



## Therapy Pets of Greater Cincinnati

# The Pet Connection



### SPRING 2017

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### Message from our Director

Hello All,

A big Thank You for everyone that helped with the Practicum, without you it would have been impossible to have it. Thank you Anita Burtosky-Mays, Karen Spradlin, Marilyn Edwards for help getting things ready. Actually we had fun also. Also thank you to all who helped make the Practicum run so smoothly- Sherry Henry, Shirley Turner, Bob Kehm, Alice Sturgeon, Susan Coates, Sandra Korn, Sharon Newman, Khari Barger, Glenda Flaughner, Suzanne Malenfant, Christine Dauenhauer, Ann Sullivan, Dee Volante, George Kent and Bob Murray. I sure hope I didn't forget anyone. THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALL YOUR HELP

ALSO GOOD LUCK TO THE 3 GALS IN OUR GROUP TESTING TO BE EVALUATORS Joy Faust, Robin Daniel, and Karen Howard. Thank You again for your help.

~ Glenna

### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 16th, 2017

#### Workshop

Besthesda North Hospital  
Must register in advance  
Contact: [Susan](#)

July 23rd, 2017

#### Pet Partner testing

Besthesda North  
Hospital  
Must have gone through a  
work shop, or renewal  
Contact: [Susan](#)

Sept. 16, 2017

#### PPWork Shop

9:30am-4:00pm  
St Elizabeth Hospital,  
Florence, Ky.  
Must register in advance  
Contact: [Susan](#)

### GLENNA'S CORNER

1. NEVER drop a leash
2. It is flea and tick season—keep an eye out for those nasty bugs

### Volunteer Opportunities

VA Hospital: 475-6332

Shriners: 800 -875-8580

Ask for Volunteer form.

Let Glenna know.

**Note: Most of you know that Gabe, Glenna's dog is now cancer free.**

*Young Therapy Dog Gets Cancer Diagnosis*

Gabe, a four-year-old yellow lab, was a happy go-lucky dog who had never been sick a day in his life. To those who know him, "he's a big, goofy guy that loves everyone he meets," says his owner, Glenna Mockbee of Cincinnati, Ohio.

It was that cheerful disposition that convinced Mockbee that Gabe should be a therapy dog – a job Gabe embraced right from the start. At 90 pounds, this gentle giant practically gallops into hospitals and schools, eager to visit with kids and adults who eagerly embrace him and return his affections.



At Shriner's Hospital for Children in Cincinnati, Ohio, for example, Gabe doesn't just give out hugs and kisses; he stands tall and steady so kids who are learning to use artificial legs can hold onto his body to stand up. When he visits autistic children at public schools, he sits patiently while they brush him and stays close when they walk him on a leash around campus.

"He seems to know what each person needs and meets them where they are," says Mockbee.

"He's a special dog with a gift for making people feel better."

### ***Sudden symptoms lead to “shocking” diagnosis***

Gabe’s life was one happy therapy visit after another until one day last year when Mockbee discovered a large lump on Gabe’s hind end while bathing him.

“It was the size of a tennis ball,” she says. “That same night, he got sick for the first time in his life. He whined every 15 minutes to go outside and throw up.”

Mockbee took Gabe to her veterinarian, Dr. Lucinda Craig at Baker House Animal Hospital. “I remember her saying, ‘This lump doesn’t look good,’” says Mockbee. “I knew we were going to get bad news.”

A week later, a biopsy confirmed Mockbee’s worst fears. Gabe’s tennis-ball size lump was a Grade 3 soft tissue sarcoma. “I couldn’t believe cancer could happen to such a young dog,” says Mockbee. “I thought he could die.”

### **Gabe goes from visiting patients to being the patient**

Gabe was too sick to continue his pet therapy sessions in the community. In fact, Dr. Craig surgically removed as much of the lump as she could from Gabe’s hind end that very same week. She then referred Gabe to Dr. Cheryl Harris, a local oncologist, for ten rounds of chemotherapy.

Things were moving quickly, and Mockbee worried about the cost of the surgery and chemotherapy treatments. “I was ready to max out a credit card for him,” she says.

Fortunately, she didn’t have to go into debt. As a therapy dog for [Therapy Pets of Greater Cincinnati](#), an affiliate of the national group [Pet Partners](#), Gabe qualified for a grant funded by the Petco Foundation’s [PCA campaign](#) for his surgery and chemotherapy treatments.

According to Natalie Pond, Marketing & Strategic Partnerships Coordinator for Pet Partners, Mockbee received \$3,000 in support for Gabe’s cancer treatment.



“It was the most wonderful thing on earth to get this help,” says Mockbee. “It was heaven-sent.”

### **After treatments, Gabe spreads joy again**

Gabe received all his chemotherapy before heading back to Dr. Harris for one last surgery to make sure the tumor was gone. “It looks like they got every bit of it,” says Mockbee. “Gabe’s in remission and should live to a ripe old age now.”

After six months of treatment and surgeries, Gabe started his pet therapy visits again.

“He’s happy to be visiting people, and they are happy to see him,” says Mockbee. “He’s running and playing, and happy as a lark. I am forever grateful for the financial help for Gabe’s treatments. He spreads so much joy

Gabe just celebrated his fifth birthday.

### ***Join the fight***

Each May, the Petco Foundation teams up with [Blue Buffalo](#) and [Petco](#) for the Pet Cancer Awareness campaign to fight pet cancer. Thanks to donations raised during this campaign, the Petco Foundation is able to partner with organizations like Pet Partners to help pet parents afford the costs of pet cancer treatment.

[Make a donation today to join the fight.](#)

If your pet has been diagnosed with pet cancer and you need assistance with the cost of care, please see our [Pet Cancer Resource Guide](#) featuring some of the organizations providing help thanks to the Pet Cancer Awareness campaign.

## Welcome New Members!

### Team Jesse and Jill

Our journey began when I first met Jessie at the Cinti Lab Rescue. She was a frightened little girl, crawling instead of walking! As a volunteer, I worked to restore and build her confidence and trust.

Since adopting her in 2013, both our lives have been transformed remarkably. Having just lost two dogs ...one a TPGC dog...Jessie taught me to love again. With care and time, she has blossomed into the dearest of companions.

Together, we discovered our mission and calling, spreading joy and love to those confined to nursing homes. I am blessed to have been given another dog who shares my compassion for others!



**Handler:** LaVerne Ailman

**Pet Partner:** Fava, Golden Retriever, 2 1/2 years old

TPGC member since September 25, 2016

Over 100 volunteer hours visiting in the first 6 months

Visits: Nursing homes—Lebanon Country Manor,  
Otterbein Middletown

School—Kings High School

Medical Facility—Arrow Springs

Special Events—Creskide School (read to your  
Dog), Seven Hills Academy and Bishop Fenwick  
High School (Stress relief for exams), Bethesda  
North Hospital (Take your kids to work day)

Mentored at Cedar Village



Hi my name is Katie Sudbrack and I'm a new 13 year old Junior Handler with my dog Rang-er. He is an 11 year old chocolate Labrador Retriever and we've grown up together.

I'm in seventh grade at Kings Junior High School and part of the Kings dance team and track and field team. We are excited to visit retirement communities, the Ronald McDon-ald House, libraries and other places with lots of little kids to help put a smile on their faces. I'm also looking forward to being a part of Therapy Pets of Greater Cincinnati!

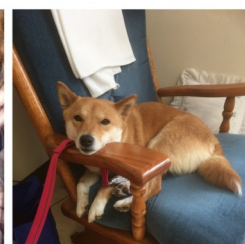
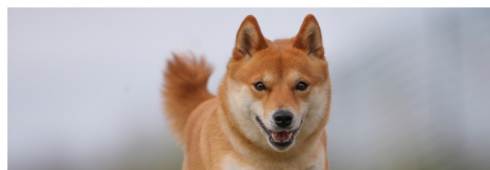
## The life of a TPGC Therapy Dog is not all hard work.

One of the most common phrases I hear about Kivrin when she is working as a Therapy Dog is how calm that she is, especially for a two-year old Shiba Inu.

I explain that this public demeanor is only through extensive and ongoing training, because she definitely knows how to be dog at home and on the sport's field.

I have watched Kivrin calm people to sleep, go through endless selfie photo shoots, and wait patiently in a library, but give her a plastic bag on a string with a Tally Ho, and she freely shows her excitability when at play.

Mark Myers and Kirvin



My name is Melissa Witte and Fiona is my Border Collie Rescue Mix. I adopted her 1 1/2 years ago from S.A.A.P. and she had a natural sweet nature, so we got involved with therapy work. I was a former Police Officer and am currently in my 30th year with FedEx. I work from home so Fiona is never lonely! We have really enjoyed our various opportunities with TPGC!

Melissa Witte & Fiona



## HONORING LEXI

This is so cool. Lexi's brick is honoring her work with students. The students she started with in first grade graduated these past two years and the brick is now at the high school permanently in the walkway to the school entrance. Next week we are having a ceremony honoring Lexi's years of service as a staff member. I know lots of pet partners have done a lot with their dogs and that I am not the only one proud of my dog, but I thought I would share this with you. The school put an article in the newsletter honoring Lexi's work and acknowledging she died and was missed. She has been in every yearbook for 13 years and this year she gets a memorial page....and yep, I still cry!



~Sami

# Recognitions

## Amy Hudoba

*I'm a very humble person and don't believe in boasting about something, but tonight at my International Epsilon Sigman Alpha (ESA) Ohio State Council (OSC) Convention I received a very distinguished award --- Hildagard Brooke. It's the highest award one can receive from the Int'l ESA OSC for outstanding and continuous service for which one has to be nominated. I was very shocked - brought me to tears - feeling very honored. I was always very happy for those who have received this award before me - never thinking one day I would be the recipient.*

**Way to go Amy!**

## Donna Parniuk and Lou Lou

"I was at the school today and was in the room when one of the custodians came in and started talking about her dad with one of the teachers and me. She explained that he almost died last Saturday and was rushed to the hospital, and it has been a tough fight for him every day since. She was explaining that he was in so much pain after a day or two that he was ready to stop allowing them to treat him and let himself die. His wife and daughter reasoned with him and convinced him to allow the doctors to keep trying, for the time being, but obviously his mood was far from the best. Then, she told us everything changed when someone brought in a therapy dog to visit him. She was so amazed as she explained the the remarkable difference the therapy dog made in his demeanor! He was thrilled to see her, and something about that one visit with a dog made him so much happier; it seemed to give him that little boost of encouragement to keep on living. After that he was much more cooperative with the doctors and willing to hang in there and keep trying.

Then I asked her what hospital he is at and she told me that it was Dearborn County hospital. I mentioned Lou Lou's name and she said, "Yes, that was her name, Lou Lou!"

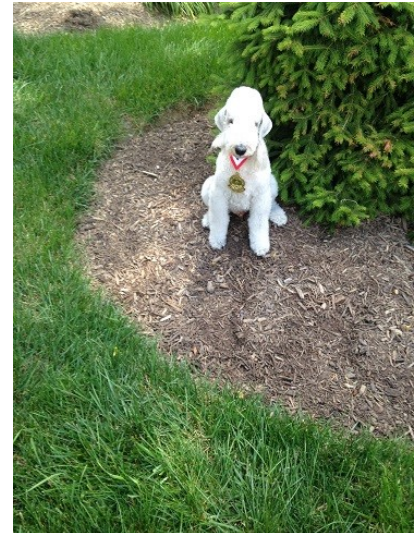
When I realized she was talking about you and Lou Lou, I just had to share with you. What a testament to the power of a therapy dog visit!

Keep up the great work, ladies!"

~Provided by Emma Risinger

# Sparky

## UNCONDITIONAL LOVE



Long before becoming a certified therapy dog, and even before his first birthday, Sparky, a Bedlington Terrier, made obvious his natural disposition to fill such a role. When permitted to visit a hospitalized family friend, he nestled in her bed sheets, where he remained while doted upon until, much to the friend's dismay, he had to leave.

Since then, in a dedicated 13-year career as a therapy pet representing Therapy Pets of Greater Cincinnati (certified with Pet Partners), Sparky has positively impacted thousands of lives in over 1,000 pet therapy visits totaling 2,600 hours. Sparky has been a therapy dog at six Cincinnati area hospitals, Hospice of Cincinnati, Ronald McDonald House, nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities, schools (pre-school, elementary through university), helping students relax during exams and providing grief therapy after the loss of a classmate due to a suicide or tragic accident), libraries, Girl and Boy Scout troops, churches and corporations.

Sparky has been a certified R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dog) Dog (certified through Intermountain Therapy Dogs). With the Pages 'N Paws reading program he has listened patiently and non-judgmentally to students who have difficulty reading. Sparky has contributed to these students improving their reading skills in a non-threatening environment. Although these visits testify to Sparky's and his owner Amy's dedication, they alone do not demonstrate excellence. Beyond the virtue of mere visits, Sparky has proven himself to be a caring companion.

Sparky's lamb-like appearance instantly endears people to him; his soft coat is an immediate attraction as are an inviting smile and welcoming eyes. His presence alone comforts Hospice patients. Even with what little energy they have, they delight when they can pet him or when he is content to lie in their bed. A Hospice nurse commented that, from Sparky, she has learned the value of just offering a patient a hand to hold.

Sparky brings joy not only to patients, but also to families, visitors, and staff. Young children visiting parents and grandparents at Hospice welcome the opportunity to walk him, and nurses find brief respite in petting him. He makes rounds in his designated units and acquiesces to the wishes of those he is intended to serve.

One man whose grandmother was in Hospice commented that Sparky exemplifies calm, obedience, and friendliness, and is confident that solely by permitting his grandmother to pet him, talk to him Sparky helped her through a difficult time. In fact, this man commented whenever he thinks of the phrase "man's best friend," he thinks of Sparky. Sparky demonstrates excellence in his therapy dog work because he is caring and loyal. When wearing his Pet Partners therapy dog vest, he knows and loves his role, and as much as those who have grown to love Sparky consider him a friend, so too does he consider them among his friends.

Sparky and his owner/handler have received the Dynamic Duo Award from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

Sparky recently received his American Kennel Club Distinguished Therapy Dog title that represents his dedication these past 13 years. He has also earned his AKC Canine Good Citizen title

## DOGS AT WORK



Maggie loves listening to kids read at JF Burns Elementary School every Friday! She gets loads of loving and then catches a snooze afterwards at home!



Nadia at 7 Hills schools for Stress Relief

The following pages are a presentation prepared by Claire Long, a special student at Mason Middle School. As you can see, visits by our Pet Partners are very special to her. Great job Claire!

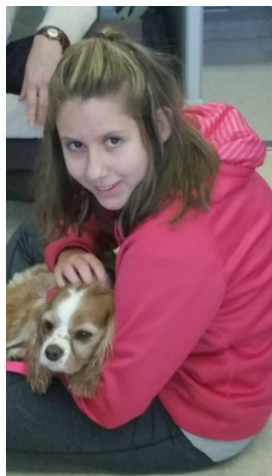
## Passion Project- Dog Therapy

By: Claire Long

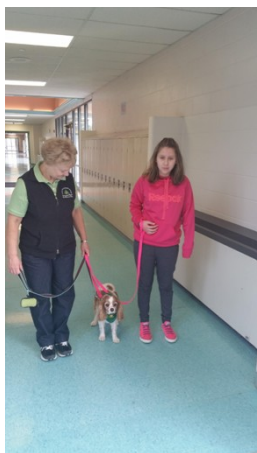


My class has therapy dogs visit our room. We learn how to take care of dogs from Mrs. Glenna and other dog handlers.

The 2 dogs on the floor both have the same name. I am holding Sunny and I am petting the big dog also named Sonny. Mrs. Glenna is holding Bandit.

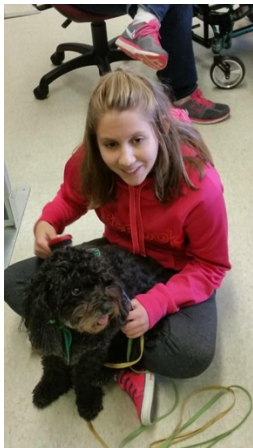


Petting dogs makes me happy!



Every Thursday I get to walk the Therapy dogs. I hold one leash while the dog's handler holds the other one.

This is a spaniel name "Chester"



I like to brush the dogs and the dogs like me brushing them.

This little cutie's name is "Crystal"



"Sunny" and her handler Barb



This is Peaches.



“Wilson”

This dog’s name is “Wilson”. He is one of my favorite dogs. He is a Lab.



So as you can see dog therapy is very special to me!

Thank you for listening. Are there any questions?



These are stuffed animals for the July 4th parade....if you find me you will find Oreo. Every year we throw out stuffed animals in the parade and Honda gives us a new truck to use...it's going to have banners honoring Lexi this year...and yep, Oreo will be riding in the truck in place of Lexi .

~Sami