

broke my heart. Because of that difficulty in giving him up, I decided not to do that again."

A year later, in 1992, Gosson said she got bitten by the obedience bug and purchased her first purebred dog, Major, a yellow Lab, to compete in the Canadian Kennel Club sanctioned obedience trials.

"I trained Major over the next seven years to earn the title of obedience trial champion, the highest level a dog can attain. That was one of the highlights of my life," Gosson said proudly. "It took dedication, perseverance and hard work and we both managed to accomplish that as a team effort."

The team also earned two American obedience titles, including one leg toward Major's American Companion Dog Title at the Beverly Hills Kennel Club.

Gosson was secretary of the Belleville and District Kennel Club when she launched the therapy dog program in this area.

"I read a lot about dog therapy and the good that it does. I was very interested in it so I volunteered to be the co-ordinator for the next six years," she said.

Between 1994 and 2000, volunteers and their dogs visited 21 nursing homes every week throughout the Quinte area as well as hospitals in both Belleville and Trenton.

The Gossons, along with Logan and Major, are being honoured later this fall with the Ontario Volunteer Service Award for their decade of service to the dog therapy program.

"Even though we no longer have Major, we both love what we're doing," she said. "It makes us feel good to bring such joy and comfort to these patients and staff."

She said Logan loves being petted. "He was born for this."

The Gossons recently acquired Hudson, their newest black Lab, and they plan to enter him in obedience trials and have him become a therapy dog.

"With his love of people already, I'm sure he will be a great therapy dog once he calms down," she said.

Gosson said there is one advantage to having both Logan and Hudson at home.

"Not only is it a joy to have them around all day, but it's also good therapy for us too."

Contact Henry Bury at:  
[newsroom@intelligencer.ca](mailto:newsroom@intelligencer.ca)