FAST FACTS

- Kol means voice in Hebrew.
- She has been married to Bruce Eisenberg for 29 years. He’s a financial adviser.
- They enjoy travel and cruises.
- The couple has two grown children: a daughter who’s a lawyer in Pittsburgh and a son who is a football coaching intern at Florida Atlantic University.
- She plays mahjong with a couple of groups; one is made up of friends from her former home in Connecticut.

How do visits from Eisenberg and Kol benefit people?

Kol loves everybody. In hospice, where there are patients that are comatose or don’t recognize anyone, the family members get closure from a beautiful dog. And John is wonderful because when you go to see whatever kind of visit they’re in the mood for. It’s a wonderful service.

CINDI METCALF-LEE
GOLDEN RETRIEVER BREEDER

For many of the old people who no longer have dogs in their lives, it gives them the chance to hug and love a dog. It brings back joy and good memories of their own dogs. It’s a stress reliever. Dogs accept you no matter what. They don’t judge you, especially golden retrievers, they just like you.

ON THE SPOT

At Florida Atlantic University during finals, how did the students react to Kol, your certified therapy dog?

It was awesome to watch the students. When they walked in you could see in their faces that they were all stressed out. Their shoulders were tense. They saw the dog and their eyes lit up. They ran over and asked, “Can we pet him?” They just melted. You could see their body language change immediately they relaxed. The stress melted away. They smiled from ear to ear.

How did you get interested in having a therapy dog?

We moved to Delray 11 years ago to take care of our parents. My mom had multiple sclerosis. I had a golden retriever who would sit by her bedside. He became her therapy dog. If she went to the hospital, he’d wait by the front door until she returned. The day she didn’t return, he picked up and went to sit by my father. Golden retrievers are very smart.

What made you decide to train Kol as a therapy dog?

I noticed those same qualities in Kol as a puppy. I figured all I had to do was train him. I already had all the equipment in the house, like the walker and wheelchair. I knew my dog and his weaknesses (he could be distracted with tennis balls or the wheels of walkers in the hallway). Although, I got him for the purpose of showing, after both my parents went to hospice, I wanted a way to give back.

How long have you been working with Kol as a therapy dog?

Five years ago, I took certification training with Therapy Dogs International. Kol has taken many obedience classes and show dog classes. We have been working with nursing homes and hospice for three years. We sometimes visit centers for abused women and children and will be doing more of that.

Kol is a competitive show dog, too?

He’s very well liked. He’s a Grand Champion. He won Best in Specialty at the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club show in 2012. The last time I showed him, in November at the national Golden Retriever Club, he went Select. That’s a big win. He beat 100 dogs.

How has Kol taken to his role as a working dog?

It’s wonderful. At FAU his tail was wagging. He was so happy. He’s awesome in a nursing home. Hospice is a different scenario than a nursing home. It’s a solemn place. I believe not all dogs are mean for hospice. Kol gets it. He really understands. I’ve seen a grown man bent down, sobbing into Kol’s shoulder, and Kol leaned in and licked his face.