

# the **BARKER**

Therapy  
Dog

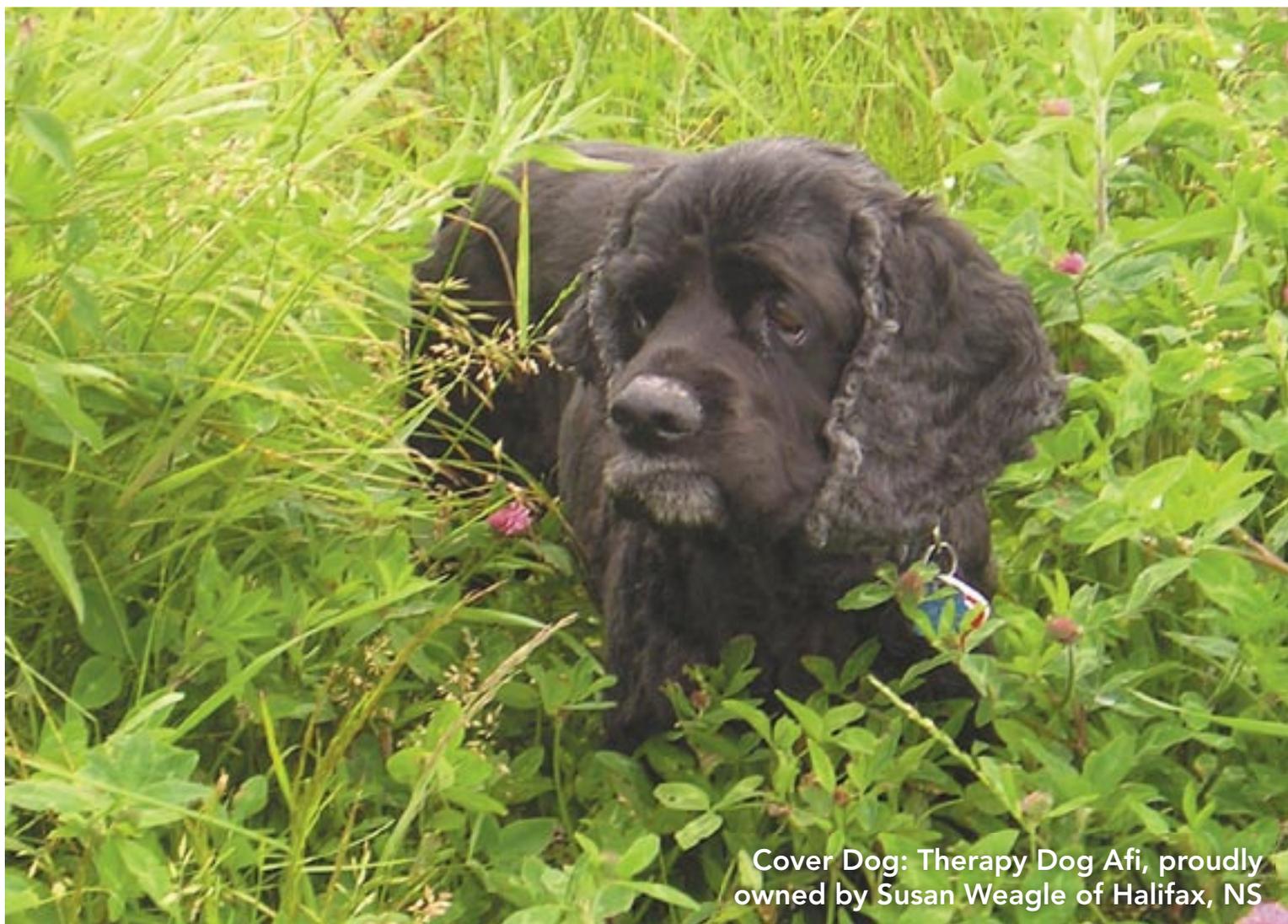


St. John Ambulance

Summer • 2007

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Vol. 3



Cover Dog: Therapy Dog Afi, proudly owned by Susan Weagle of Halifax, NS

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# Letter From the Editor

The crazy (but never lazy) days are finally here, although the weather we have been having recently sure feels more like fall than summer.

This spring and summer has been incredibly busy for me, and because of that I have been slightly delayed in getting the summer edition of The Barker completed. I do apologize for the delay, and for causing some people to think that we had decided to cancel the newsletter. As long as the volunteers keep asking for it, I'll keep sending it.

So far this spring and summer we have had some really great opportunities to showcase the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program, and we are hopeful that this will help get the "word out", so to speak, about the program. It is important to be seen in order to create interest for potential volunteers and facilities, but it is also just as important to be seen to educate the general public about this

program and all of the wonderful work our volunteers do. There has been quite a bit of interest in the program at these events, as well as many more people familiar with the program this year, which is very exciting.

During this time of year quite a few of us go on vacation or fill up our schedules with fun in the sun, which can cause us to become forgetful, so I want to simply remind everyone to try and remember to send in their visit info at the end of every month. It seems to be getting harder and harder to get this info, and it is so very important to the program. I don't need a lot of information from you, just how many visits you made during the month, and the total number of hours (including travel/grooming time) during the month.

Enjoy your summer!

**Tiffany Mullen**

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baHahaes  
dog jokes



**"I'm looking up some important stuff:  
Does tail wagging count as aerobic exercise?  
How long should you know someone before  
you lick their face? What do the etiquette  
rules say about drinking from the toilet?"**

# Volunteer Spotlight:

## Krista Hilton & Ruah and Tom Vaughan & Shiloh

*[Editor's note: Just before this edition of The Barker was completed, I was contacted by Krista to tell me that, sadly, Ruah had unexpectedly passed away at the end of June 2007. I debated with myself as to whether or not I should pull this article from the newsletter and "spotlight" another volunteer, simply because I did not want to cause Krista and Tom any more pain or sadness so soon after losing Ruah. However, as you can see I did decide to leave this spotlight in the newsletter, and I would like to dedicate it to the memory of Ruah, who was a wonderful SJA Therapy Dog. I would also like to thank Krista and Tom for taking the time to share Ruah with the residents of Villa St. Joseph, and to once again offer my condolences to them.]*

My husband and I heard of the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program through our local coordinator, Don Smith, who saw us playing with Ruah and Shiloh at a lake in Yarmouth one summer afternoon in 2005. We were immediately interested, as we had thought more than once how we would like to get our dogs involved in community outreach. We were delighted to become volunteers with St. John Ambulance in this regard and are now visitors at the Villa St. Joseph just outside of Yarmouth.

I handle Ruah, who is a 9-year-old chocolate lab. She has an outgoing and friendly personality, always eager

to meet new people. Sometimes she can be a little intimidating because in her enthusiasm, she likes to greet face-to-face! So long as I'm sure Ruah has "all four on the floor", she is a great visiting dog. Ruah has a natural sensitivity that lets her respond to a variety of different needs: with residents confined to their beds, or confined to a wheel chair, I have observed Ruah temper her enthusiasm and sit her wiggling body as close as possible. Even though I know that Ruah's excitement would normally cause her to want to play, I have watched as she patiently allows a resident to pat her on the head (which, I might add, she doesn't normally enjoy!). Ruah displays an innate gentleness with residents with special needs, as well, as she draws regular smiles from residents who are mentally challenged or living with Alzheimer's. It is always a joy to smile and answer questions about Ruah, and let Ruah do the visiting.

My husband, Tom, handles Shiloh, our 6-year-old black lab. Taller than Ruah, she is, however, calmer and will sit quietly next to the residents and enjoy the petting. With her big smiling, panting face, and her clear brown eyes gazing at the residents, she seems to enjoy the attention and newness of each situation. Shiloh's personality is such that nothing intimidates her, so



she walks confidently into each room, tail wagging—with absolutely no self-esteem problems, she assumes everyone loves her and her pleasure in life is naturally contagious. The one snag Tom is always on guard for, however, is food—Shiloh is a lab that is ruled by her stomach and if there is any food nearby, woe to the one that stands between her and the food! So Shiloh has strict rules in visiting—no treats involved. Needless to say, on the day that birthdays were being celebrated in the lounge, Shiloh wasn't allowed to attend the celebration, despite the residents' many offers of cake for the visiting dog!

The four of us enjoy visiting every two weeks and it becomes a special family time for us, a time away from our busy schedules, when we can give back to the community in some small way, while at the same time sharing the joy that our beloved dogs bring into our lives.

## the Gourmet Dog

### THE KING OF DOG COOKIES

1 1/2 Cups cooked rice, oatmeal or other whole grain cereal

1/4 cup whole or skim milk powder

1/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 cup wheat bran

1/4 cup whole wheat flour, rye flour or cornmeal (change around for variety)

Add any or all of the following to taste:

Grated cheese

Nutritional yeast

Fresh garlic or garlic powder

Oregano

Fennel seed

- Combine all ingredients into a firm ball. add milk if more moisture is needed.

- Roll the dough out. Cut into your dog's favorite cookie shape.

- Place on greased cookie sheet and bake at 300 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes or until the cookies are crispy.

- Cool and serve.

## Conversation Starters for volunteers

*I've occasionally heard from volunteers that they have difficulty starting a conversation with people they are visiting, either when the volunteer is new or when they visit a new patient or resident. The following may help:*

### YOUR DOG

- Draw attention to your dog "Would you like to meet Rusty, my dog?"; "Look who I brought to visit you today!";

- Allow your dog to lead. If eye contact is made, the person you are visiting may call the animal. Follow from there.

- Speak on behalf of your animal: "Sherman wants to know if you would like to pet him."

- Explain your animal's actions: "Molly must like you, because her ears are perked up and she is wagging her tail"; "Sailor wants you to pet him some more".

- Ask the person you are visiting to talk about your dog: "How does her coat feel?"; "What do you think he wants?"

### THE PAST

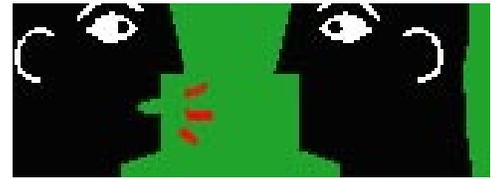
- Ask where the person was born.

- Tell the person some places where you have lived.

- Ask about the patient's/resident's school days.

- Enquire about their past occupation.

- Ask how their world was: families, entertainment, transportation, etc.



- Find out whether they had pets, and be inquisitive about them.

### THE PRESENT

- Ask about favorite foods, television shows, music, movies, sports.

- Find out about the person's hobbies and current interests.

- Enquire about books and magazines that may interest the patient/resident.

- Comment on something the person is wearing or using, or something in the room.

- Ask what they have done in the last couple of days.

- Ask if they would like you to visit again.

### YOURSELF

- Be sensitive to asking the patient/resident too many questions about themselves – they may not be accustomed to very much interaction.

- Make yourself an interesting visitor – tell the patient/resident stories about yourself, your family, your hobbies or your pets.

- You may have to share a story about yourself to get a story.

- Bring a small photo album to stimulate conversation.

- Be cautious that the visit does not become entirely about you – be aware of non-verbal cues from the patient/resident that may indicate lack of interest.

# Volunteer Recognition Awards

Much like last year, in order for St. John Ambulance to show it's appreciation for Therapy Dog Volunteers, I will be holding volunteer recognition events throughout the province, and at these events I will be presenting awards to some of the volunteers. The awards presented this year are based on the total amount of visits each volunteer has completed up until December 31, 2006. The levels for awards are 50 visits, 100 visits, 175 visits, 250 visits, and 400 visits. We also have a Therapy Dog pin for our "Veteran Volunteers", which are those volunteers that have reached over 400 visits.

**I would like to congratulate the following volunteers who will be receiving awards this year:**



## 50 Visits

- Karen Hebb – Dartmouth
- Karen Watson – Dartmouth
- Christi Lingard-White – Halifax
- Lill Mallett – Halifax
- Christa Pierce – Halifax
- Peggy Hopper – South Shore
- Laurel Joudrey – South Shore
- Judy Lively – Cape Breton
- Jocelyn Wujcik – Cape Breton
- Fay Oatway – PEI
- Rhonda LeBlanc – Arichat
- Helen Samson – Arichat
- Gloria Armstrong – Valley



## 100 Visits

- Patty Dunbrack – Dartmouth
- Lloyd McKnight – South Shore
- Al Parsons – South Shore
- Margaret Parsons – South Shore
- Susan Hiscock – Cape Breton
- Diane Moore – Valley
- Christine Perron – Valley



## 175 Visits

- Donald LeBlanc – Halifax
- Nancy Haughn – South Shore
- Claude Roch – South Shore
- Lee Tibbo – Cape Breton
- Stephanie Minshull - Truro



## 250 Visits

- Kaitlin Fraser – South Shore
- Rhoda MacFadgen – Cape Breton



## 400 Visits

- Clarke Johnson – South Shore\*
- Nancy Weaver – South Shore\*

*\*Also receiving Veteran Volunteer pin.*

## Dog Haiku

I lie belly-up  
In the sunshine, happier than  
You will ever be.

Today I sniffed  
Many dog behinds-I celebrate  
By kissing your face.

I sound the alarm!  
Paper boy-come to kill us all  
Look! Look! Look! Look! Look!

I sound the alarm!  
Garbage man-come to kill us all  
Look! Look! Look! Look! Look!

How do I love thee?  
The ways are as numberless as  
My hairs on the rug.

My human is home!  
I am so ecstatic I have  
Made a puddle.

I Hate my choke chain  
Look, world, they strangle me! Ack!  
Ack! Ack! Ack! Ack! Ack!

Sleeping here, my chin  
On your foot-no greater bliss-well,  
Maybe catching rats

Look in my eyes and  
Deny it. No human could  
Love you as much as I do.

The cat is not all  
Bad-she fills the litter box  
With tootsie rolls.

Dig under the fence-why?

Because it is there. Because it's  
There. Because it's there.

I am your best friend,  
Now, always, and especially  
When you are eating.

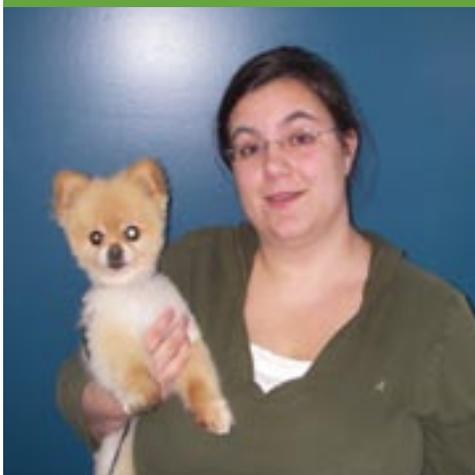
# WELCOMING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

HALIFAX



Heather Hatcher & Clancy

HALIFAX



Jennifer Frost & Chance

DARTMOUTH



Janice Hill & Jem

DARTMOUTH



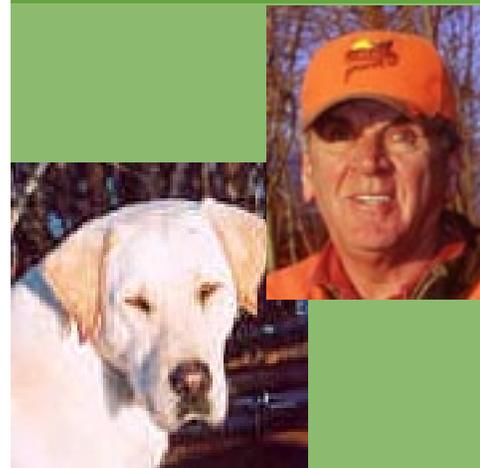
Laura Tait & Chloe

DARTMOUTH



Rudy Menin & Mikey

DARTMOUTH



Don Bates & Roo

TRURO



Susan Ling, Dream & Ritchie

## QUOTE:

"A dog is a smile and a wagging tail. What is in between doesn't matter much."  
- Clara Ortega

# WELCOMING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

TATAMAGOUCHE



Bob Hawkley & Willow

TRURO



Darlene Westhaver & Ayshia

TRURO



Beatrice Westhaver & Sarang

TRURO



Cheryl Crowe & Ramie

TRURO



Clyde Maguire & Timbit

TRURO



Lisa Pettigrew & Dante

TRURO



Wade Armsworthy & Selena

## QUOTE:

"I had a linguistics professor who said that it's man's ability to use language that makes him the dominant species on the planet. That may be. But I think there's another thing that separates us from animals. We aren't afraid of vacuum cleaners. "

- Jeff Stilson

# WELCOMING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Susan Siscoe & Shadow

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Melissa Hurwood & Urick

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Arleen Lively & Tillie

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY



Lynda Thorsen & Jenna

## QUOTES:

"One reason a dog can be such a comfort when you're feeling blue is that he doesn't try to find out why." -Author Unknown

"My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to 99 cents a can. That's almost \$7.00 in dog money." -Joe Weinstein

"The best way to get a puppy is to beg for a baby brother- and they'll settle for a puppy every time." - Winston Pendelton

"Dachshunds are ideal dogs for small children, as they are already stretched and pulled to such a length that the child cannot do much harm one way or the other." - Robert Benchley

## NEW LOOK FOR THE BARKER

The Barker has a new look. The change reflects the new visual identity that unites the varied communications materials and electronic media used throughout St. John Ambulance Canada. Using standardized colours, messages, and graphic formats, the refreshed brand builds on the strengths and values of our overall corporate identity.

# WANTED: Someone to Love



**Hi, My name is Pippy.**

I am 8 years young. As you may have noticed, I have a bit of an underbite. My foster mom says it makes me unique.

I am an awesome girl. I love to go for walks. I love to swim and I love the car.

I am very quiet in the house. I only bark when someone comes to the door. I have excellent manners.

When I go outside to play, I have lots of energy. I don't mean to brag but I met a nice lady when I was out for one of my walks and she thought I was a puppy.

I am currently living with another furkid and we get along great. I

also get to play with the big Golden Retriever next door. I love to get hugs and snuggle up on the couch with my foster mom.

Even though I really like it here, I am ready to go to my new forever home and have a family of my own. I hope you will come and meet me.

Smooches ,  


**If you are interested in adopting Pippy, please contact  
 Lab Rescue NS at [labrescuens@gmail.com](mailto:labrescuens@gmail.com)**

**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 Susan Weagle of Halifax for sending us our current cover photo of therapy dog Afi.*

