



UNLEASH A SMILE

SUMMER 2013

*Touching Hearts, Bringing Joy, Offering Comfort, and
Enriching Lives with Certified Therapy Dog Teams*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Monica Clark & Amanda Maxham and Allie
Cynthia Kern and Andy
Jen Monteleone and Baxter
Alyson Groesbeck and Benny
Warren & Denise Brooks and Cooper Hudson
Melissa O'Brien and Daisy
Julie Hinman and Stanley

Rachel Corbett LaVallee and Fauna
Patricia Mercier and Finian
Kris Tootle and Fletcher
Kristen Johnson and Flint
Leslie & Matthew Horowitz and Fred
Susan McNeill and Ganzy
Barb Sammon and Huckleberry

Helyn Kerr and Jaxon
Mackenzie Gunn and JB
Vivian Jamieson and Karma
Fran Hendricks and Little Man
Mark Szuchman and Luna
Jon Katz and Red
Cherie Troyen and Savi
Tim McCullough and Wrigley

GREETINGS FROM BIGDOG

By Steve Reiman, Founder and President

As we volunteer to unleash smiles in our communities, we bring hope, laughter, and happiness that might not otherwise be there. Plus, as we find ourselves in the middle of 2013, we can see large steps forward in many areas with sincere thanks to our Executive Director, Bob Uerz. He has maintained our organizational focus on the TDV 2013 Action Plan and Budget as well as coordinated TDV's Fundraising Management Process through grants, special events, and member solicitation.

Our sincere thanks goes out to TDV VP, Deb Helfrich, who, as our Director of Certification & Testing and her incredible Certification Team, has offered MANY Clinics and Tests to members of our community. Her outstanding efforts have spread the good name of TDV and gained us a lot of new members.

Our Third Decade Initiative was jump started at our BOD Summit on the Norwich University campus Saturday, June 22nd. Bob Uerz and BOD member, Julia Page, organized the Summit. It was facilitated by Amy Shollenberger, and attended by Adjutant General Steven A. Cray, the senior uniformed officer in Vermont, as well as by Jason Jullo of the VA at White River Jct.

TDV is moving along and looking forward to offering its members opportunities in Veteran Outreach Centers. Stay tuned for announcements in future WOOF publications and on our Web.

To all TDV members, I want to say that you make me proud. To all members of the Board of Directors and the countless people who support our many operations, know that without you, none of this could be happening. I am deeply grateful to all of you.

With my sincere respect and gratitude,



THIRD DECADE INITIATIVE SUMMIT BEGINS DIALOGUE ON HOW BEST THERAPY DOGS OF VERMONT CAN SERVE OUR VETERANS BY 2016

By Bob Uerz, Executive Director

On Saturday, June 22nd at Norwich University, Therapy Dogs of Vermont's (TDV) Board of Directors and outside experts on veterans' affairs came together to discuss how best the organization can serve, in an appropriate and sensitive way, our Veterans in the coming years.

Vermont's Adjutant General Steven Cray was on hand to both share welcoming remarks and participate in the preliminary stage of the day-long process.



Utilizing the benefit of an outside facilitator, Amy Shollenberger from Montpelier-based Action-Circles, the group went through a series of activities which took the participants from dreams to potential reality by 2016.

By the end of the day, it was apparent to all that a Veteran to Veteran approach should be an important component of our future efforts as well as the necessity for TDV to reconnect or more closely connect with the VA Hospital in White River Junction and with Veteran Outreach Centers around the State.

Work will continue in the coming year to establish even closer collaborative relationships and in figuring out the operational steps needed to make this dream a reality by securing necessary human and financial resources.

NIP

By Jackie Provost

We were saddened to hear of dear Nips passing. She was a beautiful Chocolate Labrador of great temperament and Vicki had done such a wonderful job in training her. She will be missed by us here at the preschool where we've come accustomed to her frequent visits. I'm a strong believer that pets offer people incredible and therapeutic benefits to all ages. When I had the idea to offer an experience with a pet to our preschoolers, I knew it had to be fun and it had to be safe. How great would it be to have a dog in the classroom? In my search for this opportunity, I came across the organization of Therapy Dogs of Vermont, a volunteer group that offers well trained and tested dogs to provide companionship and distractions to people who may be in a stressful situation. I put in a request and in a couple of weeks, Vicki Shepard contacted me and told me about her special girl named Nip. I told her we needed a gentle, slow moving and predictable dog that children with varying disabilities could come up to and pat. I told her that some of these children might make loud noises or react in unpredictable ways. Could her dog handle this? She assured me that Nip was up for the challenge, being drawn to children more than adults instinctively. Vicki was confident that Nip was the one for the job. This began a relationship that spanned many years.



Every few months over the next 5 years, Vicki would volunteer to bring Nip in for a half hour or so to visit the children during a free play time. The kids would swarm around wanting to be able to give Nip a snack and take her leash and lead her around the classroom. They loved to see her tricks and touch her feet and occasionally try to sit on her. Nip was most patient and attentive to the children. She went through the biggest test each time she visited. Tail pulling, eye poking, feet tickling episodes that she put up with by the young children, some not exposed to dogs and this being their first time had to learn how to greet and behave around a dog. Nip and Vicki were the most patient teachers. When the class' free time was done, Nip was ready to go home for a nap. As any parent and preschool teacher will tell you, preschoolers can be exhausting. Vicki gave such a gift to her Saint Albans community by donating her time over the years to share her love of children and her love of dogs with us at the Barlow Street Preschool. Nip was such an excellent ambassador for both the Therapy Dogs of Vermont group, in which she wore her bandana with pride and as a representative of how animals can become teachers too. We as a team at Barlow Street Preschool wish thank Vicki and Nip for this gift.

The Barlow Street Preschool Staff

- Andrea Racek -Teacher, Special educator
- Carmen Dennis- Para-Professional
- Jackie Provost – Para-Professional
- Rebecca Christensen- Para-Professional
- John Payne- Teacher

BUDDY

By Cindy Nichols

My dog Buddy was a therapy dog since 2009 and passed away on May 10th at the age of 9. Attached is a collage I made of some of his work. Thank you, TDV, for the opportunity for him to make people smile!

We had the honor of meeting Buddy in the summer of 2004. He arrived in our mudroom during a thunderstorm after running away from the breeders. After a month of looking for his owners and an hour long discussion with them, they decided to give him to us. That was a wonderful and unforgettable day which also happened to be our son's 10th birthday.

From the time we got him at 4 months of age, he was the sweetest and calmest Golden Retriever I have ever met. I just knew he had to do something special. In 2009 he became a Therapy Dog of Vermont.



He would visit the local schools (Lyndon Town School and The Burke Town School) helping the special education kids to become better readers, weekly visits to The Cobleigh Public Library as "Your Reading Buddy", and most recently to The Canterbury Inn Assisted Living Center.

Buddy loved going to Dog Mountain, loved his squeaky toys, going on walks, riding in the car and just being home with us...his family. He was loved by everyone that met him. He will be greatly missed!



**MY TRIBUTE TO TDV MEMBER PATRICIA PERRY
(JULY 21, 1959 – JUNE 26, 2013)
"Sasha And I Can Be On The Ferry Within The Hour"**

By Bob Uerz, Executive Director



I can remember it like it was yesterday perhaps because it was so amazing. It was my first call to a TDV volunteer beyond those who I had met in the process to become the new TDV Executive Director.

TDV had received a special request visit to the Respite House in Williston, Vermont, with the family asking for a visit from a German Shepherd and I had a call list in front of me. At the top of the list was Pat Perry's name and her GSD Sasha. I traced my finger across the computer screen and noticed that the home address was Plattsburgh, New York but I dialed the number anyway.

A very upbeat voiced answered and I began to explain the reason for the call. However, before I could finish my sentence Pat cut me off asking, "when do you need us?" Immediately followed by, "Sasha and I could be in the Ferry within the hour."

And that's how I met Pat. Since then we have appeared together at numerous TDV recruiting events. One of Pat and Sasha's most memorable recruitment events was an in-store event at Orvis in Manchester which required the pair to travel literally two and a half hours to get there last spring. And, as usual, when they arrived they were both smiling and very happy to have made the trip in order to talk to potential new members in one of TDV's new growth hub. There they stood, Pat talking about her experiences with Sasha and Sasha sitting there as loveable as always seeming to smile from ear to ear no matter how long the conversation went.

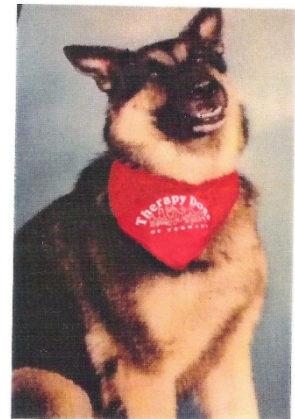
Since that first telephone call a lot has happened. Last year Sasha got sick with cancer and passed then this year Pat was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer and passed only months after being diagnosed.

What remains their legacy is that never once did Pat & Sasha ever turn down making a visit for Therapy Dogs of Vermont. Together they touched hundreds of lives and brought thousands of smiles --- and for that, they will be always remembered.

And for me, that first self-less conversation, she will always be in my memory. Therapy Dogs of Vermont members are the best! And Pat, you are the best of the best.

Bob Uerz, CFRE

*In Loving Memory of
Patricia A. Perry*



*July 21, 1959
June 26, 2013*

"We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone."
-- Ronald Reagan



TDV TESTERS and/or EVALUATORS

Deb Helfrich, *Director of Certification and Training*

Brenda Altman	Tim Pollock	Deborah Schapiro
Raymond Belanger	Emily Reed	Beth Wadleigh
Brenda Carpenter	Jason Reed	Jenn Vaughan
Kristin Comeau	Steve Reiman	Karen Odatto
Callie Field		

Our testers and evaluators are also supported by dedicated certification support team: Craig Deslauriers, Michelle Douglas Carroll, Nancy Kahn, John O'Connor, Patti Shaw, and Maryellen Sullivan.

TDV SUPPORT TEAM

Allison Ross, *Member & Facility Support*

Benda Altman, *Liaison to UVM*

Wendy Huntley, *Liaison to Camp Ta-Kum-Ta*

Diane Forsey & Janet Dooley, *FAHC Coordinators*

Elizabeth Hall, *Administration and Newsletter Design*

TDV OFFICER TEAM

Bob Uerz, CFRE, *Executive Director*

Steve Reiman, *President/Founder*

Deb Helfrich, *Vice President & Director of Certification and Training*

Connie Barrett, *Treasurer*

Katie Ziegler

Julia Page



VOLUNTEER ADVISORS

Dr. Lisa Nelson, *Veterinary Behavior Specialist*

Nikki Kellaway, CT, *Veterinary Advisor*

Jamie Dayton, *Business Advisor*

Chad Bonanni of Bergeron Paradis & Fitzpatrick, LLP,
Legal Advisor

THANK YOU MARYELLEN SULLIVAN!

With sincere regret, we accepted her resignation from the Board of Therapy Dogs of Vermont.

We have many things for which to thank Maryellen over the time she was our Director of Board Development and Governance. She brought us from a Team to a Board of Directors. She made revisions to our Bylaws to reflect our new organization with an Executive Director. She helped many of the other Board members. And, most effectively, she organized, ran, and took minutes of our meetings while acting as the Secretary of Therapy Dogs of Vermont.

We wish Maryellen the very best and appreciate knowing that she plans to stay involved in TDV activities.

THANK YOU CAREY LAUBENBERG!

With sincere regret, we accepted Carey's resignation from the Board of Therapy Dogs of Vermont.

Although Carey has been on the Board for a relative short period of time, she has been involved with us in a big way. In addition to serving as the volunteer Facilities Support Coordinator, she served as the Stowe Hub Director, and worked with Bob on preliminary plans for the Dine Around Vermont event connecting us with Athena at the Green Goddess Café to get feedback before launching this year's effort. Carey helped with many tests and clinics. Julia Page, TDV's BOD member and Volunteer Director of CVMC writes "Earl and Carey make a great team. Our patients and staff at CVMC truly enjoyed their visits. Having recently joined the TDV Board, I was looking forward to working more closely with Carey as a fellow board member and helping out at the Stowe Hub. I will miss them both, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors!"

We will all miss your "can-do" attitude!

TEST AND CLINIC SCHEDULE

TDV has a significant schedule of tests and clinics posted on the Web and on the Hub Director Facebook page - Thank you to Deb and all of her Testers & Evaluators.