



Alliance of **THERAPY DOGS**

NEWSMAGAZINE

Spring/Summer 2026



Magazine Editors:

Don Vaughan

Jared Wadley

Graphic Designer:

Courtney Roberts

Disclaimer

We edit your stories the best we can, but do trust our members to provide correct or verified information. We are not professional journalists or copy editors. We are volunteers. We try our best to catch errors, misspellings and incorrect information. But sometimes we err!

Advertising Requirements

Single issue, full page \$100, half page \$75, and quarter page \$50. Ad must be camera ready and submitted to ATD office no later than February 15 for the Spring/Summer issue and August 31 for the Fall/Winter issue.

Alliance of Therapy Dogs
Newsmagazine is published two times a year. Any articles published in *Alliance of Therapy Dogs* newsmagazines may be reprinted with credit given to the author of the article and the statement: Reprinted with permission from *Alliance of Therapy Dogs* Newsmagazine (ex.: Vol. 1, Issue 2, p. 60) or whatever issue it is taken from.

All communications regarding applications for membership, renewals, concerns, issues, general questions and requests for merchandise are processed by the corporate office and should be sent to:

Alliance of Therapy Dogs

Mailing address:

P. O. Box 20227

Cheyenne, WY 82003

Physical Address:

401 West 19th St. Suite 201

Cheyenne, WY 82001

307-432-0272

877-843-7364 (Toll Free)

307-638-2079 (Fax)

Email: office@therapydogs.com

Website: www.therapydogs.com

When and How Do I Renew?

- One renewal date per household - October through March registrations will renew on January 1 of each year. April through September registrations will renew on July 1 of each year.
- Electronic renewals will be sent out 60 days prior to renewal and will be on the Member Portal.
- Hard copy renewal notices should be received 30 days prior to your renewal date.
- Electronic second notices will be generated January 1 and July 1. Hard copies will be mailed out by January 15 and July 15.
- All renewals received after your renewal date will be assessed a \$15 late fee.
- If your renewal is late, there is no insurance coverage between your renewal date and the date your renewal is finalized. Any Member who does not renew, including the \$15 late fee, by February 15 or August 15, will be required to retest and reapply for ATD membership.

Prepare to Renew:

- Make sure your dog has had an annual wellness examination by a veterinarian within 12 months.
- Be sure the rabies vaccination is current.
- If using a titer instead of rabies vaccine, rabies titer levels must be 0.5 IU or greater and must be measured every 2 years.
- Your dog's annual fecal exam must be done within 12 months. Make sure the fecal exam is done early enough to get results and, if positive, get treatment and retest.
- Your veterinarian will sign off on the Renewal Health Verification form attesting that all three items are up to date.

Time to Renew:

- You can go to www.therapydogs.com to renew online. Sign into the Member Portal. Your username is your email address, and your initial password (if you have not changed it) is your Member number.
- Complete your review. T/Os take the T/O Review. All other Members take the Member Review.
- You will print your Renewal Health Verification Form, have your veterinarian complete it, scan and upload it, and save.
- Include the appropriate fees. Make your check or money order payable to Alliance of Therapy Dogs. You can also pay online by going to the Member Portal. Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) are not accepted.
- Payment without the signed renewal health verification form will not be accepted. All required materials must be submitted together. Your renewal will not be processed until the Office has received all required materials.
- We appreciate all that you do to prepare for your renewal. Please remember that postage fees are a large expense for our organization. We strive to keep our membership fees as low as possible. Please help us by returning your complete membership renewal package with all required materials and signatures to arrive by your appropriate renewal date. This way, your membership and insurance will not lapse and you will avoid incurring late fees.
- If you have any questions concerning the Member renewal process, please contact the corporate office on the toll free number 307-432-0272 or email us at office@therapydogs.com.

2025/2026 Board of Directors

Officers

Don Vaughan (President)
Kasson, MN 55944
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Pat Coglianese (Secretary)
Rock Hill, SC 29730
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Sandy Schiller (Treasurer)
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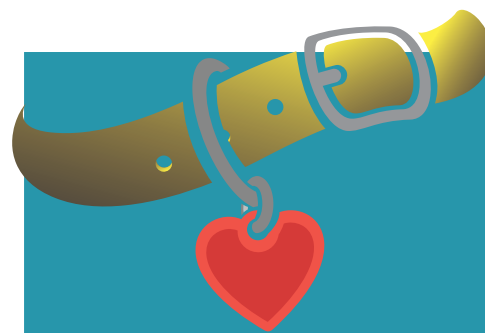
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Kimberly Williams (Immediate Past President)
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Alliance of
Therapy Dogs

Mission Statement

Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) is an international registry of certified therapy dog teams. We provide testing, certification, registration, support, and insurance for Members who volunteer with their dogs in animal assisted activities. Our objective is to form and support our network of caring individuals and special dogs who share smiles and joy with people, young and old alike.

Magical Miracle Moments

We would like to hear about the very special or “magical” moment you and your wonderful dog experienced during your volunteer work. Examples may be a patient who has been totally unresponsive until a dog visits and, the next thing you know, they are smiling, petting the dog, a tear running down their face. Or a child who simply cannot read, and one day reads an entire book to a therapy dog. These articles should focus only on the special, unique moment, not the everyday miracles we experience with our dogs on regular visits.

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1,000 words or less
- Author’s name, city and state
- Photos with photo releases attached
- In a format able to be edited, such as a word document

If your story is not published in this section it may be published in another section.

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Members who take their dogs to work with them and/or use them in their jobs, including but not limited to teachers, therapists, doctors or psychologists, are not covered by ATD insurance when functioning as employees. Our insurance only provides coverage when the member is acting in a volunteer capacity.

Requirements for Alliance of Therapy Dogs Newsmagazine Submissions

We love your stories! Reading each and every 1 is a true pleasure, and we are happy to share them with the rest of our Alliance of Therapy Dogs family. Here are the things you need to know in order to get your stories printed.

1. Articles and Stories

- a. 1,000 words or less
- b. Submit to corporate office in an electronic format such as a Word document, Rich Text File, or other editable electronic/digital form; not a .pdf or Adobe file.
- c. The story or article you submit must follow all Alliance of Therapy Dogs rules and guidelines. For instance, any stories or articles where your dog is off leash (unless performing tricks) will not be published. To be certain, please refer to your Member Handbook or look up the guidelines online.
- d. Besides being a Member in good standing, the story should have taken place within the past year (except for certain instances, such as a pandemic) and not focus on a dog's retirement or death. Background information and stating that a dog has retired or has died is acceptable. Please see "Retires" and "Rainbow Bridge" for more details.
- e. Only 1 story submission from a Member per issue. Stories submitted in consecutive issues from the same Member must not be on the same topic as the previously submitted story.

2. Photos

- a. Photos of non-members must be accompanied by a signed Media Authorization Release Form, or we cannot publish them. (www.therapydogs.com/MemberDocuments.html)
- b. You may submit more than 1 photo, but usually only one will be selected for printing.
- c. We prefer that all photos submitted be high-resolution digital photos. Hard copy photographs are also acceptable.
- d. Please, no newspaper clippings or copies of such.

3. Dogs in the News

- a. Summarize any news articles in your own words in 125 words or less.
- b. Must include your name, city and state of residence.
- c. You may include one photo that was not taken by the media outlet.
- d. Please do not send articles or links for us to summarize as the Newsmagazine Committee will no longer summarize third-party articles.

4. Retired

- a. All dog retirement announcements should be limited to a photo, years of service, and no more than 50 words describing the dog's special qualities. Editors may shorten descriptions that exceed the word count.

5. Somewhere Over the Rainbow

- a. Photos must follow the above guidelines.
- b. Include the following: owner's/handler's name, dog's name, breed, date of birth, date of death and years of service.
- c. You may include a few lines (no more than 50 words) about the dog's service or special qualities, but we may need to edit it accordingly.
- d. Due to limited space, human obituaries are not published.

Submission Deadline Dates are Always February 15 and August 31

Please understand that not all articles that are submitted are published. News articles cannot be reproduced due to copyright issues. The Newsmagazine Committee reserves the right to edit contributions for language and length and to make the final decision regarding which articles will be included in each issue. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Links to stories will no longer be published, and the Newsmagazine staff will no longer summarize third-party stories. If we have any follow-up questions about your submission, we'll send them to you as soon as possible. Send electronic submissions to office@therapydogs.com.

Mail hard copies to ATD, PO Box 20227, Cheyenne, WY 82003



Executive Director Amy Brockel Resigned

Effective March 27, 2026, Amy Brockel stepped down as Alliance of Therapy Dogs Executive Director to pursue new opportunities and focus on personal matters. Amy served in this role for nearly 8 years, leading the organization through the COVID pandemic, initiating online visit logging and establishing an endowment fund.

“We are grateful for the dedication that Amy brought to our mission,” said ATD Board President Don Vaughan. “During her time with ATD, the organization has grown to be the largest therapy dog registry in the country. We wish Amy the very best in her next chapter.”

The ATD Board of Directors is committed to a seamless transition and has begun a formal search for a new leader immediately.

“Our mission of sharing smiles and joy with our therapy teams in many communities they serve remains our top priority,” Vaughan said.

Board Committees

Certification (CERT): Ensure the quality of Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) Tester/Observers (T/O) by reviewing T/O applications, developing the annual Tester/Observer Review, monitoring the T/O Egroup, advising the ATD Office on concerns regarding T/O that surface, and investigating and resolving T/O grievances. Review and approve membership applications outside the standard ATD Certification Test when there is no available T/O in the area of the prospective member. Reviews, approves and denies all concerns that fall outside the established ATD rules.

Documents (DOC): Update policies as needed. Publish all handbooks. Prepare Director biographies.

Executive: Assist the Board of Directors of Alliance of Therapy Dogs in the orderly and fair governance of ATD by, among other things, acting on behalf of the Board within the scope of the Bylaws, conducting research to assist in strategic planning, assisting in emergent and sensitive issues, and acting as the Appeals Committee. It assists the ATD Office with research and investigation issues as needed.

Finance: Assists the Board of Directors in the monitoring and compliance of the financial reporting and management of the financial health of ATD by, among other things, overseeing the budget, monitoring financial statements, ensuring compliance and accurate financial reporting to the Board and external entities, developing financial policies, managing assets, safeguarding funds and working with the Board to ensure the organization’s long-term financial health. Ensures that financial practices align with ATD’s mission and nonprofit best practices, and that risk management and long-term fiscal sustainability are prioritized in all financial decisions.

Grievance and Ethics (G&E): Review and respond to grievances, complaints, ethics issues and general concerns.

Newsmagazine: Choose and edit submissions and design the semiannual newsmagazine.

Nominating and Awards (N&A): Conduct election of Officers and Board Members with the assistance of the ATD Office. Set scholarship criteria and choose recipients. Review and select the recipient of the annual Outstanding Member Award.



Summer 2026 President's Message

Almost 30 years ago, my wife (girlfriend at the time) and I had a dream. That dream was to have a certified therapy dog who could visit children at a specific children's hospital in Illinois. In 2002, our dream of having a certified therapy dog became a reality. We certified our first therapy dog with Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD). ATD was known as Therapy Dogs Inc. at the time. Our first therapy dog was a 3-year-old Tosa Ken named Majo. Majo set the bar high for us and for all our dogs to follow.

In 2011, I decided to apply to become a Tester/Observer (T/O). Becoming a T/O opened the door a little more to an organization I was already very proud to be a part of. It gave me (and still does) the opportunity to educate and help others who also have a dream of becoming a certified therapy team.

Early in 2016, my wife and I very unexpectedly lost our second therapy dog, Gaag, a rescued Saint Bernard. It was shortly after this loss that I was encouraged to apply to the Board of Directors. Joining the Board was not on my radar. However, I decided to apply and was elected to the Board in June of 2016.

After being elected, I thought I might be on the Board as a Director for 5 years and then move on. Being an

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Officer wasn't a role I had considered. But after 2 years as a Director, I was elected Treasurer. Then three years later, I was elected Vice President. Two years ago, I was elected President. Needless to say, I have been honored by the opportunity to serve on the Board the past 10 years.

As I look back at my time on the Board and with ATD, especially as I have had the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of this wonderful organization, there is one thing that sticks out the most. It's the people. From our Members to our T/Os to our Board to our Office Staff and all our supporters, the people and their special pups make this such a special organization to be a part of.

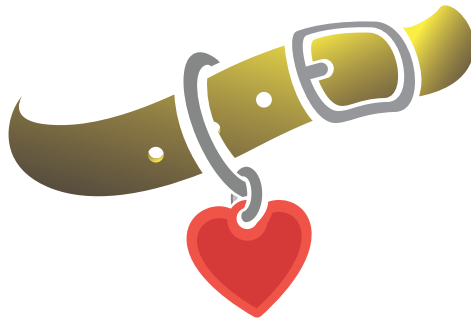
As of June 30, my term as Alliance of Therapy Dogs President ends. After 10 years serving on the Board of Directors, I have decided not to seek reelection as President or to the Board.

Long-standing Director and former Board President Pat Coglianesse also will be stepping off the Board. As of July 1, Cris Lewis has been elected the next ATD Board President. Sandy Schiller has been elected Vice President, Deb Miller as Secretary, and Jessica Davis as Treasurer. Congratulations to the newly elected Officers. I am wishing everyone on the Board the best.

At the end of March, Executive Director Amy Brockel resigned. We thank Amy for all that she did during her time with ATD and wish her the best in her next endeavors.

For me, this is not a goodbye. As Immediate Past President, I plan to be of assistance when and where needed. I will also continue as a T/O and proud Member of ATD.

I want to thank everyone for this opportunity to serve you and ATD. It has been an honor and a privilege. Please continue sharing smiles and joy.



Ways to Donate to **Alliance of Therapy Dogs**

The easiest way to donate is to go to our website
therapydogs.com and click on the
“DONATE” button in the upper right-hand corner.

The Donate button will give you the option to:

- 🐾 Donate 1-time**
- 🐾 Donate monthly**
- 🐾 Donate once a month by rounding up on purchases you make to a debit/ credit card you link to the donation page**
- 🐾 Donate “in memory” or “in honor” of someone**

You can also support Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) by donating to ATD’s Endowment. The ATD Board of Directors approved and established an endowment to ensure that ATD will have the foundation and funds to continue to support its volunteers for decades to come across our vast service area of the USA, Canada and Puerto Rico. This endowment is set up to accept donations from all over the world and in various forms, from cash and securities to real estate. Please contact the ATD Office if you have questions or if you would like to learn more about donating or about updating your estate plans to include Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

You are also welcomed to donate
by mailing a check or money order to:
Alliance of Therapy Dogs
P.O. Box 20227
Cheyenne, WY 82003

Thank you for the ongoing support of our organization.

* ATD will place all donations received into the general fund
unless otherwise specified by the donor.



Looking for a Few Good Volunteers



Do you ever wonder how you can help others experience the satisfaction you feel when you take your dog on a pet therapy visit? If you do, you have an opportunity to take the concept of “Sharing Smiles and Joy” to new heights by becoming a Tester/Observer (T/O).

T/Os are role models for Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) and as such must know and follow all rules and regulations and be able to convey them to new and prospective Members. Good people skills are essential to communicating effectively and tactfully with people.

The main purpose of the T/O role is to assess the skills of teams seeking certification and coach prospective and current members. The T/O provides constructive and encouraging feedback that helps teams (both the handler and the dog) improve their skills and confidence in providing animal-assisted activities or therapy. ATD has the following expectations of its T/Os:

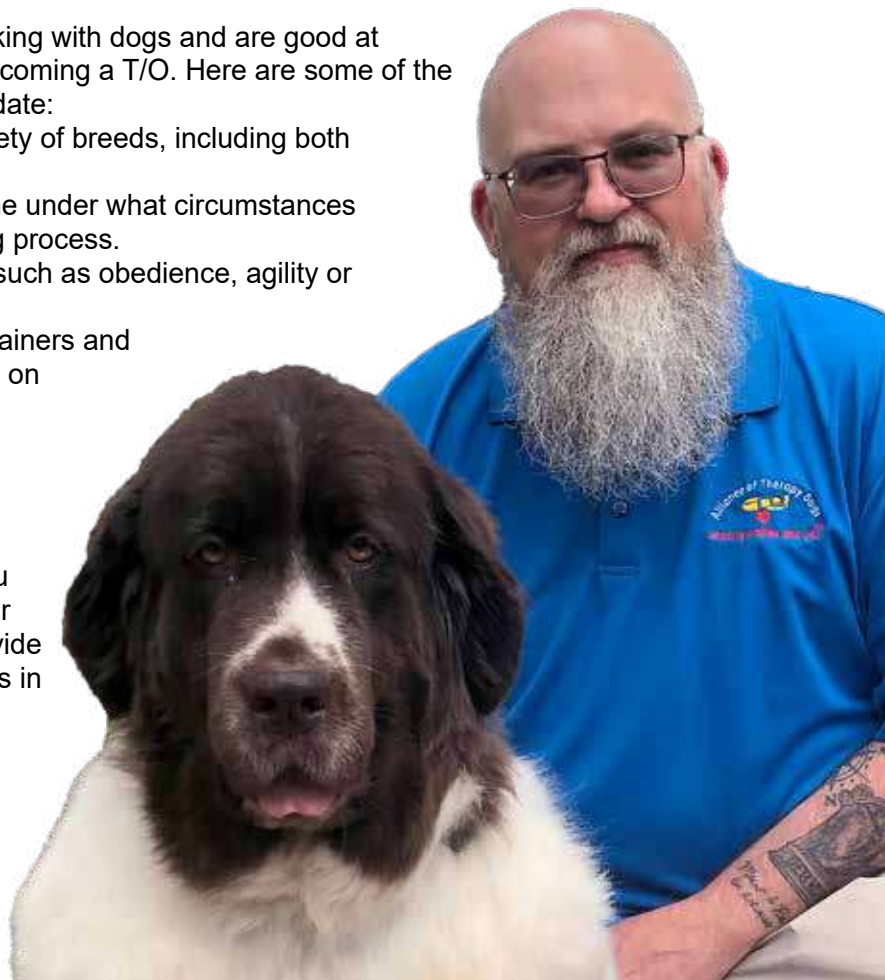
- Abide by the ATD and T/O Code of Ethics.
- Be a role model and follow all current ATD rules and guidelines as an example to handlers and prospective Members.
- Review the Member Handbook and Tester/Observer Handbook yearly and incorporate any changes into their practices.
- Follow current Certification Guidelines as outlined in the Tester/Observer Handbook.
- Coach prospective and existing Members on following all current ATD rules. Do not criticize them but inform them so they understand ATD rules and guidelines and have the opportunity to make changes. If coaching is ignored, contact the ATD Office for guidance.

In addition, if you have practical experience working with dogs and are good at reading their body language, please consider becoming a T/O. Here are some of the dog-related attributes we look for in a T/O candidate:

- Interaction on various levels with a variety of breeds, including both large and small dogs.
- Assisting T/Os and learning to determine under what circumstances teams successfully complete the testing process.
- Training dogs for performance venues such as obedience, agility or herding.
- Reading a variety of books by animal trainers and behaviorists and/or attending seminars on training and behaviors.
- Experience in teaching or assisting in teaching dog training classes.
- Fostering and rehoming dogs.

There are additional abilities that may qualify you as well, so please contact the ATD Office for your application packet. Join us in our mission to provide registration and support for prospective Members in volunteer-assisted activities.

 **We need
your help!**





ATD Merchandise

Members may purchase the following items from Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

If you would like to place an order, you can scan the QR Code or go to:

www.atdmerch.myshopify.com/

If you have not yet set up your Shopify account, please email office@therapydogs.com to request an invite.



ATD tags, vests, collars, ties, leashes, bandanas, and more!



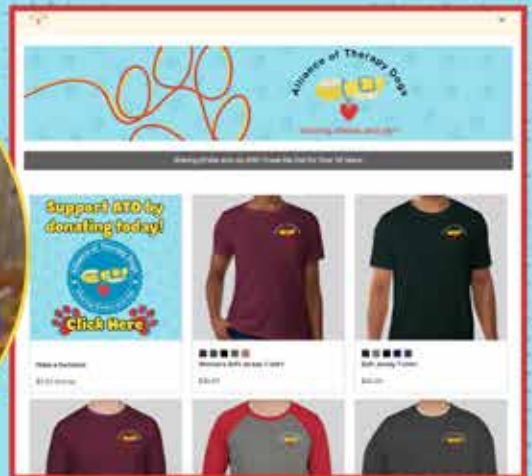
Members may purchase the following items from ATD.
 We also provide giveaway items for booths or events!
 Email office@therapydogs.com to request free items for your next event.



**Bookmarks, magnets,
 notecards, stickers,
 pins, patches, and more!**

ATD Clothing from Custom Ink

Please note: There are print minimums on orders. Merchandise will print and ship approximately every 2 weeks. Custom Ink will let you know printing estimates as you complete your order.



ATD updates the offerings in the Custom Ink store to include new and seasonal items.

Visit <https://stores.customink.com/atd>

Spotlight



Keri Brammer, Director

Lawton, OK

What inspired you to become a therapy dog handler?

A friend of mine was in a local therapy dog group, and she invited me to a meeting. She thought I would enjoy the group even though I didn't have a therapy dog at the time. After being a member for a while, I was asked to go along on to an elementary school to talk about the therapy dogs. My friend walked in the school doors with her big red Irish Setter and the look and smiles on those kids faces were just amazing. One little boy sat down in the middle of the floor with that big red dog and the happiness that little boy had just petting the dog was amazing. We talked to the entire school, and they were just so excited and happy to see the dogs in the school. I was amazed. I walked out of that school and the first thing I told my friend was, "I am going to get myself a dog and I want to make it a therapy dog. I want to do that kind of work and bring that kind of happiness. It was the most amazing thing I had seen."

(L-R) Tucker, Scout and Rosie

How did you choose the dog that would become your therapy partner? What makes your dog particularly suited for therapy work?

I owned an English Setter and found that their personalities were so great, and they were such sweet affectionate dogs that I knew I wanted to have an English Setter as a therapy dog. My Setter was older at the time, so I set out in search of a puppy that I could start at an early age. I found my girl Rosie. She was a trooper from the very beginning, tolerating anything that was thrown at her.

Rosie loves kids. She is drawn to them and will pick a small child out of a crowd of people. She is so gentle with them and wants to just hang out with them all of the time. Rosie is my one who I can take to any therapy dog visit. She will adapt to any situation.

What was the biggest challenge in starting your therapy dog journey?

The biggest challenge was learning where my dogs enjoyed visiting. Not all dogs like the same facilities or

settings, so working to figure out where my dogs were comfortable was a bit of a challenge. Once that is done, we all enjoy each visit we make.

How has being a handler changed you personally?

Being a therapy dog handler makes you aware of the different circumstances that people are going through. It made me more aware of how lucky we all are to be able to bring a little bit of comfort and joy to people who need it in that very moment. I am very fortunate to have that kind of relationship with my dogs to be able to bring so many smiles.

Did you have any hesitations or fears before starting this work?

Once I observed a therapy dog visit and the impact it had on individuals those dogs were visiting, I had no hesitations at all. I knew this work was what I wanted to do.

As for any fears, it wasn't so much as a fear, it was nervousness. Will my dog like this work I am asking them to do? Will my dog be good at this work I am asking them to do? After getting started, all of my fears and hesitations were wiped away once I saw the smiles and joy that my dog brought to people.

What kind of training did you and your dog complete to become certified?

ATD does not require any class training, but I have had all of my dogs since they were puppies. I started socializing them early. I took them to different places and exposed them to different noises, situations and people. I always go through basic obedience training with my dogs and work on focus with them. All of that helps in preparing both of us for testing.

What advice would you give to someone preparing for the therapy dog test?

Relax. Just relax and breathe. I will tell people that if you are nervous and holding that leash, that will follow down through the leash and make your dog nervous as well. So just relax.

Also, ATD has a website video of the test and that is a great place to start. Watching that can give them an idea of what they will have to go through during the therapy dog test.

Can you describe one visit that touched your heart?

On one particular visit to a behavioral center, we will see several groups of different ages. They have the younger children as well as the adolescents. We had seen a big group of younger children and were waiting on the adolescents. Once they brought them in, there weren't many, so it ended up that there was one young lady who came and sat with Rosie. This facility is one of Rosie's favorites, so she is always so good with all

the different age groups. Rosie is very laid back and usually just lays on her side and lets the kids come to her and pet her belly and give her all of the attention. When this one young lady sat down, Rosie immediately sat up and just looked at her. She didn't speak, sitting while looking at Rosie. After a few minutes, Rosie stood up and laid her head on the young lady's shoulder, who immediately cried. She put her arms around Rosie, cried into her fur and told her how much she missed her dogs and how sad she was. A nurse who was watching checked on the girl to make sure she was ok. She looked up and said that Rosie just knew she needed this visit. She continued to hug Rosie and cry during the entire time. Once the staff called for the visit to end, she gave Rosie one final hug and looked at me and said. "Thank you." I have never forgotten that visit.

What types of facilities do you visit most?

I visit the hospital and cancer center every week. I also do reading at the local library visits with one of my dogs. I visit a behavioral center with one of my therapy dogs on occasion. We do a lot of Christmas parties for children as well.

How do you handle emotionally heavy visits or situations?

When you volunteer at a hospital, it is always possible that you will run into a difficult situation. Coming home from one of those visits, I usually try to take my dog outside to relax, sit and let my dog just be a dog. They will do anything I ask of them, so I owe it to them to let them just be a dog and enjoy life.

What are your dog's favorite things to do when not working?

All 3 of my dogs are different. My oldest, Rosie, when the weather is nice, her favorite thing to do is play ball outside. She will bring it to me and drop it in my hand. We play until she gets tired. Otherwise, she loves to be on the couch right by my side.

Tucker, my middle dog, he is very laid back, very chill. He loves to be outside to just watch the world go by.

Scout, my youngest and my bird dog, loves to be on the go, loves to be outside, and loves to watch the birds.

Can you describe the bond you share with your dog through this therapy experience?

I have had all of my dogs since they were small puppies. It is always so special to form that early bond with them as they are growing up and becoming adult dogs. Watching them grow up and start to be in tune with how I am feeling and wanting to do anything I ask them to do is amazing. Being able to take them on a therapy dog visit and watch them bring as much joy to others as they do me. There is just nothing like it.



Winner – Rick Cavin

Rick is a dedicated and creative ATD Member who is involved in many visits with his own 3 therapy dogs in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He has been active with ATD since 2012, and has spent all 13 years of his volunteer service being the head of the Pet Ambassador Program at a local hospital.

Rick initiated the program at the hospital to formalize the therapy dog support provided to patients and staff. He created a Facebook page during COVID so the nursing staff could see their favorite furry friends when dogs were not allowed to enter the facilities. Staff

eagerly signed up on the page, and it now boasts an active subscribership of more than 500 people in the U.S. and Europe. He taught himself how to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create online songs and cartoon characters for each of the 40 therapy dogs, and these are used to bolster morale and camaraderie amongst teams and the hospital staff. Magnetic dog memes of the teams are also some of Rick's handiwork so that the nursing staff can hang them on patient doors, and the Handlers can see at a quick glance who would like a visit as they stroll the hallways.

Two big and loved events at the hospital involve Rick organizing and scheduling an Emergency Nurses Day and a Nurses Week Dog Parade. He schedules therapy dog teams on a rotating basis for the enjoyment of the staff and patients throughout the day of these events.

His selfless and tremendous efforts are having beneficial

impacts on the community as well as the hospital, and often is praised and recognized by the staff and high-ranking leadership of the facilities with which Rick is involved. Rick embraces and exemplifies the spirit and mission of ATD by encouraging other Handlers and their dogs to share smiles and joy.

Finalists



Wendy Borst

An enthusiastic Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) Member and Tester/Observer (T/O), Wendy hails from Vass, North Carolina. She has been active with ATD since 2010, and has had a total of 7 beautiful therapy dogs partnering with her as they visit a cancer center, elementary and high schools, memory care facilities, skilled nursing facilities and community centers.

Wendy introduced a program for seniors living at a senior facility to train their dogs and become therapy dog teams. This allowed the seniors to volunteer within their own community. She is also going to introduce a therapy dog/counseling program at one of the local high schools, as well as at an area youth crisis center. Other special visits that Wendy and her dogs undertake are to Parkinson's disease support groups and the Pet Responsibility Program for 4th graders in local elementary schools.

As a T/O for ATD, Wendy is known for creating a calm and supportive experience where both Handlers and their dogs feel confident and at ease, alleviating the stress of testing while upholding the highest standards. She is well-known to be a thoughtful T/O who helps ensure that only well-prepared teams are approved. Her enthusiastic commitment to therapy dog work in her area has produced many qualified teams that are now making a lasting difference in the lives of many people.



Maxine German

Maxine has been involved with therapy dog volunteering for over 20 years, but made it formal in 2011. This selfless, tireless and supportive Member and T/O with ATD is a long-time resident of Rock Hill, South Carolina. Here, she and her dogs do visits at hospitals, the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, assisted living facilities, memory care units, libraries, schools

and even a teenage residential treatment center. She fosters partnerships with unique local organizations, such as Miracle Park, where therapy dog teams interact with special needs kids while they enjoy playing the game of baseball. Maxine can be found cheering the kids with her therapy dog at every game.

She is considered a primary T/O in her area, warmly welcoming new applicant teams with structure and positivity. Maxine's strong relationships with facilities in the Rock Hill area are many and have opened doors providing opportunities for ATD teams to make impactful visits. She communicates regularly with over 145 ATD teams in her area through a Facebook page she created and administers. The group page allows these teams to keep them informed of opportunities and coordinate visits, and the options are so much more than hospitals and schools.

Many of her ATD colleagues are inspired by Maxine's spirit and leadership. While she coaches and mentors, she also motivates the next generation of Handlers and T/Os to take on responsibilities to make and keep a strong network of sites to visit as well as recruit new teams. She is a remarkable representative of the ATD mission.



The Importance of Reobservations for Therapy Dog Teams After a Health Change

At Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD), we understand that both Handlers and their dogs may experience health changes over time. While ATD does not require annual in-person retesting for our therapy dog teams, we do require Reobservation by a Tester/Observer (T/O) whenever there is a change in the health of either the Handler or the dog. You might wonder: why is this necessary?

The answer is twofold: first, it ensures the continued safety and well-being of all participants in therapy visits; second, it fulfills the requirements of our insurance policy, which mandates that teams be observed by a local T/O after any health changes.

Changes in Your Dog's Health

ATD Rule No. 25: Certified Dog Developing Disabilities and/or Stress

The Member/Handler must notify the ATD Office if the dog has developed any disability since the initial testing or shows signs of physical and/or mental distress during visits. The Handler/dog team will need to be retested with 1 Observation before continuing any visits.

Dogs are incredibly skilled at hiding pain and discomfort, and even subtle changes in their physical or mental abilities can impact how they interact during visits. A new disability or health issue may make your dog uncomfortable with being touched a certain way or with how certain people move.

Reobservation provides an extra set of eyes to ensure your dog is still comfortable and safe during visits. Handlers can sometimes become accustomed to subtle signs of discomfort or changes in behavior. A T/O can help identify these changes and offer guidance, ensuring your dog continues to thrive in their therapy role.

Changes in Your Health

ATD Rule No. 26: Handler Health Requirements and Developing Medical Issues

Handlers who have any fresh wounds, recent surgery, other injuries, infections, or any condition that may inhibit their ability to handle the dog safely may not do pet therapy visits until recovered and healed. Any Member/Handler who has had any change in medical condition since initial testing, even if temporary, that may impede their ability to safely handle their dog must notify the ATD Office. Examples of these medical conditions include but are not limited to stroke, broken limb, weakened strength, change in disability, change in mental or emotional condition, etc. These Member/Handlers may need to be retested and/or observed before continuing any visits.

As a Handler, new physical or mental disabilities may require adapting the way you interact with your therapy dog during visits. Safety is paramount – for the dog, the Handler, and those being visited. A local T/O can evaluate your situation, ensure compliance with ATD Rules, and provide practical suggestions to support safe, effective visits. No Handler should feel embarrassed about needing guidance or adjustments; Reobservation is simply part of maintaining safe, high-quality therapy work.

Why Reobservations Matter

Even small health changes, temporary or permanent, can affect how therapy dog teams interact during visits. Seeking Reobservation is not about creating obstacles; it's about protecting everyone involved and ensuring your team can continue to provide safe, compassionate therapy.

If you are ever unsure whether a new health issue, yours or your dog's, might affect your visits, contact the ATD Office. Our Office Staff is always available to discuss your situation and help determine the best next steps. Reobservation ensures that therapy dog teams can continue making a positive impact safely, confidently, and effectively.





Silent support: Copper visits deaf students

At the Washington School for the Deaf, Fridays have taken on a special meaning. Walk through the doors on a Friday morning and you'll see it instantly -- the front desk staff grinning, the school counselor waving down the hall, students whispering and signing with excitement. It's "Copper Day," and everyone knows it.

Copper, a 3-year-old mini goldendoodle, has been volunteering with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs since 2023. In 2024, he found his calling: weekly visits to the school's elementary classrooms, serving students from kindergarten through 6th grade. He's become such a beloved presence that the students insisted he be included in last year's school yearbook as official "support staff."

What makes Copper remarkable isn't just the regularity of his visits; it's the way he connects. With 1 child, he offers quiet patience, happily sitting still while small hands rest gently on his fur. With another, he bursts into play, tossing out a perfect high-5 or rearing up on 2 legs to "dance." Somehow, Copper always knows exactly what each student needs.

The impact of those visits is undeniable. Teachers and staff have watched children who once hesitated to communicate begin to use American Sign Language more freely when Copper is present. "He changes the whole atmosphere," 1 staff member remarked. And it's true - Copper has a way of softening a room, making it feel lighter, safer, and more joyful.

Copper's handlers have also found creative ways to extend his influence beyond the school walls. Each student receives a "player card" featuring Copper, a fun way to spark conversations at home about his visits. At the end of the school year, he passed out custom bookmarks, encouraging kids to keep reading during summer break. These small tokens became treasured reminders of their 4-legged friend.

Before dedicating his Fridays to the Washington School for the Deaf, Copper volunteered in a variety of settings, including assisted living facilities, hospitals, and even with law enforcement. That wide-ranging experience gave him a strong foundation, but it's clear that working with children has become his heart's work.

Outside of therapy visits, Copper has a playful side that endears him to his community. He's a regular at the downtown "Dog Prom," where his tuxedo-like white chest fur and love of costumes have earned him repeated nominations for Prom King. He enjoys watching 101 Dalmatians, playing hide-and-seek with treats, and sharpening his skills with his trainer every other week. His signature high-5 remains a fan favorite, especially among the kids he serves.

Week after week, Copper proves that therapy work is about more than scheduled visits. It's about connection, trust, and the joy that comes from being seen and understood.

For the students at the Washington School for the Deaf, Copper isn't just a therapy dog - he's a friend, a motivator, and a reminder that kindness sometimes shows up on 4 paws with a wagging tail. Fridays simply wouldn't be the same without him.

Brandi and Jackson Oldham, Vancouver, WA





From Puppy Mill to Therapy Dog

I rescued my Adam Standard Poodle boy in April, 2024. Adam was a product of a puppy mill, and I rescued him from an animal rescue facility. He was a wild, little 3-month-old pup! I had been an old-time dog trainer and showed my dogs in Obedience trials for many years. Now in old age, I have slowed down and Adam gave me all that I could handle. The first thing I did for Adam was socialize him. We have gone somewhere daily to businesses that allow dogs to visit. His socialization is ongoing at this time, as he loves it. Adam has never met a person that he did not love - that includes our mail carriers. The next thing we did was attend every dog class and private lessons that we could find.

We did those classes one right after another as they were offered and recently completed a class, and Adam is now 22 months old. Adam earned his CGC around 12 months and then quickly went on to test for his therapy dog certification. He volunteers at our local hospital and is our church greeter/therapy dog every Sunday morning. I am 81 and when I adopted Adam, I immediately made arrangements for him when the time comes that I can no longer have him. He will go to live with a family member who will continue to love and care for him. Adam is my third ATD certified therapy dog.

Sharon Cramer, Rock Island, IL





Bear-y Special Reading Buddy Inspires Kids

I would love to share what it has meant to me and countless others for Bear and me to be a therapy dog team. Bear is a 6-year-old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel who has become so known and beloved that anywhere we go, everyone knows her name.

Bear loves visiting people of all ages. We visit senior facilities, schools, children’s therapy center, libraries, as well as community events.

Once we began at our local library, it became so fun for the kids, she has become a permanent monthly event.

What made it more special is the appearance of Bear in a delightful book written by Julie Huetch. Her first book, “Cavie Tales,” was meaningful and when I commented on it, she told me she had planned for her next book to be about all 4 colors. Once she realized Bear is a therapy dog, and also visits the library, she asked if Bear could represent the Black & Tan. After little adjustments

for her size and thick coat, she was chosen to receive the gift of super strength. The book, “Cavie and the SuperPups Save the Day,” is all about being helpful, kind and the beauty of friendship.

We have had 2 library book “signings” and the author, Julie, has donated hardback books, plus soft-bound copies to be given away to the library, schools, and to give to the facilities that we visit.

Julie’s upcoming book will feature her own therapy dog and 2 other dogs that visit together.

Bear has 2 friends that visit together several times a week, so I know that could be a book too!

We took the 3 to see Santa and the photo is adorable.

Jan Harris, Charleston, TN



American Cancer Society Paws of Hope supported by ATD Therapy Dog Team

American Cancer Society Hope Lodge in Jacksonville, Florida, provides a home for cancer patients and their caretakers. It is more than just a roof over their heads. It is a nurturing community that helps patients access the care they need. All guests staying there must be undergoing active cancer treatment. The facility has 30 rooms and is located on the Mayo Clinic Campus. It also hosts patients from UF Health Proton Therapy, MD Anderson Cancer Center and Ackerman Cancer Center.

In July of 2025, I received information from Alliance of Therapy Dogs about the need for a “Paws of Hope” handler at the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge. I reached out to Anna Navaro, the guest relations coordinator, to set-up a meeting. Shortly thereafter, Penny and I went for a visit. Anna fell in love with Penny, especially after she saw Penny’s photo in a pink tutu. She told me, “We need this dog on the team.”

Now, Penny and I visit frequently. As residents arrive at the lodge after a long day of treatments or appointment

at Mayo, they are greeted in the lobby by Penny on the floor wagging her tail. They immediately go over to pet her. It makes them remember their own dogs at home or a dog they lost. It is the hug they need. They talk to me about their dogs and the good times they have had. I can see their faces light-up as they talk. The memories are healing, for sure.

In October, we dressed up for Halloween. “Cowboy Tony” and my sidekick, Penny the Cowgirl, gave out candy and other treats. Residents didn’t miss out on that holiday. Wait until they see the other costumes Penny and I have and how they celebrate other holidays with the people they support.

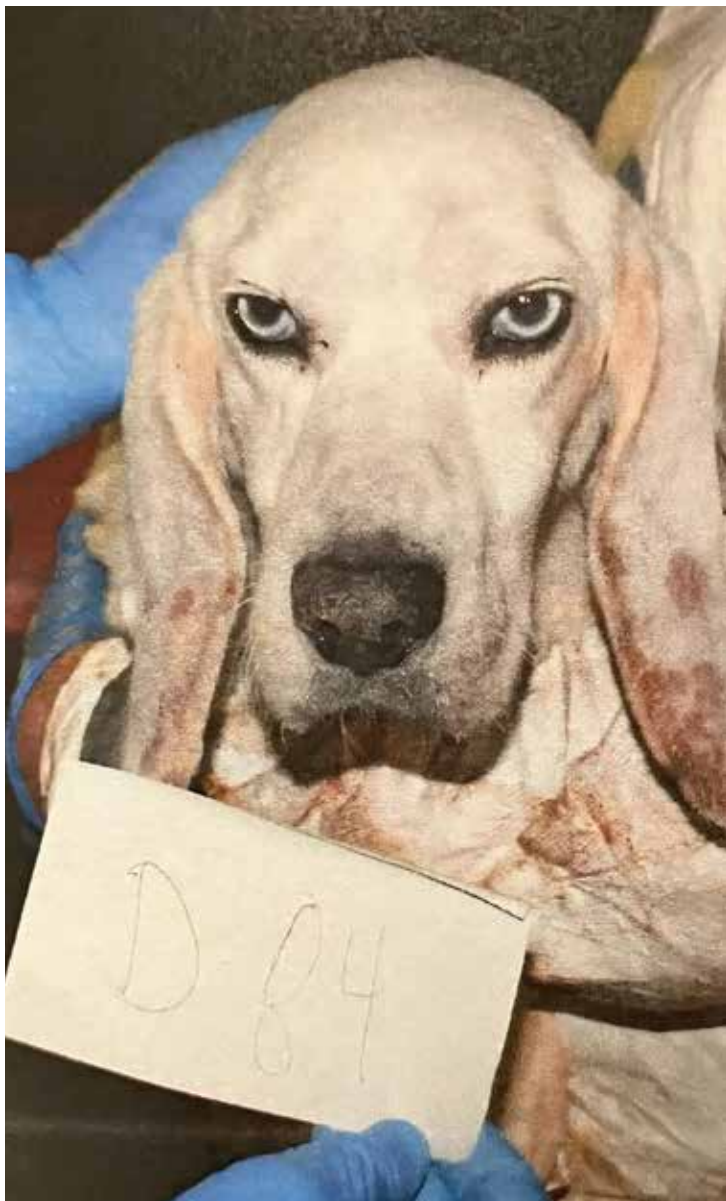
Beyond the Hope Lodge, we have other therapy assignments in the area. The longest of which is with the Jacksonville Library. Children read to Penny. Interestingly, they seem to like to bring books about dogs. There is no word on which book is Penny’s favorite. After they read, the kids get a small treat.

We also go to Naval Station Mayport where we visit the helicopter squadrons and support teams on the base. We go from room to room on all floors, greeting the sailors and making their days. These young adults are responsible for our nation’s defense and a visit from a friendly, well fed, loving chocolate lab is just the stress relief they need.

The Penny and Tony Pierce therapy team have been supporting groups in Jacksonville for about 6 years and love it as much as or more than all the people they visit. We are grateful to Lori Coleman for great training which launched them on the journey. We will continue their work as long as they can and highly recommend it to others.

Tony Pierce, Jacksonville, FL





Now Healed, Bringing Smiles and Joy

Murdoch is a 10-year-old beagle basset mix that was rescued on January 1, 2024. He was the 84th dog rescued from a hoarding house in Bedford, Pennsylvania. He was transferred to the Central PA Humane Society for immediate veterinary care.

He was near death, couldn't walk, was septic from multiple infections, didn't know what clean water was or how to eat out of bowl, and was deaf. Veterinarians think he was never out of a crate in his 8 years.

I contacted the Central PA Humane Society about medically fostering him. With my prior veterinary experience and knowledge of the breed, my husband and I rushed to get him and started the healing process after years of neglect.

Tri-State Basset Rescue out of New Jersey offered to pay for all medical bills pertaining to Murdoch to free up funds for the other 98 dogs that were rescued from Bedford, PA. Murdoch's medical bills totaled \$9,000 after months of care. Without Tri-State Basset Rescue's generosity, it is certain Murdoch would not have survived.

After getting Murdoch healed, we knew he would be a perfect therapy dog. He was gentle, calm, and just happy to be experiencing a free life out of a crate in a basement. We began the process to become certified through Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

Murdoch passed with flying colors and now visits schools, nursing homes, and businesses. He brings so much happiness and smiles to everyone he encounters.

Once you meet him and hear his story, you will never be the same. It is an incredible story of survival, generosity and resilience.

Thank you to everyone who has helped this amazing soul.

Michele Miller, Tyrone, PA

Alliance of Therapy Dogs





Mighty Valkyrie: Gentle Healer in Hospital Halls

Being an Emergency Room nurse is undoubtedly one of the most stressful roles imaginable. Our Valkyrie provided much-needed comfort and stress reduction to this nurse exactly when she needed it most.

Rebecca Bass, Beaufort, SC

What's Wrong?



Clarification: There have been a few Members who have reached out for clarification concerning the positioning of the dog on the patient's lap. Even though the Member is properly controlling the dog's head and helping keep it turned away from the patient, the dog's body should have been turned away from the patient. Please reference the Member Handbook, page 14:

44. Dogs on Laps and Furniture: The ATD Handler must know and strictly adhere to the facility policy concerning dogs on any laps or furniture and have permission from the resident or patient. This is for all furniture, including, but not limited to, chairs, couches, wheelchairs, beds, or physical therapy beds and pads. The Handler must be in control of the dog's head at all times.

Laps: If the facility policy allows, and permission from the patient or guardian is given, ATD allows dogs weighing 15 pounds or less to be placed in a person's lap. When placing a dog in someone's lap, be sure to face the dog away from the person's face, presenting the back and shoulders to be petted. Do not present the dog face-to-face with the person.

Thus, when a dog is under 15 pounds and is allowed to be placed in a person's lap, be sure to face the dog away from the person's face, presenting the back and shoulders to be petted.



Seniors With Purpose!

Because of our dogs, we are living our senior years with happiness and purpose. Our dogs, Chevy, Mazie and Jenny, keep us active and social as they attract attention wherever we go. My husband and I enjoy taking them to outside restaurant patios where they lie on their mats near our feet. We joke that our food always gets cold because we are approached so often to talk about the dogs. On occasion, we have even had a child or an adult

on the floor interacting with them while we were eating our meal.

People are always surprised to hear that our well behaved, beautiful dogs were all rescues. We adopted them from 3 different states at 3 different times from the same rescue organization, English Springer Rescue America (ESRA). We proudly tell everyone that Chevy, Mazie and Jenny are now certified with Alliance of

Photo 1 (L-R) Chevy, Suzanne, Gary, Jenny
Photo 2 (L-R) Jenny, Chevy, and Mazie

Therapy Dogs and volunteer regularly with us at Halifax Health and the Veterans Administration in Daytona Beach. Whether they are orienting future therapy dog teams, visiting a clinic, cancer center, psychiatric or intensive care unit, we can always count on them to be “stars.” What a labor of love it has been to turn around our dogs’ former lives of medical problems, neglect and fear. In turn, they have given my husband and me a beautiful sense of purpose in our senior years.

Chevy was our inspiration for becoming therapy dog teams. Soon after rescue, he was admired for his sweet, laid-back disposition. A year after classes and socialization at dog-friendly businesses, Chevy, “The Cool Dude,” and I became a certified therapy dog team. My husband, Gary, was inspired and later became a team with Mazie, “The Perky Princess.” Her trademark became rolling on her back for belly rubs.

Our most recent adoptee, Jenny, was our “foster fail.” ESRA had sent out an urgent request for foster homes after a group of dogs was relinquished at the same time. My husband said, “We can’t have 3 dogs at our

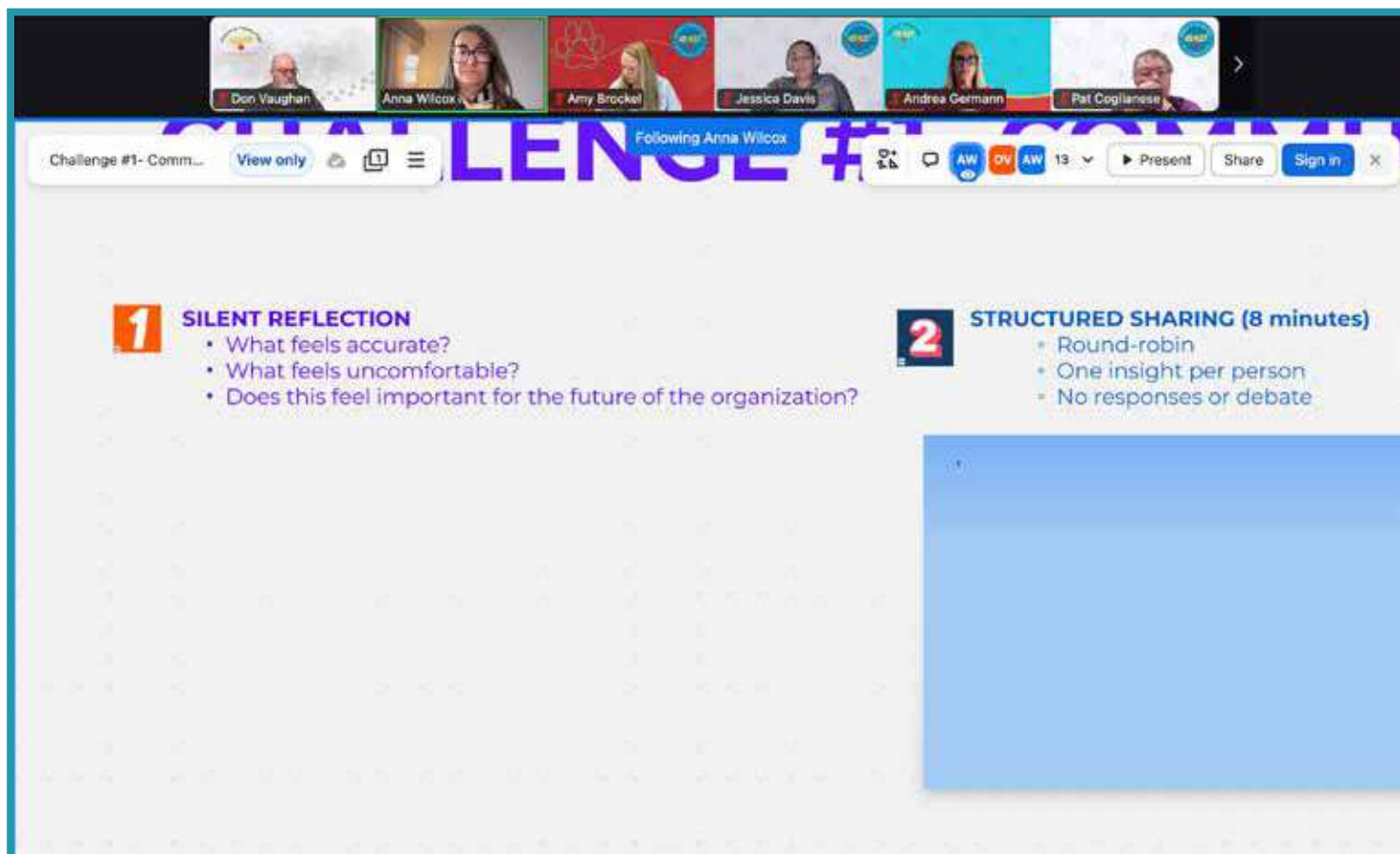
age!” I told him we could help by fostering a dog for several months. We agreed. We found out that not only could we manage 3 dogs, but we would also love it!

Jenny was 3 when she came into our lives. She was extremely skittish. Having a family with senior parents and senior dogs as siblings brought calmness and stability into Jenny’s life. We nicknamed her “Firefly” because she brought youthful energy and light into our lives. With time, love, and Chevy and Mazie as role models, Jenny gained confidence and became a certified therapy dog like her siblings.

Adopting our 3 dogs has been among the very best decisions my husband and I have ever made. They’re proof that rescued dogs can become great therapy dogs! Now they regularly volunteer with us and bring smiles wherever they go. After visiting with our dogs, people often say to us, “You have made my day!” That makes OUR day!

Suzanne Zimmerman, Ormond Beach, FL





Working on ATD's Future

Since COVID-19, growth and change have been a common theme. Seeing the interest in therapy dogs grow is great. However, growth also brings challenges, especially when it happens quickly. During this past year, we surpassed 20,000 Members.

Given the growth and change, the Board and Office are working on ATD's future - specifically, what can and must be done to make sure ATD is here for another 35 years to make sure we are set up well to continue the wonderful work our Members do. To assist with this, late in 2025, the Board hired Blackburn Co. as a consultant to review the organization.

Here are a few topics we are addressing with the consultant:

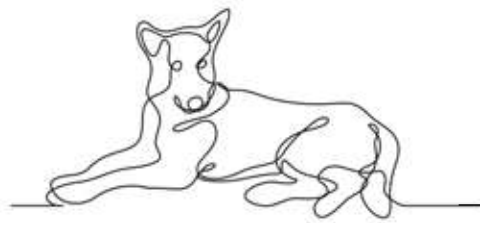
Is the Office structured appropriately to support membership?

Though ATD is financially stable, with growth comes more cost. As we are all aware, costs everywhere are not going down. What can we do to make ATD even more financially stable and prepared for the future?

Is the Board structured appropriately to guide ATD to be the best it can be?

As part of the consult, Blackburn Co. hosted 4 different virtual workshops via Zoom. One of the virtual workshops was held on January 25, 2026. Since this was the scheduled date for the Midyear Board Meeting, the majority of the regular Board meeting agenda was handled beforehand. A brief Midyear Board Meeting was held following the workshop.

Retired



Clara

Char Nash, Grand Haven, MI
Years of Service: 3

Clara loved going to Holland Hospital and visiting people of all ages. Clara also visited the Grand Haven Courthouse. Last summer, Clara started having some medical issues. I decided to retire after being an ATD Member since 2002. Thank you ATD for being supportive and an awesome organization.



Sammie

Susan Wasserman, Kuna, ID
Years of Service: 9

Soon after being adopted from a rescue, Sammie began training for his therapy dog career. He joyfully made visits to assisted living, hospice care, and library children's reading programs. Now, at age 11, he moves a little slower, but still has his cheerful and friendly disposition.



Piper

Lori Lampe, Dallas, TX
Years of Service: 5

Sweet Piper is retiring after 5 wonderful years as a therapy dog. Her calm, gentle spirit brought comfort and joy to everyone she met, especially young readers at the library. We'll miss our visits but cherish the memories. Now Piper looks forward to well-earned couch naps and plenty of cuddles.



Sadie

Jackie Earney, Sarasota, FL
Years of Service: 10

Sadie has brought happiness and comfort to the nursing home and assisted living facility we visit each week. It was wonderful to see the smiles she brought when she came into a room. Sadie is 13 now and likes a quieter life, taking short walks and snoozing in her bed.



Tinkerbelle

Nancy McClintock, The Villages, FL
Years of Service: 10

Her first client was a 96-year-old who laid in bed waiting to die. After 2 visits, this woman waited for us in her wheelchair, dressed up, earrings and lipstick on. For the next 6 years, Tinkerbelle would visit her every week. Oh, the smiles on her face.



Bogey

Tracy Rice, Aledo, IL
Years of Service: 8

Bogey brought a lot of joy to a countless amount of people over the years. There is nothing more rewarding than making someone smile. His retirement is well deserved.

Retired



Spirit

Linda Brendlinger, Flagler Beach, FL
Years of Service: 8

Spirit, now over 12, has led a very active life visiting schools, universities, libraries, hospitals, senior facilities, and courtrooms in Pennsylvania and Florida. We've enjoyed every minute. She has earned a well-deserved rest. Many thanks to all who opened such wonderful opportunities to share our dogs.



Rio

Corlis Koga, Honolulu, HI
Years of Service: 5

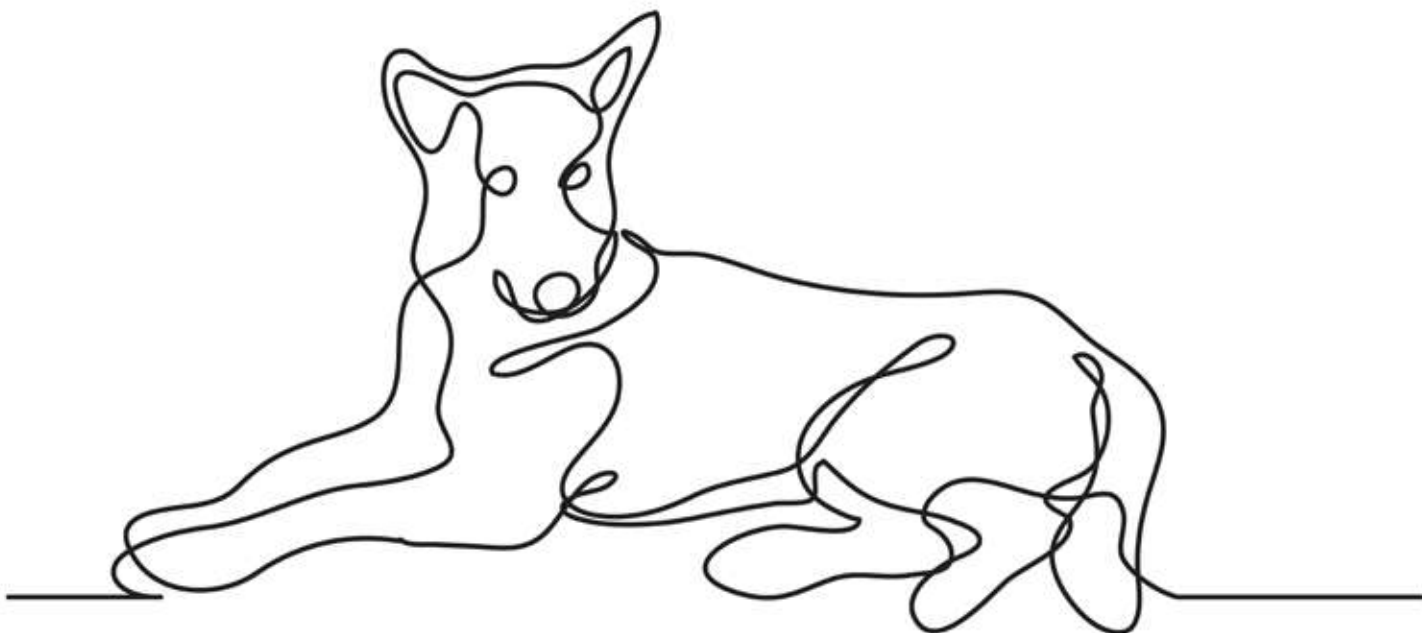
Rio is a sweet, smart, big boy and my soulmate dog. He is very lovable. Rio enjoyed his visits at the University of Hawaii and especially Chaminade College. We both enjoyed all our therapy visits. He blossomed from those visits. We appreciate and are thankful for the ATD program.



Hillock's Brandiwyne Baybea (Brandi)

Kathleen Galembush, Irwin, PA
Years of Service: 6

Brandi is 10 years old and retired after bringing countless smiles and comfort to people at nursing homes, the family court program with children and adults, as well as an elementary school reading program. Brandi is the sweetest little girl, and her visits will be missed.



Someewhere Over the Rainbow

As puppies we must grow and learn
To walk and sit and stay.
We learn to listen to our mom
We get to play and play.

When we are grown at least a year
We get to take the test.
We have to mind our P's and Q's
We have to do our best.

So, now we all are therapy dogs
Is it work or play?
We visit friends both old and new
All takers; come what may.

We visit on throughout the years
We do our job so well.
But age is catching up to us
Look close and you can tell.

It's time for us to take a break
We'll shed a canine tear.
Time to rest our weary paws,
Retirement time is near.

A time will come when we will pass
Many hours we did log.
Time to cross the Rainbow Bridge
A retired Therapy Dog.

—Sandy Peterson, Boise, ID

Memorial Submissions

It's never easy to close the "therapy dog" chapter in your dog's life. The memorable connections and smiles created by your loving pet's visits can stir many emotions as you decide to retire your loved one from Alliance of Therapy Dogs. The Newsmagazine wants to highlight these dedicated pets in our section about retired dogs. We will publish profiles recognizing their service to Alliance

of Therapy Dogs. In addition to the photo, send the dog's name, owner's name, city and state, years of service and a brief summary (less than 50 words) about the pet's special qualities. Keep in mind that only one submission to the Newsmagazine per issue will be accepted for your dog as it relates to tributes—either "Retired dogs" or "Over the Rainbow."



Beany

Lori Dede,
Channahon, IL
12/10/16- 9/9/25 | Years of
Service: 7½

Patient and kind, Beany brought comfort and joy to all he encountered. He loved visiting schools, libraries, assisted living and special events. He touched so many lives - none greater than mine.



Miss Molli Halo

Cindi Stokes,
Columbus, OH
6/5/08-5/22/25 | Years of
Service: 11

Molli, a Bichon Frise, devoted her life to bringing comfort, joy, and companionship to many. She comforted nursing home residents, encouraged young readers, and brought calm and cheer to patients while in the hospital. With her gentle spirit and unconditional love, Molli will be deeply missed but forever remembered.



Eggy

Susan Fohrman-Mead,
Hood River, OR
7/21/22-5/21/25 | Years of
Service: 1

Eggy was pure joy and love. In her short life, she provided caring therapy and support to both children and adults through her service in schools, homeless shelters and visitor centers. She will be missed by many.



Jax

Sandy VanDeMark,
Berkeley Springs, WV
8/16/15-2/28/25 | Years of
Service: 1

Jax was a special dog who loved to meet people to bring smiles to their faces. He visited nursing and assisted living homes in West Virginia and North Carolina. Jax holds a special place in the hearts he touched. I will cherish those memories. He'll be forever loved and missed.



Lexi

Jen Bottorf,
Mill Hall, PA
5/23/17-9/23/25 | Years of
Service: 7

Lexi had a way of making anyone smile, whether with her quirky head tilt, the thump of her wagging tail, or her constant requests for belly rubs and treats. She was endlessly happy and always brightened the day of everyone she met, bringing warmth and joy wherever she went daily.



Wesson

Jenny and Henry Rudolph,
Boise, ID
10/13/14-9/10/24 | Years of
Service: 5

Wesson was born to be a therapy dog. He always wanted to make people happy, which he did in numerous ways. Wesson participated in a Kids Read to Dogs program, allowing kids to read without judgment, and regularly visited a nursing home, bringing joy to residents. He is sorely missed!



Matilda

Ronald Horn,
Greenwood Village, CO
12/1/13-12/19/25 | Years of
Service: 10

After 12 wonderful years, we are without our dear friend and companion. She was a regular at Craig Hospital and joined the Denver International Airport's Canine Airport Therapy Squad in 2017. Her last therapy visit was the day before we lost her, helping me in my role as a Tester/Observer.



Anaiah

Jill Miller, Perkasie, PA
2/3/12-4/26/24 | Years in
Service: 10

"Anaiah" is a Hebrew word for "God answers." Over the years, we visited many sick people including a mom who was in a coma for days. After she had her hand put on Anaiah's head, she began to slowly wake up. Anaiah was a gift to many.



Greta

Roger Dziadosz,
Macon Township, MI
6/16/17-12/23/25 | Years of
Service: 3

Greta was a retired racer who could melt hearts with her eyes. She loved her new role as a therapy dog and took it very seriously. Rest easy sweet girl. You were one in a million.



Angel

Anna Feddersen,
Kearney, NE
5/9/11-12/8/25 | Years of
Service: 11

Angel loved going on pet therapy visits. She loved treats, going on long walks, and being petted and loved by everyone. Over the years, we went to lots of places. The kids were always excited to see her. She will be missed by everyone.



Maggie Brown

Cathy Serra,
Lake Park, GA
12/5/13-1/4/26 | Years of
Service: 11

Maggie was a wonderful girl who had such a big, funny, and very loving personality. She visited assisted living homes, hospice homes, schools, and kids' bereavement camps. Many would comment how she "made their day." We miss her so much and she will live in our hearts forever.



Chloe

Pat Rumpel,
Eau Claire, WI
6/19/14-9/26/25 | Years of
Service: 4

Chloe was a special Golden Retriever. She made so many smile and made their day better. You were so loved.



Josie

Linda Brown,
Macon, GA
9/11/10-12/30/25 | Years of
Service: 6

During therapy visits, Josie instinctively knew which person needed comfort, and she would go directly to that person to offer an emotional connection. Her soulful gaze, calm demeanor, unconditional love, gentle spirit, and remarkable kindness lifted the spirits of those she visited, as well as her family.



Peewee

Cheryl Slabozeski,
Crest Hill, IL
7/09-1/26 | Years of Service: 10

Peewee was a magical toy poodle with a gentle loving spirit. Dr. Peewee was an honorary cardiologist at our local hospital. People would laugh when they saw him wearing his lab coat and stethoscope while making his rounds. He healed hearts with love.



Peyton Manning Cash Garcia

Shaun Andrew Suller,
Las Vegas, NV
12/28/13-5/7/25 | Years of
Service: 5

Peyton helped children read with many visits to the library for Reading with Rover. We had our miracle moment visiting the patients at the skilled nursing and rehab center in Las Vegas. He was King of St. Rose Court and gave love and golden fur to all.



Casey

Milan Shepherd,
Fayetteville, PA
9/4/12-2/8/26 | Years of
Service: 8

The moment I started training Casey, I knew he was special. Full of life, he was always happy, looking for someone to pet him. He is the reason we became a therapy dog team. He will be missed by everyone he touched. See ya at the bridge, my buddy.



Audrey
Marti Bajwa,
Durham, NC
11/30/12-7/21/25 | Years of
Service: 6

Audrey was adopted at 5 years old. She took Obedience classes, passed her Canine Good Citizen, enjoyed Tricks, Rally and Scent classes, then therapy dog training. As a therapy dog team, we visited nursing homes, bringing joy to many! We love you and miss you our dear, sweet girl!



Cayenne
Beth Stefanik,
Orlando, FL
1/20/13-8/29/25 | Years of
Service: 4

Cayenne loved everyone he met. He adored his stuffed animals and Frisbees. His favorite activities were swimming and playing in our wetlands. He was a therapy dog for 4 years before he joined ATD. We will miss him and love him forever.



A Special Thank You For Our Volunteers

We are proud of the many Alliance of Therapy Dogs visits you have made since becoming a Member. Whether you go to hospitals, nursing homes or other medical facilities, participate in education or reading programs, or help de-stress passengers at airports or students during final exams, you are providing a valuable service to the people in your area.

We believe that faithful volunteers like you deserve to be recognized for all the beneficial work you do. In honor of your dedication to Alliance of Therapy Dogs, we are pleased to acknowledge the contributions you make to your community with these tokens of our admiration and gratitude.

Alliance of Therapy Dogs Visit Pins

Do you ever think about how many times you and your dog(s) visit facilities on behalf of Alliance of Therapy Dogs? We invite you to keep track of your facility visits. Alliance of Therapy Dogs offers a lapel pin which displays the Alliance of Therapy Dogs logo. There are 2 rings on the bottom to attach the gold bars that display the number of facility visits.

Achievement levels begin with 50 visits to any given facility and then go on to 100, 250, 500, and 1000+. When you reach the next level, you may order the appropriate bar to signify the new number.

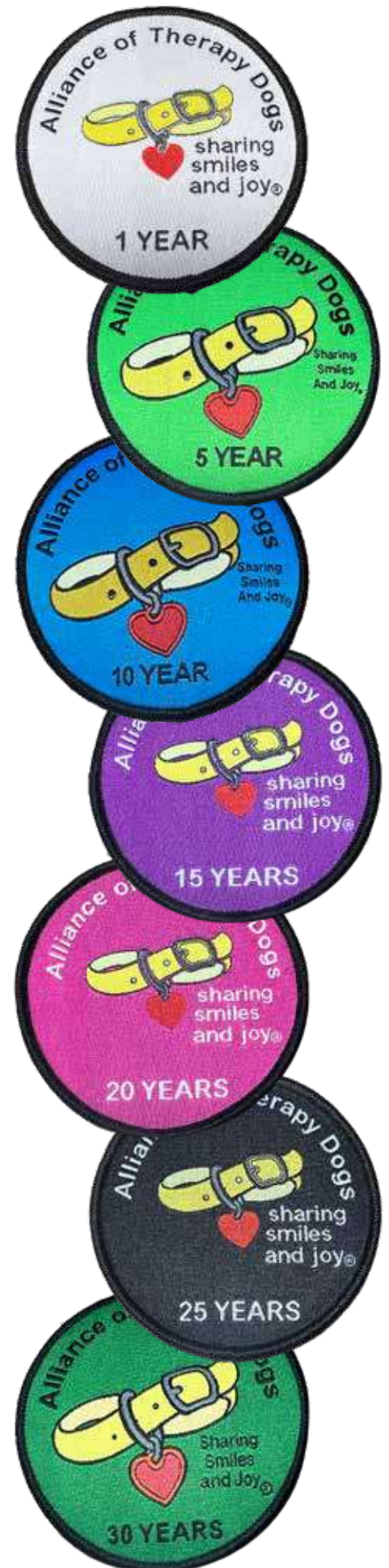
Alliance of Therapy Dogs Visit Certificates

Alliance of Therapy Dogs offers certificates for your visits. Provide your visit tracking information and Alliance of Therapy Dogs will send you a certificate showing your name and your dog's name along with the appropriate number of visits. Achievement levels begin with a minimum of 50 visits. These certificates can also be copied and sent to the AKC to apply for the Therapy Dog (ThD) Title.

Years of Service Patches

In recognition of the amount of time you have participated in pet therapy with Alliance of Therapy Dogs, we are pleased to offer you a service patch which displays the Alliance of Therapy Dogs logo and the number of years you have been a Member. The patch may be sewn onto a shirt, hat, fanny pack, vest, or wherever you would like to display it.

Following 1 year of service, patches are offered in 5-year increments thereafter. If you would like a service patch, please order at <https://atdmerch.myshopify.com/>.





ATTENTION TESTER/OBSERVERS

Have you ever considered joining the Board of Directors?

The ATD Board is an active working board, not simply an advisory board, and is responsible for implementing the strategy and policies of our organization. The anticipated volunteer commitment by each successful applicant includes:

- 10-15 hours per week.
- In-person attendance at the multi-day Annual Board Meeting in July each year.
- Virtual attendance at a 1-day Midyear Board Meeting.
- Virtual attendance at a ½-day Spring and Fall Quarterly Board Meeting.
- Review and respond to emails within 3 business days.

Would you like to help
Alliance of Therapy Dogs
continue to grow and develop?

- Do you have ideas for the future?
- Do you have time to help with organizational and committee operations?
- Do you have professional skills that could assist ATD?

Did you answer yes?

If you are a Tester/Observer, we would love you have you apply to be elected to the Board of Directors.

If you are interested in applying, please contact the ATD Office.
When there is an opening, an announcement will be made via the
T/O Egroup and an email blast.

307-432-0272 or 877-843-7364 • office@therapydogs.com
www.therapydogs.com

Outstanding Member Award

This honor is awarded annually. Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Must be an Alliance of Therapy Dogs member or Tester/Observer in good standing.
- Must be actively conducting pet therapy visits.
- Must never have had a verified incident/accident or complaint filed against them which resulted in action taken by ATD.
- Must have made a minimum of 25 visits during the calendar year of the nomination.

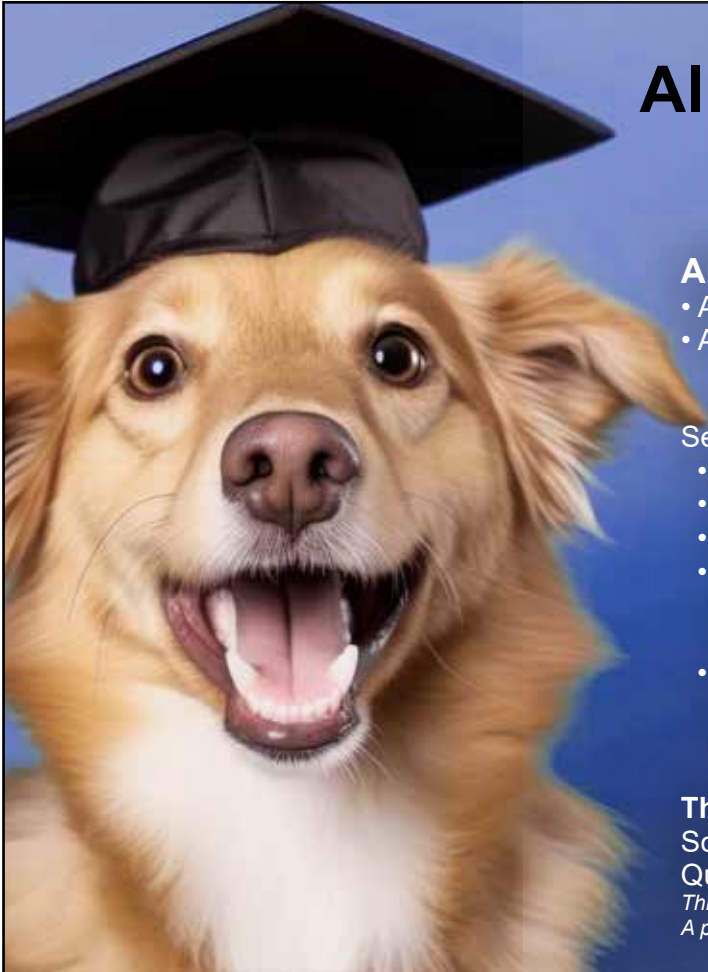
Nominations must be submitted and postmarked by November 1 of the year for consideration and must be 300 to 700 words in length.

Nominations should include:

- Details about the number or frequency of therapy dog visits the nominee makes.
- Details about the nominee's impact on the community.
- Details on whether the nominee recruits other therapy dog teams or facilities.
- How many years the nominee has been volunteering with pet therapy and/or with Alliance of Therapy Dogs.
- Any particular attributes that make the nominee outstanding.

The Nominating and Awards Committee will evaluate all nominations and submit the top several candidates for the Members, T/Os, and Supporting Members to vote upon to determine the winner.

Nominations must be postmarked by November 1. The Outstanding Member Award winner will be announced on December 19. If you have questions, please contact the Alliance of Therapy Dogs Office.



Alliance of Therapy Dog *Scholarship*

Are You:

- An Alliance of Therapy Dogs member in good standing?
- Applying to an accredited college program?

Yes? Apply for our scholarship today!

Send us your application, plus

- A letter of introduction telling us about yourself
- Institution's verification of acceptance
- Copy of your current transcript (within the past 10 years)
- Two letters of recommendation from non-family members. One from a facility visited by you and your therapy dog
- The completed Alliance of Therapy Dogs scholarship questionnaire (available on the website or by request from the office at office@therapydogs.com).

The deadline to apply is February 15.

Scholarship winners will be notified by April 15.

Questions? office@therapydogs.com | therapydogs.com

This scholarship is awarded annually. Applicants must meet the above criteria. A portion of the scholarship is dedicated to qualified Junior Handlers.



Alliance of Therapy Dogs
P.O. Box 20227
Cheyenne, WY 82003
307-432-0272 or 877-843-7364
office@therapydogs.com
www.therapydogs.com

Media Authorization Release Form

Instructions for Alliance of Therapy Dogs Member: Please type or print legibly. Follow all facility rules regarding photographs, videos, or other digital media including filling out a facility photo release form if requested. For the privacy of those whom we visit and to protect both Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) and our Members from liability, Members must have an ATD Media Authorization Release Form signed prior to taking any photo, video, or other digital media that identifies any individual (e.g., face, tattoo, birthmark, scar, etc.). The signed ATD Media Authorization Release Form must accompany any submission to an ATD-managed publication or social media platform. A facility or organization media release may not be used instead of the ATD Media Authorization Release. If you are not submitting the media to ATD for publication, simply retain this signed form for your records.

I do hereby consent, without the promise of compensation of any kind, to grant Alliance of Therapy Dogs, a registered non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation headquartered in Wyoming, its successors and assigns, including those acting under its permission, the right to reproduce, copyright, publish, circulate, or otherwise use my likeness and name in photograph, video, or other digital media.

This authorization and release covers the use of said material in any published form and any medium of advertising, publicity, or trade in any part of the world, including, but not limited to the Alliance of Therapy Dogs Newsmagazine, website, presentations, and social media.

This agreement fully represents all terms and considerations and no other inducements, statements, or promises have been made to me. I fully understand that no monetary payment will be made to me for such uses as described above.

Please return this signed and dated form with any photos you submit for Alliance of Therapy Dogs' publication and social media use:

Alliance of Therapy Dogs
P.O. Box 20227
Cheyenne, WY 82003
307-432-0272 or 877-843-7364
office@therapydogs.com

Member Name and Number:

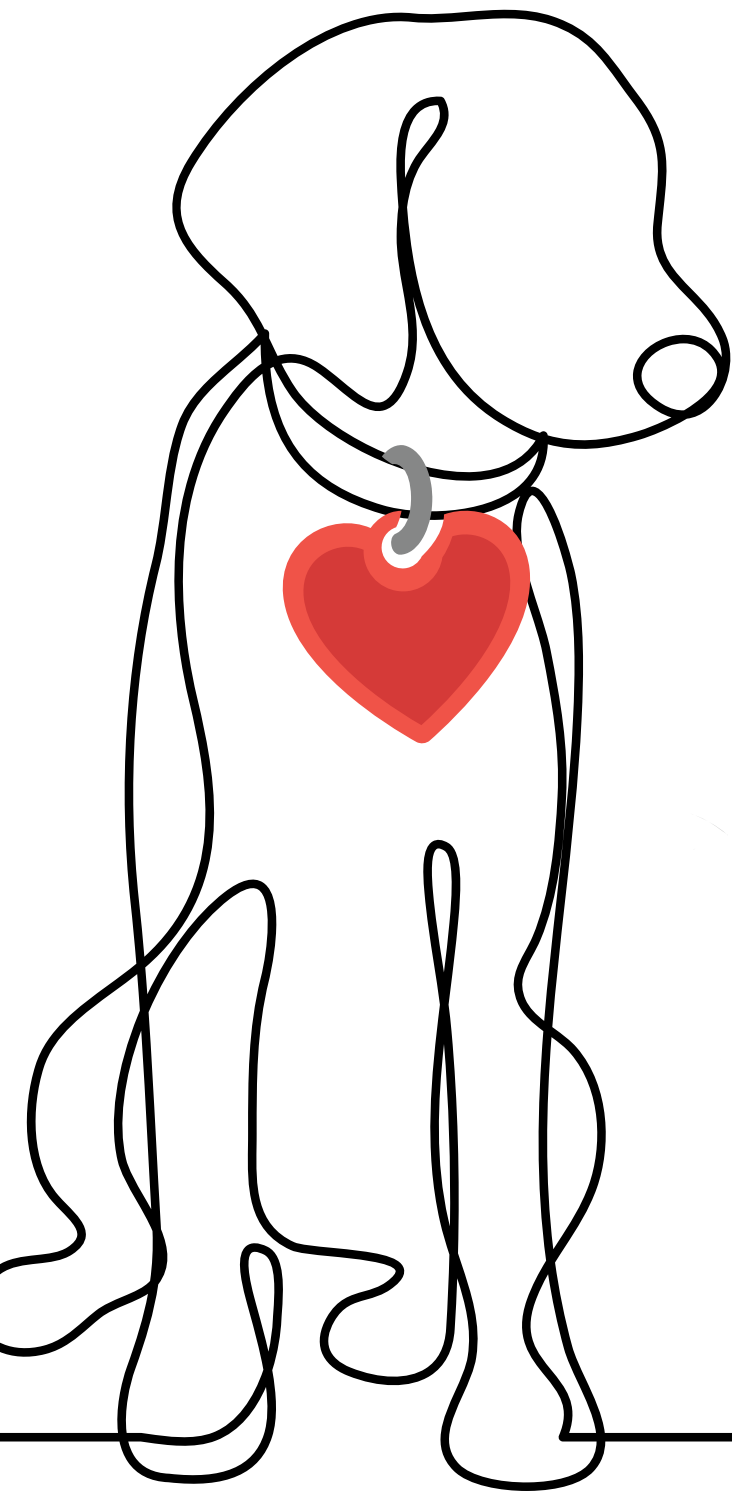
Photo Description, Location and Date:

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE MEDIA RELEASE. I AFFIRM THAT I AM AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE, OR, IF I AM UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, I HAVE OBTAINED THE REQUIRED CONSENT OF MY PARENTS/GUARDIANS AS EVIDENCED BY THEIR SIGNATURES BELOW. I ACCEPT:

Signature	Printed Name	Guardian Signature (if necessary)	Printed Guardian Name

If more signatures are required than are spaces above, use the back of the page for additional signatures.

Is it time to hang up the red heart?
Become a Supporting Member!



There comes a time when every team faces the difficult decision to hang up our partner's red heart tag. It might be because of illness, age or death. Sometimes the decision is made for us and other times, it is up to the human to make the decision to no longer be an active Alliance of Therapy Dogs team. It's not easy letting go of that special partnership. However, there is still a way for you to be involved in ATD even after the visits stop. You can become an ATD Supporting Member!

What does becoming a Supporting Member mean? It means that for \$20 per year you pay to support ATD, you continue to receive the Member Handbook, the Newsmagazine and Member communications. When the time is right and you want to become an ATD team again, you will not need to take the volunteer background check because you are still considered a Member of ATD. When you notify the office that your dog has retired or has passed away, you can let the office know that you want to be transferred from active Member to Supporting Member.



Alliance of Therapy Dogs Photo Tags & IDs

ONLINE ORDERING ONLY: www.k9tag.com/tdog.html

A donation is made to Alliance of Therapy Dogs with each order.

FRONT



Laminated
stainless steel!

Collar tag size is 1&1/4" diameter

COLLAR TAG

Collar ring
included.

BACK



Wallet IDs are the size of a credit card &
a badge holder with slot at top is included.

WALLET IDs

BACK

HUMAN ID FRONT



CE OF THE
P.O. Box 20
neyenne, WY
877-843-73
ydogsinc@qw
w.therapyd
017 K9TAG® Inc. www

DOG ID FRONT



USE THIS LINK TO ORDER: www.k9tag.com/tdog.html

EMAIL THE IMAGES FOR YOUR ORDER TO: tag@k9tag.com

Dog collar size tag \$6.95 Dog wallet ID \$6.95 Human wallet ID \$6.95

Handler's Name:

Pet's Name - 25 Character limit:

Address Line one - 25 character limit: **USED FOR MAILING ONLY, NOT USED ON IDs OR TAGS.**

Address line two (city / state / zip) - 25 character limit: **USED FOR MAILING ONLY, NOT ON IDs OR TAGS.**

MEMBER ID NUMBER:

THERAPY DOG #:

Sex:

Breed:

QUESTIONS? email tag@k9tag.com or phone 703-402-6917



Alliance of Therapy Dogs

P.O. Box 20227
Cheyenne, WY 82003
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office@therapydogs.com
www.therapydogs.com

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