

**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

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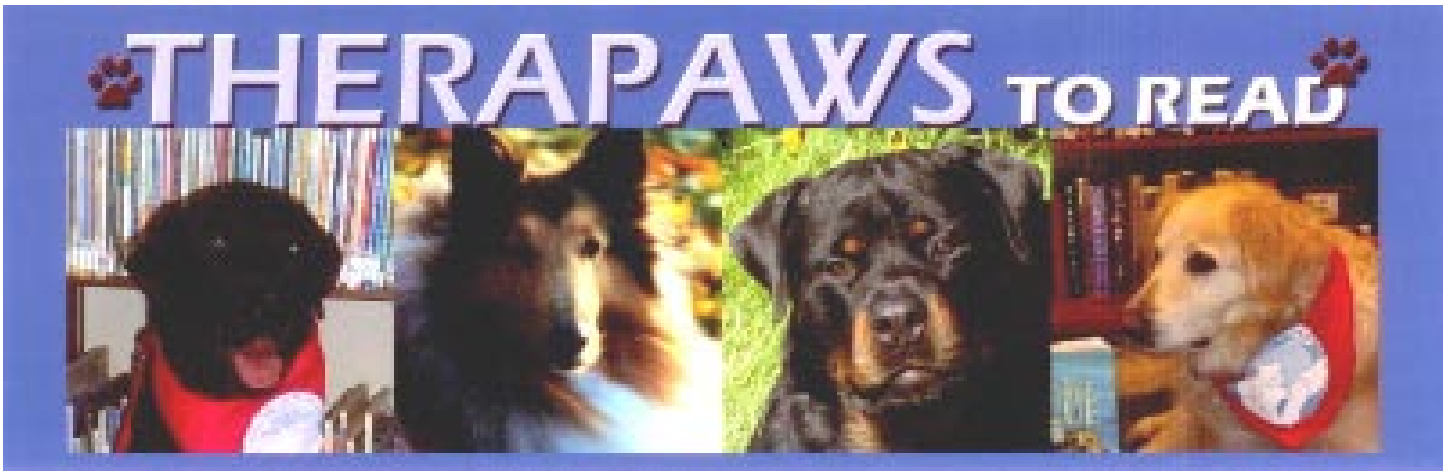
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**Bow Wow Weekend conference
 set for May 6-7 in Ann Arbor**

“Bringing Your Clicker Skills to the Next Level” with Virginia Broitman
 (See pages 4-5 for details)



Virginia Broitman works on loose-leash walking with a Golden Retriever during a recent workshop she conducted in Taipei, Taiwan.



Therapaws to Read bookmarks have been designed and printed (thanks to Denise Pitcher) and are ready to be used in our Read programs. Contact Karen OConnor at KWOC@charter.net for a supply.

Read programs gain in popularity, and importance

The Therapaws to Read program is growing and flourishing in this area—popular with facilities, students, parents, and Therapaws teams alike. In fact, reading to dogs has become such a popular program throughout the country that The Early Show on CBS recently devoted a segment to this growing trend. Some 750 Read teams nationwide visit schools and libraries on a regular basis, getting kids hooked on reading.

According to the show's resident veterinarian, Dr. Debbye Turner, the thinking is that reading out loud helps reading comprehension. And reading to a dog is apparently less scary than reading to a person.

While there are no formal studies that prove the program works, research does show that just being around a dog reduces anxiety. And less anxiety promotes better learning. The National Assessment of Education Progress reports that kids who don't read for fun have much lower scores than kids who do.

Dr. Turner adds that dogs can detect bombs, help the physically challenged and even sniff out cancer. Now, some educators say they're helping elementary school children learn to read. Therapaws is proud to be a part of this educational program and currently has teams in Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter, and Ypsilanti.

- Ann Arbor Academy is new with the Therapaws to Read program and targets those who need extra reading time. Suzanne Mahler and Sadie visit there.

- Chelsea Library is now managing the Therapaws to Read program themselves, with Grace Bowles and Cassie, Happy Jolliffe and Flag, Michelle McCarthy and Leo, and Karen OConnor and Kaylee conducting sessions there.

- Cornerstone Elementary School in Dexter targets students in second grade. Grace Bowles and

Cassie, Kathe Fogleman and Dolly, Sandy Hansen and Angus, and Karen OConnor and Kaylee are the regulars in Dexter.

- Ypsilanti Library also is new to the Therapaws to Read program. Those making visits are Pat Haber and Gus, Mary Lynn Samford and Logan, and Suzanne Mahler and Sadie. Ypsilanti is looking for more Therapaws to Read teams to make visits. If you are interested, email Pat Haber, Read coordinator for Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, at: pathaber@msn.com. According to Pat, the Ann Arbor Library program is on hold for now.

Parents report that it is the joy of their child's week to read to the dogs. And according to the Therapaws to Read teams, you can tell how much the children enjoy it by the smiles on their faces. The dogs lap it up as well. What's not to like?

Can you guess who a heart patient's best friend is?

Results of a recent study, published in the New York Times on November 16, 2005, reported that people hospitalized with advanced heart disease do better when they have a dog (and handler) visitor than when they have only a human visitor and/or lie quietly alone.

According to the senior author of the study, dogs are a great comfort. They make people happier, calmer, and feel more loved. That is huge when you are scared and not feeling well. Anxiety levels, epinephrine levels, and pressure levels in the heart all dropped when patients were visited by a dog.

A Message from the President

On behalf of the Board of Directors and all the members of Therapaws, I wish to welcome the following new teams to our ranks:

Tracy Dunbar and Spencer, VA
Kathe Fogleman and Dolly, Read
Diana Gasek and Sophie, UMH-Mott
Happy Jolliffe and Flag, VA, Read
Jay Mahler (returning member) and Sadie, UMH
Suzanne Mahler and Sadie, Read
Mary Lynn Samford and Logan, StJH, Read
Gloria Van Alstine and Annie, VA

We are pleased you stayed the course and we thank you for your patience. While we have been streamlining the Therapaws screening, testing, observing, and placement processes over the past year or two, the Board of Directors has voted to make another change that will further speed the progression.

Applicant teams now will be required to first contact and secure registration and insurance coverage with Therapy Dogs Inc. (TDInc.) before applying to Therapaws. In the past, Therapaws served as the initial contact and oversaw all aspects of the qualification process. Once an applicant team has been tested, registered, and insured by TDInc., they may initiate the Therapaws qualification process via our website. (It's a little like being pre-approved for a mortgage before buying a new house.) Becoming registered with TDInc., however, does not mean an applicant automatically meets the Therapaws qualifications.

Therapaws handbooks available

Another project the Board has been busy with is the Therapaws handbook, created to help members organize their Therapaws world with items that are important to their work. White binders have been distributed to a number of members, but there are still some who have not gotten theirs. If you need a binder, contact Mary Ann Trainor at: mtrainor02@comcast.net. So far the Membership Directory and the Facilities Directory have been emailed in a .pdf attachment for members to print out and place behind the correct divider. We will be working on the Policies and Procedures and hope to have those ready to email over the next few months.



Raising funds and having fun

Therapaws currently is working on two fund-raising projects. One is Therapaws sponsorship of a



major dog training conference featuring renowned clicker-training expert Virginia Broitman (see details on pages 1, 4, 5). We urge all of you to take advantage of this training, while raising funds for Therapaws programs.

The second fund-raiser is the sale of our stuffed Therapaws puppies (above). They are housebroken, they don't bark, and they don't need to be fed. They just need to be loved. The puppies are \$16 each, which includes shipping right to your door. Or, avoid shipping charges and buy directly for \$10 per dog, with \$4 of that money going to Therapaws. They are available in black and yellow and make wonderful birthday or holiday gifts. Check with your contact person at the facility you visit and see if they are interested in buying (or having for sale) these puppies with the Therapaws neck scarfs. To adopt a puppy, contact Margy Goodnoe at: (734) 769-0576 or at: mgoodnoe@ameritech.net.

With sincere sympathy

One of the saddest parts of our Therapaws work is the passing of our beloved pet partners. On behalf of all the members of Therapaws, I wish to express our sincerest sympathy to current and former members on the recent passing of their dogs:

Sue Fischer and Ripley
Gale Marcoux and Wally
Cindy Stauch and MeMe

We are eternally grateful for the years of service you and your dogs have spent sharing the human-animal bond.

Karen OConnor



Therapaws sponsors Bow Wow Weekend conference with Virginia Broitman, May 6-7

Therapaws is sponsoring a two-day clicker training conference on Saturday and Sunday, May 6-7, 2006, featuring renowned training expert Virginia Broitman. Specializing in positive reinforcement training and behavior modification, Ms. Broitman, has written and co-produced three highly acclaimed “Bow Wow” videos based on clicker training.

She is an award-winning columnist for various training publications and a faculty member of Karen Pryor’s Clicker Expos. Her clicker-trained dogs have been involved with activities such as agility, herding, pet therapy, and TV and advertising work.

The two-day event, which will be held at the Best Western Conference Center, 2900 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor, will cost \$195. A 50 percent discount is available to members of Therapaws, Therapy Dogs Inc., Therapy Dogs International, and the Delta Society, with proof of membership. All proceeds, after costs, go to Therapaws of Michigan.

To register for the conference, or to get more information, go to the Therapaws website at: www.therapaws.org or email Michelle McCarthy at: mmccarthy@therapaws.org.

Workshops on both days will run from 9 AM to 5 PM and will focus on:

- Improving your mechanical skills;
- Maximizing your reinforcers;
- Essential foundation skills;
- Ways to “get” behaviors with special emphasis on shaping;
- Enhancing creativity in both dogs and handlers;
- Advanced Training Concepts (raising criteria, stimulus control, cues as re-enforcers reinforcers, behavior chains, adduction, and compound cues);
- Teaching skills to a fluent level;
- Adding distractions and duration and working at a distance from the handler;
- Solving behavior problems with positive reinforcement.

According to Ms. Broitman, “The clicker is a valuable tool because it allows us to mark good behaviors the exact moment they occur. It’s like taking a snapshot of the perfect behavior. The clicker instantly tells the dog that he is doing a good job and that a reward is coming. Good timing and clear communication allow the dog to learn quickly.”



ABOVE: Virginia Broitman works on “off” “leave it” with a brindle dog during a workshop press event in Taiwan.

LEFT: One of her clicker-trained dogs waves goodbye.

BELOW: Another of her clicker-trained dogs poses for the cameras.





50 percent discount to therapy team members to attend weekend training conference

Bow Wow Weekend Conference Registration

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

CELL: _____

EMAIL: _____

AMOUNT: _____ \$195 full cost, or _____ \$97.50 therapy dog discount
(Check One)

Please note the following:

1. We will be using email for all correspondence unless otherwise requested by the registrant.
2. All therapy dog teams currently registered with Therapaws, Therapy Dogs Incorporated (TDInc.), Therapy Dogs International, and the Delta Society are eligible for the 50 percent discount. Please circle the organization with whom you are registered.
3. If you do not wish to use this form, you may go to the Therapaws website at: www.therapaws.org where you can access and print off all conference materials, including a registration form to fill out and send in with your check.
4. Registrants will receive complete conference details, schedules, etc. in mid-April.
5. Make checks payable to “Therapaws of Michigan” and mail with completed registration form to:

Michelle McCarthy
13599 Seneca Court
Gregory, MI 48137





Lana Berry and Casey (above) and Sandie Langbehn and Sedona (below) were among the 12 teams who participated in the TTouch class.

Dogs, owners benefit from that special TTouch

By Lana Berry

The February 4, 2006 TTouch class, conducted by certified practitioner Manuela Hejna from the Center for Animal Therapy, was attended by 12 team participants. The TTouch is a unique approach to animal training and care. It offers a training approach that encourages optimal performance and health, and presents solutions to common behavioral and physical problems. It helps reduce stress and builds confidence.

We learned the basic TTouches, called the Raccoon TTouch, Lying Leopard TTouch, Ear Touch, and how to do the Body Wrap, which is used for anxiety. Two teams had some major breakthroughs, one in having their dog able to be crated and another in having their owner able to touch his paws.



Manuela has scheduled additional sessions if you missed this one. The schedule can be viewed at: www.centerforanimaltherapy.com. Special thanks to Ann Arbor Animal Hospital for providing the training room for this session.

How to Make a Contribution

Therapaws of Michigan, Inc. is an all-volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. To help further the important work of Therapaws, tax-deductible contributions or bequests may be sent with this form to:

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

Amount: \$ _____

Check #: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

If you wish your contribution to be directed to the **Paws and Remember** program in honor of—or in memory of—a person or pet, please fill in the information below:

Name: _____
Person or pet (cat or dog)

Occasion: _____
Deceased or celebration

Family's Name: _____
Relative or owner

Family's Address: _____

Acknowledgement letters will be sent to you and to the family, in your name.

www.therapaws.org

Don't forget, you can celebrate a happy occasion or memorialize a sad one by making a contribution to the **Paws and Remember** program. Just fill out the form above and send in with your check to Therapaws, P.O. Box 92, Dexter, MI 48130.

Holiday party was a time for telling tails of Therapaws experiences



ABOVE: Mary Anzalone (from left, foreground), Karen Malone (web master), MaryD Lunk, and Susan Carpenter were among attendees at the Therapaws Holiday Party listening as members told of their Therapaws experiences. **LEFT:** Bill French (standing), a new member, introduced himself while Sandie Langbehn (back to camera) and Ken Ray (seated) waited their turn.



Therapaws trivia

Out of the more than 55 dogs listed in the Therapaws master file, 14 are Golden Retrievers; nine are Labrador Retrievers; five are Collies or Border Collies, and four are Newfoundlands. The rest run the gamut from Dachshund to Great Dane, Corgi to Bouvier, Terrier to American Eskimo, Poodle to Rottweiler, Spaniel to Port Water Dog, and Brittany to Shepherd to Chesapeake Bay Retriever. (Some dogs are mixed breeds).

The majority of dogs' names are two syllables long with most of the names ending in the letters: i, ie, ey, or y. Ten names are one syllable long and only three dogs have names with three syllables. Two dogs have three and four syllables, but their nick names are two syllables.

From this list of some 55 dogs, there is only one duplicate name. "Billy" is the name of the Newfoundland Mix that belongs to Katie Richards-Schuster and of the Springer Mix belonging to Ann Szlinis.

All other names stand alone.



Holding hands/paws

There are those times that our pet partners absolutely astound us when they know just what to do with a very sick patient. Mickey Sloan and Torie made regular visits to the gentleman above who had a lung transplant at the University of Michigan Hospital.

Invariably, Torie would reach out to hold his hand, something she does with very ill people. The man's wife was so impressed that she took this photo herself and told Mickey that Torie's visits were about the nicest thing that had happened during her husband's hospital stay. All is not just fun and games for Therapaws teams.

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 (TDInc.) 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 July 1, 2006, if your TDInc. renewal is this July. 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 TDInc. or Therapaws of Michigan.

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

To:

