

## Tigger's Story



We are honored to be selected to be Pet Partner of the Month for February 2008. Tigger visits Swedish Medical Center and Englewood Library. When Tigger sees me get out his visiting bag he starts whining and heads for the door. He knows that bag means he gets to go and visit. One visit that sticks out in my mind was when Tigger and I were visiting Life Care Center of Littleton. There was a lady there who spoke German and I never understood a word she was saying. She would hold Tigger's face and just talk away to him and he would wag his tail the entire time. Every time we went to visit, Tigger would practically pull me into her room. One day we went and her room was empty. Tigger just looked from me to the bed and then back to me again. He seemed sad that day for the rest of his visits. As it turned out, the lady who Tigger had bonded with had passed away a couple of days before our visit. I am glad that Tigger had the

time to bond with her and that Tigger made her days brighter in the end.

Tigger came into our lives unexpectedly about 7 years ago when he was 9 months old. At his previous home, Tigger had gotten up on the table and ate a plate full of chocolate chip cookies. His cookie snatching resulted in a week long stay in an emergency hospital and for his owners to want to find another home for him. My husband worked with his owner at the time and she brought Tigger to work asking anyone and everyone who wanted to take him and my husband brought him home that day. He was such a beautiful dog with big brown eyes that just melted your heart. As soon as my husband brought him home we bonded and Tigger became my companion. He sleeps next to me in bed and he would prefer to always be in my lap on the couch. Until we had a human baby join our family he was my baby.

Tigger has had his own share of hospital visits. Food is almost always the culprit. One day we came home to Tigger hours away from dying because he had bloat. A friend had been watching him and he got into dog food. At that time he had to have emergency surgery and had his stomach attached to his rib cage. A year later he had to go back to the emergency hospital because his intestines were twisted. This time he stayed for three weeks and two surgeries. A few years later, he went back in again because he pulled his back out and could not walk. He also has fought allergies most of his life. Through all of this he has always been loving and attentive to us. When he has been in the hospital and I go to visit him he licks me and tries to comfort me even though he is the one hurting. We have always joked that he is truly our "Golden" dog; just based on the amount of money we have spent to keep him with us. But I believe he is our "Golden" Dog; because of the amount of love and



joy he has also brought into our life. I also think that his visits to the doggie hospital and bouts with illness himself have made him that much better of a Therapy Dog.



Tigger has two canine sisters, named Disney (Golden Retriever) and Frisco (Lab Mix). He is close to both of them and loves to romp and play. He also has a feline brother named Arthur, who he is also



close to and often lets him lay with him. Most recently Tigger got a human sister named Chloe. He loves Chloe and lets her dress him, feed him, make pretend meals, and mostly likes to eat up her crumbs.

Writing this has allowed me to reflect how much Tigger means to us and how much love he brings us each and every day. I hope that we can share that love with others through Animal-Assisted Therapy for a long time to come.

