



IFA - Managing Our Growth



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS
ANNUAL REPORT

2023

INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS ~ 2023

Intermountain Therapy Animals (ITA) is a 501(c)(3) Utah nonprofit, founded in 1993 (as The Good Shepherd Association) to bring animal resources to human needs. Our mission is to *enhance quality of life through the human-animal bond.*

2023 brought us into ITA's 30th year. Our growth has reached 320 volunteer teams and 171 program sites. And we still have almost 40 places on our waiting list. Our principal challenge at this time is to manage our growth effectively. Here are some of the highlights:

- We reached over 300,000 clients, with hours served by our ITA volunteer teams totaling more than 200,000.
- We instituted a new crisis response training and gathered a group of volunteers who could participate at a moment's notice. We responded to several requests from schools, where students had faced the suicides of classmates.
- Our new programs with family courts continued to grow and gain popularity, with not only the kids who were reporting, but also the judges and court staffs.
- We faced a major challenge when our landlord informed us that our rent would increase by 62%, from \$4,300 to \$7,000 per month. We explored other options, including seeking advice from the Holladay Business Council, but in the end we signed a lease for another three years. The new rate is \$14/sf/year, whereas the current rate in our area is \$24-26/sf/year, so this is a "good deal," but still a daunting challenge.
- We held three training class series in the Salt Lake area this year, and our chapters held three one-day sessions. Overall, we held 12 sessions



Dory, partner of Karin Kirchhoff, inspires some joy for a staff nurse at IMED.

of team assessments, and an additional 18 individual assessments.

- We interviewed 94 potential teams in Salt Lake alone.
- Additional internal trainings included 33 volunteer orientations, 6 R.E.A.D. trainings, 3 evaluator meetings and multiple Zooms with other chapter leaders.
- We held DEI and gender education for the ITA staff.
- We continued with regular Zoom meetings to stay in touch with our worldwide network of R.E.A.D. instructors, as well as leaders of the 17 colleague organizations for whom we are the "mother ship." Some of our ITA board of directors' meetings were also still held via Zoom, as well as numerous community presentations, and even some R.E.A.D. sessions and remote visits with clients.
- For our volunteers, we held our annual Volunteer Celebration in February, as well as a Halloween photo shoot, doggy birthday cards, and a staff holiday lunch.
- We continued the process of revising and upgrading our entire process of team training and assessment, in line with the latest research and our long experience in this arena of putting humans and animals together for the benefit

of both. Our goal was to help everyone realize that it's not just the animals who need to have particular skills and temperaments; it's also the humans—who have to be responsible for the welfare of those animals while at the same time creating meaningful connections with each patient/client and being aware of the environment around them. We are pleased that we are getting ever better at helping humans realize that the animals are equal beings, with wisdom and sensibilities that often are more intuitive and effective than the humans' in these settings. Executive Director Kathy Klotz was also chosen to make a presentation called "Implementing Handler Team Assessments" to the Animal-Assisted Interactions International (AII) conference on September 30th.

- ITA made an extraordinary number of presentations throughout 2023: 46 new, expansion and re-started facility programs, 10 R.E.A.D.

events, 38 stress-relief events for students and employees, 16 in-person presentations to community and educational groups, and 101 separate events for teams, including schools, universities, corporate offices, etc..

- Our major fundraiser this year was "Dogtoberfest" on October 21st. It was less formal than most of our past gala events and attracted a much wider audience, who came for live music and entertainment by the group "Salzburger Echo," and lots of varieties of beer (and other beverages) and excellent food. It was extremely well-received by the attendees!
- Other fundraisers during the year included two animal portrait sessions with The Photo Box, a T-shirt campaigns (Valentine, 30th anniversary and Peace, Love & Therapy Animals), and Giving Tuesday in November.

INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS

Dogtoberfest

Thursday
September 14, 2023
6:00-9:00 pm
The Garden Place
This is the Place Park
Salt Lake City

30th Anniversary
2023 ITA FUNDRAISER • therapyanimals.org

Scan the QR code to purchase your tickets



The stresses of traveling are more intense than ever, and our dogs bring a lot of joy and stress relief at the airports where they visit.

On the Cover:

One of the hallmarks of visits from therapy dogs is the inevitable eruption of smiles and laughter, often for the first time since a devastating accident or diagnosis. This is no small thing; research confirms the importance of smiles and laughter for stress relief, relaxation, social connection and better sleep, among other benefits.

FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

It has been, and continues to be, an honor serving as Intermountain Therapy Animals' Board President. I am fully committed to facilitating the most remarkable 30-year journey of this exceptional organization.

My Australian Shepherd, Mickey, and I have enjoyed three years so far as an ITA volunteer team. It has been exciting, enlightening, humbling and, most of all, gratifying beyond words. It continually amazes me how brilliant, empathic and sensitive our animal partners are in whatever situation they are placed. Mickey takes his "job" very seriously, as do I.

If you knew all the effort our little staff of six puts into qualifying, training and placing just one therapy team, and then multiplying that by 320+, you would understand how much our donors' investment in ITA pays off.

No matter what crises are going on in the world around us, individual people of all ages and socio-economic circumstances receive devastating diagnoses and injuries every day. Our teams are there to help them re-ignite their hope and enthusiasm for life, inspiring them to move forward on the tough path to healing. Our therapists have told us over and over, year after year, that the animals inspire cooperation, participation and progress that they cannot otherwise get from their patients. 2023 was especially impactful for us in seeing what good medicine our teams are for families and medical staff personnel, as well.

I have a passion for the work that all our teams have accomplished. And I am grateful beyond words for all of you who have continued to support us and our special medicine through these unpredictable times and singular circumstances. We could never have done it without you. We trust you know how hard we have worked to make every dollar count toward health and healing.

With sincere thanks and appreciation,

Jane L. Fischer
Jane L. Fischer
Chair, ITA Board of Directors



... AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year, 2023, has found ITA not only back to full services, but doing it "on steroids," as the saying goes. By the end of the year our programs were back to more than 170 health care and educational facilities, and with more than 40 still on our waiting list.

There is no longer any doubt, at any level, about the efficacy and healing benefits of animals. Staff personnel at all facilities are still pressuring us most of all for visits, and we are so happy to be able to lighten their burdens by offering the chance to interact with our animals.

In our chosen endeavor, ITA remains on the front lines, always seeking to learn more and do even better for all parties who participate in our animal-assisted interactions — client, staff, family, handler and animal. We currently have 17 colleague organizations in 10 other states who use ITA's training and testing protocols.

Jane Goodall has said that "If we can take an animal as a true partner and learn from the animal, who will then learn from us — a back and forth relationship — it can lead in the future to all kinds of amazing and innovative ways of helping the world become a better place." We humans have always expected our animals to learn from us, but it's a more recent bit of enlightenment that they have much to teach us, as well, and we are committed to staying open in that process of discovery.

We remain permanently committed to staying personal, too, despite the relentless advance of the technologies that are disconnecting our society. We will always choose personal interaction over automation, even when that choice may seem "inefficient." We are also committed to being open and direct when dealing with issues and solving problems. We never fail to be dazzled by how quickly disagreements melt away when people speak to one another directly instead of speculating sideways. We have observed that this is another simple but powerful way that animals are great role models.

I am personally so proud of our very small and committed staff. They are all dazzlingly competent, creative and hard-working, and they produce more good with less resources than any group or organization I know.

We continue to recommend lots of furry, four-paw love—it's a comfort and a constant in our always-challenging world.

Thank you for continuing to help our dreams come true as we change lives, one encounter at a time.

Kathy Klotz
Kathy Klotz
Executive Director



Kathy Klotz, Executive Director,
with Skye and Tristan

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2022–2023

2022

Support

Grants and Donations	\$ 291,084	66.1%
Membership and Training	46,161	10.5%
R.E.A.D. Revenue	11,622	2.6%
Fundraising Events/Merch.	91,473	20.8%
Investment Income	251	0.1%
	\$ 440,591	100%

Expenses

Total Program Services	\$ 329,311	91.0%
Fundraising	10,857	3.0%
Administration	21,712	14.5%
	\$ 361,880	100%

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

\$ 245,130

FUND BALANCES \$ 173,781

OVERHEAD RATE 9%

2023

Support

Grants and Donations	\$ 334,827	59.9%
Membership and Training	63,513	11.4%
R.E.A.D. Revenue	12,841	2.3%
Fundraising Events/Merch.	146,682	26.3%
Investment Income	888	0.2%
	\$ 558,751	100%

Expenses

Total Program Services	\$ 447,452	84.6%
Fundraising	45,188	8.5%
Administration	36,511	6.9%
	\$ 529,151	100%

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

\$ 283,366

FUND BALANCES \$ 204,805

OVERHEAD RATE 15.4%

(As reported on our 2022 and 2023 IRS Form 990s.)

SIX-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2018–2023



READING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE DOGS®



24 Years — 27 Countries

These are all the countries and regions, in addition to the United States, where R.E.A.D. is currently flourishing:



Argentina



Austria



Belgium



Bosnia-Herzegovina



Canada



Chile



Colombia



Croatia



Dominican Republic



Finland



France



Germany



Iceland



Italy



Kazakhstan



Luxembourg



Mexico



The Netherlands



Norway



Portugal



Republic of China/Taiwan



READING EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE DOGS®

Since 1999

A PROGRAM OF
INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS



Slovenia



South Africa



Spain



Sweden



The United Kingdom



Wales

Intermountain Therapy Animals' animal-assisted education program, R.E.A.D.® (Reading Education Assistance Dogs®), introduced in December of 1999, continues to inspire children and gratify their parents and school and library personnel, across the U.S. and beyond.

The impact on children's education at all levels, due to the pandemic, has been huge and debilitating. We now know that the U.S. ranks 125th among the countries of the world for children's literacy. Our R.E.A.D. programs were among the last to be reinstated because schools faced such difficulties.

Nevertheless, by the end of 2023, the demand had built back up to historic highs. We have sold the R.E.A.D. training package to people all over the world, and registered more than 7,200 therapy teams to offer the program. Beyond the United States, there are 27 other countries (see flags above) where the program is flourishing. The R.E.A.D. manual has already been translated into Russian, Kazakh, Spanish and Portuguese.

Our trained, licensed network of R.E.A.D. program instructors now numbers 77, and we have 96 official R.E.A.D. affiliate groups in 35 states.

Competing theories about the optimal way to educate our children will no doubt continue to be discussed, because each individual's learning style is different. But one thing we know for sure, after 24 years, is that no matter what methods are used, having a dog by one's side makes the experience more motivating, more beneficial, more fun, and ultimately more successful.

We learned very early that the R.E.A.D. experience is about so much more than acquiring reading skills like fluency and comprehension. R.E.A.D. dogs help in many other significant ways, by relieving chronic stress, building confidence, improving class participation, and letting children fall in love with books and reading. R.E.A.D. will no doubt be ITA's legacy to the world of animal-assisted interactions.

A Few Excerpts from

"30 Great Things About ITA"

published in 2023 to highlight our 30 years of service

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Top Qualifications



"When we researched local pet therapy programs, we found ITA to be at the top, offering teams that go through an extensive training and certification process, one that clears requirements into a facility where infection control is highly mandated. ITA has proven able to abide by our high standard requirements."

- Blanca Raphael
Patient & Family Resources Manager
Huntsman Cancer Hospital



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 - 2023

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30 Great

Pawsitive Chair Reactions

"We have over 450 clinical staff that have participated with ITA teams each year during nursing recognition week. Having the animals come for a short session is a major benefit in promoting the emotional wellness of our staff that care for patients on a daily basis. We have learned that promoting the emotional wellness of our employees increases their desire to provide exceptional care to our patients."



"The kindness that the animals share with each person is a gift that in turn is passed to our patients. It has been a pleasure to experience the joys our staff express when they participate!"

- Suzanne Green
University of Utah Healthcare / South Jordan



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 - 2023



"30 Great Things About ITA" (cont.)

Things About ITA

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Always Improving



Nancy with Eli, and Eli cozying up with one of his R.E.A.D. students

"I love that ITA continues to be passionate about our mission, constantly updating, tweaking and incorporating new research and techniques in our training. The staff is always available for support and suggestions, and they (we) never sit on what we have done in the past—but are always excited about what we can do in the future."

— Nancy Rosen
Director of ITA Bozeman Chapter
Member of ITA since February 1998
& ITA Team with Maggie, KC, Eli & Lily



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 – 2023

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30 Great

Animal Advocacy and Respect



"At ITA, animal advocacy and respect are top priorities. Our philosophy requires that attempting to help heal others must never be done at the expense of our animal partners."

— Kathy Klotz
ITA Executive Director



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 – 2023

First smiles, when connecting with a dog, are very often the first step to hope, motivation and healing.



"30 Great Things About ITA" (cont.)

Things About ITA

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Comfort and Stress Relief for Belaguered Travelers



At first we weren't sure we could spare dogs to send to the Salt Lake International Airport since we never have enough teams to meet the demand.

But we were wrong—flying is currently an extremely difficult experience! There is a great deal of frustration, fear, nervousness and sometimes even anger among today's travelers, and we regularly hear that "Salt Lake is the world's best airport to offer therapy dogs to us weary travelers!"



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Things About ITA

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Crisis Response

"When the ITA teams came on short notice to our boys' program last night, the entire experience was just amazing, simply put.

"The boys responded immediately to the dogs and truly enjoyed having them there. And while the dogs were the spotlight of this experience, I want to express how uniquely qualified each of the humans were, too, for this particular assignment. All of them took the time to engage with every single one of the boys and get to know them. With each boy receiving individualized attention from both the dogs and the humans, they received a heartwarming connection that I know had a deep therapeutic effect. It was so much more than just petting a dog. I cannot begin to express how much this meant to them and to all of us here.

"Thank you again. You are incredibly valued by all of us."

– Gina White
Quality Assurance/Records
Waterfall Canyon Academy



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 – 2023

A couple of typical smiling scenes at the SLC airport.



(More on page 12)

BOARD AND STAFF 2023

Members of ITA's Board of Trustees serve minimum terms of at least two years, which may be extended by mutual agreement. In 2023 nine (9) board meetings were held on January 10, February 7, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11 (annual business meeting), August 9, September 12, October 10. In-person meetings were held at Intermountain Therapy Animals' offices at 4050 South 2700 East, in Holladay, Utah.

Board of Directors

Jane Lee Fischer
Board President
Owner, Pampered Pets of Utah

Becky Butler
Business Owner
ITA Team Volunteer

Susan Daynes
Business Owner
ITA Team Volunteer

Laura Joesten, TRS, CTRS
Recreational Therapist

Jane Peterson, LCSW
Therapist, Solstice Residential Treatment Center

Steven Sellers, CPA
Chief Financial Officer, Prime Alliance Bank

Linda Wright, csw
Chief of Staff/Tech Industry

Volunteer (non-voting) Board Representatives

Eileen Ambrose
Carol Prince
Beth Wolfer

Co-Executive Directors

Kathy Klotz
Karen Burns

Staff

Lilly Beaman
International R.E.A.D. and Affiliate Organizations

Melissa Byrd
Office Manager

Beth Ott
Volunteer Coordinator

Laurel Romero
Bookkeeping and Special Projects

Advisory Board

Chris Beck-McKay
Business Woman/Restauranteer

Katie Domann, DVM
Veterinarian
Animal Health and Nutrition

Karen F. Duncan, MSN, RN
Former Board Member; Community Volunteer

Mary Renck Jalongo, PhD
Professor of Early Childhood Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

James J. Lynch, PhD
LifeCareHealth Associates
Baltimore, Maryland

Stephanie Magid
Vice President, Goldman Sachs

Sandi Martin, RN, BSN, NCBF
ITA Member

Jeffrey N. Porter, DVM
Cottonwood Animal Hospital


The University of Utah Burn ICU lets everyone know that therapy dogs are welcome!





It has always been so, but intensified ever since the COVID pandemic, that medical staffers need the stress relief, comfort and joy of therapy animals just as much as their patients do.

ITA'S SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

	2022	2023
Facebook:		
	Intermountain Therapy Animals	
"Likes"	5,100	5,500
Followers	5,439	5,516
R.E.A.D.		
"Likes"	6,445	6,700
Followers	6,777	6,912
YouTube:		
	Subscribers	
	3,520	3,710
Views (Just of "Caleb's Story")	9,600,000	9,600,000
Instagram:		
	ITA Followers	
	2,100	2,319
R.E.A.D. Followers	341	481



**INTERMOUNTAIN
THERAPY ANIMALS**

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PO BOX 17201
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84117

TEL 801.272.3439
www.therapyanimals.org

"30 Great Things About ITA" (cont.)

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30 Great

Things About ITA

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We Give Kids New Books

Hundreds of them, each and every year!

In conjunction with our R.E.A.D.® program, we gave away 350 new books last year and are well on the way to giving that many or more this year! We are

happy to partner with the KUED Super Reader Program to connect with many families and promote the joys of reading and books. Kids who accomplish their reading goals in their personal reading marathon get to stop by our office and choose a free book to keep. It is a bright spot in our day for all of the ITA staff to see the kids come in and light up at all the books on the shelves. Many of the kids are excited to show us their choice.

Research tells us how vital it is for a child to have books of their very own—new ones, not previously used. We are grateful to our many supporters who have held book drives to help us keep the shelves full of wondrous choices.



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 – 2023



Supporting Kids in Court

Children and teenagers experiencing custody, drug, or mental health issues are calmed and reassured by the presence of a therapy dog when they must appear in court.



We started in the 3rd District Juvenile Court with one judge and one courtroom, and positive outcomes have caused the program to grow to include all six of the Juvenile Specialty Courts as well as individual child welfare and delinquency cases.

The judges and their staff love having us in their courtrooms, and the clients love the comfort our teams provide during stressful times.

One of the judges told us, "When a therapy dog is in my courtroom, the room is calm and I always have more productive conversations with the juveniles."



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS 1993 – 2023



One of the court judges collects her own share of love from an ITA dog, Jiffy.



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS
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