

SPEAK!



CANINE THERAPY
CORPS™

Vol. 19, No. 1, Spring 2010 | Canine Therapy Corps newsletter

P. Casso and D. Vinci Paint Pictures of Brighter Days for Clients at Haymarket

Elizabeth Loftus

In this issue of SPEAK! we'd like to share some of the many contributions that rescue dogs have made in our therapy programs. My own two dogs, P. Casso and D. Vinci, have certainly shown me and many others that rescue dogs can become great therapy dogs. While some rescue dogs, P. Casso included, have visible scars from past injuries due to abuse and neglect, their resilience of spirit is evident in their ability to continue to give so much love. In some ways they are like the clients we serve, having overcome enormous odds, including past mistreatment.

P. Casso (Casso for short) and D. Vinci (Vinci for short), work with clients recovering from addiction at Haymarket Center. Casso came to live with us after a string of fortunate events led him from the Illinois Birddog Rescue to a foster home in Skokie.



Casso and Liz run the agility course

Unfortunately, he had been hit by a car and suffered nerve damage to his right hind leg. He also had bits of buckshot scattered throughout his belly and one rifle shot lodged in the joint of his left front leg. He had surgery to remove the rifle shot that

was lodged in his elbow joint, but the nerve damaged leg may never heal completely. Even with his injuries, he is still the fastest dog in the park when he picks up the injured leg and runs on the other three. He is curious and creative, much like his namesake, Pablo Picasso. In true artistic fashion, he is also missing a tiny piece of his left ear.

Our second rescue dog, Vinci, is an English Setter mix. She was just over a year old when we met her and had already had a litter of pups. She was very timid at first, but has blossomed into an incredibly sweet dog that lives for chasing birds. Although her "birdy" nature made passing the CTC test challenging (for at least the first two tries), it has proven to be an asset when working with clients at Haymarket

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ROU'S ROUSINGS AT HAYMARKET

Louie Greenebaum



Rou and Jimmie working "down" at Haymarket Center

My wife, Callie, and I adopted Rou (formally Rouge), a 5-year-old American Pit Bull Terrier, three years ago after the Chicagoland Bully Breed

Rescue saved him from euthanasia and found him a foster home in Chicago. Rou came over for a play date our dog, Scotch, and our cat, Vinny. Almost immediately we decided that Rou was the perfect addition, as he met all of our criteria. His adoption listing indicated he got along with cats, loved other dogs, and didn't want to sleep in your bed. They were right about everything, except for the part about sleeping in your bed part; we can hardly tear him away sometimes.

Callie and I split time training Rou. It took him almost a month to sit consistently on command, but after he picked up sit, other commands and tricks followed more readily. Having food definitely helped Rou's motivation. He is particularly fond of string cheese and hot dogs.

Per the United Kennel Club breed standard, the American Pit Bull Terrier's essential characteristics are "strength, confidence and zest for life. This breed is eager to please and brimming over with enthusiasm. APBT's make excellent family companions and have always been noted for their love of children." Anyone who has met Rou will tell you that he epitomizes these words. He's clownish, incredibly tolerant and has yet to meet a child or adult he doesn't like.

Rou passed the Canine Therapy Corps test in November 2008 and is currently working with adults in substance abuse recovery at Haymarket Center. In June, he will be eagerly helping young burn victims recover at Camp

I Am Me. He has also worked with children at the Easter Seals Autism Therapeutic School.

Last session at Haymarket Center, Rou worked with "Omar." Omar had an affinity for pit bulls and made repeated requests to work with Rou before dogs and clients were paired up. Unfortunately once the active handling sessions started, it was difficult for Omar to complete them because the medications he took for his condition made him lethargic. He had difficulty matching Rou's energy level, yet he persevered, using Rou as his motivation. As the program progressed, Omar made significant strides, eventually running Rou through the agility course a few times during a session. By the 7th week of the program, Omar had worked through his exhaustion completely and ran the agility course with Rou nearly 10 times. Rou's enthusiasm for his work had spread to Omar, and they worked as a proud, successful, connected team.

Kibbles and Bits

Congratulations to the following new teams who passed the Canine Therapy Corps certification test in January and March: **Mary Dellorto** and **Libby**, a Labrador Retriever (Mary's 6th certified dog!); **Andrea Freedberg** and **Pete**, a Doberman/Hound mix; **Magdalena Lorkiewicz** and **Layla**, a Labrador Retriever; **Cheryl Purdy** and **Maxine**, a Labrador Retriever; **Ben and Hayley Raatz** and **Bernard**, a Bernese Mountain Dog; **Sheryl Schiff** and **Libby**, a Beagle; **Charity Simpson** and **Dori**, a Standard Poodle; **Nicole Thompson** and **Lila**, a Boxer; and **John Walsman** and **Buddy**, a Golden Retriever. That's a lot of dogs! Each and every one of the teams is working hard at programs and is busy helping people to reach their therapeutic goals. We are very proud to have them as part of the Corps!

We also welcome **Linda Abrahams**, **Kristen Callis**, **Carolyn Chandler**, **Laurie Conavay**, **Albert Ellenich**, **Brian Inman**, **Kenn Plebanek**, **Danielle Riemer**, **Eileen Schumann** and **Beth Tap**, volunteers with-



Charity & Dori; Magda & Layla; Cheryl & Maxine; and Sheryl & Libby

out dogs, all of whom are working in programs, serving on the UNLEASHED! benefit committee or developing our Facebook and Twitter sites (take a look!). Thanks to all!

In February, **Ginny Beck** and **Dylan**, and **Ken** and **Julie Fixler** and **Billy** assisted the Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital therapists at the Kid's Expo in Schaumburg, highlighting the animal-assisted therapy program we provide in the Outpatient Therapies Department at the hospital. The dogs were, of course, the biggest draw at the Expo. Children of all ages were delighted by the opportunity to sit

with the two well behaved golden retrievers, pet them, brush them, pose for pictures with them, and just share a little love. It was a great opportunity for us to explain to other medical professionals, as well as parents of special needs children, just how valuable animal assisted therapy can be in an overall therapy plan. Thanks to Advocate for showcasing our work and to **Ginny, Ken, Julie, Dylan and Billy** for sharing the love!

Once again, Canine Therapy Corps dogs and volunteers wowed the crowds at the International Kennel Club Cluster of Dog Shows at McCormick Place. More than 10,000 dogs were entered in the shows, but none were any better looking or better behaved than the Canine Therapy Corps dogs who worked our booth and shared information about our brand of interactive animal-assisted therapy with the public. Special thanks to **Josh Walsman** and **Buddy**, **Ann Maxfield** and **Hampton**, **Christine Montet** and **Snoopy**, **Callie Cozzolino** and **Rou**, **Eileen Schumann**, **Charity Simpson**, and **Beth Tap** and **Brian Inman** for spending part of their weekend at the show on our behalf.

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Donations were made to Canine Therapy Corps:

In memory of Tag Alexander by Mrs. Walter Alexander

In memory of Sparky Eaton by:
 Linda and Philip Abrahams
 Ginny Beck
 Wendy Mancini
 Julie Muccillo and Matt Pollack
 Nancy and Leslie Spokany

In memory of Spike, Abby and Scotchie by Scott Allen Barber

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In memory of Grandpa George Jaworowski by David and Gayle Friend

In memory of Joyce Hansen's father by Rhonda Milkowski

In memory of Porter Ferguson Hatis by Mr. and Mrs. Harold J. Hayes

In memory of Frank Costa by Inge West

In honor of Callie Cozzolino, Louie Greenebaum, Scotch and Rou by Gregory Bayles

In honor of the speedy recovery of Trey Mitcham by Ginny Beck

In honor of Sarah Stewart and Gus by Mr. and Mrs. Randy Carlton

In honor of Lisa Wiersma and Dubs and Turner by Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Droste

In honor of Daisy Petersen by Lauren and Trent Edwards

In honor of their son Tate by Eowyn and Matt Ford

In honor of Harley by Mr. and Mrs. Michael Levin

In honor of Duke by Ms. Deb Loeser

In honor of Charlie by Ms. Celene Peurye-Hissong

In honor of Barbara Young Morris by Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ryan

In honor of Janet Rosen Eaton, Larry Eaton and Edith Rosen by Tara Todd Farris and Daniel Farris

Rescue Dog Rescuers Make Great Volunteers, Too

Eileen Fitzsimons

When a friend told me that she had found the “perfect dog for me”, I was a bit skeptical. Once I met Mr. Perfect (aka Buster Brown), though, I knew that she was right. Buster was a mix of breeds, including pit bull and something that neither the vet nor trainer could identify, and he was a very sweet, loving dog. What stood out about him the most was the one thing that he lacked—ears. Someone had most likely tried to dock them before he was rescued, and something had gone horribly wrong. All Buster had left of his ears were tips, but he more than made up for what was missing with his incredibly big heart.

Unfortunately, Buster’s affection for people did not extend to other dogs. After a series of training sessions, Buster came around. He was very happy and obedient around people and became a bit more sociable with other dogs. After some time he seemed ready to take the Canine Therapy Corps certification test. Unfortunately Buster’s chances of being a CTC dog ended abruptly when he lunged at another dog and automatically failed the test.

I continued to go to training classes with Barbara (another CTC volunteer) and her dog, Bonnie Blue (yet another rescue dog), to provide moral support. The more that I heard about CTC, the more I became intrigued with the organization. I wanted Buster to become a therapy dog, but I didn’t think I could get him fully adjusted. Once I found out that you could volunteer without a dog, I joined another friend, Judith Jaffe, who volunteered at Rice Child and Family Center helping young people overcome the effects of abuse. During the therapy programs, I worked with Scotchie, one of Judith’s dogs, and she became “my dog” once a week.

The changes that I saw in the kids who participated in the therapy programs were wonderful. Even from the first session to the second there were noticeable changes. After working with the dogs, the kids were better able to listen and interact with one another. One of the young girls in the program, who had been traumatized from abuse, was able to verbalize her fears and recognize her accomplishments by working with the CTC dogs and volunteers.

I continued to witness these types of triumphs when Scotchie and I started working at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC). At RIC, the CTC dogs and volunteers helped patients who were recovering from a range of physical and psychological traumas including strokes and brain injuries. During one particularly poignant session, I was deeply moved by a little boy, “Allen,” who was paralyzed from the waist down and had to use a wheelchair. Allen had fallen in love with Bertha, a small English Bulldog, who is also a rescue dog, and he wanted to be able to walk with her. Allen made real progress; one evening he got out of his wheelchair and began crawling with Bertha. After a few more sessions, he came in with a walker. Although working with Bertha didn’t cure Allen, she inspired him and other kids like him to persist in the hard work of physical therapy. It also enabled him to achieve a goal that both he and his therapists had set—walking.

Volunteering with CTC and being a part of such accomplishments is something that I feel really good about. Even though Buster cannot participate in the therapy sessions, I am proud that I can share some of his triumph over abuse to help others overcome their challenges.

P. Casso and D. Vinci

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Center. She readily focuses on whomever she is working with in the program.

Vinci just completed her first year at Haymarket Center while Casso has been working as a CTC dog for almost four years now. Although Casso and Vinci both had a rough start in life, they are now healthy and strong. Both of them thoroughly enjoy their work at Haymarket where they help clients who are overcoming substance abuse learn how to interact with others in a constructive way. It’s amazing to watch how these dogs, given their own sordid histories, can help heal the emotional scars of their clients.



A client and Vinci at work

IN MEMORIAM:



It is with great sadness that we report the loss of Max Van Den Hende, a darling Cairn Terrier who passed away in April at the young age of twelve. Max, the beloved family member of Sharon and Karen Van Den Hende, was a member of the elite group of terriers in the Corps. Max passed our certification test in April 2000, almost ten years to the day prior to his passing. From that day on, Max was busy repre-

senting the Corps. Max worked at Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital, La Rabida Children’s Hospital, the Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education and the Easter Seals Therapeutic School. His energy and enthusiasm for work made him a favorite of our clients. He was always ready to jump through hoops or over hurdles; he was a bundle of energy and loved to work, especially with children. Max had an affinity for those who needed him the most, and seemed to know just how active or how quiet his client needed him to be. In addition to his weekly work in program, Max

represented Canine Therapy Corps at many outreach events, including the International Kennel Club Show, the Hotel for Dogs Premier at Webster Place, Burn Survivor Saturday, Illinois Fire Safety Alliance Camp I AM ME and National Youth Leadership Forum for Medicine, just to name a few recent events. Over his long career, Max appeared on television for us, on the runway at one of our benefits and was a Healing Hearts dog. Max never said no to an opportunity to help, and he will be missed by those whose lives he touched.



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Kibbles and Bits

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Did you know that the Old Testament of the Bible requires us to treat animals with respect and kindness? That was part of the lesson taught at the Social Action Day at Temple Beth Emet where **Michael Sparrow** and **Jersey**, a Golden Retriever, and **Lorie Latham** and **Bayla**, a Newfoundland, went to visit third graders in early March. Bayla and Jersey helped the youngsters understand how dogs can help people, and each of the children then had a chance to teach the dogs how to “heel” and “sit” and “stay.” The children had a great time and the dogs went home exhausted and took a long Sunday afternoon nap!

In spite of a mighty wind blowing off the

lake, Canine Therapy Corps dogs and thousands of their friends were out in force to support the Anti-Cruelty Society’s annual Bark in the Park on May 1 at Montrose Harbor in Lincoln Park. While volunteers **Michael Golden** and **Paul Schiff** walked the lakefront with their dogs **Toby**, **Trudy** and **Fanny**, seeking out potential candidates for our certification process, volunteers **Nancy Golden** and **Sadie Louise**, **Sheryl Schiff** and **Libby**, **Andrea Freedberg** and **Andrew Strusiner** and **Petey** spent the morning at the booth recruiting interested humans and canines to work in our programs. Thanks to all the volunteers for their help.



Libby (f), Sadie, Trudy and Petey work the CTC booth at Bark in the Park

SAVE THE DATE



LET LOOSE AT A BENEFIT FOR CANINE THERAPY CORPS

UNLEASHED!

come out and play

October 15, 2010

WE ARE HALF WAY THERE AND WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!

Canine Therapy Corps has been awarded a Challenge Grant by a very generous donor. This Donor will match, dollar for dollar, any gifts received from new supporters and increased gifts from current supporters, up to a maximum of \$20,000! So if you have not made a gift to Canine Therapy Corps in the past two years, now would be the PERFECT time to donate because your gift will double in value! And if you are already one of our many generous supporters and can increase your most recent gift, the increased amount will be matched.

Your gift of any amount will help us complete this financial challenge, and will also insure that our volunteer teams are there to help our clients face the very real challenges they must face every day.