

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Embrace Differences and Celebrate All Pets!

National Specially-Abled Pets Day is May 3, 2012

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. April 6, 2012 –The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS), a national non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals, encourages the celebration of pets living with physical handicaps, in honor of National Specially-Abled Pets Day, May 3, 2012.

First celebrated in 2006 by The Animal Miracle Foundation & Network, Specially-Abled Pets Day was established to educate the public about properly caring for pets with physical disabilities. Formally called, “Disabled Pets Day”, the holiday celebrates the uniqueness of pets living with physical handicaps.

“Animals with disabilities need as much attention and love as any other family member,” said John D’Ariano, President of NAPPS. “Pets with handicaps should be celebrated and valued for who they are; their differences and disabilities are what makes them a unique, one-of-a-kind pet.”

According to the Animal Miracle Foundation & Network, physical disabilities are often a result of a birth flaw, injury or disease the animal has overcome. Pet parents adjusting to the new lifestyle of their disabled pet may become overwhelmed with the additional tasks associated with properly caring for their furry friend. Professional pet sitters are able to customize care plans to suit the needs of both the pet and the pet parent, including administering medication daily to your pet. A pet sitter can give your loved ones the extra attention they need when you can’t be there.

In honor of the holiday, NAPPS offers these tips for celebrating the specially-abled pets in your life:

- Create a fundraiser to support local animal shelters overcome medical expenses associated with caring for animals with special needs.
- Become a foster pet parent: provide the extra love and care the pet needs while it waits to be adopted
- Make your house accessible for your pet: don't put the pet bed on the third floor if your furry friend has trouble walking
- Organize a parade for the unique, specially-abled pets in your neighborhood
- Set up ramps for your pet, allowing it to get on and off of furniture easily
- Choose dog or cat doors that are open to the floor so your pet doesn't have to struggle with stepping over barriers
- Volunteer at an animal rescue shelter and give extra attention to the many animals looking for their “forever home”
- For blind pets, use childproof gates in front of stairs: this will help avoid accidental falls

About NAPPS

NAPPS is the only national non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as “the most respected authority in professional pet sitting.” It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS’ free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, nationwide referral service, and quarterly teleconferences aimed to educate the pet owning public. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS’ nationwide “Pet Sitter Locator” at www.petsitters.org. For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheNAPPS.

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