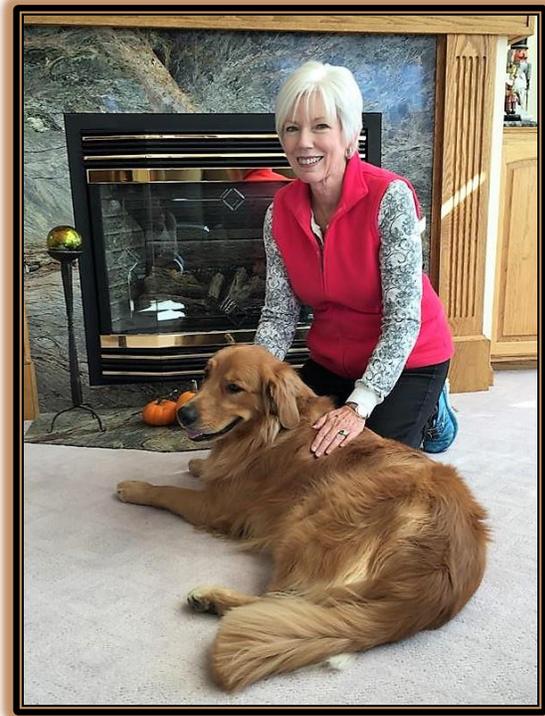


Cathy Robinson and Clay



Clay and I became a team in April 2016 and I have been a member of Denver Pet Partners for approximately two years. For the past year, Clay and I have visited patients at The Medical Center of Aurora. We visit Oncology, Cardiology and “other” patients once a week and have found it to be a very meaningful experience. Both patients and staff give us a warm welcome and enjoy spending time with Clay. We have encountered a variety of reactions including patients

who enjoy talking about their own pets to those that have cried when we come in and those that don’t want to let go of him. All have been appreciative of their time with him.

Clay was born in Virginia in March of 2012 and was owned by a breeder. He was purchased some weeks later by an organization called Eyes, Ears, Nose and Paws based in Chapel Hill, NC. EENP trains service animals and Clay successfully





completed his training, graduated and was placed. Unfortunately, there were communication issues between the client/owner and Clay. EENP eventually removed Clay, allowed him some time to “recuperate” and then decided to release him for adoption. My sister is on the Board of Directors for the organization and she knew I was interested in having a dog so she called and convinced me Clay was the one! Arrangements were made to fly him to Colorado in early November of 2014. A US Air employee, who volunteers with EENP, agreed to escort Clay on his flight to Denver so that Clay wouldn’t have to go in the cargo hold. He picked Clay up in Raleigh, NC and I’m told as they were boarding the plane, Clay went to the First Class area as he thought he should. Of course, he is deserving of that but the flight attendants thought otherwise and redirected him to his spot in economy class. Reportedly the flight was uneventful and he arrived safely in Denver. I might add here that Clay is the first dog I’ve owned as an adult.



I was aware that animals were often used to visit patients in hospitals, nursing homes and other facilities as well as participate in “reading with children” programs. Because Clay was trained as a service animal, I

thought he would be a good candidate to participate in animal assisted intervention programs. I did an internet search and found DPP. I joined the organization and took the day-long workshop. Although Clay is well trained, I’m the one who needed training. We received formal training and then

DPP Team of the Month (September 2017)

DENVER PET PARTNERS



were fortunate enough to pass the evaluation on our second try. We have enjoyed working as a team since that time.

Clay and I have been together almost three years. In our time together and at the hospital I have come to learn much about the human - animal bond. I'm in awe of the effect he has on patients, staff, visitors and people in general. The joy and comfort he brings to others is heart-warming and I am grateful to have the opportunity to share him with others.