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## Dog's owner urges action

By **EMILY C. DOOLEY**  
STAFF WRITER

DENNIS - The owner of a Yorkshire terrier who was mauled to death at a Dennis dog show last week has vowed to change laws to make sure service dogs are properly trained and certified.

Instead of taking home a prize for smallest dog at the annual Pooches on Parade show Thursday afternoon, Evelyn Galloway had to rush her pet, Libby, to the hospital after a service dog attacked her 4-pound Yorkie. Libby died 30 minutes into surgery.

Dennis animal control officer Cheryl Malone has since called for the attacking dog, a nearly 100-pound Bouvier des Flandres named Rafferty, to be muzzled when in public.

Rafferty was trained to carry and fetch items by his owner, Autumn Daniels, who uses a wheelchair. She declined comment yesterday.

Under Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, trained service animals must be allowed any place humans frequent. They can only be barred for aggressive or hostile behavior.

But there are no guidelines or laws detailing how service animals should be trained or if they must pass a temperament test.

Galloway, 74, has hired an attorney to bring attention to the lack of safety requirements governing service dogs.

"I'm not doing this to be vindictive," she said. "This time it was my little dog. Next time it could be another little dog or a child crawling across the floor."

Galloway also wants to make sure service dogs are professionally trained and that owners can't train their own animals unless they have the proper education.

"It's kind of a romantic notion to train your own dog, but I don't think it's nearly as successful as people would like it to be," Malone said.

Several dog training groups, such as the National Education for Assistance Dog Services in West Boylston, have established minimum training requirements for dogs and owners. But they are voluntary standards and by no means mandatory, NEADS development director Joyce Schmitt said.

Changing the rules would mean amending the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is a civil rights statute.

And that would require an act of Congress, said Allan H. Macurdy, director of the Office of Disability Services and an adjunct assistant law professor at Boston University.

The modification would have to be proposed by a U.S. senator or representative. Even if that happens, Macurdy said, proposing certification would be hard because there are so many breeds and activities people require of a service dog.

The best way would be to lobby for a state law that requires training, registration or certification "as long as they are reasonable and they don't discriminate against people with disabilities," he said.

Malone, the animal control officer, met with Daniels yesterday and gave her a head halter for Rafferty. It attaches below the chin, which helps with control.

Malone also told Daniels she needs to consider whether Rafferty has the right temperament to be a service dog. Additional training by professionals would also be a plus.

Galloway also wants Daniels to be held responsible, and she may seek a legal remedy.

"People have got to learn what they have when they have a dog that big," she said. "Something good has to come out of it. I can't let it pass."

Pooches on Parade has been sponsored by the Dennis Council on Aging for the past eight years, but it is unlikely the town will see a lawsuit.

When pet owners registered for the parade, they signed a release taking responsibility for the actions of their animal. They also agreed not to hold the town liable should anything happen, Dennis legal administrator Patricia Folcik said.

In the meantime, the Galloways are trying to decide if they want another Yorkie.

"First I want one, then I don't," Galloway said. "The void is so bad."

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