Radio personality, Moon from KS95 is an entertainer who lives with MS.

Thanks to you and Ritz, he lives a more independent life!
While out at a restaurant, Ritz donned her Mobility Assist Dog cape and sat silently while Larry Thompson (Moon) and his wife Cynthia were ready to enjoy their evening. Then their server walked up and told them they had to leave the restaurant because dogs weren’t allowed in the building. Before Larry could comment, the restaurant manager interrupted the moment and told them they could stay. Larry said, “It’s sometimes a little disheartening when they say you can’t have a dog there even when they have their assistance dog vest on. So many people aren’t informed and that’s kind of sad. I’m going to change that. I’m going to change the world!”

Larry, a.k.a., “Moon” has worked for KS95 Hubbard Broadcasting on the Moon and Staci Show for 13 years as an on-air personality. He has been diagnosed with MS for 12 of those years. His job requires him to do a lot of public meet-and-greets as well as attend multiple charity events each year. While attending the MuckFest MS Twin Cities event, Larry met the Can Do Canines graduate team Beth Kantor and Mobility Assist Dog Dazzle. Larry had mentioned that he didn’t need more work like bringing a dog into his home - he needed less work. Beth proclaimed, “You don’t understand what an assistance dog can do for you!” A little while later Larry decided to research Can Do Canines and ask his family if they were ready for a new family member.

Enter Ritz, a gorgeous two-and-a-half-year-old black Labrador Retriever who’s been trained specifically for Larry as a Mobility Assist Dog. Besides offering companionship, Ritz helps Larry get out of chairs, pick up dropped items, take his shoes and socks off, retrieve his pajamas before bed, and she helps him in and out of their van by raising and lifting Larry’s legs. “Ritz is very, very smart. If you show her what you want she can generally figure it out on her own.”

“I’m a happier person now that we have Ritz. I went many years saying no to having a pet or an animal of any kind. Now that we have Ritz, it’s unbelievable! Man are we spoiled. She is nearly perfect!”

Your support helped make Ritz and Larry a successful team. Larry exclaims, “Everyone at Can Do Canines has been top shelf in helping me learn and figure things out. What I know about having a disability is that the amount of service that these dogs can give to somebody that really needs help is huge. What would we do without your help?”
Because of volunteers, puppy raisers, fosters and donors like you, Ritz is able to change Larry’s life for the better. He wants you to know, “I wish that everybody could have what I have with Ritz, but I know that can’t happen.”

“Ritz loves me I think just as much as I love her!”

“If you’re one of those people who can make a donation or try to help the process from raising a puppy all the way to what we’re doing today, then please get on the Can Do Canines website and make a contribution or volunteer because it’s truly appreciated and it’s a big deal to me!”

You helped make the following possible:

- Train 20 New Assistance Dog Teams
- Certify 50 Teams in 2016

Can Do Canines

- Trained and placed 20 specially-trained dogs this quarter. All dogs were provided free of charge due to your support.

See the back cover for the list of our soon to be graduates and join us in congratulating them on February 18!

Nicole Greenlund & Diabetes Assist Dog Tuesday

Ritz loves to work and play.
Lisa Jordan and Hearing Assist Dog Cleo are birds of a feather. In fact, Lisa claims that Cleo is actually her, but in dog form. Both Cleo and Lisa can easily be described as funny, intelligent, delightful, and so darn charming!

Cleo is a three-year-old yellow Labrador Retriever who is in Lisa’s life as a substitute pair of ears. Lisa has Cochlear Implants that help her to hear. However background noise can interfere with the effectiveness of Cochlear Implants and also cause other discomforts for Lisa. Furthermore, there are often times when Lisa needs to have her Cochlear Implants off; it is invaluable that Cleo is there to hear for Lisa and alert her to sounds she would miss otherwise.

Cleo alerts Lisa to several common sounds in their home environment including a door knock, alarm clock, timer, smoke alarm, and phone. To alert Lisa to a sound, Cleo uses her nose to nudge Lisa and then she leads Lisa to the sound. Cleo takes her work seriously. Her awareness of the sounds around them helps Lisa be more aware, too.

“It creates peace of mind to live without the stress of what sounds I might be missing.”

Cleo is all about Lisa. The team’s success is a testament to both Lisa and the staff at Can Do Canines. Although Cleo was well-trained when she was matched with Lisa, it still took a lot of hard work, training together for the two to become a fluid team. Lisa wants everyone to know how grateful she is to every single person involved in what she calls a first-rate organization; Lisa also notes the user-friendly, streamlined process that Can Do Canines has fashioned makes this big life change successful.

It’s important to know that assistance dogs do not come perfectly trained. Their skills are honed and finely polished once the match to a human is made. Then the real work begins - getting to know each other, living together, bonding, only then a strong connection can begin to form. Human and canine both need to be trained.

Several life changes have occurred for Lisa since Cleo became her Hearing Assist Dog and it has strengthened their bond. Shortly after they certified as a team, Lisa and Cleo moved across the country, worked at a camp together, and Lisa got engagement (yes, Cleo will be in the wedding!). “Cleo loves doing everything!” Lisa exclaims, and it is evidenced by Cleo’s good behavior in the home, workplace, out in public, and lots of traveling.

Because of volunteers and donors like you, Lisa is living a more carefree, independent life with Hearing Assist Dog Cleo. Thanks to you, Lisa and Cleo are a successful team!
One Saturday morning in 2012, Kris Fitzer from Blaine, Minn. was watching the news on Kare 11. One of the guests featured was Can Do Canines Executive Director, Al Peters along with Autism Assistance Dog, Jazz. While learning more about the organization, as well as the volunteer opportunities available, Kris thought to herself, “I think I can do that!” So, a year before Kris was set to retire from her company, she started volunteering with Can Do Canines on Thursdays.

Kris has helped the organization in many ways: volunteering her time at events, helping with projects, acting as a front desk receptionist, making fundraising calls, assisting with the annual phone-a-thon, speaking on behalf of the organization as an ambassador as well as driving dogs to and from prison.

Kris notes that one of the many reasons why she continues to volunteer with Can Do Canines is because of the heartwarming stories. She says, “The dogs are really helping people. They’re also very talented and can act as an emotional barometer, especially the Autism Assist Dogs. For example, Kona, a yellow Labrador Retriever who was placed as an Autism Assist Dog, changed Preston Laase and his family’s life the moment they received him. It was the first time in five years that Preston stayed in his bed all night because Kona made him feel safe and comfortable. Kona instantly changed that family’s situation. The stories are just incredible!”

Not only does Kris donate her time and talents, but she also donates financially to Can Do Canines. She says, “It feels good to do it! You see directly where your money goes.” Janet Cobus, Director of Development for Can Do Canines says, “The word ‘dedicated’ comes to mind when I think of Kris. If there’s a way she can help when we ask her, she will go above and beyond. She loves to make phone calls for our projects, has supervised 10 nights of our annual phone-a-thon, given generous in-kind and financial support, encouraged others to support Can Do Canines by being a Table Host for our fundraising luncheon and she is a pleasure to work with on any project!”

When asked how Can Do Canines has impacted her life, Kris feels that she’s sort of an evangelist for the organization. She exclaims, “I hand out tour cards everywhere I go. There’s a special place in my heart for the dogs here.” Can Do Canines Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Carlson exclaims, “Kris is always a joy to work with, and quick to jump in to help where needed!”

Volunteers like Kris make a huge impact every single day for Can Do Canines’ clients. Kris notes that one of the most frequent questions she receives from people is, “Isn’t it hard to give up the dog after you spend time with him or her?” To which she responds, “You may think that, but I know what these dogs are going to do. They’re so sweet and they really change people’s lives. Come to a Tails to Tell Tour! You may be afraid of the unknown, but just come out and see how you can help.”

Can Do Canines is always in need of volunteers, especially to help raise our puppies. Whether you have an hour, a day or a year to spare, we have volunteer opportunities that may suit your schedule and skills.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Carlson at 763.331.3000 ext.113 or lcarlson@can-do-canines.org.

“I love telling the Can Do Canines story!”

Kris Fitzer and two Can Do Canines in training
OUR MISSION
Can Do Canines is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specially trained dogs.

JOIN US FOR WINTER GRADUATION
At Can Do Canines
Saturday, February 18,
at 1 p.m.

Did you know?
If you have any of the items on our wish list which you no longer need or want, contributing them makes sense in many ways. You’ll help us, spare the environment and turn your unwanted goods into a possible tax deduction!
can-do-canines.org/donate/wishlist/

CONNECT WITH US
Can Do Canines
9440 Science Center Drive
New Hope, MN 55428
763.331.3000
info@can-do-canines.org
can-do-canines.org

Take a Tour—Meet Our Dogs
One of the best ways to see your support firsthand is to come to a Tails To Tell Tour. You’ll have a chance to meet a volunteer Puppy Raiser, one of our graduate teams and see the facility where our dogs learn their life-saving skills.

All tours take place at our facility located at the address below. Please call our office at 763-331-3000 or email tour@can-do-canines.org to reserve your spot!
• Thursday, February 9, 7 p.m.
• Saturday, March 25, 10 a.m.
• Thursday, April 20, 11 a.m.

YOU MADE THESE PARTNERSHIPS POSSIBLE

Read their stories at can-do-canines.org.