

February 22, 2012 Written by Greg Hayward

Rudy Earns Therapy Dog International Active TDIA Certification and new AKC ThD

Title: CT Ike von der Neuen Welt: RE, ThD, aka “Rudy” By 2x VA Fabian vom Mittelwest SchH3, KKL1 (2005 Universal Sieger) X V Serra von der Neuen Welt SCHH1 KKL1.

Many of you reading this may know the following TDI definition. What is new is the AKC ThD title recognizing the TDIA work listed below.

Therapy Dogs International (TDI®) is a volunteer organization dedicated to regulating, testing and registration therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers for the purpose of visiting nursing homes, hospitals, other institutions and wherever else therapy dogs are needed. These dog handler teams passed the 14 point TDI certification tests. To belong to Therapy Dogs International (TDI®) all dogs must be tested and evaluated by a Certified TDI Evaluator. A dog must be a minimum of one (1) year of age and have a sound temperament. Each dog must pass a temperament evaluation for suitability to become a Therapy Dog, which includes the American Kennel Club’s Canine Good Citizen Test (CGC). The test will also include the evaluation of the dog’s behavior around people with the use of some type of service equipment (wheelchairs, crutches, etc.). The TDIA Certificate is given to dogs that register at least 50 visitations.



Rudy is on the right and Patti Barra’s Nohea is on the left in this picture from the rainy and cold American Cancer Society Walk and Roll Fund Raiser May 7, 2011. Roller Blades, no problem! In addition in the past years, our team of 4 to 8 GSDs encountered wheelchairs, crutches, thousands of walkers, and hundreds of bicyclist during this 5 mile walk. We get requests to pet our dogs throughout the event.

AKC Therapy Dog Title (ThD): *On June 27, 2011, the American Kennel Club launched its AKC Therapy Dog Title Program to honor those who have unconditionally given so much. To achieve AKC’s*

Therapy Dog or “ThD” title a dog must be certified or registered with an AKC-recognized therapy dog organization, perform a minimum of 50 documented visits and be an AKC Dog through either AKC registration, PAL listing or AKC Canine Partners enrollment.

Here is our story. Rudy became a CGC at 8 month and was certified as TDI in May 1st, 2008 at 13 1/2 months old. Since that time, we have systematically recorded our TDI visits on the sheets TDI requires for documenting visitations to facilities, homebound patients, or other alternate settings as a volunteer doing Therapy Work. We completed the 50th visit on January 12th 2012 and receive our TDIA on February 22, 2012. We made visits to a home bound patient that loves seeing Rudy, public events and nursing homes. It was mutually rewarding for me and Rudy and the folks we visited.



Featured in the August 17, 2011 picture above is Mary Ann Riecke (at Forest Villa Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Nile, IL) who founded and managed Tail Waggers Dog Training Club where Rudy was certified as a TDI Dog. She was one of our first Lincolnwood instructors and mentored us in so many ways from puppy training to TDI Certification to Rally Titles. LTC is where Rudy earned his CGC at 8 months. Mary Ann encouraged us to show in Rally and we earn our RN, RA and RE. She taught us so many things about handling & training; and she even taught us how to fill out the AKC Trial forms.

I am proud to say I handled and put a TD Title on her female GSD Fiona the Sunday after Rudy earned his VST and CT. Fiona's TD Title (Fiona's 1st AKC title) was my Birthday Present to Mary Ann on Mary Ann's Birthday. It made her day and her Birthday special for both of us.

Mary Ann passed away on February 20, 2012 and is now in our memories. All I can say is, look for ways to pay it forward whenever you can because life is too short.