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Pioneer pooches detect diabetes crises

By Zoe Francis
CORRESPONDENT

A 1-year-old black Labrador puppy named Benton may have saved Mark Ruefenacht's life.

Ruefenacht was traveling in New York City five years ago with Benton, a guide dog in training, when the normally well-behaved dog roused his traveling companion from a deep sleep.

"He was pawing at me," Ruefenacht said. "He had his paws on the bed and was barking. It was activity that was unlike the normal personality of this dog."

Ruefenacht has diabetes that he manages with insulin shots. That evening, he had given himself extra insulin so he could have dessert. He then made the mistake of going to bed without checking his blood.

The extra insulin caused Ruefenacht's blood sugar to plunge to a dangerously low level.

"I knew I had a problem, but I was having a hard time bringing myself up to consciousness," Ruefenacht said. "Benton persisted in waking me up until I was able to get out of bed to help myself."

Please see **DOGS**, News 7



SNIFFING OUT DANGER



ARMSTRONG gets attention from a group of kids attending a diabetes workshop at Camp Arroyo. **MICHAEL LUCIA** — Staff photos