

Puppy Love

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Addie Comes to Sandy Hook

Newtown, Connecticut experienced one of the most tragic days in our nation's history when a deadly mass shooting occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School, killing twenty children and six staff members. Within hours registered therapy dog teams made plans to travel to Newton, in total seventy dog teams assisted victims following the tragedy. Addie started out as the sole comfort dog for Sandy Hook Elementary School. Jenn Marr, Addie's handler and coordinator for the project said, "The responsibility was overwhelming, but when I saw the ability of this dog, I knew I would be all right," With tears in her eyes Ms. Marr said, "Addie and I have seen so much. We have seen children want to come to school just to see her. Children have gone to their classroom and been able to focus on work because Addie was beside them. Special students have been given one-on-one time with Addie for brushing, giving water and hugging. Addie just seems to know what each child needs to get them back on their path to recovery. I have seen the worst of the worst with what happened at Sandy Hook, and I have seen the best of the best with the comfort dogs. I am just so happy I am able to serve the children in such an important way." Addie eventually went on the school districts payroll becoming a five-days-a-week employee at the relocated Sandy Hook Elementary School. Every day Addie goes to work she sports her blue jacket with the words; Please Pet Me! Addie was trained by K9 Comfort Dogs, a mission outreach program of Lutheran Charities.



Addie Starts a Trend

Many parents who previously never wanted a dog have purchased puppies for their families after seeing the effects of the therapy dogs. Kim Calbo of Newtown and her 12-year-old daughter, Gabrielle, now own Cooper, a goldendoodle. "It's puppyville around here. Everybody's getting dogs," Calbo said.

Addie's Awards

- Top 11 Animals of 2013.
- The ASPCA Dog of the Year.
- The Pet of the Year by the Connecticut Veterinarians Medical Association

Dogs and angels are not very far apart. Charles Bukowski



Good Morning America anchorperson, Lara Spencer awarded special recognition to Ms. Marr and Addie for their work with Comfort Dogs. The national program was presented a new van to transport the dogs to anywhere a tragedy might occur and comforting is needed.