



## Legal Labrador proves field of law is as frisky as ever

text by HOLLY PETERSEN

**T**HE SIGN ON THE FRONT door at The Law Offices of James R. Makin reads: Large, Friendly Dog Inside.

In a nutshell, this accurately captures the law office's sole canine employee, Max the Law Dog. At 90 pounds, this 3 1/2 year old yellow lab is undeniably large. And, one look into his soulful brown eyes and incessantly wagging tail confirms that he is indeed friendly.

"This is Max's job," said Lynda Kay Makin, owner of Max and the office's legal administrator. "He is the official greeter at our office."

Max is the second yellow lab to hold the title of Law Dog. Several years ago, a yellow lab, Kodi, greeted and comforted clients. Sadly, Kodi, whose portrait still hangs in the office, passed away at 12 years old.

After Kodi's death, Judge Susan Lowry, a Labrador Retriever breeder and friend of

the Makins, began faxing pictures of her new litter of puppies. It took some convincing, but two months later Max came home.

Bred by a judge and owned by a lawyer and legal administrator, Max seemed destined to be a wonderful Law Dog. Even in his youth, a time when most Labrador retriever puppies are mischievously digging up gardens, rooting through trash, and chewing everything in sight, Max embodied perfect behavior, a tribute to his show dog progenitors. Max is far too refined to engage in annoying doggie

behaviors like licking visitors to death or jumping in their laps.

Despite his show potential, Max is more likely to visit Washington D.C. than Westminster. The entire office staff agrees that at his core, Max truly believes he's an attorney.

He definitely has the diploma. At 11 months of age, Max attended canine obedience school and graduated Magna Cum Laude – or, rather Magna Canine Laude.

Like a true attorney, Max has the art of hobnobbing down to a science. New clients are welcomed with such an exuberantly wagging tail that the contents of an entire coffee table can be cleared in seconds. Max's clients can also expect him to share his favorite red teddy bear. And, if they're particularly special, Max might even invite them into the kitchen for a snack of the Milk Bone variety. Of course, with such a big, Labrador heart, all these services are offered pro bono.

After a little socializing, Max is ready for business; he sits in for James Makin's client interviews and then attends financial consultations with Lynda Kay.

Because of his flexible work hours, Max benefits from frequent walks accompanied by the finest of company, office staffers. In

fact, one of the staff job requirements is, "Must Love Dogs."

After a walk, Max requires yet another visit to the office treat jar before jumping back into work.

Despite his work ethic, Max knows how to separate work and play. He works from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and then he's home doing what he loves best – spending quality time with Lynda Kay and James Makin. He particularly enjoys visits from the Makin's seven grandchildren. Max also considers himself a bit of a water sportsman; he enjoys frequent trips to the Makin's beach house where he's perfected the art of saltwater romping and stick fetching.

Although Max's dogged resolution to achieve his goals of getting petted and receiving treats is glaringly apparent, the office simply wouldn't be the same without him.

"People don't care if James or I aren't at the office," laughs Lynda Kay, "They only care if Max is around." **VIP**

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