

Winter Newsletter

Meet China

Hi! My name is China an “almost 4 years old rotti/huskey”. Like all dogs I was born full of love and from my earliest memories, I’ve heard that I have “the softest ears in the world”.

My specialty is being able to sense and feel what humans are feeling. You wouldn’t believe all the happiness when my humans figured that out. We all felt good then; happiness goes well with love. That’s me, happy in love and always ready for more. Sometimes the cats are up to it, but mostly not. Usually I just hold it all in until my human takes me to the park to nozzle with some of our dog & human friends.

One day my human took me for a car ride to a new place where we visited a nice dog-smelling lady who did irritating things in-between some great ear fondling. I nearly jumped right out of my fur when she made a big thing and loud sounds. The weirdest part was that she ‘felt’ like a good human despite her odd behavior. Who knows how some dogs train their humans!

Then my human came home one day with a new tag for my necklace. I can’t stick my head into the I.D. tag necklace fast enough because every-time I wear it we go somewhere wonderful. The somewhere is a big high house full of the most loveable humans ever. The place had many different and interesting smells. I just couldn’t stop smelling and smelling – was



that a bunny? YES! Smelling sooooo lovely there he was, watching me suspiciously from inside his cage on the floor. Making my best squeaky-whine friendly sounds I hopped back & forth in front of his cage. This failed to impress him and to the amazement of the watching humans he didn’t even thump his foot at me. Eventually he did touch his nose to mine, but that along with the cat in the closet is another story.

Now we go to the big high house full of loveable humans every week. Most of the humans are like me: full of love and ready to share it. They understand how unimportant most things really are and many of them are exceptionally well trained in dog appreciation behaviors.

Could a dog ask for more? Yes of course, I’d like to visit there every-day.

At the big high house I am important, the doors open by themselves when I arrive, everyone knows my name and many of my human friends are sitting just inside, waiting for me. As an official Pets and Friends visitor I’m greeted with smiles everywhere in the big high house, even in the dining room! If it weren’t for my human following me everywhere I’m sure I could even get some extra food.

Each time I visit the big high house I love my job more and instantly adjust my behavior to match the mood of each of my humans who live there.

Don’t wait for the ending to this story - there isn’t one.

Love China

*Would you like to feature your pet
Send a picture and information to
Mary: info@petsandfriends.org*

President's Message

Happy Holidays

As 2005 comes to an end I would like to thank all of you for your support throughout the year. BC Pets & Friends couldn't do it without you.

We are continuing to grow - presently 270 facilities are on our list and we have 280 members. 2006 promises an even greater increase in these numbers, in part due to the increase in screeners and orientation facilitators.

The branding sessions are continuing and we hopefully will see our new look by the fall of next year.

The Bow Wow Ball was another success this year - we are looking to add a few new events next year so that all members will hopefully find one they can participate in.

All the Very Best in
2006

Judi Brown
President, BCPF

Doggy Poems

Norman the Therapy Dog

Pleased to meetcha
how you doin' today?
I'll sit right here
and I won't go away
If you can't talk
well just reach out your hand (pat, pat)
I'll be your friend
yeah, I will understand

I'm Norman, the therapy dog
pretty nice dog, and I love my job
do my work, collect my pay
one dog biscuit every day.

Tell me what the fuss is all about
maybe I can help you sort it out
don't be afraid,
'cause I won't hurt a flea
(except the fleas that wanna live on me)

Yeah, I'm Norman, the therapy dog
pretty nice dog and I love my job
do my work, collect my pay
one dog biscuit every day

I'm glad I had this little chat with you
Yeah, you got me
to tell your troubles to
scratch my ears
if you just feel depressed
that's the language
that I love the best

I'm Norman, the therapy dog
pretty nice dog and I love my job
do my work, collect my pay
one dog biscuit every day.

J.P. Harrison

"Twas the night before Christmas..." (When Fido fell ill!)

'Twas the night before Christmas when
Fido fell ill,
From chomping and chewing on holiday
frill,
The big red poinsettia lay dead on its
side,
A mouthful of fur gone from Rudolph's
rear hide,
I saw "Chocolate Santa" had gotten quite
thin,
As I hoped and I prayed that the vet
would be in!

Marianne Murdock
author of "RANCH DOG," A Tribute to
the Working Dog in the American
West.

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Christmas Without My Dog

The tree is all trimmed.
The gifts are all wrapped.
The hymns are all sung,
Ant the travel plans mapped.

And still there's a sadness
That lies in your heart,
For a dog that was lost
And a love now apart.

A stocking is missing,
With toys and a treat.
A lap is now empty,
A space at your feet.

Yet remember this season
God's small gift to you,
Wonderful memories
To treasure life through.

CC

New Face at BC Pets and Friends

The Board of BC Pets & Friends would like to welcome Mary Findley to the fold. Mary has been working diligently behind, and not-so-behind, the scenes keeping the BCPF juggernaut on-track and running smoothly. Mary takes over from Diana Williams, who stepped down from her duties in the Summer to return to school. If you need to contact BCPF, send Mary an email info@petsandfriends.org or phone her at (604) 523-1557.

Therapeutic Dogs Good for Heart Patients

Visits from furry friends can help lower anxiety, stress

The Associated Press

DALLAS - It turns out dogs are more than man's best friend. They're pretty good at making the sick feel better, too, in ways that can be measured.

A small study showed that visits from therapeutic dogs lowered anxiety, stress and heart and lung pressure among heart failure patients.

"I'm not surprised at all that something that makes people feel good also makes them feel less anxious, has measurable physiological effects," said Dr. Marc Gillinov, a cardiac surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic who was not involved in the study.

"You can see it on their face, first you see a smile and then you see the worries of the world roll off their shoulders," said Kathie Cole, a nurse at the University of California Los Angeles Medical Center who led the study presented Tuesday at an American Heart Association meeting.

Take Charles Denson, for example. His face brightened as a speckled Australian Shepherd named Bart cuddled next to him as he rested in his hospital bed in a Dallas cardiac care unit.

"You've got a pretty coat," the 51-year-old said, while petting Bart's soft fur.

Cole and her colleagues studied 76 heart failure patients - average age 57 - who got either a visit from a volunteer, a volunteer plus a dog, or no visit.

The scientists meticulously measured patients' physiological responses before, during and after the visits.

Anxiety as measured by a standard rating scale dropped 24 percent for those visited by the dog and volunteer team, but only by 10 percent for those visited by just a volunteer. The scores for the group with no visit remained the same.

Levels of epinephrine, a hormone the body makes when under stress, dropped about 17 percent in patients visited by a person and a dog, and 2 percent in those visited just by a person. But levels rose about 7 percent in the unvisited group.

Heart pressure dropped 10 percent after the visit by the volunteer and dog. It increased 3 percent for those visited by a volunteer and 5 percent for those who got no visit. Lung pressure declined 5 percent for those visited by a dog and a volunteer. It rose in the other two groups.

Gillinov said the study was especially impressive because of the hard data it provided as opposed to observations.

Cole said that she hopes the study, funded by the Pet Care Trust Foundation, a nonprofit that promotes the value of animals in society, helps show that pet therapy is a credible addition to patient care, not just a nicety.

"It makes the hospital seem less like a hospital and it lowers people's blood pressure," said Linda Marler, education coordinator for Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation and animal assisted therapy coordinator for Baylor Healthcare System. Her program has grown from its beginnings in 1985 with one dog to 84.

The dogs used in the study — which ranged from a poodle to a golden retriever to a miniature schnauzer — were carefully screened at UCLA and had to pass a behavior test and checkup by a veterinarian, Cole said. Patients were also asked if they liked dogs and wanted to be part of the study.

Dr. George Dennish, a cardiologist at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla, Calif., said that he occasionally uses dogs in therapy.

"(The patients) felt better, they felt calmer, they felt more satisfied," Dennish said.

But he said more long-term studies with more people need to be done.

For bypass patient Danny Smith, being visited by a furry friend was a highlight of his stay at Scripps Memorial.

"It was very relieving because all they want to do was give you love," said Smith, 57, of Oceanside, Calif.

After his visit to Denson at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, Bart padded into 68-year-old John Coleman's room. The predictable smile emerged and Coleman began reminiscing: "Last dog I had was a Dachshund."

Membership Renewal

Is your membership up-to-date? Please take a moment to check.

Your membership expiry date is printed on the top right hand corner of the mailing label. Or you can call or email Mary at our office, 604-523-1557 or email info@petsandfriends.org.

You are not covered by BC Pets & Friends insurance if your membership has expired.

To renew your membership, please send us a cheque for \$35 and a copy of your pet's up-to-date vaccination records, including rabies.

Your renewal can be mailed to:

BC Pets & Friends

Box 190, 106 - 1656 Martin Drive
Surrey, BC V4A 6E7

If you have any questions or concerns regarding vaccinations, inability to pay or anything else that may affect your ability to renew your membership, please call Mary to make arrangements. Our volunteers are vital to the success of our organization so if there is any way we can help you we will be more than happy to do so.

Help Wanted

BC Pets and Friends is looking for enthusiastic, knowledgeable volunteers who would like to become Orientation Facilitators. Would you like to share your Volunteer experience and prepare new B C Pets and Friends volunteers for their new roles? If you have been with us for at least one year and would enjoy a new volunteer challenge contact Mary for more information, 604-523-1557 or email info@petsandfriends.org.

Meet Bubba

Owner: Sarah Mootoo - Members since Sept. 2005

