



# The Barker

## NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS

Canine Partners in Education

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

### NEWSLETTER

EDITOR:

Deborah Glessner

### Issue Highlights:

- TRIBUTE TO WES
- NWR COMMENDATION
- KIM SECTER
- TEACHING IDEAS
- And more . . . !

Nor'wester teams are currently visiting classrooms in:

♦ School Districts of:  
Bensalem Township  
Centennial  
Council Rock  
New Hope Solebury  
Pennsbury

♦ Chester County IU Child  
& Career Development  
Center Coatesville, PA

♦ MCC Warwick House  
(BCIU)

♦ Private School:  
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 7, issue 1

Winter 2017

## ~ A TRIBUTE TO WES ~

By Julie Sturman

**Editor's Note:** The Nor'wester organization extends their heartfelt condolences to the Huttner family on the passing of Wes. He has left an amazing legacy, and Wendi's friend, Julie Sturman, kindly shared her thoughts about Wes and his indomitable presence.

From the moment Wes stepped off the plane from Wales, we knew he was a very special Labrador Retriever. Outgoing, friendly, and eminently biddable, he was the calmest and most laid back puppy we had ever seen.

Champion Balrion Weathertop Nor'wester, named for his father, El Nino, sailed through his AKC championship and earned his AKC Canine Good Citizen title and the THDD (Therapy Dog Distinguished) certificate as well.

His owner, Wendi Huttner, a long-time Labrador breeder whose children are both grown, had heard about reading dogs. These very patient, kind canines go into schools and libraries where, as non-judgmental audiences, they inspire children to gain confidence and love reading, a passion that will serve them well throughout life.

At first, the school administrators were reluctant - a dog in school? Allergies? Parent objections? But Wes changed all that as he charmed one and all and obligingly wagged his tail as each child read to him, showed him the pictures, smelled his fur, observed his anatomy, climbed on him, and literally used him as not only a reading aid but as an old and very reliable friend.

The remarkable thing about Wes was that not only did he do reading therapy, but as the pilot dog for the *Nor'wester Readers* organization, he inspired teachers, children, school board members, administrators, and other volunteers with therapy dogs to develop an ever-growing reading program in the Council Rock School District in Bucks County, PA.



Because of Wes's success, many children have become avid and competent readers, writers, illustrators, and learners. They look forward to and enjoy an activity that is often uninspiring for them to say the least.

Nor'wester Readers, renamed Nor'wester Therapy Dogs in 2016, is now in its tenth year of providing therapy dog services, and their pilot dog, Wes, made it all possible. Had he been less of a dog, there might have been only one class and one semester. Because of him and him alone, Council Rock and eight other districts, plus two public libraries participate in the program he started. Countless children will continue to reap benefits beyond

(continued on page 2)



anyone's expectations. Kudos to Wendi Huttner and Deborah Glessner, whose combined experience smoothed the way for growth and progress, but special thanks to Wes, without whom Nor'wester Therapy Dogs would have never come to be.



**POSTSCRIPT:** *Wes's legacy continues on through his offspring who have served or are currently serving as therapy dogs in the Nor'wester program. They are:*

*Blake Huttner's Bode (great grandson)  
Brooke & Craig Morgenstern's T'ea (daughter)  
Becky Weiss's Laila (daughter)  
Nan and Bob Muska's Sadie (daughter)  
Leslie Zak's Avery (son)  
Debbie Glessner's Hannah (also a THDD) and Heidi (both daughters)*



above: Wendi Huttner, with Wes (left) and Bode, accepts a 2015 donation to NWR of \$535.00 raised by the students and staff of Richboro Elementary School where Wes visited as a therapy dog for seven years in Carla Foy's second grade class, working both by the side of Wendi and her son Blake.



left: Wes accepts his basket of gifts from the students of Richboro Elementary at his retirement celebration. April 2015



Lower Elementary—New Hope Solebury School District (Title I reading class)



left and above: Where it all began. Kim Rinella's class at Hillcrest Elementary, Council Rock School District May 2008

## **PAST PARTNERS**

**The Nor'wester Therapy Dog organization honors the memory of our therapy dogs who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge.**

**Leslie Zak's Avery  
Michelle Rothstein's Darcie  
Wendi Huttner's Wes**

## **NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS LAUDED BY NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP**

On September 28, 2016, Northampton Township, Bucks County, PA. presented Nor'wester Therapy Dogs with a township commendation award. The township board of supervisors recognized, acknowledged, and thanked the organization for its dedicated volunteerism and for enriching the lives of area students and community members.

The award was accepted by co-founders Debbie Glessner and Wendi Huttner on behalf of the organization. Dr. Kim Rose, supervisor, presented the award to Debbie and Wendi who attended with their therapy dogs Hannah and Bode.



**WE'VE BEEN NOMINATED AGAIN FOR BUCKS HAPPENINGS!!  
PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT AND VOTE FOR US!**

**Charity:** <http://bucks.happeningmag.com/happeninglist/2017-everything-bucks-charity/>

**Volunteer:** <http://bucks.happeningmag.com/happeninglist/2017-people-volunteer/>

**OR VOTE FROM OUR WEBSITE: [www.norwesterreaders.org](http://www.norwesterreaders.org)**



## NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS APPRECIATES YOUR DONATIONS!

Your contribution can:

- ~ Make a great teacher gift
- ~ Celebrate a graduation or learning milestone
- ~ Honor a person, pet, or favorite volunteer
- ~ Honor an anniversary or birthday



Your generosity and thoughtfulness will enable *Nor'wester Readers Therapy Dogs* to grow and to improve our services to the children and classrooms visited by our therapy dog teams.

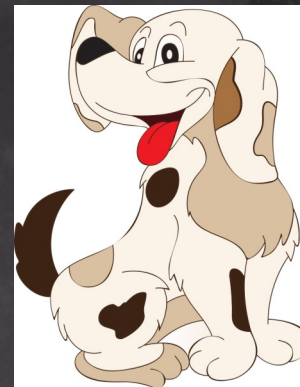
Please mail your tax-deductible donation to:

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs  
485 Worthington Mill Rd.  
Richboro, PA 18954



## NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS WELCOMES NEW TEAMS:

Joyce McGettigan and Jingles  
Jim & Heidi Amoroso with Bianca



## THERAPY DOG TEAMS NEEDED!

Our waiting list of school districts and classrooms is growing. We desperately need more therapy dog teams to meet the demand.

Please see our website for more information and an application form.

**WWW.NORWESTERREADERS.ORG**

**Editor's Note:** After seeing NWR volunteer Kim Sector do an amazing agility run televised from Westminster , we asked her to share more about her dog Piper and her Westminster experience. Kim volunteers for NWR with Piper's dam, Ranger, at Lower Elementary in the New Hope Solebury School District. They support the Title I reading program with weekly visits. NWR congratulates Kim and Piper on their 4th place and wish them lots of luck in Georgia.

Although not completely "Therapy Dog" related, I have to brag about Piper, who competed at the Westminster Agility Master Championship on Friday, February 10th. We qualified in both preliminary rounds, which earned us a coveted spot at the top of the heap and an appearance in the finals that was broadcast on Fox Sports on Saturday Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Piper and I ended up finishing in 4th Place out of 99 dogs in the 20" jump height. Never in my wildest dreams!

Agility is a very fast, fun sport that requires incredible team-work with your dog. The team-work part is not unlike what we do with our therapy dogs.

Ranger, my therapy dog, is a retired High Level Agility Dog with 6 MACH's Master Championship titles to her credit along with advanced Obedience and Hunting titles. I bred Ranger one time to keep a puppy. She had 10 chocolate Lab pups, and we kept the smallest girl from that breeding. That puppy is our little Piper who is now 5 years old and following in her amazing dam's paw prints.

Piper just finished her MACH 4 and will be heading down to Perry, GA next month for the AKC National Championship. Ranger will be coming along as her cheering section!



The photo above is of Piper and me with our preliminary round ribbon stash under the famous Westminster Kennel Club logo! The photo to the left is Ranger, relaxing between therapy dog visits.

For those that have never been to the Westminster show in NYC, it is an incredible experience. The crowds, the energy, the love the people of NY have for dogs, and the cheering they did for every team that stepped to the line was amazing.

An experience I will always treasure. I am so grateful for the opportunity to show my dog in such a great venue but even more thankful to Ranger who gifted me with this talented pup! ~Contributed by Kim Sector



**TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS AND AMAZING DOGS! WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU AND YOUR DOGS ARE DOING! PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SHARE YOUR THERAPY DOG STORIES AS WELL AS OTHER HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS!**

# SUMMER 2016 THERAPY VISITS A HUGE SUCCESS!

The summer of 2016 was a busy one for Nor'wester Therapy Dogs. Our teams supported both the Free Library of Northampton Township (Richboro, PA) and the Southampton Public Library (Southampton, PA) in their reading dog programs. Special thanks to Lynn Lenz who is the public library liaison for NWR and coordinated both programs.

NWR also provided therapy dogs to Center School's summer school program in Willow Grove, PA. And our Upper Dublin group was also busy!



## FREE LIBRARY OF NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

### Dog Days at the Library (6 weeks)

Librarian: Christy Lazarino

Teams:	Nancy Jorczak and Moon	Hannah Spicer and Daisy
	Judy Eckenrode and Casey	Mike Grothman and Carter
	Mary McCaffrey and Hootie	Debbie Glessner and Hannah

## SOUTHAMPTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Read to the Dogs (5 weeks)

Librarian: Heather Soltroff

Teams:	Cheryl Munizza with Molly	Kelly Wolff with Miss Daisy
	Mitch Cohen with Cooper	

## THE CENTER SCHOOL Summer School (4 weeks)

Run in conjunction with LaSalle University graduate students. Emphasis was placed upon reading and motivation.

Teams:	Nancy Jorczak with Secret	Maureen Bahr with Fiona
	Arlene Pflaumer with Abby	Cheryl Metzel with Vincent
	Debbie Glessner with Heidi	

## UPPER MORELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Reading With Fuzzy Friends

Upper Moreland Library kicked off their summer reading program, **Reading with Fuzzy Friends**, by inviting Nor'wester Therapy Dogs of Upper Dublin to participate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month.

Teams:

Arlene Pflaumer and Abby	Michele Taffer and Colette	Paula Herman and Genny
Cheryl Metzel and Beau	Mary Beth Maye and Cassidy	Terri Weiss and Buzz
Bob Weiss and Billie	Elizabeth Hayes and Mariah	Kathy Gardosh and Sam

The program was so successful the library decided to continue it throughout the year and our volunteers are happy to oblige.

## UPPER DUBLIN HIGH SCHOOL: Summer Writing Program

The Nor'wester teams from Upper Dublin also participated in a language arts **Summer Writing Program** at the High School on Wednesday, July 27, 2016. It was a dress rehearsal for the kids to practice reading their stories and poems to the dogs before their final presentation to parents.

Teams:	Terri Weiss & Buzz	Bob Weiss & Billie	Paula Herman & Genny
	Michele Taffer & Colette		
	Kathy Gardosh & Patrick		



**Dogs are not our whole life, but  
they make our lives whole."** -

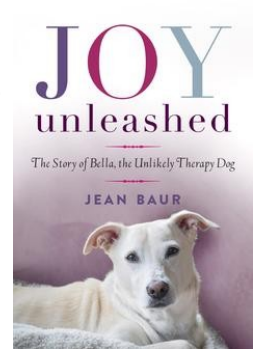
*~Roger Caras*



## Book Talk at Newtown Bookshop with Jean Baur and Bella, a Therapy Dog

Jean Baur, former Yardley resident and author, shared stories from her new book *Joy Unleashed: The Story of Bella, the Unlikely Therapy Dog* on Saturday, November 19th at the Newtown Bookshop in Newtown, PA. Attendees had the opportunity to meet Bella and ask questions. Debbie Glessner spoke briefly about the work Nor'wester Therapy Dog teams are doing. Ten percent of all book sales was generously donated to Nor'wester Therapy Dogs.

Thank you to Jean and Kathy Morrison, owner of the bookshop, for their thoughtfulness in designating NWR as the recipient of their donation.

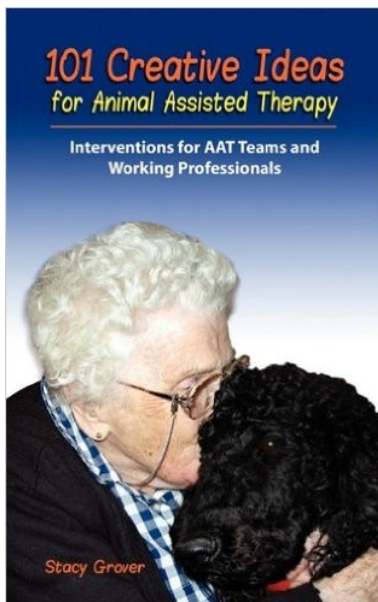


## NOR'WESTER THERAPY DOGS 'GO FUND ME' CAMPAIGN



Our organization is continually grateful for your donations. Last fall, using monies donated through our GO FUND ME campaign, we were able to purchase four puppy bean bags. These bean bags have been placed with teachers hosting a therapy dog to use in their classroom. Children are much more comfortable and find it easier to relax by the side of their therapy dog while sitting on one of these snuggly bean bags. We are continuing to accept donations at:

<https://www.gofundme.com/pmc6l4>



## A WONDERFUL BOOK FOR TEACHERS! *101 Creative Ideas for Animal Assisted Therapy*

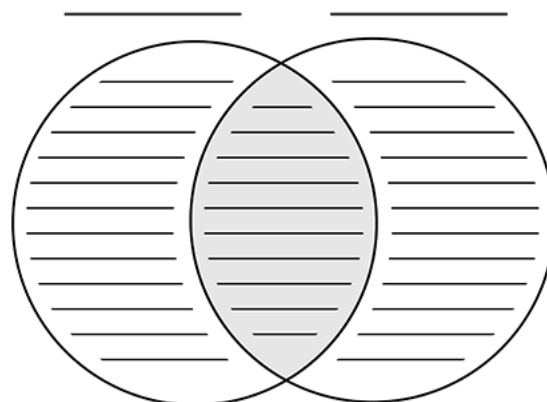
This book is packed with 190 pages of step-by-step instructions for 101 practical animal-assisted therapy activities and interventions. There is also an index that correlates the activities with a myriad of goals in the areas of physical therapy, occupational therapy, mental health, social skills, educational skills, speech therapy, and recreational therapy. You will also find recipes to make for animals, animal-related booklists, and animal-related songs. This book is not limited to animal-assisted therapy with dogs. It also includes small animals, cats, birds, and horses. If you are a handler of a therapy animal, a trainer of therapy teams, or if you are a professional who incorporates animal assisted therapy into your practice, this book was written for you!

## ⇒ CREATIVE TEACHING IDEAS ⇐ to use with a therapy dog team

**Editor's Note:** I am doing therapy dog visits with my Labs Hannah and Heidi to Tanya' Mahon's autistic support class (gr 3-5) at William Davis Elementary School in Centennial School District. I asked her if I could share two teaching lessons she designed around the presence of a therapy dog. The Nor'wester organization strongly encourages teachers to think of their therapy dog team as a "teaching tool" to be used to help meet academic and instructional goals. I want to take this opportunity to remind our teachers and handlers that we LOVE hearing about successful lessons where the magic of the therapy dog made a difference. By sharing, everyone benefits! Copies of handouts or blurbs describing lessons along with photographs are always appreciated. Please note the name of the teacher, school, therapy dog team, and the purpose of the lesson along with permission to share. Thank you! Debbie Glessner

Venn Diagram

Name \_\_\_\_\_

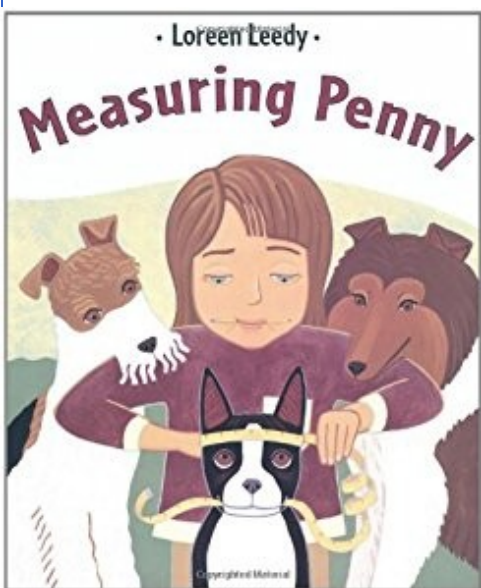


### COMPARE AND CONTRAST: VENN DIAGRAM

Tanya began class by reading the story *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathman to her students. Her goals included listening skills, literature appreciation, compare and contrast, and learning to use a Venn diagram. After the story was over, Tanya asked each child to label the 3 sections of the diagram. Hannah was left circle portion, Gloria was the right portion, and the center overlap represented how both dogs were the same. They then had a discussion about the "differences" between Hannah and Gloria, recording the specific differences in the corresponding circle portions. For example, Gloria is a police dog and Hannah is a therapy dog. Gloria was a German Shepherd and Hannah is a Labrador Retriever. Some of the similarities the children identified were that both dogs had a job and both were girls. It was amazing how the presence of a live dog really made the lesson come "alive!"

### MEASURING

Using the book *Measuring Penny* by Loreen Leedy, Tanya set forth the goals of listening skills, literature appreciation, following directions, interpreting measurement in a variety of ways, and



recording the findings. This lesson took 2 weeks, and the second week incorporated compare and contrast since Hannah visited the second week. In the story, Lisa has an important homework assignment-- to measure something in several different ways. She has to use standard units like inches/centimeters and nonstandard units like paper clips to find out height, width, length, weight, volume, temperature, and time. Lisa decides to measure her dog, Penny, and finds out ... Penny's nose = 1 inch long  
Penny's tail = 1 dog biscuit long, and Penny's paw print = 3 centimeters wide ... and that was only the beginning! Lisa learns a lot about her dog and about measuring, and even has fun doing it. The students measured both Heidi (week 1) and Hannah the following week with inches, centimeters, Lego blocks, paper clips, and magic markers to find out how long their ears, legs, tails were and how tall each one was. They had lots of fun comparing and contrasting the differences between Heidi and Hannah.

**THANK YOU to Tanya Mahon for sharing these wonderful teaching ideas! Please share YOURS!!**





**NOR'WESTER THERAPY  
DOGS**

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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 in the academic environment 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 in public/private schools and on the collegiate level in ways which will prompt students to fully realize their learning potential.

**[www.norwesterreaders.org](http://www.norwesterreaders.org)**



## THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTORS:

Greetings!

Happy New Year and warm wishes for an exciting 2017!

It's mind-boggling to think that we are nearing the end of our tenth year of providing therapy dog services to area public and private schools. Back in 2007 when we started with Wendi and Wes at Hillcrest Elementary, we really didn't know what to expect. Quickly we discovered the high demand for therapy dog services, and along with observing creative teachers who were thinking outside the box, we realized that dogs could be used in so many more ways in addition to reading. Our program is in great demand; unfortunately we often have to say no due to location and lack of therapy dog teams to supply those areas.

This fall we started in Centennial School District, serving learning support and autistic support classes at William Davis Elementary and Klinger Middle School.

Wendi is still working through channels at BCCC and hoping that we will soon be able to get our Comfort Dogs On Campus program up and running there.

We would like to thank Karen McAllister, who visits with her bulldog Moose in two classes weekly, for coming on board with our administrative team as a network coordinator for our spreadsheets and documents. Karen will also be sending reminders when team therapy dog affiliation renewals are due. And a special thanks also to Karen's daughter Meghan Roberts for her technical expertise in transitioning us from Excel to Google Sheets.

We also welcome Karen Leininger, another volunteer who visits with her Golden Retriever, Charlie, to our administrative crew. Karen has a marketing background and will be assisting with our fund-raising efforts.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the newsletter. We welcome photographs and informative articles for future issues. The summer deadline is July 1, and the winter deadline is January 1. Please remember to keep recruiting new teams!

So, get that friendly, well-socialized dog off the sofa and earn your CGC and therapy dog certifications. Nor'wester Therapy Dogs would love to have you join our team! See our website for more information.

*Debbie Glessner and Wendi Huttner*

