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Newsletter




June 2009

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www.ottawatherapydogs.ca
(613) 261-6834

AGM 2008 – A Huge Success!



Rachelle Gibeault

As a new OTD Associate Member and Communications Committee Member, I have been quite keen to get to know more about the OTD. After attending an orientation session for members this past April, I was looking forward to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May to see what the OTD had been up to for the past year. The AGM was well-attended and it was a great opportunity to meet Members and hear about all of the accomplishments in the past year.

I was impressed with the structured process to meet all legal AGM requirements while allowing for some fun and laughter, as well as all the great work done throughout the year: proved by the 2008-2009 list of activities and the reports put forth by OTD committees. (If you have not received these reports, you can ask for them by e-mailing admin@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Veterinarian, Lynn Morgan, was the key note speaker. She gave a special presentation on behaviour issues – in particular, focusing on anxiety in dogs. She provided us with some calming techniques to use with an anxious dog: getting your dog to sit, ensuring your dog gets plenty of exercise before getting into an anxious situation, ignoring the nervous behaviour and rewarding any display of calm behaviour. If you notice that an anxious or unwanted behaviour is getting worse, it may mean that you are

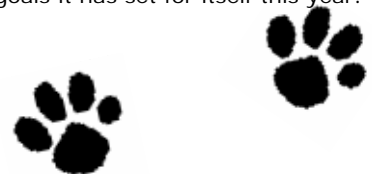
rewarding the behaviour somehow - sometimes by inadvertently paying attention to it.

The volunteer of the year award presentation was quite touching. This year's award was presented to Chantel by her mom who came all the way from North Bay for the occasion. Before presenting her with the award, she read a poem that she had written for the special occasion. You can read all about Chantel's great contributions to the R.E.A.D.® program on p.3.

Dee spoke to OTD members on the upcoming activities of the Community Outreach Committee. The fundraising goal for 2009 is to raise \$12,000 and \$20,000 by 2010. Now more than ever, the OTD needs the help and support of its members. If you have any fundraising ideas, please share them with the Committee. It can be as simple as starting a coffee club at work and having the proceeds go to OTD.

Two OTD Board members' terms (Margot Montgomery and Tanja Mackin) were renewed and a new Board member, Pat Finn, was appointed and has agreed to serve as Secretary to the Board for the coming period.

The event ended with a social where members were able to catch up with one another and speak to Board members and Dr. Morgan. The coming year will be even busier than the last but I can tell that the OTD is up for the challenge and is prepared to meet the goals it has set for itself this year!



Board News

Report from the Chair

Carole Eldridge

It was a delight to see so many of you at our AGM a few weeks ago. Always a pleasure to put names and faces together. Our Guest Speaker, Dr. Lynn Morgan, was superb; as was OTD member Dee – her visual of an afghan will stay with me for a very long time (if you were unable to attend, this reference may be confusing but any further explanations would not do justice to Dee’s role-play). In any case, we look forward to seeing you next year at our AGM. Thank you to all who contributed to make this an enjoyable evening.

Plans are falling into place for the fall.

- The Board has decided that it would like to have a retreat with Committee Chairs since last year’s was so successful. Facilitator Réjeanne Lalonde has agreed to volunteer her services again. Location still to be confirmed for Saturday, November 28 2009 (9 to 1)
- We will be scheduling a Mentor workshop in late September or early October for all interested OTD Members. As our team numbers continue to grow, so does our need for Mentors for those new teams. It is important that we provide our new teams with the same messages about standards and practices for service delivery. For more information, see p.6 of the newsletter.
- Our new Community Outreach Committee has developed an exciting tentative work plan for the

balance of 2009. Please see Margot’s report which follows on p.7.

I want to encourage all of you to read the article that follows on p.5 in this newsletter from Catherine Mirsky, the Chair of our Standards and Practices Committee. At our Orientation Sessions for potential new handlers, we have been stressing the importance of client safety with regard to the potential transfer of germs. It is my practice to always carry hand sanitizer with me (provided by my facility) as PandaRu and I visit clients. After the clients have had their time with PandaRu, I always require that they wash their hands with the sanitizer. It seems that not all of us are following this important practice. We have to remember that client safety is a top priority!

Happy summer to all! Many of you will be enjoying some time away – as will Kate and the Board of Directors. Historically we have always slowed the pace during July and August and this year is no exception. Be safe.

Carole Eldridge
Chair, OTD Board of Directors



Carole picking out a winning number from Pat’s pocket for door prizes

OTD Board Members

Carole Eldridge, Chair
(chair@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Susan Roberts, Vice Chair
(vicechair@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Pat Finn, Secretary
(secretary@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Tanya Mackin, Treasurer
(treasurer@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Joan Allum
(director@ottawatherapydogs.ca),

Margot Montgomery, Directors
(director2@ottawatherapydogs.ca)

Gardening Hints for This Summer

Problem with bugs/aphids

Mix together:

- 25 ml liquid dish soap
- 15-25 ml of isopropyl alcohol
- 5-10 ml of baby oil
- 15-25 ml lemon juice.

Problem with ants

Mix together:

- 2/3 cup of borax
- 1/3 cup of sugar

Loosen the earth of the hill so you can apply the mix below the surface. This may require several applications. (Both above solutions from Mapleawn Heritage Garden).

Those pesky weeds in driveways, sidewalks and the like (Shell Busey’s House Smart Center)

Shell Busey’s Dog Friendly Weed Killer Formula:

- 4 cups (1 L) of white vinegar
- 1/4 cup (50 ml) of table salt
- 2 tsp (10 ml) of your favorite liquid dish soap
- Put this mixture into a spray bottle and spray it on your weeds when it is hot out.

Remember, this is only recommended for weeds in driveways, sidewalks, etc. – if you spray it onto the weeds in your lawn, you’re going to kill the grass too and create a big ugly brown spot.

OTD Volunteers of the Year 2008

CHANTEL AND CHELSEA

In many ways, Chantel Hutter, and her dog Chelsea, together personified OTD's R.E.A.D.® (Reading Education Assistance Dogs®) program. Chantel was our R.E.A.D.® coordinator from 2003 until last summer (2008). Sadly Chelsea went to the Rainbow Bridge two months ago.

The premise of the R.E.A.D.® program is that children find reading to an animal less intimidating than reading to people. Reading to a therapy dog becomes a special time for the children participating in the program, creating a positive environment in which learning is facilitated. When done in a classroom setting it also has the capability of changing the class dynamics: this is often the first time that other students want to be in the struggling reader's shoes, and this can promote positive peer interactions that may not have occurred otherwise.

Chantel contributed sustained leadership and collaboration to establish our R.E.A.D.® program. Through donations to OTD and funding through the Community Foundation of Ottawa, she ensured that we could give students a "pawdographed" book to take home with them as a thank you for reading to our therapy dogs. The students receive a book every time they have completed 5 R.E.A.D.® sessions. The R.E.A.D.® program makes reading less scary for young readers and helps to change reading from glum to fun.

As the Board matured and was building policies, Chantel proposed R.E.A.D.® operational guidelines, a Mentor Policy and collaborated on R.E.A.D.® Team Criteria – all of which received Board endorsement. She also designed an

OTD R.E.A.D.® logo. She continues to work in the program with her dogs - Jake and Lola.

The lovely tribute to Chantel from Carole Lindsay (Retired Director of Education for the Western Quebec School Board) the night of our AGM follows:

May 26, 2009 - Dear OTD Members and Supporters

Regretfully I am unable to be at the meeting tonight to congratulate Chantel for the wonderful work she has done with Chelsea in the R.E.A.D.® Program with the Western Quebec School Board. I never doubted the passion Chantel brought to her work! She was so committed to the success of the program and to ensuring that students who were really struggling with reading could have something positive to help them along the road to literacy acquisition.

She gave freely of her time and made sure that she understood the learning needs of the students prior to her sessions in the four schools where she contributed her time. As my Administrative Assistant, Chantel was familiar with the work our school board was doing in assessing assess and quantifying students' reading progress and being the keen learner she is, she soaked up all she could about how to support emergent readers in order to maximize the work she did with Chelsea. She and I had lots of enjoyable discussions about learning to read and she would share her weekly successes and challenges with me on a regular basis.

As you might suspect, the students she was assigned were the most challenged and the most turned off reading! Chantel had a natural way with the students and the feedback from parents and teachers was always

complementary. Our biggest thrill this year was learning that one of our earliest R.E.A.D.® students recently passed his Grade 6 Provincial Exam! I am sure that his interactions with Chelsea and Chantel gave him confidence when he most needed it.

The R.E.A.D.® Program is fortunate to have such a dedicated volunteer and I wish Chantel many more satisfying years of volunteering and know that by reducing students' anxieties she will succeed in opening new doors for reluctant readers. We will all miss faithful Chelsea but Lola and Jake will do a fine job and be equally appreciated by the children in time.

*Congratulations. Chantel!
Congratulations to the OTD for the fine work they do also.*



Carole presenting Chantel with her award

[Poem about Chantel, written by her Mom](#)

Our Chantel

You knew Chantel, when Chelsea grew weak
And pain kept her from her sleep
Then you did do what had to be done
For this last battle wouldn't be won.

You would be sad, we understand
You did not let grief stay your hand
For this day more than the rest
Your love for Chelsea stood the test.

You've had so many happy years
What had to come you were not held by fears
You did not want her to suffer so
The time had come, and you let her go.

You took her for her last needs to tend
You stayed with her til the very end
You held her close and spoke to her
You gave her your last loving care.

We know you knew and did agree
It was the kindest thing to set her free
Although her tail its last has waved
From pain and suffering she was saved.

You did not grieve that it was you
Who had this painful thing to do
You've been so close, in tune to each
other
There will be not a Chelsea, but another.

To know and feel your kindly care
Teaching, loving children no matter where.
Your +Dad and I are very proud
To have a daughter, like you, we could
shout aloud.

For the kind of your own person you are
and free
Paving your special way in life
Making a lasting gift to children, Dad and
me.

Love Mom

(Note: Revised to suit by Terry, May
25, 2009 from a poem from author
unknown).

SHARON AND CAFFREY

There are many OTD handlers and dogs who contribute to the well being of people living either permanently or temporarily in institutionalized settings. I'd like to take a few minutes to recognize the special contributions of one team who stand out because of the dedication and compassion of both the handler and the dog.

First, the dog - because we love dogs and because dogs are why we are doing what we're doing. This dog is undoubtedly the largest of our therapy dogs, a giant among dogs. He's huge (the size of a small pony), he's furry (a hairy beast with long fur) and he's undoubtedly a challenging dog to clean to the standards required of therapy dogs for their visits. He's a gentle giant and well loved among the patients that he visits at the Perley. His name is Caffrey. One look at this wonderful dog and you won't forget him. He stands out as unique in the therapy dog world.

We should also mention that Caffrey is not without his flaws; after all, he's a dog and he does what dogs love to

do....roll in the mud and other things. One memory that stands out is the year that his handler and Caffrey joined the Blessing of the Animals fall service in the Gatineau Hills then drove over to Julianne's farm in the Gatineau Hills. It was a rainy, wet day, but Caffrey and some of the other dogs joined in a walk across the meadow and into the woods. When he returned, he was taken, somewhat unsympathetically, to the car as he reeked of bear poo, fresh and strong. Reportedly, most of the rest of his evening was spent in the backyard with a good garden hose.

Caffrey lives and is loved by Sharon McGladdery, a handler who has been with OTD for many years. For those of us with recollections of those early days with OTD, one memory is the night that Sharon joined our orientation sessions, a quiet, pleasant, enthusiastic woman and an excellent listener. It was only later that some of us discovered that this amazingly talented woman not only has a PhD but is a scientist with an interest in small creatures, including those that spread zoonotic disease. She was the one who should have been teaching us! In later years, we put Sharon's skills to good use. She has assisted us in our orientation sessions, speaking, of course, about zoonotic disease. She has participated as an OTD board member, including those difficult and painful times when Marilyn Benoit, our founder, was not longer with us. She helped in evaluation sessions. She has assisted with mentoring new teams and with screening potential teams. She has often been there to support fundraising and educational events. Her contribution to the life and work of OTD has been immense and we are very grateful.

It's not just her talent that we've appreciated. Sharon has a lot of commonsense, a solid grounding in the

practical, and a wicked sense of humour. She provided balance to the board in hard times, intellectual rigor when it came to her role of secretary of the organization, and always, a pleasant, happy person who you just wanted to spend time getting to know. If she wasn't so busy with her demanding job, it would have been easy to have asked her to be even more involved with OTD. Her waged work sometimes got in the way of her volunteer work. What a pity, but how fortunate for us that she was there for us when we needed her most.

It's important to share one more story about Caffrey and Sharon. It happened a few years ago when a little girl, who went on to attain honorary status with our organization, decided to have a birthday party. This was no ordinary kids' party. This little girl decided to donate her birthday monies to OTD instead of receiving presents. It was an inspiring moment and OTD was very impressed. In return, we agreed to send a team to surprise Chloe and her friends. That team was Sharon and Caffrey. Imagine a birthday party when the door bell rings and a dog steps in the house that is as big or bigger than most of the kids at the party. Needless to say, Caffrey was the hit of the party. But there's more....Chloe also likes lots of other animals, including snakes, lizards and other less 'cuddly' creatures. Reportedly, a few other creatures of the crawling variety were present at the party too. Caffrey, with his usual finesse, and Sharon, with her usual finesse too, didn't blink an eye. If that



Chloe and Caffrey

had been another handler, he or she may have gone screaming hysterically home. Not Sharon and Caffrey.

Unfortunately, Caffrey had an accident involving his hips a few months ago. We hope that he continues to heal well. He is a remarkable dog. Meanwhile, Sharon is packing her bags and returning to her home province of New Brunswick where she has an important new job. We wish both of them well as they leave us. They do promise to stay in touch and maybe even maintain their membership with OTD from afar. Meanwhile, today, we would like to recognize their contributions over the years by giving them our Volunteer of the Year Award. Congratulations and best wishes to you both.

We've Always Been Told to Wash our Hands . . .

Catherine Mirsky, MA, CPDT

But what about washing the hands of the clients we see on our OTD visits? Is it really that necessary? Having a client cleanse their hands when they are having direct contact with my dog? Surely, this practice removes the spontaneity and considerable therapeutic value of our therapy dog visit. Besides, I feel uncomfortable asking my clients to wash their hands. Doesn't my request imply that my dog is not clean or, even worse, that I suspect that my client is unclean?

These questions are not unreasonable to ask. OTD members have attended an orientation in their early days with Ottawa Therapy Dogs where standards and practices of therapy dog visiting are described. Every member understands the importance of the health and safety for our clients, our dogs and us. We dutifully bathe our

dogs, brush their teeth and trim and buff their nails. We put a clean collar and leash on our dogs and lay out a clean towel or blanket for them to sit upon for their ride in the car to their weekly visit. Why do we have to insist that our clients wash or sanitize their hands? Why should we insist that any of the facility staff who wish to touch our dogs, sanitize their hands?

Our dogs are only half of the equation in a therapy dog visit. We often fail to remember that the other half of the equation is made up by our clients. It is important to keep in mind that a most critical unknown on each and every visit, with each and every client, is what is being transferred from the client to the dog, the moment our client touches the dog. Germs are not unidirectional in their travel. We know this and yet, for whatever reason, we often don't think of or underestimate the relevance of this knowledge.

If we do not have our clients wash or sanitize their hands when they visit with our dogs we introduce the risk of transferring germs or infection not only to our dogs but, also importantly, from one client to the next through a common contact, our dogs. Many clients are challenged in one way or another and are unable or unmindful of a desirable level of cleanliness. In these cases, it is not difficult to recognize the need for hand cleansing, but it can be a bit more of a challenge for us to see the importance of able clients to sanitizing their hands when they visit our dogs.

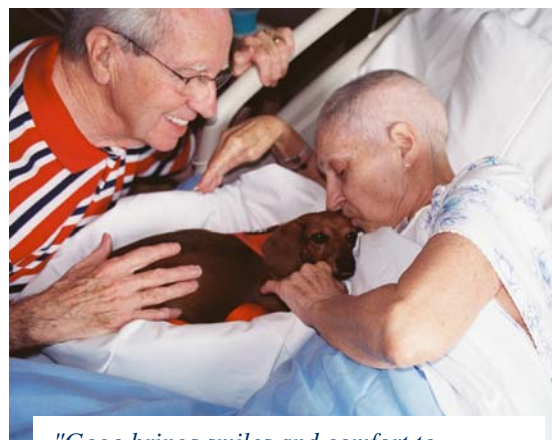
The staff where you visit with your dog should be aware of OTD's hand sanitization protocol but, if they aren't, they usually welcome and appreciate having this information. It may be helpful to know that some OTD

members actually have the staff at the facilities they visit 'trained' not to touch the dog before sanitizing their hands.

With the number of infectious diseases that are of concern in today's world, it is our responsibility as therapy dog handlers to do our very best to care for the safety of our clients. It is not an inconvenience asking our clients or caregivers to wash or sanitize our clients' hands before and after a visit. With permission, one can help cleanse a client's hands if a caregiver is unavailable. It is following 'best practices' in health care and is identifying you as a professional therapy dog handler.

Congratulations Gogo and Karen!

Congratulations to OTD therapy dog team Karen Luker and Gogo. This team volunteers their time regularly visiting palliative care patients at Elizabeth Bruyere. Gogo, a little brown dachshund, was recently nominated as 'Outstanding Volunteer' at Elizabeth Bruyere. Over the years, Gogo has proven herself to be a therapy dog 'extraordinaire' with these patients and their families. She provides calm, gentle and affectionate moments of care for these patients in their dying days.



"Gogo brings smiles and comfort to patients and their families at the Elizabeth Bruyere Hospital"

Gogo visits her patients on a small cart steered by Karen, wheeled from room to room, making therapy visits efficient, clean and easy for this team.

Karen is an active member of OTD who also is involved with our R.E.A.D.® program. She works as a speech language pathologist and therefore her own skills as a bilingual communicator and counsellor serve this team well.

Karen has recently completed a chapter in a book, in French, on therapy dogs, focusing on the role of therapy dogs in palliative care. She also has provided several workshops to volunteers and health professionals on this topic.

Gogo follows in the footsteps of OTD former therapy dog Ruby, a black Labrador Retriever who worked with OTD founder, Marilyn Benoit. Marilyn was killed in a car accident several years ago. Ruby passed away a few months prior to her death. Marilyn and Ruby were also publicly recognized as champions in the field of palliative care. Their legacy lives on through the dedication, devotion and care of Karen and her dog Gogo.

Fur in the Family- A Happy Ending

Kate Miller

The two "Fur in the Family" OTD fundraising events hosted by Bark & Fitz (May 2 at the Westboro location and May 23 at Centrum Kanata) were wildly successful.

Sue of "Urban Dog Photog" worked extremely hard on both Saturdays taking portraits of families and their furry friends. The total number of portraits taken over the two days was well over 40. Sue was booked solid! The largest family (mine) had 8 people, ranging from newborn baby to great-

grandpa with their five dogs, to the smallest of one dog and one person. All photos are fabulous and will be treasured by their families.

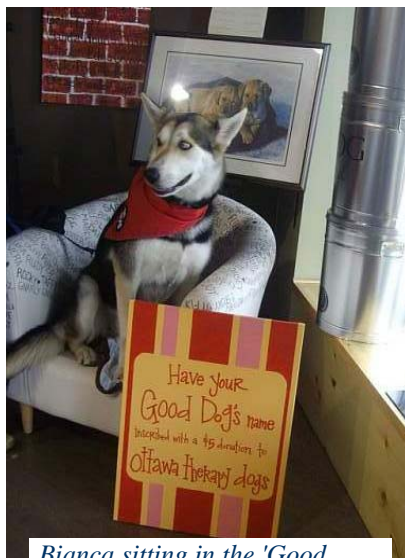
A raffle was held inside the B&F stores that netted a grand total of almost \$900 (all proceeds go directly to OTD). The winners received a B&B "Doggy Bag" valued at \$150 with coupons and gifts from various merchants. Our OTD volunteers and their dogs worked hard to promote the raffle; obviously they did a great sales job!

The combination of the raffle proceeds (raffle will be ongoing during the summer) and proceeds of a percentage of the portrait fees (generously donated by Sue Bird) brings a grand total of close to \$2000 for OTD!

Last but not least, our cheerful and hardworking OTD volunteers deserve a big thank you for their help and enthusiastic support of this fundraiser. A special thanks to those who came BOTH days!

Members and their dogs were super ambassadors for Ottawa Therapy Dogs.

Thanks to: Bob & Kelty; Tanya & Rocky; Janice Caluori & Azor; Karine; Margot; Joan; Carole & PandaRu; Claire & Marcus; Joanne & Bianca; Marion & Marnie; Kerri & Tyco; Suzanie & Sybs; Karen Luker.



Bianca sitting in the 'Good Dog' chair posing for a picture.

WORKSHOP: VOLUNTEER TO MENTOR A NEW TEAM – WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Ottawa Therapy Dogs is growing! We cannot do this without the support of our existing Handlers and their dogs.

One of things that make us special is our requirement that all new Handlers and Teams be mentored for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

What is Stage 1?

New Handlers visit without their dog to observe existing Teams (two different experiences)

What is Stage 2?

New Handlers and pup are in initial placement

Experienced Handler observes and gives feedback (two different Handlers)

As you can see, we need four (4) Handlers per new Team.

Interested in mentoring? OTD will be holding a workshop (about 1.5 hours) in late September – early October. Please contact chair@ottawatherapydogs.ca if you wish to register. We will be scheduling the workshop based on the number of responses received.

Please remember that we all want to provide the same messages when doing our field work and we cannot do this without you!

Carole Eldridge,
Chair, OTD Board of Directors

OTD's Community Outreach Committee is off and Running!

Margot Montgomery

Last year's strategic planning and organizational changes, among other things, created the Community Outreach (CO) Committee. Working closely with existing Fundraising and Communications committees and with Margot as chair, the CO represents and lobbies for Ottawa Therapy Dogs.

This is done by monitoring events and organizations in our community and recommending to the Board appropriate representation and participation. An important aspect of this work is identifying potential partners and understanding competitors. Among the current committee priorities are:

- to increase the OTD profile,
- to raise \$10,000 by December 2009 and
- to develop a strategy for sustainable future funding.

For the rest of 2009, committee members will work with

Communications Committee members on generic OTD business cards for all members; a dog photo "postcard" as a 'leave behind' after therapy visits; and two generic presentations for use in introducing OTD to groups and pitching OTD to potential funders. We also plan to have several OTD exhibits or tables in busy shopping locations to build awareness and attract new members and donations.

Your help on any of these initiatives is invited. If each member could find just one \$100 contribution to OTD before the end of the year, we would be more than half-way to our goal of \$10,000.

Congratulations to New OTD Members!

May 15/09 Evaluation at Best Friends

- Christiane Charron & Harley (small Terrier mix)
- Doreen Doré & Brutus (St. Bernard)
- Connie Edlund & Jordy (Standard Poodle)
- Gisèle Rivest & Jasmine (Nova Scotia Duck Toller Retriever)
- Patty Soles & Snap (Black Lab)
- Nanda Soucy & Calypso (Lab/Husky mix)
- Michael Whelan & Lady Byng (Nova Scotia Duck Toller Retriever)

Thanks to Catherine Mirsky and Frances Holmes for evaluating!

June 5/09 Evaluation at The Training Hall

- Carol Fetterly & Sunny (Golden Retriever)
- Barbara LaPalme & Barrett (Standard Poodle)
- Helen Teeple & Paddington (Golden Ret/Chow mix)

Thanks to Sue Roberts and Ann Lambert for evaluating!



OTD OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

KATE MILLER

OTD Administrator

Tel: 613-261-6834

Fax: 613-256-0077

Email:

admin@ottawatherapydogs.ca

Hours: flexible, please leave a message and I'll get back to you ASAP.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following merchants will provide OTD members a discount upon presentation of membership card:

Berry's Pet Food, Glebe Store

Critter Jungle, Hampton Park Plaza

TLC Grooming

Bark & Fitz, Westboro

Natural Pet Foods

Kalaidoscope Kids, Glebe bookstore

Petsmart, Merivale Rd.

Scholar's Choice Moyer

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

AWARDS PRESENTATION – 2008 AGM CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

Community Foundation of Ottawa
Leacross Foundation
Export Development Corporation
LCBO- Eastern Branch (Laurie Brown)
Bark and Fitz
United Way

DONORS

Minto: Lois Drummond - senior graphic designer
Leimerk Developments
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 593
Adup Corporation
Costco Wholesale
Hillary's Cleaners, Bank Street
Independent Linen Service
Starbucks, Stafford Centre
Your Credit Union
Royal Canadian Legion, Westboro Branch 480
Ottawa Veterinary Hospital and Bells Corners Animal Hospital
Saunders Book Company
Best Friends School of Dog Training
West Québec School Board
Alta Vista Bayview Animal Hospital
Open Hand Group

FACILITIES

Best Friends School of Dog Training (Kim Cooper)
Bruyère Continuing Care
Ottawa Paramedic Service HQ (John Rathier)
The Training Hall (Frances Holmes)
Carolark Centre for Applied Canine
Low United Church

TO ALL NON-PET OWNERS WHO VISIT AND LIKE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OUR PETS:

- (1) They live here. You don't.
- (2) If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. That's why they call it 'fur'-niture.
- (3) I like my pets a lot better than I like most people.
- (4) To you, they are animals. To me, they are adopted sons/daughters who are short, hairy, walk on all fours and don't speak clearly.



Here's Looking at You!

The Communications Committee wants to hear your thoughts!

- How do you like the OTD Newsletter?
- Do you have an OTD success story that you would like to share?

Send us your thoughts or ideas at:

newsletter@ottawatherapydogs.ca

