

the BARKER

Therapy
Dog



St. John Ambulance

Winter • 2008

A Therapy Dog Program publication of St. John Ambulance NS/PEI Council

Vol. 4



Cover Dog: Mocha Chino, proudly owned by Susan Deveau of Yarmouth, NS

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www.sja.ca/ns



Letter From the Editor

Welcome to the Holiday Edition of The Barker! I had a lot of fun creating this issue, and I hope you have just as much fun reading it.

The last few months working with the Therapy Dog Program have been amazing, and very busy!! I attended my first conference (the Provincial Alzheimer Conference in Wolfville), my first Evaluation (in the South Shore) and my first dog visits (in New Glasgow and Eastern Shore). Everyone has been so helpful getting me settled into my new position – I suppose that is one of the benefits of working with volunteers! I was a little nervous when I started, but as I told one of our volunteers, it is so easy to talk about and promote this program because I feel so strongly about it and truly believe in its benefits. I hope you will all feel free to contact me with any suggestions or questions, or just to chat about the program in general.

Most importantly, I'd like to wish you all the best this Holiday Season. It really is a time for giving, and Therapy Dog volunteers give the best gift of all – a smile and a laugh that may not be present otherwise. Thank you for all that you do. Happy Holidays!!

Kaela Ott
Community Services Program Coordinator

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

Kaela Ott

Community Services Program
Coordinator

88 Slayter Street,
Dartmouth, NS B3A 2A6

Phone:

(902) 463-5646 Ext 2302

Toll-Free:

(800) 565-5056 Ext 2302

Email:

kaela.ott@ns.sja.ca

www.sja.ca/ns

baH AhAs
dog jokes



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Great News!

The St. John Ambulance NS/PEI Council website now has a section on Therapy Dog Resources!

Go to www.sjs.ca > Publications & Resources > SJA Therapy Dog Resources (on the side menu). Here you will find most of the forms you need (ie. vet certificate forms and police record attestation forms), information on the program and promotional materials. You can even access blank visit logs to download or print – perfect for sending in your hours (hint hint)! I will update this section as often as possible.

If there is anything you would like to be included, please let me know. (Currently the site is not set up to include photo albums, but we're working on it!)

Bundle up- its cold out there!

Your dog isn't the only one who needs to stay warm. Get cozy with a Therapy Dog sweater. These gray, fleecy pullovers have the Therapy Dog logo on the front and will help fight off those cold, Winter nights. Email me for more details or to place your order!

Price: \$40

the
Gourmet Dog

Mixed Nut Mutt Bar
pretty squares that make a great gift

4 cups whole wheat flour
1 cup unbleached flour or whole wheat pastry flour
1 tbsp cinnamon
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
NRG egg replacement equivalent to 1 egg
¼ cup molasses
¼ cup peanut butter
½ cup unsweetened apple sauce
½ cup vegetable oil
2 ½ tsp vanilla
1 ½ cups water
chopped peanuts and sesame seeds for topping

- Combine first 5 ingredients in a large bowl.
- In a second bowl, combine remaining ingredients except for nuts and seeds.
- Add wet mixture to dry and stir.
- When dough is formed, knead and roll out to about 1/2 inch thickness.
- Cut into squares about 3"x3".
- Brush with water and press chopped nuts and seeds onto the top of each bar.
- Bake at 325 degrees for 50-60 minutes.

Walking in a Doggy Wonderland

Dogs tags ring, are you listening?

In the lane, snow is glistening,
It's yellow, not white,
I've been there tonight,
Marking up my winter wonderland!

Smell that tree? That's my fragrance.

It's a sign for wand'ring vagrants,
Avoid where I pee, it's MY property!

Marking up my winter wonderland.

In the meadow dad will build a snowman,
Following the classical design.
Then I'll lift my leg and let it go,
man,

So all the world will know it's mine, all mine!

Straight from me to the fence post

Flows my natural incense boast,
Stay off my turf, this small piece of earth,
I mark it as my winter wonderland!"



Congratulations!

Therapy Dog Team of the Year

Congratulations to Gloria Armstrong and her dogs Gracie and Brogan from Berwick, Annapolis Valley on being the Therapy Dog Team of the Year! You may remember these gorgeous girls from the cover photo of the Fall Edition of The Barker. Gloria is always eager to help and has spoken publicly about the program on numerous occasions. Gloria and the girls were honored at our Annual Dinner on November 2nd. Way to go, ladies!

Amazing Grace

By Krista Hilton, SJA Therapy Dog Program Volunteer

I was visiting with my dog Ruah at the local nursing home, as we had been doing every two weeks.

A new resident had recently moved in: "Ellen" (pseudonym) was in advanced stages of Alzheimer's. I had known Ellen previously (in a context other than volunteering) when she had lived in a different residence. During that time, though I had spoken with her over numerous occasions, I had never witnessed any visible response to my words or to anything that was going on around her.

As I approached Ellen with Ruah, this time as a volunteer visitor, I didn't expect any different response than what I had become accustomed to, which was no

(visible) response at all. I placed Ellen's hand on Ruah's head and I watched in amazement as Ellen's own head raised up. Her full attention focused upon Ruah and she said clearly and audibly, "Nice dog" as her hand began to pet Ruah. Raising her head further, she looked me directly in the eyes and said, "Is she yours?" I answered automatically but breathlessly—I couldn't believe that Ellen had engaged me (truthfully, Ruah) in such a way that she was communicating and interacting in a manner I had never witnessed before.

The visit was only a brief one—but I walked away humbled and amazed at the power of an animal to reach depths within a human being that at times

seem unreachable through all our medical and psychological expertise. In that one grace-filled moment I saw again in Ruah the wonderful ability dogs have to communicate on levels beyond our human understanding.



Fido Fudge

Your favorite four-legged friend will love this holiday treat.

- 1 cup shortening
- 6 tbsp molasses
- NRG egg replacement
- equivalent to 8 eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- ½ cup carob powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- Cream shortening and molasses
- Gradually beat in the other ingredients till smooth
- Pour into a greased 8x8" pan
- Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes or until done, but not hard

Our Therapy Dogs are on the 'Nice' List

Humans aren't the only ones that love toys – your faithful companion wants in on the goods, too! Our Therapy Dogs are hard at work throughout the year, so they deserve some play time. This Holiday season, treat your doggy to a fun - but safe - toy. Playthings can help fight boredom, prevent the development of problem behaviours and face it – they're just plain fun!

Follow these tips from the Humane Society of the United States to safely choose a toy that you can feel comfortable giving to your dog:

- Toys should be appropriate for your dog's size; a large dog should not be playing with a small item that can easily be swallowed
- Rawhides should only be played with under your supervision; good quality hard rubber toys are often safer and last longer
- Be careful with stuffed toys – make sure that they are safe for children under the age of three and do not contain any dangerous fillings
- Soft toys should be machine washable
- Double check with your vet to make sure it is safe to give peanut butter to your particular breed of dog
- Avoid or alter toys that are not "dog proof" by removing ribbons, elastics, eyes or other parts that could easily be chewed off and ingested
- Discard toys that are breaking or missing pieces
- Get the most out of your toys by rotating them weekly so that they seem "new"; keep a favorite out all of the time

Winter Protection for Your Dog

The following is an excerpt from a November 2003 Therapy Dog Program Bulletin (Vol. 2, No. 8)

As dog owners, we are all aware that the winter months, especially in Eastern Canada and the far north can be dangerous for both “man and beast”. We must always be on the alert to ensure our dog’s well being.

New and old members can appreciate the reinforcement of the points listed below. Albeit a repeat, if even one dog is saved because of this, it is worthwhile.

Frostbite and hypothermia

Any animal exposed to cold temperatures can suffer frost-bite or hypothermia. Dogs are susceptible to frost-bite through the foot pads and on the ears. Make certain snow is promptly cleaned off the pads and between the toes with a cloth or soft brush – ice forms quickly and if not removed, can cause frost-bite quickly. Do not leave your dog outside in very cold weather, no matter what the breed. In hypothermia, the animal’s body temperature is reduced because heat is lost faster than it can be replaced. They slow down, start to shiver, and finally lapse into an unconscious state. Old or very young dogs

are most susceptible and if the condition is suspected, should be checked by a veterinarian. You can protect your pet by not keeping them outside for long periods of time, providing a thick coat or sweater if you take them out, and providing boots for their feet. There is a good selection of protective wear for animals available on the market today.

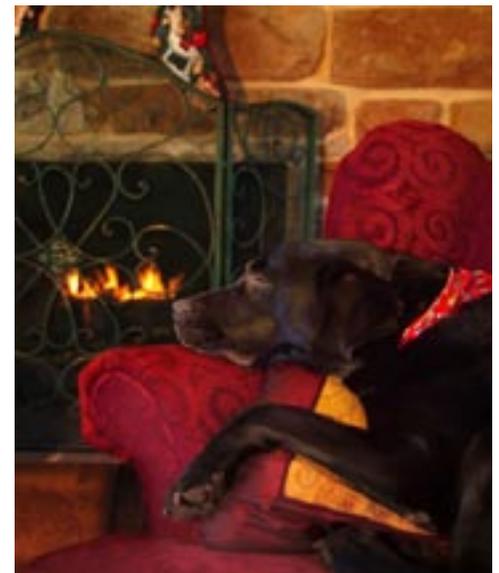
Ice, Snow and Salt

Ice, snow and salt can cause great discomfort for our pets. Dogs get snowballs between their pads and on lower legs and stomach. Once inside, the snow melts quickly. Always check the toes and pads making certain all are clean. Again, an adequate coat or sweater and boots for the feet are good protection. (You protect your feet – be aware of your dogs’ need too). Some salts affect the pads more than others. Watch for signs of slowness in walking, holding up the affected paw, and reluctance to go outside. Salt must be cleaned off at once, even to the extent of soaking the paws in warm water only and drying carefully.

Wet Bedding

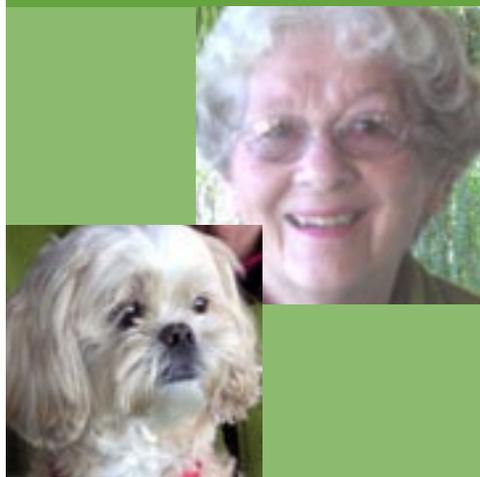
We can sometimes forget that when a pet comes inside, even though we have removed the snow, the coat can still be wet or damp in places. When the pet retreats to its bed, it can be lying in “damp comfort”. Be watchful – replace damp bedding and covers. If your dog has an outdoor kennel, provide good clean straw – it is a good insulator as well as a “wetness” absorber. Being alert to the problem will save your pet from being uncomfortable and prevent early arthritis.

Keep your pet warm and in a healthy environment, just as you do for yourself.



WELCOMING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

SOUTH SHORE



Jean Ritcey & Mia

SOUTH SHORE



Alan Wentworth & Steamer

SOUTH SHORE



Nancy Weaver & Teal
*(Nancy is an existing SJA
volunteer with a new dog
being evaluated)*

SOUTH SHORE



Beverlee Brown & Kelli

SOUTH SHORE



Don Robertson & Bridget

QUOTES:

"My dog is usually pleased with what I do, because she is not infected with the concept of what I "should" be doing."
~Lonzo Idolswine

"A dog is like an eternal Peter Pan, a child who never grows old and who therefore is always available to love and be loved."
~Aaron Katcher,
American Educator and
Psychiatrist

"If you want the best seat in the house ... move the dog."
~Unknown

"Dogs are miracles with paws."
~Attributed to Susan Ariel Rainbow Kennedy

Seasons Greeting Card

Thanks to everyone who submitted a photo of their dog(s) for our Therapy Dog Seasons Greetings card! It appears we have some very photogenic friends in our program. Keep a lookout for the card, which will be arriving soon. In the meantime, here are some of our 'honorable mentions.' Happy Holidays, and don't forget to take pictures this season to send in for next year's contest!

1. Santa's Little Helper –

Jamie (submitted by Christa Pierce)

2. Looking for the Perfect Christmas

Tree – Chloe (submitted by Alisa and Tom Digout)

3. Santa Hat Strike –

Roxie (submitted by Melissa Aucoin)

4. First Christmas –

Dawson (submitted by David Demetre)

5. Santa Paws –

Broghan (submitted by Mandy Samson)

6. I Made the Nice List, Right? –

Sable (submitted by Leighann Hartnett)

7. Present Time! –

Autumn (submitted by Viola Julien)



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.

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.

This month's cover dog is Mocha Chino from Yarmouth – all dressed up in his Therapy Dog duds and ready for the Holidays! Thank you to Susan Deveau for sending in this photo of her fellow volunteer. What a cutie!!