



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025



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

Vince Cupo - President
Margaret Eggers - Vice President
Susie Blake - Secretary/Membership
Janet Herron - Treasurer
Sue Subkow - Chapters Coordinator
Beth Hulsart
Julie Hernandez
Deb Lee
Theresa Schwarz
Ana Cianciola

Inside this Issue...

Regular Features:

From the Board.....	1
Taking Care of Biz	2
Guidelines Spotlight.....	3
Phone Volunteers.....	3
Shop Online.....	4
Spread the Word.....	4
By the Numbers	5

Chapter Spotlight.....	8-9
Advanced Therapy Degrees	12
Recognition Patches.....	13
Rainbow Bridge	14
Put Yer Feet Up!	15
In Memoriam	16
In Remembrance	17-18

Featured Stories:

New Fees	2
Merch Survey	5
Coloring Pages	5
Molly the Rocket!	6
Hoosierland.....	7
Meet our Rabbits	10
Meet our Cats	11

*In some browsers, page hyperlinks may only be active once the newsletter is downloaded.

From the Board – Say NO to Contracts & Agreements

Hello Love on a Leash® Family!

I hope this message finds you and your wonderful therapy animals well. I'm writing today with a friendly but important reminder for all our pet therapy teams, from new volunteers to long-time handlers. We've noticed an increase in requests from various facilities – hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and others –for our certified volunteers to sign **Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Visit Contracts, Visit Agreements, or similar documents.**

Please remember that as a Love on a Leash® volunteer, you are an essential part of our nationwide organization. However, no volunteer certified by Love on a Leash® has the authority to sign documents for the National organization. Unfortunately, many of these types of documents presented to our team members are actually "vendor" or "service provider" agreements, which are completely inappropriate for the volunteer work that you are doing. Others are simply inappropriate for volunteers invited to visit. **You must not sign any of these documents without first consulting National Headquarters.**

You can submit any proposed document for review to either info@loveonaleash.org or president@loveonaleash.org.

Why is this so important? Love on a Leash® is a registered **501(c)(3) nonprofit organization**. Signing any agreement, regardless of how

simple it may seem, puts our entire organization at a potential risk on multiple levels. These risks could include legal and financial liabilities that we are not equipped to handle and that could threaten our ability to continue our mission. That is why you should not hesitate to contact us here at National when presented with any documents or agreements by a facility or organization where you have been invited to volunteer with pet therapy visits.

Our primary goal is to provide comfort and love through our therapy animals, and we want to do so safely and securely for everyone – you, your pet, the people we visit, and the organization itself.

Let's be clear: A visit is never worth the risk to our great organization. If a facility tries to pressure you into signing something on the spot, you should respectfully decline and explain that all agreements must first be reviewed and approved by Love on a Leash® National Headquarters.

If you have any questions or are unsure about a specific situation, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you and ensure that all our visits are safe, positive, and beneficial for everyone involved.

Thank you for your understanding and for all the incredible work you do.

Cheers,

Your Love on a Leash® President, Vince Cupo



New fees as of Jan 1, 2026

The Love on a Leash® Board has worked hard over the last 30 years to keep our pricing low and we have made every effort to make as few increases as possible. Unfortunately, we have also been impacted by economic realities, inflation, and rising postage, manufacturing, and labor costs. After much discussion, the Board had to make the difficult decision to increase our current fees. The updated fee structure is provided below and will be effective Jan 1st, 2026, regardless of application status.

New team	\$100
Add pet	\$80
Add handler	\$30
Renewal	\$50 (1 handler+1 pet, more than one pet renewal \$25 each)
Bandana	\$30 (new, softer, 2-ply fabric with <u>embroidered</u> logo, included with each new Welcome packet)
Vest	\$35 (optional purchase; no longer included in Welcome packets)
Neck wallet	\$15
Decal	\$5

Taking Care of Business

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!

Logo & 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 an official pet therapy team from a recognized organization.

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 snail mail your updates.



Guidelines in the Spotlight

When we step into a facility as certified Love on a Leash® volunteers, we're not only representing ourselves and our pets, we're representing the entire organization. **One of the most important responsibilities we have is to maintain control of our therapy pets at all times.** Page one of our Guidelines states:

"All therapy pets must be under the control of their handler on a maximum 4-foot leash for the entirety of all official visits. Never drop, let go, or hand off the leash during your visit. Rabbits and cats may be transported in strollers or baskets but must also be on a 4-foot leash at all times while on official visits. Tied, looped, stretchable, or retractable leashes are not permitted. If a volunteer is using anything longer than a 4-foot leash, they must be sent home." [Guidelines, p. 1]

Why LEASH Control Matters

♥ **Safety first:** Even the calmest therapy pet can become startled or distracted. Dropping a leash, even for a moment, creates a risk of harm to your pet, the people

you're visiting, and the reputation of our program.

- ♥ **Liability:** If an incident were to occur while the pet is not under your control, it would put our insurance coverage at risk.
- ♥ **Setting an example:** New volunteers in training, facility staff, and the public are always watching. Dropping or handing off the leash sends the wrong message about what is acceptable during visits.

Phones and Distractions

It's also important to remember that **phones are a distraction.** While a quick photo may be appropriate if the facility permits, handlers must never shift their focus away from their pet. A distracted volunteer, even for a few seconds, may let go of the leash or miss a subtle sign that their pet is uncomfortable.

We all love sharing the joy of our therapy pets, but safety and professionalism must always come first. Please keep your leash in hand, your attention on your pet, and your visits focused on those you're there to serve.

Together, we can set the standard for responsible, safe, and joy filled visits. 🐾

☀ Phone Volunteers Needed ☀

We're looking for friendly and reliable volunteers to help cover the Love on a Leash® phone line on Mondays & Wednesdays. This is a great opportunity to support our community and ensure that we're always available to assist our current volunteer teams, any new volunteers, and the public. If you're comfortable answering voice mails 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 pets! 🐾



Reggie (2015-2022)



Shop for Love on a Leash® Gear



Keep your hands (and your pup's slobber!) in check with our **Port Authority Microfiber Slobber Towel**. Lightweight and ultra-absorbent, this odor-fighting towel is perfect for therapy visits, training sessions, or even a round of golf. Made with an 85/15 poly/nylon microfiber blend and fully hemmed for a clean look, it measures 16" x 26" and weighs 4-lbs per dozen. Handy, versatile, and easy to wash, it's a must-have for every volunteer on the go! 🐾



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, comparison cards or both! 🐾



💙 Send Your Questions to the Pet Panel 💙

Have a question for our Pet Panel? There is not a sticky situation they have not tackled. From first day jitters to senior pet comfort and everything in between, we are happy to help. Email your question to newsletter@loveonaleash.org and include your pet's name and a brief description of what is going on. Please put "Pet Panel" in the subject line. While we cannot provide medical diagnoses, we can offer friendly, experience-based guidance from seasoned Love on a Leash® teams and professional trainers.



We'd Love Your Feedback!

Love on a Leash® is working with Fully Promoted, our third-party merchandise provider to ensure the items available to our volunteers are the ones you truly want and need. We'd love your input to help guide future merchandise offerings. Please take a few minutes to complete our [short survey](#) and share your thoughts, your feedback makes a difference!



📸 All Call for Photos 📸

We're excited to showcase the joy our therapy pets bring by turning your favorite photos into **coloring** pages! We are asking each certified team to **submit ONE favorite photo** of your therapy pet **in action** on a visit. Selected photos may be transformed into coloring pages to share with our Love on a Leash® community.

👉 Please send your photo submissions to info@loveonaleash.com. We can't wait to see your amazing photos!



💙 By the Numbers 💙

As of October 2025, Love on a Leash® has grown to **2598** 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!





Molly the Rocket: From Comfort to Competition



Submitted by Cathy McMillan Hall, South Central Indiana chapter leader

Columbus, IN – MOLLY. Registered as Magnificent Molly Grace. This 8 year old little nugget of love entered our family at the perfect time at 10 weeks old – a cuddle-bug from the beginning, destined for great things.

Molly is a magnificent darling that exudes grace. Sharing her sweet spirit as a Love on a Leash therapy dog, she brings oodles of love and comfort to the young, the elderly, disabled, school children, military, special needs, college students, and at-risk youth. Then, with the snap of a finger, this girl

transforms into sport dog mode, from zero to one hundred, competing in agility, lure chasing (FastCAT & CAT), urban rat hunting (the rats are well socialized and safe) and performing a multitude of tricks. She recently completed the fifth and final level of AKC trick titles as an Elite Performer.

In Molly's "spare" time she has attended several Joel Silverman *Dogs in TV and Film*

workshops and may even be seen in future on the big screen or in a magazine! This speedy girl has clocked in her top FastCAT speed at 22.06 mph and is #12 in AKC standings of Miniature Schnauzers, aptly reflecting her nickname, "Jolly Molly Rocket"! She is closing in on her 3000 point FCAT5 title this Fall. Molly has a huge zest for life and brings joy to all who meet her. She is truly an amazing and special soul. 🐾



🎉 Welcome Hoosierland Bloomington Chapter! 🎉

Submitted by Susanne Wheeler, Hoosierland Bloomington co-chapter leader

Bloomington, IN – The Hoosierland Bloomington Love on a Leash® chapter has been a dream in the making for a couple of years now. With our previous long-standing community therapy pet organization dwindling and finally dissolving, we are thrilled to join the Love on a Leash® community as a new chapter serving in and around Bloomington, IN.

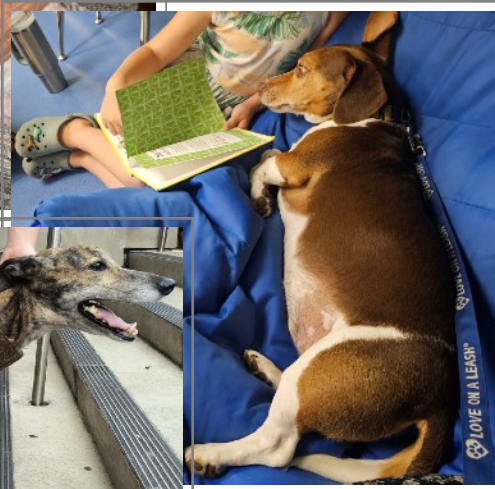
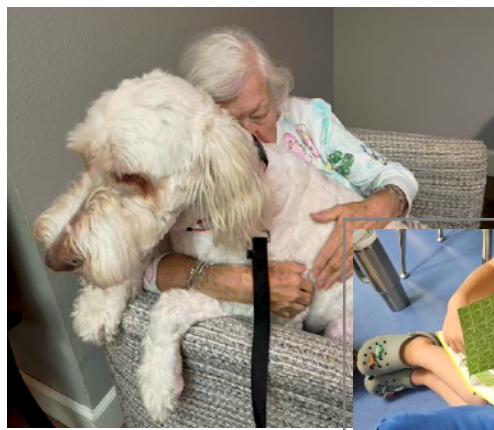
Our chapter began with two pet therapy teams in the Bloomington area a little over a year ago. The number of teams in our local area has more than tripled since. With 6 teams – 1 awaiting official certification, and 2 entering into supervised visits – the Hoosierland Bloomington LOAL Chapter is growing month-by-month.

Our team members are serving the community as volunteers in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, schools, library reading programs, and more. The love and comfort that therapy pets offer to the people they visit is uniquely wonderful, and our chapter is looking forward to expanding the number of visits we can accommodate as we continue to grow.

Some amazing things we hear folks say on our visits are, "I miss my dog at home so much, this makes my day!", "I just love dogs and look forward to them coming", and countless stories of their own dogs past and present. We've experienced non-verbal individuals speaking to our dogs. The families are amazed and so very appreciative. It's enormously fulfilling for us as the handlers and our dogs as people

lovers to interact with such a wide range of individuals in the community.

We have a steady flow of visit requests already and we are booking through the end of the year at this point! 🐾



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: Coastal Carolina 👉

Chapter Leader Pat Rapaport

Beaufort, NC – When the Coastal Carolina chapter of Love on a Leash® was founded in 2010, it was only four dedicated volunteers and their incredible therapy dogs. From the very beginning, their mission was clear: to bring comfort and joy to those who needed it most. Weekly visits to Camp LeJeune's Wounded Warriors Program quickly became a cornerstone of their efforts. Many Marines were returning from overseas with physical and mental health challenges, and the therapy dogs provided a unique source of comfort and connection. In those early days, the group also visited elementary schools and summer programs, always working together as a close-knit team.

As the years went on, the chapter grew steadily, expanding both its programs and its membership. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, momentum was strong, with a wide range of visits and events across four counties. Although the pandemic slowed things down for a while, the chapter is now back to pre-pandemic levels of activity, with about 40 active teams. Impressively, two of the original four founding members are still volunteering today!

The chapter participates in both group and individual visits. Large events, such as the Veterans Day Parade – the largest in North Carolina – and Christmas parades in several towns, bring together 10~14 teams, often dressed festively alongside their spectacular pups. Most visits, however, are done individually, at hospitals, nursing facilities, schools, libraries, and even unique locations like Carteret County's 911 dispatch center. These visits provide dispatchers, who often handle life-or-death calls, with meaningful breaks and moments of joy. The chapter has also participated in debriefing activities for first responders following critical incidents, including a tragic small aircraft accident involving local high school students. ↩



✍️ Chapter Spotlight ctd: ✍️



Scheduling is handled primarily through email. Most requests come directly from facilities, though occasionally the chapter will reach out to offer visits.

Over time, the variety of locations has expanded, reflecting both the community's trust in the program and the dedication of its volunteers.

Socially, the chapter gathers annually each January for a chapter meeting, often with a guest presenter. This year's meeting will be extra special as the chapter will be celebrating its 15th anniversary. Therapy dogs who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge are honored with their names on a plaque, a touching reminder of the impact each pet has made.

The Coastal Carolina chapter is also home to some standout teams. Don Ingraham is a pilot who transports dogs to other parts of the country for adoption. Arlene Coles and her Leonberger also volunteer with HOPE AACR, offering comfort in times of crisis. Mia Swift visits with Scarlet, a Savannah cat who behaves like a dog and loves to "talk," and fashionista Belle Moose, who recently passed, was known for her signature jewelry during visits – she loved to sparkle.



When asked about her favorite part of volunteering, chapter leader Pat summed it up beautifully: "There is nothing better than seeing a person smile when the dog makes a visit. It's like Christmas for everyone."

Looking ahead, Pat hopes National Love on a Leash® will offer more virtual learning opportunities for volunteers. She suggested topics include recognizing stress in therapy pets, knowing when it's time to retire, and ideas for enrichment activities to keep dogs mentally engaged. These kinds of resources would help chapters like Coastal Carolina continue to grow and thrive.

Fifteen years after its founding, our Coastal Carolina chapter remains a shining example of community spirit, dedication, and the enduring impact of therapy pets changing lives. 🐾



Hop Into Pet Therapy: Marti Gough & Bun Bun the rabbit, North-Central Indiana chapter

Anderson, IN – Bun Bun is no ordinary rabbit – he’s a confident, social bunny who loves attention and thrives in the middle of activity. “I had never heard of a therapy cat or bunny,” Marti explained. “I’ve never had a pet that would have been a good candidate before, but I knew I would enjoy volunteering with an organization like Love on a Leash®.”

From Evaluation to Visits

Bun Bun’s journey began with a Control Evaluation at his veterinarian’s office. The vet gently handled Bun Bun, a Mini Lop Rabbit, and had other staff members interact with him, observing his temperament. She asked questions about how Bun Bun behaved around unfamiliar people, in new settings, and with other animals. After confirming he was a good candidate, she made sure Marti understood the importance of ending a visit if Bun Bun ever showed signs of discomfort or stress.

With guidance from Love on a Leash® volunteers, Marti and Bun Bun began their supervised visits. Residents in long-term care facilities were immediately intrigued by the idea of a bunny therapy pet, as they were used to visits from dogs and the occasional cat. These early visits built Marti’s confidence and gave her a strong understanding of visit protocols.

Bringing Joy to Many

Bun Bun has visited assisted living and long-term care facilities, a drug and alcohol treatment center, and even the National Guard Armory during a testing weekend. At Fisher’s Library children’s section, kids have delighted in reading to him – an environment where Bun Bun truly shined.

Advice for Prospective Rabbit Teams

Marti offers thoughtful advice for anyone considering certifying a rabbit as a therapy pet. “Since rabbits are prey animals, they typically don’t enjoy being held or handled and prefer to keep their feet on the ground. This ‘work’ is not appropriate for most rabbits. Your first concern must be your rabbit’s well-being.”

For rabbits that *do* enjoy social interaction, the right setup can make visits more comfortable. Bun Bun travels in a pet stroller, with a small blanket for visits with people who have limited mobility, and even a small litter box – though he’s never used it. He’s always well-fed, hydrated, and given some exercise before visits.

Dogs are often curious about Bun Bun, so keeping a little distance helps avoid distracting them from their visit.

Volunteering with Love on a Leash® has been a rewarding experience for Marti and Bun Bun. “It’s been such a positive experience, and I look forward to many more visits and events.” 



🐾Therapy Cats of Pensacola🐾

Submitted by member Wayne Epley [member since 2018]

Pensacola, FL – Thank you for allowing me to continue bragging about my three amazing therapy cats. In this issue, I'd like to introduce you to **Thumnus**. He is a brown and black tabby Maine Coon with amazing green eyes. He weighs well over 25-lbs and is about 45-inches long. He is also a rescue who was being threatened on the same softball field as my other rescue, Aslan. He was in the outfield and some of the players were threatening to kick him over the fence.

Like my other rescues, Thumnus completed a year and a half of training. He learned to walk on a leash, wear a harness, tolerate loud noises, move comfortably from person to person, and work in challenging environments; all without the use of treats. I've found that extra attention and simply talking to my cats about what's happening goes a long way. I often tell people that pets are a lot like toddlers, responding emotionally and mentally in similar ways.

We are very blessed to have six facilities that we visit. We are going five days a week and see between 175 and 250 people. Yes, we are busy. Most of the facilities lost all of their volunteers after the COVID shutdown. When the facilities reopened, the fact that we were willing to visit got around. So off to visit we went. We have spent a lot of time visiting Memory and Angel wards. Even though I am still only known to most as the "cat man," that is OK. We love it when we turn the corner to the ward and hear, "Look, it's the cat man!" We have made some very good friends who look forward to our visits.

Thumnus Gets a History Lesson

While on one visit, our friend had Thumnus on her lap, I asked about her Vietnam Wall South T-shirt. She shared that she had helped rally the business community and local organizations to raise money to keep the memorial in Pensacola. It is in a very lovely

memorial park for the veterans that live here. We also have visitors come to see the wall as it may be closer to many that cannot travel to Washington, D.C. She explained how difficult it was to get things started with the Wall South, but once the word spread, support poured in. In fact, there was enough to establish a fund to help homeless veterans. My heart swelled at the thought of the impact she made simply because she saw a need and took action.

We didn't see Mrs. P. for a few visits and later learned she had not been well. When we finally saw her again, she didn't recognize us, though she still gently petted Thumnus with a distant expression. Shortly afterward, she passed away. Thumnus and I feel honored to have been part of her life, even briefly.

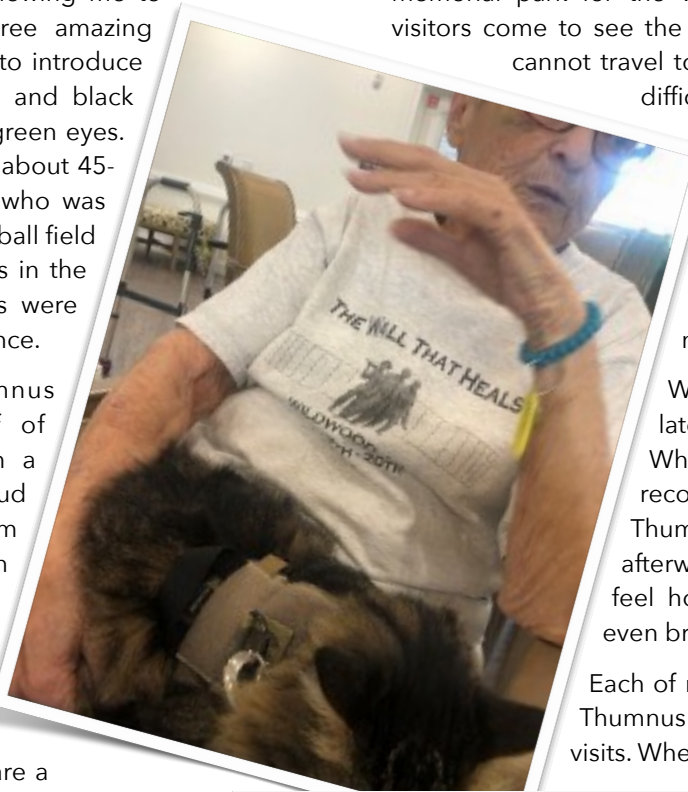
Each of my animals seems to have special gifts. Thumnus loves to hold hands with those he visits. Whether I am holding him or if he is on their lap or laying with them in bed, he likes to connect with them physically.

Thank you for letting me share a bit about these amazing animals that I'm so lucky to have. It's such a joy to bring them to people who simply need a visit, a little company, and some good old-fashioned purr therapy.

Peace,
Wayne



Next Issue: Solara Teaches
Me How To See



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.



ThD (ht)

Hospital Therapy



Ollie (TX) - Sep '25

ThD (e:sv)

Elderly: Social Visits



Sola  (KY) - Sep '25

2 Degrees

Hank (ME)

1.c:rp (Sep '25)

2.e:sv (Sep '25)

Congratulations!



**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.



Lee & Mouse (WA)



Kylo & Karen (CA)

*Congratulations
on achieving these
milestones!*



Lori & Comet (CA)

**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 (Golden Retriever) 2015-2024 (Batesville, IN)	Lincoln (Cav. King Charles Spaniel) 2017-2025 (Wichita, KS)
Austin (Pointer Bulldog Mix) 2022-2025 (Omaha, NE)	Macey (Cav. King Charles Spaniel) 2015-2025 (Fishers, IN)
Bacardi (Bernese Mountain Dog) 2024-2025 (San Diego, CA)	Mike Valentine (member) 2021-2025 (West Richland, WA)
Bear (Schnorgi) 2023-2025 (Chapel Hill, NC)	Nexci (Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier) 2018-2025 (Butner NC)
Bentley (Aussie Shepherd) 2023-2025 (Vista, CA)	Ozzy (Doberman Pinscher) 2023-2025 (Udall, KS)
Brinkley (Golden Lab) 2017-2025 (El Cajon, CA)	Pam Schuman (member) 2002-2025 (Ventura, CA)
Caesar Augustus (Golden Retriever) 2015-2025 (Paducah, KY)	Pepper (Morkie) 2015-2025 (Saint Louis, MO)
Cathy Seluke (member) 2019-2024 (Sidney, ME)	Prima (Rottweiler) 2017-2025 (Escondido, CA)
Charles (Bernese Mountain Dog) 2017-2025 (Ventura, CA)	Riley (Yorkie) 2017-2024 (Woodland Park, NJ)
Clarabelle (Siberian Husky) 2017-2025 (Athol, MA)	Roxie (Aussie Shepherd) 2019-2025 (Andale, KS)
Daffy (Labrador Retriever) 2020-2025 (Westfield, IN)	Sage (Mini Aussie Shepherd) 2022-2025 (Yuma, AZ)
Ellie (Toy Poodle) 2012-2025 (Fountain Valley, CA)	Sam (Golden Retriever) 2024-2025 (Northridge, CA)
Emmy Lou (Mixed) 2019-2025 (Minnesott Beach, NC)	Scout (Labrador Retriever) 2019-2024 (Kokomo, IN)
Faith (Labrador Retriever) 2024-2025 (Spokane Valley, WA)	Sierra Wayne (Eng. Springer Spaniel) 2021-2025 (Bismarck, ND)
Febe (Tibetan Spaniel Mix) 2013-2025 (Temecula, CA)	Snoopy (Dachshund Mix) 2019-2025 (Wichita, KS)
Gary (Aussie Shepherd) 2021-2025 (Fishers, IN)	Sola (Doberman Pinscher) 2021-2025 (Cynthiana, KY)
Honey (Goldendoodle) 2024-2025 (Greenwood, IN)	Therese Velasquez (member) 2021-2025 (Murrieta, CA)
Jasper (Goldendoodle) 2019-2025 (Norridgewock, ME)	Toby (Golden Lab) 2018-2025 (Malibu, CA)
Kenny (Mini Aussie Labradoodle) 2019-2025 (Palmyra, VA)	Wes (Sheltie) 2016-2025 (Sun Valley, CA)
Lily (Labrador Retriever) 2011-2025 (Camarillo, CA)	Willie (Cav. King Charles Spaniel) 2015-2025 (Syosset, NY)



🐾 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®.**

Bailey (Golden Retriever) 2023-2025 (Benton, KS)

Beau James (Boston Terrier) 2016-2025 (Wilmington, NC)

Bennie (Labrador Retriever) 2018-2024 (Mansfield, TX)

Bernadette (Bernese Mountain Dog) 2024-2025 (Henderson, NV)

Carter (Golden Retriever) 2022-2025 (Port Huron, MI)

Chia (Samoyed Mix) 2016-2025 (Prospect, IL)

Cody (Bichon Frisé) 2017-2024 (Palisades, NY)

Cotton (Coton de Tuléar) 2022-2025 (Sulphur Springs, TX)

Derby (Goldendoodle) 2021-2024 (San Diego, CA)

Ella (Terrier Mix) 2016-2025 (Carlsbad, CA)

Fletcher (Golden Retriever) 2016-2025 (Del Mar, CA)

Fontana (Chiweenie) 2021-2024 (Mandeville, LA)

Goose (Golden Retriever) 2018-2025 (Morehead, KY)

Hamish MacGregor (Scottish Terrier) 2022-2025 (Lexington, MI)

Harley (Vizsla) 2015-2025 (Del Mar, CA)

Jackson (Pembroke Welsh Corgi) 2014-2025 (Encinitas, CA)

Lily (Retriever Mix) 2021-2025 (Clearfield, PA)

Livi (Bearded Collie) 2013-2025 (Ventura, CA)

Luca (Rottweiler) 2019-2025 (Lake Balboa, CA)

Luke "Pookie" (Chinese Shar-Pei) 2021-2025 (Chattanooga, TN)

Luna Bird (Cavapoo) 2022-2024 (San Diego, CA)

Mary Schmidt (member) 2011-2025 (Saint Louis, MO)

Oliver Thompson (Lab Retriever) 2015-2025 (Fayetteville, AR)

Retha (Bich-Poo) 2017-2024 (Madison, TN)

Riley (English Springer Spaniel) 2023-2025 (Hemet, CA)

Ringer (Bouvier des Flandres) 2023-2025 (Lewisville, NC)

Sugar (Mixed) 2019-2024 (Vista, CA)

Tucker (Morkie) 2012-2025 (Kenosha, WI)

Walker (Labrador Retriever) 2021-2025 (Indianapolis, IN)

Zoey (Boerboel) 2022-2025 (Lake Havasu City, AZ)

You'll

be

really

missed!



Honoring Lily's Legacy – 8/27/10 ~ 8/29/25 🌈



Camarillo, CA – **Lily**, a black Labrador Retriever from the Camarillo-Pleasant Valley chapter, was a steady source of comfort, joy, and unconditional love to everyone she met. With her handler, Terri Buck, Lily embodied the heart of pet therapy with Love on a Leash®. At the library, she would roll onto her back while a child read to her, sparking laughter and easing nerves. In rest homes, she curled gently beside residents. During college finals, she offered quiet stress relief to students who needed a moment of calm.



Beyond the smiles she inspired, Lily had a gift for presence. She moved slowly when someone was frail, leaned in when a hand searched for comfort, and turned a worried afternoon into a moment of ease with a simple belly-up invitation. Children found their voices reading aloud to her, residents relaxed with her gentle snuggle, and students took a deep breath again because Lily was there.

Her visits stitched together small, meaningful moments that added up to something lasting. Volunteers learned from her calm example, staff looked forward to her familiar wag, and families still tell stories about the day Lily made them laugh. That is the quiet magic of therapy work, a hundred simple kindnesses that keep working long after a visit ends.

Lily crossed the Rainbow Bridge at 15, leaving a legacy of love that will be forever missed by Terri and all who knew her. 🐾





In Gratitude & Remembrance



Beverly Hodges 1930 † 2025 - San Diego North County Chapter

Vista, CA – Our Love on a Leash® family was deeply saddened by the loss of longtime volunteer **Beverly Hodges**, who faithfully served for **23 years**. Bev and her beloved therapy dogs, **Molly** and **Kiwi**, touched countless lives, bringing joy, calm, and comfort to those they visited. Even after losing her second dog Kiwi, Bev continued her visits with a “new Kiwi” stuffie, sharing smiles and encouragement everywhere she went.

In addition to her many years of visits, Bev also served on the Love on a Leash® Board for most of her volunteer years and assisted in writing the Guidelines that we continue to use today. Her leadership, dedication, and vision shaped the foundation of our organization and will continue to guide us for years to come.

Many members shared heartfelt memories of Bev:

♥ **Geri Sterling** and Sammy the Corgi remembered:

“Beverly was one of my first Visit Captains. She was so sweet and encouraging to a nervous newbie and taught me how to be a good volunteer. I will always remember her fondly and with gratitude.”

♥ **Tricia** said: “Bev and Kiwi were the perfect role models and mentors. They made every visit a



special occasion for those we visited and for LOAL teams.”

♥ **Beth Hulsart** reflected: “I was so very fortunate on my very first visit with Love on a Leash® – I met Beverly and she agreed to supervise my first visit. I knew by the end of that visit that I had found my ‘FIVE’ person. Beverly and Kiwi were my guide posts and my encouragers. To see them operate as a team was to see what the best of LOAL was all about. Those of us who knew and had the privilege of visiting with Beverly were so very blessed.”



♥ **Bonnie Biggs** shared: “Bev was one in a million. She so generously mentored me and my new therapy dog, Koshi, in how to participate in a read to dogs program. I continue to do those visits with my third therapy dog and Bev is always looking over me. I carry her in my heart.” ↪





In Gratitude & Remembrance ctd.



♥ **Janet Downer** recalled, "Bev was my supervisor 12 years ago with Marissa and she supervised many teams in training over the years. She had a gentle way to give advice and guidance to a new therapy team. My favorite saying: 'Kiwi can't hold her lick!' Bev would do puzzles with those she visited and stay for an extra long visit while a patient completed a portrait of a Kiwi pencil etching. She brought a calm to those she visited. After she lost Kiwi, she said it wasn't appropriate to get a new dog in her 90's, but she continued visiting with her new stuffed Kiwi and helped patients with their eye-hand coordination tossing Kiwi to them. She was one of a kind!"

♥ **Susie Blake** sums up Bev's legacy beautifully, "Love on a Leash® was blessed to have Beverly Hodges as a member. She carried Love on a Leash® in her heart and aside from her family, Love on a Leash® was what she enjoyed most. Her love for volunteering was contagious. She is missed dearly as one of my best friends in life, and in the community; she brought smiles to everyone she met."



Beverly's legacy of kindness, mentorship, and joy will always be remembered by those who had the privilege of knowing her. Her more than two decades of service to Love on a Leash® left an indelible mark, and she is dearly missed. ♥



Scott Grammer

1967 † 2025

Seven Years of Dedication

With deep sadness, we remember **Scott Grammer** of the former Capitol Area chapter in Michigan. For seven years, Scott and his beloved dog **Fletcher** volunteered with Love on a Leash®, bringing comfort and smiles to countless people. Scott's gentle presence and steady commitment exemplified the heart of pet therapy. Scott's legacy lives on in the many lives he and Fletcher touched and in the volunteers they inspired. We are grateful for the joy Scott and Fletcher shared and extend our heartfelt condolences to Scott's family and friends. ♥

Sometimes we must say goodbye to volunteers that have left an indelible mark in our local communities. Their 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."

