

# Community Hospice Home facility dog Magnum brings joy to people's lives

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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## **Public invited to attend seventh birthday celebration on Thursday**

“Magnum,” a hospice therapy labradoodle in Edwardsville, touches the lives of families who come in contact with him.

Magnum's friends and co-workers invite the public to his birthday party from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, at the [Community Hospice Home, Relais Bonne Eau](#) at 7325 Marine Road in Edwardsville. The community can come share some puppy love for Magnum on his seventh birthday and learn about the power of pet therapy. There will be activities for children, treats and any puppy donations will go to C.H.A.M.P. (Canine Helpers Allow More Possibilities) Assistance Dogs & Metro-East Humane Society.

There will also be tours of Magnum's workplace, the Hospice Home.

Carol Mestemacher, Magnum's caretaker, couldn't be more proud of what he does to help people not only at the Hospice home, but everywhere.

“He thinks everybody is here to see him,” Mestemacher laughed during an interview at the beautiful Hospice Home in Edwardsville. “He has evolved and become an ambassador for hospice. He reflects the energy around him. Hospice is about living life to the fullest and that is what Magnum helps show people.”

The Hospice of Southern Illinois Community Hospice Home in Edwardsville rests on serene 17-wooded acres with birds and other wildlife. The residents enjoy the company of Magnum and the other therapy dogs who join him.

Hospice of Southern Illinois Print and Social Media Coordinator Christine Litteken said the facility provides higher levels of care in the home for someone terminally ill. She is a perfect fit for the Hospice of Southern Illinois group with her vivacious personality and caring nature for those who are hospice clients.

This job is something she has done for several years, starting with an internship during college and then being hired immediately afterward.

“I love my job, the work I do both with the hospice home and the Belleville office,” she said.

For her, it is more of a calling than just a job.

Magnum gets very close to those who reside at Hospice of Southern Illinois and their families because of his gentle, compassionate nature. For those who come to the hospice facility it is never known exactly how long they will live, whether it is one day, one

month or six months, but Magnum is always a consistent factor in their lives if they invite him.

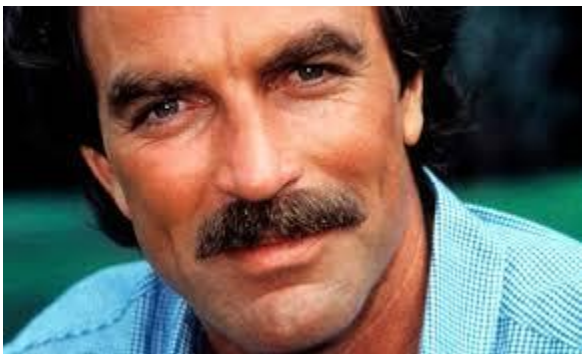
Magnum was specially trained in the C.H.A.M.P. Assistance Dogs Program. It is the mission of C.H.A.M.P. Assistance Dogs, Inc. to improve and enhance life skills and promote companionship through the placement of specially selected service dogs with qualified individuals, and further, to always celebrate the mystery and joy inherent in the canine/human bond. The vision for C.H.A.M.P. at the end of their time together, both partners - dog and human – is to have had a better life because of the other.

Hospice of Southern Illinois has a mission to enhance people's lives. Craig Tarpoff, owner of Andria's Countryside Restaurant, next door, is quite taken by Magnum. He is a constant contributor to the efforts of the Hospice of Southern Illinois in Edwardsville.

Tarpoff helps with vet bills, food, toys and much more for Magnum and also does a lot of other volunteer efforts for the home.

"I consider myself privileged to be associated with him," Tarpoff said. "I have been trained to babysit him and look forward to times I have here with him. I have had dogs all my life; but he is just really special. He reads people's needs. When someone is hurting, he knows it. When they need him, he knows it. "

Magnum received his name because some feel he is a dog look-a-like for Magnum P.I. actor Tom Selleck.



Magnum constantly shows love to Hospice clients and families, Litteken said.

Mastemacher said Magnum has even been trained to deliver cards to patients, holding them gently in his mouth. He often lays down by their bedside or at times at the foot of a client's bed to provide comfort.

Magnum has even been asked to attend funerals after some have passed at the home.

Most days, Magnum makes an appearance at the home and each time, leaves a lasting impact, Carol said.

“He has brought joy and comfort to a lot of people’s lives,” she said.

Those who know Magnum and wish to see him again or others who want to see the Hospice Home and Magnum can visit from 5 to 7 p.m. at the facility at 7325 Marine Road in Edwardsville on Thursday.

[CLICK HERE TO VISIT MAGNUM ON FACEBOOK](#)

[CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT MAGNUM'S BLOG](#)

[CLICK HERE TO SEE MAGNUM ON YOUTUBE](#)



# Come. Sit. Stay.

And Celebrate Magnum's 7th Birthday!



## *You're Invited To* **MAGNUM'S "PAW"TY**

**THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2015**

*5:00 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.*

*Community Hospice Home, Relais Bonne Eau  
7325 Marine Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025*

### **SHARE SOME PUPPY LOVE**

- *Learn about The Power of Pet Therapy*
- *Activities for Children*
- *"Human" Treats and Refreshments Served*
- *Any puppy donations will be given to  
CHAMP Assistance Dogs & Metro-East  
Humane Society*
- *Tours of Magnum's Workplace, the Hospice  
Home, will be available*



[www.hospice.org](http://www.hospice.org)

RSVP or Questions? 618-659-7900

*No pets please.*



