



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026 



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.....	3
Photo Release Forms	3
Shop Online.....	4
Spread the Word.....	4
Fun Giveaways.....	5

By the Numbers	5
Pet Panel.....	6
Chapter Spotlight	9
Advanced Therapy	
Degrees	12
Recognition Patches.....	13
Rainbow Bridge	14
Put Yer Feet Up!	15

In Memoriam	16
In Remembrance	17

Featured Stories:

Welcome Tippecanoe.....	7-8
PUGsutawney Sam	8
Memphis Serves.....	9-10
Remarkable Ray.....	12

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

From the Board – Supporting Our Mission

As Treasurer, I wanted to take a moment and share how your membership fees directly support the mission we all care so deeply about. With our recent fee increase, transparency is especially important and I hope this provides helpful context around where your investment goes.

At Love on a Leash®, every dollar is thoughtfully allocated to support our community of nearly 3,000 members across 46 states. We remain a volunteer-driven organization, with our entire Board of Directors contributing their time and expertise without compensation. As we've grown, we have added three part-time administrative assistants to manage increasing operational needs and to ensure our members and Chapters receive timely, reliable support.

Membership fees also help cover the tangible items each new team receives upon certification, including a branded bandana for your pet, a 4-foot leash for visits, and official

member and pet ID cards. These materials not only support safe and professional visits but also help present a consistent and trusted presence in the communities we serve.



In addition, your fees support the resources we provide to volunteers and Chapters at no additional cost such as brochures, insurance coverage, materials, chapter banners, and ongoing member support. Notably, the cost of insurance and postage has risen significantly over the past several years, and these increases directly impact our operating expenses.

We remain committed to keeping certification and renewal fees as accessible as possible so that qualified individuals and their pets can continue to share the benefits of pet therapy. Every dollar is reinvested into supporting our members and expanding our reach.

Thank you for being part of this meaningful work.

– Janet Herron
Treasurer, Board of Directors



Taking Care of Business

Pet Profiles!

For insurance purposes, we ask all volunteers to submit two different body photos of their therapy pets (ideally left and right sides). Photos can be uploaded to your online member account, or by emailing your pet's photos directly to info@loveonaleash.org. Thank you for helping us keep your records up-to-date!

Pet Panel

Had an experience on a visit and not sure how to handle it? Ask our Pet Panel! We'll keep your privacy and provide trainer-approved advice in a simple, helpful way. Simply email your question to newsletter@loveonaleash.org with "Pet Panel Question" in the subject line.

Logo and 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 cards are 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. Displaying our name helps set you and your pet apart as a pet therapy team from a recognized organization.

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 improve as pet therapy volunteers,

we want to hear from you!

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 for clarity, flow, and 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

At Love on a Leash®, one of our most important guidelines is **one handler and one pet per visit, no exceptions**. While it may seem harmless to bring along a friend, family member, or even another certified volunteer with the same pet, this rule exists to protect everyone involved in pet therapy visits.

First and foremost, our liability insurance only covers one registered certified handler and the therapy pet they are certified with during an official visit. If a guest accompanies a volunteer, that individual is not covered under our policy, which creates a potential liability risk for the volunteer, the facility, and our organization. Even if the guest is a certified volunteer, they may not attend a visit unless they are actively handling their own certified therapy pet or supervising a team-in-training.

Equally important is the focus and quality of the visit itself. Pet therapy visits are most successful when the handler can give their full attention to both their pet and the people they are visiting. Managing additional people, conversations, or extra pets can create distractions and reduce the calm, supportive environment we strive to provide. For this reason also, volunteers may only handle one pet per visit, even if they are certified with multiple therapy animals.

These policies help ensure that visits remain safe, focused, and meaningful for everyone involved. By following the "one handler, one pet" rule, we help protect our volunteers, the facilities we serve, and most importantly, the people who look forward to the comfort our therapy pets provide. 💙



Send in those Photo Release Forms!



Our goal at National is to support and protect you, our valued volunteers, as much as possible, so that you can focus on spreading joy and comfort with your amazing pets during important therapy visits without spending too much time worrying about the nitty-gritty. If you are posting Love on a Leash® content publicly on social media, Photo Releases are extremely important, especially in the age of social media where photos can live forever on the internet. While necessary, we don't want you to be responsible for storing them forever on your personal devices or gathering dust in garages or file cabinets, especially if you retire from pet therapy. Therefore, please scan and [email](#), or mail your Photo Releases to Love on a Leash®. National has the means, and is ultimately responsible for any inquiry that comes along related to publicly posted photos online. Thank you for respecting the privacy of the special folks we visit! 💙



Shop for Love on a Leash® Gear

Stay cool, comfortable and stylish during your pet therapy visits with the Sport-Tek Ladies Micropique Sport-Wick Polo. This smooth, lightweight polo is made from 3.8-ounce, 100% polyester tricot, designed to wick moisture and resist snags, making it a great choice for busy volunteer days. The breathable performance fabric helps keep you feeling fresh even during warmer weather, while thoughtful details like double-needle stitching, a tag-free label, and side vents add durability and all-day comfort.



Designed with both style and function in mind, this polo features a self-fabric collar, open placket, and a curved back waist seam that provides a flattering fit. Whether you're visiting schools, hospitals, or community events, this polished and practical polo helps you represent Love on a Leash® while staying comfortable throughout the day. It's the perfect warm-weather addition to your volunteer wardrobe. 🐾



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 – *commonly misunderstood!* 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 (they come in bundles of 25 each) and let us know whether you would like brochures, therapy comparison cards, or both! 🐾



Fun Giveaways Adored by All Ages



Love on a Leash® is partnered with Creative Instinct, Inc. to offer Therapy Pet Trading Cards to our teams nationwide.

The order process is easy and the cards are very popular, especially with our younger fans.

Love on a Leash® bookmarks are also a big hit with our avid readers.

Available as single or double-sided;
minimum order: 25 pcs.



Log into your Member Account to order both the trading cards and bookmarks in the Order Merchandise section.



♥ By the Numbers ♥

As of May 2026, Love on a Leash® has grown to **2592** certified volunteer pet therapy teams in **44** states. Did you know that **81%** of our teams belong to chapters? At this time we have **69** active chapters in **28** states. Thank you for continuing to bring comfort and joy to those in need!



Ask Our Pet Panel

Dear Pet Panel,

My name is Daisy, and I'm a therapy dog who loves visiting the library to listen to children read. During my last visit, a very young child came close to me and started waving a toy in my face while their parents were not nearby. It made me feel a little uncomfortable and distracted during the reading time.

What should my human and I do if something like this happens again?

Sincerely,



Dear Daisy,

Thank you for your thoughtful question. Situations like this occasionally arise during visits, especially in busy environments such as libraries or schools.

The most important thing to remember is that it is always paramount for your human to **advocate for your safety and comfort**. Therapy visits should be a positive experience for both the people we visit and our pets. If a situation begins to feel unsafe or overly stressful, it is completely appropriate to take steps to protect you.

In many cases, simply having your human gently remind the child how to behave around therapy pets will resolve the issue. If the behavior persists, your handler should consider asking a nearby parent, teacher, librarian, or staff member to help redirect the child so the visit can continue safely.

However, if the behavior does not cease or you become uncomfortable or agitated, it is always acceptable to end the interaction early. Your handler might simply say something like, "Daisy needs a little break right now," and calmly step away from the situation. Ending a visit early is not a failure. It is responsible handling and ensures that pet therapy visits remains safe and enjoyable for everyone involved.

You and your human have a special bond. Paying attention to your body language and comfort level is key. By prioritizing your well-being, your human helps maintain the high standards of safety and professionalism that make Love on a Leash® visits so successful.

We are genuinely grateful for the care and attention your handler shows you and the children you visit.

Warm wishes,
The Pet Panel 

Have a question for our Pet Panel? There isn't a sticky situation they haven't addressed! Send your pet's questions to newsletter@loveonaleash.org.





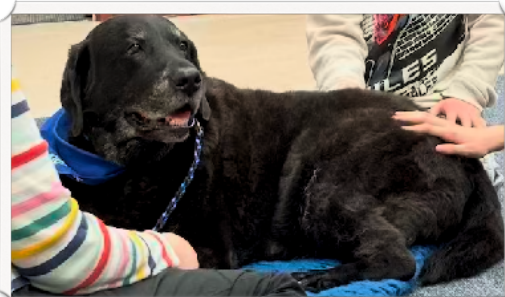
Our Newest Chapter: Tippecanoe County



Chapter Leaders Lisa Hopkins and Pam Schendel, IN

West Lafayette, IN – The Tippecanoe County chapter of Love on a Leash® grew out of a long-standing group of experienced therapy dog teams that together had made several thousand visits as members of Therapy Dogs International (TDI). In late 2024, we began looking for

a therapy animal organization that would be a better fit for our group. One of our members was already a certified Love on a Leash® handler with her cat, Molly. Her positive experience alongside the mission of Love on a Leash® seemed like a good fit for our group. The exceptional support and clear communication we have received from National Love on a Leash® confirmed that we made the right decision for our teams.



Today, our Love on a Leash® chapter includes 13 certified volunteers who have registered 16 dogs and one cat. As of April 2026, 8 more teams are currently in-training and 2 teams have submitted their applications and are awaiting registration.

We feel especially fortunate that certifying with Love on a Leash® allowed our close-knit group to remain together and maintain our existing



strong relationships with facilities, so we could serve them without interruption.

Our chapter embraces a culture that emphasizes group visits and a mentorship that create a supportive environment for new members, which fosters chapter growth. This culture aligns seamlessly with the Love on a Leash® certification process.

In addition to the initial control evaluation, the requirement of 10 supervised visits truly sets Love on a Leash® apart. The one-on-one mentoring that prospective new members receive during these supervised visits ensures that teams have the feedback and resources they need to become confident, capable, and well-prepared certified teams.

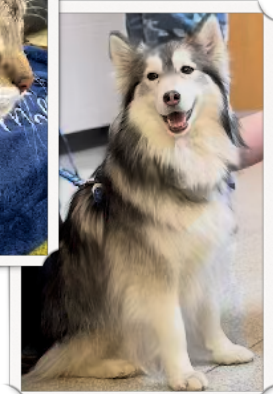
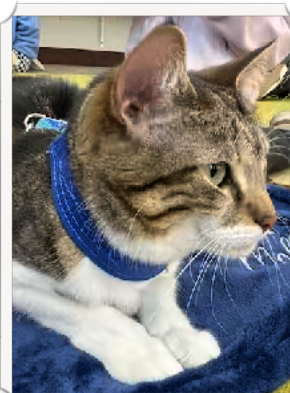


Our chapter's teams serve a wide range of community partners, including senior living and memory care facilities, schools, colleges and

universities, libraries, special needs centers, hospitals, a child advocacy center and our local veterans home. For nearly 10 years, our group has proudly supported a court dog program in Tippecanoe County, where experienced therapy teams provide comfort to

children involved in cases within the county court system. In recognition of this vital work, in 2022 our court dog teams were honored with the Tippecanoe County Prosecutor's Justice Award – only the third time such an award has been granted!

Our members also actively participate in community outreach and education. We present on the benefits of therapy animals to nursing students, veterinary technology programs, psychology classes, Girl Scout troops, elementary school students, and more. We also partner with hospitals, universities, and the county health department for public events, mental health, and wellness initiatives.



Our Newest Chapter: Tippecanoe County (ctd)



Since becoming a chapter in January 2026, our teams have completed more than 100 group visits across 31 facilities. We hold monthly chapter meetings that welcome anyone with an interest in therapy animal volunteering. At meetings, we discuss upcoming visits, answer questions, review Love on a Leash® Guidelines and provide support and mentorship to those interested in joining the chapter. At our most recent meeting, members shared stories of some of

their most meaningful and impactful visits.

These reflections highlight the many ways our therapy animals bring comfort, connection, and joy to the individuals and communities we serve.

Outside of meetings and facility visits, our group reinforces connections between members and their animals by making fun outings to local dog parks, offering training opportunities and hosting social gatherings.

We are excited to be a part of Love on a Leash® and look forward to continuing to grow our chapter, welcome new teams, and expanding our impact as we serve Tippecanoe County and surrounding communities.



PUGsutawney Sam Predicted Six More Weeks of Winter!



Camarillo, CA – Back in April, PUGsutawney Sam saw his super huge Pug shadow, which meant we were in for six more weeks of winter! While the weather may have stayed chilly a bit longer, Sam continued to warm hearts wherever he went. An adorable and dedicated Love on a Leash® volunteer since February 2017, Sam and his handler, Margie Bradley, faithfully serve with the Camarillo-Pleasant Valley chapter.

Whether he's spreading smiles during visits or making his annual Groundhog Day prediction, Sam proves that even on the coldest days, a sweet pug with a big heart can bring plenty of sunshine.

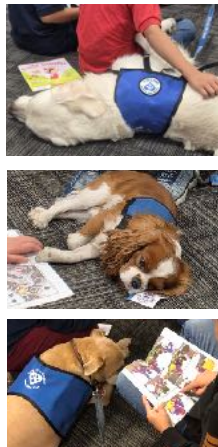
Stay cozy, everyone, Sam says the Dog Days of Summer will be upon us before we know it! 🐾

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: Lake Havasu 👉

Submitted by Chapter Leader Anne Mitchell



Lake Havasu City, AZ – The Lake Havasu Love on a Leash® chapter was formed in 2012, when 10 local residents came together because they wanted to share the comfort and joy of pet therapy with their community as a group. Sue Ladd, a co-chapter leader with Anne Mitchell, is one of the original ten. Anne is now in her fifth year with the chapter. Over the years, our chapter expanded from our original 10 to 24 volunteer teams today. We have seen steady

growth in the last few years as awareness in the benefits of pet therapy broadens. Our chapter visits schools, senior living and assisted living facilities, plus memory care and skilled nursing facilities. Our visits primarily consist of 3~5 teams. We meet once a month to update our volunteers about any policy changes or important news from the National office, and announce any new facilities requesting visits. During the holidays all our teams dress up for the season; e.g. Veteran's Day Parade, Halloween week visits, Christmas visits, and Dr. Seuss Day visits (Read Across America). Our seniors seem to enjoy the costumes as much as our school kids. All our volunteers enjoy seeing faces light up with big smiles when we bring our therapy dogs to visit. That's what it's all about for us! 🐾

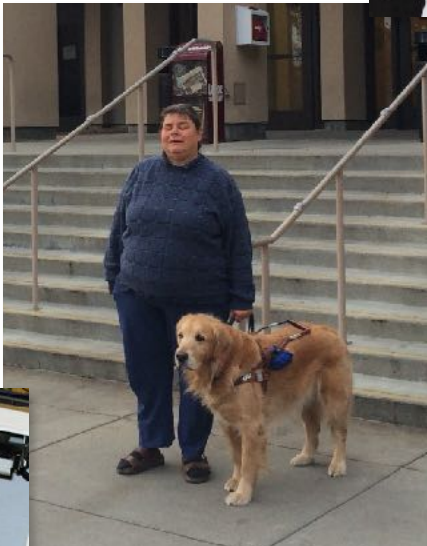
Memphis: A Guide Dog With a Heart for Therapy

Milpitas, CA – For **Deborah Armstrong**, **Memphis** is more than a guide dog. He is her seventh guide dog and the fourth to also serve as a therapy pet. Together they volunteer at senior living facilities, libraries for children's reading programs, and training programs for adults with developmental disabilities.

Deborah's husband, Bob, is also certified as an Additional Handler with Memphis. Because Bob is also certified with his own Golden Retriever, Seager, he completed 20 supervised visits so he could work with both dogs. When Deborah's guide dogs retire from service, Bob often certifies with them, so they can continue bringing comfort to others through pet therapy visits.

Since Memphis is still actively guiding Deborah, she and Bob are careful to help him distinguish

between his two important roles. When Memphis is working as a guide dog, he wears his harness from **Guide Dogs for the Blind** and focuses on safely navigating Deborah through the world.



Once the harness is removed, Memphis knows he is free to enjoy gentle pets and attention.

During therapy visits with children, Deborah spreads out Memphis's Love on a Leash® blanket, which signals that it is time for

him to lie quietly while the children interact with him. When visiting adults, the blanket disappears so Memphis knows he can stand or sit while people greet him.



When children ask Deborah if Memphis knows any tricks, she tells them that

for Memphis, learning tricks is like getting homework. "A little is okay," she explains. "But when his guiding day is over, he would much rather roll onto his back and enjoy a tummy rub."

For Deborah, therapy visits are about more than simply bringing smiles. They are an opportunity to show others that **living with a disability does not prevent someone from living a full and meaningful life.**

Memphis accompanies Deborah to her job as a computer technician on a busy college campus. Each day he guides her safely across streets, finds bus benches and building entrances, and navigates around construction zones and crowded sidewalks. Deborah jokes that Memphis's favorite stop on campus is the cafeteria.

Whether he is guiding Deborah to work or greeting someone during a therapy visit, Memphis remains a calm and steady companion and for Memphis, that may simply be the best reward of all. 



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 (cr)

Crisis Response



Kipper (IN) - Mar '26

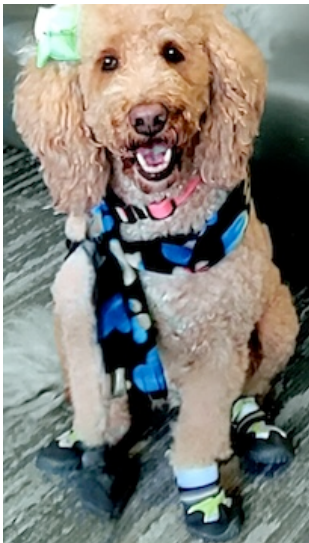
+ Degrees



Bärli (WA)

1. e:sv (Jan '24) 3. cr (Mar '25)
2. hcv (Apr '24) 4. ht (Mar '26)

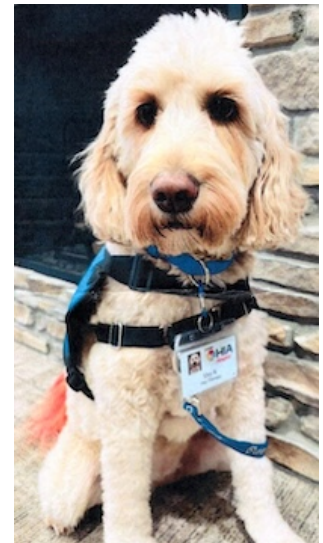
2 Degrees



Maia (MO) – 1. ht (Sep '24), 2. e:sv (Mar '26)



Wendy (WA) – 1. e:sv (Oct '24), 2. ht (Mar '26)



Sky (ND) – 1. ht (Dec '23), 2. hcv (Mar '26)

**Unless indicated otherwise, all pets are active as of this publication; dates indicate when degree was earned.*



Congratulations!

Love on a Leash® - NEWSLETTER
Spring 2026, Vol 4. Issue 2, Page 11 of 17
www.loveonaleash.org
PO Box 4548, Oceanside, CA 92052-4548

1000 Visits For Ray the Remarkable Keeshond

Submitted by Robert and Mary Lynch

Mount Sinai, NY – **Ray**, a Keeshond, became our 3rd canine family member almost 8 years ago. We were asked to help Ray find a "new purpose" after retiring from the conformation ring [dog shows]. After taking needed time to acclimate to his new life, Ray soon began daily training which included obedience, tricks, Good Citizenship and more. Three of our prior dogs were previously certified with Love on a Leash®, and we truly hoped that Ray's new purpose would ultimately be to follow in their footsteps.

Soon our friendly, outgoing Ray was ready to join therapy dog training and he did very well. He also continued with trick, stunt, animal actor, and fitness training. Ray's varied training not only helped prepare and strengthen his therapy dog work, he also loved every facet of it! And who doesn't enjoy watching a special canine visitor enthusiastically perform a trick or two in between tail wags and friendly smiles?

We are fortunate to be part of our active, local Love on a Leash® Long Island chapter, affording Ray the opportunity to experience many different "Therapy Destinations" as we like to call them: schools, hospitals, nursing homes, rehab centers, veterans, community activities and more.

Over Ray's 1000+ visits, **he earned Advanced Therapy Degrees for Elderly: Social Visits, Hospital Therapy, Special Education Visits, and Teenager/College Students: Stress Relief.** Ray's work with children includes a children's hospital, special education classes, and substantial time at elementary schools. We were excited when Ray completed over 50 hours with students at middle schools, high schools, college, and even law school!

We've often said that our gentle Ray's favorite assignments involve children. Students of all ages are as drawn to fluffy, huggable Ray as he is to them! While every Advanced Therapy Degree has its own challenges, Student Stress Relief visits sometimes require a unique flexibility. Situations may vary from loads of fun to emotionally difficult. The COVID Pandemic stressed students on new and unusual levels.

We've also been called to provide support after the loss of students or teachers, to participate with Career Day, to help with exam stress, or help celebrate holidays. At his current experience level, Ray is prepared to handle that inevitable group of squealing teenagers running toward him with arms wide open, descending around him for a big group hug. It wasn't always that way...we'd practice purposeful, random "hit and run" hugs with our dogs at home, including Ray, to help prepare him for the very different and energetic young adult greetings compared to his quieter assisted living or hospital visits!

After years of volunteering, Team Ray enjoys a fair amount of recognition within our community. It's one of many experiences that make therapy work so rewarding. Ray also recently received

his AKC Therapy Dog Supreme designation. At 12 years old and still going strong, Ray continues to meet countless students. Ray has even followed as students graduate one school to start another. He has visited hospitalized students who, upon meeting Ray again in their classrooms, excitedly shared that they've already met!

We think we can confidently say that Ray has clearly found his calling, and we feel privileged to be a part of it. 💙



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.



Helene & Mayble (NJ)



Mango & Cindi (CA)

*Congratulations
on achieving these
milestones!*

**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®.**

Ava (Golden Retriever) 2022-2026 (Wichita, KS)
Bailey (Mini Poodle) 2019-2026 (San Diego, CA)
Bandit (American Bully) 2015-2025 (Winston-Salem, NC)
Baxter (Pixie-bob Cat) 2013-2025 (Amherst, VA)
Bernie (Aussie Shep-Pyrenees) 2020-2026 (Wichita, KS)
Bobbi (Airedale Terrier) 2025-2026 (Goddard, KS)
Brodie (Labrador Retriever) 2019-2025 (Little River, SC)
Butch (Labrador Retriever) 2018-2025 (Gibson City, IL)
Coco (Labrador Retriever) 2023-2026 (Indianapolis, IN)
Cooper (Golden Retriever) 2018-2026 (Pawleys Island, SC)
Eli (Golden Retriever Mix) 2022-2026 (Wichita, KS)
Espresso (Borador) 2013-2026 (Rocklin, CA)
Fred (St. Bernard) 2023-2025 (Fayetteville, NC)
Fredrick Pickle (Goldendoodle) 2019-2025 (Loves Park, IL)
Gemma Garnet (Bernese Mt Dog) 2015-2026 (Omaha, NE)
Gurl (Aussie Cattle Dog) 2023-2026 (Slidell, LA)
Hank (Irish Wolfhound) 2024-2025 (Curwensville, PA)
Hazel (Goldendoodle) 2024-2025 (Port Huron, MI)
Henley (Golden Retriever) 2017-2026 (Lexington, KY)
Jackson (Cav King Charles Span) 2013-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Jake (Great Dane) 2024-2026 (Morrill, KS)

Kasa (Newfoundland) 2024-2026 (Derby, KS)
Kenzie (Great Dane) 2019-2026 (Auburn, KS)
Louie (Golden Retriever) 2015-2026 (Zionsville, IN)
Lucy (Labrador Retriever) 2016-2026 (Westfield, MA)
Michelle Olsen (member) 2023-2025 (Richland, WA)
Mindy (Yorkipoo) 2018-2026 (Huntington, MA)
Molly (Maltese Mix) 2022-2025 (San Diego, CA)
Molly Grace (Basset Shepherd) 2017-2026 (Cary, NC)
Moose (Great Dane) 2021-2026 (Wichita, KS)
Murphy (Golden Retriever) 2023-2026 (Encinitas, CA)
Murphy (Golden Retriever) 2015-2026 (Carlsbad, CA)
Paulette Stanick (member) 2018-2026 (Middle Island, NY)
Phoebe (Golden Retriever) 2024-2026 (Wilmington, NC)
Pistol Annie (Aussie Mix) 2015-2026 (Winston-Salem, NC)
Pyper (Golden Retriever) 2017-2026 (Benton, KY)
Ruby (Golden Retriever) 2022-2026 (Cardiff, CA)
Sherlock (Shepherd Mix) 2018-2026 (Cardiff, CA)
Sunshine (All American Dog) 2013-2025 (Camarillo, CA)
Tazzy (Cockapoo Eng Sheep Mix) 2018-2026 (Fort Gratiot, MI)
Wyatt (Scottish Terrier) 2017-2026 (Raleigh, NC)
Zoe (Schnoodle) 2016-2026 (Newbury Park, CA)



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®.**

Archer (Golden Retriever) 2017-2025 (Wichita, KS)	Lorenzo (Vizsla) 2024-2025 (Wichita, KS)
Arden (Goldendoodle) 2022-2025 (Clemmons, NC)	Layla (Cockapoo) 2022-2026 (Indianapolis, IN)
Bear (Labrador Retriever) 2022-2025 (San Diego, CA)	Lily (Yorkie Mix) 2019-2025 (Conway, SC)
Beau (Golden Retriever) 2018-2025 (Almo, KY)	Luna (Entlebucher Mt Dog) 2022-2026 (Santa Barbara, CA)
Bennett (Cav King Charles Span) 2019-2026 (Mechanicsburg, PA)	Meeko (Domestic Short Hair Cat) 2015-2026 (Hodgkins, IL)
Bentley (Goldendoodle) 2024-2025 (Augusta, KS)	Mellow (Labradoodle) 2024-2025 (Oxnard, CA)
Bolt (Golden Lab) 2014-2026 (Port Washington, NY)	Miss Tootie (Cavachon) 2024-2025 (La Jolla, CA)
Casper (Aussie Shepherd) 2024-2026 (Lake Havasu City, AZ)	Moose (Standard Poodle) 2019-2026 (Medford, OR)
Chance (Standard Poodle) 2019-2025 (Saint Louis, MO)	Nala (Goldendoodle) 2021-2025 (Wichita, KS)
Chloe (Golden Retriever) 2018-2025 (Clinton Township, MI)	Nesta (Welsh Terrier) 2023-2026 (Efland, NC)
Darla (Wirehaired Dachshund Mix) 2010-2026 (Redlands, CA)	Peyton (Labrador Retriever) 2017-2025 (Gloucester City, NJ)
Darlene Hermann (Cont. Member) 2013-2026 (Lake Havasu City, AZ)	Ray (Golden Mt Doodle) 2024-2026 (Wichita, KS)
Desi (Goldendoodle) 2023-2025 (Springdale, AR)	Renee Raynor (Cont. Member) 2018-2025 (Raleigh, NC)
Eppie (Mini Poodle) 2022-2025 (Huntington Beach, CA)	Robby (Blue Heeler Terrier Mix) 2017-2025 (Encinitas, CA)
Ernie (Aussiedoodle) 2024-2025 (Wentzville, MO)	Roux (Labrador Retriever) 2022-2026 (Covington, LA)
Finn (Golden Retriever) 2024-2025 (Hesston, KS)	Ruby (Shih Tzu) 2013-2026 (Indianapolis, IN)
Frannie Sue (Mini Longhaired Dachshund) 2024-2025 (Omaha, NE)	Sadie (Goldendoodle) 2018-2026 (Fairfield, ME)
Ginger (Golden Retriever) 2020-2026 (Covington, LA)	Salem (Pug) 2020-2026 (Winston-Salem, NC)
Gizmo (Shih Tzu) 2018-2026 (Metairie, LA)	Scarlett (Golden Retriever) 2015-2026 (Summerville, SC)
Gus (Cockapoo) 2022-2026 (Plattsburgh, NY)	Sophie Lee (Labrador Retriever) 2020-2025 (Wichita, KS)
Gypsy (Aussie Shepherd) 2024-2025 (Columbus, IN)	Travis (Toy Poodle) 2022-2025 (Myrtle Beach, SC)
Harley Sue (Mastiff Mix) 2018-2025 (Wichita, KS)	Tricia (Sheltie) 2017-2025 (Auburn, CA)
Herbie (Shih Tzu) 2022-2026 (Wadsworth, OH)	Vandal (Frenchie) 2023-2025 (Lake Havasu City, AZ)
Honey (Golden Retriever) 2024-2025 (Wichita, KS)	Vegas (Mixed) 2024-2025 (Winston-Salem, NC)
Jackson (Standard Poodle) 2023-2025 (Southport, NC)	Victoria Vernau (Cont. Member) 2008-2025 (Ballwin, MO)
Jeff (English Springer Spaniel) 2023-2025 (Princeton, TX)	Willow (Beagle) 2021-2025 (Burgaw, NC)
Jenny (Toy Poodle) 2024-2025 (Murrells Inlet, SC)	Zeus (Siberian Husky) 2019-2025 (Newbury Park, CA)
Just Gus (Labrador Retriever) 2018-2026 (Port Huron, MI)	

You'll

be

really

missed!



Jackson's Life as a Therapy Dog – 04/12/11 ~ 3/26/26

Submitted by Nancy Nevin [member from 2013-2025]

San Diego, CA – We searched for and found **Jackson** after a few friends had Cavaliers and we saw what terrific pets they were. At the time my adult daughter and my 7-year-old granddaughter were living with us and I wanted a dog who had an even temperament with children. The idea of having a smaller dog than our previous Labrador was appealing and more "portable" in order to easily take places. After we found this adorable ten-week-old puppy from a recommended local breeder and he had quickly adapted to our home, I thought about basic obedience training, which has always been important to me with our dogs. At the time, my daughter, Meredith, was a nurse at Sharp Memorial Hospital and she told me about the Pet Therapy program there and said, "why don't you train Jackson to be a therapy dog and you can visit at the hospital?"

I had never taken on training that seriously before, but this little dog loved people and new encounters. He was never shy or aggressive, but always curious, which are hallmarks of the Cavalier breed. After basic obedience classes, I found a trainer who taught advanced obedience for the AKC Canine Good Citizen certification and later administered the test. Jackson passed these steps with flying colors. After 10 required visits with Love on a Leash® at rehab and nursing facilities as well as the VA Medical Center, we became certified in 2013.

This lead me to becoming a volunteer therapy pet team at Sharp in their Integrated Care program. I worked as an R.N. decades ago, so volunteering at the bedside with hospital patients was automatic. The program then had us work as an independent team where we visited patients who requested a dog visit during their hospitalization or when a staff member arranged our

visit. Jackson took to it immediately, never hesitating to walk the halls with me, meeting with patients, family, staff members. He carefully hopped up on beds and snuggled up next to them. It was truly a rewarding experience until we stopped when COVID began.

In addition, we started elementary school visits in the Solana Beach School District where my granddaughter was attended. The program was called "Read to the Dogs." Carefully screened and patient therapy dogs joined a group of children who practiced their reading skills with the dogs, overcoming fear and uncertainty. Our school visits later included middle and high school visits in the San Dieguito School District.

After working in the medical field for almost 20 years, I had always hoped to find a rewarding voluntary "job" and this little guy lead me right to it. Having a dog like Jackson who was well behaved and I could take anywhere to meet people and "nice" dogs was so much fun. And we met wonderful friends, human, and canines.



In Gratitude & Remembrance

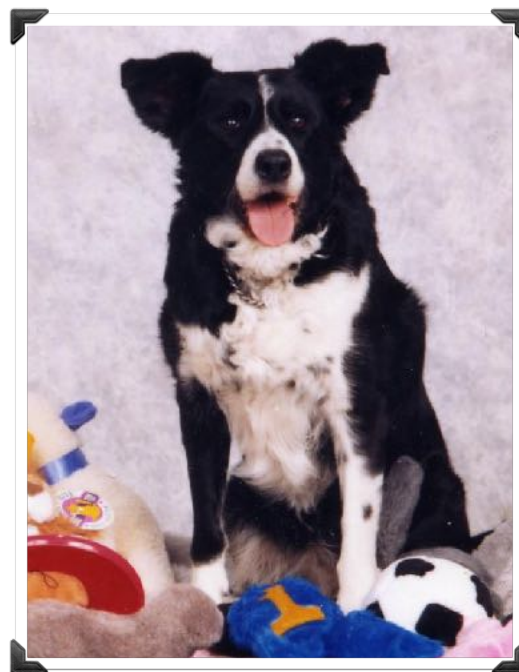
Elaine Kahn 1938 † 2026 – Former St. Louis Chapter

Collinsville, IL – For nearly three decades, **Elaine Kahn** shared the joy of pet therapy with her community through her beloved companions, **Lucky**, her gentle tabby cat, and **Misty**, her devoted Border Collie. From October 1997 through February 2026, Elaine's dedication to Love on a Leash® brought comfort, smiles, and meaningful connections to countless people.

Elaine was an active visiting member of the St. Louis Chapter for several years beginning around 2003. During that time, she especially enjoyed visiting libraries with Lucky, while also participating in group visits at nursing homes with Misty. She had a deep love for both of her pets and took great joy in sharing stories of their adventures with others. Elaine also took great pride in her work with a local training club, reflecting her strong commitment to responsible pet ownership and training.

After Misty passed, Elaine continued visiting for several years with Lucky until her retirement. Even after her pets retired, Elaine remained a Continuing Love on a Leash® Member for many years, always offering her support at community events, social gatherings, and through sharing her knowledge with others.

Elaine's dedication to pet therapy reflects the very heart of Love on a Leash®. Through Lucky and Misty, she demonstrated the powerful bond between people and animals and the healing that connection can bring. Her many years of service touched countless lives, and her legacy will continue to inspire those who follow in her paw prints. 



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