

THE BENEFITS OF PET THERAPY FOR SENIORS

Tuesdays are a special day at Lakeside; our residents look forward to their weekly visit with "Toby", a lovable golden retriever who provides so much cheer to our residents! One resident recently expressed she was not feeling as well as usual, and Toby put both paws on the resident's knee and kissed her, and she said "You just made my day!" His trainer adds "Toby has a very keen sense of intuition. He also knows when he can be playful and happy with one who invites it, or when to sit quietly when that's what someone needs."

Toby is part of the Pets on Wheels of Delmarva Program. As part of Toby's orientation, he was evaluated to have the proper temperament with seniors. Bev Horner, who volunteers her time with Toby visiting senior care facilities, said "It's important for Toby to meet strangers without panicking or jumping, and to know who will welcome him." His affection caught on quickly, so he now visits residents throughout our whole building!

The benefits of pet therapy are profound. Just the act of stroking a pet can lower blood pressure and calm anxiety. Who of us doesn't love petting a soft animal? Their fur is warm and feels very soothing; by using our sense of touch, we maintain and exercise our brain.

We all have the need for affection. Pet visits provide relaxation and joy, especially with unconditional love, invaluable in healing. Pet therapy also promotes socialization, entertainment, laughter, acceptance, and fosters a sense of belonging.

If you or your loved one would enjoy a visit with Toby, feel free to call Roxana Laguerre for a tour at 410-749-4480.
