

Guide Dogs Get Free Eye Exams

National event benefited thousands of working dogs and their owners.

Posted: May 22, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

Cory Mosunic, DVM, examines Pele. More than 1,500 service dogs got free eye exams as part of the recent American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists' (ACVO) national service dog eye exam event.

The effort took place the week of May 4, 2009, pairing veterinary ophthalmologists with service dogs throughout the United States and Canada. The goal is to better assist visually impaired people by helping guide dogs, according to Stacey Daniel, executive director of the ACVO.

During the eye exams, more than 150 board-certified veterinary ophthalmologists were checking dogs for any retinal disease or early cataracts. They also look for things that may limit their vision in the future, said Cory Mosunic, DVM, of Katonah Bedford Veterinary Center, such as an ingrown hair or anything that can result in a scratch of the cornea. "It's a complete ocular exam," Mosunic said.

Dogs participating included active working dogs who were certified by a formal training program or organization or enrolled in a formal training program. Plans for next year's event are underway for the first week of May.

Sponsors include Hill's Pet Nutrition of Topeka, Kan., OptiGen of Ithaca, N.Y., and Kong Veterinary Products of Irwindale, Calif.