

Reaching out to the community with “man’s best friend”...



In the summer of 2010 I looked into the requirements to become a therapy dog/handler team with Molly, my 160 pound Newfoundland that loves being around people. After taking all of the testing Molly and I certified through the Delta Society and I began to look into local therapy dog groups. All therapy dog organizations are terrific. However, I decided to join Caring Canines in the fall of 2010. It’s a wonderful group of people who, together with their dogs, love to help others.

Therapy dogs provide love, support and companionship to people in hospitals, nursing homes, retirement homes, assisted care facilities, schools and libraries. Members of Caring Canines participate in a number of events in order to let the public meet our dogs and educate them about the benefits of therapy dogs.

Studies have been done at such places as the Mayo Clinic documenting that interaction with dogs lowers blood pressure, and reduces loneliness and depression. Coronary patients are more likely to survive the first five years after surgery with visits from therapy dogs. It is also documented that visits with therapy dogs are known to lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and can result in improved motivation and motor skills in people with physical disabilities.

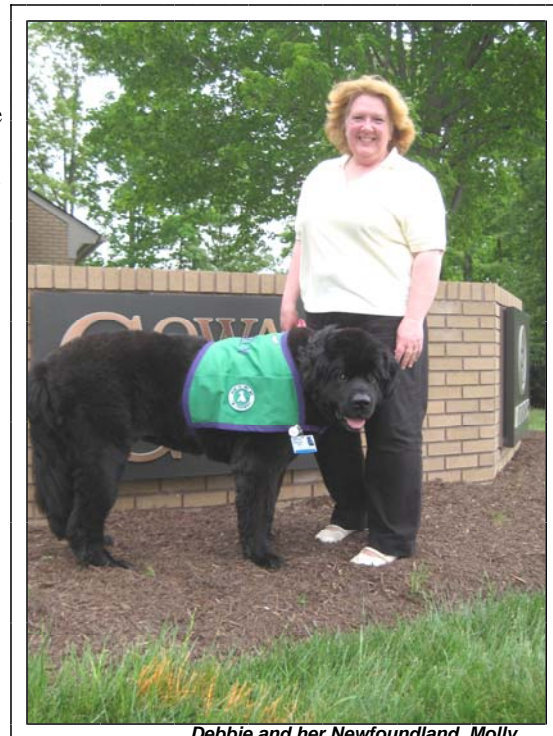
Children who have difficulty opening up to adults will tell secrets to dogs. This helps them open up to counselors and friends. Some children have difficulty reading out loud in class but they love to read to a dog. This builds their self-esteem and confidence.

When you walk into a facility and the people are so happy to see the dogs, it really gives you the sense that you are making their day just a little bit better.

For more information on Caring Canines, visit <http://www.caringk9.com/>

In April of this year, Caring Canines went to the University of Richmond, T.C. Williams School of Law to help law students relieve stress during exams. To read the full article, click on the link below.

<http://news.richmond.edu/features/article/law/7273/therapy-dogs-help-law-students-relieve-stress-during-exams.html>



Debbie and her Newfoundland, Molly