

THE HYDRANT

The Monthly
Bulletin
for Members of
Intermountain
Therapy Animals

Volume 23/Number 1
January 2023



Are you current with ITA?

ITA Office Hours:
Monday ~ Thursday, 9 am
to 5 pm
(Fridays - CLOSED)

Membership Dues:

Individual \$99
Family \$150

How to Pay:

- Call the office with your credit card (801.272.3439)
 - Request a PayPal invoice
- Go to the MEMBER tab on our website, (therapyanimals.org); click on the red button that says "Pay Your Membership Dues"
- OR, just send a check to ITA at PO Box 17201, SLC, UT 84117.

If you are not planning to renew your membership, please let us know so that we don't continue to send you notices!



January

Tuesday, January 5 ~ American Academy of Innovation, 1:45-3 pm

Monday, January 9 ~ Amazon Employees, 12:30 pm

Tuesday, January 10 ~ ITA Board of Directors Meeting, 7 pm

Thursday, January 12 ~ Presentation to IMC Support Group, 6 pm

Wednesday, January 11 ~ Team Training Workshop Classes begin, 6:30-9:30 pm

Tuesday, January 17 ~ R.E.A.D. training by Zoom; time TBA.

Wednesday, January 25 ~ Literacy Night at Esperanza Elementary, 6-7:30 pm

Thursday, January 26 ~ Hillcrest High School HOPE Week, 10:30 am - 1:15 pm

COMING UP (Mark your calendars!) ~ ITA Annual Volunteer Celebration on Thursday, 2/9 !!



Service Opportunities ~

FACILITIES: We are back at 111! STILL WAITING: 44 more!

ITAVOLUNTEERS.COM

The list of possibilities grows by the day!

Stop by the office anytime to claim your very own refrigerator magnet to remind you where to search for ITA service opportunities!



Rob & Diana Bennett and Luke did a fun KSL-Radio gig with host Jeff Kaplan that led to a KSL-Channel 5 TV piece with ITA dogs at the airport, and then another TV piece with Telemundo! Way to go! (See more on page 5.)



NEW UTAH TEAMS



**Patti Carlson
& Sage**
(St. George)



**Janice Pinteric
& Yuki**
(Salt Lake)



**Stacey Collett
& Bill**
(Salt Lake)



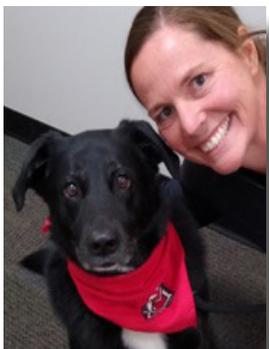
**Abby Russell
& Tika**
(Salt Lake)



**Anna Guidry
& Charlie**
(Salt Lake)



**Amber Tuckness
& Nemo**
(Draper)



**Lindsay Hall
& Mokey**
(Bozeman)



OUT & ABOUT



Great fun for ITA airport teams in December! Above are Bob Albrecht & Lily, Susan Daynes & Kingsley, Carol Prince & Nikki, Judy Cooper & Thibodeaux, and Rob Bennett & Luke.

Below left, at the North Pole, are (front to back) Luke, Gus, Kingsley and Ardi; below right, letting Santa know their Christmas wishes, are Ardi, Luke and Lily.



RETIRING



Cara, partner of Linday Weiskopf

(Ogden) Cara retired in December 2022, after being a faithful ITA partner for 12 years. ITA has always been proud of how long our people and dogs choose to serve, but clearly a dog who works for 12 years exceeds the length of even many of our humans. Cara will be 15 in February, which is another amazing fact for a bigger dog. (We always think that's an indication of how much they love their lives.) Thank you, Cara!

Linda and her other partners, Harvey and Donny, will still be active.

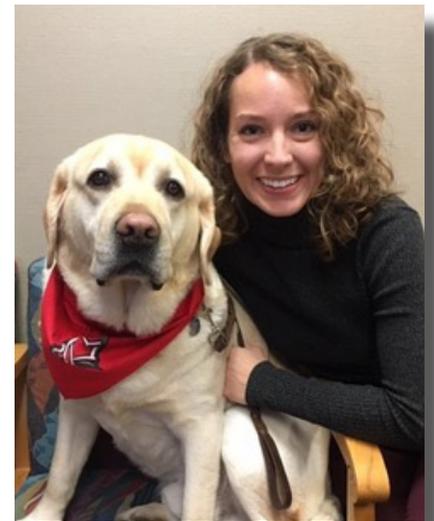
PARTNER LEAVING EARTH

Ruger, partner of Carson Chambers

(Homer, Alaska)

Carson told us, "It's with a very heavy heart that I must share the news that we said goodbye to our sweet Ruger on Christmas Eve morning. He started having seizures in August and it's been a long and painful road to diagnosis and treatment. We believe he had an inflammatory disease called GME. Things had been looking up for the past month or so and then he started having seizures again last week. Over 48 hours they became too much and he could not recover. We are hoping that he is finally able to rest and is at peace."

Carson & Ruger joined ITA in March of 2020 and, after relocating to Alaska, they volunteered together at the Homer Public Library. We send the Chambers our love.



The Newer Way to Calculate a Dog's Age

The people at [betterpet.com](https://www.betterpet.com) reported in December on the newest way to determine your dog's approximate age in human years.

Yes, you could always multiply your dog's age by seven, as we have been doing for years, but there's a better way. They have a dog age calculator to understand the different stages of your dog's life.

How to use the dog age calculator

First, go to [betterpet.com](https://www.betterpet.com).

The illustration at right shows what the calculator looks like.

To find your dog's approximate "human" age, select their weight, breed, and years since birth, below. You don't have to know their exact breed, but it helps to know whether your canine is small, medium, or large because their size and life expectancy go hand-in-hand. For example, the life expectancy of a Chihuahua ranges between 14 and 16 years compared to 11 to 13 years for a Fox red Labrador retriever.

Dog size

Small, 20 lbs or less; Medium, 21-50 lbs; Large, more than 50 lbs

Key takeaways about a dog's age

- The 7:1 ratio is flawed — As it turns out, figuring your dog's age is more complex than multiplying by seven. That old rule of thumb that one dog year equals seven human years is based on the notion that dogs live about 10 years and humans live to about 70.
- There isn't a perfect formula — A dog age calculator is a great way to get a better idea of your

dog's age in human years, but parents of rescue dogs may not know their pet's birth date. There are other ways to estimate if you don't know your dog's age.

- Small dogs typically live longer than big dogs — Dogs under 40 pounds aren't as prone to conditions such as hip dysplasia that can limit their mobility and increase their risk for obesity and other health conditions.

Dog size
 Small, 20 lbs or less
 Medium, 21-50 lbs
 Large, more than 50 lbs

Dog breed
Select Breed

Age of dog
2 years old

Age in human years
24 years

Powered by [betterpet](https://www.betterpet.com)

The math: How we calculate a dog's age in human years

For the last half-century, many assumed that every year of a dog's life equaled seven human years. While that formula might provide a rough estimate, it was never scientifically proven and often didn't make much sense. Using the old method, a 15-year-old dog would be well over 100, while a year-old adult

dog healthily capable of producing a litter of pups would only be 7.

A new way to calculate age

A 2019 study suggests there's now a better way to calculate your dog's age. A team of researchers at the University of California, San Diego, studied the methylation in a dog's DNA to see how it corresponds to aging. Methylation in genes acts like "wrinkles," similar to wrinkles on our foreheads as we grow older. By comparing the methylation of over 100 Fox red Labrador retrievers to methylation in humans and mice, scientists created a formula to estimate your dog's age in human years.

(continued next page)



The Newer Way to Calculate a Dog's Age (cont.)

This new equation multiplies the natural logarithm of the dog's age by 16 and adds 31.

Other ways to figure out your dog's age

Perhaps you adopted your dog with no background history, so you don't know their birthday or even the year they were born. While there's no way to get an exact number, you can estimate your dog's approximate age in a couple of ways.

Teeth health

Puppies receive all of their baby teeth by the time they're 6 weeks old. They'll lose their baby incisors around 4 months, followed by their canines. All of their baby teeth are gone by 6 months, replaced by 42 permanent teeth. If you've adopted a puppy, you'll either notice the thinner, sharper pricks of baby teeth, missing teeth, or new adult teeth beginning to fill in the gaps. During their first year, a dog's teeth should also appear fairly white.

By their first birthday, your dog's canines may already be turning yellow. Usually, dogs will have developed periodontal disease by the time they're 3. Vets also can check the ridges of your dog's teeth to guess your dog's age — they're typically half-worn around 3 to 4 years and smooth by age 7.

Coat color

The presence of gray hair may give you a hint of your dog's life stage. However, like humans, genetic and environmental factors determine when a dog's fur turns gray more so than age. Your gray-haired dog could still be quite young, but their fur changed early due to genetics or a rough start in life.

The betterpet.com website has a huge wealth of information about dogs. Once you've calculated your dog's age, you may want to wander around there a bit longer.

MEET OUR THERAPY DOGS

Animal therapy in hospitals—having trained dogs and their human partners visit—is proven to have positive effects on patients and health care staff. In an article on the subject, the Oncology Nursing Society reports, "Its use was even recommended by the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale, who wrote about the benefits of animals in patient care and recovery: 'A pet is often an excellent companion for the sick, for long chronic cases especially.'"

Ardi and Kingsley are some of the furry friends who visit Huntsman Cancer Institute. Learn more about them.



Ardi
Breed: Great Pyrenees
Birthday: March 10, 2019
Partner: Cindy
Therapy Dog Since: August 2020
Favorite Sport: Hiking in the mountains
Favorite Activity: Getting love from all he meets
Least Favorite Thing: Staying home without his humans



Kingsley
Breed: Golden Retriever
Birthday: July 28, 2020
Partner: Susan
Therapy Dog Since: November 2021
Favorite Sports: Walking and hiking
Favorite Activity: Playing with other dogs
Least Favorite Thing: Staying home alone in his crate
Favorite Toy: Any stuffed animal he can chew up

BENEFITS OF ANIMAL THERAPY

- Decreases stress and anxiety
- Helps with pain management
- Increases communication
- Reduces feelings of isolation, loneliness, and boredom
- Increases patient satisfaction
- Elevates mood

Ardi & Kingsley, partners of Cindy Yorgason and Susan Daynes, respectively, were given a very big and glamorous spread in the Huntsman Cancer Hospital's "Helix" magazine, Fall-Winter 2022 issue. Thanks, Huntsman folks, and Way To Go, Ardi and Kingsley!



On the Sensitivities of Dogs

More from Frank Bruni, contributing opinion writer to the *NYTimes*

I am a big fan of columnist Frank Bruni, who manages to say exactly what I've been thinking and feeling on all sorts of topics but was unable to express so clearly. No surprise, I am especially fond of his descriptions of his life with his dog, Regan. Enjoy! – KK

When houseguests arrive, Regan greets them expansively, euphorically, as if ravenous for company beyond mine. I understand. A little of me goes a long way.

But what happens next is the intriguing part. She painstakingly monitors the guests — swiveling her ears to track their movements, frequently following them from room to room, always positioning herself outside their bedroom door in the morning so that she knows precisely when they rise. I think I've figured out why.

Over time, she has noticed how often the appearance of guests presages the *disappearance* of those guests and me, as we head out to the event that they're in town for or a restaurant that I want to introduce them to. She's hoping that if she doesn't relax her watch, we won't give her the slip.

I'm ceaselessly impressed by how quickly dogs recognize patterns and how keenly they adapt to them. It verges on mind reading. From clues that are a mystery to me, Regan can detect when I'm taking a shower as the prelude to zipping off without her and when I'm merely getting clean. In the former case, she plants herself feet away, forcing me to confront my imminent and unforgivable betrayal of her. In the latter, she continues to nap wherever she was napping.

If you're wearing a coat or pullover with deep front pockets and you move a hand even slightly toward one of them, she will instantly materialize at your feet, head tilted up, eyes pleading with you. She's primed for a treat. Your gesture suggested the possibility of one. And every time I close my laptop, no matter when, no matter where, no matter how softly, she snaps to attention. For her, that subtle

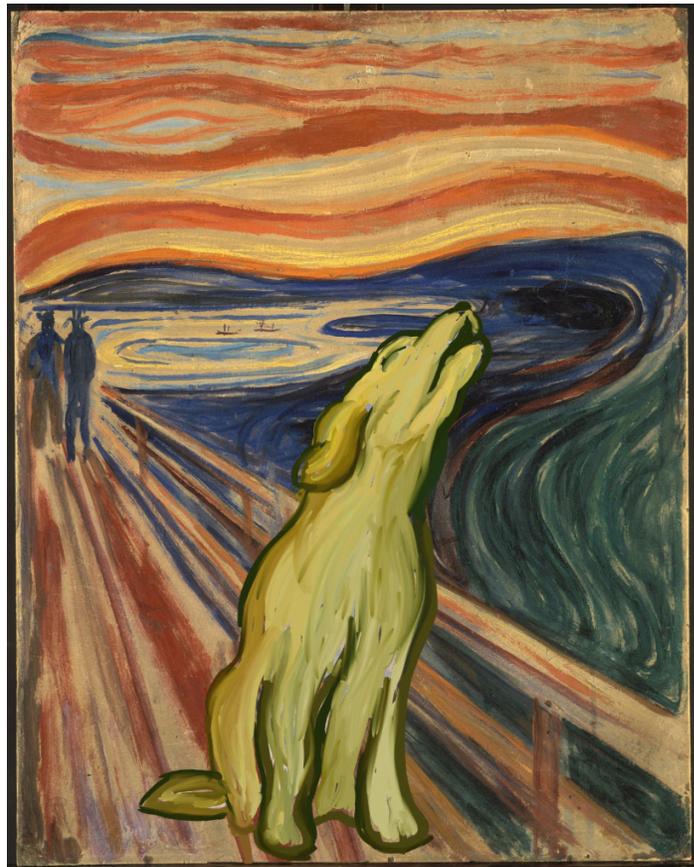


Regan Bruni Photo Credits: Frank Bruni / The New York Times

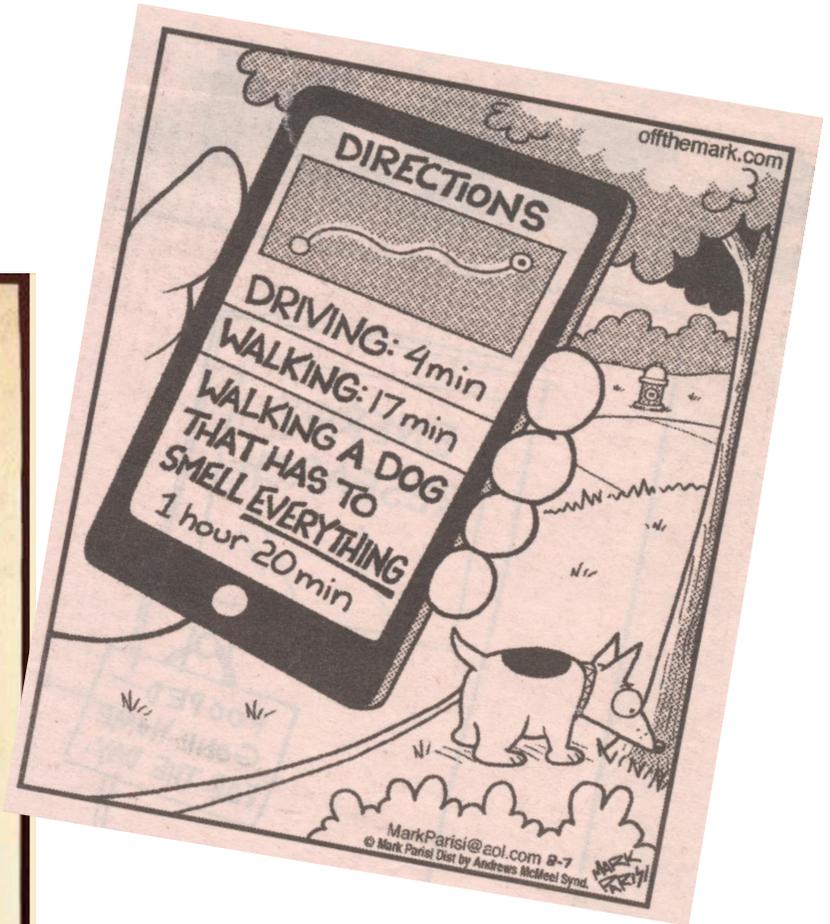
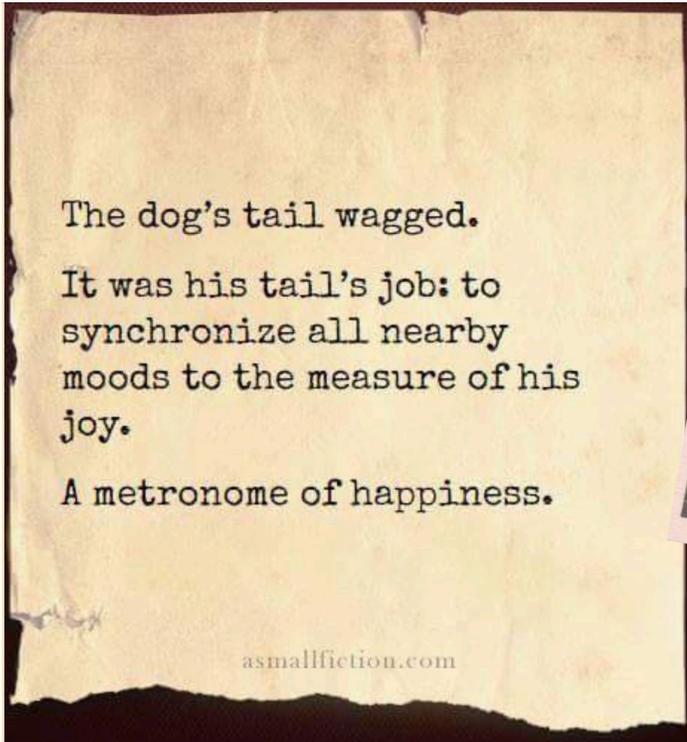
but apparently singular sound flags transition, movement: I'm headed to a different room. I'm pivoting from work to play. I'm about to give her dinner or a walk or a belly rub. I'm crossing some border and she — ever loyal, ever loving — intends to accompany me to the far side of it.



Dogs in Paintings (modified)



The Lighter Side



“Animals don’t lie. Animals don’t criticize. If animals have moody days, they handle them better than humans do.”

Betty White

Overheard:

Dogs typically go to the bathroom in alignment with the north-south axis.

Could this possibly be true? Do a survey with your own dog!

