

Why I want an Emergency Medical Response Dog
By: Jonathan Bell

Jonathan Bell is a 2006 graduate of the Service Dogs for America training center. He is a federal employee and is a participant in the Combined Federal Campaign.

I thought about this long and hard before I began the process of request for an Emergency Medical Response Dog.

I would like to feel more independent, to be able to walk down the street with my kids, to go to church, or the store, etc without the fear of something happening and either now knowing that I needed help, or them not being able to help and over reacting. I would like to be assisted with taking my medication on time, (if I mess that up, I can be messed up very quickly).

... I am required to travel as part of my job, and during one episode, I was lost in a strange city for several days (literally the wrong city and the wrong hotel) and it was three days before I realized anything was wrong.

...I want my wife to feel comfortable leaving me alone, to be able to feel like I can resume my responsibilities at home as a husband and father and at work as a civil servant.

Jonathan Bell's wish came true in the way of an EMRD named Jack.

Mr. Bell arrived on June 10th with his wife and children to attend the three week team training session. This is one of the great assets of the Service Dogs for America program. We are not only able to accommodate individuals, but entire families when necessary.

Jonathan was an excellent student, entering into the 3 week session ready to learn. Jon and Jack excelled and achieved the highest of marks on their public access exam.

We received a Thank You from Jonathan and his family that [with Jon's permission] we'd like to share with you. "Thanks for giving all you give, for doing all you do, for caring as you care.... Thanks for being you."

Jonathan adds, "The card says a lot about how we feel about you. I am writing this after Jack alerted to a seizure in advance. This is more than I had dared to hope for. I want to be sure where to assign gratitude for this. This is due in a very large part to the vision you had all those years ago."

"The work in the interim years with dogs and staff. This is also due in large part to the work you put in with Mitch, Jack and us. I do not believe I will ever be able to pay you or your organization back for the blessings God has given us through you. I am sure after all your experience you should understand how much impact your group is having on my family and me personally through Jack. God Bless You, Jonathan, Melanie, Jacob and Katie Bell.

Friends and supporters need to understand also that the impact Jonathan speaks of is not possible without those who foot the bill. We share these accolades with you.