

## Barb and Colin



Having Colin by my side while walking gives me a sense of confidence and security that I haven't had in years. When I feel wobbly or unsteady, I take hold of the harness handle until I regain my equilibrium. Moreover, just hanging on to his leash seems to have a steadying effect and I am able to move more quickly in a straight line, reducing my tendency to stagger and fall. I am happy to feel my legs getting stronger as I increase our walking time. He loves to bring me things, my clothes, shoes, anything that falls to the floor he believes needs to be picked up.

Over the past month we have gone everywhere together. We've gone to my yoga and exercise classes, swimming, medical appointments, restaurants, stores, visits with friends, and work. We take at least three walks daily to the park and around the neighborhood. He wakes me every morning by poking his long nose in my face. His eagerness and happiness to see me are infectious, making the transition from oblivion of sleep to life in the real world much easier. He's the best anti-depressant I've ever had!

My favorite activity with him is spending time in my best-loved bookstore, browsing the shelves, sitting and reading and having coffee. Colin seems to enjoy this as well. There are many people to admire him and when he tires of being the center of attention, he can nap. I feel a debt of gratitude to Denise, not just for her work in training Colin, but for raising him as her personal dog with so much love and attention. I think this combination has resulted in the perfect balance of a skilled and reliable assistance dog with an affectionate and unique personality. He is so professional and well-behaved in public areas, yet feels free to show his exuberant, silly side at home. I guess I am somewhat that way myself, so we are a perfect match!