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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Man Receives Assistance Dog

With a Wagging Tail, Service Dog Axel is Happy to Help

OCEANSIDE, CA – Country music singer and Bakersfield, CA resident Scotty Crabtree has a new helper by his side, and he comes with a cold nose and a warm heart. Scotty recently graduated from two weeks of training and received an assistance dog from Canine Companions for Independence, a non-profit organization that breeds, raises and trains assistance dogs for people with disabilities.

Scotty was born with cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair. Scotty was matched with a service dog named Axel V, a two-year-old yellow Labrador, who has been professionally trained in over 40 commands. Axel will assist Scotty by picking up dropped items, turning on and off lights, opening and closing doors and drawers and other tasks that will enable him to live a more independent life.

Scotty graduated with Service Dog Axel after completing an intense, residential, two-week Team Training course with his family at Canine Companions' Southwest Regional Center in Oceanside, CA. During Team Training, students are strategically matched with assistance dogs and learn how to work with them safely and effectively. Though costs to breed, raise, train an assistance dog and provide ongoing support to the team are estimated at \$50,000, Canine Companions assistance dogs are provided free of charge to recipients.

Scotty is thrilled to be matched with Axel. He says, "I am really grateful because I'm going to have a new best friend in my life, and that is really important to me." Scotty and Axel make a perfect team.

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About Canine Companions for Independence

Canine Companions for Independence provides expertly-trained assistance dogs to children and adults with disabilities. Established in 1975, Canine Companions has six training centers across the country, including CA, FL, OH, NY and TX. Canine Companions is recognized worldwide for the excellence of its dogs, and the quality and longevity of the matches it makes between dogs and people. There is no charge for the dog, its training and ongoing follow-up services. For more information, call 1-800-572-BARK or visit www.cci.org.