



UNLEASH A SMILE

## WINTER 2012-2013

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

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

N. Bonny Green and Belle  
Amanda Herzberger and Strider  
Jessica Katz and Libby  
Elisa Kiviranna and Ginger  
Laura Rabinovitz and Daisy  
Kim Germain and Salem  
Lynn McNamara and Willow

Evan Sivo and Ruby  
Leslie Schreiber and Milo  
Maryellen Sullivan and Toby  
Liz Butler and Tango  
Linda Studer and Schatzie  
Dyan Walker and Ollie  
Bailey Southgate and Lucy

Emily Lester and Autumn  
Jim Heath and Shayla  
Kara Campbell and Colbie  
Phillip Cohn and Wei Wei  
Jennifer Alexander-Whitmore and Molly  
Cynthia Fort & Patricia Beckwith and Gillian  
Faith Covey and Zoe

### GREETINGS FROM BIGDOG

*by Steve Reiman, TDV Founder and President*

This has been a challenging and exciting year for TDV. We have grown our membership in new areas of Vermont to expand our visits to current and new facilities. We have brought highly talented and dedicated individuals to our Board of Directors. Our Executive Director has helped us operate in a more business-like and professional direction. Most notably, the impact each of our members has shown by unleashing smiles is tremendous and unlimited. Truly, our member's efforts are appreciated with every visit and have made an impact upon those who need their day to be brightened.

Continual improvement is an important part of our mindset. Our Certification Team has spent a lot of time testing and training the right people with the right dogs. As a team, we have continually improved our policies based on the best ones we have found. All of these initiatives translate into more and better teams in more facilities in our communities.

In my opinion, there is one significant thing that separates Therapy Dogs of Vermont from other therapy dog organizations. TDV has a well-trained and supervised Certification Team of Testers and Evaluators. Facilities can count on TDV dogs being extremely well tested to guarantee, as best as possible, that there will never be an incident with the people and other dogs we meet. Our 20+ years of experience has helped us adjust and improve our tests and evaluations to insure the safety of the people in the facilities we visit as well as other dogs we may meet while on duty. I know of no other TD organization that has standards as high as ours and you can thank our Certification team for this.

To all TDV members, I want to say that you continue to make me proud. To all on the Board of Directors and support people, I am truly grateful for your time, effort, and sacrifices. You are the people who provide the support and opportunity for our members to bring immense joy and comfort to the many people we serve.

With my sincere respect and gratitude,



## TDV CERTIFIED THERAPY DOG TEAM PREPARED TO HEAD TO NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT FOLLOWING SCHOOL SHOOTING

*By Bob Uerz, TDV Executive Director*

The TDV Certified Therapy Dog Team of retired child psychologist Kay Boyce, Ph.D. and her dog, Jouet, are standing ready to make the trip when the call comes from Connecticut to assist in the wake of the heartbreaking events of Friday, December 14th.

Before coming to Vermont, Kay served as a Red Cross Mental Health Specialist in California and Oregon.

Today, Kay and pup, Jouet make regular visits to the pediatric unit and psychology wards at Fletcher Allen Hospital.

**While TDV is not setup to mobilize teams into crisis situations, we thank Kay and Jouet for being ready to, at the appropriate time; make the trip to Connecticut to assist Newtown residents in the long-term effort to heal from their horrific ordeal.**

## PRELIMINARY STEPS TO CREATE TDV'S THIRD DECADE INITIATIVE FOCUSING ON VETERANS

*By Bob Uerz, TDV Executive Director*

As you may be aware, one of the five organizational goals to flow from TDV's 2011 strategic planning process was to "Identify Therapy Dogs of Vermont's Third Decade Initiative." Since those five organizational goals were formally adopted in March 2012, the TDV Board has unanimously voted to focus this initiative on Veterans and at its December 5th meeting adopted an overall action plan for TDV in 2013 containing a process to make this Third Decade Initiative a reality by 2014.



Over the last ten months, TDV has been creating relationships with veteran organizations and organizations serving veterans and, as a short-term result, we are pleased to announce that the TDV Certified Therapy Dog Team of Ann Broekhuizen and her dog, Kasey, are now making weekly visits to Canal Street Veteran Housing in Winooski. This collaborative effort with Vermont Soldier Angels and COTS was highlighted recently on WCAX-TV.

This relationship-building effort will continue and we plan to convene a Third Decade Initiative Summit in early June to bring together inside and, most especially, outside TDV folks to prepare a list of recommendations to guide the TDV Board and Executive Director in moving forward to create and adopt a fundable and sustainable program to serve Veterans.

It is our hope to provide an update for the TDV membership at our 2013 TDV Annual Membership Meeting which will again take place at Shelburne Museum Goes to the Dogs in September.

Our timeline calls for TDV Board action on a comprehensive plan at their December 2013 Board Meeting.



## THANK YOU LINDA SAMTER

*By Steve Reiman, TDV Founder and President*



Linda Samter has been my friend, one-time neighbor, and the TDV Treasurer for more than 20 years. In the beginning, she and her Australian Shepherd, Cheyenne, teamed with me and the founding TDV dogs.

Linda has been TDV's treasurer for more than two decades. Over that time she handled all of TDV's financial matters, nineteen of which were in her job description, and MANY more. They included paying all of the bills, doing all of the bookkeeping, managing the yearly budgets, and keeping everything in alignment with the state of Vermont and the IRS.

In addition to the above, Linda assisted other officers with projects and handled special projects as needed. She was always there to provide direction and advice for TDV's stability & growth.

Linda says, "The 8 or so years of service that Cheyenne and I provided as an on-the-ground therapy dog team with (Steve), Lily and Jordan, were the most special of times for me, on so many levels. I may have been a steady hand at the helm for TDV as far as finances were concerned, but the real thanks goes to the many volunteers that meet with patients, children, and other people in need. I do really hope to return to doing therapy dog visits one day, maybe even with my current Border Collie, Wren. My decision (to leave TDV) is based on my situation and the fact that I am overcommitted. I am juggling a busy home life with a toddler, other extended family obligations, running my own business, taking the architecture exams (7 in total), and other stuff."



It will be hard to imagine TDV without Linda as part of the team, but we wish her well and thank her for her two decades of service to our communities.

## THE ARBORS SUPPORTS THERAPY DOGS OF VERMONT

TDV was overwhelmed to receive \$800 from the proceeds of their 2012 Holiday Wreath Stroll and Bake Sale.

TDV Certified Therapy Dog Team Carey Laubenberg (also New TDV Board Member) and her dog, Earl and Executive Director Bob Uerz were on-hand for the event to meet and greet attendees, sharing details about our efforts. TDV Board Member Deb Helfrich and TDV Board Member Connie Barrett also visited.

TDV member Callie Field also created a beautiful star shaped wreath decorated with blue bows & dog treats bows and donated it to this seasonal fundraising effort to support the work of Therapy Dogs of Vermont.

Thank you all for your contributions that made the event so special.



## CERTIFICATION TEAM MEMBER INTERVIEW

**Name:** Tim Pollock

**Dog's Name and Breed:** Jubal, Border Collie – Jersey, Border Collie

**Town where you live:** Milton, VT

**Location/s where TDV volunteering is done:** Respite house, Williston, VT

**What can you tell us about yourself? What is your personal/professional background?**

Retired, Failure Analysis Lab tech, IBM. Learning to be a school bus driver. Musician and edible gardener.

**Who is your TDV partner? What breed is s/he? How did you come to be her/his owner?**

I have two certified Border Collies, a male named Jubal and a female named Jersey. They are family pets; we like Border Collies so I specifically found a local breeder.

**How long have you been with TDV? What is your role on the Certification Team?**

About 5 years. I help out with testing new teams and/or clinics. I also run evaluations for new teams.

**What is your favorite part about being a Certification Team member?**

Meeting other handlers and the dogs. Can't learn enough about dogs and I like people.

**What is the most challenging thing about being a member of the Certification Team?**

I guess it would be failing teams. I don't like hurting people but at times it is necessary.

**If you had one wish for Therapy Dogs of Vermont as an organization, what would it be?**

TDV is already a great organization that does much to help people; I guess I'd like to see us get even better at it.

## CHARLIE HAS GONE TO RAINBOW BRIDGE

*By Carol Ball, TDV member*

He was a wonderful, loyal dog, always at my side and ready to travel whenever his therapy dog bandana appeared. He was a dedicated therapy dog, certified on my birthday on 12/1/00. Attached is a picture of Charlie's last appearance as a working therapy dog when he visited Wags and Wiggles Day Camp on Aug. 22nd of this year.

Ironically, Charlie at age 1, was a rescue from a family in Burlington who happened to live only a few blocks away from the day camp. Charlie has put a smile on thousands of faces throughout the years. He's buried in our yard with his tennis ball and his favorite red ball hanging over him from the nearby tree. He has joined our other 9 dogs at Rainbow Bridge and will always be remembered.



## A MEMBER'S STORY

In the Autumn Newsletter, we printed Pat Perry's story about the amazing accomplishments of her truly special companion and therapy dog, Sasha. Just prior to its publication, we learned of the loss of this extraordinary dog. Below is her obituary which was submitted to the Plattsburg, NY Press Republican.

*The 11-year-old German Shepherd and her owner/mother, Patricia Perry, were regular Sunday morning visitors to CVPH Medical Center, brightening the day for both young and old, patients and families. Sasha was always willing to dress for any occasion and led the hospital's Halloween parade for many years. She also donned bunny ears and a tail for the children's Easter egg hunt on the hospital lawn.*

*Certified through Therapy Dogs of Vermont, Sasha and Pat attended the Shelburne Museum Goes to the Dogs event every year to promote the work of TDV. In 2011, she took the grand prize, dressed as part of a Native American Village with the help of two young friends.*

*Just weeks before being diagnosed with cancer, she participated in this year's event, winning second place in the Olympic sport category.*

*On many occasions, Pat and Sasha would fulfill special requests to visit people in nursing and hospice homes. Last year, they made several trips to Vermont to visit a terminal patient who once had a German Shepherd and wanted to see one for the final time.*

*Although Sasha always received quality care from Champlain Valley Veterinary Services, she developed an incurable blood vessel cancer. It took great strength and deep love for Pat to let her go.*



*Say Hello to TDV's future volunteer*

With great delight, we can report that Pat brought home a nine week old longhaired German Shepherd in November whom she named Willow. Pat tells us "Willow is adjusting really well. She received a thorough vet exam yesterday and thankfully was pronounced healthy. She's become my shadow and is quite the go getter, but very sweet. She's a sweetie and very mellow. She likes to be held and is a good kisser. I've already starting taking her places to begin socializing her."

## TDV EXPANDS OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please join us in welcoming Katie Ziegler, Carey Laubenberg, Julia Page, and Connie Barrett to the Board of Directors of TDV.

**Katie Ziegler** is very active community affairs. She volunteers at North Country Animal League and is the Founder and President of Helping Hearts, a non-profit organization that raises money for various charities whose work ranges from natural disaster relief to providing resources and tuition for students in need. She is also a former member of the Board of Directors for the Lamoille County Food Share. Katie is currently attending the American College of Applied Science with a Major in Canine Behavior Analysis, Care and Counseling.

**Carey Laubenberg** comes to the Board with a wealth of experience in the business sector. She is currently the owner of Peak Personal Training, based in Stowe. She is also the President of the Stowe Chapter of Business Networking International. Carey's educational background includes a BA in Art History from Boston University and an MBA-Marketing from the University of Houston. Carey is passionate about TD. She and her Olde English



*Cont. from TDV Expands our Board of Directors*

Bulldog, Earl, were certified as a therapy dog team this past summer and will soon be spreading their charm at Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin.

**Julia Page** is the Volunteer Services Manager at Central Vermont Medical Center and prior to that, worked in Finance at Fletcher Allen Health Care for ten years. She brings a wealth of facility experience to the Board. Julia lives in central Vermont with my husband and daughter and has a cat named Phoebe.

The TDV team welcomes **Connie Barrett** to the Board of Directors as our new Treasurer. Connie has been a friend of TDV for a long time. She has provided data base support and has handled new member processing and packet mailing in addition to the renewal processing. Connie has been a constant support to team members while always smiling. She is highly skilled in all forms of accounting and computer technology and deals with situations with confidence, excellence, ability and humor. She has strong interpersonal, communication, and listening skills, keen attention to detail, excellent time management and organizational skills. Her solid analytical, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking make her an excellent team player, plus she works well independently. Connie attained an Associate in Science Degree in accounting from Champlain College, and graduated Cum Laude from Southern New Hampshire University with Bachelor of Science Degrees in accounting and finance. Connie currently works as the accountant for Switchback Brewing Company.

TDV is indeed fortunate to have four such talented, capable and compassionate individuals join the Board. We welcome them!

## TDV HAS A VP

Longtime member, and current Director of Certification & Testing, Deb Helfrich, is again TDV's Vice President. This is another giant step ahead for our organization in meeting our fifth strategic goal of Expanding the TDV Board.

### TDV HUB DIRECTORS

**Deb Helfrich**, *Director of Certification and Training*

Carey Laubenberg  
Jason & Emily Reed  
Kristin Comeau  
Karen Odato  
Steve Reiman

### TDV TESTERS and/or EVALUATORS

Raymond Belanger	Tim Pollock	Deborah Schapiro
Brenda Carpenter	Emily Reed	Jenn Vaughan
Callie Field	Jason Reed	Beth Wadleigh
Deb Helfrich	Steve Reiman	

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

### TDV SUPPORT TEAM

**Brenda Altman**, *Liaison to UVM*  
**Dorothy Forsey & Janet Dooley**, *FAHC Coordinators*  
**Elizabeth Hall**, *Administration and Newsletter Design*  
**Kiana Donegan**, *Liaison to Middlebury College*  
**Wendy Huntley**, *Liaison to Camp Ta-Kum-Ta*

### TDV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Bob Uerz**, *Executive Director*  
**Steve Reiman**, *Founder & President*  
**Deb Helfrich**, *VP and Director of Certification & Training*  
**Maryellen Sullivan**, *Board Development and Governance and Secretary*  
**Connie Barrett**, *Member Support & Treasurer*  
**Katie Ziegler**, *Board of Directors and Editor and Woof Design*  
**Carey Laubenberg**, *Board of Directors and Facility Support*  
**Julia Page**, *Board of Directors*

### VOLUNTEER ADVISORS

**Dr. Lisa Nelson**, *Veterinary Behavior Specialist*  
**Nikki Kellaway, CT**, *Veterinary Advisor*  
**Dr. Michael Ricci**, *Health Advisor*  
**Jamie Dayton**, *Business Advisor*  
**Chad Bonanni of Bergeron Paradis & Fitzpatrick, LLP**,  
*Legal Advisor*

