

Winter



February 2010

Inside this Issue

- 1 Community Outreach and Fundrai\$ing
- 2 Letter from the Editor
- 2 News from the Office
- 4 Lyme Disease & KC the Wonder Dog
- 5 Arkansas Humour
- 7 There's a Dog in my Room! Living and Learning with Gogo in Palliative Care
- 9 R.E.A..D. Program
- 9 Regional Treatment Center's Therapy Dog Program
- 11 In Memoriam

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.ottawatherapydogs.ca
(613) 261-6834

Newsletter



Community Outreach and Fundrai\$ing

Margot Montgomery

Last newsletter, I reported on how OTD funding has evolved over the years. Now I want to look at the path ahead.

In 2010, the Community Outreach and Fundraising Committees continue to operate as a single merged committee. The twin goals are to raise awareness about OTD and to secure the funds needed to run the organization. For 2010, this means finding about \$6,000 to cover normal operating costs in the current year and raising at least \$25,000 for 2011.

At the November OTD Retreat attended by Board members, Committee Chairs and others, we shared a sense that OTD is on the move; our organization is growing to serve more members (~100 soon) as well as to increase our impact in the community. To do this we need to think bigger financially, say about \$15,000 more for a total annual budget of about \$40,000. This presents new fundraising challenges!

To kick things off in raising major funds, we plan the **FIRST EVER OTD GOLF TOURNAMENT** in July, marking OTD's 10th Anniversary. Details are being worked on and will be shared as soon as available, watch your email.

The event has three objectives:

1. to increase awareness of OTD

2. to raise \$10,000 - including \$2500 from a silent auction, and
3. to test the viability of an annual event.

We need your help to make this happen, for example:

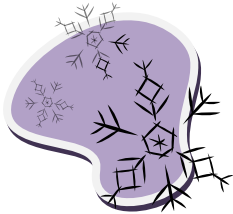
- you can form a foursome or twosome and enjoy a wonderful golf day
- you can promote the event to your contacts (if each of us sells 2 tickets, we make our goal of 144 golfers!). For example, my Bayview Animal Hospital Vet is already pumped and plans to challenge his partners to join him!
- you can suggest and find donations for the accompanying silent auction, e.g. Julianne Labreche has offered to create a color Mac book of customized pet photos. This entails a photo shoot, editing and text time and the cost of publication which could be at least \$250 if done professionally. Thank you so much Julianne!
- on the day of the event you can help by bringing your therapy dog to showcase our work to the golfers
- you can help in advance with many details such as creating an OTD trivia quiz for fun on the course, stuffing loot bags, organizing the auction ...

With the help of the Communications Committee and Guy Mercier, our new web master, we will soon have Member Only pages on the OTD web site. These will feature customizable greeting cards and posters for use in your work. We hope that members will create and print their own products to post in facilities or give to clients – leading to more

recognition for Ottawa Therapy Dogs. Coming soon!

Great news: the RBC Foundation donated \$1000 to OTD in October, which enabled us to purchase a PC projector, much needed for orientations and other presentations. This donation was the result of a conversation with Luc Perron, my RBC financial advisor, followed by his recommendation to the Foundation that OTD be considered for charitable donation – it really was that simple. I strongly urge you to approach your insurance, financial and other contacts about our excellent organization. To help, the Community Outreach and Fundraising Committee can provide sample letters as well as a generic power point presentation.

You never know when your initiative might lead to a fruitful new relationship and enhanced benefit to our work for the community. Try it please!



Letter from the Editor

Claire Heistek

Preparing this newsletter has been a bitter-sweet experience. I agreed to do this newsletter a while back as a result of a request from OTD founder and friend, Marilyn. Also, as an active member of a therapy dog team, I felt a certain ownership to the development of communication tools such as the newsletter. Now, both Marilyn and Tobie are gone. In writing Tobie's obit, fond memories of our eight years with OTD rolled in. It is Marilyn who first

called Tobie 'bomb-proof'. When I expressed my interest in working one-on-one in a therapeutic setting, Marilyn suggested we try the Loeb Centre and it was a great fit. I was wondering whether OTD still held some importance in my life. Did I want to continue participating in this organisation without my dog? Is my heart still in it? I am not sure.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 25

**Ottawa Paramedic Service
Headquarters**
2465 Don Reid Drive
the same venue as last year.

7 PM

THIS IS FOR YOU!

What I am sure about is that I am not ready to let it go just yet. So, I have decided to become an associate member. You will see a short article in this issue that explains the benefits of being an associate member. These, for me, are summarized in a short statement of my own – OTD and its activities are needed in our community and if I can help it in other ways than being an active team member, then I can do that for this year.

In this issue, you will find, on top of our regular contributions from the Office, the Board, READ and the Fundraising committee, featured articles from OTD other members.

We hope that you enjoy these articles – we try to educate you, inform you, and make to laugh.

You might also notice that we have a greater number of workshops offered

this time. I can speak to the writers' workshop as I was one of the participating organisers last year. Not only did every participant produce a description of their dog for the member page, but we got to know each other in a way that you can only get when sharing an enjoyable and common activity. Also, Teresa, our photographer, provided a beautiful photo of each dog team. Because writing for the public can be a bit intimidating, the workshop leaders will be there to reassure you that your piece is publishable and interesting.

This newsletter is by the members and for the members of OTD – yes, I know that that is obvious. However, it does bear repeating. Please do not hesitate to send us your news, reflections, jokes, etc.

Finally, I would like to thank Rachelle Gibeault for doing such a great job of the layout - she is also an associate member – and to all who have contributed to this issue.

News from the Office

Kate Miller

Like most of you I am still thinking 2009 and have to constantly change the date on documents and cheques to 2010.

As the calendar flips to the fresh new year many fond memories of the past year pop up in my thoughts.

This morning while working out on the, oh so tedious, rowing machine, I said to myself and dogs, "Kate, you have been a pretty lucky person in 2009". I get up each day to a tremendous variety of challenges (some fun-some not!); sorting out various issues members or

facilities may have, providing information to board members and committees (goes both ways), organizing new applicants and guiding them from the first cold call to OTD, then through evaluation, orientation, mentoring and, finally, placement. Along the way I have met some simply spectacular people and special dogs of every shape and size. I have come to know many of you as friends and that is a very special benefit of being on the other end of the OTD phone or laptop.

I want to thank the board members, committee chairs and members and all of the OTD members, those with dogs and those without for your kindness, humour, patience and remarkable dedication to what we do.

You really make my day.

OTD Membership continues to grow

We held our second set of evaluation and orientation sessions in November/December and have nine new members and dogs. Sadly one of the new "graduate" dogs passed away this week. (Please check the In Memoriam section for details)

Presently I am in the process of organizing mentor visits and placing teams in their first facility- always challenging but made easier by my wonderful "kennel" of mentors. If any member would enjoy the challenge of mentoring a new OTD team, I would be very happy to hear from you.

As well, long time members, Ann and Catherine had a second dog (in Ann's case 4th) successfully evaluated.

Speaking of renewals

As of **Jan 1, 2010** I was very pleased to have the majority of renewal

OTD has a poster dog!

Claudia's therapy dog, Jazz, was asked to pose for the Perley and Rideau Veteran's Health Centre 2010 calendar – he is a natural centerfold.

Below is the caption that goes along with Jazz' captivating photo.



"Rescued from the Humane Society six years ago, Jazz is a wonderful companion who loves exercise and the outdoors. Easy going with a very loving temperament, Jazz's main passions in life are food and a good belly scratch!"

In February 2009, Jazz began his official work with the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre. He gets excited when he "gets dressed" in his bright red Ottawa Therapy Dogs bandana, knowing that he's going to visit with the residents of Ottawa 2East. He loves to stroll from room to room or in the hallways, looking for anyone who would like to cuddle with this furry visitor or maybe give him a good belly rub."

packages mailed out. This year's package was a little more fulsome and colourful with the addition of our fabulous new **10th anniversary scarves and anniversary ID badges**.

Many thanks to **John (OTD Registrar) and his wife Stephanie** for providing these to our members plus sewing the badges onto the scarves- lots of work in a very short time frame! Thanks also go to **Helen** for sewing the regular scarves when needed- much appreciated.

Also included in the registration and renewal packages are our brand new **OTD business cards** designed by talented **Teresa** of the Communications Committee.

Now you can hand them out to people you meet who are interested in our work, no more scribbling info on the back of hands!

Upcoming events

On **Feb 11th** OTD will once again be part of the **Volunteer Ottawa Volunteer Marketplace** at St. Laurent Plaza. This is a full day event where volunteer agencies such as ours meet the public and hand out as much information as possible.

OTD dogs are the absolutely most popular draw at the Marketplace; second place goes to the Canadian Guide dogs in training.

The Communications Committee is hosting a Profile Writing workshop on **March 27th**.

The workshop is for members who would like to post a profile of their dog and the work they do on our web site. We are always eager for postings of the important work of our dogs and handlers. Check the profiles that are up there now and you will want to add your perfect pup's story at:

<http://www.ottawatherapydogs.ca/members/teams.htm>.

The ever popular **Tricks Workshop** is being offered once again by the Membership Committee on April 25

April 15th is a big day for OTD - the **new web site** will be launched!

Watch for further information.

Last, but not least

Special thanks to:

- the kind and reliable OTD members who continue to offer help in mentoring our new members (you know who you are);
- our evaluators Frances, Ann, Catherine, Jeannie and Susan and all the helpers at evaluation and orientation; and
- Kim and Frances for offering their facilities to us for evaluation.

LYME DISEASE & KC THE WONDER DOG



KC

Joan Colbourn

KC is one of those dogs who works in many fields and does each well. She is a Canadian Champion who has her Field

Dog Jr. accreditation. She's working at Agility now. As a member of OTD she has been therapy dog at Queensway-Carleton Hospital since she was 2 yrs old as and now, at six, she still loves this job.

She is one of a long line of Irish Setters who have been visiting Queensway Carleton Hospital. That is, since the early 1990s-5 generations. In fact it was these early Irish Setters who helped develop the behaviour protocols which became the Canadian Canine Good Citizen (CCGC) Test. This CCGC Test has now morphed into the Canadian Kennel Club's Canadian Good Neighbour Test. The original CCGC Test is the foundation of the now augmented test all OTD dogs must pass in order to work as therapy dogs out in the community.

Over the past 20-odd years, my husband and I have enjoyed sailing in the 1000 Islands and the great lakes. The Dog(s) often accompany us. During the summer of 2007 my regular grooming and handling of KC led me to remove many ticks from KC. Toward the end of that summer, in one week, I removed maybe 13 or 14 from her.

When we sail the 1000 Islands we often moor overnight in the islands with the dog exercising on an island. White-tailed deer populate these islands. Some, in large quantity. Deer ticks carry Lyme disease. In years gone by I may have taken as many as a couple of ticks off a dog during an entire summer. Ticks were not abundant. Not so today.

In early 2008 I noticed that KC was moving somewhat tentatively from time to time. It was nothing specific. If I hadn't been a person with long experience in observation, a conformation dog judge & something of a 'canine behaviour junkie' I may not

OTD MEMBERS WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Thinking about creating a member team profile for our website? Need to update your existing profile page? Not sure how to start? We can help!

Following the success of last year's workshop, the Communications Committee would once again like to invite members to attend a free two-hour writing workshop on March 27, 10 am to noon at the Alta Vista branch of the Ottawa Public library. We can help you with brainstorming, composition, and editing for your team profile page. These pages introduce our therapy dog teams to other members and our clients, and allow members to share what being a part of OTD means to them. Visit the members' area of our website for inspiration and to see some of the current profile pages:

www.ottawatherapydogs.ca/members/teams.htm

Members who enjoy writing and who would like to assist are also welcome to join us at the workshop. The workshop will be in a dog-friendly space, so feel free to bring your dog and we will take digital photos for the profile pages.

If you are interested in attending or assisting at the workshop, please email Sarah at memberpage@ottawatherapydogs.ca.

OTD would like to thank the Alta Vista Branch of the Ottawa Public Library for the use of the room and waiving the standard fee because of their partnership with OTD on the R.E.A.D. program.

have noticed peculiarities in her movement and behaviour.

The chronology of this disease is extremely important...important from a progression of the disease point of view and important from a symptom point of view. So, the dog owner must be aware of the normal behaviour and movement of the dog.

KC seemed okay. But sometimes she seemed a little off. She'd do strange things....like running off to fetch something and stop in mid-run to do nothing. Her agility runs became oddly erratic. Sometimes she looked decidedly depressed.

Then, into the Spring, we planned a 3 week trip on the boat. We were going to circumnavigate Lake Ontario. And KC would stay with our daughter while we were sailing.



KC's puppies

We were to leave on Saturday. The Thursday morning prior to that Saturday, KC would not get up. So, we put her on a blanket, put her in the car and whisked her off to our vet. Predictably (it never fails) our regular vet was not available. Neither was his regular clinic. So, we had to go to the sister clinic where we didn't know the vet. Fortunately I did know a vet tech there, so my credibility could be quickly established.

Due to our departure in a couple of days we needed to know immediately what KC's problem was. There are two

blood tests for Lyme disease. By now, this is what I suspected was her malady. One test is the 24 hour SNAP Test. The other takes 4 or 5 days to get the results but is considered more dependable. We learned this much later.

The results of the SNAP test led to a 14 days course of the antibiotic clavamox. All that I had read said that the course of antibiotics for this disease should be at least 30 days. The clinic kept her in overnight on an IV to re-hydrate her. We picked up a much improved KC the next day and she went onto the clavamox and went to our daughter's. KC loves staying there because there are 2 other dogs and things are happening.....not as boring as home.

She was certainly mostly recovered by our return, but I felt that she needed more antibiotics. So, to find out 'what was what, another blood test was done with our regular vet and with the more reliable longer test this time. It was a two-phase test: 1) quantitative and, 2) qualitative.

When the vet tech called with the results she said that KC was clear of Lyme disease. I did not know enough about this test, myself, to ask about the other half of the test and the vet tech hadn't looked at the second half of the test results either. I asked that the clinic send me a copy of the results. It arrived in a few days. When I read it over I found that the other half of the blood test was negative and that KC needed more drugs to combat the disease. So, this time, doxycycline was the drug of choice, which she was on for an additional 30 days. Thirty days is the minimum recommended length of time an affected animal should be on this drug for this disease.

Regular blood tests have followed just to make sure she was rid of this disease. She had blood taken for what

should be a last look for Lyme disease after 10 months. Her titre was now down to 6. It was up to 40 just after she finished her course of antibiotics.

She did, however, miss her regular visits to Q-C Hospital for about 10 months but now is back to her sessions in the hospital and enjoying them.

The problem with this disease is that a proper diagnosis is often hard to come by due to the strange and varying symptoms. Symptoms are often not

TRICKS WORKSHOP

25th April, 2010

NEPEAN NATIONAL
EQUESTRIAN PARK

Are you looking for some easy and entertaining tricks you can teach your Therapy Dog, in order to bring even more smiles to the patients you visit?

This workshop will be taught by Barb Jeffries, a well-known Obedience Trainer and Agility competitor.

The workshop runs from 1 – 4pm on Sunday, 25th April, and is open to all OTD handlers and their Therapy Dogs. The cost is \$25 for each team. Auditors are welcome at a cost of \$5 per person.

Space in this workshop is limited. Registration Forms will be available closer to the date.

For further information please email Joan Allum: director@ottawatherapydog.ca

February 2010

noticed by the owner and they vary from day to day: i.e.: a limb appears sore one day, another one being sore the next day. And the first sore one is fine on that next day. Lyme disease symptoms are many and varied **and** they change from day to day. This makes it really hard to define the cause of such a diverse set of symptoms.

We can get a vaccination against the disease for the dog.

Awareness is of utmost importance.

Arkansas Humour

Carole Eldridge

What follows are highlights of email responses from an amazing Director of an Animal Shelter in Jonesboro, Arkansas. They start as PandaRu and I arrive back in Ottawa (a three-day trip for the boy from Jonesboro), and end as Bill gives me permission to write this article. We continue to be in touch - and, all being equal, will meet in person in April of this year.

April 08 - *Have to say - the boy certainly has attitude ... We are home. An update with our challenges:*

Put both dogs in the garden once we got home so that I could unpack the car with ease. His thought - nope - want to explore - and he escaped. Went to visit a neighbour and came back to me (2 min escape). Put him back in the garden and thought I had fixed the gate - still needed to take luggage from the car. Escape #2. Another 2 minutes and he met new neighbours. OK - I accept the fact that the garden needs additional supports. Put him in the house. Carole

Thanks for the report. Sounds like him. A truly inquisitive Arkie wanting to meet the neighbors, lay on the couch, watch TV and drink beer. Tried

to get all the red off his neck before he left but looks like I failed. Enjoy. Bill

May 08 - *Gotta say - the boy still has attitude - though it was in hiding for the 2 weeks after the heartworm treatment. AND - have to say - had I known the pain he would suffer - may never have chosen to bring him north to the 'new' country and subjected him to the experience of not having those ugly little worms in his heart. Carole*

Poor PandaRu. So sorry he isn't up to par yet but he is big enough to fully recover. Love for dogs is no different than love for children, the parent has to call the shots even if they do sulk and pout. We at the shelter don't get to spend enough time with them individually to help with the attitudes. If anything we compound the problem and spoil them even more because we feel so sorry for them. Keep a stiff upper lip, be the boss and only reward when he behaves the way you want him to. Thanks so much for the update, I can visualize him on his back with his legs in the air. I am ok I guess. Sixty Four is not nearly as much fun as 18 but I still play a decent game of golf. Bill



April 09 - *The boy made it. He is now officially an Ottawa Therapy Dog. Inside he is great. Outside - different meaning. Even the southern version of 'come' or 'ici' (with the southern drawl) means didly squat. He was so handsome on Friday night - so clean - Sunday, a visit to Morris Island,*

water beckons and he is a total collection of mud.

I see your outside problem from the first picture. Too many "hitchin posts" to water. The boy is totally confused. I'm tickled that his training went well and that he finally has a real purpose in life. Bill

April 09 - *PandaRu Day 1 as a Therapy Dog!!!! So - now you have it - a picture of 'the' tongue and me. He is not allowed to use that tongue with the clients/patients. Carole*



Love the pics. Maybe you should have named him Casanova!! I just know the folks just love having him in the room with them. If Conway Twitty were still alive he could write a song about, "Love a Dog With A Slow Slurp." Thanks for the update, our entire board was encouraged by your story. Bill

June 09 - *PandaRu and the next Newsletter from OTD - Thought you might enjoy. Carole*

Thanks for the update. We're all sooo proud of PandaRu and you for the work that you do. No one would have ever thought that a shaggy ole mutt from the backwoods of Arkansas with heartworms would ever make such an impact on peoples' lives. Congratulations to you and my boy!!!! Keep up the good work. Bill

July 09 - *This has been such a wonderful connection since I decided that HE was of interest. I love your humour. May I do an article for our*

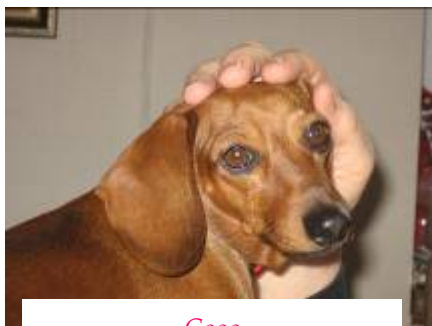
Newsletter which will be pretty much based on your replies to my PandaRu updates? By the by. Let me give you a sense of last week with the 'pup'. Tasu knows where there is a fox den. She continues to escape there after our walks.

Thankfully - seems the fox has moved on. Tasu escaped to research the den last Friday. PandaRu took after her with glee. Bottom line - some 1.5 hours later - had done the whistle thing many times ... PandaRu comes creeping across the Parking Lot - very thirsty. Get him into the car - tired pup. We get home - he is very wet. Clean him with a towel - wow - how much dirt! Seems he went into the den. Think he then got stuck. Made it out after much effort. Carole

Of course you can use my slow wit. Sounds like we could use PandaRu in Afghanistan to sniff out enemy "fox holes". Like most children, experience is always the best teacher. In his case, being separated from Mom for even that short time was more uncomfortable than fun. I would expect him to stay a little closer to home from now on. Take care, Bill

There's a Dog in my Room! Living and Learning with Gogo in Palliative Care

Karen Luker



Gogo

Respect. Compassion. Collaboration. Accountability. Learning. These were the five values that were presented to us at our hospital orientation session. They were what every volunteer should aspire to in every task they complete and with every patient they meet. When I first joined Ottawa Therapy Dogs in 2006, I accepted an assignment at the Elizabeth Bruyere Health Centre Palliative Care Unit. This was a far cry from the work I did with young children every day in my job. What made this especially challenging was that I was counting on a stubborn, ten-pound, dog to assist me in embracing the above values.

Gogo is a three-year old miniature dachshund who could be described as your "typical" dachshund: she enjoys food, lounging, sunshine, chasing squirrels, more food, and most of all, making her own decisions. Gogo is comfortable in her familiar surroundings and has a spring in her waddle whenever she finds herself at the park. As long as my husband and I are close by, life is grand. She is wary of strangers, however, and will gladly scare anyone she doesn't approve of with her high-pitched, big-dog, bark.

The first day of our new assignment consisted of having Gogo visit one (and only one) patient in Palliative Care. The goal was to see if she was comfortable in this new environment and if she would perform her duties appropriately. This is the day that Gogo and I met Mrs. M.. Mrs. M. greeted us cheerfully and invited us to sit with her for a visit. Gogo completed her first visit with Mrs. M. with calm and only minimal apprehension. She was not quite sure what to make of the fact that she was suddenly dropped onto someone's bed, with the expectation that she might "cuddle up" to a stranger. She began this new assignment by smelling the bed sheets as well as Mrs. M.'s hands.

She quickly proceeded to lick one hand, a habit (read obsession) we would have to discourage in this environment. Once she realized that she had not been placed on this bed to satisfy her own needs, Gogo decided this was not what she had signed up for. She cautiously stepped about, attempting to turn and make a swift exit. I was able to reassure her by staying close by and allowing her to place her rump on my lap. Subsequent visits revealed that,

Congratulations and Welcome to New OTD Members and Associate Members!

Associate Members:

- Guy M. - Has joined the Communications Committee
- Sarah M. - Has joined Communications committee
- Sarah L. - Helping with READ and Communications committees
- Mary H. - Helping with Membership committee

New Teams:

- Jason and Bohdi
- Katie and Bohdi
- Lesley and Taffy
- Rochelle and Aussie
- Claudia and Simba
- Mike and Astro
- Donna and Astro
- Erika and Aspen

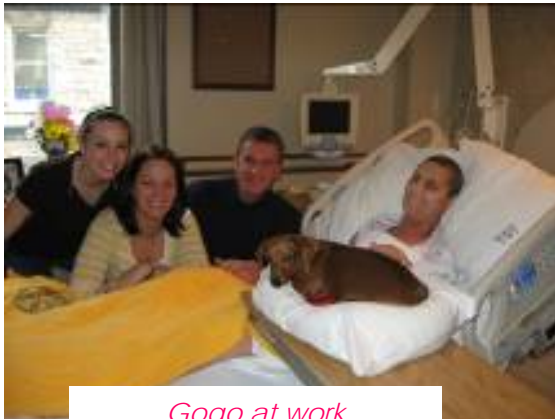
New OTD dogs:

- Jaz (and Ann)
- Kye (and Catherine)

for each new person Gogo visited, she went through this necessary adaptation phase of smelling, licking, moving, and finally settling. Gogo appreciates people with a gentle nature, those who allow her to warm up to them in her own time. Mrs. M. taught her that this was possible from the very first day.

Having left our first visit, I began to think about the five values again. As far as respect was concerned, this was something that I felt we had attempted but not achieved successfully. Although Mrs. M. had shown respect and tolerance toward us, I did not approve of the fact that Gogo invaded her space to meet her own needs. Mrs. M. deserved respect, especially in her final days. We would have to work on this. I began to doubt whether or not Gogo and I would ever embrace the values as a team, and wonder whether this setting was too challenging for us. I decided not to fret too much at this point; we would simply try again.

When the following Tuesday arrived, I looked forward to seeing Mrs. M. again. Gogo and I had had several "chats" over the course of the week, but I worried about whether or not she understood anything I had said. As I prepared Gogo to be placed on Mrs. M.'s bed, I thought I detected some level of understanding in her eyes, but perhaps it was just wishful thinking on my part. To my surprise, Gogo lay calmly and accepted Mrs. M.'s touch without a fuss. I began to feel that this assignment might be a suitable one for her after all.



Gogo at work

By the time Gogo and I had completed three visits to the centre, Gogo had met several new people, always beginning with her smelling and licking ritual. Once she knew a person, though, she appeared to remember them. I could tell that she was most comfortable with Mrs. M. as she would rapidly settle into her role as a therapy dog, calmly settling down, ready to be petted and loved.

In the short time that we had visited, Gogo had already become a hit. It was difficult to see all of the patients and families that wanted visits in the ninety or so minutes that we were assigned to be on the unit. During our fourth visit, we had had a demanding schedule. I made a point of walking by Mrs. M.'s room prior to our departure, as I had wanted to see her again. I felt Gogo and I owed her at least a quick 'hello', as she had been so patient and welcoming to us. I also imagined patients must feel lonely at times

despite the frequent bustle in their surroundings.

When I knocked on Mrs. M.'s door, the lights were dim and she was lying on her side. She

was obviously tired, so I planned to stay for a few short minutes only. As soon as Gogo saw Mrs. M., she lay obediently on her bed and lowered her head so that Mrs. M. could touch her. I suddenly began to recognize that Gogo had embraced the values of respect, compassion, and collaboration. After a few moments of small talk, I could tell that Mrs. M. was tiring. Her eyes began to close, but she kept her hand on Gogo's head. To my

surprise, Gogo's eyes also began to shut. She let herself go with the utmost trust; the same could be said of Mrs. M.

The lessons both Gogo and I learned in those first few weeks have helped us to continue our work at Elizabeth Bruyere for the past 3 1/2 years. Not only have I learned about the process of dying as an extension of life, I have also come to appreciate the strength and dignity displayed by individuals who are dealing with tremendous losses. I have also learned of the remarkable potential and contribution of our pets. I can only hope that when Gogo's time comes, I will be able to offer her the same love and compassion she continues to offer so many.

R.E.A.D. PROGRAM

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

OTD's R.E.A.D. pooches were all decked out to help celebrate the 10th anniversary of the R.E.A.D. program on November 14, 2009. The Alta Vista branch of the Ottawa Public Library hosted an event which saw 6 teams and over 20 children enjoy some one-on-one time with a selection of books. Most children were keen to meet and read to any dog - in some cases, the kids wanted to read to all of the dogs, and patiently awaited each turn! A few reluctant children used books as a bridge to become more comfortable with our beloved friends, and left with



Bro at work

smiles and new-found confidence. A great day was had by all! The Alta Vista library also hosted a series of R.E.A.D. days in February 2010

THE R.E.A.D. PROGRAM IS GROWING!

Ottawa Therapy Dogs' Reading Education Assistance Program (R.E.A.D.) is gearing up to send some new teams into the community. An evaluation session is scheduled for March 5, 2010. Successful candidates will be placed in community settings which include schools and libraries in the Ottawa-Gatineau area. Additional teams are still needed! Please contact Karen Luker at read@ottawatherapydogs.ca if you are interested.



Regional Treatment Center's Therapy Dog Program

Submitted by: Vicki Rombough, Social Programs Officer, Regional Treatment Center (Reprinted with her permission)

Therapy Dogs have been recognized for the positive physical and emotional benefits they bring to people in hospitals, seniors' residences, nursing homes, day care centres, special needs schools, psychiatric hospitals, and many other places where people may be restricted from having pets. The

medical profession has widely acknowledged that stroking and petting animals can have a calming effect, lower blood pressure, reduce depression, raise self-esteem, and relieve tension.

At Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario), Therapy Dogs have been introduced into the institution so that patients have an opportunity to experience these calming and therapeutic effects. Thanks to the efforts of Social Programs Officer, Vicki Rombough, and the support of management, nursing, occupational therapy, and correctional staff, two volunteers from the Kingston community and their dogs have started making one hour, weekly visits. Gwen Howard and Kim Pritchard, from Luv-A-K9, are professional dog trainers who each have a certified Therapy Dog. Face, an eight year old Whippet and Luke, a five year old Rottweiler have had a profound influence on the patients they have met.

The initial target group for this program is the psycho-geriatric offender with chronic health issues, who tends to be unable to participate in either recreational or correctional programming. With the assistance of nursing staff and Personal Support Workers, six individuals have been able to come to the gym to pet the dogs, watch them do tricks, ask questions and

interact with

FAREWELL TO OTD FRIENDS

NANCY AND PADDY-
RETIRED FROM SERVICE AT
THE CIVIC HOSPITAL,
AWAITING PLACEMENT
UNIT (APU)

JOANNE AND BIANCA-
RETIRED FROM THE
OTTAWA HOSPITAL, REHAB
CENTRE

BARBARA AND SHADOW –
RETIRED FROM HARMER
HOUSE

**GOOD LUCK ALL IN YOUR
NEW VENTURES!**

members of the community.

In the space of only a few short weeks, staff members have noticed that the presence of these dogs has raised the spirits of the patients, elicited positive responses, and increased interactions in individuals who are typically withdrawn and limited in their abilities.



(Kim Pritchard with Rottweiler Luke, Gwen Howard with whippet, Face)

In Memoriam

ROXY

Margaret Galley

We aren't really sure how Roxy started her life. She was a surprise belated Valentine's Day gift for my Mom (I know, you're not supposed to do that!). We adopted her from the SPCA in Ottawa in March of 2007. She was a lab/collie mix and they claim she was about 5 years old. Roxy was nervous at first; always thinking we were going to leave her.



She had no idea what a dog park was, or swimming and boating were, or anything about hiking! She basically didn't know how to live a dog's life. These all became her favourite activities, and, of course, sleeping in my bed! Not to forget stopping at Timmy's for some timbits!! She always loved getting attention and playing with her ball. Roxy loved car rides and was back and forth between my Mom and I (Pembroke -Ottawa) constantly. We were soon going to have to make a shared custody/access agreement because we both wanted her all the time!! Roxy and I had a very special bond, so she really became my dog.

Roxy and I were head over heels for each other. She always wanted to please me and give me her love and affection. She would always cheer you

up if she knew you were sad, or cuddle in bed with you because she knew how much you loved it! She came everywhere that she possibly could with me, even if it was just backing out of the driveway to rearrange the cars!

I knew she'd be a perfect therapy dog and I wanted to share the joy she brought to me with everyone else. Since I took her virtually everywhere with me, I could see people's eyes light up and the huge smiles that took over their faces when they saw her. She was kind and gentle and always very happy. Everybody adored her.

I got in touch with OTD in September of 2009 and we did the evaluation test which we passed with flying colours. Roxy was excited to start therapy together, but sadly her life was cut short and she passed away from cancer in January 2010. I couldn't possibly tell you how amazing Roxy was or all of our wonderful memories together in such

a short paragraph. I am glad we found each other and extremely grateful that Roxy had the chance to live her life to the fullest and be loved unconditionally. She was so special in my life and still is in my heart. She was my best friend and my little angel.

Tobie

Claire Heistek

On January 9, 2010, the greatest dog on earth went over the Rainbow Bridge.

She was adopted in October 1998 at about five months old. I was recovering from a lengthy illness and needed a companion to walk with. Since I enjoyed walking in the forest, I chose a dog that would accompany me off-leash and enjoy the thrills of the

wild. I got much more. She gave me a wonderful activity that we could share.

This energetic dog loved to be of service. She was protective of me and my family and sensitive to my illness; she would patiently just wait by me when I would have a crisis. In 2001, I discovered therapy dog work and thought it might be something we could do together. Tobie and I served for 8 years.

Our first placement was at the Loeb Centre, a sheltered workshop run by OCAPDD, and we were there for 6 years. Concurrently, Tobie 'did her thing' at the Awaiting Placement Unit at the Civic Hospital for 2 years, the Ottawa Rehabilitation Centre for 2 years and the READ programme (Manor Park) for another 2 years. Her last two placements were on 6N at CHEO helping with mental health assessment through play therapy with 5 to 12 year old children and at Hillcrest High School in a Special Education class. December 16 was her last day 'on the job'. Needless to say, she received great hugs of thanks from the children and staff at CHEO.



Tobie was a very versatile dog. Some of her attributes: bomb proof – she seemed to be able to take just about anything – gentleness, patience, obedience, sensitivity to human

emotion, happiness, playfulness, adaptability and 'hungry' (sometimes that could be embarrassing...).

The last year of her life, Tobie had periods of pain which limited her physical activity. She also had a thyroid problem and, in the end, succumbed to a major infection of unknown source.

Heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Sean Walter and Nancy at the Blair Animal Hospital. Their human support and humane care were invaluable. Also, the therapy dog discount allowed Tobie and me to pursue the medical question a bit further and to re-assure me that Tobie was getting the best care possible.

Tobie is being missed terribly by her humans, Claire and Elias, and her furry companions, Buckwheat and Fred.

In her memory, Tobie would appreciate that charitable contributions be made to Ottawa Therapy Dogs or any animal-centered charity of your choice.

LEAVE A LEGACY

If you support the work of therapy dogs in the Ottawa community, then consider Ottawa Therapy Dogs (OTD) in your will. Your legacy will go to the continued support of OTD. Ottawa Therapy Dogs is a registered Canadian charity. Your goodwill will go a long way to support the work of our therapy dog teams.



CONSIDER AN ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

It takes a village to raise a therapy dog. One way to be part of that village is to consider becoming an OTD associate member.

Maybe your own therapy dog is getting old, or about to retire. Perhaps you need to take a break as a therapy dog handler. Alternatively, you may have a friend, family member or neighbor who wants to support the work of our local therapy dog teams. Whatever the case, associate membership is open to everyone.

Many volunteers currently active within OTD are associate members, including past and present OTD board members. Some are retired therapy dog handlers. Some are "between" dogs. Some of these volunteers are fond of dogs, but simply haven't time to take care of one.

Here are some advantages to associate membership status:

- Stay abreast of news within OTD
- Receive this newsletter regularly
- Receive an invitation to the AGM.
- Get to know the committed volunteers who work quietly behind-the-scenes.
- Be able contribute in new ways to OTD- whatever your interest- from fundraising to organizing a potluck.
- Be invited to social and fundraising events.
- Meet new friends who love dogs as much as you do.
- Know, even after you and your own dog have retired, therapy dogs will have your ongoing support.

The cost for an associate membership is ONLY fifteen dollars annually!

For further information, you can download the associate membership form directly from our OTD website page: www.ottawatherapydogs.ca or contact Kate Miller at (613) 261-6834. Alternatively, contact Kate at

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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

MEMBER DISCOUNTS 2009

All of the following merchants require proof of current OTD membership (ID badge) and will honor discounts to OTD members.

- **Berry's Food Store**, Glebe Store- 15% discount on general merchandise
- **Critter Jungle**, Hampton Park Plaza- 10% discount on general dog related merchandise
- **TLC Grooming**, Canotek Rd- 5% discount on grooming services
- **Bark & Fitz**, Westboro and Centrum- 10% discount on non-food related merchandise, grooming (not nail clipping or u-bath), OTD members must register with the HYDRANT program at the store and provide contact info for their system
- **Natural Pet Foods**, Westboro and Carleton Place- 10% discount on all dog related merchandise
- **Kaleidoscope Kids**, Glebe- 15% discount on books for OTD READ members
- **Blair Animal Hospital**
- ***NEW* - A guy, a girl, two dogs and a cat** – a funky new store near the Byward market, "*Ottawa's best source for pet nutrition and more!*"
Please show Jodi your OTD membership badge and she will offer a 10% discount on store items, except food. Located at 207 Dalhousie St. and can be reached at (613)-747-1542 www.aguyagirltwodogsandacat.com

OTD OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

KATE MILLER

OTD Administrator

Tel: 613-261-6834

Email:

admin@ottawatherapydogs.ca

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

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

