh, FetchDog.com also has dog features and news stories, expert and celebrity blogs, world-class dog photography, games, videos and community-oriented centers for hundreds of dog breeds.

About Puppies Behind Bars

Puppies Behind Bars trains prison inmates to raise service dogs for the disabled and explosive detection canines for law enforcement. The puppies live in prison with their puppy raisers from the age of eight weeks to 18 months. As the puppies mature into well-loved, well-behaved dogs, their raisers learn what it means to contribute to society rather than take from it. For more information, please visit www.puppiesbehindbars.com.

About Quabaug Corporation and Vibram

Quabaug Corporation is the North American manufacturer of Vibram products under exclusive license. Quabaug Corporation, located in North Brookfield, Mass., employs 300 people and manufactures Vibram® shoe soles and QuaBoing® resilient rubber surfacing.

Quabaug Corporation also offers dog toys, training tools, leashes and collars in its line of Vibram® Pet Products. These include Vibram® balls, sticks, discs and the Shoey Chewie sole, which are all molded in the USA using clean rubber that is nitrosamine-free.

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