

# SPEAK!



Vol. 20, No. 2, Winter 2011 | Canine Therapy Corps newsletter

## Love is Blind The Amazing Work of CTC's First Blind Therapy Dog

By Jessica Tartof DVM, CVA

I take a nap as I'm buckled into the back seat on a familiar car ride. I have a pretty good idea of where we're headed. The different bag is with us today, and my nails were Dremeled, coat brushed, and feet trimmed the other day. I'll find out pretty soon where we are headed so I'll nap for now. As the ignition is turned off, I'm unbuckled from the safety car harness. I sniff the air as I jump out of the car. Yup, I was right, play time with kids!

The familiar vest is slipped over my head, my collar is changed and away we go. I'm reminded of the "step," "door," "door." I hear the beeping of the elevator and the sliding sound which means it's time to go in, turn around and sit while we go up three floors. As the sliding sound comes again, we walk into the hallway. There I catch scent of him and am so excited I have to wiggle my nubbin!

My friend Evan is picking out a game to play with me. I lay down patiently as Evan talks and has his turn. Now it's mine. My instructions are to hold a fishbowl cutout on my head as I jump over a jump. The foam fishbowl cutout is tucked under my collar. When I hear the cue "jump," I start to scent and use my nose to find the jump, then I hear "over" and jump over it. Although I can't see their faces, I can hear the "gasp" and amazement in their voices.

For my next turn, a cardboard fan is tucked under my therapy dog vest and I'm told "up, up, up." I jump as high as I can in place, trying each time to touch my nose to the noise of the finger snaps. Evan thought I did such a good job today that I deserved a treat. He usually likes other people to give me treats, but I impressed him so much that he wanted to give it to me himself. He couldn't quite hold it in his hand, so he put the treat on the armrest of his wheelchair, and I use my nose to figure out where it is.

I'm walking down the hall to play with my next friend when I hear the voice of the volunteer coordinator, Mary. I have to stop and say hi; it would be rude not to. After some nice petting, I continue my walk. Then I hear the familiar, "Look, Jeffrey, Piper's here to walk with you!" I can't help but wiggle my nubbin again as I first say hello to Jeffrey's mom, then Jeffrey. Another leash is attached to my collar, and Jeffrey reaches out to grab my leash and hold it. I walk on Jeffrey's right side with him holding my other leash as he practices walking. I listen intently out of my left ear for any sound indicating he is losing his balance, or going faster or slower. Sometimes I need to just feel that he is right where he should be by gently touching him with my nose or whiskers. I hear Jeffrey making his happy

sounds as we walk through the hospital. Afterward, I take a little break before visiting my next friend.

Not everyone knows by looking at me that I can't see. I

was born sighted, but with a congenital eye condition. I became homeless as a four-month-old puppy when it was realized that I was going blind. I found a new home just in time, and learned the human's language. When I was nine months old, I had to have surgery to remove the inside parts of my eyes and put prosthetics in place. With the pain permanently gone, my true personality came out and everyone realized how much I loved people. Their sounds, scents and movements are unique to each individual making it easy for me to figure out who it is. I had a hard time finding a therapy organization that allowed blind dogs and am so glad I found Canine Therapy Corps and get to play with kids. I couldn't ask for a better job!



## Reporting for Service with Bryan Anderson Highlights Chicago Volunteer Groups

by Callie Cozzolino



While serving in Iraq in 2005, Sergeant Bryan Anderson lost both of his legs and part of his left arm when an improvised explosive device annihilated the vehicle he was driving. Anderson spent a

year recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and endured over 40 surgical procedures. He returned to the Chicago

area and found that an army of volunteers had made his home wheelchair accessible. In a warm tribute to the outpouring of support he received during his most trying time, Anderson highlighted Chicago community organizations that make our city a better place.

Along with Blackstone Bicycle Works, Growing Power's Iron Street Farm and the Valentine Boys & Girls Club, Canine

Therapy Corps was featured in *Reporting for Service with Bryan Anderson*, which aired on WTTW-11 at various times during November. The show introduced Chicago to a remarkable veteran, who gave so much for his country, and his desire to mobilize viewers toward volunteerism and philanthropy. Ultimately, Lodge One Media, which produced the show, hopes to take it nationwide,

*cont. on pg. 2*

## Kibbles and Bits

Congratulations and welcome to the new teams who passed the Canine Therapy Corps certification test in August: **Emily Stoddard** and **The Dude**, a Bassett Hound; **Emily Izenstein** and **Caeli**, an Australian Shepherd; and **Rachael Litvin** and **Mr. Sweaters**, a Labradoodle. Welcome also to the new non-dog volunteers who recently went through orientation: **Meg Crapster-Pregont**, **Melanie Gabel**, **Alicia Geller**, **Victoria Gestner**, **Andrea Jennings**, **Jennifer Groszek**, **Jenny Lenz**, **Mark Pelech**, **Abigail Weinberg**, and **Laura Wiscomb**.

The summer and autumn months have seen us busier than ever with wonderful outreach events! In July, **Jerry Kirkpatrick** and **Dude**, along with **Linda Carr** and **Toby**, attended the Maria Shelter Health Fair in Englewood, which provides free health services and education to those in need. Dude and Toby were on hand to provide smiles and love to attendees. In August, CTC made its debut at the Susan G. Komen 3-Day Walk for the Cure in Des Plaines. **Beth Tap**, **Eileen Schumann**, **Becky Bennett**, **Callie**



*Emily and The Dude, Emily and Caeli, and Rachel and Mr. Sweaters*

**Cozzolino** and **Rou**, **Linda Carr** and **Toby**, **Elizabeth Loftus** and **P. Casso** and **D. Vinci**, **Jerry Kirkpatrick** and **Dude**, and **Mary Dellorto** and **Gemma & Shayna** were all in attendance. They circulated the walkers' campground at Oakton Community College to help comfort, relax, and revitalize the participants. The dogs were a huge hit, as usual! Also in August, CTC was present at the Illinois Warrior Summit at Soldier Field – another new outreach event for the organization. **Beth Tap**, **Andrea Jennings**, **Callie Cozzolino** and **Rou**, **Rik Liddle** and **Ralph**, and **Cheryl Purdy** and **Maxine** represented CTC at the event, which serves to educate veterans on services available to them. In September, **Noelle Gaffney** and **Tootsie**, along with **Judith Jaffe** and **Willow**, helped demonstrate the effectiveness of animal-assisted activities during a presentation at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Neuroscience Nurses Symposium. Additionally in September, **Cheryl Purdy** and **Maxine** made a visit to Thresholds Apartments, a community for those with severe mental disorders on Chicago's North side, to meet with residents who had expressed an interest in interacting with a

dog. In October, CTC was invited to speak at the Glenview Senior Center as part of their "First Monday" series, which highlights community organizations. **Beth Tap**, **Callie Cozzolino** and **Rou**, and **Emily Izenstein** and **Caeli** were there to give a presentation to First Monday's largest audience to date! Also in October, **Mark Pelech**, **Noelle Gaffney** and **Tootsie**, and **Jerry Kirkpatrick** and **Dude** made an appearance at the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Wellness Fair at Loyola University. Of the roughly 60 booths present, CTC's won the "Best Booth" contest – and we weren't even aware there was a competition! October also presented CTC with the wonderful opportunity to present at a "lunch-and-learn" for the Boeing Company. **Beth Tap**, **Callie Cozzolino** and **Rou**, and **Lisa Wiersma** and **Dubs** delivered a presentation to about 50 employees at Boeing's corporate headquarters in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness month. We ended October with an appearance at the Spooky Pooch Parade at the Chicago Botanic Garden. **Beth Tap**, **Brian Inman**, and **Rachael Litvin** and **Mr. Sweaters** staffed the CTC booth at the parade and canine costume contest. A great time was had by all! In November, CTC gave a presentation for a Girl Scout troop in Northbrook. **Beth Tap**, **Mary Dellorto** and **Gemma**, and **John & Thea Pfeiffer** and **Dezi** were there to teach the girls all about therapy dogs and what they mean to the community. Rounding out November was a trip back to Loyola University – this time for an exam de-stress event. **Jerry Kirkpatrick** and **Dude** visited students at the student union to help take their minds off finals. A big, heartfelt THANK YOU to all the volunteers who attended these outreach events!

### SPEAK!

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### Reporting for Service, *cont. from pg. 1*

with Anderson shining light on compassionate volunteerism across the country.

Viewers followed Canine Therapy Corps volunteer teams to CTC's programs at Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital, both the pediatric outpatient therapy animal-assisted therapy program and the hematology and oncology visitation program. They met Billy, Chiquita, D.Vinci, P.Casso, Piper, Ralph and Rou (a wide cross-section of CTC's dog diversity) and a few of the incredible kids they are privileged to

serve - Ameerah, Charlie, Jeffrey and Kaitlyn.

Canine Therapy Corps' full *Reporting for Service with Bryan Anderson* segment will be posted on our website soon. In the meantime, please visit our homepage to view an abridged version. Canine Therapy Corps is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be part of *Reporting for Service*. Infinite thanks to Bryan Anderson, David Berg, Lawrence Weinberg and the rest of the team for including us in this amazing show.

## In Memoriam

Canine Therapy Corps recently lost two of its cherished therapy dogs. Both fought cancer and were beautiful examples that we have choices in dealing with life's hardships. We can let our circumstances hold us back, or we can persevere. Spencer and Maxine elected for the latter. Both will be deeply missed.

**Spencer**, a Bernese Mountain Dog, came to Canine Therapy Corps in 2006. He is probably best known for being a charter member of the giant breed club at Rice Child and Family Center where he lovingly tended to children who had been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. Spencer gently made the kids feel like they were in control, at a time in their lives when they actually had little. Spencer was laid back and attentive, always giving the kids eye contact. He never begged for food, just for attention, particularly a rub behind his ears. If you found the spot, he would purr to let you know how much he liked it.



Spencer

Although **Maxine's** Canine Therapy Corps career was under two years, like everything else in her life, she made the most of it. Apart from working at Swedish Covenant Hospital, Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Feinberg Pavilion and Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital's hematology and oncology department, Maxine was also a highly anticipated,



Maxine

perennial participant at Loyola University's final exam de-stress events. She also worked CTC's booth at this year's Illinois Warriors Summit and Welcome Home Celebration, where veterans who had lost limbs in combat showed solidarity and took pictures with Maxine, a tripod. Maxine is the September 2012 featured dog in our Healing Hearts calendar.

## 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. 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:

#### Grants from Foundations:

Council for Physically Challenged Children  
Kraus Family Foundation  
and Merry Beth Kowalczyk  
Leo S. Guthman Fund  
The Wanda Muntwyler Foundation

Zoey Neidy, Bailey Pietrowicz, Coffee Puetz, Lucy Schultz, Seamus Soldani, Barley Spatz, Sophie O'Sullivan, Earl Stack, Mazel Tushman, Niji Weatherhead and Geoffrey Whitchurch by Berglund Animal Hospital

Bob by Kathleen Seidel  
Dottie Eaton by Barbara Young Morris  
Gracie Morris by Callie Cozzolino and Barbara Young Morris

Gus Stewart by Sharon Van Den Hende  
Jersey Sparrow by Judith Jaffe and Barbara Young Morris

Kate Vranicar Reeves by Robert and Ursula Kewer, Barbara Young Morris and Sharon Van Den Hende

Parker Schlessinger  
by Skip and Michele Rosenmutter  
Schnoogey Boogey Man (aka "Shadow")  
by Skip and Michele Rosenmutter

Shana Weiss  
by Skip and Michele Rosenmutter  
Turner Wiersma by Judith Jaffe,

Barbara Young Morris and William and Joan Wiersma

#### In Honor Of:

Abby Carter by Suzann Chester  
Brady by Jean Theiss  
Shayne Gelfond's Bar Mitzvah  
by Diane Holway

Shannon Schaefer  
Charles and Mary Sethness  
Dianne and Michael Shanley  
Connie Cozzolino Smith  
Janette Stefani  
Beth Tap  
Shelli Zomer

#### Corporate Donations:

Keshet  
United Healthcare

#### Estate Bequests:

Merle and Eunice Eggen  
Marilynne Olsen

#### In Memory Of:

Max Albright, Max Brady, Nurie Byun, Chelsea Chensoff, Sugar Fink, Alex Flanigan, Auggie Ginsberg, Chase Greiner, Chloe Klier, Ramone Laurie, Sydney Lionberger, Quiana Lys, Jersey Maggio, Duke Mann, Duke McConnell, Addy McInnis, Charleston Monroe,

#### Gifts:

Cora Adams  
Karen Alexander  
Jacinda Bauman and Joe Goldberg  
Jon and Barbara Brightman  
Renton and Mary Brodie  
Brownie Troop #1497  
Dr. Robert Dewel  
Judith Keitz  
Carrie Nutter  
Anne Maxfield  
Catherine McGivney  
Sharyn Reiff

*Periodically, Canine Therapy Corps is the fortunate beneficiary of estate bequests from individuals who were affiliated with CTC, benefitted from our work or wanted to honor someone who worked diligently on our behalf. These gifts are particularly meaningful, not only because of the significant financial implications, but also because they affirm the impact our work has on people's lives. If you are interested in remembering CTC through such a bequest, or other planned gift, we encourage you to do so. If you need additional information in this regard, please contact Callie Cozzolino (callie@caninetherapycorps.org or 773.404.6467)*



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**SPEAK!**

## Give the Gift that Makes a Difference This Holiday Season!

### Limited Edition 2012 Heeling Hearts Calendar

Canine Therapy Corps' inaugural 2012 Heeling Hearts calendar is now on sale. The more you buy, the more you save:

- \$15 for one calendar
- \$14 each for two
- \$13 each for three
- \$12 each for four
- \$10 each for five or more



### Sponsor a therapy dog through Canine Therapy Corps' Heeling Hearts Campaign!

Canine Therapy Corps dogs are cute, well-behaved and don't need to be walked in the winter. We will send your lucky gift recipient:

- a custom, seasonal greeting card
- your chosen therapy dog's trading card (there are over 35 to choose from)
- a Canine Therapy Corps brochure; and
- a Heeling Hearts calendar

#### Pricing for Heeling Hearts sponsorship:

- \$50 for a sponsorship with one calendar
- \$60 for a sponsorship with two calendars

Further, if you sponsor a therapy dog through the Heeling Hearts campaign or make another donation, there is a good chance the donation will be matched, doubling its value to us. (See Challenge Grant details.)

### Challenge Grant

Canine Therapy Corps was awarded a Challenge Grant by a very generous donor, who will match, dollar for dollar, any gifts received from new supporters and increased gifts from current supporters, up to \$15,000!

If you have not made a gift to Canine Therapy Corps in the past two years, now is 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 generosity will help us meet this financial challenge and also ensure that Canine Therapy Corps volunteer teams are there to help our clients face and overcome the very real challenges they confront every day.

Goal  
\$15,000





Dear Friend,

Every year you are faced with an agonizing dilemma as many deserving non-profit organizations solicit your support for their good work. You want to know that your contributions are truly making a difference in people's lives. To prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that your donations do just that, let me share with you the story of Ashley, a 3 year-old pediatric leukemia patient who was first introduced to Canine Therapy Corps' therapy dogs in June 2009.

Ashley had been diagnosed the previous December, and her treatment began shortly thereafter. Receiving chemotherapy on a regular basis had been a frightening and painful experience for Ashley. Since beginning her treatments (six months earlier), she was known to the hospital staff as the child they could not get to stop crying. Other families could often hear her screams as they entered the oncology treatment area.

On the way to the hospital, Ashley would ask her mother, "Doctor?" When her mother replied in the affirmative, signaling that they were on their way to a chemotherapy session, Ashley would immediately begin to sob. She would not stop until her treatment was over. Seeing her beloved little girl in such pain and anguish, Ashley's mom would fight to hold back her own tears.



One day, when Ashley and her mom arrived at the hospital, there was something different - Jersey, a big, lovable Golden Retriever, was waiting there to greet them. Although her first reaction was to shed more tears, Ashley steadily warmed to the dog's calm presence. Before long, Ashley stretched out on the floor next to Jersey in her treatment room. They became the best of friends, and Ashley would read to Jersey while waiting for the results of her blood work. Sometimes, they would just snuggle. Regardless of the activities the two friends shared, Ashley began to associate her trips to the hospital with spending time with Jersey and other CTC dogs, not with fear and pain. According to her mom and the medical staff, it made all the difference in the world for Ashley, and for her parents.

Not only was Ashley's experience with CTC dogs a wonderful gift to her and her family, but her treatment was extremely successful, and as you can see in the photograph to the right, today, she is a picture of good health. In fact, this summer she and her mother performed in a talent show produced by the Pediatric Therapy Department at Advocate. And, this fall, Ashley excitedly started kindergarten. All of us whose lives were touched by Ashley cannot help but feel a great sense of pride in how this courageous little girl overcame very difficult challenges to return to the normal, happy life she richly deserved. We are proud that our gifted dog teams could make such a meaningful difference in the life of this sweet little girl.



Jersey was one of many Canine Therapy Corps dogs that spend hours with young patients undergoing treatment for pediatric cancers at Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital. Our dogs participate in 11 programs which CTC operates in metropolitan Chicago-programs that are focused on helping people address serious medical or psychological challenges so they can continue leading happy, productive lives.

We work in partnership with medical professionals to develop site-specific programs designed to meet the individual needs of each patient or client and have seen profound changes in those with whom our volunteer dog teams work. Because of the success our programs have enjoyed over the years, the demand for our services far exceeds what we can provide. We need resources to recruit and certify more dog teams, design and manage each of our programs, and continually evaluate and enhance their effectiveness.

That is why we are asking for your help. I encourage you to visit our website and learn more about our exciting work. When you do, I know that you will want to support Canine Therapy Corps as generously as you can.

Sincerely,

Barbara Young Morris  
Chair, Board of Directors