

## *Betty and Arne Ray with Bailey*



*Betty and Bailey*



*Arne and Bailey*

### Betty Ray:

About 5 years ago I felt a tug at my heart to volunteer with Hospice of St. John. By “coincidence” I also became aware of a tug to consider training for animal-assisted therapy with our standard poodle Bailey. He is friendly with people and assumes that the universe loves him! Since 2009 Hospice of St. John began accepting only animals registered with Pet Partners (formerly “Delta Society”), so that was the route I needed to go.



After passing our first evaluation in June 2009, Bailey and I began our journey of bringing love and comfort to patients in their end stages of life. Bailey understands that he is “going to work” when I put his Denver Pet Partners vest on him; his eyes sparkle and his ears prick up, and he dances toward the car.

Our most dramatic reaction from a visit was with a lady receiving hospice care at an assisted living center. She was depressed, isolated, and negative to staff and family.

## Denver Pet Partners – Team of the Month (September 2012)



During our first visit, she and Bailey grinned at each other throughout the visit, and she enjoyed petting Bailey, saying over and over, “He’s a good one”. We assured her we would return for more visits. I reported to the nurse that the first visit had gone well and that Bailey and the patient grinned together. The nurse was shocked and said, “She NEVER smiles!” A couple of days later, the chaplain had visited the patient and asked the nurse, “What happened here?” The nurse replied, “The dog came to visit.” An immediate result was that the patient began treating staff and family more kindly and had a more positive attitude.

I’m convinced that Bailey is a furry angel. We take our mini-miracles where they occur!

Arne Ray:

I began by attending DPP meetings with Betty and Bailey after their start and was highly impressed by the professionalism and enthusiasm from pets and partners. So, Bailey and I successfully joined the program as a team shortly after. Our interests took us to work at the youth facility at Fort Logan Mental Health Center, which has transitioned to adult work after the youth facility closed.



Each week, Bailey and I team with a staff therapist in one-on-one sessions with our clients. We participate in a variety of activities from grooming to an adapted “rally course” to longer walks around the campus. Part of the work is inviting our clients to decide which activity best fits their interests. Kyle, my staff partner, reports that there are almost always longer-term positive behavior changes lasting well beyond the sessions.

Since Fort Logan is a “no touch” facility, grooming is a particular favorite for the clients, as well as for Bailey. One other observation is what a bright break in their daily routine

Bailey brings to the staff who look forward to his friendly tail wags on his way to work. It is a joy to me to see how much delight he brings to clients and staff alike on his weekly visits.