

SPEAK!

canine
therapy
corps

formerly chenny troupe

Vol. 17, No. 2, Summer 2008 | Canine Therapy Corps newsletter

Building Confidence at Haymarket Center *By Barb Zimmerman and Callie Cozzolino*

At the Maternal Addiction Center program at Haymarket Center, the focus of the Canine Therapy Corps volunteers is to support the residents' recovery and rehabilitation from addiction. The women, having been adjudicated for a variety of charges, reside at the facility as an alternative to serving time in jail while they are pregnant. The program helps them understand the experiences surrounding their addictions as well as the addiction itself. It also helps the women transform their losses into achievements.

In order to participate in the Canine Therapy Corps program, the women and the volunteers must fully commit to a 6-week session. Not only does the commitment test the women's dedication, it also reinforces the importance of responsibility, one of the lessons deeply woven into the program. The sessions consist of small groups (one or two participants per dog and the handler) who work together for the entire 6-week period. On the surface the women experience what it is like to prepare a dog for the role of being a therapy dog.

They learn how to interact with a dog and how to care for one. Each week, the women can see marked improvement in their abilities to communicate with their dogs and guide them in numerous activities. Not only does the experience create the type of positive bond that many of the women have never experienced, but it also builds confidence and self-esteem and teaches valuable lessons about their experiences as future parents. The women improve their communication and anger

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Camp "I Am Me" 2008 *By Tara Todd Farris*

On a beautiful and sunny Tuesday in June, a team of extremely dedicated Canine Therapy Corps volunteers traveled to Ingleside, Illinois for our annual trip to Camp "I Am Me!" a week-long camp for children who are burn survivors. Burn Camp is sponsored by the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance, and is provided at no cost to the participants or their families. The entire week of programming is dedicated to helping children build self-esteem while learning to deal with the visible physical scars and less visible psychological trauma they often suffer as a result of their experience.

What makes this group particularly dedicated was that they traveled for over two hours on the tortuous route of I-94 and I-294, interstates which are both under construction! Nonetheless, with smiles on their faces and tails wagging, the team arrived at YMCA Camp Duncan to be greeted by a group of 20 kids, ages 8-12 years old. Our fearless leader Michelle Schwartz helped each child choose a canine partner, and together they worked through agility equipment, sometimes with a little help from a handler. Each group of campers demonstrated their new skills to the whole group, rounding out the session with a big round of applause and a certificate of accomplishment.

The second group of campers were 12-16 year olds, and the session was much calmer and quieter! Campers were again paired with a canine partner of their choosing, but there was much more sharing and conversation than agility the second time around. Many campers relayed stories about pets they once had, and especially how much they missed them. It was quite touching to see these children start out the hour very shy and then share so openly about their lives and experiences. Highlights of the sessions included Spike (the 195 lb. mastiff) stepping through the ring instead of jumping through it, Emma (the Irish wolfhound) "singing" the national anthem, and Dylan refusing to bring back the newspaper while running beautiful circles around it!

We would like to give a big thank you to Camp "I Am Me!" for allowing us to participate, Dottie Ahbe, our camp contact, and of course, our volunteers: Birgit Mantilla and Spike, Gail Kaplan and Emma, Ginny Beck and Dylan, Mary Dellorto and Gemma & Kali, Mary Rein and Rue, Sharon Van Den Hende and Max, Ronnie Sprunger and Eryen, Michael Golden and Sadie, Michelle Schwartz and Callie Cozzolino.



Kibbles and Bits

Welcome to our newest volunteer team, **Lisa Wiersma** and **Dubs**, who passed the Canine Therapy Corps Certification Evaluation in April. Lisa has been volunteering with her yellow Lab Turner since 2000 and has served as program leader at RIC, Rice and Stone. Lisa is also a member of the Canine Therapy Corps Board of Directors and chair of the Program Committee. Dubs will follow in the very large footsteps of his companion Turner when he works at RIC this fall.

Toasting our New Name! In April, the Associate Board hosted a **Wine Tasting** to celebrate our new name at Coco Rouge, a hot new Wicker Park venue. The capacity crowd enjoyed wines selected by Amy Johnson of Wine Discount Center and sumptuous delicacies hand crafted by the chef at Coco Rouge, including goat cheese puffs, incredibly delicate cookies and fabulous truffles. We welcomed lots of new supporters whom we hope to see again soon!



Lisa Wiersma and Dubs

Canine Therapy Corps volunteers **Callie Cozzolino** and **Scotch, Dan Jarvis** and **Sam** and **Sharon Van Den Hende** and **Max** joined Executive Director Janet Eaton at the National Youth Leadership Conference on Medicine to present two introductory sessions about animal assisted therapy. High school students from around the country gather at University of Illinois at this ten day seminar to learn more about careers in medicine, and we want all of them to know about the effectiveness of

goal directed interactive sessions with a trained therapy dog for both physical and emotional disabilities. The students had an opportunity to work on agility commands, command sequencing and special tricks. Although the sessions last only an hour, none of the dogs could manage to escape the adoring crowds for quite some time after that!

The **Canine Therapy Corps Book Group** meeting is August 23 and the group will be discussing "Merle's Door" by Ted Kerasote. Please call the office for more information and the location of the meeting.

Save The Date for This Educational Opportunity! Canine Therapy Corps will be hosting its third annual seminar on animal-assisted therapy on Saturday October 11 at the Anti-Cruelty Society in Chicago. Chaired by volunteers **Nancy Golden** and **Sarah Stewart**, the program promises to provide a wealth of information for those who work in our programs as well as those who are new to AAT or interested in becoming more involved. Watch your email and our website for more information.

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Donations

Donations in memory of, or in honor of, a special person or pet are always welcome and help us continue to provide our programs free of charge. We even have birthday cards for your canine friend's special day. Canine Therapy Corps is a 501(c)(3) organization, and your gift is tax exempt to the extent permitted by law.

Donations were made to Canine Therapy Corps:

In honor of the marriage of Lisa Crossett and Michael Sparrow by Claudia Braun

In honor of Christian McDonald and Adam Beca by Kylie McDonald

In honor of Sophie and Dixie Paine and in recognition of Dixie's 85th birthday by Jeff Paine

In honor of Daisy Petersen by Mr. and Mrs. Peter W. Petersen

In honor of Whisper Ann by Rebecca Soldwisch

In honor of Nancy Golden by Sarah Stewart

In honor of Henry Pavalon by Carolyn and Carey Yelton

With gratitude for the work done by Canine Therapy Corps Volunteers by the Pediatric Therapies Staff at Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital

In memory of Chaucer Buscher by Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Lawrie

In memory of Jake and Emily by Diana Rich Segal

In memory of Addy Kinczel by Gayle Schor and David Friend

Never Fear, Bonnie Blue is Here!

by Mary Beth Gahan



Rehabilitation is a lot about learning new things. Individuals who experience the onset of disability or chronic illness must learn many new things while interacting with others and the environment as they face new challenges. Often it is necessary to learn to do basic activities of daily living using a new technique or with the aid of adaptive equipment. As people participate in the rehabilitative process, they must deal with a host of professionals new to them, and also learn a myriad of terms to add to their vocabulary. Due to the required new

skills and knowledge, rehabilitation is indeed a lot about learning new things. It is also a lot about courage.

When I was a child, there was a popular cartoon hero called Under Dog. His well-known slogan was “Never fear, Under Dog is here!” as though the very presence of a beloved canine could instill bravery. While Under Dog is a fictional character, it may in fact be true that a dog can help to dissipate fear.

In a recent session with Canine Therapy Corps, I observed an amazing and heart-warming transformation. JJ, a bright and delightful third grader who uses a wheelchair, came to the session following a long day of inpatient therapy. Initially, JJ was not so sure she wanted to be there because she was afraid of dogs. When first introduced to Bonnie Blue an adorable and charming mixed breed member of the Corps, JJ cowered in terror. After coaxing, she mustered up the bravery to stay. Bonnie Blue with her beautiful eyes and winsome ways won JJ over. As the session continued, I watched as

JJ began to interact with Bonnie Blue. Before long, JJ was happily “shaking hands” as Bonnie Blue eagerly presented her paw. JJ also began assertively giving commands to Bonnie Blue to sit, stay, and “finish”. JJ successfully participated in “show and tell” with Bonnie Blue. At the end of the session, JJ had her picture taken hugging Emma, an enormous Irish wolfhound.

As I reflect on this little girl’s transition from anxiety to boldness, I wonder whether the courage that she employs facing the work of rehabilitation helps her to be brave enough to interact with dogs, or whether the bravery she found with the Canine Therapy Corps will help her to courageously continue to face the challenges of life with a disability. Perhaps both are true. I am also reminded that love does cast away fear.

Though Bonnie Blue may not be a superhero, she certainly helps to calm fears and encourage triumph in new things.

Winners Circle Gala is on the Horizon

by Margaret J. O'Connor, MarCon Communications

Canine Therapy Corp will hold its inaugural gala, **Winners Circle**, on Friday, September 19, at the Adler Planetarium. This year’s cocktail attire benefit, chaired by Elaine Hoffmann and Mayari Pritzker, promises to be a spectacular sellout.

Celestial Sponsors, Tawani Foundation, J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation, and Mayari and Bob Pritzker are joined by Galaxy and Stellar Sponsors.

The evening’s festivities get underway at 6:00 p.m. on the Milky Way with cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, and a silent auction, followed by a gourmet dinner in Galileo’s Café. An array of irresistible auction items await: a week-long Caribbean cruise, Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade private viewing tickets, destination trips, sporting events, dinners, one-of-a-kind experiences, plus a few surprises. Not to be outdone, the live auction, led by Alyssa Quinlan of Leslie

Hindman Auctioneers, will include a Hollywood film premier and celebrity after-party in LA, a private dinner designed and created by Chef Art Smith of famed restaurant, Table 52, a Miraval spa retreat, a private suite for a day at Arlington International Racecourse and more. One of the evening’s most anticipated highlights will be the introduction of Corps therapy dogs. Guests of the gala and friends of Canine Therapy Corps will have the opportunity to donate to this year’s Pet Project: the hiring of consulting therapists to increase program effectiveness. Dancing under the stars to the sounds of the Bradley Young Orchestra completes the evening.

“When I heard about Canine Therapy Corps (Chenny Troupe in those days), our dog Max and I became involved with them and it was a truly rewarding experience for Max and us,” Mayari Pritzker, gala co-chair

said. “Max was a therapy dog at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago where we volunteered every Wednesday. I saw the dramatic benefits Max made in the lives of those suffering from tremendous trauma. It was inspiring and a miracle, really.” Guests will have an opportunity to share the experiences of volunteers and a previous client.

Reservations are available at the following levels for a table of ten: Celestial \$10,000; Galaxy \$5,000; Star \$2,000. Two premium seating, special recognition tickets are offered at the Stellar level for \$1,500. Individual tickets are \$200 each.

Visit www.caninetherapycorps.org/gala for more information, gala updates, and a complete listing of auction items. To make reservations, please contact Janet Eaton at the Canine Therapy Corps office: 773.404.6467.

Take Your Dog To Dinner 2008

Canine Therapy Corps volunteers are gearing up for our fifth annual Take Your Dog to Dinner on Monday evening, September 8, 2008 (rain date September 9). There is a lot of excitement around the event this year, because for the first time, Chicago restaurants can obtain licenses to permit dogs on their sidewalk cafes! We are proud to have been very involved the passage of the City ordinance that makes this fabulous evening possible and are sure that the example set by all of our canine supporters over the years had a big impact on the City Council.

We are expecting lots of new locations to join our loyal participants Oak Street Beachstro, Brasserie Jo, Enoteca Roma and Smoke Daddy. Check out www.Takeyourdogtodinner.com for the most up-to-date list of locations.

Our volunteers will be at each location to present the companions of doggie diners with a special new gift (it's great, it's green and it's a surprise!). They'll be available to answer questions about Canine Therapy Corps, and keep an eye out for good candidates for our canine certification program.

We have every reason to believe that Take Your Dog To Dinner will be bigger and better than ever! It's a fun way to tell people about Canine Therapy Corps while they are out on the town with their furry best friends, and helps us raise the funds we need to continue to provide our programs for free. If you are interested in helping to plan or staff the event, or if you have suggestions for dog-friendly dining locations, please contact the office.



Building Confidence *cont. from pg. 1*

management skills by having to work communally. They are able to draw parallels between their interactions with the dogs and their interactions with people in their personal lives.

One particularly amazing success story started with a series of challenges for "Rose". Rose worked with volunteer Bunny Wagner and her Standard Poodle, Zoe. Her first session went smoothly until it was time for Rose to demonstrate the commands in front of the group. Despite success when working one-on-one with Zoe, Rose could not remember how to navigate the stations. She gave Zoe obedience commands in long sentences and spoke so quickly that it was difficult for both the human and canine

volunteers to understand her. While Zoe, an incredibly intelligent and obedient dog, struggled to determine what was being asked of her, Rose felt frustrated and embarrassed, which increased her panic. Yet Rose persevered. Both the Canine Therapy Corps volunteers and the Haymarket staff were pleasantly surprised when Rose returned the following week. A few sessions later, when it came time to perform the "meet and greet" (two dogs and handlers approach each other, ask their dogs to sit, shake hands and engage in a brief conversation), Rose fumbled. She had breezily executed the command with Zoe, but when it came time to converse with her partner, she didn't know what to do.

As the weeks progressed, Rose's confidence grew. She learned to manage her nervousness and began to interact more with the other members of the group. By graduation, Rose and Zoe excelled in every way. Not only was Zoe's bond with Rose stronger than with any previous client, Rose radiated with Zoe's affection. They were truly a team. When she started the group, Rose was reluctant to let people get close to her. Just a few weeks later, Rose made a point to let people know how much she enjoyed being part of the program. What Rose had achieved was something that she would not have been able to articulate when she started the program. Zoe helped Rose find her confidence.

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