

THE HYDRANT

The Monthly
Bulletin
for Members of
Intermountain
Therapy Animals

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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)



NEW TEAMS



**Jessica Coolidge
& Cass**
Helena, MT
June 2026



Susan Martin & Neila
Kalispell, MT
June 2026



Sarah Hess & Piper
Helena, MT
June 2026



**Lori Sagona
& Shawnee**
Kalispell, MT
June 2026



Kara Hurst & Minnie
East Helena, MT
June 2026



**Tom Van Meter
& Emma**
Washington, UT
May 2026



Cindy Lee & Leo
Santa Clara, UT
May 2026



Patty Wick & Zeus
Whitefish, MT
June 2026



RETIRING TEAM



Rachel Konishi & Benny Midvale, UT

"We will be retiring at the end of June. Benny has had a great three years of volunteering and we appreciate all of the fun experiences

and memories that have come with being a part of this amazing organization!"

Rachel & Benny have been with ITA since December of 2023.



OUT & ABOUT



Washington County Library

On June 4th, five teams in our Southern Utah chapter offered a delightful spectrum of canine choice for R.E.A.D.ing companions to kids. *[From left:]* Denise Hume & Jinger, Julie Stephenson & Cooper, Ann McLuckie & Suzie Q, Nicki Elsberry & Winnie, and Merrilee Anderson & Willie.





Living (and Extending) the Dream with Mo Lynch Vashel

Join your colleagues for a short, but intense and focused, session with trainer Mo Lynch Vashel on overall health and wellness for therapy dogs, with extra attention on the aging process and the real, practical things handlers can do to help extend their dogs' careers and keep them comfortable as they get older.

We all dream of our beloved animal companions living on and on and on with us. But we also know the cruel truth: they can't. By definition, dogs' lives are simply way too short.

Those of us with our special therapy partners are super-invested in keeping them healthy and happy, because our work takes a heavy, ongoing toll on their stamina and emotions.

Saturday, August 15, 2026

12 noon - 1:30 pm

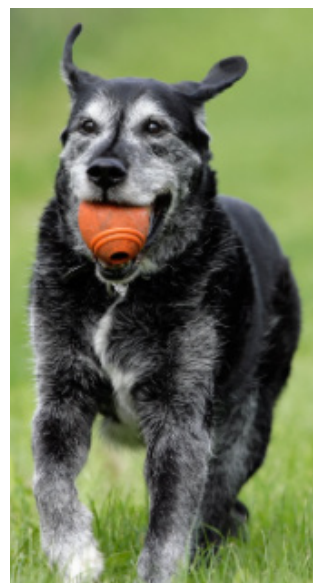
(including Q&A)

This event is one of your continuing education benefits as a member of ITA.

NO COST for ITA members • **NO DOGS**, please—just humans
(Want to bring a non-member friend? Please do—all are welcome for a small donation of **\$10** to ITA).

At ITA's **The Family Dog** ~ 4048 South 2700 East, SLC 84124

Please RSVP to Melissa ~ melissa@therapyanimals.org



OUT & ABOUT

ITA Team Pippi & Kirsten Nilsson Featured in the Park Record!

On June 16th, Pippi and Kirsten got a full-length feature in the Park Record newspaper in Park City, written by Cannon Taylor.

Here are photos (by Jonathan Herrera) and highlights from the article.

Pippi is clearly a media darling; they were featured a year ago in the same paper for their service as a R.E.A.D. team in the Kimball Junction Library.

Meet Pippi, Heber Valley Hospital's first goldendoodle therapist

Pup also visits Park City Hospital, Kimball Junction library branch, airport

It was a silent, slow Friday afternoon in the lobby at Intermountain Health's Heber Valley Hospital, aside from the occasional cooing from patients and employees alike as they came in contact with Pippi, a 6-year-old, gingerbread-colored golden-doodle hired as the hospital's first therapy dog.

Her handler, Kirsten Nilsson, usually breaks the ice with patients by asking them if they have any dogs.

As volunteers, Nilsson and Pippi have visited Intermountain Health's Park City Hospital every Wednesday for the past four years. The pair started visiting the Heber Valley Hospital earlier this month and plans to continue doing so on the first Tuesday of each month.



in a visit from Pippi, usually by checking with the receptionist.

"Sometimes, Pippi will pick out someone and start walking towards them, which I've learned to not ever ignore, because a lot of times, dogs can sense there's something wrong or that they need somebody," Nilsson said. "When Pippi approaches someone, then they're always like, 'This is just what I needed.' It's really rewarding."

Nilsson often gives patients a trading card with Pippi's "stats," like her birthday and favorite sport: swimming with the ducks in the lake near Nilsson's house.

Pippi learned everything she knows through the Salt Lake City organization, Intermountain Therapy Animals. Her qualification test involved role-playing Pippi in a hospital environment, com-



Usually, the pair wanders in the lobby and visits the medical-surgical wing and emergency clinic to see if any patients might be interested

