

Canine Award – Allen Parton



Allen Parton was a Chief Petty Officer serving in the Royal Navy during the first Gulf War. He had a promising naval career ahead of him and a wife and two children. A tragic war time incident changed

his life completely. Allen suffered a severe head injury that left him with considerable physical and emotional trauma. It wiped out his memory and left him unable to walk, speak or write. He couldn't even remember getting married or the birth of his children. He spent the next five years in hospital struggling to come to terms with his disabilities.

Then Allen was partnered with Endal, a yellow Labrador assistance dog. Allen's confidence returned to such an extent that he cannot stop talking about how Endal transformed his life. Endal helped to save Allen's marriage and rebuild the relationship with his children. He became increasingly independent and his wife was no longer on call twenty-four hours a day allowing her the freedom and peace of mind to pursue her own interests again.

Endal could respond to over one hundred commands and could also problem solve. Endal demonstrated his ability to react in an emergency. In 2001, Allen was knocked out of his wheelchair by a speeding car and left

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unconscious. Endal took charge, put Allen into the recovery position, covered him with a blanket and fetched his mobile phone. Getting no response from Allen, Endal went to a nearby hotel and raised the alarm; he probably saved Allen's life.

This amazing partnership started Allen thinking about setting up a new charity to help disabled personnel from the Armed Forces and Emergency Services. Allen says "it has been a dream of mine to have a charity that works specifically for people who have been damaged as a result of putting themselves in harm's way to help others. Hounds for Heroes is our chance to give people the same chances that I have had". The new charity not only provides trained dogs to provide 'Endal' type support, it also provides through life funding i.e. food, vet's bills etc. so that there is no financial burden associated with receiving the help.

Endal died in 2009 but the partnership keeps going with EJ (Endal Junior) who as well as being Endal's successor is also the first dog to be trained through Hounds for Heroes.

EJ has taken over where Endal left off and is similarly if not even more capable. Allen's vision in setting up the charity Hounds for Heroes has been informed by his own experiences and it is his own drive and determination to improve the lives of those who have suffered as he and his family have done. There can be few who are more worthy of a Soldiering On Through Life Award than Allen and he is most strongly recommended for favourable consideration for the 2013 Award programme.

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