



APRIL - MAY 2021



NEWSLETTER

Let's Get Ready to Visit Again!



Pet Therapy Teams:

As the facilities are still in various states of re-opening for visitors, we have contacted a few to determine status. Some are still not allowing visits; some require proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test before each visit. Each facility will have their own protocol and procedure for future visits as well.

We are still monitoring the situation, but if you are interested in returning to your facility to visit, please feel free to contact them and check on the status or let us know and we will make the contact.

Please remember, we must have current renewal paperwork on file, which includes the membership renewal form, the veterinary health check-up form that indicates an up-to-date rabies vaccination and a current fecal exam, and the CAAA COVID Liability Waiver. All forms are available on the CAAA website at:

<https://www.caaainc.org/forms.html>

Once again, thank you so much for your patience during this difficult time and we look forward to working with those of you who want to return to doing your pet therapy visits.



CAAA Board of Directors

Save the Date



Our Fall Outing has been scheduled!

After having to cancel last year's Fall Outing and Volunteer Celebration, we are back on track for 2021. So think positive, cross your fingers, knock on wood, hold on to your lucky charms and plan on being there.

Oct 23rd at Hollis park in Tempe

10:00 - 1:00 p.m.

More information to follow as we get closer to October 23



Let The Visits Begin !

For one of our Therapy Teams visiting never really stopped during the past pandemic year. Ray Ritchotte not only continued his visits, but added another member to his team. Joining Bake, his social therapy dog for the past seven years was Encore, an 11 year old retired Champion Springer Spaniel who started her visits this past April. Encore is Ray's 4th social therapy dog.

So how did he do it? It started with Westchester Care Center in Tempe where Ray has been visiting for over 13 years and knows many of the residents. The Activity Director called him after the facility had been locked down for a while and asked for help with one of the residents Ray and Blake knew well. She had no family and never had visitors other than the two of them. Her isolation had resulted with almost no interaction with anyone any longer and her mental state was deteriorating quickly. That phone call resulted in Ray and Blake's first "virtual" visit. "That's something I'll never forget", says Ray. "You can't believe the look on that lady's face when she saw us on the laptop. She was so overcome with surprise and joy that at first, she couldn't even talk as tears ran down her face. I can't even put into words my feelings. Extremely heartwarming comes close".

They continued to do virtual visits at Westchester every week as a few more residents would join in with each one. In February 2021 Ray and Blake's visiting progressed to a modified on-site visit. "The staff would bring residents to the large picture window in the dining room where Blake and I would be sitting outside looking in. They passed around cell phones and everyone got to talk. They were so glad to finally talk with us in person." The next step forward in visiting was after everyone was vaccinated. Ray says, "Masked and social distancing, we were able to sit on opposite sides of the patio. Since then, things have gotten better and during the last week in April, residents were able to interact with us as long as we were all outside and masked". By this time, Encore was able to visit too.

Encore came into Ray's life about a year ago shortly after he lost Julie, also a long time social therapy dog. "Our entire family along with Blake were just heart-broken when we lost Julie. So when a good friend and breeder in Mesa retired Encore and asked if I would be interested in taking her, I did." After obedience school where she did very well, Encore passed her Canine Good Citizen test and it was on to a social therapy certification with CAAA. Ray says, "Once completed I immediately filled out the necessary paperwork and started visiting with her at Westchester. If things continue to get better, hopefully we'll be able to see residents in their rooms which will allow us to see more residents with each visit.



(Continued on page 3)

Ray and his new and 4th therapy dog, Encore, during a recent visit at Westchester Care Center



Encore at Parkland Memory Care Center

As more facilities opened up, I started back visiting all my previous sites as soon as I could; May 6th was Parkland Memory Care in Chandler and Grand Court in Mesa. Copper Village in Mesa and Tivoli Manor in Tempe are still in lockdown but hopefully we'll be able to see those residents soon." Ray not only shares his dogs with residents of these facilities, but also with children in the Gabriel's Angles and Head Start programs where he regularly visits with Blake. "Hopefully these programs will also open up soon."

With over 48 years working within the Fire Services Field I've always been involved with service to others. I think this most recent phase of my life of providing service to others by using my dogs has really been a calling; one that I just love".

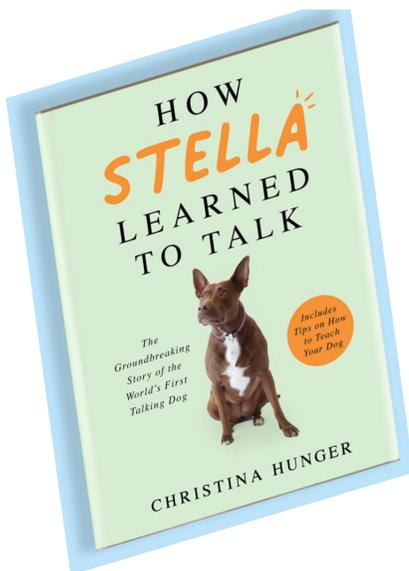
When asked if he had any advice to other CAAA teams on starting back visiting their facilities after all this time, Ray said, "Please, please just don't give up. Most of these residents have had no one visiting them for over a year now. They really need us there more than ever. You'll be amazed at their reactions when they see you and your dog again. You'll probably be at a loss for words just like I was. So keep going. It means so much to them".

So..... Let the Visits Begin!!

Blake's Gabriel Angles official ID



YES....THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A TALKING DOG!



Her name is Stella. She's a Catahoula, Australian Cattle Dog mix and she can talk! Her owner Christina Huger is a language pathologist working with toddlers. For some who do not talk at all, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices are used. These can range from sign language to very high tech speech generating tools.

Christina noticed similarities in how toddlers who did not speak communicated to just how her puppy, Stella, also tried to communicate without words. So she developed an ACC she thought Stella could learn to understand and use; a board with buttons that when pushed activate prerecorded words. Now, a few years later, Stella has a lot to say. She's "talking" by pawing at those buttons and tapping out over 48 words along with a variety of phases.

Click here to see Stella and Christina's story on CBS -



Or visit their website at:





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"A dog is the only thing
on earth that loves you
more than you love
yourself."

~ Josh Billings ~



VOL. 21 - No. 03

2020 Top HERO SERVICE DOG



Meet Dolly Pawton, a 4-year-old black Lab and the 2020 American Humane Hero Dog in the category of "Service". Her owner, Amy Sherwood, has postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome, congestive heart failure, adrenal insufficiency and uses a wheelchair. Dolly is trained to help monitor Amy's cardiac health and is able to alert her if her heart rate gets too high or her blood pressure falls too low.

"When your heart rate goes up or your blood pressure goes down", Sherwood says, "You give off a different smell that dogs can detect. So how did Amy train Dolly to recognize the difference? "I would put a cotton ball in her mouth when my heart rate was up and then when it was normal. I kept each in a bag. I would present each of them to Dolly at different times and give her a treat when she reacted to the high heart rate cotton ball, and ignore her if she reacted to the normal heart rate cotton ball."

Dolly also assists Amy in daily tasks such as helping her with her laundry, paying for items at stores or other ways to "help maintain the normalcy in life," Sherwood says.

Dolly was chosen as number one out of a pool of 408 dogs competing in the service dog category for this prestigious award. The Hero Dog Awards are sponsored by American Humane, an organization with the mission to ensure the safety, welfare and well-being of animals. Winners in all seven categories and the top category of Hero of the Year are chosen by a combination of public votes and voting by a panel of animal advocates and celebrity judges. You may remember the story in the last newsletter of Mackenzie, the four pound Chihuahua rescue who won top prize of Hero of the Year. The award presentations were televised nationally this past October on cable TV.

Amy summed up her relationship with Dolly saying, "She is truly my most crucial medical equipment with a loving, beating heart. I don't know what I would do without her in my life and she is my hero."

Sources for this article:

Lakes Region Weekly - <https://www.pressherald.com/2020/06/10/dolly-pawton-of-naples-honored-for-her-service/>

American Humane Website - <https://herodogawards.org/dog/dolly-pawton/>



SMOKY

A Healing Presence for Wounded WW II Soldiers

For centuries military dogs have played important roles on the battlefield. The following story was written by Rebecca Frankel for National Geographic with photos courtesy of Bill Wynne. Submitted by Pam Peet, it's the story of one of those dogs, a tiny Yorkie named Smoky 🐾

Every day waves of Japanese planes attacked the Allied airfield at Lingayen Gulf on Luzon, the largest of the Philippine Islands. The onslaught was taking a toll on communication, and the American commanders urgently needed to run telephone lines through a pipe that stretched roughly 70 feet underground from the base to three separate squadrons, but they lacked the proper equipment. The pipe was just eight inches in diameter, and the only way to put the lines in place would be to do the job by hand—having dozens of men dig a trench to get the wires underground, a dangerous job that would've taken days and left the men exposed to the constant enemy attacks.

So instead, they pinned their hopes on an unconventional solution: send a tiny Yorkshire terrier through the pipe with kite string tied to her collar. The string could then be used to thread the wires through the pipe. Calling to her, coaxing her forward was her owner, Corporal Bill Wynne, a 22-year-old Ohio native, who'd adopted her while he was in New Guinea.

The little dog reached the other side, the communication network was established, and she was credited with saving the lives of some 250 men and 40 planes that day. But in the years to come, the little Yorkie would achieve much greater acclaim for her healing effect on wounded soldiers.

Finding Smoky

When Wynne first set eyes on this dog in March 1944, while he was stationed with the U.S. Army Air Corps in Nadzab, New Guinea, she'd seemed almost too small to be taken seriously, weighing a mere four pounds, standing only seven inches tall, with a head the size of a baseball.

One of his tent mates had found her in an abandoned foxhole on the side of the road and was willing to sell her. She was underfed and scrawny. And because another soldier had thought the small dog was too hot under all her fur, he'd crudely sheared her, leaving her once-long, silky hair sticking out in uneven tufts.

But Wynne, who had been around dogs all his life, decided to keep this scraggly little animal, and so he shelled out the soldier's asking price, two Australian pounds (\$6.44 U.S.)—a fair chunk of his overseas pay—and called her Smoky.

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Bill Wynne (left) and linesman Bob Gapp send Smoky into a pipe to help string telephone wire beneath an airstrip heavily targeted by the Japanese. She is credited with saving 250 men and 40 U.S. planes from possible destruction over a three-day period.



There are several ways you can help CAAA generate financial contributions by participating with our Community Partners.

- When shopping at **Amazon** on line, use : [SMILE.AMAZON.COM](https://www.amazon.com/?ref=astore)
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- Any real estate transactions with **Richard Howell, North & Co. Real Estate**. Email: richard@northandco.com
- **Making United Way Agency Pledges** using code: Companion Animal Assoc of Arizona TIN-94-2908620
- **Intel** encourages employees to pursue their passion to volunteer. The Intel Foundation matches the time they volunteer with a cash grant through the Intel Involved Matching Grant Program. CAAA is eligible to receive these cash grants.



And during the next year and a half together, Wynne and the little dog would survive air raids, typhoons, and 12 combat missions .

Not long after Wynne adopted Smoky, he caught dengue fever and was sent to the 233rd Station Hospital. After a couple of days, Wynne's friends brought Smoky to see him, and the nurses, charmed by the tiny dog and her story, asked if they could bring her around to visit with other patients who had been wounded in the Biak Island invasion. During the five days he spent in the hospital, Smoky slept with Wynne on his bed at night, and the nurses would collect her in the morning to take her along on patient rounds, returning her at the end of the day.

Wynne had noticed what a powerful effect the dog had on the soldiers around him, how Smoky lightened the mood, not only with her presence but also with her personality. They laughed as she chased the wildly colorful Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterflies that, with a wingspan of 14 inches, were far larger than she was. And of course, they loved the tricks Wynne had taught her mostly to relieve the tedium.

The duo's repertoire started modestly enough with basic commands, and Wynne soon had his diminutive charge playing dead. When Wynne would point one finger at her and yell "bang!" not only would Smoky fall over to the ground at the command, but she also would lie there listless while Wynne came over to poke and prod her and even as he lifted her from the ground.

Eventually, he trained her to walk a tightrope, ride a handmade scooter, and even "spell" her own name—Smoky would pick up the large cutout letters in her mouth as he called them out to her.



A Red Cross worker brings Smoky on patient rounds at a U.S. Army hospital. The four-pound Yorkie became a popular and effective diversion for wounded men in the Philippines as well as back home after the war.

(Continued on page 5)



Bill and Smoky

Trailblazing Therapy Dog

Word of their act spread, and while Wynne and Smoky were on convalescence furlough in Australia, they were invited to perform at a few hospitals. As he watched the men in wheelchairs holding Smoky in their arms, he could see the difference that the tiny dog was making. "There's a complete change when we came into the room," he says. "They all smiled; they all loved her."

Smoky was hardly the only dog aiding in the recovery of wounded veterans in the aftermath of the Second World War. At an Air Force convalescent home in Pawling, New York, the medical staff witnessed the remarkable effect one dog had on a reluctant patient, completely changing his mental outlook. After that, they brought more dogs into the hospital and eventually built a kennel on the grounds to house them all.

The trend caught on, and in much the same way patriotic owners volunteered their dogs to serve with American forces fighting overseas, they brought their pets to serve as hospital dogs to provide uplift for injured soldiers as they recovered from their wounds. By 1947 civilians had donated about 700 dogs. In many ways, these dogs were the first **therapy dogs**, whose curative abilities were not only recognized but also harnessed to great effect.

After the war was over, Wynne and Smoky continued to tour hospitals, bringing their act to recuperating soldiers back home. Smoky retired in 1955. She died in her sleep two years later in 1957 at the age of 14.

As Bill Wynne remembers it, for the wounded soldiers Smoky was a complete diversion; something to pull them away from what ailed them, something they could await with happy anticipation. In his mind her ability to make a difference was really quite simple: "She was just an instrument of love."



U. S. Army "Corporal" Smoky



Matthew's Law **Helping to Protect our Pets When We Can't**

This past April Governor Ducey signed HB 2507 which will help to protect pets after their owner becomes deceased or incapable of giving them care. The bill was named after Matthew Meisner who died last year and whose relatives were unable to rescue his cats from his rented home because under the law, they were considered personal property.

Landlords now have several options to help animals in the same situation. They are allowed to release pets to relatives of a deceased tenant or one not capable of caring for them. They now also have the authority to remove a pet to a shelter or boarding facility if the landlord determines an animal to be "abandoned". To do this, they must be unable to contact an authorized individual to claim them or if the authorized person fails to respond within a day of written contact.

Thank you Governor Ducey!



More A Few Lesser Known (But Very Interesting) Facts About Dogs



Did You Know?

Eighty percent of dog owners shower their pets with gifts on special occasions like birthdays and holidays. And even winning basket goodies from the CAAA Fall Picnic.

(Source: Animal Planet)

MARY WITH TRINA & ANGEL

Do Dogs Have a Sense of Time?

Yes - and they miss you when you're gone. If you think your dog knows when it's time for dinner or a walk, you're right! Dogs pick up on our routines and habits, and also sense how much time has passed. One study showed how dogs responded differently to their owners being gone for different lengths of time.

(Source: AKC Website)

MIDNIGHT - TIME FOR JENNIFER TO COME HOME



Can All Dogs Swim?

Dogs are born with strong natural instincts, including barking, digging and being totally lovable to humans. Some people also think that swimming is a skill that all dogs naturally have. But swimming isn't necessarily an innate ability for dogs.

(Source: Dog Behavior)

JAKE - RELAXING AFTER A GOOD SWIM

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