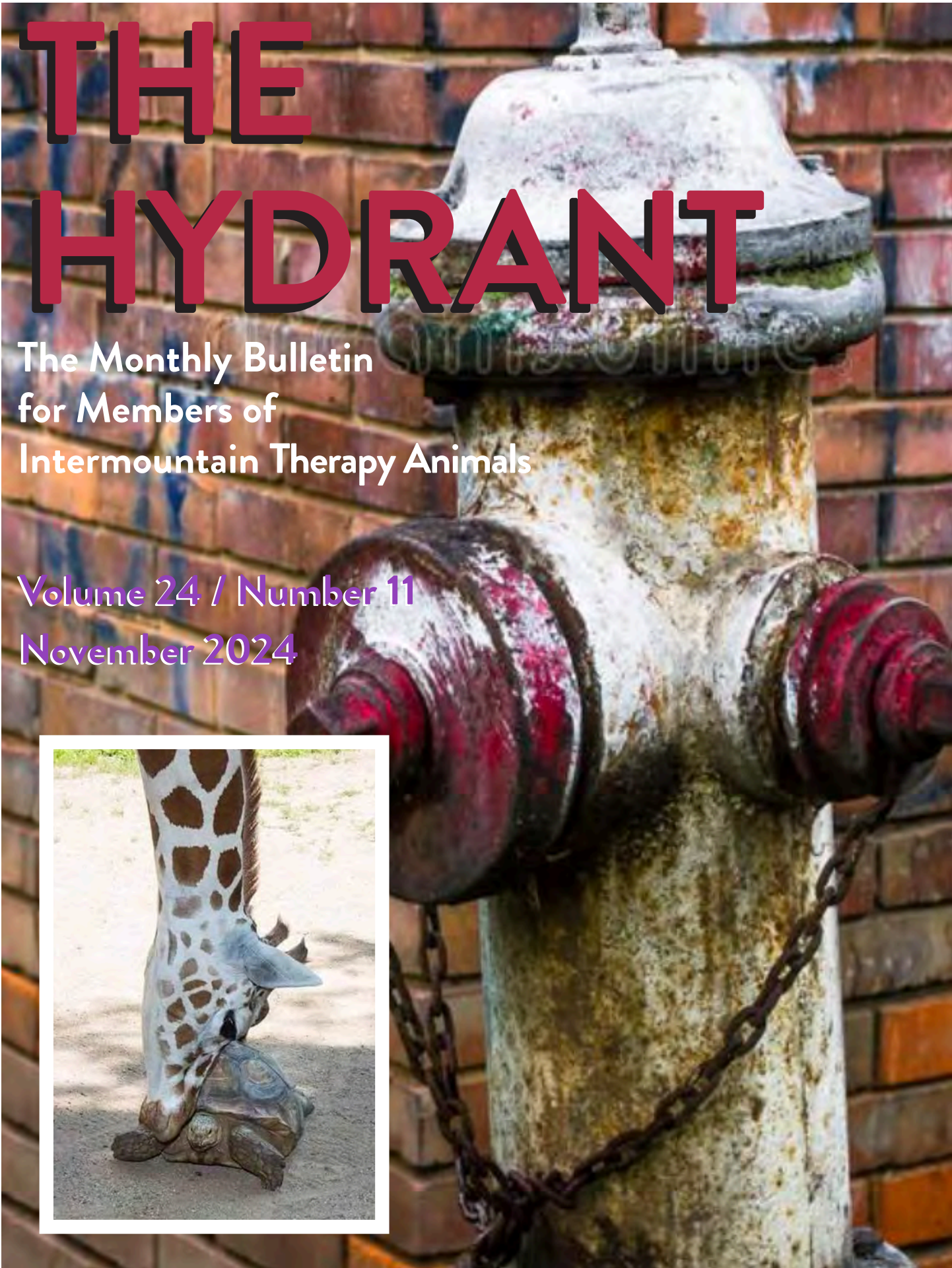


# THE HYDRANT

The Monthly Bulletin  
for Members of  
Intermountain Therapy Animals

Volume 24 / Number 11  
November 2024



# Are you current with ITA?

## Membership Dues:

Individual \$99  
Family \$150

## How to Pay:

Pay online at [therapyanimals.org/ita-members-only/](http://therapyanimals.org/ita-members-only/)  
OR call the office with a credit card (801-272-3439),  
request a PayPal invoice, or send a check to  
PO Box 17201, SLC, UT 84117

## Update your Contact Information:

If your contact info remains the same, you can simply make your payment. If any of your contact info has changed, please let us know by responding to this email or you can use the membership renewal application on our website (using the link above).

*If you are not planning on renewing your membership, please let us know so that we don't send more notices.*

## ITA Normal Office Hours:

Monday ~ Thursday, 9 am to 5 pm  
(Fridays - CLOSED)



# Unequaled Holiday Portraits and More!

The Photo Box Photography is coming to town!  
Intermountain Therapy Animals and  
The Photo Box are excited to announce a  
Christmas event you won't want to miss. For just  
\$30 you will get a 10 minute photo session and a  
free gifted 8x10 photo to leave with right after!  
You're welcome to bring pets, kids, your whole  
family, whatever you'd like. A variety of  
backdrops will be available and you'll have the  
option to order more photos and holiday cards in  
an online gallery. To reserve your spot contact  
Melissa at 801-272-3439

or scan the QR code

**Saturday and Sunday  
November 16th and 17th!!!**

No Santa at this event



[www.ThePhotoBox.com](http://www.ThePhotoBox.com)

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH  
SEPTEMBER 2024**



**TEDDY**

READ of the Gulf Coast - Serving Escambia & Santa Rosa Counties  
Favorites · 3h · 📍  
Teddy was Employee of the Month at West Florida Public Library Downtown.

**The library in Pensacola, Florida,  
where Joanne C. Wilson & Teddy R.E.A.D.  
just voted Teddy "Employee of the Month!"**



# RETIRING



## **Nedda Greer & Josie**

(Ogden, UT)

Members since November 2022.



## **Aaron Murray & Maddox**

(Murray, UT)

Members since November 2022.

# NEW TEAMS



## **Lauren Tobias & Fluffer**

(Bozeman, MT)



## **Brett Stubson & Pepper**

(Billings, MT)



# OUT & ABOUT

## Lots of Halloween Festivities this year!



ITA teams participated in making a Halloween video at University of Utah Hospital: Melanie Lobato & Indie, Peggy Chudd & Gus, Beth Wolfer & Edgar. U Health published the video on YouTube and Instagram under the title, "When Your Therapy Dogs Dress Up for Halloween" and go trick or treating. It's a fun one if you want to watch.



Meanwhile, down in St. George, Utah, ITA teams also observed the holiday at St. George Regional Hospital: Anita Sjoblom with Jack as a dapper young man, Sherry Armour-Andersen with Gypsy as a lion, and Candice Rogers with Arlo as Dracula.



Andrea Story & Jiffy Pop brought these scary but yummy donuts to the 3rd District Family Court session to help lend a little light-heartedness to the proceedings.



# More Halloween Celebrating...



Everyone went all out at the SLC Airport this year! Above and at left are Southwest Airlines staff with Susan Daynes & Dresden, Suzanne Doutre & Moose, and Kate Bjordahl & Potato. Moose went as a hot dog with ketchup and mustard, while Potato refused to wear his costume—and Kate honored his decision!

## It was a big year for lions

LEFT: Edgar and Emma, partners of Beth Wolfer and Bee Lufkin, respectively, went together as lions to University Hospital this year while Dresden, above, was doing her own lion-



thing at the airport. RIGHT TOP: Edgar & Beth showing off their matching embellishments.

RIGHT BOTTOM: Being lions did not deter anyone from either giving or receiving therapeutic affection!



# The Weight of our Partners

As an important subgroup of humans who are dedicated to considering our companion therapy animals as true partners, committed to being great role models for the rest of the human species, a difficult issue that comes up on a regular basis for our ITA Team Evaluators is *whether to mention a dog's weight to a handler*. It's a delicate subject, and after all, we are not a team's veterinarian. (Even some vets have trouble bringing up this embarrassing topic.)

Philosophically, at ITA we say *yes*, it is definitely appropriate to talk about it!

But if all of us as handlers devoted ourselves to keeping our dogs at their ideal weight, no one would have to bring it up.

So here is some helpful information to help you recognize whether, in fact, your dog is over- or underweight, or perfect just as s/he is. Even better, you have no need of a scale to do this. It's called the **Body Condition System**, and it's illustrated on the next page.

This describes how to use visual inspection and your sense of touch *to rate the state of a dog's ribs, waistline and tummy*.

By using your senses of sight and touch, you can assign your dog to one of three categories...

- Too Thin (Body Condition Score = 1 to 3)
- Ideal (Body Condition Score = 4 to 5)
- Too Heavy (Body Condition Score = 6 to 9)

A dog's BCS score will be based on comparing her *appearance* to the diagram at right, and by *palpating (feeling)* the ribs and frame.

Once your pet reaches a body condition score of 4 to 5 on a 9-point scale, be sure to weigh her, because you've got evidence of your dog's ideal weight.)

You don't even need to be as formal as to name a "Body Condition Score," as noted in the illus-

tration. The most important thing is to understand the pictures and then the *look and feel* of your dog.

ITA's own former member and consulting vet, Susan McDonald, explained these guidelines to me very simply years ago, and I have found them to be enormously helpful with my own animals, and also as an ITA Team Evaluator. Susan said:

- You should be able to feel your dog's ribs, but not see them.
- From the top view, you should see at least a bit of a waist indentation.
- From the side view, you should see an abdominal tuck.

Now, if an ITA Team Evaluator should happen to mention to you that your dog is overweight, please know that it is not our intention to make you feel guilty or defensive—maintaining perfect weight is something almost all of us struggle with throughout life, and it's the same with our dogs; they love food and treats and we love to make them happy. Rather, this is a matter of supporting their best health so that they can live good long lives in addition to being more comfortable and less stressed while visiting as a therapy dog. (-KK)





**Nestlé PURINA**

# BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

**TOO THIN**

**1**

Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.

**2**

Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.

**3**

Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.

**IDEAL**

**4**

Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.

**5**

Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.

**6**

Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.

**TOO HEAVY**

**7**

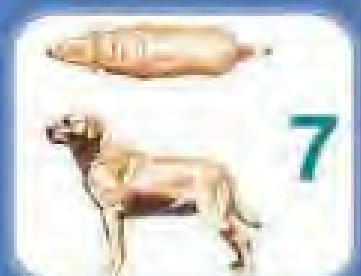
Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.

**8**

Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.

**9**

Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.



The BODY CONDITION SYSTEM was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as discussed in the following publications:

Masley D, Sargent M, Meyers T, et al. Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and desferrioxamine ascite dilution in client-owned dogs. *Compendium* 2001; 23(7):61-70

LeFavre CP. Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs. *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 23:10-15

Kaaly, et al. Effects of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs. *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Call 1-800-222-VETS (8387), weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT

**Nestlé PURINA**





# On Communicating ...

Sometimes I'm glad that our dogs can't talk to us — or, more specifically, that Regan can't tell me what's on her mind — because I'm not sure I'd want to hear it:

“Filling my bowl with dry kibble while you roast a salmon fillet for yourself? You're a monster.”

“I'm not actually kissing you, stupid. There's a bagel crumb on your lower lip.”

“What's the point of bringing that damned ball back to you if you're just going to hurl it to the other side of the yard again? I'm not Sisyphus.” (I imagine Regan as a lover of Greek mythology who regards the peanut butter I slather around her heartworm tablet as a Trojan horse.)

But over the past week, I've ardently wished that she could explain what she's feeling, where she hurts, what she needs. She started limping. Badly at certain times, barely at others, in a somewhat erratic pattern that deepened the mystery. She never stopped chasing squirrels, but I did have to help her up the stairs one

night. There was a newly pronounced asymmetry in her walk. There was a new, heavy weight in my heart.

Was she suffering from a sprain? A pull? Arthritis? The vet has placed a bet on the last, and we've started Regan on monthly injections that should help. They may work so well, the vet said, that I have to keep Regan from running too much and leaping too high and far. They

may fail, in which case I have to keep Regan from being too still and getting too stiff.

I shall read the signs, make the adjustments, hope I get it right. I shall continue with Regan's daily glucosamine supplement, coupled with another pill the vet recommends. I shall bear in

mind that at 10 $\frac{2}{3}$  years old, Regan is entering a phase of life when things will go wrong. And I shall cling to this: Even though she can't describe her aches and ailments, she can't mistake my concern. My actions, not my words, make that clear.

- Frank Bruni  
in the *NYTimes*, October 17, 2024



Frank Bruni



# MORE OUT & ABOUT!



Monument Health in Salt Lake hosted a mini-fundraiser for ITA in conjunction with their Car Show event for residents and their families on Friday, October 11, and everything went smoothly and was lots of fun!!

**LEFT ABOVE:** Jody Andes & Lily, Patti Keith & Bella, Joy Coquillard & Bizzie, Cheryl McKay & Mozart, and Patti Meldrum & Finn.

**RIGHT ABOVE:** Alexandra Henderson & Teddi visit with a resident.

**RIGHT:** Allison Bedont & Noche share a hug.



# AND STILL MORE!



**Moses**, partner of Jenna Malone, is one of ITA's most gargantuan therapy dogs. Here he is visiting with students in the Social Emotional Learning class at Oakwood Elementary in Salt Lake in October, and basking in all the attention.

Jenna tells us, "My neighbor, Eli Lovett, is the teacher and she has asked me to bring Moses to visit several times. Many of the kids struggle with impulse control or have had behavioral and attention struggles. Eli says having Moses in the classroom helps them focus really well and brings a sense of calm. I talk to them about what a therapy dog is and does, and they take turns asking questions, and then get to come up, 2 or 3 at a time, to pet and snuggle with Moses. Eli has been an SEL teacher for a long time and said she wishes they could have a therapy dog in class all the time because she notices such a positive difference in the kids' attention and focus with a dog there.



# AND . . . MORE!



**ABOVE:** ITA went to the New Bridge School in Ogden to talk to 100 6th graders about how animals and people can work together. Above are Ken Osborne & Scout, Michelle Pasker & Ranger, Joy Coquillard & Bizzie, Keith Pasker & Theo, and Ilene Nelson & Gypsy.

**BIG & LITTLE:** Scout the Berner and Gypsy the Cavalier look a lot alike except for size!



# Paintings with Dogs



LEFT: Sueellen Ross - Subtle Hint - 2004  
RIGHT: Jose van Kleeef - White Dog - 2011

BELOW LEFT: Amy Katherine Browning - Lime Tree Shade - 1913



LEFT: Giuseppe van Nittis - Returning from the Bois de Boulogne, Lady with a Dog - 1878



# The Lighter Side



"I can't believe that they try to hide my medication in my food. I'm a drug sniffing dog!"

