

**Therapaws
of Michigan, Inc.**

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The Woofers

A publication for and about the volunteer owner-dog teams of Therapaws of Michigan, Inc. The Woofers also may be viewed online at www.therapaws.org

Editor

Mary Ann Trainor

mtrainor02@comcast.net

Web Master

Karen Malone

kmalone@therapaws.org

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Therapaws at work and at play



**Therapaws
Holiday Party,
Friday evening,
December 3. Trinity
Lutheran Church.
Watch for your
invitation. Sorry, no
pet partners.**



Therapaws called upon by local Red Cross to help during Katrina crisis....

By Mary Ann Trainor

I was having lunch with Karen OConnor one afternoon—shortly after Hurricane Katrina turned the Gulf Coast upside down—when I received a call on my cell phone from the Red Cross. Could we mobilize the dogs to begin making visits at the Washtenaw County Chapter of the American Red Cross? Karen and I had spent most of our lunch talking about the horrible conditions Katrina left in her wake and how we wished we could do something more than write a check. Still, I was a little surprised with the request.

Therapaws of Michigan has a relationship with the local Red Cross, working with them at several of their events. But what could we possibly do to help, being several hundred miles from the scene? My Red Cross colleague went on to explain that thousands of people called into this local chapter alone to volunteer to help Katrina victims. They all had to be called back and appointments scheduled for emergency screening, orientation, and training so they could get as many volunteers as possible to the affected areas as quickly as possible.

Taking a toll

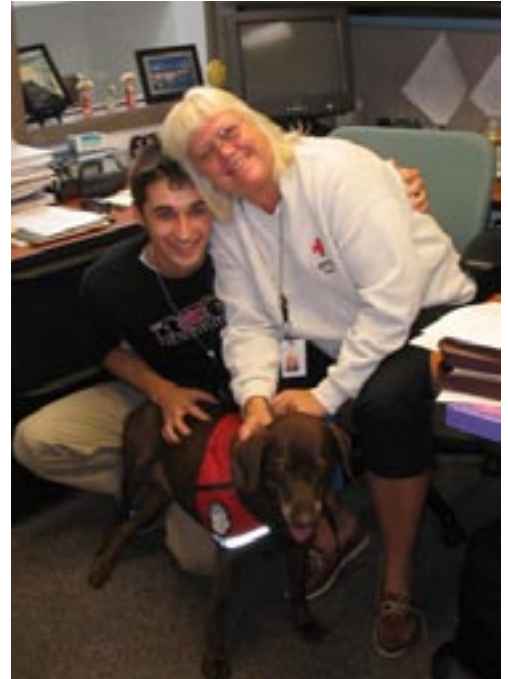
Red Cross staff already had been working day and night screening and training the volunteers, processing financial donations, and ramping up the call for blood donors. Now, some evacuees were making their way up to Michigan and were being triaged at the Red Cross facility. The long hours were beginning to take a toll and these wonderful people who spend their careers helping others, were in need of a little respite themselves. Thankfully, someone thought about the therapy dogs so I sent out a broadcast email to the Therapaws membership asking for help.

Babe and I arrived first thing the next day and it was amazing. The Emergency Services Director told me to feel free to go to every classroom, every office, every conference room, and just walk

Therapaws welcomes new members

Anna Marie Anzalone and Jester
Trish Deeds and Meg
Bill French and Katie
Patricia Pardon and Lizzie

A visit from Babe brings big smiles to a Red Cross volunteer and staffer. Several Therapaws teams visited the Red Cross in the aftermath of Katrina.



Danny sports his Therapaws scarf as Karen Eisenbrey gets him ready to greet Red Cross staff.

in, quietly of course, and gauge the reception you get and the busyness of the work being done.

The staff stopped everything to pet Babe and laugh and smile and talk for a few minutes. We didn't stay in any one office too long because they were all so busy. We then went into the classrooms (two on the main floor and one make-shift classroom in the basement garage) and walked quietly around the room, letting everyone pet her. The rooms were being used to give emergency training and orientation throughout the day and night for volunteers who wanted to go South.

Pet Partnerships pay off in many ways during disaster situations



Karen O'Connor (left) with Kaylee (Golden), and her girlfriend Babe, make the rounds charming staff and volunteers.

ed back couldn't believe how they were so welcomed. One staff person commented that there were no dog visits one day and they missed our furry friends and looked so forward to seeing them in the hallways. Eventually, we were able to spend more time with families who had been evacuated. One person was so moved when we came in, she started crying. Not only were all her possessions gone, but she lost her two cats in the flood as well.

Being on site at the Red Cross facility during those weeks was an inspiration. We heard a lot of heart wrenching stories on one hand, and a lot of heart warming reasons why people reach out to help on the other hand. Strangely, what we never heard was one single complaint from Red Cross staff during our visits. No matter how busy or frazzled they appeared they always told us they were doing just fine, grateful that they were able to help the victims. And Therapaws was able to do just a little bit to help them, as well.



Red Cross staff take a short break to visit with Pat Haber (right) and Gus, who seems to enjoy posing for the camera.

On the lower level, they were beginning to welcome hurricane victims who managed to get to Michigan. There were not too many yet, but as they came in volunteers were posted all along the hallways extending their hands and saying "Welcome to Michigan, Welcome to Michigan," and escorting them to the interview area.

Awhile later, Pat Haber came with Gus and she went through the staff area on the second floor and they couldn't get enough of Gus. Throughout the following weeks, several Therapaws teams made visits to the Red Cross. Everyone who report-

From the President

At the September 14 meeting of the Therapaws Board of Directors, the Board voted to contribute \$2,000, on behalf of Therapaws, to an organization involved in animal care and rescue as a result of Hurricane Katrina. After checking with Therapy Dogs Inc., and other such organizations, the Board agreed to donate \$1,000 to "Noah's Wish," an animal welfare organization dedicated exclusively to the rescue and shelter of animals in disaster situations throughout the United States and Canada, and \$1,000 to the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine's Hurricane Katrina Emergency Animal Shelter program.

I wish to thank all of you who donated to other animal welfare organizations on your own, and the following teams who made visits to the Red Cross:

Grace Bowles and Cassie
Karen Eisenbrey and Danny
Pat Haber and Gus
Cathy Leadley and Dixie
Sue Machin and Sandy
Karen O'Connor and Kaylee
Mary Ann Trainor and Babe
Joyce Williams/Gregg Lyon and Nicki

Karen O'Connor



Therapaws at work

Editor's Note: While *The Woofers* features on its pages the Therapaws teams who appear at special community events, we don't want to forget that some 60 teams visit nearly 20 local facilities on a regular basis. These include hospitals, rehabs, assisted living centers, nursing homes, psych centers, libraries, etc., and are the backbone of our organization. Let's hear from you (and your dog) about your regular assignment.

Cancer Survivors' Celebration Day

In June, hundreds of cancer survivors, their families and friends, and healthcare providers gathered at the University of Michigan's Cancer Survivors' Celebration Day. The annual event, celebrated nationwide, honors those who have survived the dreaded disease.

Participants included representatives from Gilda's Club of Metro Detroit and the American Cancer Society. The U. of M. Comprehensive Cancer Center, sponsor of the Ann Arbor celebration, provided an information fair, family activities, and plenty of food and beverages.

Also invited were Therapaws teams who routinely visit patients at the University of Michigan Hospital. Attending were Lana Berry and Casey; Mary Lou Black and Molly; Karen Eisenbrey and Danny, and Mickey Sloan and Torie.

Pain Awareness Program

Therapaws teams were invited for the second year to participate in the University of Michigan's Pain Awareness Month program in September at Towsley Triangle. Sponsored by the hospital's Sedation Analgesia and Pain Management unit, the teams were there on two different days to help demonstrate how therapy animals can help in pain management.

Attending were Mary Anzalone and Tinker; Wendy Baker and Sera; Lana Barry and Casey; Karen Eisenbrey and Danny, and Mickey Sloan and Torie. Margie Goodnoe and Mary Ann Trainor staffed the Therapaws table with a banner, brochures, and pencils.

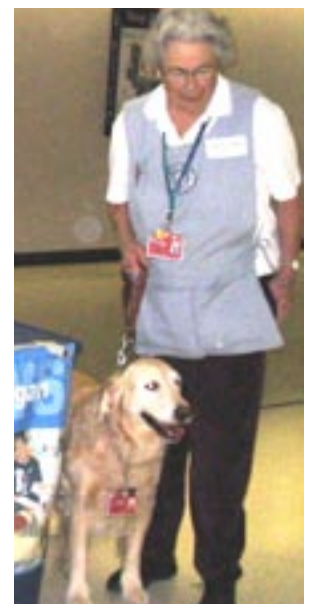
Other Therapaws Events

Among other recent events that Therapaws teams were invited to participate in were:

- A conference for children, teens, and young adults with implantable cardiovert defibrillators. The annual conference is sponsored by the University of Michigan's Cardiovascular Center and Mott Hospital Congenital Heart Center.
- A community fundraising project sponsored by the Medical Information Services (MIS) staff of the University of Michigan Health System. MIS donated \$750 of the money raised to Therapaws.



At the Survivors' Celebration Day were:
ABOVE LEFT: Lana Berry (kneeling) with Casey.
ABOVE RIGHT: Karen Eisenbrey (left) with Danny.
LEFT: Mary Lou Black and Dr. Molly.



Therapaws' new banner already has appeared at many special events.

At the Pain Awareness event were:
ABOVE: Mickey Sloan and Torie.
ABOVE LEFT: Wendy Baker, Sera, nurse clown, and patient.



Therapaws at play



Picnic in the Park

Therapaws members and their canine partners enjoyed a beautiful sunny afternoon at the second Annual Picnic on Sunday, Aug. 28, 2005. Once again, the event was at the Hudson Mills Metropark, where there was plenty of room to romp, play games, and show off.

A highlight of the event was an exhibition of "Brilliant Pet Tricks," by Bunny and Buck, both Black Labs. Bunny's owner and trainer is Scott Sample and Buck (still a puppy) is being trained by Michelle McCarthy as a Service Dog for a young friend who is paralyzed. Both dogs performed admirably, even with all the distractions that accompany a gathering of dogs, kids, and hundreds of buzzing bees.

Treats and beverages were available for dogs and their owners and a photographer was on hand to take photos of member teams for posting on the website. Many thanks go to Karen Eisenbrey and Robin Petrillo for all their work in making this a very successful event.

Save the dates for a Bow Wow Weekend: May 6-7, 2006

Therapaws will be sponsoring a conference next spring featuring Virginia Broitman, a dog trainer specializing in positive reinforcement training and behavior modification. The two-day conference will be held May 6-7, 2006 at the Best Western in Ann Arbor and will include lectures, discussions, and working sessions.

Therapaws members will be receiving more details. In the meantime, you may access the Therapaws website at www.therapaws.org for more information or contact Michelle McCarthy at michelle@k9homeschooling.com or at (734) 395-2608.

ABOVE LEFT: Scott Sample with Bunny.
ABOVE RIGHT: Karen Eisenbrey with Danny (foreground), and Margy Goodnoe with Cooper.
RIGHT: Michelle McCarthy with Bunny and Buck.



ABOVE: Denise Pitcher with her son Chase and dog Riva.
LEFT: Mary Anzalone and Tinker.

Moving on after grief by looking back at ...

Editor's Note: *We don't necessarily want to fill the pages of "The Woofers" with sad stories, but such sadness is a very real part of our lives as Therapaws teams. The three stories on these pages came through email last spring. I have selected excerpts from each of them to show the tremendous contributions these dogs have made and how their owners are moving on after grief.*

By Kathy Ward

I lost my beloved boxer Daisy on May 5, 2005, to kidney disease. We were going to celebrate her sixth birthday in just another month. My vet had been monitoring her kidney dysfunction for about three years and she was on a prescription dog food. We felt we were keeping it under control—until May. Daisy had what I thought was a seizure. I think now that it was probably a stroke. I took her in to the vet. The blood work was sent to an outside lab and we'd have to wait for the results until the next day. In the meantime, the vet said she looked in very good shape and her heart sounded good and we could rule that out as a problem.

The next day Daisy had another stroke just before the vet called and gave me the horrible news. The kidneys were shutting down. The toxin levels had built up so high there was nothing they could do for her. One day I had a seemingly healthy dog, and the next I'm holding my dear friend in my arms knowing she was slowly dying. The last stroke left



Kathy Ward with her beloved Daisy.

Continuing Sydney's legacy

Hi and thank you for the informative newsletters. I read them all cover to cover with much enthusiasm.

I write to bring you the sad news of Sydney Treston Aurand. Sydney was diagnosed with brain cancer in May and continued on a downhill course throughout the summer. On June 30th, Syd was laid to rest. She had a remarkable career as a therapy dog and put me in contact with many remarkable people. She will be missed by myself and family and many friends.

Sydney was the first pet therapy dog at Livingston (St. Joseph Mercy in Howell) and because she did such a great job, there are now more teams. Thank you for all of your continued support. Meeko and I will try and continue her legacy.

Jan Treston Aurand

her unable to use her rear legs. I just sat and cried and held her, waiting for my husband to come home to drive us to the vet. There was no time to contemplate what to do, no other decision. We both held her and cried as she went off to sleep forever.

It took me days to think of anything but seeing her lying there like that, but I asked God to hold me up and give me strength to go on, and He did. He helped me to remember the very good times, and all the good that Daisy had done for others.

I had begun to volunteer for the Palliative Care (terminal diseases) group at the Veterans Hospital last May. I was waiting for certification for Daisy from Therapaws and when that came in, Daisy started going to work with me every Friday. My job was to visit and encourage the patients for Palliative Care but as I'd walk down the halls, so many others would be interested in seeing Daisy. I began to routinely stop at each room and say "Good morning! How are you this morning?" If I got a positive response, I'd go in and introduce myself and Daisy. One man had been in Viet Nam and had been a "dog man." He handled one of the many dogs that had gone over to sniff out booby traps and act as sen-

... precious moments, lasting contributions

tries. He belonged to the War Dogs Association and proudly wore the shirt, even there in the hospital. He sat on the floor and cuddled Daisy in his arms, almost in tears. He told me of his dog in Viet Nam and the sadness of leaving him there. The order, “Dog man, take the point!” was something he told me with such honor. Daisy made such an impact on him, and brightened his weeks there so much, that he gave us both a hug when he was going home.

After losing Daisy, I was still going into the hospital because I didn’t just volunteer as a dog handler. Those first visits were so hard. I could visualize clearly our routine of going over for her potty stop before going in, the way she’d back away from the door after it clicked to let us in. She’d look up at the same things on the walls or ceilings every time, down the same hallways, and into the same offices. She’d greet every person sitting in the Volunteer Lounge as we checked in. She’d sniff at the crack of the elevator doors and then look so surprised when it opened. I could even hear the tiny click of her nails as I walked down the halls—alone.

The staff in the four wards where we worked were so wonderful to me. They not only offered sympathy, but gave me hugs and stood and talked, just like mourners at a funeral home. I always said Daisy had a fan club of hundreds at the VA.

After a couple of weeks, I knew I had to look for another dog to train for therapy. Not to re-

place Daisy—that could never be done—but to do the work of encouraging people who had little or no hope. My work just wasn’t as easy, or enjoyable, without the dog to “open those doors.” My husband suggested we get another border collie. (We have a 17 year old that we’ve had for 16 years.) I started looking at border collie rescue sites and found a pretty little candidate who looked a lot like our old lady. Her name was Sally and she was being fostered by the Buckeye Border Collie Rescue. After several emails, filling out the on-line application, and a home-visit, we were approved.

We drove to Tiffin, OH, to meet Sally and bring her home. God only knows what the poor girl had been through before she hit the foster care system. She was about two years old at that time and had been with Buckeye for seven months. She was terrified of a leash and would fight it or flop over in total fear. Her foster moms worked with her until she began to walk on leash in a pretty respectable heel position. She’s far from being able to screen for Therapaws, but we’ll make it. Sally lives up to the border collie intelligence and she’s such a loveable animal. I know that when we get through her trauma of having been shifted from pillar to post in her young life, she’ll settle into being one terrific therapy dog.

Rest in peace, Daisy. Sally is picking up the mantle of your good work.

Jeannie lives on and on and on

We said good-bye to Jeannie. She was having a terrible time with her hind legs. She would head in one direction and the back legs would turn her around to the opposite direction. You could see the frustration in her eyes. I knew she was telling me that the time was now.

My good friend Cathy accompanied me to the Vets with Jeannie on Monday. Of all the times we have had to put pets to sleep, this was definitely the best.

Cindy (Dr. Rushbrook) gave Jeannie a sedative first, so that she was sound asleep when she gave her the final shot. As she gave me a great big hug, Cindy told me that my timing was perfect, that Jeannie died while she still had her dignity and pride. She told me that



Jeannie proudly wore her Leader Dog “Mom” scarf.

she had never met a Shepherd she liked more, and reminded me of all the good that Jeannie had done throughout her life. Five litters of puppies for Leader Dogs for the Blind (46 puppies in all), and the wonderful people we helped through her many years as a Therapaws Dog.

I think God certainly performed a miracle for me. I have done really well, but as I write this, the tears are flowing from my eyes. Nicky misses his companion very much, but last night he finally picked up his tennis ball and told us that he wanted to play.

Now I will be able to spend more time with him, and hopefully I can make him a therapy dog too.

Linda Marken

Therapaws of Michigan, Inc.
P.O. Box 92
Dexter, MI 48130
(734) 332-9115



Therapaws of Michigan, Inc.,
a canine-assisted therapy program,
is dedicated to promoting and
fostering the human-animal bond
in therapeutic and educational
settings.

Visit us on the web:
www.therapaws.org

Are you still a member?

You are if your registration with Therapy Dogs Incorporated is current and you have sent the proper papers to Therapaws of Michigan, Inc.

- For Therapy Dogs Inc., each member has either a January or July renewal date, which can be found on the back of your Therapy Dogs Inc. membership card. The TDInc. renewal form to be signed and returned with your check is sent to you by TDInc. 45 days in advance of the due date, which is either January 1 or July 1. It must be received by the TDInc. office on or before your renewal date or your membership expires, requiring retesting and reapplication.

- For Therapaws, you must forward a copy of your paid TDInc. renewal statement and a current health certificate to Therapaws at P.O. Box 92, Dexter, MI 48130, by January 1, 2006, if your TDInc. renewal is this January. If you are not registered with Therapy Dogs Inc., your dog is no longer insured and therefore should not be making any visits on behalf of Therapaws of Michigan.

Therapaws of Michigan, Inc.
P.O. Box 92
Dexter, MI 48130

To:

