



# the Therapaws **WOOFER**

## A message from the President

Volume XI • Number 1  
Spring 2011

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

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

### Officers

President  
Jerry Nordblom  
Treasurer  
Robin Petrillo  
Secretary  
Kathryn Taylor

### Directors

Chuck Blackmer  
Karen OConnor  
Jared Wadley  
Valerie Wells  
Devvon Wilce

### The Woofers

A publication for and about the volunteer  
owner-dog teams of  
Therapaws of Michigan, Inc.

### Editor

Jared Wadley  
jwadley@umich.edu

### In this issue

R.E.A.D. visits Ann Arbor Library ....2  
In loving memory .....3  
Are you still a member? .....4

**G**reetings. It is my privilege to be president of Therapaws. I want to share a few thoughts with those of you who have made this organization such an important and rewarding non-profit organization.

First, I want to thank Mary Ann Trainor for the wonderful service she has given as past president. She will remain involved with Therapaws and will continue to be a valuable source for me.

My therapy dog Cori and I have been involved with Therapaws for more than four years. In that time, we have visited the University of Michigan Hospital, Mott Children's Hospital, and Glacier Hills Assisted Living and Rehabilitation facility. We also have been involved in the R.E.A.D. program and many community events.



I tell people that I often feel guilty because I sometimes think I get more from our interaction than the folks we are ministering to. However, from their reactions and smiles I know that isn't true. Once

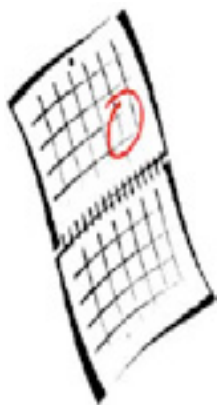
**“Once in a while someone will say ‘you made my day,’ which is the greatest compliment we can get.”**

in a while someone will say “you made my day,” which is the greatest compliment we can get.

I recently took Cori to a veterinarian's emergency room. While waiting for a diagnosis, dreading the worst and hoping for the best, it reminded me who the “real stars” of this organization are. Fortunately, he recovered quickly and returned to Therapaws duty. He is so in tune with the folks we visit and good at what he does. Actually, the only reason he needs me is that he isn't old enough to drive yet.

(Message, continued on Page 4)

## Dates to remember



### MAY

- \* May 28 - Memorial Day parade, Dexter, with Therapaws teams
- \* May 30 - Pinckney Dog Fest, Arise Dog Park in Pinckney

### JUNE

- \* June 18 - Therapaws Picnic, Dexter-Huron Metropark, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

### JULY

- \* National Pet Safety Awareness Month

### SEPTEMBER

- \* Sept. 25 - 30 National Dog Week

## Therapaws welcomes new members

Jan Treston-Aurand &  
Oakley  
Sharon Fay & Hazel B  
Stacy Holloway & Freya  
Tom Fisher & Benny  
Kelly Gregg & Rupert  
Karen A'Leorio & Sally  
Lynn Johnson & Ester  
Amanda Brosseau & Freya  
Katelin Thomas & Turbo

# UMHS welcomes teams to “Therapaws Awareness Day”

Therapaws teams returned to UMHS for the 4th annual T-Paws Awareness Day April 13, bringing countless smiles and joy to hospital patients, staff and visitors.

The opportunity, which occurs during National Volunteer Week, allows us to showcase the terrific therapy dog teams that visit the U-M Health System medical campuses, said Lana Berry, UMHS Therapaws coordinator.

The four-hour event drew hundreds of people – the largest turnout in four years – to the hallway intersection

between Mott Hospital and University Hospital (commonly referred to as “The Triangle”). Children petted, received kisses and took pictures with the 12 participating dogs, who were more than happy to get the special attention.



The following teams participated: Chuck Blackmer and Rusty; Grace Bowles and Stevie; Judi Breeding and Sasha; Sue Fischer and Ivy; Lisa Jevens and Roxy; Nancy Kuzminski and Kira; Stephanie Lutzeier and Alex; Jerry Nordblom and Cori; Gloria VanAlstine and Annie; Jared Wadley and Bella; Valerie Wells and Howie; and Devvon Wilce and Bear.

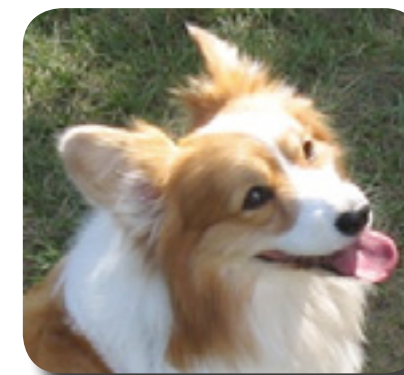
Thank you all for making the day one of the most successful Therapaws Awareness Days ever.

## U-M students “paw-se” from studying to greet new friends

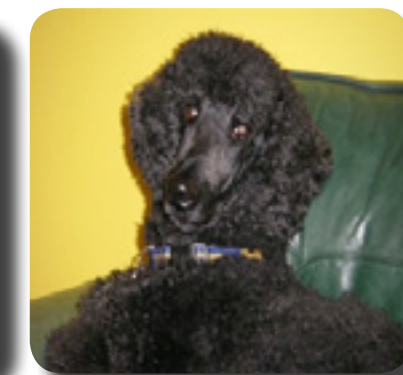


Peter Smith

Howie delighted students during the recent “Paws for a Break” in the University of Michigan’s Art + Architecture Building. The visiting teams were Valerie Wells and Howie; Mitch Rycus and Kipu; Mara Markovs and Taffy; Kathryn Taylor and Ellie; and Jane Taylor and Bella.



“Casey” Berry



“Norman” Blackmer

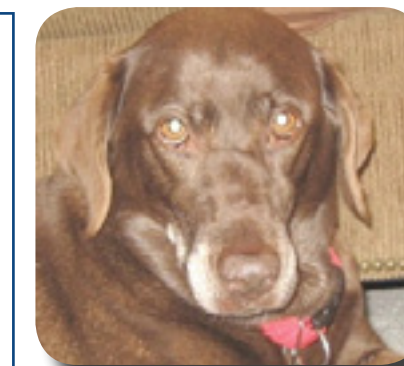


“Cassie” Bowles

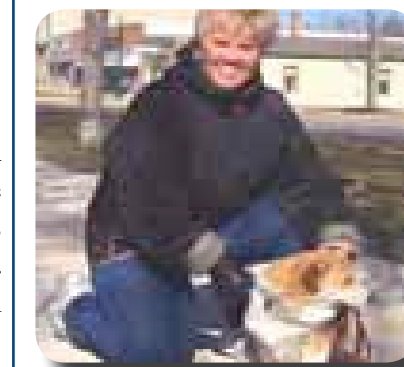
**In loving memory of our canine partners**

On behalf of all Therapaws members, we want to express our heartfelt condolences to current and former members on the passing of their beloved pet partners since the last Woofers issue.

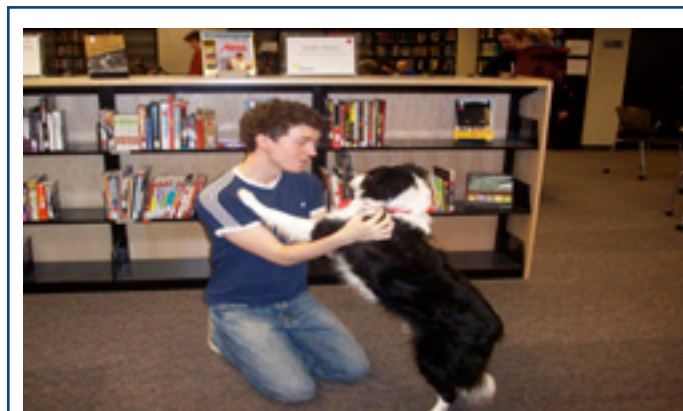
We are grateful for the years of service you and your dogs have spent sharing the human-animal bond. The five dogs will be missed by our Therapaws family, as well as the patients, residents and children throughout southeast Michigan.



“Babe” Trainor



“Meeko” Treston-Aurand



## MLibrary goes to the dogs

Four Therapaws dogs—Bindi, Coda, Stella and Zoë — stopped by the U-M Shapiro Undergraduate Library in April to visit students. Library officials estimated that 150 students interacted with the dogs. U-M student Ryan Smith gets a warm welcome from Coda.

## Editor’s note:

### Therapaws to revamp its website

It’s time for a makeover. Therapaws’ website will get an updated look this fall. All the data from our existing website will be moved to a content management system, which will allow us – rather than the website developer – to make timely changes.



In other words, the fresh new site will be redesigned to meet the needs of our current and prospective team members, as well as inform the public about our activities. You’ll find up-to-date information for all things happening with Therapaws. We welcome any suggestions you have for content. Please send your comments to me at [jwadley@umich.edu](mailto:jwadley@umich.edu).

Jared and Bella

## R.E.A.D. program inspires children at Traverwood Library



Matthew Xiao, 9, reads to Therapaws team Barbara Reed and Bindi at Ann Arbor’s Traverwood Library. The experience left a lasting impression on the third grader. “I think I want to get a dog to read to it,” he said. Six teams read to children at this library each Saturday in April. The other teams were Sue Adler and Zoey; Jared Wadley and Bella; Gloria VanAlstine and Annie; Jane Taylor and Bella; and Mary Roderique and Colby.

## Dogs lower stress for EMU students

Eastern Michigan University students took a break from studying in early February to greet Therapaws teams.

Jerry Nordblom talks to one of the students about the program, while Zoey Adler (brown dog) and Cori Nordblom wait for their next petting.

More than 100 students gathered to meet the six teams, including Barbara Reed and Bindi; Sue Adler and Zoey; Valerie Wells and Howie; Devvon Wilce and Bear; and Kathryn Taylor and Ellie.



## Therapaws picnic and annual meeting

Attention all Therapaws members

Join us on **Saturday, June 18, 2011 2 to 4 P.M.**  
at Central Shelter Dexter-Huron Metropark on Huron River Drive  
(Park entry fee is \$5 per car) Dogs and family members welcome

# A walk to fight cancer



The American Cancer Society held the “Bark For Life” at Independence Lake County Park in May to raise funds in its fight against cancer. (Standing, from left): Kathryn Taylor and Ellie; Jerry Nordblom and Duke; Karen OConnor; Bill Pinnell and Ben; and Robin Petrillo and Nugget. (Sitting, from left): Sadie (Karen’s dog); Lana Berry and Penny; Carrie Sercel and Charlie (Lana’s dog); and Nancy Kuzminski and Kira.

(Message, continued from Page 1)

When I think about the missions of Therapaws, the first is providing social, emotional and physical benefits for those less fortunate than us.

A second role is creating public awareness, which means continuing our involvement in any event that promotes canine-human interactions. For me, there is another role we can play. If just one person at each visit or event can see the effects that our dogs have on people, we have achieved a valuable result. Maybe that same observer will take the appropriate action if, for instance, he sees a stray or abused pet. Finally, I appreciate your confidence in allowing me to serve as this organization’s president.

I, along with the other board members, will strive to follow our goals and missions. If you have concerns or comments, please contact me at [michiblom@earthlink.net](mailto:michiblom@earthlink.net).

Thank you for your time and commitment.

Cheers,  
Jerry and Cori

## Are you still a member?



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

For Therapy Dogs, Inc., each member has either a January or July renewal date, which can be found on your Therapy Dogs, Inc. membership card. A signed renewal form (which they send you), paperwork (copy of your dog’s rabies vaccination certificate and proof of your dog’s annual fecal exam with negative results) and a check is due TDInc. on the first of the month of your renewal date. You are given a 30-day grace period, after which your registration expires and you must go through the entire process again.

For Therapaws, you must forward a copy of your paid TDInc. renewal statement and a current health certificate to Karen OConnor, 9401 Hidden Lake Circle Dexter, MI, 48130, by July 10th if your TDInc. renewal is in 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 Therapaws of Michigan.

## FYI FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Getting physically fit while dog walking

Two-thirds of dog owners walk their dog, but only 27% of this group walked frequently enough to accrue at least 150 minutes per week. The Michigan State University study indicates that 2 ½ hours is the benchmark for moderate physical activity that meets the minimum public health recommendations. Dog walkers also trekked 30 minutes more per week than non-dog owners. The findings appear in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.



### Are female dogs smarter than male dogs?

Female dogs might analyze unexpected situations better than their male counterparts -- at least based on a University of Vienna experiment involving a ball that “changes” size while temporarily hidden.

Researchers tested 50 pet dogs of various breeds. The unexpected event consisted of a ball disappearing behind a screen and a ball of different size appearing on the other side. For the expected event, the appearing ball had the same size as the disappearing ball. Female dogs spent more time looking when the ball “changed” sizes. Male dogs, however, looked at the balls for the same amount of time regardless of size change. The findings appear in Biology Letters.