

Welcome New Members!

Alex Lamberton and Lilly
 Melanie Young and Epi
 Kristin Chamberlain and Frankie
 Ed & Mary Coffey and Poppy
 Nikki Kellaway and Kenai
 Lynne Pirkanen and Molly
 Megan Breen and Kiva
 Katrina Haeger and Kitty
 Sue & Thomas Booska and Emmitt
 Marsha Morrell and Ramsey
 Ellen Adams and Warren
 Nichole Curley and Connor

Anita Cohn and Teddy
 Wendy Shea and Nevada
 Naomi Freedner/Robyn Maguire and Jackson
 Macaela Brier and Rou
 Carol Pierce and Sadie
 Laurie McIntosh and Cooper
 Alicia Kroll and Val
 Matthew Johnson/Chandelle Trahan and Nugget
 Marc Richter and Darby
 Jill Sweet and Max

Jeffrey & Wendy Lamphere and Callie
 Rachel Feeley and Isabella
 Donna Buck and Emma
 Jodi Towne and Buggs
 Kim Dannies and Gracie Lovie
 Jill Sweet and Bear
 Deborah Schapiro and Sasha
 Valerie Wise and Harley
 David Meatyard and Liam
 Deb Maddalena and Luther

Greetings from BigDog, Your President & Founder

By Steve Reiman

In my 20 years with TDV, I have never seen so much energy and passion to bring smiles to those in our communities who need them most.

The growth of TDV has been phenomenal. The number of Puppy Classes, Clinics, Testing sessions, and Evaluations has surpassed our wildest predictions. Dogs have retired and passed, members have moved, yet our membership has grown larger than ever before. As of this summer, 220 teams, many with multiple dogs, are making visits all over Vermont and neighboring states. They visit residents in retirement communities and nursing homes. They visit patients in rehabilitation facilities and treatment centers, inmates in correctional facilities, and residents in shelters and crisis centers. They help students, faculty, and staff in schools, libraries, and youth centers.

The totally VOLUNTEER 7-person TDV Officer Team shows constant innovation at the core of our operations. Your team focuses on the power of ideas, pursuing the innovative vision, and taking creative risks. They communicate, cooperate, and collaborate, often on a DAILY BASIS and at monthly meetings, to continually improve the organization. **And, they need helpers so if you have a special talent or some time, we really need your help.**

I look forward to meeting many of you at TDV booths during summer and fall events, and am committed to doing my best to help TDV meet all of your expectations.

To all TDV members, I want to say that you continue to make me proud. To all officers and support people, I am truly grateful to all of you because without you, there would be a lot less smiling going on.





Ask Isa

Isa and Deb Helfrich

If you have a question for me, please e-mail it to: admin@therapydogs.org. I can use your name or you can remain anonymous! Looking forward to your questions! —Isa

Dear Isa:

I have a young newly-certified therapy dog and she's great after a few minutes in the facility, but she can be very excitable when we first get in the door. How can we temper that initial enthusiasm so we don't seem like a bomb coming through the door?

—Tippy's mom, Barb

Dear Barb:

Enthusiasm and wanting to visit is a good thing! However, we also want teams to be in control and calm. So, here are some tips for helping an enthusiastic, and/or young therapy dog make a better entrance!

•Take Tippy for a brisk run around the parking lot or facility grounds to get out that energy from the car ride and arriving at the facility. I like to play Frisbee before I work, so we play some disc in the grassy area in front of the nursing home (we made sure to ask permission to do this off leash—and the residents like to watch me catch the disc from the windows!).

•Start using some simple habits/behaviors to get Tippy into work mode before you go into the facility. For example, put on your TDV bandanna and do five minutes of obedience exercises; use a training cue like “working now”.

•If you are working with other therapy dog teams, always meet them outside the facility to get greeting out of the way and go into work mode. floor so you can avoid those rooms.

•Use Tippy's desire to meet people as a reward and training tool—so instead of letting her burst in the door, if there's someone wanting to greet her, ask her to be in control (a sit is excellent). Then when she is in quiet control, let her meet (this is her reward).

•Use a command for eye contact (look or watch me) to get her focused on you for a calm entry.

•Use a command like sit or heel to tell Tippy what to do with her energy when she's all excited to start working!

•Use a command for eye contact (look or watch me) to get her focused on you for a calm entry.

Hope this helps! Safe and happy visiting to you both!

If you have any questions related to making safe visits, please do not hesitate to e-mail Deb or Isa at admin@therapydogs.org or Christy and Andy, your member support officers, at membersupport@therapydogs.org

Gentle Persuasion in Training Your Dog

By Fr. Al. Murphy



Shortly after the first quarter of the last century, when I was a runny nosed kid about nine years old, I did not expect to witness a man, with his big dog, stop to beat his “companion” with a chain. To this day, I can see the poor animal with glassy eyes and sharp teeth, poised for a vicious attack. Before the abuse, I saw a dog merely pulling on the leash. It stands to reason that, instructing a dog should be conducted when the handler is not subject to an agitated

emotional state. Just as reprehensible as a parent beating a child after a bad day in the workplace (or for any reason), cruelty toward animals has no place either.

Mahatma Gandhi declares, “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way in which its animals are treated.” Paul Owens in *The Dog Whisperer* introduces us to a compassionate, nonviolent approach to dog training. He stresses the point that the process used to teach our companions to “sit,” for example, is as important as the result. Gentle persuasion is based in kindness, respect, and compassion. The command we give is full of power—and part of this power is based in the silence before, after, and between each command.

The author writes about the classic conditioning discovered by the behaviorist Ivan Pavlov in the 1930s. Pavlov conditioned his dog to “think” of food when he sounded a bell. Thus, whenever a bell rang, the dog associated the sound with food. Just imagine what Ivan’s companion went through when church bells called the faithful to prayer. Paul Owens suggests another training technique: Operant Conditioning. Operant means operating or producing an effect. A reward is given because a behavior was performed. Dogs must earn what they receive. This is not teasing. Rather, our Alpha status is reinforced. And the dog will respect us for taking the lead in their lives.

Before training begins Deborah Wood suggests in her book *The Tao of Bow Wow*, to seek silence with your dog. Breathe with their breathing. Make stillness precious time together; gently stroking his head. Think of the action (heel, down, stay) you want your dog to perform. Then, do the exercises.

Let me use just a bit more space by referring to Arturo Toscanini and Pierre Monteux, two contemporary music conductors in the 1800s. Both, in their own way, could draw the best out of their musicians. However, Toscanini trained by stamping his foot, screaming, and throwing his baton at the musicians. Monteux, on the other hand, taught by using a calmer method. He trained his people to understand that his glance at a violinist, for example, meant he was displeased with the unprepared performer. Raising his little finger was the signal for a section to regroup their thinking.

Monteux made it known that he was trying to help the musicians to be better at the art of music. Both men accomplished their objective: fine music. Monteux created his goal with gentle compassion while Toscanini created ulcers.

In Memory of Bill Fleming

PAWS for Reading Volunteer 2005-2009

Randolph's PAWS for Reading volunteers join the staff at Randolph Elementary School in mourning the death of Bill Fleming. Bill and his dog, Oscar, came to school to read with children for four years. Bill was an avid supporter of the PAWS program. In spite of being legally blind, Bill came to school faithfully, transported by his driver who later came back and drove Bill and Oscar to work in Brookfield.

Bill loved working with the children and encouraging them to become confident readers. He was especially effective because he remembered his own struggles in school. Oscar is a big, gentle pit bull who was much loved by children and adults alike. Bill was special to many children at Randolph Elementary during the four years that he served as a volunteer.

Last year toward the end of the school year, Bill was diagnosed with heart problems and was hospitalized. In spite of his serious health issues, he arranged for gift certificates for each child in Carol Petty's classroom where he had been volunteering during the school year. Toting his portable oxygen, he went to visit the class and present the gifts along with a poem he had written for the children. Soon after that visit, Bill and Oscar moved to eastern Pennsylvania to live with his sister and to seek medical help in the Philadelphia area.



During the present school year, Bill asked to become a PAWS pen pal and corresponded with a new group of second graders in Ms. Petty's class. The children have sent messages to him and Oscar and have received individual answers to their letters. In fact, Bill wrote to the class just before he died. His sister is going to send the messages after the funeral services. Those children, who already have a special connection with Bill, will have the unique

experience of knowing how important they were to this man even as he struggled with such serious health problems.

Bill's Poem to Ms. Petty's 2nd Graders

By Bill Fleming, June 2009

*Here's just a quick note from me and my Boy,
Spending time with you all has been quite a joy.
Oscar enjoyed your stories...and biscuits too,
And now he has something to give to all of you.*

*He thought long and hard on what you might need,
And decided on giving you your own book to read.
This book will be special to you there's no doubt,
You'll need to go to the bookstore and pick your own out.*

*Cover to Cover Books is a great store downtown;
Have someone take you there and look around.
You'll find lots of good books just waiting to be found.*

*When you pick out that book,
That special one for you,
There are a couple more things you need to do.*

*Go home with your new book,
Find a quiet place to read,
Let the story grow on you,
Like a flower planted from a seed.*

*Books can be fun in their own special way,
Taking you places depending what they say.
In return for this gift there is one thing I'll ask,
Reading twenty minutes a week will be your task.*

*So enjoy your book but follow the rule,
Read twenty minutes a week and be better at school!*

Listen to Your Dog

By Steve Reiman

In between the “Oh, what cute dogs!” and “Can I pat your dogs?” there was a resounding voice which asked “Do you remember me?” Karen Nolan and Lessie Reiman were in the lobby of the FAHC preparing to sign in for duty with Gus and Micro. The voice was that of Sabrina Hammons of Malone, NY and indeed she was remembered.



“I have to tell you what happened after you visited with my son a while back” she said. Karen remembered the visit well. Her Yorkshire Terrier, Gus, was on Blake’s bed in the Pediatric Unit. She remembered that the 7 year old was a bit disoriented and disinterested in the visit when Gus began to bark. Karen quickly told Gus to stop barking while thinking that she might get kicked out of the hospital or even worse, get kicked out of TDV. But Gus kept it up and the bark was a new sound Karen had never heard. It was different than the Chipmunk alert, different than barking at someone at the front door. She remembers that it was an urgent and meaningful bark.

Unable to control the barking, Karen apologized and led the agitated terrier from the room and out of the ward. Gus didn’t bark at anyone or anything after that.

Sabrina continued saying that she knew her son hadn’t been acting quite right that day. He had previously had a minor seizure last March and was here for more tests and an MRI. “Within 15 minutes after you left our room, Blake had a Grand Mal Seizure which lasted 8 hours . . . and Gus sensed that it was going to happen.” Immediately Gus went from “Bad Barking Dog” to “Hero Seizure Alert Dog”.

After the shock of hearing this, Sabrina, Karen, Lessie, Micro, and Mr. (SAD) Gus went to visit with Blake in Pedi. Blake, now a happy, alert, and charming little fellow didn’t remember the prior visit. The MRI determined that he has a congenital brain defect and that is what causes the seizures. This time, Gus was his normal quiet but playful self and he and his partner, Micro, had a wonderful time entertaining and cheering up their young friend.

I can only imagine that Gus had been desperately trying to tell everyone about Blake’s impending medical situation. My guess is that Gus does his best to let his Mommy know about what he sees and feels but she doesn’t always understand. I bet she’ll pay more attention now.

Blake is home now and we all wish him every good wish for a speedy and complete recovery.

A Companion for All Seasons

By Steve Reiman

Fr. Al Murphy has been a member of TDV with two of his Golden Retrievers, and a very good friend, for some time. He has also been a blessing by writing many thoughtful, meaningful articles for our newsletters.

Last year, our TDV Director of Training/Certification, Deb Helfrich, collected his stories, added pictures, and bound them as a Christmas present back to Fr. Al. Fr. Al then came up with a wonderful idea...his Christmas present could become a gift shared with many others who have been in some way touched by TDV or been a friend to TDV. So, Fr. Al had the book published and distributed to raise funds for our organization. His love for TDV is unparalleled, and he is aware of the difficult times we face.

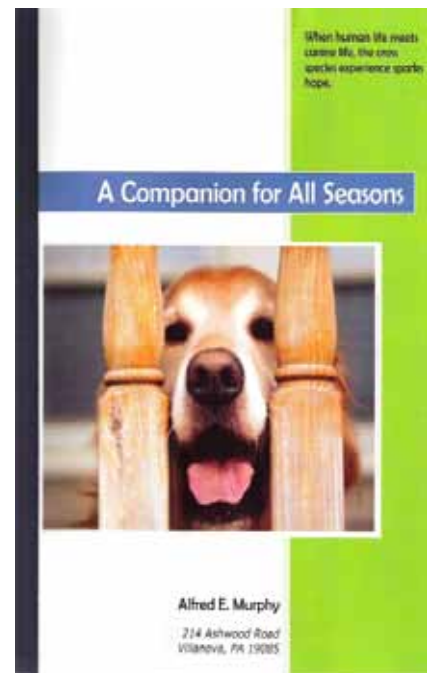
Fr Al’s book is available for a donation of any size (suggested gift minimum is \$20.00). If you would like a copy of A Companion for All Seasons please mail a donation to:

Therapy Dogs of Vermont
PO Box 1271
Williston, VT 05495

Please include the address to where you would like the book mailed.

The hope is that Fr. Al’s generosity, along with that of our members and friends, will help not only to sustain what we do, but also spread the joy of our therapy dogs to many more facilities and communities. We rely on donations to provide for all of our programs.

Thank you, Fr. Al, for this incredibly generous thing you have done for TDV.



Welcome Tamara Kelly, Volunteer Fundraising Officer

By Steve Reiman



TDV welcomes our new volunteer Fundraising and Giving Officer, Tamara Kelley. Tamara, born in Alaska, is a total animal lover. She loves to fish, hike, camp and do things outside. She has two pups, Smith and Wesson, and two cats, Bella and Oliver. She graduated from Essex Jct. High School and Endicott College. She grew up all over the world, since her dad was active duty military.

Tamara is a super volunteer and believes that it is important to help people and communities as much as possible. She says that it is an amazing feeling of self-satisfaction knowing that you did something that will help others. To her, TDV is the total package. She gets to work with dogs and she gets to help people.

She is very passionate about what TDV does and says she is going to work and fight to raise money that we desperately need so we can continue to do what we do and do it even better. So far, she has started a dialog with United Way. She has already acquired sizeable donations from local companies, is talking with professional development/fundraising experts and documenting their ideas, and developing an overall multi-faceted funding plan to guide us where we should put our best efforts.

Tamara says she would love to meet every member and dog team and have them share stories with her.

Welcome aboard Tamara!!

TDV Administration Assistant Change

By Steve Reiman

In June of 2009, Connie Barrett became TDV's Administrative Support Contractor. She picked up much of the administrative work formerly handled mostly by me. What a blessing she has been to me and others of your volunteer officer team. No one realizes the amount of effort which is required to run TDV. Much of it is related to the processing of new members and the related upkeep of our database and lists. Connie receives each new member's paperwork, checks it for completeness, prepares the materials that each new member receives, and then carefully enters many pieces of data into our database; she also deals with wrong and missing paperwork to make sure all ducks are in a row. Considering we have over 220 members and are new members at an amazing rate, this is an enormous job requiring lots of attention to detail and many hours. Connie

also handles most of the member renewal tasks, working with our member support team, each year for several months: preparing renewal forms and letters each member receives for the member support team to print and mail, receiving all of the returned forms and money, making sure they are complete and entering them into our database, mailing back out renewal confirmations, and preparing reports for the member support team on missing or late items. And all this for over 200 members!! And, always done professionally and with a high attention to detail and accuracy. And, lastly, she is always a pleasure to work with and we all love her humor, her upbeat attitude, and her genuine love of TDV's work. During the year, she manages the TDV member database and the MANY updates required. She also works very closely with our Treasurer to manage our book-keeping. The time commitment on her shoulders has been massive and we are all so thankful for her help because it allows officers to work on projects that move TDV forward.

No words can express how much we all love this special person, for all that she has done and for all that she is to us. Connie is turning over the job, but will be TDV's Lifetime Honorary Administrator. She will be training our new Admin Contractor and has agreed will help out whenever needed. Thank you, dear Connie, from all of us.

In July, Elizabeth Hall began picking up the Administrative Support duties. Her technical and administrative skills have been well documented and we look forward to working with her in moving TDV forward. Welcome aboard Elizabeth!

TDV NEEDS YOUR HELP

Out of the Trucks of our Cars and on Our Lunch Breaks Over 220 certified therapy dogs require support. They make thousands of visits in hundreds of facilities. We make countless public appearances, set up at events, and provide informational requests. The operational and daily management tasks take hours each day to complete.

All completed by 8 volunteers who desperately need your help to continue TDV's mission.

TDV's operational needs are significant and the resources needed to certify, train, place, and support each therapy dog team and the facilities they work in is staggering. Our volunteer team needs your help to make sure TDV can continue to touch people with its special canine magic.

How you can help: Offer your expertise as a business manager, financial planner, fundraiser, or strategic planner to help us manage TDV's immediate needs as well as build a plan for our future. Or you can donate money via our website or by sending a check to:

Therapy Dogs of Vermont

P.O. Box 1271

Williston, VT 05495

TDV is a 501(C)(3) so all donations are tax deductible.

Karen Fiebig & Therapy Dog Renee

By Karen Fiebig



When I started working with my dog Renee as a certified pet therapy team on the CVMV Medical/Surgical Unit in September 2009, I had some idea of how her loving nature would bring comfort to the patients. But, now I see that Renee's job encompasses so much more. She makes the staff smile as they stop by to say hi, and she seems to ease some of the anxiety of families who are visiting with their loved ones. As Renee offers her head to be petted, the patients are reminded

of their own pets and happily tell me all about them. Sometimes, just looking into Renee's bright eyes and seeing her wagging tail changes someone's mood for the better.

Our path toward becoming a therapy dog team had some interesting turns. Growing up, my family always had pets. But during the years while I was a city mail carrier for the Postal Service, I developed a fear of dogs after several scary encounters. When I retired, I knew I wanted to spend more time volunteering. I heard about the puppy-raising program through Guiding Eyes for the Blind and thought that might be a good way to learn how to love dogs again. My husband and I applied for a puppy, and we received an eight week old black Lab named Renee. After giving her our love, socialization, and obedience training over a year, she was taken back to Guiding Eyes for professional training.

Renee was smart and willing, but in the final stages she didn't have the confidence necessary to lead a blind person. Guiding Eyes offers their puppy raisers the first chance to adopt dogs released from training. By this time I knew others who had given their dogs new careers with Therapy Dogs of Vermont (TDV) so Renee and I applied to become a certified team. The certification process includes a test of Renee's temperament and obedience, and then we were evaluated as a team during three actual visits. It took us a month to fulfill the requirements, and we passed with flying colors! Through TDV I learned about volunteer opportunities at Central Vermont Medical Center. We

enrolled with Volunteer Services at CVMC and have been visiting weekly since.

I love it at CVMC. The hospital has a calm and welcoming atmosphere and Woodbridge is the nicest nursing home I've ever visited. Every week Renee and I make at least one special connection with a patient or family member. Truly this is the most rewarding way I've ever found to volunteer and I hope to encourage other TDV members with loving dogs to join us here at CVMC and Woodbridge.

For more information about volunteering at CVMC, contact the Volunteer Services at 371-5364.



TDV Officers

Steve Reiman *President/Founder*

Linda Samter, *Treasurer*

Deb Helfrich, *Testing & Training*

Sherri Bushee, *Events Coordinator*

Christy & Andy Hollstein, *Member & Facility Support*

Tamara Kelley, *Fundraising & Giving*

TDV Support Team

Thomas Oliver, *Liaison to UVM*

Cathy Jones, *FAHC Coordinator*

Kristin Jones, *Communications Advisor*

Dr. Lisa Nelson, *Veterinary Behavior Consultant*

Dr. Michael Ricci, *Health Advisor*

Starr Jewell Marketing Services, *Design*

Chad Bonanno, *Legal Advisor*

Jenn Knauer, *Facilitator/Team Dynamics Advisor*

Jan Marinelli, *Strategic Advisor*