

## People and Dogs in Motion: RIC Study Trials Completed

Chenny Troupe dogs and volunteers have just finished their work in the lab. Work now begins for the research professionals to complete the first quantitative study of the effect of Chenny Troupe animal-assisted therapy on patient walking.

Begun a year ago on a pilot basis, restarted after approval of requested changes to the protocol and running virtually every week since January, trials are now complete for the feasibility study, *The Impact of Animal-Assisted Therapy on Patient Ambulation*.

The trials were conducted with approximately 30 patients at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. Chenny Troupe volunteer dog teams worked with RIC Director of Recreational Therapy, Brienne Costa, to study the effects that walking with a dog had on the distance and time patients walked to compare how far and long they walked without a dog. In addition, the feasibility of conducting a larger scale study as part of the Chenny program was also examined.

Many valuable lessons were learned. Preliminary analyses have been conducted on the data by the principal investigator

and RIC Senior Research Scientist, Rita K. Bode, Ph.D., who submitted the proposal and received approval for the study from the Northwestern University Institutional Review Board. Preliminary findings reveal that subjects on average walked faster, farther and longer with a dog. The study was designed to be as simple as possible to minimize variables that might be open to different interpretations.

“It’s well known that interacting with animals can lower heart rate and blood pressure but that information is mainly anecdotal. The body of research on animal-assisted therapy is very thin,” said Bode. “This is one of the few studies that has attempted to quantify the effects of animal-assisted therapy on patient outcomes.”

“Just like in a regular Chenny Troupe session at RIC, you could really tell that the patients like working with the dogs,” Costa said. “But with the data we collected, we can show empirically that working with the dogs is also effective therapy.”

A complete report of the findings, which will also include information on the feasi-

bility aspects of the study, will be submitted to RIC and Northwestern University, with copies sent to the medical research press. The plans are to use the results of this study as pilot data for a proposal for a more extensive study for which external funding would be sought.

Volunteer/dog teams for both sets of trials were: Mary Ann Alexander and Tag; Noelle Gaffney and Tootsie; Michelle Gray and Jib; Judith Jaffe, Star and Scotchie; Dan Jarvis and Sam; Beth Kadow and Ginger; Roger Lauth and Trievers; and Lisa Wiersma and Turner. Assisting at the study trials as aides were: Lisa Boggs, Amber Crain, Eileen Fitzsimons, Emily Fondahn, Caryl Horn, Kathryn Mullins and Sue Ann Selle. Everyone at Chenny Troupe extends their thanks for all their contributions to this important new aspect of the organization’s mission.

Look for further results of the study, and notice of any press coverage the report receives, in future issues of *Troupe Talk*.

Joe Frey

## Warm Hearts and Noses Celebrate 15th Anniversary

For those who braved the storms on May 11th to come to Heeling Hearts, Chenny Troupe’s 15th anniversary celebration, the reward was great – a fabulous evening with friends, dogs, food, fun and a great silent auction. Although the weather outside was frightful, we had a wonderful time at Kaleidoscope. Guests were greeted by Ann Dudley, Benefit chair and other committee members and encountered caricature artists and good news psychics before descending to the main floor of the venue. Downstairs, our guests found a sumptuous buffet, our signature martini (ruby-colored pomegranate in honor of our ruby anniversary) and our now famous silent auction. All of the

guests enjoyed the company of a wide variety of Chenny Troupe canines, who were on their best behavior, in spite of the distraction provided by the aroma of the buffet!

The centerpiece of the evening was the program, moderated by long time Board member, Tony Ozzauto. After reviewing their many accomplishments, Tony presented Ann Rohlen and Cathy Lawler, Chenny Troupe co-founders, with awards for their foresight and tireless efforts on behalf of the organization. Tony then announced the retirement of canine evaluator Kathy McCarthy, who, for fifteen years, tested virtually every Chenny Troupe dog. He surprised Kathy by telling the appreciative

audience that the Board has established the McCarthy Award for Excellence, to be presented annually to a volunteer (with or without a certified therapy dog) to acknowledge his or her outstanding contribution to Chenny Troupe.

After much applause, Lisa Wiersma introduced Jim Ivers, a former patient at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. Lisa and her yellow Lab Turner worked with Jim after an accident last December left him with multiple injuries and cost him his sight. Jim, a professional motivational speaker, said that Turner inspired him to work hard on his mobility, but most importantly, Turner

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## Chenny Benefit...continued from the front page



Founders Ann Rohlen (left) and Cathy Lawler are congratulated by Tony Ozzauto

raised his spirits energetically by bringing the ball back to Jim as Jim was learning how to orient himself without vision. Jim noted the importance of joy in the healing process and noted that he and many other

patients find that joy in working with the dogs. Jim said that the Chenny Troupe dogs bring out the best in people, and help give our clients a positive outlook on life, essential to their successful rehabilitation.

Ed Dudley closed the program with an energetic live auction that raised much needed funds for Chenny Troupe's continued work.

Special thanks go to Benefit Chair Ann Dudley and her Committee for their hard work on this important 15th anniversary celebration. It was a great time to acknowledge the founders' vision in developing Chenny Troupe's goal-directed, interactive

style of animal-assisted therapy and the contributions of all the volunteers throughout the years. Thanks to all of them, including of course, the incredibly talented dogs, Chenny Troupe does make the world a better place!



Jim Ivers and Turner share their story

## TroupeTalk

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We welcome your thoughts, contributions, and articles. Pertinent addresses and numbers follow.

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## Donations

*Donations in memory of, or in honor of, a special pet or person are always welcome and help us continue to provide our programs free of charge. We even have birthday cards for your canine friend's special day!*

### Donations were made to Chenny Troupe:

In Memory of "Max" Pritzker by

- Judy Keitz
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pritzker

In Honor of Barbara Morris  
by Mr. and Mrs. John Bunce

In memory of "Pagi" Friedmann by  
Dr. John Kasmersky and Broadway  
Animal Hospital

In honor of "Gus" and Sarah Stewart  
by Ms. Sarah Riley

In memory of "Jack" Rosenfeld  
by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Rosenfeld

In memory of "Quinn" Janush  
by Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Schuler

In memory of "Derby" Keitz by

- Sheila and Scott Davis
- Caryl and Jerry Horn
- Sally Von Gundy

In honor of Ann Rohlen on the occasion of  
Chenny Troupe's 15th anniversary by the  
Abra Prentice Wilkin Charitable Trust

Correction to Spring Edition: Contribution  
was made in honor of Barbara Morris by  
William Young.

## Exciting News for Volunteers

We are thrilled to announce a grant from the Baxter International Foundation to reimburse our volunteers for a portion of the veterinary costs incurred to obtain medical clearance for their dogs to work in Chenny Troupe programs. To be eligible for up to \$200 reimbursement per certified therapy dog, you and your dog must log twenty hours of service with Chenny Troupe, working in a program or at outreach events designated by Chenny Troupe, between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007. You and your program leader will be asked

to keep records of your participation so that we can insure compliance with the Foundation's requirements. Volunteers should watch their mail for more detailed information on covered expenses and reimbursement procedures. Special thanks to John Himmel for the idea, to Melissa Kelly for working on the grant proposal and to Baxter International Foundation for acknowledging the enormous contribution made by our volunteer teams to the health and well-being of our community.

## Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of the following therapy dogs.

**“Max”**, a Golden Retriever, passed the Chenny Troupe test in November 1994, making him one of the early pioneers of our work. The cherished companion of Mayari and Robert Pritzker, Max worked at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago perfecting the toss and directed toss exercises. After early retirement, Max and the Pritzkers continued to be strong Chenny Troupe supporters. Max enjoyed the many doggie pleasures of Lincoln Park and Wisconsin, sharing them for many years with his longtime companion, Molly. Max truly had a winning way and a generous heart.

**“Jordan”** was the beloved companion of Shelly Gasper. A beautiful golden retriever, Jordan passed the Chenny Troupe test on his first try in 1996 just after his third birthday, and worked continuously with Shelly throughout the years. Shelly and Jordan left Lincoln Park Hospital to open our program at Somerset Place in 2001, where Jordan was adored by the residents, who often waited for him the lobby on Wednesday nights, long after they had completed their turn in the Chenny Troupe program. Jordan appeared with Shelly in a benefit fashion show and at many Chenny

Troupe outreach events, as well in the Heeling Hearts campaign, sharing his kind and gentle nature with everyone he met.

**“Simba”** passed the Chenny Troupe test in 1996, shortly after his brother Sampson became a Trouper. The two yellow Labradors were constant companions until Sampson’s death last spring. Most recently, Simba worked at Somerset Place with Nancy and Mike Golden, where he and Sampson were well known for their joint trick routines performed at graduation, such as “Hide and Seek” - one of the dogs would find the other, pick up his leash and bring him back to the waiting resident. Simba spent his last year in the happy company of Sadie Louise, the Golden’s Standard Poodle, who follows the Labs as the Golden’s third Chenny Troupe dog.

**“Jack”**, a fun loving Airedale terrier, had recently retired after five years as a devoted volunteer at Lincoln Park Hospital with Honey Rosenfeld. Jack and Honey were a graceful duet. Jack was a willing participant in all the activities required at the program, including jumping through hoops and fetching. Jack brought humor, love and companionship to the many people who worked with him. In Jack’s senior years which he faced with dignity, many of his clients were able to relate to his aches and pains that accompanied his aging.

**“KD”**, Marge Hannigan’s beloved golden Retriever, had retired to Santa Fe New Mexico after almost seven years of service – with perfect attendance! Marge and KD were tireless volunteers at Somerset, Schwab and La Rabida, and represented Chenny Troupe at many public functions. KD accepted Chenny Troupe’s Outstanding Community Organization Award from La Rabida in 2003, and was served water out of a silver pitcher at the Knickerbocker Hotel before a demonstration of her work that brought the audience to its feet. KD will forever be memorialized in our informational video, where she is shown doing her favorite “tunnel” routine with the delighted children.

Each of these wonderful animals shared their unconditional love generously with everyone they met over their many years of work. They will be missed, and their memories will be cherished, not just by the families they have left, but by everyone who was lucky enough to experience the joy of their companionship.

We also send our sincere condolences to long time volunteer and program leader Ramona Condie on the loss of her dear Corgi, Taz, who in her last months had to use a wheelchair, but never lost her spirit. Ramona and Ida, her Chenny Troupe corgi, will miss Taz’s companionship.

## Kudos From Planet Dog

**The following is a letter that we received from one of our foundation supporters. It needs no introduction!**

Dear Chenny Troupe Volunteers:

My name is Catherine Frost and I work with Planet Dog, a manufacturer and retailer of dog products based in Portland, ME. Because our company believes strongly in giving back to the communities that support us, we established the Planet Dog Foundation, a non-profit grant making organization committed to promoting and celebrating programs in which dogs serve and support their best friends. PDF awarded its first round of grants under this mission in March, 2006, and we were very pleased to select the Chenny Troupe as

one of the first four grantees chosen for their work helping dogs to help people.

I recently had the opportunity to visit Chicago and see firsthand the great work the Chenny Troupe is accomplishing. I was able to accompany ten dogs to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and see the rapport between the dogs and patients. I was able to observe the dedication of the volunteers who visit the Institute with their dogs, the light in the eyes of the patients, and the pride of the Chenny Troupe staff in the program they have established. It was truly inspirational.

We knew when we developed the mission of PDF that we would be helping to support some great work—but it was my visit to Chicago that made the tangible benefits

of these programs so obvious. I want to thank everyone involved in the Chenny Troupe- every dog, every volunteer and the great staff of the program for affirming the immeasurable value of dog service programs and the incredible capacity dogs have to make people’s lives better in so many ways. It has been a pleasure to share this with the team at Planet Dog and the Planet Dog Foundation. I thank you and congratulate you for your amazing work and all your beautiful, well-trained dogs.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Frost  
Director of Marketing and  
Product Development  
*Planet Dog*

# Kibbles and Bits

We welcome the following new Chenny Troupe teams: **Victoria Anderson** and **Cindy**, a yellow Lab, **Denise Bloom, Chuck Postma** and **Ria**, a Swiss Mountain Dog, **Linda Carr** and **Toby**, a yellow Lab, **Nancy Golden** and **Sadie Louise**, a standard Poodle, **Karen Holt** and **Walter**, a Border Collie/German Shepard, **Cathy Lawler** and **Georgia Peanut**, a mini daschund, **Mary Rein** and **Rue**, a rough Collie, and **Mark Roswig** and **Jack**, a golden Retriever. **Ria, Toby** and **Cindy** went to work at the Rice Center and **Georgia Peanut** worked at Haymarket Center. The others will begin work in the fall. We also welcome **Kristin Broadwell**, a volunteer without a dog, who has already found a home at RIC.

Volunteer **Denise Bloom**, who teaches at the Ferst School in Chicago for medically complex students, invited Chenny Troupe to visit the school and work with her students on tasks including range of motion, coordination and improved communication skills. Denise's Chenny Trouper **Ria** was joined by **Sarah Stewart** and **Gus** and **Lisa Wiersma** and **Turner**. The three dogs brought immeasurable enjoyment to the students, who wrote letters to the dogs, including the following: "Dear Gus, How

are you doing? I'm doing fine. I like when the dog rolls over. I had a good time. Thanks, Big D." and "Dear Turner, How are you doing? I like Turner because he chased the ball. Thank you! Brittany."

Chenny Troupe volunteers are working to educate the next generation of medical professionals. On June 19, **Judy Keitz, Callie Cozzolino** and **Scotch, Meg** and **Tony Kremer** and **Boots** and **China Bear** and **Sarah Stewart** and **Gus** presented an interactive demonstration of animal-assisted therapy to an attentive group of high school students attending the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. On July 6, **Janet Eaton, Lisa Crossett** and **Jersey, Dan Jarvis** and **Sam** and **Michelle Schwartz** and **Prada** met with another group at the same conference. The students come to Chicago to learn about careers in health care and spent this particular session learning about integrating dogs into therapeutic routines. We hope all the future doctors will prescribe AAT for their patients as a result of this exposure!

After another successful session at Burn Survivor Saturday last winter, Chenny Troupe volunteers were invited to provide

two sessions of animal-assisted therapy to youngsters attending the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance summer camp, Camp I Am Me. **Michelle Schwartz** and **Prada** led a group of veterans, **Sarah Stewart** and **Gus, John Himmel** and **Kim Kubiak** and **Dean, Ginny Beck** and **Dylan**, **Cathy Lawler** and **Georgia Peanut, Mary Ann Alexander** and **Tag, Patty Oakley** and **Carly** and **Sharon** and **Karen Van Den Hende** and **Max** to YMCA Camp Duncan in Ingleside for a day of outdoor activities with children between ages 8 and 16 who are survivors of fire injury. Volunteers and campers worked to complete basic obedience and agility exercises and each camper received a Certificate of Achievement to signify their successful completion of the program. The volunteers agreed that camp was a great success – and the ultimate temperament test for each dog as little hands and arms came from every direction, followed by strings of commands!

We are so grateful to all of these volunteer teams for participating in these community outreach sessions, spreading the word about the value of animal assisted therapy. If you are interested helping with future events, please contact the office.

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