

## A joyful milestone for patient – and her dog

*Published 6/7/16 by the University of Kansas Hospital*

**We** would like to share with you a little about a very special Pets for Life volunteer team ... Tricia Melland and her dog Kenny.

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Of all the high school graduations last month, the ceremony at St. Teresa's Academy proved especially poignant for some Pediatrics staff at The University of Kansas Hospital. The class of 2016 includes Tricia Melland, a young woman who has faced years of in-patient treatment for a range of complex gastrointestinal illnesses, including mitochondrial dysfunction, intestinal failure and myopathic pseudo obstruction.

The graduating class also includes her dog, Kenny, a slim Italian Greyhound-Dachshund mix. He's not only a popular therapy dog at our hospital, he's also Tricia's service dog, alerting her when her delicate health starts to decline.



Next fall, Tricia will enter the University of Nebraska-Lincoln honors program, where she plans to study pre-medicine and become a physician. And Kenny, rescued from a shelter, will join her in college.

Their remarkable story has its roots in our hospital.



### Pet Therapy

As a patient in Pediatrics and Pediatric ICU, Tricia first met and fell in love with therapy dogs 10 years ago. She and her mother wanted to give back to the hospital, so they adopted Kenny from the Great Plains SPCA and trained him to join Pets for Life. The group's tail-wagging pooches and their handlers routinely visit our hospital and others in the metro, spreading their joy among patients, families and staff.

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"She's such a sweet girl," added Rosa Fleytas, RN, Pediatric ICU's nurse. "It was heartbreaking to see her go through a very difficult, very complex diagnosis. But when Kenny was in the room, you could see the hope in her face. She was brighter and happier." As they grew closer, Kenny also became acutely aware of Tricia's medical needs. He learned to alert her when she faces medical issues, such as low blood sugar or an autonomic crisis. He once woke her up as her fever rose to 104. She was rushed to the hospital, her condition spiraling into sepsis.

### Inspiration to other Children

"Tricia is a trooper who has overcome numerous medical challenges and hurdles while staying in school," said Sarah Hoehn, MD. "She is an inspiration to other children struggling with chronic illness." Hoehn also gives credit to Tricia's furry sidekick: "Kenny was a source of support and positive energy during hospital admissions." But now Tricia and Kenny are gearing up for college. Kenny even received an acceptance certificate and personal letter from UNL Admissions, welcoming him to campus.

Kenny and Tricia plan to return to our hospital during college breaks as part of their Pets for Life duties; however, Kenny already has trained his replacement, Esky, also a rescue dog, to take over Kenny's weekly visits at our hospital.

"We know how much it means to patients and staff," said Tricia's mom, "and it's become an important part of our lives giving back to the community."

Tricia & Kenny, We wish you the very best in your new college journey!

*From everyone at Pets for Life*



Don't forget to like our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pages/Pets-for-Life-Inc.](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pets-for-Life-Inc.) We post lots of fun PFL updates and trivia, and occasionally we have giveaways! Stay in the loop, join us on Facebook!



## SPRING STARTS MARCH 20, 2017 Hello Spring!

Does anyone have something you would like to share with other volunteers in the Newsletter?  
Please email to me for review!

Sharon Wilson sunnyd3@live.com



## Sharing an email from Susie & Yogi

Thank you so much.

I am so grateful for this wonderful opportunity, and I know Yogi and I will love our visits at RMH very much. Yogi is wonderful with kids, and I hope she can bring some comfort, happiness, and smiles to some very deserving children.

Also wanted to let you know that Yogi and I had our bi-monthly visit to Care Haven - Fontana home today. We visited with about 10 residents/staff. I took the darling photo cards of Yogi from Pets for Life, put heart stickers on them, and we passed them out as valentines to all the residents. They were so happy! Rose kept kissing hers. I believe a few of them have a special bond with Yogi (and hopefully me, too), and we look forward to our visits there very much!

Have a great week, and thank you for all you do!

Fondly,  
Susie and Yogi

## Homemade Treat For Healthy Pets



By: Dr. Karen Becker

Liver and other organ meats are an essential part of the natural diet of wild canines and felines. Here's a tasty way to serve it to your domesticated pooch or kitty.



### INGREDIENTS:

1 lb. beef liver, thinly sliced 2 Tbsp. dried parsley

### PROCEDURE:

1. Dry the liver slices by blotting them with a paper towel, and then dust them with parsley.
2. Transfer the liver to a greased cookie sheet, and bake for 30 minutes at 325°F.
3. Remove the cookie sheet from the oven, flip the liver slices, and then bake for another 20 minutes.
4. Once the liver is cooked, transfer to a cooling rack. Once cool, cut into bite-sized cubes. Store in the refrigerator and consume within one week. If stored in the freezer, this can stay fresh for up to three months.



**Forward on  
March 12th!  
Daylight  
Saving Time  
begins!**



## Thank You For Your Support

Pets for Life is very grateful for the gifts from individuals, foundations and businesses. Please accept our thanks for the following:

John B. Rust Charitable Trust	\$5,000
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## VOLUNTEERS THAT HELP WITH EVENTS- WINNERS !!!

October - Joan Morrill

November - Terri Stamper

December - David Miller

CONGRATULATIONS and  
THANK YOU!

## A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUN-

### December

Marney Frye and Bella  
Elizabeth Boydston and Birdie  
Darla Morris and Boeing  
Karen Fitzgerald and Calvin  
Loring Leifer and Loki  
Cheryl Crudup and Rango  
Betsy Klein and Newton

### January

Cheryl Roht and Monty  
Sarah Rehme and Matisse  
Lisa Lujin and Howie  
Jacqueline Hansen and Annie  
Max Hansen and Annie  
Carrie Viser and Libby

## EASTER IS APRIL 16TH

WISHING  
EVERYONE  
A VERY



<http://www.kcpetsforlife.com>

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Pets For Life newsletter is published quarterly in Kansas City, Missouri,  
by Pets For Life., a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation: all donations are tax deductible.  
Pets For Life, receives no government funding and relies solely on your gifts and donations.  
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