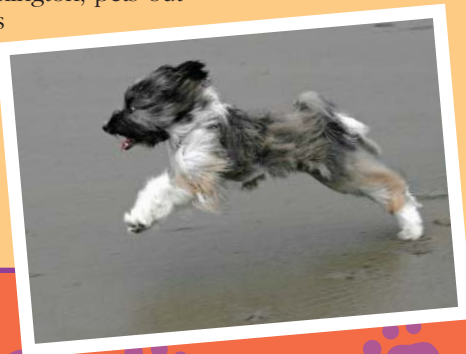


Pampered PETS

BY
**STACY
BOOTH**

Charlie Brown had Snoopy, Dorothy had Toto, Calvin had Hobbes and, judging from all the submissions *REFLECTIONS* Magazine received, members have their own furry companions. It should be no surprise that in Washington, pets outnumber children—it seems there are pet-centered businesses around every corner. Dogs, in particular, are so popular, that Brandie Ahlgren founded CityDog, a quarterly mag-

azine that focuses on dogs in the Northwest. The publication focuses on practical dog-related topics, of which there is no limit. “I get ideas from readers, from freelance writers—it’s simply things I’m interested in learning about,” Brandie says. Since the magazine launched in June 2005, Brandie has noticed an increased awareness of the importance of nutrition and training for dogs. “Dogs are happier if they have a balanced life,” she says.



Because there are more dogs in an urban environment, she's also seen demand for services increase. Non-pet businesses seem



don't expect to see a dog in the hospital. It really pulls them away from focusing on why they're in the hospital." Alison says Abby starts getting excited on the way to the hospital, and enjoys every visit. Alison and her husband have another Bernese mountain dog, Boone, who she says will get certified once he gets a little older. "Patients would just absolutely love both of these two together, coming in."

On the following pages, see photos of members' pets and read stories about why these animals are so loved.



For more information
WWW.CITYDOGMAGAZINE.COM
WWW.DELTASOCIETY.ORG



to be catching on, too. Many hotels allow pets to stay and coffee shops supply a water bowl for dogs waiting for their owners. Brandie says CityDog also recently had a story about dog-friendly

weekend getaways to the Washington wine country.

With dogs more accepted at vacation spots and hotels, Club members Duke and Kathy Coonrad take their Tibetan terrier, Bugsy, along when they can. Kathy says Bugsy knows how to behave in a hotel, and has proper elevator and lobby manners. The pair have had pets for years, and Kathy says, "Once you've had pets your whole life, it's really difficult to be without one." Bugsy has proven to be a great companion, with Kathy and Duke agreeing he's always good for a laugh. Duke says they once took Bugsy to a dog park to let him run, and sat on a bench to watch. Instead of joining the other dogs, Bugsy found Duke and Kathy and sat between them on the bench, watching the other dogs. "He's a source of joy, a source of entertainment. He makes us laugh every day," says Kathy.

Members' pets are doing more than just giving love to their families. There are a number of dogs who, along with their owners, donate their time to giving sick people something to smile about. Melinda DeBruler and Alison Hill are two such women, who with their dogs Karma and Abby, respectively, visit Overlake Hospital weekly.

Melinda's Rottweiler, Karma, visits mental health and rehabilitation patients, and loves visiting people. "I feel like we're touching a lot of lives in a positive way. I love it. I could do it every day," says Melinda.

Like Karma and Melinda, Alison and her Bernese mountain dog, Abby, were certified through Delta Society to visit patients in the hospital. Alison says certification required about two months of training in addition to regular obedience classes. Alison was also required to take a written test, and she and Abby took an on-site test with an evaluator and judge. Delta Society pets have to be recertified every two years.

"The patients are so appreciative," Alison says. "They

Raising Companion Dogs

Jeanie Johnstone had two friends in college with guide dogs, and she thought raising the puppies to help others was something she might enjoy doing. Then, just over four years ago, the time was right. Jeanie found Canine Companions for Independence, a nonprofit that trains Labradors and golden retrievers to be companion dogs for people with all disabilities except blindness. After a home interview with someone from the Santa Rosa, Calif.-based organization, a puppy was quickly placed in Jeanie's home. "I got Moxie," she says.

CCI breeds all the dogs and places them in homes throughout the country. Jeanie says puppy raisers get puppies at around eight weeks old and they work to

OPPOSITE PAGE Duke says when Bugsy runs, he looks just like a rabbit. They hop, and they're fast. They're just funny."

ABOVE RIGHT Melinda and J enjoy hiking and their two dogs Olivia, a Norfolk terrier, and Karma come with them. Melinda says Olivia is more than 16 years old and still joins the hikes—"I think it's because of the exercise."

ABOVE LEFT Bugsy travels with Kathy and Duke almost everywhere.

RIGHT Alison and Abby in their Delta Society badge photo. Abby has her own scarf and badge to wear in the hospital.





teach the puppies around 30 commands and socialize the dogs. The puppies are then sent back to Santa Rosa for advanced training when they are 16 to 18 months old.

ABOVE Boone is the Hills' younger dog, who Alison says is still somewhat of a juvenile delinquent.

LEFT Moxie in her CCI outfit, before she was released from the program.

BELOW Moxie, the larger dog, is now the Johnstones' family pet. Hermione, the smaller dog, is still in training in hope that she'll one day be a companion dog.

Advanced training is six months of turning the 30 basic commands into more complicated tasks. Over time, the dogs learn things like picking up keys or even credit cards off floors for their owners, opening doors, turning on light switches and more. At any time during advanced training, the dogs can be released. "Because the dogs are going to serve the disabled people, they have to be very specific about their behaviors," says Jeanie. She didn't realize when they received their first dog that this could happen, and during Moxie's advanced training, she was released. Puppy raisers get first choice of whether to keep the dog as a family pet, and Jeanie and her husband decided to keep Moxie.

Hermione is the family's current CCI dog, who is quickly approaching her own advanced training. If she graduates, she will be placed with a family in need of a companion dog. Jeanie says there

is an average two-year waiting period before a family can get a dog. Recipients pay \$100 to go to Santa Rosa for training, which they get back in vouchers for dog food and other supplies. CCI matches client profiles with dog profiles, and each recipient gets three dogs to choose from. The dogs are free for recipients.

Jeanie is the president of the Puget Sound Chapter of CCI, and says this area is great because there are a number of companies, and even some schools, that allow puppy raisers to bring the dogs to work. The Puget Sound Chapter is holding a fund-raising auction on March 31 at the Redmond Town Center Marriott. Jeanie enjoys the auction because it allows puppy raisers to meet each other and meet some dog recipients. "It's a really nice community of people from all walks

of life that do this. It's really been much more than I'd ever anticipated."

For more information about CCI and their dogs, visit www.cciseattle.org or www.caninecompanions.org.



The Boileau family has five pets in their household: Montana, an Old English sheepdog; Puddles, a poodle; Bataille, a Shitzu-poo; Charlotte, a white cat; and Diego, a black and white cat. "They are the best because they make our family complete," says Cathye. Pictured are Cathye and Kevin's children Jordan and Hannah with Bataille and Puddles.



ABOVE Meow is Dayle Ellison's 5-year-old cat. Dayle says Meow loves to be held.



RIGHT Snowflahe, Dayle's 13-year-old cat, has two different colored eyes. She likes to join in whenever Dayle plays the piano, climbing up on the keys.



Emily and Olivia are two sisters owned by Lynne Simons. Lynne says the pair are complete opposites but "are a constant source of amusement and affection." She adds the cats growl when they hear people approaching the house, but greet the family after a day apart.

Bella is the beloved 6-year-old Airedale terrier that belongs to Joan, Steve, Katie and Jack Savarad. They say, "The greatest thing about Bella is she immediately improves your blood pressure at the end of a hectic day."



PAMPERED PETS



Duke is the 11-year-old Westie owned by the Mills family. Susan says Duke is a very gentle soul who has the ability to calm down people and other dogs. Susan credits his mellow behavior to the large amount of training she did with Duke, as she says Westies can be high-strung. Duke even took classes to be able to visit children with terminal cancer.

Gracie is the Ficca family's 2-year-old English springer spaniel. Tracy says Gracie is extremely gentle and loves to be cuddled. Pictured below are Claire and Daniel Ficca with Gracie.



Dr. Michael Steiner owns Anton, an Entlebucher mountain dog. Michael says Anton is a great companion for all the hiking Michael likes to do, and is also incredibly intelligent. Besides mastering walking on narrow logs, Anton will rise onto his hind legs to see over the edges of things, showing intelligence and curiosity. "He thinks," Michael says.



Holly Grant calls her cat Sam very unique—besides wearing costumes like this dinosaur outfit, Sam also enjoys playing with dogs.





Janni Trenary owns Bud the boxer and Fenway the Boston terrier. Janni says Fenway, although she's the smaller dog, is the boss of the house. Bud is a "big, gentle giant." Janni describes him as a tiny dog in a huge body, and says Bud wants to be a lapdog.



Bailey is Gregg and Pat Jordshaugen's 8-year-old Cavalier King Charles spaniel. "He loves walking around our neighborhood, greeting people with a happy face. Our neighbors all know Bailey by name even when they don't know us."



Daisy Mae, the Ray's 3-year-old dog, is "exceptionally skilled at using her front paws as tools," says Carol. Daisy will sneak into the kitchen and grab any food she can reach. Daisy has even managed to eat an entire loaf of bread.

For more pet photos, visit
WWW.BCREFLECTIONS.COM