



Newfoundland Dogs  
Spreading Hope & Healing

## 2024 Impact Report



Supporting our heroes

# *It started with a brain tumor and a promise.*

My Dear Friends,

Many of you know my story. In September 2015, I was diagnosed with a massive, brain-crushing tumor. After being told I might not survive the night, a nurse asked if I needed anything. All I could think to ask for was a dog. A volunteer arrived with a small Corgi, and as I wrapped my arms around him, I felt an overwhelming sense of peace. In that moment, I made a promise—if I survived, I would find a way to pay that gift forward.

And I did. When that day came, Chewie, my first therapy dog—who loved giving sloppy kisses and stood about a foot taller than the average Newfie—entered my life. To the heartbreak of all who knew him, Chewie passed away this year. But not before he inspired a new generation of therapy teams. Today, nearly a hundred volunteers across the country are spreading hope, unconditional love, and healing in their communities.

This fall, when Hurricane Helene tore through Western North Carolina, leaving behind devastation and loss, our teams responded. As soon as it was safe to travel, our volunteers mobilized. Firefighters and rescue workers Ed Thompson and Jennifer Williams drove up from Charleston, SC. Air Force veterans Ralph Selius and Jana Rife arrived from Georgia, their Newfie therapy dogs—Skylar, Odin, and Molly—packed in and ready to bring comfort. Volunteers whose own homes were still without electricity and running water didn't hesitate to load up supplies and therapy dogs to help others. Among them were Jeanette Cothorn, Katie Ammons, Valerie White, Larry Boyer, Linda Hiestand, and Melissa Monroe with their gentle giants—Taft, Louis, and Scarlett. Together, these incredible teams visited some of the hardest-hit areas, including Hendersonville, Black Mountain, and Swannanoa.

One moment stood out as a powerful testament to the healing bond between animals and people. Our therapy team returned to a high school where, 18 years ago, my co-founder, Patti Sutherland, and her therapy team—led by Hudson—helped at-risk students find hope. Because of their past impact, we were asked to return, this time to help students and staff face their first day back to school after the floods. Many had lost loved ones and homes. Trauma was everywhere. But when our dogs walked through the doors, they were met with laughter, tears, and embraces.

One child's words will stay with me forever: "Thank you for giving me the courage to come back to school."

This is why we do what we do. And this is how you have made it all possible—through your kindness, generosity, and unwavering support. Thank you for standing with us. Thank you for believing in the healing power of love—on four paws.

With gratitude,



Through your support  
we've been  
able to help over  
203,898 people!

*Lisa Schiffer*  
President

# Mission

Platinum  
Transparency  
2025

**Candid.**

OUR MISSION IS SIMPLE - HOPE ON A LEASH

SPREADING JOY, HOPE AND HEALING TO PEOPLE  
RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA OR ILLNESS.

Since becoming a 501c3 non profit organization in North Carolina in 2018, we've helped 203,898 people. Over 100 volunteers provide community support to veterans, firefighters, law enforcement officers, EMTs, healthcare workers, teachers, students, pediatric patients, adults battling illness - anyone and everyone who needs comfort, stress relief, and, most of all, hope.





# Honoring Chewie: A Legacy of Love

He was more than my companion—he was my inspiration. Chewie's impact on the people he met was profound, and it was because of him that the Newfie Therapy team was born. We wanted the love and healing he shared to reach far beyond what the two of us could do alone. Throughout his life, Chewie supported more than 5,200 people—patients, veterans, first responders, and healthcare workers. He was by my side as I recovered from brain surgery and gave me the strength to face the devastating news that my tumor was growing back. He stood with healthcare workers and first responders during their longest days battling COVID, offering comfort when they needed it most.

And in the quiet moments of hospital ICUs, he gently soothed grieving families as they said their final goodbyes to loved ones.

Saying goodbye to him was one of the hardest days of my life. But the greatest gift of loving a dog like Chewie is the legacy they leave behind—a legacy of unwavering love and healing that continues to grow. ♥



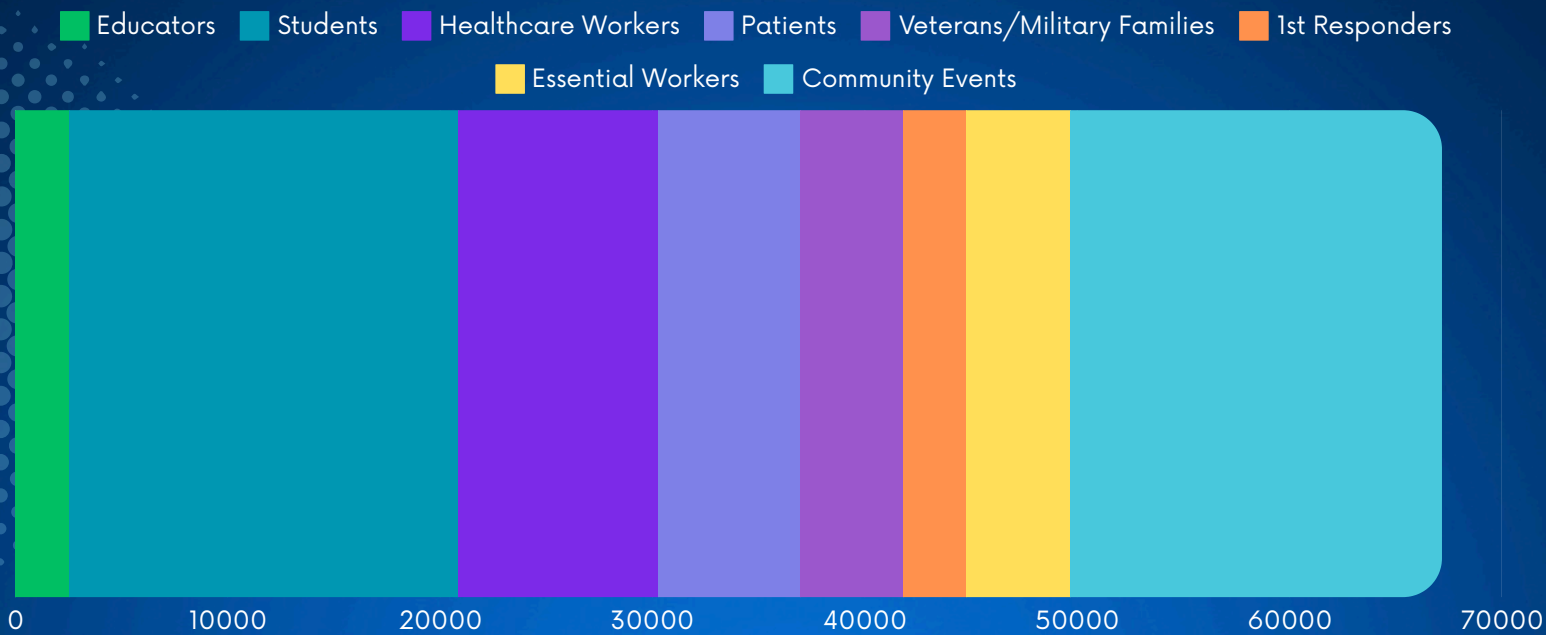
## Coming Soon: Chewie's Comfort Kits

In honor of Chewie's memory, we are launching a new phase of Mission Pawsitive—Chewie's Comfort Kits.

These special care packages will be sent to people who need a little extra hope, support, and encouragement. Soon, we'll be accepting nominations, so you can help us bring comfort to those facing difficult times—just as Chewie did every day of his life. Stay tuned for more details!



# Who we helped in 2024



**67,078  
people  
supported!**

**Brought trauma  
and stress relief  
to more than  
2958 1st  
Responders**



**Provided  
uplifting animal  
therapy to 3863  
Veterans**



# Helping WNC Recover from Hurricane Helene

In the wake of Hurricane Helene's devastation, our therapy teams became a lifeline for communities grappling with loss, trauma, and uncertainty. Studies show that up to 40% of disaster survivors experience PTSD, anxiety, or depression, with children being especially vulnerable. From flooded homes to overwhelmed shelters and schools, our volunteers and their gentle giants provided comfort, courage, and connection when it was needed most. Through every hug, every tear, and every moment of resilience, we witnessed the undeniable power of animal-assisted therapy in helping people heal—turning trauma into hope, one paw at a time

Newfie Therapy teams brought emotional support to 7829 people overcoming the trauma of Hurricane Helene in Western North Carolina





*'Top Dog'*

*Newfie Therapist 2024*

*Boomer*

With 112 visits in 2024, Boomer showed that even battling cancer he's not slowed down from what makes him the happiest, making people smile. He was walking in a parade when a woman ran out of the crowd screaming his name. "Boomer! You helped me beat cancer!" She was a patient that Boomer had sat through countless chemo infusion sessions with. Distracting her from the fear of the treatments. This month it was his turn to ring the bell, for his last chemo session. Then he put on his bib and went back to work, sharing his love with the world!





# Apollo

Apollo made 97 visits this year! Most of his visits supported hospitals in the NC research triangle area, including the Duke Medical Center and the Duke Cancer Center. He comforts pediatric oncology patients while they are getting their chemo infusions, and he brings emotional support to the nursing staff, who are face incredible daily stress, trauma and exhaustion.



# Abraham

Abraham went on 90 visits in 2024! Most of his visits were to first responder stations and into the community to spread joy and stress relief. The work he did with rescue squads, teachers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, linemen, and county workers in the months after Hurricane Helene devastated WNC was his most powerful work yet. Heroes cried into his fur, and he always seemed to know what they needed to walk away smiling and more hopeful than before they'd been touched by him.





# Rocky

Rocky made 88 visits in 2024! He visits with families staying at the Ronald McDonald House, pediatric patients, senior citizens in assisted living, he even helps children learn to read at local libraries!

# Bella & Riley



Bella and Riley made 74 visits this past year and have become quite well known throughout the Northeast! They visit Princeton University with their best friend Newfie Henry and they walk in community parades, visit with veterans, senior citizens, girl scout troops and patients in hospice. Where ever some hope is needed, Bella and Riley aren't far behind.

# Sawdust

Sawdust made 53 visits in 2024, helping veterans, senior citizens, elementary school students and teachers. Sawdust lifts spirits all around!

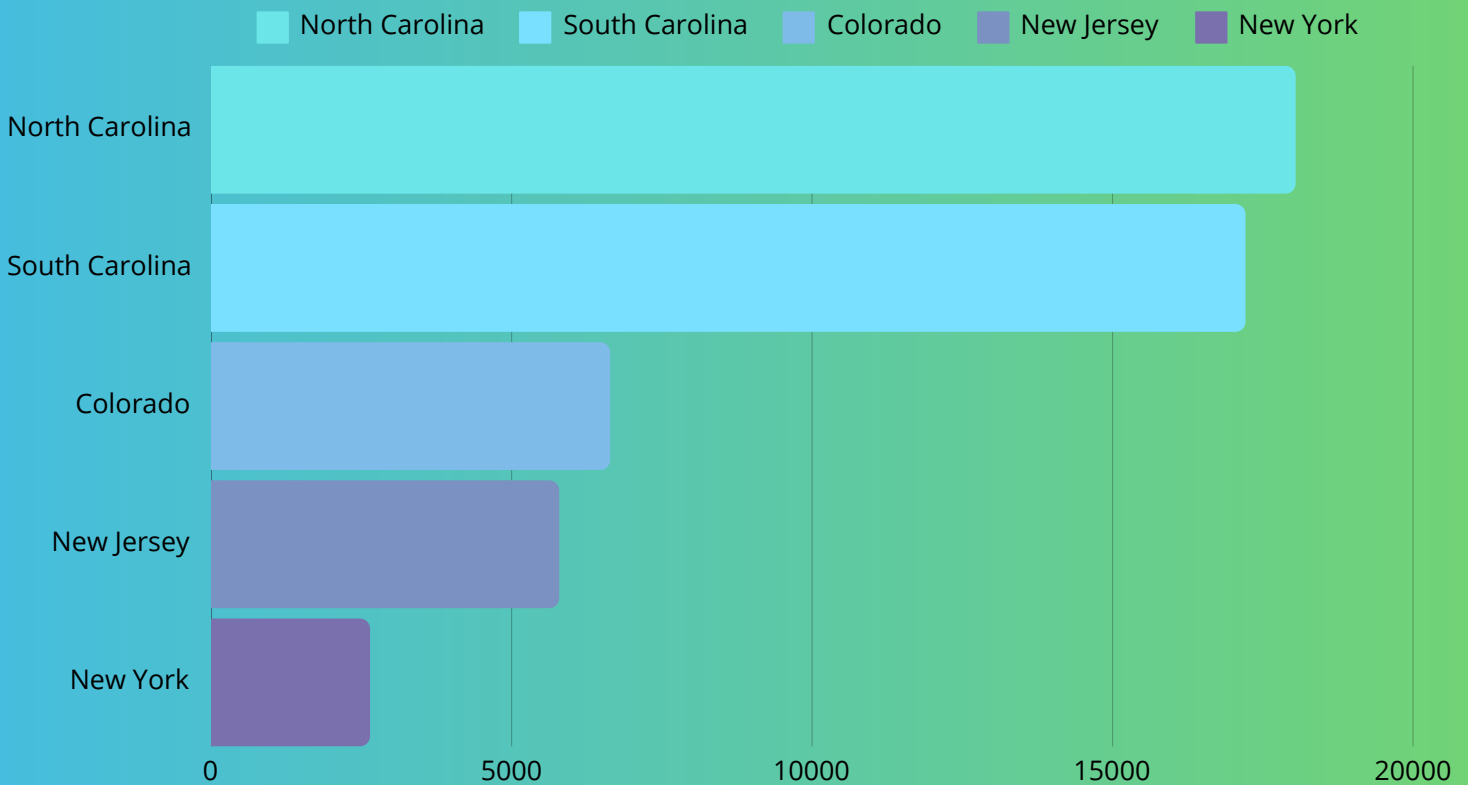


# 2024 Geographic Impact



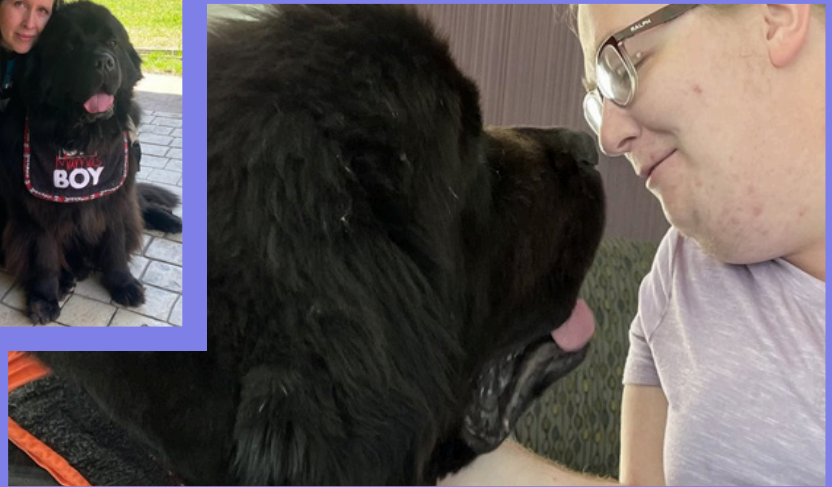
[WATCH VIDEO](#)

## Total people impacted by state - top 5





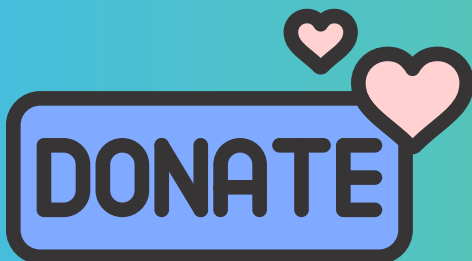
# In the midst of busy lives, taking time to help others and grow this powerful mission



## Newfie Therapy Team

Abraham – Amber - Amelia – Apollo - Aquene - Bailey - Baloo  
Bella - Benjamin – Birdie – Boatswain - Boomer - Chewie  
Cheyenne – Cormac - Dakota – Decklan – Duncan - Edna - Ella  
Ellie – Enzo - Esme – Finbarr -Fluffy- Gabriel - Grace – Gracie  
Griffen - Gus - Hallie Bear - Harper- Henry - Jack - Kai - Louis  
Mango Tango - Mason – Max Bear - Mellie - Mercy - Miche -  
Milan - Molly - Morgan - Nevie - Oden - Oliver – Padric - Pearl -  
Poppy - Rafter - Reddie - Riley - Rocky – Ronin - Rook - Ruby -  
Saana - Sawdust - Scarlett - Serena - Shiprah - Skylar - Sophie -  
Spencer - Splinter - Stitch - Stormi - Taft - Thunder - Toby -  
Walker – Westley - Winston - Yukon Jack

**94%**  
of every dollar spent  
directly supported  
animal assisted  
intervention  
programs





A heartfelt thank you to our generous donors and community partners whose unwavering support has made it possible for us to spread hope and positivity in communities desperate for healing. We are deeply grateful for your partnership.

