



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025



Love on a Leash® Board - Your Volunteer Board members serve with enthusiasm, strive to improve organization and continue to expand our national presence.

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Margaret Eggers - Vice President
Susie Blake - Secretary/Membership
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**In some browsers, page hyperlinks may only be active when newsletter downloaded.*

From the Board – Balancing Service and Therapy Work

When I started exploring Therapy Dog certification for my French Bulldog, I quickly realized our situation was unique. You see, Dexter is my medical-alert Service Dog. Most Pet Therapy organizations didn't allow dogs to serve these dual roles. I knew I didn't want to compromise my safety, but also knew he'd be an amazing Therapy Dog. Love on a Leash® was the only organization that understood and supported what we hoped to do.

Dexter's roles couldn't be more different. As a Service Dog, he must stay focused, meaning no petting, no socializing, no sniffing other dogs. But as a Therapy Dog, his job is to do exactly the opposite: approach strangers, share affection and interact warmly with people and other Therapy Dogs. It was a lot to ask of him, but with guidance from our trainer, we found a system that worked beautifully.

We gave Dexter distinct "uniforms", namely a full tactile vest for service work and a lightweight bandana for therapy visits.

Dexter quickly understood the difference between his two roles based on what he wore: his service vest meant focus, while his therapy bandana signaled it was time to engage. Interestingly, when I relaxed the routine over just a few days and allowed

people to pet him while he was vested, he became confused and began to blur the boundaries. Thankfully, with a return to consistency, he relearned the rules and I now make sure to remove his vest if I'm going to let him be social.

Perhaps the biggest lesson was learning to honor Dexter's need to just be a dog. He gives so much to me and others, so in the evenings, we take slow strolls with no agenda. He gets to sniff, explore and lead the way. It's my way of allowing him to recharge and honestly, I think it tucks him out more than a strict heeled walk ever did.

Dexter works hard and Love on a Leash® gave us a way to let him give joy to others, while still honoring my medical needs. I couldn't be more grateful.

– Ana Cianciola & Dexter
Board of Directors



Taking Care of Business

Pet Profiles!

For insurance purposes, we ask all volunteers to submit two different body photos of their therapy pets (ideally left and right sides). Photos can be uploaded to your online member account [currently experiencing technical difficulties], or by emailing your pet's photos directly to info@loveonaleash.org. Thank you for helping us keep our records up to date!

Pet Panel

Had an experience on a visit and not sure how to handle it? Ask our Pet Panel! We'll keep your privacy and provide trainer-approved advice in a simple, helpful way. Just email your question to newsletter@loveonaleash.org with "Pet Panel Question" in the subject line.

Logo and Visit Requirements

We're proud of our official color – medium blue – so please try to wear it during your visits! Please also make sure your ID card is visible at all times (on a badge, lanyard, neck wallet, or retractable holder).

Don't forget to carry your pet's ID, too, and present it if asked. Wearing our name helps set you and your pet apart as a pet therapy team from a recognized organization.

We Want to Hear From You!

We know that every day brings heartwarming moments and inspiring stories from our visits, and we're lucky to witness them all. However, for our newsletter to serve as a valuable resource for everyone, it's essential that we focus on content that helps support, improve, and strengthen the Love on a Leash® experience for all of us.

If you've had a unique experience, a lightbulb moment, or any ideas that could help us all become better pet therapy volunteers,

we want to hear from you!

We also welcome your heartwarming photos and stories – they're what make our community so special! We love sharing these moments, and we will include them when space allows.

You can easily share your ideas through our convenient [Google Forms](#) or feel free to email your submissions directly to newsletter@loveonaleash.org. Articles should ideally be no more than 400 words and may be gently edited to fit our space limitations. Please remember to include appropriate photo release forms when necessary.

Membership Updates

Log into your account online anytime to update your personal details. If your pet has retired or passed away, please let us know at info@loveonaleash.org. No internet? No problem –call us at (760) 740-2326 or mail in your updates.



Guidelines in the Spotlight

At Love on a Leash®, our certified volunteer teams bring joy and comfort wherever we are invited, so it's important we show up looking and feeling our best. That way we can focus on our mission! Remember:

"Your pet must be groomed and tidy – pay special attention that nails are trimmed and smooth." (p. 20)

During these hot summer months, grooming becomes even more important. Shedding increases, and warm weather can make pets uncomfortable, especially if their coats aren't properly cared for. A well-groomed pet not only looks good, but also feels better – and that confidence shows during visits.

Brush That Fur

Regular brushing helps keep your pet's coat healthy, reduces shedding, and makes cuddle time more pleasant for those being visited. It also helps prevent matting and gives volunteers a chance to check for any skin issues. Brushing before each visit is a quick and easy way to show up prepared and polished.

Trim Those Claws or Cover Them

Long or sharp claws can unintentionally scratch or snag, especially when visiting children or seniors. Keeping claws trimmed and smooth or covered ensures safer, more comfortable visits for everyone – including your pet. It also helps pets move more easily on slick or unfamiliar surfaces.

A quick brush and nail check before each visit goes a long way in helping our teams make the best possible impression. It's a small routine that reflects the care and pride you bring to every visit.

Thank you for taking the time to keep your therapy pets looking and feeling great. Your attention to these details makes every visit more welcoming, safe, and meaningful. We're proud to have such thoughtful volunteers representing Love on a Leash®! 🐾



☀️ Phone Volunteers Wanted ☀️

We're looking for a friendly and reliable volunteer to help cover the Love on a Leash® phone line on Thursdays. This is a great opportunity to support our community and ensure that we're always available to assist our volunteer teams and new volunteers. If you're comfortable answering calls and would like to contribute, we'd love to have you on board! It's a flexible and rewarding way to give back. If you're interested or want to learn more, please reach out to us at info@loveonaleash.org.

Thank you for helping us continue our mission to spread love and comfort through therapy animals! 🐾



Reggie (2015-2022)



Shop for Love on a Leash® Gear

As the weather warms up and more therapy visits move outdoors, make sure your pet has a comfortable place to relax with our **Love on a Leash® fleece blanket!**

Made from **13.5 oz. polar fleece**, this **anti-pill blanket** is soft, durable, and

perfect for any outing. It features **contrasting whip stitching** for a stylish touch and comes with a **nylon strap** for easy carrying. At **50" x 60"**, it provides plenty of space for your therapy pet to relax on during pet therapy visits.

Whether you're at a park, school, or community event, this blanket is a must-have for any outdoor visit! **Order yours today and keep your furry friend comfy wherever your visits take you!** 🐾



Spread the Word

Love on a Leash® is proud to offer printed brochures and educational cards, illustrating the differences between therapy, service and emotional support animals. We provide these at no cost to our teams. If you would like some of these to provide to prospective teams in training, the facilities you visit, or for an upcoming event, please email us at assistant2@loveonaleash.org.

Please include the quantity you would like and let us know whether you would like brochures, therapy comparison cards or both! 🐾



Fun Giveaways Adored by All Ages



Love on a Leash® is partnered with Creative Instinct, Inc. to offer Therapy Pet Trading Cards to our teams nationwide.

The order process is easy and the cards are very popular, especially with our younger fans.



Love on a Leash® bookmarks are also a big hit with our avid readers.

Available as single or double-sided;
minimum order: 25 pcs.

Log into your Member Account to order both the trading cards and bookmarks in the Order Merchandise section.



💙 By the Numbers 💙

As of July 2025, Love on a Leash® has grown to **2631** certified volunteer pet therapy teams in **46** states! Did you know that **81%** of our teams belong to chapters? At this time we have **65** active chapters in **28** states. Thank you for continuing to bring comfort and joy to those in need!





Ask Our Pet Panel



Dear Pet Panel,

I recently had an experience during a therapy visit that really scared me. An off-leash dog came charging at me, growling and barking. I was so frightened, my owner quickly picked me up to keep me safe. But it made me wonder, what could my owner have done if her hands were full, or if I was too big to be picked up?

Sincerely,
Buddy

Dear Buddy,

It can be scary, for you and your owner, to be approached by an unknown, unleashed, barking dog. This happened recently to two Love on a Leash® teams visiting at an assisted living facility.

Fortunately like you, each team was able to safely pick up their small dog until the barking dog was returned to the owner's room. Whew! I'm glad everything worked out in the above example, but picking you up is not always the best solution. An aggressive dog might attack your owner, and with their arms full, they cannot use defensive actions to protect you and themselves.

So, what else can an owner do? What if a dog is too big to pick up? What if the

team is charged by another dog while on a Love on a Leash® visit or when they are simply out and about?

Follow this plan:

- ♥ **Stay Calm and Assess**
- ♥ **Divert**
- ♥ **Find a Safe Space**
- ♥ **Create a Barrier**
- ♥ **Block and Startle**

STAY CALM and ASSESS

Assess the dog first, remain calm (or fake it as best you can), and try to read the dog's body language. Don't raise your voice or make any sudden moves, as either could be construed as a threat. Shrieking or screaming can also cause a dog to become more excited and worked up, so try not to do either.

If you have enough distance, the best option is usually to move off in a different direction, but that's not always possible.

Look for aggression. A curious, friendly dog looks very different from a dog that is looking for a fight. A relaxed

posture and loose tail are the biggest signs that a dog is actually friendly. However, be wary of "he's friendly" dogs, as that attitude can change in a moment. Even "friendly" dogs can be rude, which may bother your dog. Pick your dog's "friends" carefully to prevent nasty situations from occurring.

Aggressive body language can include:

- ✗ tense/stiff body
- ✗ raised hackles



- ✗ a hard stare and/or intense eye contact
- ✗ closed mouth
- ✗ high and rigid tail
- ✗ ears pricked up
- ✗ stalking movements (crouching or lunging)
- ✗ bared teeth
- ✗ low growling and/or snapping

Don't make eye contact when you don't know the dog, particularly if they don't appear friendly. You should still face the dog, but make a point of looking elsewhere, and slowly back away without turning your back until you're a safe distance away.

If the dog starts heading toward you, do not run, as this could entice them to chase you. You can try saying "Go home!" or "Sit!" Do not hit or kick the dog, as this could increase their aggression toward you.

DIVERT

One option is to grab a handful of treats and throw them next to the off-leash dog. Throwing a bunch of treats also has the advantage of giving you time to distance yourself. The dog will need time to sniff around and locate them all, enabling you to make your escape. Move fairly quickly, and watch the dog, as the dog may try to follow for more treats. 🐾



Have a question for our Pet Panel? There isn't a sticky situation they haven't addressed! Send your pet's questions to newsletter@loveonaleash.org.



Ask Our Pet Panel, cont.



If there's nothing nearby to toss, just pretend that you're throwing something. Many dogs are easily tricked with this method, and it will hopefully give you and your dog time to leave.

FIND a SAFE SPACE

Can you find a safe space — a fenced yard, a place of business, another room in the facility? Remain in that place until you're sure the other dog is contained or removed. Once, while walking with a client and their dog, I went into "red alert" when I saw a dog approaching. She and I put her dog in the bed of a pickup truck then climbed up in there, too. Our yells brought out the neighbors who helped us fend off the aggressive dog. Consider, too, the story of a woman who put her yorkie into a trash can until the other dog left the area!

If the loose dog isn't intent on destruction, putting yourself or your dog out of view or out of reach might be enough to convince the other dog to continue on his way.

CREATE a BARRIER

What's around you that you can use to create a barrier? A desk, chair, car, bicycle, garbage can, or a fence gate? Anything is preferable to letting the dog come right up to you.

Have a purse, backpack, fanny bag, or visit bag? Don't try to strike the other dog, but swing the bag around you to create a moving barrier. If you have another leash handy, swing the clip end like a propeller. Take your backup leash out of your visit bag and use both items

to create a barrier and keep the dog from getting close.

If the dog is still approaching, you might need to rely on "block and startle" techniques to keep you and your dog safe.

BLOCK and STARTLE

Dog fights can be very scary. Our usual instinct is to scream and grab to pull the dogs apart. But doing so could lead to severe injuries to both you and the dogs involved. If a fight happens, take a deep breath, consider your available options, and choose the one(s) that are most likely to work in that place and time.

When dogs start fighting, they are "in the zone" and it can be hard to snap them out of it. There is a lot of information on ways to break up a dog fight. Here are a few suggestions.

Use noise, distractions, or something similar to break them out of the "zone", even if just for a moment to allow you to grab your dog and move to safety (Be aware that sometimes, loud noises can have a negative effect and amp up the dogs, it really can depend on each dog.)

Possible ways you can break a dog's attention during a fight:

- ◆ Use an air horn, compressed air, citronella spray, or something similar. Bang on a nearby tree/wall/garbage can/etc. Blow a whistle (carrying one on your keychain is great).
- ◆ Dump water on the dogs (this can be surprisingly effective) or throw something at the fighting dogs. Throw something over the dogs: a jacket,

tarp, or anything nearby – go for the head and eyes.

- ◆ Put something (NOT you) between the dogs: A backpack or something similar; a skateboard, bicycle, or other similar objects; an umbrella, stick, or cane (but not your hands).

Those are a few ideas, but the goal is to try and break the dogs' concentration. If you illicit a 1~2 second pause, you can likely get your dog out of the situation.

Sigh My intent is not to worry you so much that you are afraid to go out unless you're both wearing suits of armor! Prevention is key. The best way to avoid a fight is to prevent one from occurring.

Prepare mentally, gather and practice with the tools and methods described here. Get in the habit of being aware of other dogs. Consider all your options: Where could go? What can you use? What can you do?

If there is one takeaway, learn to read and listen to your pet's body language. Give your pet the space and time to decide if they want to be friends or simply polite coworkers. That goes for other Love on a Leash® therapy pets, too. Being in tune with your pet is the single most important way to avoid an angry reaction or fight and keep you and your pet safe. 🐾

- Submitted by Kate Abbott, Love on a Leash® volunteer and Director of [Kindred Spirits Canine Education Center](http://www.kindredsprits.org)

Welcome to our Newest Chapter!



We are excited to announce that the Cape Fear chapter has been reborn as the **Wilmington** chapter! Under the dedicated leadership of Julie Benoit and Elizabeth Oram, the chapter is back and stronger than ever, with 30 passionate volunteers currently involved.

Our Wilmington chapter is committed to continuing the legacy of spreading joy and comfort

through pet therapy in their community. With their strong foundation and dedicated volunteers, we are looking forward to seeing this chapter grow and make an even greater impact in the Wilmington area.

Stay tuned for more updates as the Wilmington Chapter continues to bring smiles and comfort to those in need! You can visit the Wilmington chapter's subpage here <https://www.loveonaleash.org/wilmington/>. 🐾



Northern Colorado Chapter Making Strides in Greeley

Our Northern Colorado chapter has been leading impactful weekly visits to an underserved elementary school in Greeley, a town about 50 miles north of Denver. The school community has embraced therapy dogs Dottie and

Stryker in a big way, so much so that both dogs were presented with their own official staff badges! It's a heartwarming and humorous recognition of the love and support they bring to both students and staff alike.

Sadly, both Dottie and Stryker have since crossed the Rainbow Bridge, but their legacy lives on in the hearts of everyone they touched. Their dedication and the joy they brought to the school community will never be forgotten.

Thank you to the Northern Colorado chapter, for the incredible service you and your therapy pets are providing. Your dedication truly reflects the mission of Love on a Leash®. 🐾



Chapters are unique to Love on a Leash®. A chapter provides support, motivation, and social interaction for you and your pet. More teams mean a greater variety of pets, talents, and interests. One established visit and 5 or more certified teams are required to start a chapter, plus the chapter leader has to have been a certified Love on a Leash® team for at least one year. Interested? Learn more on our website under [Chapters](#).



👉 Chapter Spotlight: St. Charles County 👉

Submitted by Linda Bolen, St Charles County Chapter Leader, MO

🐾 **St. Charles County Love on a Leash® : A Tail-Wagging Tale of Community, Compassion, and Connection**

Since 2010, our chapter has grown from a handful of hopeful volunteers into a thriving, joyful pack of over 40 pet therapy teams. I joined at the beginning with my 3 legged Chow Chow named Trinity. I took over as chapter lead in 2013 and have since certified 3 of my other Chow Chows.

🚀 **From Small Start to Big Impact**

What began with fewer than 10 teams has blossomed into a dynamic group where many of our members have multiple certified pets. Today, the chapter logs around 24 visits per month to places like:

- ♥ 🏥 Hospitals and cancer centers
- ♥ 📖 Libraries
- ♥ 🧓 Senior living communities
- ♥ 🎒 Elementary, middle, and high schools

And we're in high demand! New visit requests come in weekly, especially during the busy Spring season when schools are eager for one last reading event before Summer break.

📅 **How We Stay Organized**

We have a private Facebook group where a monthly calendar and individual event posts keep everyone in the loop. Visits typically include 2 to 6 volunteer teams, creating a warm, welcoming presence wherever we go. 👉



👉 Chapter Spotlight ctd: St. Charles County 👉

🎉 Community Events That Bring the Pack Together

This chapter isn't only about volunteering – it's also about building a community. Every year, members gather for a festive Christmas party hosted at my home. It's a cozy, laughter-filled celebration complete with food and fun.

And when the sun's out? It's time for the annual summer BBQ! This laid-back get-together is a chance for members to relax, share stories, and enjoy each other's company outside of our usual visits. These events help strengthen bonds and make the group feel more like family.

🌟 Unique Teams & Talents

Several members train in agility sports with their dogs. One member teaches a tricks class, helping therapy dogs learn fun moves to entertain and engage during visits. And let's not forget Chip the rabbit, a beloved team member who joins library visits and listens to kids read!



🎓 Going the Extra Mile

Many of our teams have earned Advanced Therapy Degrees by consistently volunteering in hospitals, reading programs, and special education classrooms. Their dedication is a testament to our chapter's commitment to making a meaningful impact.

❤️ Why We Do It

This is the best 'job' I've ever had. Everyone is always so glad to see us. It's incredibly rewarding to share our dogs with others and know we're making a difference.

🐾 All Breeds Welcome

From Golden Retrievers and Aussies, to Chow Chows, Labs, and Doodles, our chapter celebrates diversity. Love on a Leash's inclusive approach means every breed is welcome, and every pet has the chance to shine. 🐾

To follow all our chapter's adventures, check out our public [Facebook page](#).



Hop Into Pet Therapy: Celebrating Our Incredible Rabbit Teams Across the Country!



Royse City, TX – **Gypsy Blue Belle** owned by **Retha Lewis**, is a four-year-old Blue-Eyed Holland Lop who brings joy to everyone she meets as a member of the Rockwall-Royse City chapter. Raised by a young lady alongside Black Labs, Gypsy has a unique, calm temperament, never knowing dogs as a threat. She enjoys free roaming and has been trained to do impressive tricks like "Paws Up" in her basket and walking on a leash with perfect heel. With her stunning blue eyes and sweet personality, Gypsy connects effortlessly with both seniors and children, bringing smiles wherever she hops! 🐾



St. Charles, MO – **Chip** may be small, but he's making a big impact as a therapy bunny! Adopted two years ago by member **Leigh George**, from a foster-based rabbit rescue, Chip has a calm and affectionate personality, unfazed by loud noises, kids, or even dogs. While he prefers not to sit on laps, he loves giving kisses, receiving pets, and snuggling for hours.

At home, Chip is a tidy and well-mannered rabbit who free-rooms when Leigh is home. He eagerly races to the kitchen alongside his therapy dog sibling, Hannah, at the sound of a crinkling bag or fridge opening.

Chip is a beloved guest at monthly "Read to a Dog" library visits, where he provides a gentle, comforting presence for children who may be hesitant around dogs. His journey from rescue rabbit to therapy star proves that pet therapy comes in all shapes and sizes – including soft, furry, and hoppy!



🐾Therapy Cats of Pensacola🐾

Submitted by member Wayne Epley [member since 2018]

Pensacola, FL – I am honored to have been asked to share a few stories about my three wonderful therapy cats, Aslan, Thumnus and Solara, over the next few issues. I am a 63-year-old disabled Air Force veteran who has also been an animal trainer for over 40 years. I have been happily representing Love on a Leash® for the last 7 years.



Aslan is a rescue Maine Coon who was being mistreated at a softball field when I found him. A group of children was mishandling him, and I knew I had to step in and bring him home.

Aslan is a seal point blue Maine Coon with gorgeous blue eyes. He weighs about 20 pounds and is 43 inches long.

My animals go through a year and a half of training. They learn to walk on a leash, be comfortable in a harness, and tolerate loud noises. They also become comfortable going from person to person (something most cats do not like to do). They learn to work in a variety of "scary" environments, and they go through

all training without treats. I've found that extra attention and talking to them, letting them know what is happening and what is expected, goes a long way in reassuring them. I tell people that they are a lot like toddlers and respond very much like them, both emotionally and mentally.

Aslan Loves People

Aslan and I had some lovely visits recently at a new facility, and one day in particular stood out. While we were checking in, the Activity Director came by to take us around. We make it a point to speak to anyone we meet and ask if they'd like to say "hi" to the kitty, so no one feels left out.

The Activity Director seemed a bit surprised that some of the residents were already waiting for a hug from Aslan as soon as we walked in. She even got some nice pictures of him in action, well, mostly laying down on the job (he really likes laps). She asked if we could visit someone we hadn't seen before, and of course, we said yes.



Wayne with Aslan (L) and Thumnus (R)

🐾Therapy Cats of Pensacola, ctd.🐾

We got to spend time with a WWII veteran who turned out to be a treat for both of us. Our new friend was having a tough day. He looked tired and in pain from a long illness. He had been told to expect a therapy animal and was excited, anticipating a therapy dog to visit. When I arrived with Aslan, his face lit up.



He looked at Aslan and exclaimed, "Oh, it's a cat! I love cats! I haven't been able to pet a cat in years." I carefully laid Aslan next to him, close enough for easy petting. As he stroked Aslan's fur, he said softly, "So nice. So nice to pet a cat again."

He had such a smile on his face holding Aslan. He became so peaceful and calm. It was like all his pain and weariness slipped away, at least for a time, while he engaged with Aslan.

As a veteran myself, I sometimes wonder, if I were in his place, what it would be like to have someone visit me with an animal, and how much brighter that would make my day. This is the very best reason to do what we do. I am so thankful to have Aslan and to be able to share him with others.

A few years ago, Aslan became very ill and was diagnosed with a serious digestive condition. The vet advised us to pause pet therapy while he recovered. Thankfully, Aslan feels much better now, but he has retired from pet therapy.

We loved seeing faces light up with smiles during our visits; reminders of times long ago, and of the moment they first met this furry friend who stole their hearts. It's as if the years melt away, and cherished memories come rushing back, even if only for a little while. For that moment, sadness fades, replaced by the kind of joy only an animal can bring.

Thank you for the opportunity to share about these wonderful animals. I am so blessed to be able to bring comfort, companionship, and a little purr therapy to those who simply long for a visit and a gentle touch from a willing friend.



Peace,
Wayne



Next Issue: *Thumnus Gets a History Lesson*

Advanced Therapy Degree recipients (since our last issue)

Advanced Therapy Degrees (ThD) from Love on a Leash® are available to teams once they become certified teams. There are a variety of specialty fields depending on where your team enjoys volunteering most. Advanced Degrees showcase dedication and teamwork; this is a joint effort between you and your pet. If you are interested in learning more about how to earn this award, please log into your [Member Account](#) and navigate to Helpful Documents.



2 Degrees



Noon (SD)
1. e:sv (Apr '24)
2. ht (Feb '25)



Spirit (IL)
1. c:rp (Feb '24)
2. sev (Jun '25)



Seca (CA)
1. e:sv (Nov '22)
2. ht (Jun '25)



Captain Kai (CA)
1. ht (Jun '25)
2. hcv (Jun '25)

Congratulations!

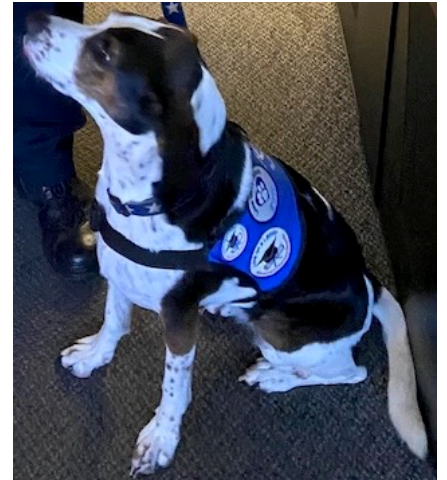
3 Degrees



Kimchi (SD)
1. e:sv (Oct '24)
2. ht (Dec '24)
3. tcs:sr (Feb '25)



Ray (NY)
1. ht (Aug '22)
2. e:sv (Aug '22)
3. tcs:sr (Jul '24)
4. sev (Jun '25)



Zuni (CA)
1. c:rp (Jan '18)
2. e:sv (Mar '19)
3. tcs:sr (May '22)
4. ht (Jun '25)

4 Degrees

**Unless indicated otherwise, all pets are active as of this publication; dates indicate when degree was earned.*



Sandi Stewart Therapy Pet Recognition

Sandi Stewart Therapy Pet Recognition patches from Love on a Leash® are available to teams once they become certified. Sandi Stewart served as a Love on a Leash® Board member, and ultimately penned documentation about therapy work with rabbits. Sandi left a lasting legacy with a generous bequest to Love on a Leash®. In 2022, we proudly introduced this program and these patches in her honor, recognizing our pets' selfless service bringing love and comfort to those in need in our communities. To learn more about how to earn this award, please log into your [Member Account](#) and navigate to Helpful Documents.



Lily Lou & Pam (MO)
750 visits!



Ray, Mary & Robert (NY)
750 visits!



Molly & Charlene (NC)
100 visits



Ozzy & Nancy (KS)
100 visits

*Congratulations
on achieving these
milestones!*



Seca & Karen (CA)
100 visits

**Unless indicated otherwise, all pets are active as of this publication.*



Till We Meet Again...

As we go through the natural ebb and flow of life, we must inevitably say goodbye to some of our dearest friends. While it's hard to part with them, we take comfort in celebrating the wonderful life they led. We are so grateful for the joy they brought into our lives and for the way they shared their lively spirit with everyone around them. They will always be remembered fondly and missed dearly. Honoring the memory of those since our Spring 2025 newsletter. **Years indicate service with Love on a Leash®.**

Ace (Labrador Retriever) 2013-2025 (Alger, MI)
Anna (Golden Sheltie) 2015-2025 (Statesboro, GA)
Bandit (Aussie Shepherd) 2015-2024 (Bonita Springs, FL)
Barney (Terrier) 2015-2025 (Portage, MI)
Belle (Rough Collie) 2013-2025 (Clinton Township, MI)
Beverly Hodges (member) 2002-2025 (Vista, CA)
Bindi (Wire Fox Terrier) Mar-June, 2025 (Meadow Vista, CA)
Boo Boo (Yorkie) 2015-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Casey (Toy Poodle) 2011-2024 (Grantwood Village, MO)
Cathy Platt (member) 2014-2025 (Fishers, IN)
Colby (Boston Terrier) 2018-2025 (Kirkwood, MO)
Cooper (Lab Retriever) 2015-2024 (Prince George, VA)
Cruella (Shih Tzu Mix) 2015-2025 (Murphy, NC)
Daisy (Labrador Retriever) 2019-2025 (Earlsville, VA)
Ffin (Sheltie) 2014-2025 (Clinton Township, MI)
Gus (Bernedoodle) 2024-2025 (Plattsburgh, NY)
Happy (Border Heeler) 2018-2025 (Millstadt, IL)
Happy (Lhasa Apso) 2015-2025 (Collinsville, MI)
Harper (Greyhound) 2024-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Huck (Golden Retriever) 2018-2025 (Saint Louis, MO)

Jaxson (Weimaraner) 2019-2025 (Camarillo, CA)
Kobe (Golden Retriever) 2017-2024 (Fenton, MO)
Koda (Labrador Retriever Mix) 2014-2025 (Lewisville, NC)
Lamar (Labrador Retriever Mix) 2015-2024 (Glendale, CA)
Lilly (Australian Shepherd) 2016-2025 (Versailles, KY)
Mabel Grace (Cav. King Charles Sp) 2014-'26 (Anaheim, CA)
Magnus (Sheltie) 2014-2025 (Charleston, SC)
Merlin (Pembroke Welsh Corgi) 2019-2025 (Bonita, CA)
Mitze (Shetland Sheepdog) 2023-2025 (Mandan, ND)
Norah (Golden Retriever) 2019-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Pemi (Bernese Mountain Dog) 2021-2024 (Littleton, NH)
Puff (Pekachi) 2011-2025 (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)
Reba (Standard Poodle) 2013-2025 (Agoura Hills, CA)
Roxus (Cav King Charles Sp) 2022-2025 (Covington, LA)
Roxy (Border Collie) 2024-2025 (Durham, NC)
Ruby (Vizsla mix) 2016-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Sierra (Bernese Mountain Dog) 2020-2025 (Rogers, AR)
Tomlin (Australian Labradoodle) 2015-2025 (Yakima, WA)
Tucker (Labrador Retriever) 2014-2024 (Alta Loma, CA)



🐾 Paws and Reflect: Celebrating Our Retirees 🐾

As we celebrate the joy and connection our therapy volunteers bring, we also want to give a warm shoutout to those who have recently hung up their leashes (and lanyards)! The following pets and their beloved humans have officially retired from Love on a Leash® – whether it's time for extra naps, more couch snuggles, or simply new adventures, we're sending them off with love and gratitude for all the smiles they've shared. **Years indicate service with Love on a Leash®.**

Alexander (Doberman Pinscher) 2021-2025 (El Cajon, CA)
April (Cav King Charles Spaniel) 2023-2025 (Altadena, CA)
Ava (German Shepherd Dog) 2017-2024 (Madisonville, LA)
Baylee (Golden Retriever) 2016-2024 (Upland, CA)
Cam (Smooth Collie) 2017-2025 (Eagle, MI)
Cash (Morkie) 2019-2025 (Edmonton, Canada)
Cooper (Labrador Retriever) 2019-2024 (Alta Loma, CA)
Cricket (Cat, Mixed) 2014-2025 (Greenville, MI)
Fizz (All American Dog) 2017-2025 (Somis, CA)
Gus (Portuguese Water Dog) 2021-2025 (Fishers, IN)
Harley (Goldendoodle) 2021-2025 (Bentonville, AR)
Hoshi (Labrador Retriever) 2016-2025 (Durham, NC)
Jackson (Cav King Charles Sp) 2013-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Jazzie (Chihuahua mix) 2023-2025 (Santa Barbara, CA)
Mia (Doberman Pinscher) 2018-2025 (Kennewick)

Micah (Greyhound) 2018-2025 (San Diego)
Olivia (Mini Schnauzer) 2013-2025 (Santa Barbara, CA)
Penny (Goldendoodle) 2016-2025 (Foley, AL)
Reggie (All American Dog) 2010-2024 (Oceanside, CA)
Rosemond Ward (member) 2015-2025 (Batesburg, SC)
Rosey (Goldendoodle) 2017-2025 (Sunnyvale, TX)
Roxy (Lab Hound Mix) 2017-2024 (Wilmington, NC)
Sophia (Standard Poodle) 2017-2025 (Oceanside, CA)
Spike (German Pinscher) 2022-2024 (Royse City, TX)
Summer (Golden Retriever) 2019-2025 (Raleigh, NC)
Sunny (Mixed) 2023-2025 (Fishers, IN)
Tom Platz (member) 2013-2025 (Clinton Township, MI)
Vinnie (Bich-Poo) 2016-2025 (Encinitas, CA)
Watson (Australian Labradoodle) 2015-2025 (Ventura, CA)
Winnie (Havanese) 2021-2024 (San Diego, CA)

You'll

be

really

missed!



Remembering a Gentle Giant – 10/4/12 ~ 9/12/24 🌈

Prince George, VA – **Cooper** was a yellow English Labrador Retriever. He and I became a certified Love on a Leash® pet therapy team in July 2015. During the course of his lifetime, he became a distinguished AKC certified Therapy Pet, AKC Canine Good Citizen, AKC Advanced Canine Good Citizen, and an AKC certified trick dog. In addition to being certified with Love on a Leash®, he was also a member of Pet Partners and VCU Dogs on Call. Cooper's life was spent bringing joy and love to both young and old, sick and well, in all settings from home to skilled-care facilities to hospitals and public venues.

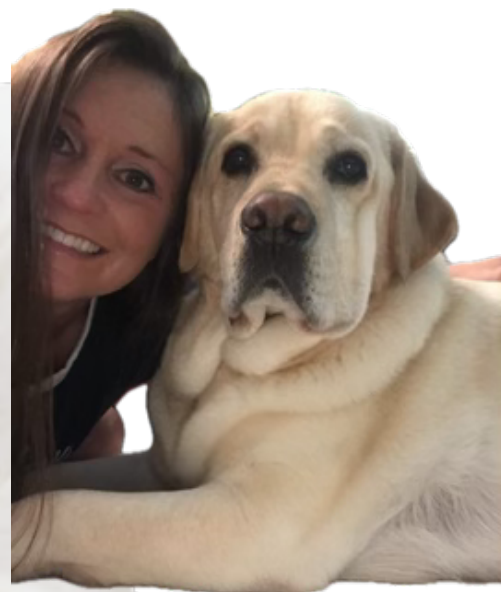
Cooper was an incredible companion to his family where he was, and still is, loved beyond measure. His accomplishments beyond his therapy visits included winning contests for his talents such as reading signs, sticking his tongue out when watching someone else do it, sneezing on command, saying "I love you", and talking, not barking. Cooper also won many costume contests for his homemade Halloween costumes where he would patiently stand for hours as they were handmade and fitted. He proudly pranced in his costumes, always with a smile on his sweet English Labrador face.

Cooper was a very special boy who always carried one of his favorite babies in his mouth, was known for his dapper bow ties, and greeted everyone he met with a wagging tail, wiggly butt, and unwavering love and affection. He was a true gentle giant who enjoyed spending time with his family, receiving snuggles and belly rubs, pawdicures, at-

home baths and blow dries, playing with his friends, taking many trips to PetSmart for training, social visits and shopping, and performing all his tricks to brighten the days of those he knew and those he met. During the holidays, Cooper would don his Santa suit and go on visits to bring smiles to everyone he encountered.

His unconditional love, loyalty, talent, and complete sweetness brought joy to the lives of so many and he truly made the world a better, happier place. He was such a smart, good, easy-going boy who would do anything you wanted him to do.

Sadly, Cooper crossed the Rainbow Bridge just before his 12th birthday, in September 2024. There is not a single day that his presence is not missed. There was not a single day of his sweet life that he did not bring joy to others and for that, he will always be our "perfect puppy". He was a true blessing in our lives. – **Stephanie Bailey** 🐾



In Loving Memory

We fondly remember **Casey**, a beloved Toy Poodle who brought joy to so many during his years as a therapy dog with Love on a Leash®. From January 2011 to October 2024, Casey logged over 400 visits, sharing comfort, smiles, and his gentle spirit with everyone he met. His dedicated handler, **Sharon Speck**, was by his side every step of the way.

Casey was known for his fun-loving personality – he especially loved "driving" his little car during visits, much to the delight of those around him. Whether dressed up for a holiday or just bringing his signature charm, Casey always made people smile. He leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter, and over a decade of devoted service. 🐾





In Gratitude & Remembrance



Betty Hall 1937 † 2025 – Rockwall-Royse City Chapter



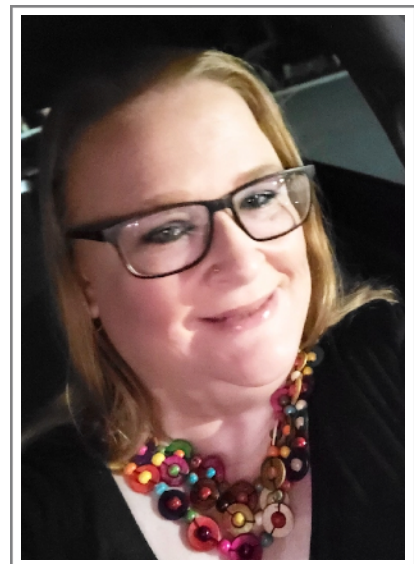
Judith Pittman 1976 † 2025 – Somerset Chapter



Nancy, KY – We are deeply saddened by the passing of **Judith Pittman**, a cherished volunteer with the Somerset chapter of Love on a Leash®. Judith and her Shepherd/Corgi mix, **Midnight Skye**, joined our chapter a mere nine months ago, excited to start their journey as a certified pet therapy team.

Though their time with us was brief, Judith's dedication to spreading kindness and compassion was evident from the start. Judith passed away on February 10th, but her legacy lives on through the bond she shared with Midnight Skye and the joy they brought to those they visited.

Our thoughts remain with Judith's family during this difficult time. ❤️



Sometimes we must say goodbye to volunteers that have left an indelible mark in our local communities. Their untimely loss reverberates deeply and they are missed greatly. "Goodbyes are not forever, Goodbyes are not the end. They simply mean I'll miss you, Until we meet again."

