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## Training canines for chores

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GOOD news for the physically handicapped - help is just a phone call away if you are looking for someone to run errands for you.

Newspaper columnist Anthony Thanasayan has come up with a special training programme for dogs and you will be amazed at the whole lot of things canines are capable of doing.

Thanasayan launched his service, called Bivai Special Dogs, and its website recently. The launch was conducted by Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir at the residence of Hugh Storey, former president of the Malaysian Disabled Persons Association, in Jalan Perumahan Gurney, Kuala Lumpur.

Also present was Storey, who delivered the keynote address.

In her opening speech, Marina said Thanasayan's effort was instrumental in bridging the gap between mainstream society and disabled people.

Thanasayan said he was inspired to carry out the project five years ago when he bought a Golden Retriever at a pet shop.

"My whole life started changing from there on. My late grandmother and I trained the dog tirelessly and our hard work paid off," he said.

He added that he later acquired two more dogs. The three canines have been trained to carry out simple chores such as collecting newspapers, putting soiled clothes into the washing machine, and retrieving things from under tables and beds.

"The time taken to train the dogs depends heavily on the relationship the trainer has with the dog.

"It all depends on how the dog is treated. If you treat him well, he will learn faster," he added.

Thanasayan is now training a dog for his fourth disabled client.

For details of the Bivai Special Dogs training programme, call 019-2643296 or e-mail: ant@pc.jaring.my.