

Shining Star Award 2023

CCA Shining Star Committee: Corinne Boon, Deborah Gates – Co-Chairs
Candy Ardizzone, Susie Green DeLorenzo,
Candace Hunter, Jerry Sulewski, Celia Van Voorhis

Every year, the Collie Club of America selects the Shining Star Ambassador from entries submitted by Collie owners throughout the world. The awards program is open to any Collie that works in any of five categories: service dog; therapy dog; library dog; search and rescue dog; and protector dog. A protector dog has done any exceptionally good deed for his family or the community.

All the Shining Star applicants should be proud of all their accomplishments with their Collies. This year we awarded Special Medallions to the category winners. All applicants meeting the Shining Star criteria receive a frame-worthy certificate.

The Collie/human team that is selected as the Shining Star Ambassador team is the representative of all the Shining Star nominees. The Collie Club of America takes great pleasure in introducing the **Shining Star Ambassador Team** for 2023:

John DeSantis & Ingrid

Their story begins in the Spring of 2019 when John wanted to switch jobs. After fifteen years as Vice Principal at his school, John decided it was time for a change and went back to classroom teaching full-time. As a present to himself for making the move and now with summers off again, he decided to get another dog. John has only ever had Collies, so of course he wanted a Collie. Upon meeting Ingrid, he knew she was a wonderful dog with a great disposition and that Ingrid could do special things. John and Ingrid began training together to become a therapy team. John and Ingrid earned the AKC CGC and AKC Community certifications. John and Ingrid traveled to Delaware to earn their therapy certification from PAWS for PEOPLE.

With the ongoing pandemic, hospitals in the area were not allowing visitors yet—including dog teams. Not to be deterred, John started cold calling different locations volunteering to bring Ingrid to visit. They spent time with first responders, greeted staff and patrons at different businesses, attended outdoor community events, and traveled to schools to various senior healthcare facilities. Ingrid was a hit wherever she went. Little by little Ingrid's popularity and awareness grew throughout the community. So much so that the local newspaper ran a front-page article about her and the local ABC TV station highlighted her in their "Philly Proud of" series on the news. Three different local magazines and an online publication have featured articles about Ingrid as well.

John and Ingrid average about four visits per week, completing more than 400 visits in less than two years after being certified. Their adventures also include bringing out the first pitch at a minor league baseball game and recently doing the ceremonial puck drop at a Reading Royals hockey game. Ingrid has previously been awarded the Good Dog Gold Medal for service and won the "Cutest Pet" contest in County Lines magazine this past summer. Ingrid has been dubbed "Chester County, Pennsylvania's Most Famous Dog" and "Chester County's Once in a Lifetime Therapy Dog."

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The Shining Star Committee has awarded Medallions to four Shining Star category winners:

Service Dog Medallion winner is Linda Metz with Arran from Amersfoort, The Netherlands.

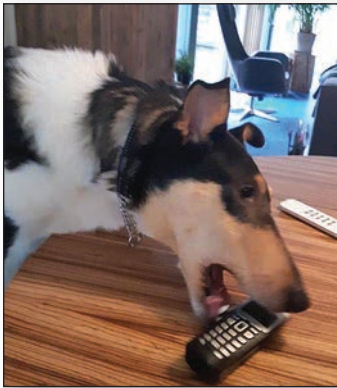
Library Dog Medallion winner is Jane LaSure with Alexander from Cazenovia, New York.

Therapy Dog Medallion winner is Sheryll Barker with Daniel from Cedar Hill, Texas.

Protector Dog Medallion winner is Tammy Roberson with Lassie from Matthews, North Carolina.

Linda Metz & Arran

Jane LaSure & Alexander





Sheryll Barker & Daniel



—SHINING STAR AWARD, CONTINUED...



Tammy Roberson & Lassie



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Shining Star Ambassador Collies “Lifetime Service” Award

Four years ago, the Collie Club of America kicked off the “Lifetime Service” Award to honor Shining Star Ambassador Collies who had passed away. Often, the Shining Star Ambassador team is recognized “mid-career.” The Committee determined that the Ambassador team often continues their extraordinary work for many additional years.

This year we are formally recognizing three Ambassador teams with the Lifetime Service award; the work of these recently deceased Collies touched the lives of thousands of people and enhanced the reputation of the Collie breed over their long careers.



The CCA’s first 2023 Lifetime Service honoree is the 2014 Ambassador team, **Celia Van Voorhis and Danny**. At sixteen months of age, Danny earned his CGC and therapy dog certification with Bright & Beautiful Therapy Dogs, Inc. Soon after Hurricane Sandy hit the Jersey shore, Danny and Celia were volunteers

with the New Jersey Disaster Services Division of the Salvation Army. They spent many hours providing comfort and solace to the victims of the hurricane. Over the years Danny and Celia visited many schools, libraries, nursing homes, and special events in New Jersey.

In 2016 Celia moved to Pennsylvania and didn’t know anyone. She would sit on her back porch and make cold calls, asking if Danny could visit. Danny became part of the Read to the Dog program at two area libraries. Both libraries previously did not have such a program and Celia and Danny pioneered the program. Celia and Danny joined the Columbia/Montour Animal Response Team (CART) where Danny became their mascot and met many people at the Bloomsburg Fair during fair week. Danny participated in Safety Awareness Day with CART. Danny also visited two assisted living facilities; an adult day care; Camp Victory “A Special Camp for Special Kids”; Bloomsburg Children’s Museum and Rohrbach’s Farm Market for their Fall Special Needs evening; and Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center’s teen program.



The CCA also honored the 2016 Ambassador team, **Corinne Boon and Forté**. Forté was Corinne’s mobility service dog and they traveled the world together. Here are Corinne’s words: “Forté really had a great life; his impact on my life is truly immeasurable.

Forté was born into my hands and my heart. My voice was the first voice he heard. We were so completely connected. I held him in my arms as he took his last breath. I looked deeply into his beautiful brown eyes as he slowly closed them for the last time.

Along his 12-year journey he became GCH CH CAN CH INT CH Encore Belfair’s Bold Ruler CGC BN RN PT TKN SSA. With all these accomplishments, his most important role was as my service dog. Forté wore a leather support harness and literally provided physical stability for me. As a mobility support dog, Forté gave me the strength and courage to travel the world independently. We enjoyed traveling to Europe, the Netherlands, Germany, New York, Peoria, Illinois, Kentucky, California, Florida, and most recently to Sunnybank in New Jersey. Forté showed beautifully at the Westminster Kennel Club in New York.

In 2022, Forté was awarded Best Smooth Veteran 11+ and an AWARD OF MERIT at our National specialty in Sandy, Utah, under judges Adria Weiner and Nancy Anstruther.

Yes, I have a debilitating disease, but it does not have me. Forté helped me realize my independence, living each day to the fullest. So many amazing people have come into my life because of our beautiful Collies. With a good dog by your side, anything is possible. When you dream, dream BIG!



We are also honoring the 2019 Ambassador team, **Rose Hutches and Fibber McGee.**

After adopting Fibber, an untrained, high-energy dog in 2013, Rose provided him with gentle, knowledgeable care and training. Fibber quickly earned a variety of competition obedience and performance

titles and was certified as a therapy dog through Therapy Dogs International. Up until the pandemic, Fibber regularly provided comfort and courage to residents of 13 facilities in central Illinois each month. Fibber's schedule was reduced during the pandemic. The 13 facilities included senior assisted care and independent living facilities, a state mental health hospital, a shelter for abused women and their children, and several other facilities including hospital pediatric units, where he provided love and solace to children and their families. He even had patients attack him, and he simply stood still, never reacting.

Fibber's work with those in stressful situations was extensive, and the number of people who benefited from his calm, loving temperament is enormous. His moving, commendable story exemplifies the qualities of loyalty, devotion, courage, and dignity for which the Collie breed is known.

Over the next year, the Shining Star Committee plans to enhance outreach activities by again staffing a table at Sunnybank with the Committee's professional permanent display poster board. The display board contains photos of our Shining Star Ambassador and our Medallion winners; our Shining Star category certificates are displayed along with the medallions. We will make the display poster board and brochures available to Meet the Breeds programs across the USA. The permanent display poster board and carrying case were donated to the Committee by a Collie-loving benefactor; the benefactor has noted that additional donations are coming!

The Shining Star Committee will add a Junior to our Committee; children are our future! We distributed Junior applications to the CCA Membership via CCA News as well as provided copies at the 2023 CCA Specialty. We also plan to fundraise for the Committee's award programs by following the successful model of the Collie Club of Washington.

We believe that the CCA Shining Star Awards program enhances the reputation of our beautiful and versatile Collie breed as well as confirms the value of purebred dogs. We all feel privileged to work on this program for the Collie Club of America. ❖

