



The Barker

Nor'wester Readers Canine Assisted Learning Program
... all the news that's fit to bark!

NEWSLETTER
EDITOR:
Deborah Glessner

Volume 4, issue 1

Winter 2014

Issue Highlights:

- 2014 FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE
- MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS!
- TEAMS IN THE NEWS
- DOG TALES AT WARMINSTER LIBRARY

Nor'wester Readers teams are currently visiting classrooms in:

- ◆ School Districts of:
Bensalem Township
Council Rock
New Hope Solebury
Pennsbury
- ◆ Chester County IU Child & Career Development Center
Coatesville, PA
- ◆ Private Schools:
The Center School
Abington, PA
Olney Charter High School
Mastery Charter
Stetson Middle School
Philadelphia, PA

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

~Groucho Marx

NOR'WESTER READERS ANNOUNCES ITS 2014 FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Nor'wester Readers Canine Assisted Learning Program is announcing its 2014 Fundraising Initiative. Our organization is growing rapidly, and our financial needs increase proportionately as operating costs accelerate. Because we do not charge for our services, we rely on grants and your generous donations to grow the organization and expand our services. Your donation is a wonderful opportunity for you, your family, or your business to help support a proven educational program that benefits children.

We will not be organizing a Dog Walk and Family Fun Fair this year, so we are encouraging individuals to consider ways to raise funds for the Nor'wester Readers organization. Casual Days, bake sales, car washes, dance marathons, 5 or 10K runs, school band concerts, and read-a-thons are just a few ways that students, parent teacher organizations, school faculties, and friends of Nor'wester Readers can contribute. High school students looking for community service hours can organize and run fund raising events.

For individuals wishing to make direct donations, we have set five suggested donor levels:

- INDIVIDUAL: \$25**
- FAMILY: \$75**
- BUSINESS: \$100**
- CORPORATE: \$250**
- FRIEND: \$500**
- OTHER:**



NWR therapy dog Avery loves to listen!

We are grateful for your support which will help Nor'wester Readers continue to impact the educational environment in the classrooms we serve. Our therapy dogs work amazing magic, and it is our desire to keep that magic alive for those students who suddenly find the ability to learn and achieve by the side of their therapy dog. (cont. on page 8)



MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS!

The Nor'wester Readers organization is proud to introduce four volunteers who have come on board to assist in administrative and publicity tasks.



LYN BAUER, who currently serves as New Team Coordinator for Nor'wester Readers, resides in Churchville with her husband Frank. They have three adult sons and one daughter-in-law who reside in Philadelphia. Although Lyn and Frank do not currently share their home with a dog, pets have played a central role in their family life and they continue to enjoy the company of their four "grand dogs". She also is an avid reader, agreeing with Groucho Marx who said, "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend".

Professionally, Lyn spent 32 years working for the School District of Philadelphia as a classroom teacher, a reading specialist and a literacy coach. She holds both a B.S. and MEd. in Elementary Education as well as a Reading Specialist Certification and a Pennsylvania Principal's License. The last five years of her career found her working in central administration, curriculum development and professional development for K-12 teachers across the city.

After retiring in 2011, Lyn met Debbie Glessner and Nan Muska in a local aquatics class and became fascinated by the role of NWR therapy teams in local classrooms. She has been a non-dog volunteer with NWR since that time, helping to maintain Nor'wester Readers data base, making e-mail contact with therapy handlers and supporters, and assisting with the Dog Walk. Most recently, Lyn provides support to new therapy teams by maintaining required documentation, coordinating a data-gathering project with three therapy teams and by making some of the yearly classroom support visits. This volunteer work has married her love of dogs with her passion for providing literacy support in all classrooms.

Anna LeGoff is Head of Marketing, overseeing the planning, development and implementation of all ProductLife Group's marketing strategies, communications and public relations activities.

A talented and results-oriented marketing communications professional, Anna draws on her proven ability to combine cutting-edge technology tools with traditional marketing practices to create comprehensive thought leadership campaigns and strategies that enhance ProductLife's image in the life sciences industry and position the company as a leader in its field.



Anna has driven highly respected and transformative marketing campaigns for many leading service providers in the life sciences industry, including CSC, MediciGroup, First Consulting Group and Covance. Most recently as Senior Director, Marketing Communications at CSC, Anna built and delivered integrated thought leadership campaigns across a spectrum of formats that established CSC Life Science as a trusted industry leader, and that met the company's business goals and objectives.

Anna lives in Newtown, with her husband of twenty eight years and their four English Cocker Spaniels. She spends her spare time visiting nursing homes and schools with her therapy dog, Colt. She is a Bright & Beautiful Therapy Dog and Nor'wester Reader volunteer. She also serves NWR in a non-dog capacity as Scheduling Coordinator for all schools and districts outside of Council Rock.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS (continued from page 3)



Bonnie Pelberg is the mother of three grown sons who attended Council Rock schools. In her spare time she makes wire crocheted jewelry and takes care of her new family; two cats and her Standard Poodle, Sasha. Bonnie and Sasha can often be seen briskly walking around their Richboro neighborhood. This is their second year working with Nor'wester Readers where they really enjoy their time working with elementary school children.

In addition to volunteering with Sasha, Bonnie has come on board as our Facebook custodian. She will be posting announcements and information to keep our fans informed. Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook.

Yardley resident **Elisa Baxt** has created a twitter account for Nor'wester Readers under the handle **@NorwesterReader**. Elisa also tweets for several other Bucks County businesses. She moved to Bucks County 8 years ago and loves everything about the area and especially enjoys the open land and visiting family farms. Her hobbies are photography and cooking, and she adores all dogs.



Sign up on your Twitter Account to receive tweets about Nor'wester Readers and what the organization and our teams are doing.



On Sunday, December 8, 2013, Nor'wester Readers hosted a Bright & Beautiful Therapy Dogs, Inc. testing at Richboro Elementary School, Richboro, PA. Melinda Berger of Dream Dogs LLC evaluated nine teams whose goals are to join our canine assisted learning program. We are grateful to Melinda for her time and expertise and also Council Rock School District for the use of Richboro Elementary's multi-purpose room.



Blake Huttner and Bode are evaluated in acceptance of assistive devices.



Nan Muska and Sadie (left) are evaluated as they demonstrate proper walking with another team.



PAST PARTNERS
The Nor'wester Readers Organization
honors the memory of our therapy
dogs who have crossed the Rainbow
Bridge.

Maryann Pfannenstiel's TESS

Members of NWR 2009 - 2013

NOR'WESTER READERS HAS PARTICIPATED IN . . .

Camp Expressions Summer Camp for Children with Special Needs July 9 through August 6, 2013

Canine Book Buddies — Free Library of Northampton Township, Richboro, PA — July 3 through 31, 2013

ESY classes for multiple disabilities students in Council Rock School District — summer 2013

Summer School—Quarry Hill Elementary—summer 2013

Crafts In The Meadow: Tyler Park — October 19, 2013

Warminster Public Library -- January 20, 2014 "DOG TALES"



NOR'WESTER READERS 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 Canine Assisted Learning Program* to grow and to improve our services to the children and classrooms visited by our therapy dog teams.

Please use our PayPal button on our website or mail your tax-deductible donation to:

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

TEAMS IN THE NEWS!

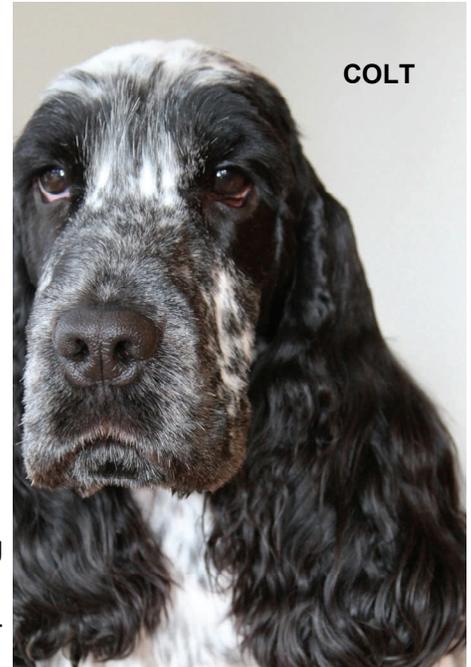
THE IDEAL READING AND LEARNING COMPANION

An article which appeared in the Newtown Elementary Newsletter

Colt, the reading dog, joined Mrs. Nancy Adams's first-grade class last year. Colt is a two-year-old English cocker spaniel and a member of Nor'wester Readers, a canine-assisted learning program whose registered therapy dogs enhance educational environments so that children become motivated to work on their reading, writing, and communication skills.

Colt rejoined Mrs. Adams this year to be with her new group of first graders. Under Mrs. Adams's direction and supervision, Colt and his handler, Anna LeGoff, work weekly with small student groups on reading, vocabulary building, and increases in students' comprehension levels.

Colt listens to the children attentively, never judging, criticizing, or laughing at them. He contributes to a safe environment in which students can learn. By incorporating Colt into the learning process, he helps otherwise unmotivated students gain confidence and discover the joys of becoming lifelong readers and learners.



Dogs Teaching Kids?

By Gina Marks, Coatesville DOES January 9, 2014

Well, maybe not exactly. But according to the Nor'wester Readers Canine Assisted Learning Program, therapy dogs can be immensely helpful in the classroom.

Created by thirty year breeder and dog trainer Wendi Huttner, along with Debbie Glessner as a pilot program in a Bucks County school district, the program uses registered therapy dogs to create a stress-free learning environment to help improve the students' self-esteem and confidence.

Nor'wester Readers operates on the philosophy that "dogs are ideal reading and learning companions because they help increase relaxation, listen attentively, do not judge, laugh, or criticize, allow children to proceed at their own pace, and are less intimidating than the students' peers."

Leslie Zak, a Coatesville DOESer, and her canine pal Avery, can be found every Tuesday between 10:30 and 12:30 at the Child & Career Development Center in Coatesville.

She says, "I absolutely love doing it..... The problem is we're the only team. The children absolutely love the dog coming into school. It helps them to build their skill and confidence without the dog judging them. We're trying to find more teams to join the Nor'wester Readers organization."

Interested? In order to participate, the dog must be CGC titled and therapy dog certified and then join the Nor'wester Readers Program.



~ DOG TALES ~

WARMINSTER TOWNSHIP FREE LIBRARY
Warminster, Pennsylvania
January 20, 2014



Katie Hansen, children's librarian at Warminster Township Free Library, organized a one-day "**DOG TALES**" event on the MLK holiday for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Each child had a 10 minute session to read to one of three therapy dog teams provided by the Nor'wester Readers organization. Ms. Hansen said, "Children's library programs are intended to promote literacy skills at all levels. Programs like "**DOG TALES**" help to build motivation and reading confidence in children."

The children were very excited to meet Tucker and Pat Mayrhofer, Sasha and Bonnie Pelberg, and Casey and Judy Eckenrode. NWR thanks our volunteers for making the event a success..



GREAT DOG BOOKS FOR WINTER READING!

Pukka's Promise: The Quest for Longer-Lived Dogs by Ted Kerasote (adult)

A Dog Named Boo by Lisa J. Edwards (adult)

Dog Breath: The Horrible Trouble with Hally Tosis by Dav Pilkey (ages 4-8)

The Puppy Place series by Erin Miles (ages 7-10)





NOR'WESTER READERS
485 Worthington Mill Rd.
Richboro, PA 18954

215-504-0154
Lab324@aol.com
Dglessner2@comcast.net

Directors:
Wendi Huttner
Deborah Glessner

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

The goal of the **Nor'wester Readers** Canine Assisted Learning Program is to utilize registered therapy dog teams who will work cooperatively with public school teachers to support and build student motivation, enhance focus, and increase task persistence. The presence of our therapy dog teams will offer a stress free learning environment which will increase student self esteem and confidence.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

Nor'wester Readers therapy dog teams will enhance the educational environment in ways which will prompt students to fully realize their learning potential.

www.norwesterreaders.org



THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Greetings!

As I write this, it is snowing. Some of our dogs love the snow, and some hate it. My Hannah goes out and runs and rolls with delightful abandon. My younger dog Heidi also likes to romp and play in the snow, but when it comes to doing her business, the cold, wet stuff is a definite hindrance. In the last storm she was grateful when I finally shoveled out a little spot for her to squat in comfort. What we will do for our dogs! But, when you think about the magic they create for so many children, and the joy they exhibit when they go to work, they are definitely worth the little extras.

We started five new teams this fall with two more waiting in the wings to start as soon as we locate classes. Congratulations to Nan and Bob Muska who have both certified and started working with their new Labrador Retriever, Sadie, and to Carol Boyle who has certified with her young Sheltie, Rocky. We also started our program in Coatesville, PA. at the Chester County IU Child & Career Development Center with our new team Avery and Leslie Zak.

We will soon be introducing our 2014 Fundraising Initiative. A donation form is included in the newsletter. Please consider making a donation and sharing our initiative with your friends and family. We are grateful for your support in any amount. Ongoing donations and sponsorships enable us to keep the magic alive for those students who suddenly find the ability to learn and achieve by the side of their therapy dog.

We are also putting out an urgent call for more therapy dog teams to join NWR and volunteer, especially in Coatesville and the Bensalem Township, Pennsbury, and New Hope-Solebury School Districts. Please visit our website for more information about joining and application forms.

In the meantime, enjoy the beauty winter has to offer. There's nothing greater than snuggling with your warm pups on these cold days!

Debbie Glessner

