

Dog and owner train to help others

Jag has an uncanny ability to identify people in pain who need a hug; he helps people heal. The amazing part is that Jag is a four year-old male Siberian Husky who is surprisingly calm and seemingly self-assured. He is a certified Therapy and Crisis Response dog who, with his handler Lisa Orth, helps people in many ways.

After learning basic obedience, Lisa and Jag took a one-day training course through the Delta Society, and Jag became a certified Therapy dog. Then Jag and Lisa were able to go into hospitals and nursing

homes so Jag could offer comfort and reassurance to people in those settings.

Most of us have heard of animals visiting nursing homes like Jag does, but that wasn't the end of his service work. Lisa recognized that Jag had more potential and, after a four-day training session, he earned the right to be called a certified Crisis Response dog. Now Lisa and Jag respond as a team to calls from the American Red Cross or the Columbia County Crisis Response Team to fires, auto accidents and other incidents where Jag offers his

unique services in times of crisis.

Jag is trained to recognize stress, trauma and shock, then he goes to work by being a big, cuddly, non-judgemental friend. He gets very close to the person he identifies as needing his services and, without being pushy, just makes himself available. Some people pet him, some hug him, some cling to him like a lifeline and some just seem to calm down in his presence. Lisa gets satisfaction from knowing that, with Jag, she is helping give people

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