



Animals Need Jobs Too

If you've ever owned an animal, you have probably felt the heart-sinking sensation of seeing a piece of your favourite shoe waiting for you at the front door, or the muddy prints of the culprit who just knocked over your favourite flower pot. Pets can be mischievous, especially when they are young or in the adjustment phase of a new living situation. In some cases, it becomes an ongoing problem that leads pet owners and animals into frustration. Often the source of the issue is the animal not receiving what he or she needs – whether that be physical exercise, mental stimulation, or proper attention.

In the case of Toby, a Chesapeake Bay retriever, what he needed was a job. Rescued by Charmaine and Chris Hammond from local rescue group NASAP, Toby seemed like any other happy-go-lucky retriever. Shortly after bringing him home they realized that he was more of a holy terror. When left to his own devices he spent his days rampaging through the house, routinely emptying out the hall closet, turning on water taps, eating items off the bookshelf, and sitting for hours on end in the sink. One of his favourite pastimes was locking himself in the bathroom (maybe with a good book from the shelf), and smashing the toilet tank lid to pieces on the floor. After a particularly disastrous encounter with a knife-block in the kitchen, the Hammond's decided Toby needed professional help.

Charmaine's eureka moment came when an animal behaviourist shared with her that all people, including dogs, need a purpose. She immediately signed Toby up for school, training him to become a service dog. "Toby instinctively knows when it's time to go to work, and there is determination in his step and enthusiasm in his eyes," says Hammond. Once Toby found his passion for charity work, things improved. And Hammond found a new passion as well when she wrote her memoir of the poignant (and often difficult) journey she embarked on with Toby as they work to change his behaviour from incorrigible to incredible. "On Toby's Terms" was published in September of 2010, and has been picked up to become a motion picture.

Toby and Charmaine Hammond will be presenting *The Toby Way to a Pawsome 2011* at the upcoming Edmonton Pet Expo in the Dog Demo Area. The Dog Demo Area will also feature demonstrations in dog sports such as Agility, Flyball and Schutzhund. These are other activities that help owners bond with their dogs while draining physical and mental energy.

Dogs, however, are not the only creatures that have needs that go beyond the basic food, water, and shelter. For bird owners, the physical signs of their pet not getting what it needs can be alarming. A bird who is stressed or not receiving enough interaction may start plucking out its own feathers. These beautiful avian creatures need stimulating toys, but more over they need an owner who will put in the time required to ensure they receive the attention they crave. The Edmonton Pet Parrot Association will present a display at the Expo and their members will be on hand to answer questions about what it takes to be a good bird owner.

The Hervey Foundation for Cats will be featuring a number of different interactive cat toys and videos that can help cats receive the mental stimulation and physical exercise they need. Many people forget that cats, too, need these things.

Pet Expo will feature a variety of products and services, as well as industry experts, that can help to ensure pets and owners live in harmony. You may even meet your own Toby at one of the many rescues that will be present!

For more information, or to book an interview, please call:

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**The City of Edmonton
Presents Pet Expo**

Event:	Edmonton Pet Expo	Tickets:	General Admission \$10.00
Location:	Edmonton EXPO Centre, Hall A		Children (5-11) \$8.00
Dates:	January 22 nd & 23 rd , 2011		Under 5 years of age Free
Hours:	Saturday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm Sunday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm		Family Pass* \$25.00 (*2 adults and up to 2 children)
			Pre-purchase tickets online to save