

Therapy Beardies Licking Loneliness

You know your beardies and how they like to make you laugh? Imagine what they do for people who really need an emotional lift!

These dogs encourage smiles and laughter, provide help in forgetting pain, relieve boredom and offer unlimited, unconditional love and attention in hospitals, nursing homes, schools for autistic children and many more health facilities. These remarkable dogs help Alzheimer patients come into reality, lower blood pressure, brighten someone's day, help with physical therapy and change lives. This is another area that our beardies excel at.

This kind of work is mentally and emotionally challenging for the dogs and their partners. The beardies must tolerate unusual noises, rolling carts, wheelchairs, rough handling, and other unexpected situations. Their partners have to have patience, a sense of humor and a deep passion for helping others. Therapy work is rewarding and bittersweet. You get attached to the people you visit knowing that on any given day you may walk into their room and they won't be there.

We've seen a significant increase in beardies doing therapy work and we're certain this trend will continue.

The newly recognized BCCA Therapy Dog Committee is honored and ecstatic to present, for the first time, BCCA Therapy Dog Certificates to bearded collies who are improving our communities and making a difference in the lives of those who are disabled, hurting or forgotten.

BCCA Therapy Dog Certificates are awarded annually to beardies doing therapy work based on verified hours of service. Requirements are as follows:

Level I - a minimum of 25 service hours

Level II - a minimum of 50 service hours

Level III - a minimum of 100 service hours

Dogs must be certified through a therapy organization that requires certification and carries liability insurance (e.g. Delta Society, Therapy Dog International) and handlers must be members in good standing with the BCCA.

First year recipients

LEVEL I

APRIL GOLD STAR DUST AX, AXJ, CGC

Owner: Carol Hegg

CH SHANASPREE-O'DUINNIN INTRIGUE OA, NAJ, HIC, CGC

Owner: Gretchen and Darron Blackburn

SWEETWATER'S GRAND VOYAGEUR CGC

Owner: Debby and Larry Furlow

WHYME LANARK'S PENNY CANDY

Owner: Rhonda Hardy

LEVEL II

ANASAZI DE CHELLY DREAMWEAVER HSAsd, RN, CGC

Owner: Sandy Dubin

CH CRISCH DOUBLE DELUXE HT

Owner: Anne Weiss

FOX LANE'S FRANCESCA

Owner: Clara J. del Valle

KHANTAH CHEYENNE BANDIT PT, RN, CGC

Owner: Marilyn Snook

CH MEADOWS' REAL SENSATION CGC

Owner: Debby Furlow

CH SHADOWFAX'S FIREWEAVER RN, PT, CGC

Owner: Sandy Dubin

SHANASPREE AIM FORA FAR POST HIC, CGC

Owner: Gretchen and Darron Blackburn

Therapy Dog of the Year—2007

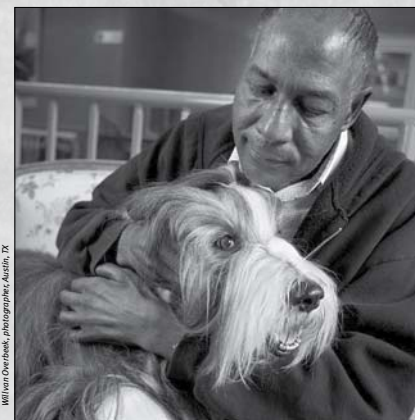
The Therapy Dog Committee recognizes **CH CRISCH DOUBLE DELUXE, HT** as "Therapy Dog of the Year". The team of "Andy" and Anne Weiss performed 82 hours of service during 2007.

Help!

- We're looking for the first therapy beardedie on record.
- Send us your most memorable stories of beardies doing therapy work.



"Teddy" has his pulse checked by a nurse at Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital before he dishes out some Beardedie TLC.



"Patrick" comforts a resident at the Retirement and Nursing Center in Austin, TX.

Molly Moments

Llwynogyn Arcadia's Fair Isle, CD, TDI

"Molly" visited at the Highway Home for two years.

During Molly's visits, along with the other dogs in our group, we would meet the residents in the great room. They would be seated around the room waiting for the dogs to arrive. One elderly lady was so fearful of the dogs the first time we came to visit. I walked over and had Molly sit beside her wheelchair and we waited. This little lady eventually reached out and touched Molly's head and all was well.

The evening usually ended with the Home's residents having ice cream and there was always a small dish of ice cream for each dog if allowed.

As the Christmas holiday approached, the November visit was highly anticipated by our group. We'd bring along a Santa hat or elf's cap for the seniors to wear and take single and group photos of the residents with the dogs. There were lots of giggles and laughter as decisions were made on who should wear the hats—the dogs or the residents!

In December, once the photos were printed and tucked into holiday cards, the pictures were given to the residents. I was told the pictures were displayed on the resident's bureau or on the door of their rooms.

Sadly, on some visits, we would learn that residents had died. It was nice to remember the stories they told of their own pets and how much they appreciated and enjoyed our being there.

I remember Molly, on those Thursday evenings, jumping into our van and, as soon as we pulled into the Home's driveway, going bonkers to get inside.

The memories I have of Molly and her time as a therapy dog still make me smile.

—Marylou McLeod

