



# *Willow's Story*

*From Street Dog to Therapy Dog Extraordinaire*

By April Crow

Willow was found running the streets of Yuma and was picked up by the Humane Society of Yuma. She had several mammary tumors and needed immediate medical attention. The wonderful people at HSOY got Willow through surgery and on the road to recovery.

A couple months later Willow was lucky enough to catch a ride on the Rescue Express and come up to Phoenix as the smallest Golden Retriever mix in history of Arizona Golden Retriever Connection.

Since Willow was not really a Golden Retriever, we had a difficult time finding a foster for her so I decided she was welcome to stay with me. Well, sometimes an unexpected love comes into your life and you are changed forever. It was truly fate that Willow, the little dog that I could not find a foster for, came into my life. It was love at first sight for both of us and she was meant to be my little girl.

Life is full of surprises. Willow came into my life at a time when I wasn't even aware how much I needed her. This little rescue dog brought a happiness that I hadn't experienced in a long time and made my life complete. Many of us think we are doing a good deed when we rescue a pet, but truthfully, that pet is more than likely to rescue us in one way or another.

Everyone seemed to fall in love with Willow wherever we went. She gets so much attention and people are just drawn to her sweet little face. I have never seen anyone or anything bring reactions to people like Willow does. She truly radiates happiness and can't help but make

everyone around her smile. This gave me an idea. What better way to spread her happiness and give back to others than with doing therapy work? So we proceeded with our testing to become a registered pet therapy team and passed with flying colors. We now visit two assisted living/nursing home facilities, volunteer with Hospice of the Valley, CAAA and Gabriel's Angels. We also participate in a children's reading program at an elementary school and



Willow is a regular visitor at my law office and greets many clients during stressful times. Who would have ever guessed that this throw away street dog from Yuma would end up being a therapy dog extraordinaire and giving back to so many others in need.

Willow has brought so much joy and happiness to my life and it is my gift to be able to share her and give back to others. One of my favorite quotes is "Be the reason somebody smiles today" and Willow lives true to this every single day.

*(Continued)*



My heartfelt thanks go out to everyone that was a part of bringing Willow into my life. Adopting an unknown shelter dog has proven to be a rewarding and life changing experience. I didn't rescue Willow the day she got off the Rescue Express, she rescued me.

### MORE ABOUT APRIL & WILLOW...

Willow is April's first therapy dog and the smallest dog she has had. This Golden wannabe is a little 13 pound Chiweenie (a Chihuahua and Dachshund mix) who has won many more hearts than just April's. "From day one in spite of everything she had been through she has always wanted to be close to people", says April. "She wants to always sit on your lap and nothing upsets or startles her. Willow is just so easy going, especially with older people like those we visit at Plaza Health Care and Brookdale. Because she is so small, they can easily hold her close and she'll sit there and let them love on her for as long as they want".



April and Willow have had many heartwarming experiences visiting facilities and participating in the other pet therapy programs they're involved with. "We've been visiting residents at Plaza Health Care for several years now; many have been there since we started. It's heart-breaking at times because some have never had a single family member or friend come to see them. We have become that missing friend and our visit is the highlight of their day. They are so excited to see us and are always thankful we came".

During other visits they became acquainted with the parents of a 13 year old boy who had been severely injured in an accident and was totally unresponsive. The couple told April their son loved dogs and asked that she please visit him whenever she and Willow came. On one of those visits April placed Willow on the young boy's chest, something that she always had done, but this time it was very different. He lifted his hand and petted Willow three times. It was the first response he made on his own. "He knew that Willow was there and even though his brain was damaged, something in him knew to pet my dog. That Mom was beyond thankful and happy with tears in her eyes. This is an image I'll never forget".



April adds fun to visits by dressing Willow in one of her many outfits. "She has more clothes than my husband, Rick. To date, she has 41 outfits! Besides seasonal wear (including a bathing suit) she has outfits for Christmas, Halloween and every other holiday. Everyone we visit really takes notice and comments on new outfits, how they fit and even their favorite colors - Willow's is pink. The little girls in our reading group love her hoodies". At times April will bring her mini Polaroid camera on visits to take pictures she can give away. "Adults and kids alike love to have their picture taken with Willow. It's really touching when at a later visit I see the picture on a bulletin board or in a picture frame on someone's dresser".

*(Continued)*



April and her husband Rick, who also does therapy visits with their Golden Retriever Jake, have been involved with CAAA and rescue groups for years. They also participate in agility, dock diving, barn hunting and canine freestyle dancing. April says "We just love our dogs and we do it for fun, not necessarily for the competition. We spend a lot of time with our dogs and enjoy having friends over with their dogs too." Some of the most fun and best times are all those heartwarming visits with her little Fashion Plate, Therapy Dog Extraordinaire, Willow.

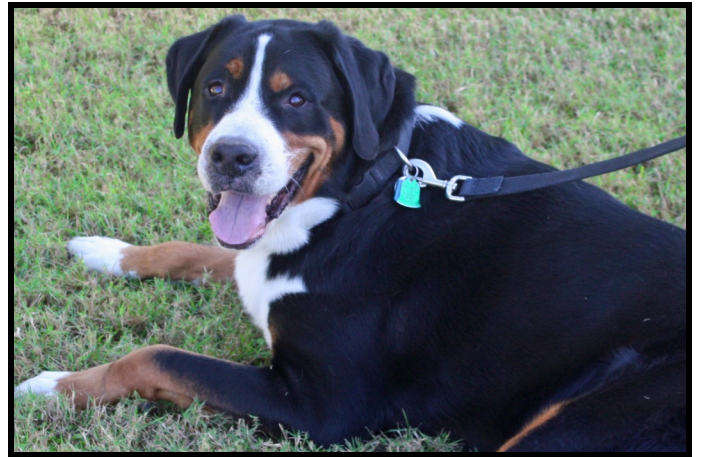


## THANKS! **Bob & Andy**

Bob Ridpath and Andy his Greater Swiss Mt Dog are retiring. They have been devoted volunteers since 2010 and one of CAAA's longest serving teams. Together they've made over 175 visits to Mi Casa in Mesa where both will be greatly missed.

In an interview from 2011 Bob explained why he thought Andy made such a good therapy dog. "Andy is just one of those dogs that can overcome various smells and all sorts of distractions like medical equipment to approach anyone in any situation. The patients there as well as the staff just seem to take to Andy."

Besides visits Bob has been our Webmaster and has helped to revamp the CAAA website improving our online presence immensely. He also make it possible for all members to receive this online newsletter. Thank you Bob and Andy.



## FROM CAAA PRESIDENT PAMELA PEET

### PET THERAPY IS THERAPEUTIC!



We all are aware that pet therapy can reduce anxiety, fatigue and depression in people with a range of health problems, but did you consider the downstream impact on family members and friends who may be visiting the same time you are? They reap the same benefits and it can be a welcome stress relief for them, too! Your regular visits also provide that personal connection to those who no longer have that 'special bond' with their own pet.

So keep doing what you are doing, as a warm and fuzzy living creature provides a great deal of comfort and happiness! Besides, pets are great listeners. They do not interrupt nor do they feel obligated to share their opinions and are interested in a variety of topics.

### COINCIDENCE ..... TIMES TWO

We received a donation from part time residents in Fountain Hills who received veterinary care from Dr. Kenneth Lyon. They wanted to donate to an organization on behalf of the doctor due to the extraordinary veterinary care he gave them. Dr. Lyon is not just an extraordinary vet, he is also the son or our founder Juana Lyon!

The doctor recommended CAAA and gave them a copy of our Jan/Feb newsletter (Wow - he has been keeping up with our newsletters). That edition had Dr. Melanie's article on the ACL tears and of all things - their dog had 2 knees with that problem! They were highly appreciative of the contents of that article!

The other ironic coincidence is that I met that dog (name was Mike Tyson :-)) on many occasions at one of the Starbucks in town! I must assume it was him, as how many dogs are named Mike Tyson in Fountain Hills let alone anywhere else?!

They gave \$300.00 from the foundation:

Lambert-Tyson Foundation, Inc.

247 Pathfinder Lane

Hedgeville, WV 25427

I wrote a thank you today to the foundation.

ALL I CAN SAY IS WOW !





What's it all about? Jessica, a representative of Oscar Health Hub, a Tempe Insurance Company, contacted our Board Member Jane Conrow and explained. "Once a month we do something called a "Surprise and Delight" and we try to organize activities, events, or treats for our whole team to enjoy. We'd love to have some therapy dogs visit". This was also a good opportunity for CAAA to introduce Oscar's 300+ employees to our organization and more importantly, recruit new members. So on April 25<sup>th</sup> those employees were definitely "surprised and delighted" with a visit from four of our therapy teams.

Oscar's bright and open workplace style which included high ceilings and 14 foot floor-to-ceiling windows allowed the teams to spread out as they met the Oscar employees. Groups of about 20 rotated in and out throughout the visit; many times sitting cross-legged on the floor surrounding and interacting with each dog. This comfortable informal setting encouraged a lot of questions about each one and also our organization.

A "Thanks" to April & Willow, Rick & Jake, Jane & Ty and Ray & Blake for participating and passing on CAAA information in such a surprisingly delightful way.



*Jane and Ty*



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★

## OUR MISSION

To enhance the quality  
of lives of people by  
promoting the  
Human/Companion  
Animal Bond and to  
provide support when  
the bond is broken.

★

"A dog can't think that  
much about what he's  
doing, he just does what  
feels right."

~ Barbara Kingsolver~



*Willow*

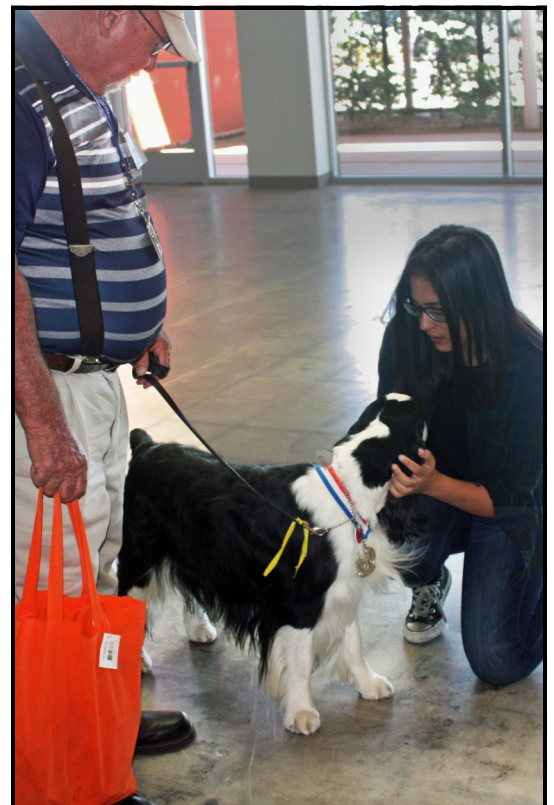


*Ty*

## "Surprise & Delight" Visit



*Jake*



*Blake*



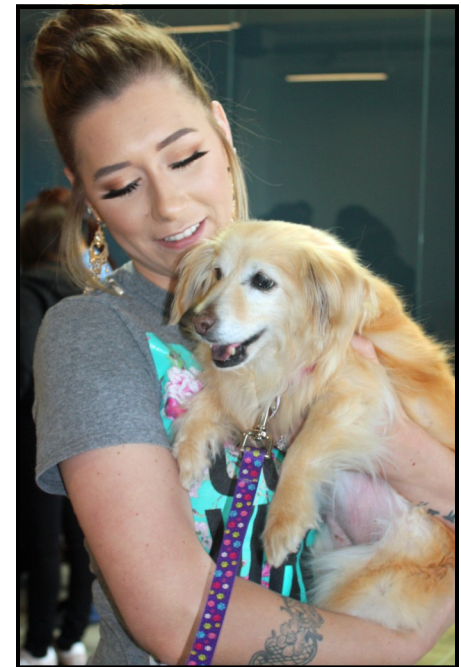
*There are several ways you can help CAAA generate financial contributions by participating with our Community Partners.*

- When shopping at **Amazon** on line, use :  
[SMILE.AMAZON.COM](https://www.amazon.com/smile)
- When you enroll your **Fry's** VIP card in their Community Rewards Program
- Any real estate transactions with **Richard Howell, North & Co. Real Estate**. Email: [richard@northandco.com](mailto:richard@northandco.com)
- Making **United Way Agency** Pledges using code:  
Companion Animal Association 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.



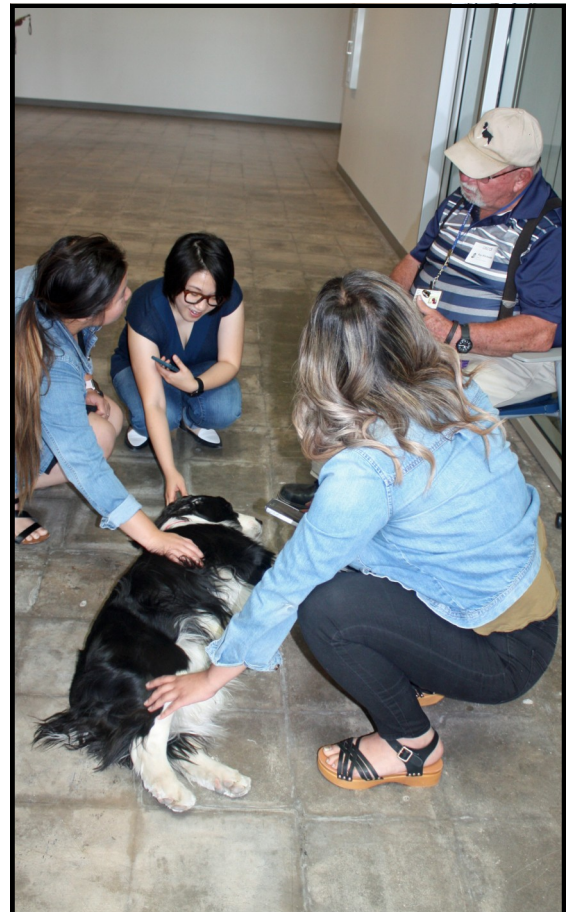
*"Thanks again for visiting us this week, the staff loved having the furry friends stop by."*

*~ Jessica ~  
OSCAR  
Representative*



More  
"Surprise  
&  
Delight"





# Two "Trick" Titles for Ty



Jane Conrow's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Ty completed his American Kennel Club Trick Dog titles at the Novice and Intermediate levels at the recent Durango dog shows.

Jane says she and Ty got started trick dog training "After CAAA's Jean Burton's Tricks presentation at our annual meeting in 2017. Ty and I took Jean's Tricks Workshop at her Desert Dog Obedience school and I started integrating tricks into his obedience training to keep things interesting and fun for both of us."

Trick Dog Titles, the most recent being awarded by the AKC, are open for dogs of all ages, sizes and breeds. The four levels of Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Trick Dog Performer allows dogs with any amount of experience to participate and all dogs (purebred or mixed breeds), can earn Trick Dog titles. The primary characteristic of trick

dog training is having fun. Tricks can be both entertaining and practical and training can take place at any time or location that fits your lifestyle. The AKC website lists a few additional benefits to this type of training as:

- Increases Clarity in Communication
- Builds Self-Confidence and Focus
- Physical and Mental exercise
- Increased Bond Between You and Your Dog
- Improves Obedience and Manners

For each level of titling there is an official checklist of 20+ tricks from which a dog must complete 10. Tricks for the Novice level range from Bark on cue ("Speak") to Crawl (at least 5 feet) and Spin in a circle; for the higher Intermediate level - Hand signals to Leg weave and Jumping through the handler's circled arms or over their leg.

Ty had to complete a total of 20 tricks to earn both his titles. Jane says one of the hardest for him to learn was, fetch. "Ty's a natural retriever and is very enthusiastic about fetching things. So for him, the hardest thing to teach was to wait until I actually gave him the command to fetch instead of instantly running out to fetch the article as he saw me toss it." And does Ty have a favorite? "He loves 'roll over' for some reason - maybe because he often waits upside down for a belly rub".

Ty is always in the spotlight during therapy visits at Brookdale in Tempe where he does the tricks he's learned. As for the resident's favorites, Jane says "Interestingly, they seem most impressed with the simple things such as

*(Continued)*

Sit, Down and Stay. Maybe because they understand that these are really the most important things a dog needs to do when so instructed".

Since he was 4 months old Jane has been taking Ty to Jean Burton's obedience classes. She's had a long term association with Jean's Desert Dog Obedience. In the 90's and early 2000's Jane taught beginning dog obedience there. Additionally, all of her previous five CAAA pet therapy Afghan Hounds were all graduates of Desert Dog Obedience.

So what's next for Ty? At only two years old, in addition to the Trick Dog titles he's already earned his AKC Beginner Novice obedience title. He only needs one more qualifying score to complete the Novice title. He and Jane are currently training to compete at the next level of obedience training which involves doing all exercises off lead, retrieving, high & broad jumps.



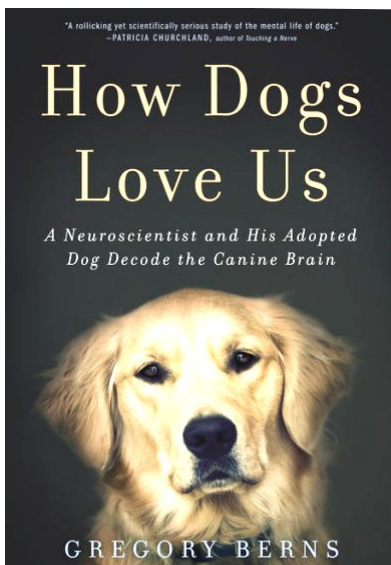
*Besides doing pet therapy for CAAA, Ty also is certified through Alliance of Pet Therapy Dogs and visits for Hospice of the Valley.*



## Read Any Good (Dog) Books Lately?

**How Dogs Love Us: A Neuroscientist and His Adopted Dog Decode the Canine Brain**

*By Gregory Berns*



The powerful bond between humans and dogs is one that's uniquely cherished. They are truly "man's best friend." But do dogs love us the way we love them? Emory University neuroscientist Gregory Berns had spent decades using MRI imaging technology to study how the human brain works, but a different question still nagged at him: What is my dog thinking?

Berns decided there was only one way to answer that question—use an MRI machine to scan a dog's brain. His colleagues dismissed the idea. Everyone knew that dogs needed to be restrained or sedated for MRI scans. But if the military could train dogs to operate calmly in some of the most challenging environments, surely there must be a way to train dogs to sit in an MRI scanner.

So Berns and Callie, his shy skinny terrier mix rescue dog, embarked on a remarkable journey to be the first to glimpse the inner workings of the canine brain. Painstakingly, the two worked together to overcome the many technical, legal, and behavioral hurdles. Berns's research offers surprising results on how dogs empathize with human emotions, how they love us, and why dogs and humans share one of the most remarkable friendships in the animal kingdom.

*How Dogs Love Us* answers the age-old question of all dog lovers and offers profound new evidence that dogs should be treated as we would treat our best human friends: with love, respect, and appreciation for their social and emotional intelligence.

*(Amazon Summary and rating of 3.9 stars)*



## CORNER

BY DR. MELANIE LOWRANCE

[www.smallanimalhousecalls.com](http://www.smallanimalhousecalls.com)

THE VET'S



### HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED.... WHY DOES MY DOG DO THAT?

The following are the most common questions I receive as a veterinarian from pet owners.

#### **Scoot his rear end on the carpet?**

The most common reason is the anal sacs are full and he is trying to express them. Anal sacs are little sacs on either side of the anal opening that are expressed every time the dog defecates to help mark his feces. (This is also why dogs sniff at each other's rear ends when they meet as a means of identification.) If this material gets too thick and it doesn't express these glands get uncomfortable and need manual expression by the veterinarian or they are a risk of abscessing. Dogs can also scoot with allergy or when they have feces matted around their anal opening. Cats have anal sacs as well and can also have anal sac problems.

#### **Eat Grass?**



Eating grass is normal behavior and instinctual. Dogs will eat grass when they are healthy or when sick. The reason we think animals eat grass is because blades of grass can wrap around worms in the intestinal tract and help expel them from the body.

#### **Lick his feet?**



If a dog is licking at his feet more than routine grooming, allergies and skin infection are the most common reasons. They should be seen by the veterinarian.

#### **Eat feces?**

The medical diagnosis is called coprophagy. Sometimes this means there is a nutritional deficiency and other times it is because they are bored and need more exercise and attention. This behavior should be corrected as eating feces can cause infection in the mouth and is a way for parasites to be ingested.

#### **Shake their Head?**



Dogs shake their head and paw at their ears most commonly when their ears are infected or there is a foreign body in their ear canal. Dogs that have seasonal/food allergies will commonly get ear infections.

#### **Smell bad?**

Bad smells can come from many areas of the dog's body. Some common reasons are: skin or ear infection, anal sac problems (this usually has a rotten fish smell), oral infection or an oral tumor, diseases such as kidney failure and diabetes can also change the odor of the breath. Have your veterinarian address any abnormal smell from your pet.



# BULLETIN BOARD

| OCTOBER 2018 |        |         |           |  |        |          |
|--------------|--------|---------|-----------|--|--------|----------|
| SUNDAY       | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY                                   | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|              | 1      | 2       | 3         | 4  | 5      | 6        |
| 7            | 8      | 9       | 10        | 11   | 12     | 13       |
| 14           | 15     | 16      | 17        | 18   | 19     | 20       |
| 21           | 22     | 23      | 24        | 25   | 26     | 27       |
| 28           | 29     | 30      | 31        | Details to follow<br>in future newsletters |        |          |

**Volunteer  
Appreciation  
Picnic**

**Saturday Oct. 13, 2018**

**SAVE THE DATE**



**2017 Picnic**

**facebook  
update**

Search for people, places and things

**DON'T FORGET!**  
July 4th is coming  
up soon. Keep your  
pets safe from loud  
noises & fireworks

**DON'T FORGET WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU?**

Share your stories from pet therapy visits on Facebook. If  
you have a story to share, please send it to Bella at:

[bellapanchmatia@gmail.com](mailto:bellapanchmatia@gmail.com)

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INPUT FOR FUTURE  
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SEND THEM TO:

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