

# the BARKER

Therapy  
Dog



St. John Ambulance

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Cover Dogs: Gracie and Brogan, proudly owned by Gloria Armstrong of Berwick, NS

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# Letter From the Editor

I would like to thank everyone involved with the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program for their support and dedication over the years. This program has grown into something really special since its beginning here in 1999, and I truly believe it is because of the people involved. Since starting here in 2004 I have come to think of many of you as friends, and I have really enjoyed the opportunity to meet and work with all of you during the past 3 years. Each of you has taught me so much. Again, thank you for your support as I couldn't have done this job without it.

Kaela Ott ([kaela.ott@ns.sja.ca](mailto:kaela.ott@ns.sja.ca)) will be looking after the program now, and I am sure that she will do a wonderful job. I hope that everyone is as supportive and helpful to her as

they were to me. Like me, she does care about this program, and she already has some great ideas for it.

Kaela will also continue on with The Barker, so if any of you have ideas for content, or if you would like to be featured in the Volunteer Spotlight, just send her an email.

And please, remember to send Kaela (or your local volunteer statistician, if you have one) your hours at the end of every month!

Thanks again guys, it's been a blast.

- Tiffany

baH AhAs  
dog jokes



# Volunteer Spotlight:

## Rhonda MacFadgen & Beau

My name is Rhoda MacFadgen and I visit with my Therapy Dog Beau (Am/Can.Ch.Renaissance Beau MacFadgen C.D. ) in Glace Bay, NS.

We started with the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog program in 2000. This is the most rewarding program as the residents love to see Beau and he loves to see his friends. Beau was 10 years old last November and he still gets excited when we get ready to go.

I can't move fast enough for him! Then when we get to Taigh Na Mara he settles right down. In the past I have visited the nursing homes with puppies and my other Springer Spaniels, but it is great to visit and know that we are covered with insurance.

I am only 75 and hope to have several years left to visit!!



## FOUR FEET

I have done mostly what men  
do,  
And pushed it out of my mind;  
But I can't forget, if I wanted to,  
Four-Feet trotting behind.

Day after day, the whole day  
through--  
Wherever my road inclined--  
Four-Feet said, 'I am coming  
with you!'  
And trotted along behind.

Now I must go by some other  
round--  
Which I shall never find--  
Some where that does not carry  
the sound  
Of Four-Feet trotting behind.

--- Rudyard Kipling ---

# Congratulations!

## Clarke Johnson Wins Volunteer Award

It is my pleasure to congratulate **Clarke Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator for the South Shore, for receiving the Volunteer of the Year award for 2007 from Harbour View Haven in Lunenburg, NS. Congratulations, Clarke, and thank you for all of your hard work!**



*"Our Regional Coordinator [for the SJA Therapy Dog Program] has been an asset to our organization and has risen above the call of duty on many occasions. In fact, Clarke Johnson was awarded our Volunteer of the Year for 2007. Clarke's enthusiasm is contagious as he liaises between [the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog] program and our facility."*

*-Lisa Craig, Volunteer Services  
Harbour View Haven*

## Garbanzo Pepita Biscuits

1.5 cups chick pea flour  
1 cup whole wheat flour  
1/4 cup cornmeal  
1 cup rice milk  
2 tbsp oil  
1/4 cup molasses  
3/4 cup pumkin seeds

- In a large bowl, combine flours, cornmeal and seeds.
- Add wet ingredients. Stir, adding more water as needed to form a stiff dough.
- Roll out onto a lightly floured surface. Cut with cookie cutters.
- Bake on well oiled cookie sheets at 300 degrees till crisp.
- Optional: To glaze before baking, mix 1/2c soy milk with 1 tbsp molasses. Brush over biscuits before baking.

# Facility Feedback

In August of 2007, I mailed our annual Therapy Dog Facility Surveys to all of the facilities that currently receive visits from Therapy Dog teams. The response from the facilities was overwhelmingly positive, with many thanks to the volunteers. Facility staff stated that the SJA Therapy Dog volunteers are always polite and professional, and that residents, staff, and family members really look forward to the visits.

There were a few concerns brought to my attention, however, and I thought it best to address them with all of the volunteers. If anyone has any questions about this, please contact me.

**Number of dogs per visit.** A handler must have only one dog on any visit, and must have been evaluated with that dog as a handler/dog team. Also, there should be no more than two Therapy Dogs in the same visiting area at one time.

**Dogs must be on leash at all times during visits.** Handlers will hold the leash at all times, but may share this duty with a resident. At no time will the dog be out of direct control of the handler.

**Missing scheduled visits.** If for some reason you must miss a scheduled visit, please contact the facility to let them know ahead of time so that they can make the residents aware that you will not be in.

Again, the feedback from the facility was mainly positive, and that is due to the dedication of our volunteers. Thank you, and please know that your time spent volunteering is making a difference in the lives of the people you visit.

# Brushing Your Dog's Teeth

Because your dog does so much with his teeth, it's inevitable that he will run into some type of dental care problem within his lifetime (80% of all dogs do). Bad breath is by far the most common ailment, and while not serious enough in its early stages, if left untreated bad breath can lead to some serious health issues ranging from bleeding gums and loss of teeth, to even possible heart or liver infections. Such hazards can be avoided by simply developing a regular routine of brushing your dog's teeth at least twice a week.

Brushing your dog's teeth is not a requirement of the SJA Therapy Dog Program, however it is recommended because reducing doggy breath can make visits even more pleasurable for residents.

## Getting Started

- Choosing a long-stemmed dog toothbrush is a good start.
- Avoid using human toothbrushes, even the bristles of a child toothbrush are far too rigid and could cause damage to a dog's gums.
- A finger brush, piece of gauze or clean cloth are also good choices for scraping plaque and bacteria build up.



## A Better Way To Brush

- To get your dog used to brushing his teeth, try starting with a wet piece of cloth or gauze
- Clean using a small circular motion over a set number of teeth just above the gum line.
- When he's ready, graduate up to a wet toothbrush or finger brush.
- Place the bristles of the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gumline of the lower teeth and push upwards towards the top of the tooth (use about a dozen short strokes). Reverse this action for the upper teeth.
- This motion will help loosen plaque and bacteria that can build up at the gum line.
- If the bacteria in his mouth is left untreated, your dog could

succumb to a number of serious dental care problems such as Gingivitis, Periodontal Disease and eventual loss of teeth.

## Proper Paste

- Ask your vet to recommend a good quality pet toothpaste.
- Apply the paste throughout the brush (not just on top). And work the paste over the teeth as mentioned in the brushing technique above.
- Avoid buying pet toothpastes that have any salts, baking sodas or detergents.

The key to brushing is to remain calm, brush gently and never rush. The better you clean now, the fewer problems you'll have later. For younger dogs, a once-a-year check up is a good idea. If your dog is a little older - twice a year should keep him smiling.

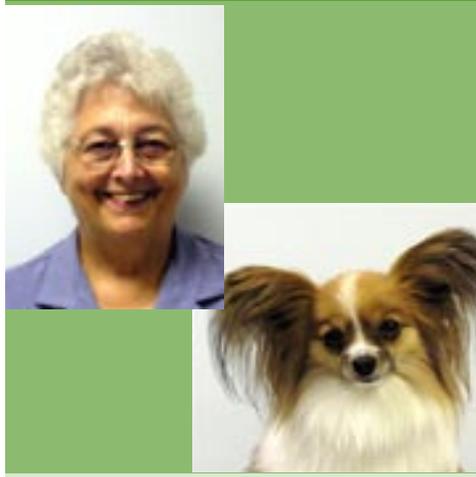
# WELCOMING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Deb MacDonald & Morgan

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Carol Wooster & Roxy

## SOUTH SHORE



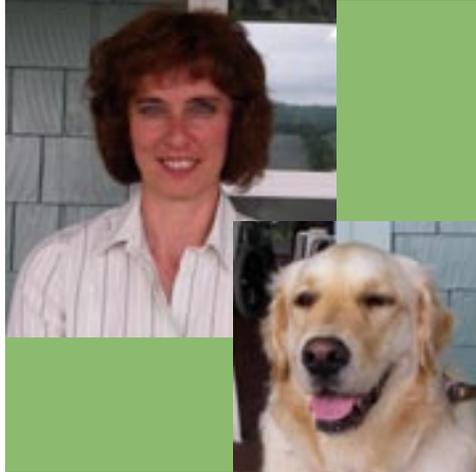
Yvonne Westhaver & Chester

## SOUTH SHORE



Ruth Simoneau & Kelly

## SHERBROOK



Viola Julien & Autumn

## NEW GLASGOW



David Demetre & Dawson

## SOUTH SHORE



Bob and Nellie Walkinshaw, & Lilly

## NEW GLASGOW



Melissa Aucoin & Roxy

## QUOTES:

Thorns may hurt you,  
men desert you, sunlight  
turn to fog; but you're  
never friendless ever, if  
you have a dog.  
-Douglas Mallock

On judgment day  
If God should say  
"Did you clean your  
house today?"  
I will say  
" I did not  
I played with my dogs  
and I forgot".  
- Unknown

A dog has the soul of a  
philosopher.  
--Plato

A dog wags its tail with  
its heart.  
- Martin Buxbaum

## PHOTO CONTEST

Well, it's getting to be that time of year again - the leaves are turning and starting to fall and soon...the holidays will be here! This is around the time we open up our photo contest.

Submit a photo of your beloved four legged friend(s) and they could be featured on the front of our Therapy Dog Seasons Greetings card!

Photos can be sent to 88 Slayter Street Dartmouth, NS B3A 2A6, attn: Kaela Ott. The photos need not be holiday themed but they should be entertaining! Happy Picture Taking!!



## COVER DOG

Send in photos of your therapy dog and they could be our next "cover dog". See contact information on page 2 of the Barker.

*Thanks to Gloria Armstrong of Berwick, NS who sent in the picture of Gracie and Brogan upon the deck of the tall ship "Unicorn" in Lunenburg.*