

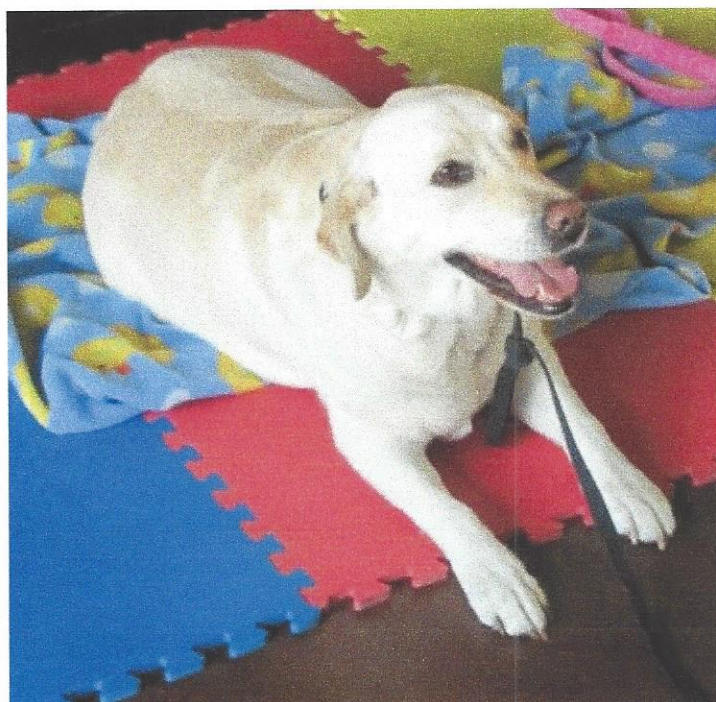
LIFE / PETS / DOGS

See also: [dogs](#), [love dog adventures](#), [animal assisted therapy](#), [pet partners](#)

## What we look for in potential Love Dogs teams

June 28, 2015

10:37 AM MST



A happy relaxed dog

SG

People often tell me "My dog is the friendliest and loves everybody - she would make a great therapy dog." The first thing I ask them is "How does your dog show you she loves people?" They then tell me their dog runs up to everyone, jumps at them, wags her tail, sometimes tries to lick them and often barks with great joy!

Well, those behaviors do not make great therapy dogs. And especially not members of the Love Dog animal-assisted therapy program.

So what do we look for? Calm, happy, predictable, reliable, steady, loving dogs (or cats) are

what we look for upon first meeting. And it is even more important that the human end of the leash be friendly but not effusive, calm, personable, knowledgeable about their animal and confident in their pet's abilities and a desire to be out amongst the public.

Love Dog Adventures is an affiliate of the national therapy organization [Pet Partners](#), thus all of our teams are trained, tested and registered through Pet Partners. To go through the program, the handlers attend a Workshop just for them without their animals and then the handler and animal team must pass a rigorous test comprised of twenty-two elements to assess their skill level and aptitude for therapy work.

What do we look for when meeting potential Love Dog teams?

- The animal must be at least one year old
- The animal must have lived with his owner for at least six months
- The animal must have solid obedience and walk calmly on a loose leash and wear approved equipment (no metal prong, choke or electronic collar)
- The animal should have been trained with positive methods and not be toy or food driven
- The animal should exhibit no signs of stress, nervousness, anxiousness when in a new environment, meeting new people or other animals, and experiencing new sights, sound and smells
- To have the desire to work - that spark in his eye when his name is called

And what do we look for in the handler?

- A great relationship with their pet
- A quiet understanding of their pet's behaviors, signs and signals
- The time and motivation to become a skilled handler and professional volunteer team

It all begins by attending a **Free Orientation** with your pet. The next Orientation will be held on **Sunday, July 26** at 12:00 noon in Summerlin.