



The Barker

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs

Canine Partners In Education

... all the news that's fit to bark!

NEWSLETTER

EDITOR:

Deborah Glessner

Issue Highlights:

- A NAME CHANGE
- READING TO ROVER
- DAISY & KERRIGAN
- 5-YEAR HONOREES
- BODE TO THE RESCUE
- ... AND MORE!

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs teams are currently visiting classrooms in:

♦ School Districts of:

Bensalem Township
Council Rock
New Hope Solebury
Pennsbury
Upper Dublin

♦ Chester County IU Child & Career Development Center

Coatesville, PA

♦ MCC Warwick House (BCIU)

♦ Private Schools:

The Center School
Abington, PA

"Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."

~Groucho Marx

Volume 6, issue 2

Summer 2016

A NAME CHANGE!

Our organization has recently received legal approval to change our name from Nor'wester Readers Inc. to Nor'wester Therapy Dogs. As we grow and support more and more teachers in the classroom, we have realized that we are so much more than just a "reading dog" program.

Stimulated by seeing the impact of our therapy dogs in classrooms where creative teachers were thinking outside the box, we have gradually shifted our emphasis to promoting our program as a true learning program, where the magic of canine partners in education open doors for students who struggle academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Our website URL will remain www.NorwesterReaders.org.



WELCOME "READING TO ROVER"!

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs welcomes the therapy dog teams who are part of the "Reading To Rover" program operating in the Upper Dublin School District under the leadership of Kathy Gardosh.

The dogs also visit local libraries in the Abington and Upper Moreland area, and several teams will be visiting classes in schools currently served by the NWR organization. The handlers are: Arlene Pflaumer, Bonnie MacDonald, Cheryl Metzel, Elizabeth Hayes, Kathy Gardosh, Mary Beth Maye, Michele Taffer, Pat Clark, Paula Herman, Bob Weiss, and Terri Weiss.



The greatest pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him, and not only will he not scold you, he will make a fool of himself too.

~ Samuel Butler

DAISY ROSE MAKES THE YEARBOOK!

Dolores Esposito's Golden Retriever, Daisy Rose, visits Kim Rinella's first and second grade resource room at Hillcrest Elementary in the Council Rock School District. She was honored for all her wonderful therapy dog work with a picture in the school's yearbook.

Kim shared: *"Daisy always makes reading fun and the kids love having her. I got an e-mail from a parent who was going through this with her second son. She wanted me to know that they still had a picture of the first son (who was afraid of dogs at the time) and Daisy in their house and how much her younger son was loving being with Daisy. Daisy has the perfect temperament for my nervous dog kids and my expert dog readers."*

Congratulations to Dolores and Daisy!



STUDENT REFLECTIONS ABOUT MS. CATHY AND KERRIGAN



Katie Christiansen, 6th grade learning support teacher, asked her students to write reflections about their 2 years working with NWR volunteer Cathy Guenzel and her Westie, Kerrigan. She praised Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan "for teaching the children how to be effective learners, how to take pride/slow down in their work, how to listen and respond to others, and of course, how to respect animals and read their signals."

One student wrote: "For two OUTSTANDING years I've known Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan. They help me accomplish So much! When I first heard that a dog was

coming to help us read, I thought that Mrs. Christiansen was CRAZY! I also thought that we would take him home every weekend, sort of like a class pet.

Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan are two very inspiring beings in my life with two very similar personalities. Ms. Cathy is a very caring, special, peaceful, sweet, encouraging, and inspiring person. And Kerrigan is a very loving, kind, calm, quiet, happy, and charming dog. Well to me he's not just a dog; in my opinion he's an Educator. If you're wondering, how can a dog be an educator? Well thanks to the wonderful organization of Nor'wester Readers training Kerrigan and even teaching Ms. Cathy a few things. Those wonderful people and one wonderful dog helped my reading, grammar, and comprehension skills increase significantly! And to them I'm beyond grateful. I can't even express how grateful I am to have them come to our classroom every single week!

Every week when Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan come to our classroom, we do fun filled activities. Some of the activities we do are the spelling roll, the ABC's of the P.S.S.A's, and we do writing. I know whoever is reading this must be thinking how can those things be fun, especially for a 12 year old kid!?

It's fun because Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan help us step by step and make sure we understand it. And even back in fourth grade we did writing prompts with them, and some prompts would even be about them!! I enjoy class more on Wednesdays because those two miracle workers come and help us!

In conclusion, I just want to thank Mrs. Christiansen for making this all possible! You inspire me every day! I love you. And I'm going to give a special thanks to Ms. Cathy and Kerrigan. You guys taught me so much I cannot even express how I feel in words, THANK YOU SO MUCH!"

When I needed a hand,
I found your paw.



Facebook/SurfDogRicochet



NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS WILL HAVE A BOOTH AT:

**~ CRAFTS IN THE MEADOW ~
October 15-16, 2016**

*Tyler State Park ~ Art Barn Entrance
off Newtown Richboro Rd.
Richboro, Pennsylvania*

***Come support our organization and
meet some of our therapy dog teams!***



~IN MEMORY~

Judy Snyder's Sofie

**Linda Lonsinger's
Glory & Reggie**

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAMS!

Karen & Hannah Spicer with Daisy

Karen Leininger with Charlie

Sharon & Cassidy Sudell with Nilla

Mitch Cohen with Cooper

Elizabeth Hayes with Rachel

Karen Horan with Sampson

Kim Sector with Ranger

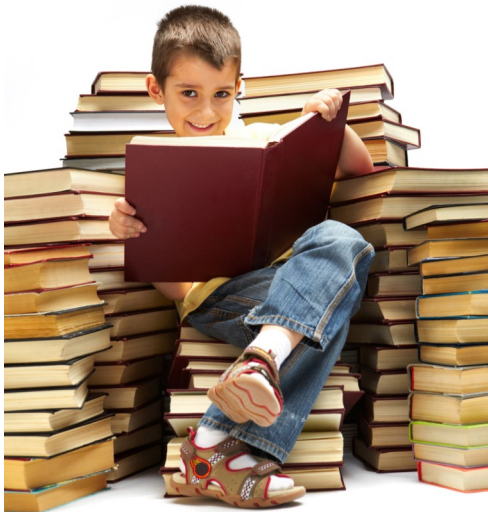
Mike Grothman with Carter

'GO FUND ME' CAMPAIGN

Fundraising for non-profit organizations like Nor'wester Therapy Dogs has become extremely challenging. Last summer we initiated a crowdfunding campaign with the **GO FUND ME** site. This campaign is still active, and we are still accepting donations.

We hope that all our readers and supporters will log into our **GO FUND ME** site and contribute. In addition, please "share" on your social media sites and forward our link to your family and friends. With insurance and expenses continually rising, we deeply appreciate your donations for this very important campaign.

URL: <http://www.gofundme.com/pmc6l4>



YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK:

Communication
Internet and website fees
Printing and duplicating
Insurance
Public Relations
Advertising
Comfort Corners for Classrooms
Accounting/Auditing expenses
Volunteer Services Expenses
Directors' Fees
Data Back-up
Social Networking
Workshops & Seminars
General operating expenses
Supplies . . . and more!

FIVE YEAR HONOREES

On May 24, 2016, the Nor'wester organization hosted an *End Of The Year Appreciation* breakfast at the Corner Bakery Café in Newtown, PA. Certificates were presented to each volunteer for their service during the 2015-2016 school year. In addition, volunteers with five or more years of participation in Nor'wester Therapy Dogs were honored with a special recognition certificate and a rhinestone paw pin. This year's five year honorees were Lyn Bauer, Marilyn Campbell, Michelle Lecker, Cathy Larrick, Pat Mayrhofer, Ted Mayrhofer, Mary McCaffrey, Sarah McGinnis, and Eileen Long. Thank you to all our volunteers for another wonderful year, and special congratulations to our nine honorees.



**DO YOU HAVE A REGISTERED THERAPY DOG?
WE NEED YOU!**

The Nor'wester Therapy Dogs organization needs dog & handler teams to volunteer in our program

www.NorwesterReaders.org



Norwester Therapy Dogs

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WE NEED THERAPY DOG TEAMS!!

Please help us recruit teams to visit school classrooms.

Teams are especially needed in Pennsbury and Centennial School Districts.

More information and application forms are on our website.

****PLEASE NOTE:** *Page 5 in this newsletter is a printable recruiting poster.*

Please consider printing out a few copies and posting them in your area.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO THIS SUMMER?

Reading to Rover and NWR therapy dog teams have been doing visits at the:

♦ **Indian Walk Veterinary Pet Pow-Wow Fair**

♦ **Free Library of Northampton Township**

"Every Dog Loves A Story"

♦ **Southampton Free Library**

"Reading To The Dogs"

♦ **The Center School, Abington, PA.**

Summer School: Going For The Gold, An Olympic Adventure

♦ **Upper Moreland Library**

"Reading With Fuzzy Friends"

♦ **Abington Township Library**

"Dog-Gone Good Readers" & "Bark Pals" at the Willow Grove Giant

♦ **West Chester University**

Young Writers/Young Readers Summer Youth Program

sponsored by the PA Writing and Literature Project



HELP WANTED!

The Nor'wester Readers organization needs some talented individuals with experience in:

Public Relations

Newsletter Publication

Fundraising / Event Planning

Grant Research and Writing

Please contact Debbie Glessner for an application form.

dglessner2@comcast.net

DONATION NEEDED: Two 6 ft lightweight collapsible tables

WE ARE GROWING!!

Centennial School District: We are excited to have been asked by Paul Hatton to take over therapy dog visits in Centennial School District. Paul worked hard to gain permission to bring dogs into Centennial and has visited classes with his therapy dog in McDonald and Davis Elementary Schools. We have the enthusiastic support of Dr. David Baugh, new superintendent in Centennial, who is a supporter of the Nor'wester Therapy Dogs organization and canine partners in education.

Bucks County Community College: Wendi Huttner has been working diligently over the last two years in an attempt to start therapy dog services in collaboration with BCCC. We just received administrative approval to move forward in developing our **"Comfort Dogs on Campus"** program and hope to be ready to provide teams during exams this December. Stay tuned!

GOOD BYE AND GOOD LUCK!

The Nor'wester organization extends warm good wishes to Lisa Conicella and Sarah McGinnis as they settle into their new homes in Florida (Lisa) and California (Sarah). We have a feeling it won't be long before Lisa's dog, Annie, and Sarah's dog, Porsha, start therapy work in their new communities.



DEBORAH GLESSNER WINS 2016 VOLUNTEER IN BUCKS MOST HAPPENING CONTEST



"I am nominating Debbie because she is the most selfless and unselfish person I know – characteristics that are, of course, indispensable for this endeavor. Every week she lends countless hours to our efforts, constantly putting Nor'wester Therapy Dogs needs ahead of her own. With heart and dogged determination, she is the glue holding this organization together." – Wendi Huttner

The Bucks Happening List is the most happening people's choice contest in Bucks County. Nor'wester's own Deborah Glessner was nominated for Most Happening Volunteer. On Friday, March 25th, results for this category were announced, and...

Drum roll please...
Debbie won!

A note from Debbie:

What an honor to be voted the winner in the VOLUNTEER category of 2016 Bucks Happening List. Thank you to Wendi Huttner, my NWR partner, who nominated me. I am thrilled to be in the company of many other wonderful volunteers, and I am extremely grateful to everyone who supports us and Nor'wester Readers Therapy Dogs – Canine Partners in Education.

Thank you to everyone who voted.

- Deborah Glessner: Co-founder and Co-director of NWR

BEHIND THE SCENES

DENISE YANULAVICH ~

Three years ago, Denise retired from Holy Redeemer Hospital as a Cash, Credit and Collections Manager. After retiring, she decided to work the Council Rock School District as a teacher assistant. This is where she had her first contact with a therapy dog. She was fascinated with the impact the handler and dog had upon the children and found it endearing and educational.

Denise lives with her husband, Mark, in Churchville and two pugs named Miley and Murphy. She enjoys reading, gardening and entertaining family and friends.

She became involved with the Nor'wester organization when her friend Lyn Bauer recommended her. Denise maintains all our spreadsheets and makes sure all handlers are in compliance with therapy memberships and Pennsylvania state security clearances. We are thrilled to have her capable assistance as a member of our administrative team.



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TEACHERS ARE TALKING!

"Mr. Nelson and Bubba have had a significant and special impact on the students in this classroom. Due to their placement at the Residential Treatment Facility, these students are often deeply impacted by the loss of what had been familiar to them -family, friends, their home and school, and their pets. This can leave them feeling vulnerable and afraid. The weekly visits with Mr. Nelson and Bubba have given these children an opportunity to once again experience the special kind of comfort and connection with a beloved pet that can help to soothe anxieties, support self-regulation through petting, brushing and talking to Bubba, and the sense of purpose that can come from taking care of another life. These children experience most relationships as chaotic and challenging. In contrast, their time spent with Bubba offers an alternative -a relationship that is easy and fun.

*One very special recent incident where Mr. Nelson and Bubba helped support a child in the classroom involves a 7 year old child who was recently admitted to the Residential Treatment Facility. He was very anxious and had episodes of crying and escalation whenever reading was required. Although he showed some improvement with 1X1 teacher support, this was still a very difficult area for him as he repeatedly exclaimed, "I can't read!" When Bubba arrived for the first time since his admission, he immediately asked why Mr. Nelson and Bubba were in the classroom. I explained that each student visits with Mr. Nelson and Bubba, has an opportunity to pet and brush Bubba and maybe offer him a treat. In addition, the children read to Bubba. He initially said, "Oh, I don't think I want to do this!" and sat down at his desk. I explained that he was not required to participate but could watch as other children each took their turn. After two other students had met with Bubba and Mr. Nelson, this child also wanted an opportunity to do the same. He was smiling and excited. He was able to relax and **read** with Mr. Nelson while Bubba listened quietly. The child began to brush and pet Bubba with great care. He gave Bubba a big hug. It was the first time since his arrival in the classroom that this young child looked happy. Mr. Nelson and Bubba have worked to change this child's experience around reading and perception of his own abilities. They also have provided him with some relief of the heavy burden that being out of the home can place on a young child.*

The positive impact that this type of therapy has had on each of these children who present with extremely significant behavioral and emotional challenges has been invaluable. Thank you!” (MC – MCC Warwick House Residential Facility)

“This program has produced such amazing results with our group of students. Students are motivated and encouraged to discuss various topics regarding social skills and look forward to reading with the dogs. The students display social deficits, low frustration tolerance, and lack of motivation in learning. These dogs have transformed them. Students are eager to join the group, read the dogs, to discuss anything and everything with the handlers! They are calm and respectful to the dogs and everyone while the dogs are here. The dog handlers are personable and professional--differentiating needs for all learners. We have been able to incorporate character education into this program which supports our school recently named the National School of Character. Nor’wester Readers have played a huge part in our learning community of students.” (NG – Emotional Support class, Pennsbury)

“The dogs in my class interact differently with the students than students in other classes, due to the ability of my students. I have one student who has become more comfortable with dogs as she was never a big fan of them. She is willing to reach out to pet them now briefly. Another student who is typically quiet has been smiling often when a dog comes to the room and has been signing “more” to have more interaction with the dog. The dogs have helped calm students having seizures. The dogs have also sat with students when they are sitting on the floor during sensory time. I have several students who walk in a gait trainer in the classroom. The dogs often “walk” with them around the room to motivate the students to walk. All of my students are in wheelchairs and use other equipment such as a stander. The dogs are able to put their paw up on the chairs/equipment to get to the students’ levels as many of them cannot bend over to reach the dogs. This program has brought joy to the students and staff in the classroom and has helped the students interact with dogs when they

BODE TO THE RESCUE!

It’s common for elementary students to experience anxiety when anticipating PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) testing, which is administered to third and fifth graders in Pennsylvania elementary schools. Teachers do whatever they can to encourage their students to be confident and comfortable about taking the test.

This spring, a teacher at Richboro Elementary had a third grade boy who was so anxious about taking the PSSA test she was concerned that it would seriously impede his focus so he could perform to the best of his ability.

Knowing that the Nor’wester organization is available work with guidance counselors and in crisis intervention, the teacher called upon Wendi Huttner who was visiting Richboro Elementary School weekly with Bode, a yellow Lab that belongs to her son Blake.

Wendi and Bode made an emergency visit to the school and spent about 15 minutes one on one with the student in the guidance counselor’s office. Bode’s calm and cheerful demeanor helped the boy to relax, and at the end of the 15 minutes he declared to Wendi and the guidance counselor, “I’m OK now. Let me go take the test!”



to

DAISY TROOP PRESENTATION



On April 29, 2016, Debbie Glessner and Hannah made a surprise visit to the Holland Girl Scout Daisy Troop meeting at Joy Bell in Holland, PA. The 16 girls were all in first grade and were working on a unit about how to respect and care for animals as part of developing a bond with a pet. Much to the delight of the girls, Hannah walked into the group and plopped down right in the middle where she got lots of gentle pats and strokes while the girls listened and asked questions about Hannah, dogs, and therapy dog work.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PROUD GRANDPARENTS!

NWR Co-Founder and Co-Director, Wendi Huttner, and her husband Jay, are excited to announce the arrival of their first grandchild. Brother Blake Huttner is enjoying his new role as “uncle.”

Wendi shares: On June 27th my husband, Jay, and I welcomed our first grandchild Alexis Riley Morgenstern into our family and hearts. We instantly fell in love with her. She's now a month old and melts my heart when she stares at me. Her parents Brooke and Craig have settled into a wonderful family life along with big sister, Labrador Te'a.



RECOMMENDED TITLES OF BOOKS ABOUT DOGS

If you have wondered how a dog's brain works, or more importantly, how it differs from the human brain, here are some wonderful books to add to your reading list.

The Culture Clash by Jean Donaldson

Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know by Alexandra Horowitz

The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs by Patricia McConnell

Bones Would Rain from the Sky: Deepening Our Relationships with Dogs by Suzanne Clothier

Reaching the Animal Mind: Clicker Training and What It Teaches Us about All Animals by Karen Pryor

The Genius of Dogs: How Dogs are Smarter Than You Think by Brian Hare & Vanessa Woods

Dog Sense: How the New Science of Dog Behavior Can Make You a Better Friend to Your Pet
by John Bradshaw



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Directors:
Wendi Huttner
Deborah Glessner

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs: Canine Partners in Education, provides registered therapy dog teams who will work cooperatively with teachers to support and build student motivation, enhance focus, and increase task persistence. The presence of our therapy dog teams will also offer emotional support and a stress free learning environment to improve academic achievement, student self-esteem and confidence. .

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs teams will enhance the educational environment and improve student learning through the use of therapy dogs in the classroom.

www.NorwesterReaders.org



THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTORS:

Greetings!

This September we will begin our tenth year of providing therapy dog services to school classrooms. It's amazing and often difficult to believe that our organization has grown so much. When Wendi's dog, Wes, started visiting a second grade learning support classroom in the fall of 2007, we had no idea that this pilot program would explode in the Council Rock School District. Our growth has been both joyous and sometimes painful as we evaluated our services, revisited our mission and vision, and initiated improvements. We are grateful to our wonderful administrative team comprised of Lyn Bauer, Lynn Lenz, Vickie O'Connell, Janine Monico, and Denise Yanulavich — and, of course, all our wonderful handlers and their dogs.

We are delighted to welcome eleven handlers and dogs of the "Reading To Rover" team who share our philosophy and enthusiasm for therapy dogs in education. Not only do they serve the Upper Dublin School District and public libraries in that area, some of the teams will also be visiting schools that NWR currently serves.

We are especially excited about taking our program into the Centennial School District and starting a Comfort Dogs On Campus program in BCCC. Stay tuned!

Along with this surge in growth, fundraising remains a critical concern. Our **GO FUND ME** campaign is still active, and we hope you will consider "sharing" the link and making a donation. In addition, we also need therapy dog teams. On page 5 of this issue there is a recruiting poster which can be printed out. We would greatly appreciate support in hanging those posters, especially in areas that the Bensalem, Pennsbury, and Centennial Districts serve.

In closing, we want to wish all of our teachers and teams another wonderful year as our therapy dogs work their magic.

Wendi Huttner & Debbie Glessner

