



They're called MIA Volunteer K-9 Ambassadors, and human handlers lead them around to stop for friendly visits with people waiting for flights. Similar programs are operated in Los Angeles, Denver and other airports.

Before you reach out to pet an airport therapy dog or any other strange animal, your travel4seniors.com editor has a story to tell. I've had furry pets and many encounters with trained working dogs, and never had a problem ... until last year's Halloween night. While attending a street parade, I approached a woman who said her big canine was in training to be a therapy dog.

I petted him, not realizing he was highly stressed from the loud music and crowds. Suddenly he snapped his jaws on my hand, making a large, deep bite. It resulted in an ambulance ride to the hospital and a dozen stitches to close the wound. Conclusion: Whether in an airport or anywhere else, be aware that even the most domesticated and trained dogs are animals. When they're suddenly nervous or frightened, the attack instinct can take over with painful results.