

THE HYDRANT

The Monthly Bulletin
for Members of
Intermountain Therapy Animals

Volume 24 / Number 9
September 2025



Are you current with ITA?

Membership Dues:

Individual \$99
Family \$150

How to Pay:

Pay online at 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)



Down to the Wire

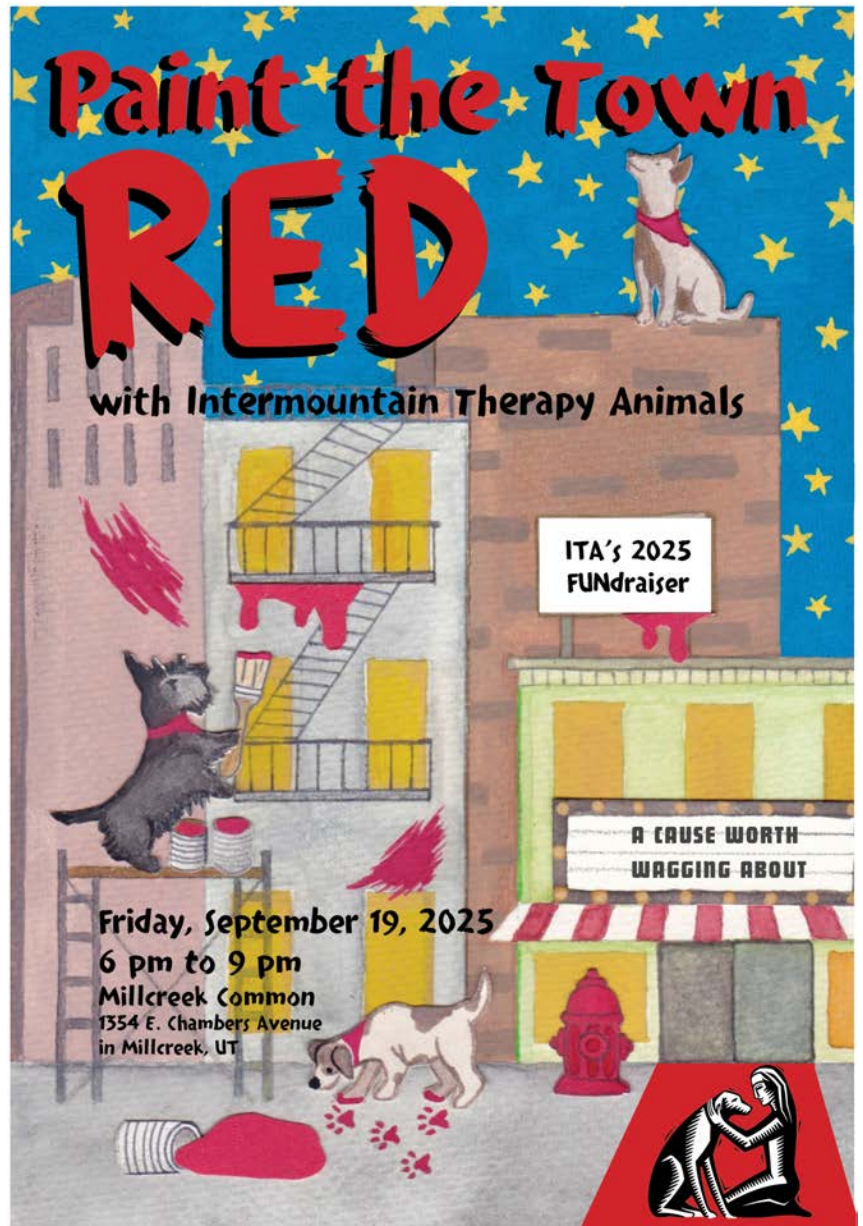
Our 2025 ITA gala, “Paint the Town Red,” is about to happen!

We have already lined up so many of you as party volunteer helpers, greeting teams, program presentation teams, and wildly generous contributors to our collection of Doggy Bag gift cards and auction items.

For all those things, THANK YOU! We couldn’t possibly bring off these huge, complex events without your help, and we are so grateful for your great generosity!

For those of you who haven’t been wrangled into the fun yet, you still have an excellent opportunity to enjoy the festivities by *coming to the party* as a guest! Sit back, relax, and enjoy a different perspective of your ITA experience.

You can buy tickets on our website, or use this QR code to get there fastest.



HANDLERS W/ NEW PARTNERS



Becky Butler & Miso

(Salt Lake City, Utah)

Becky is back with her cute and sociable new Shih Tzu, Miso. Becky & Sumo, her first partner, were an ITA team starting in September 2016.



Deb Graber & Timber

(West Jordan, Utah)

Deb has been a member since July of 2005, and Timber is the latest in her long line of wonderful Golden ITA partners.

RETIRING



Deedee Fedorchak & Novi

(Salt Lake City, Utah)

Novi has turned 10 and says it's time to retire. They have been an ITA team since June of 2023.



LEAVING EARTH

August was another very painful month with the sudden losses of three great ITA dogs. Our hearts go out to Linda, Judy and Jenna and their families.



Lizzie, partner of Linda Richards

(Cottonwood Heights, Utah) Died on August 19th after a long and brave battle against cancer that started in her mouth.

At one point Linda worried whether, with Lizzie's weight and fur loss, she looked "too straggly" to keep visiting, though her enthusiasm hadn't waned a bit. Joy Bushnell at IMC told Linda, "I think she looks lovely. Just like a human going through treatment. Things change but she is still beautiful. You and Lizzie come and bring joy! It is a positive thing and it shows people that dogs go through similar stuff."

Linda says, "I ran into a former patient somewhere recently and she remembered me and held my hand while saying, 'You know, of all the many, many people who came in and out of my hospital room during time there, *the only ones I remember are you and your therapy dog!*' She said she had so many procedures done to her during that crisis and saw so many people but...she only remembered us! That meant a lot to me and I'll treasure that conversation for the rest of my life!"

Linda & Lizzie were a team for 9 years, since August of 2016.



Grace, partner of Judy Keeler

(Helena, Montana)

Judy and Grace have been an ITA team since July of 2021; Judy tells us:

"A team member knows that this type of e-mail will ultimately be written, it's just a matter of when.

"Last week I had to send Grace to the rainbow bridge. Those darn dogs won't let you know when they are sick until it is unavoidable. She was diagnosed with advanced liver cancer that had spread to her other organs. I did not expect to lose her at 8 years of age. To say it has been a devastating week for me is Truth. As I get to reflect back on

her life, I am so proud for all she has done. The people whose lives she has touched through her participation first in Pet Partners, and then ITA and R.E.A.D. As you know, they are much more than just a pet, she is my family. She truly made a difference in the world."

(Continued next page)



LEAVING EARTH (cont.)



Moses, partner of Jenna Malone

(Brighton, Utah)

Jenna & Moses joined ITA in November of 2021 and made a huge impact everywhere they went—literally and figuratively! Jenna says, “I am absolutely heartbroken to share that we had to say goodbye to our sweet Moses on August 1. We learned that he had an osteosarcoma on one of his front legs about two months ago.

“We didn’t want to amputate Moses’ leg and put him through chemo for what our vet and the orthopedic vet told us would likely be only an additional few months, especially once they told us that bigger dogs have a much harder time losing a front leg than a rear one. Without being able to explain to him an amputation and painful recovery, we just couldn’t put him through it. The vets also assumed the cancer had already metastasized when we found it.

“Moses spent most of his ITA time in the radiation oncology unit at the Huntsman Cancer Institute, often visiting pediatric patients in the pre-op area. Abbie, a child life specialist, often put a blanket on the floor and invited small patients to lie on the floor and snuggle with Moses. As a therapy dog, Moses’ strength was in receiving touch and snuggles. He loved to lie on a cool floor and get belly rubs. I had to guard the smallest patients from his snowshoe-sized paws, as he often stretched a leg out for more if anyone stopped petting him. His reach was slow and mostly gentle, but giant, and one of his massive paws could have easily knocked a toddler over accidentally.

“One of my most powerful memories of Moses providing therapy was from a visit at Primary Children’s. A nurse asked us to visit a child who was so sad and withdrawn; I could literally feel their sadness. Moses went to the bedside and laid down, and the child rolled onto their side and started petting him. When the child stopped, Moses slowly lifted a paw to reach for them, and they started petting him again. We sat in silence for a long time like that, the child petting Moses and Moses lazily reaching for more strokes every few minutes when the child stopped. I felt the comfort that Moses wanting that patient’s touch brought. The two formed an instant connection.

“We are so grateful that Moses found Scott and me and lived with us for 7-1/2 years. We adopted him when he was two, and he lived to be 9-1/2. We wish so much we’d had more time.

“I know that there wasn’t a person he met who wasn’t changed for the better. He has left a large hole in our hearts but we know we too, are better for having had him in our lives.”



With love,

Jenna



ITA Southern Utah Chapter Enjoys a WOW of a Party!



Candice with her chihuahua (*above*) and Mark at the grill (*below*).



Candice Rogers Alverez and Mark Alverez (they got married this summer) hosted our end-of-summer pool party for the Southern Utah ITA teams and volunteers who help us with evaluations.

Candice and Donna Rusk did the party-planning, and it was extraordinary!

Dinner included hamburgers and hotdogs (Candice's husband Mark did all the cooking) with all the fixings, salads, chips, fruit, veggies, drinks (alcohol and pop), and yummy potluck dishes and desserts. (Unfortunately, no one took pictures of the food table.)

Mark's father Marko and Candice's mother Mary did all the cleanup while the rest of us continued to party and relax.

Candice and Mark's and their family's generosity went way above and beyond and we had such a great time—thank you!

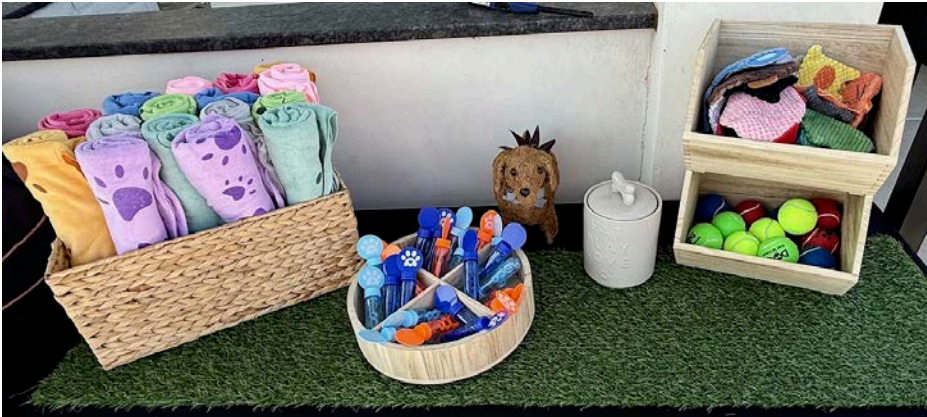
(See lots more fun photos on the next page.)

– Anita Sjoblom

(More on next page ...)



Southern Utah Chapter Party (cont.)



All the “extras” were amazing! [ABOVE:] The swag the Alverezes gave to everyone who attended with their dog included a dog towel, bubbles, toy or ball, note pads and pen.

[RIGHT:] The doggy treat cupcakes were made by Mary Rogers, Candice’s mother. The dogs loved them, and a couple of the pooches managed to get two!

[BELOW:] Some of the guests enjoying the pool!

