

# You've Got A Friend – Landry the Therapy and ESA Dog

by *Eric King*

My wife “Ava” and I first moved to North Carolina in 2006. Ava wanted a new dog. She had lived in apartments before we got married, but we now had a yard for a dog. My wife did her research and she decided on a Lhasa Apso. We were able to find a local breeder here in North Carolina, Jerri McDonough. Ava picked up Landry from Jerry; it was love at first cuddle. Little did we both know that Landry's ability to provide other people the love and comfort needed was a natural talent.

We were told by many people, including our groomer Meg Wood, that Landry was not a normal Lhasa Apso. Landry has an excellent temperament. Ava and I decided to encourage this unique trait. We took Landry to Bonn-Clyde Dog training in Sanford, NC. Landry did excel in the puppy classes. We decided to attend a Canine Good Citizen class with him. Every week we would drive to classes and learn about obedience, distractions, and how to interact with the public. Landry passed his CGC test with flying colors. We also decided to take the Therapy Dog exam.

The Therapy Dog exam has two, or three differences from the CGC test. The first difference is distractions from other people and kids. The second difference in the test is being around wheelchairs and walkers, common items in most nursing homes. The final difference is to leave food or other items on the floor. Much like the CGC test, Landry passed the Therapy Dog test with flying colors.

Landry received his Therapy Dog certification via Therapy Dog International, TDI. I was Landry's trainer and handler. Landry and I visited local nursing homes and hospitals in the Greensboro area. The most rewarding part of these visits was putting a towel on the bed of some of the residents and letting them pet Landry. They would talk about the memories and experiences of owning a dog. They would speak with me about their dog and some of their fond memories of their dog. Landry could tell that they were happy and would snuggle with them while lying on the towel. One of the most rewarding things we did with TDI was visiting the Greensboro Children's Library. That is where Landry took part in a TDI program called Tail Waggin' Tutors. The Tail Waggin' Tutor program allows kids to read books to dogs and grow confidence in reading.

“Landry was a great hit with the children as a 'Tail Waggin' Tutor'. He was gentle and calm. The children felt comfortable enough to sit on the floor with him as they practiced their reading skills.”



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My wife Ava is a traveling doctor and works at hospitals all over the country. She has spent most of her time over four years at hospitals in Des Moines, IA. Landry was Ava's companion and support when she worked in Iowa. Landry was more than Ava's companion pet while working in Iowa though. Landry became Ava's Emotional Support Animal (ESA).

**Name:** Landry, CGC TKN  
**Sire:** Ch Barjea' Just Terrific  
**Dam:** Ch Barjea' Tiffany of McGD'



## A Picture Is Worth A 1000 Words!

