Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Short Paws

The official newsletter of Furry Friends P.A.T.S. Vol 19 Issue 2 March/April 2011

Having Children Read to You is Fun!

My name is Mokey, and I'm a black cat. I've been told I'm a fairly large black cat, I weigh about 13 ½ lbs, but who's counting?

For over 3 ½ years now, my human and I have been leaving the house several times a month and going to places where I get to relax on beds while people in those beds pet me. I quite enjoy this (and get in a nap or two as well). For the last year, though, we've been going to a new place, the Morgan Hill library!

See, Furry Friends now has a new program called "Reading Buddies". This program is loosely based on similar programs across the country, and involves children reading to pets to improve confidence and literacy. It turns out that children are much less nervous about reading to a pet than they are to peers or to adults. They get to practice reading, and learn to enjoy it!

For me, that meant that I had to go to a special Reading Buddies evaluation class, where a bunch of dogs and one other cat and I were in a big room, and then read to by children right there! I passed with flying colors, of course, enjoying the petting and ignoring all those silly dogs. What can be easier than lying on a lap while being read to?

Now, I (well, we - the human has to drive and push my stroller!) go to the Morgan Hill library, a school, and a brand-new site, the San Jose library – Santa Teresa branch. We just started that one last month. Just the other day, three different children read to me, one at a time, as I relaxed on a lap and ate treats! I'll tell you, this is the life!

Want to find out how you and your pet can join the Reading Buddies program? Go to http://www.furryfriends.org/RBFAQ.html for more information!

Furry Friends

Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Our mission is to consistently facilitate delivery of the love and affection of our volunteers and their pets. We enhance the lives and touch the hearts of people with special needs.

Board of Directors

President
Anne Tiry

Vice President
Patty Guthrie

Secretary & Treasurer
Newsletter
Randee McQueen

Director
Rhonda Hardy

Administrator
Loree McQueen

Dates to Remember for 2011

Reading Buddies Classes
- March 27
- May 22
- August 28
- November 28

Tricks Classes:
- April 10
- October 23

Captains Meeting
- April 5
- April 11

Generous Donations:

PATS, Furry Friends would not be where they are without generous donations.

In loving memory of Patricia Kathleen Dixon, we receive $1000 from her brother Robert Cramer. Patricia loved the outdoors, animals and various handcrafts, delighted in taking care of other people and touched the lives of many with her smile and generosity.

An anonymous donor sent us $1500 to be uses on administration and office costs.

We received a number of donations for $25 to $250 from members during the holidays, which were all greatly appreciated.

We have also received matching fund donations from many of the companies that members work for

Thank you to everyone that has contributed.

Dues - A little history and what is happening in the future

A few years back, we started charging a membership fee because we were not able to obtain grants and funding for our organization's costs. We didn't want to do this since all of us volunteer our time to visit patients but we had to keep PATS going. There are still no grants available to us for administration or office costs (copies, mailings, insurance, storage, film). Currently our operating budget is approximately $20,000 per year.

We have received donations to fund specific things. We obtained a grant 10 years ago to pay for all of the Polaroid cameras that are now extinct. We also received a donation specifically to pay for the badge machine that we use. We have and are still attempting to get a grant to purchase more of the new cameras that we are using at the sites.

In the past we did "walk a thons" that brought in up to $10,000. The last couple of years we have participated with other groups that managed the walk a thon, but that has not brought in much funding or participation of members. Various members have done candle and make up parties to raise funds along with people participating in Macy's and Barnes and Noble fundraisers and a member doing CGC classes. Our fundraisers paid for many events in the past. We held Dinner meetings for our Captains on a yearly basis. We have had luncheon and dinner meetings for volunteers. We cannot do that now. We hold Captain orientations at Board members office (no cost) and will be having a mandatory Captains meeting at a Board member's home (again no cost but food).

When we did start the membership fees, we also allowed members to not pay due to financial hardship. We have had up to 10% of our members ask for membership dues to be waived. A few have asked for it year after year. The Board has discussed this and realized we cannot allow as many hardship waivers as in the past Beginning this year, hardship waivers are only allowed for one year. If you have applied for hardship waiver you are required to commit to helping for one event during the year. This could be Barnes and Noble, hosting a party that benefits PATS, or an informational event we are asked to attend. If the member does not do an event, they cannot have their dues waived the following year.

We hope with the change in policy and the Boards continued cost cutting we will not need to raise the membership fees in the coming years.

MACY's Community Shopping Day

Furry Friends will participate again this year in Macy's Community Shopping Day. This is a shopping event that offers local non-profit organizations the opportunity to raise funds for their programs. The Community Shopping Day event this year will be held Saturday, May 14, at the Valley Fair, Stanford and Pleasanton stores.

Furry Friends members sell "shopping passes" for $10 each; Furry Friends gets to keep all proceeds from ticket sales. These shopping passes entitle the holder to a special discount exclusive to Community Shopping Day (CSD). These are special events in the stores throughout the day – complimentary food sampling, giveaways, live entertainment, and more.

Furry Friends will also staff a table at the event, from 10am to 8 pm; we will be at the Valley Fair Store. In past years, we have been allowed (encouraged, actually) to bring out Furry Friends with us. This is a great way to promote our organization and do fund-raising at the same time.

Each group participating in the event commits to selling a minimum of 1000 tickets. Last year we sold fewer than 50 – not a great showing, but it did raise money for the organization. Let's do a better job this year!

There is a kick off meeting on March 18, so look for more details after that.

Calendar 2012

We are starting the calendar now for next year. Rhonda and Randee will be working on it. Send your pictures as you take them to : calendars@furryfriends.org or mail them to Randee McQueen, 2633 S Bascom Ave., Campbell CA 95008. If you want them returned, send a return envelope.

Just send us pictures for the general pages of the calendar (top part) We can put about 150 pictures in this part. We have been sent a couple already, please remember to send them all year….. a few from Valentines Day would be GREAT….

For a $5 fee we will put your pets picture on a specified date on the calendar (birthday, anniversary etc) we have the potential of putting in 365 additional pictures this way.

2012 Calendars will go on sale in the middle of December. We will have a PDF version of the Calendar available to be seen at that time.

Does Furry Friends Have Your Correct E-mail Address?

If in DOUBT….
Send an email to : admin@furryfriends.org
Send your name and your current e-mail address

Furry Friends is on FACEBOOK!

If you have a Facebook account, you can find Furry Friends as a group by searching for Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services. Furry Friends is also listed as a Cause Too! You will need the "Causes" app installed on your account. To find Furry Friends, open up the Causes app and search for Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services. Yes, we are in the digital age!

CRITTER DOCTOR COLUMN

JULIE C. BOND, M.S. ~~~~~~~~~~ ANIMAL BEHAVIORIST

A number of you have written to me asking about whether things you've noticed on your teams should be reported or not. Many of you have seen your teammates obviously ignoring rules and guidelines that we've set up for the safety of our pets and the people we visit. Some of you, on the other hand, are simply noticing nagging issues that you wish would get resolved, but you don't want to point fingers! A couple people have noticed quite serious issues on their teams and are unsure as to how to proceed with reporting what they've noticed and are concerned about. Given all of this, it seems to me that it is time to review how to report what you see, when to report what you see, and review what happens to those reports.

First, no matter what you have noticed, big or small, you should clearly identify the problem to your team captain. They are a volunteer just like you, but they have the added power of being able to approach the board of directors and myself for help solving larger issues. Small issues can be addressed by your team captains directly. For example, if you notice a teammate routinely showing up for visits without their Furry Friends t-shirt, badge, and/or leash, bring this to your team captain's attention. This does not require a formal report by your captain, but they do need to speak to that volunteer and remind them of why we wear our badges and t-shirts, and use our matching leashes; these items promote group uniformity and make us look like professionals.

If you notice a teammate's dog growling at another dog on your team, however, please let your teammate know immediately what you observed. From their end of the leash, they may not have seen the behavior occur. You also need to make the captain aware of your observation. By keeping your captain "in the loop," they can determine if this growling is most likely a onetime occurrence (e.g. one dog invaded another dog's space in a tight corridor and a growl occurred), or whether this growl is one of many and indicative of a larger issue of intolerance or incompatibility between dogs on your team. If growling is occurring routinely between members' dogs on a team, the board and I want to know about it! Your captain doesn't need to file a formal incident report IF no contact was made between the two dogs or a dog and a human. However, they do still need to report the growling so that I may step in and make my recommendations for how to proceed. Growling is a pre-aggressive behavior and needs to be addressed by me. I may decide to attend a visit so that I may observe the dogs myself; I may suggest staggering these two dogs' visits (one does the first half hour of the visit and the other is "the closer"); I might want the dogs to come on opposite months for their visits; or finally, I might suggest moving one dog to a new team. For example, switching to a new team may be the easiest solution if one of the growling dogs is new to the team and thus a disruption not previously experienced.

If you have reported something to your team captain, regardless, of how big or small, they should address the issue. If you feel that a reasonable amount of time has passed and they still have not addressed the problem (or the person is still flagrantly ignoring the rules as outlined by your captain), then feel free to contact the Furry Friends board of directors. They are volunteers just like you and are happy to help you sort out what you are observing on your teams. They will help your team captain to clear up any issues that arise and will bring any behavioral concerns to my immediate attention.

I realize that it is such an old adage that there is no "I" in "team," but this really is true. We are all on the same team…Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services. We are all working together to lick loneliness in our communities. This is such a wonderful organization and we all benefit and thrive from continued communication and interchange of thoughts and ideas. Please continue to keep me abreast of what you are observing on your teams. I am happy to discuss any issue with you either via phone or email. Thank you to all of you who shared your experiences and frustrations with me over the years. I appreciate your faith in me and my ability to help you work through these issues and continue to have enjoyable, productive visits.

Welcome New Members

Jennifer Parks	Opal
Nina Chan	Pualani
Christine Byerley	Suki
Mary Tremaine	Gizmo
Susan Kane	Riley
Dana Holve	Denali & Tioga
Mathew Holve	Sierra
Lissa Sheldon	Bailey
Barbara Lee	Coconut
Michelle Liu	Charlie
Anne Kearney	Dexter
Donna Wagner	Lacie
Melissa Wagner	Lacie
Wendy Sprague	Molly
Lindsay Sprague	Molly
Kris Heil	Bitsy
Quinn Winters	Toluca

Pets that have earned their wings

Griffey ~ Barbara Eisenhauer

Furry Friends
Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Furry Friends Captains:

It has been a long time since we have had a captains meeting, and several of you have said that you miss them. In our current financial situation, we are unable to pay for one meeting at a hotel as in the past. As a compromise we decided to hold the meetings in a board members home.

We have scheduled two dates for you to choose from:

Tuesday April 5
Monday April 11

Each session will begin at 6:30pm at Randee McQueen's house, 906 Sweetbriar, Campbell, and will last approximately 2 hours. Sandwiches and drinks will be provided. Along with board members, Julie Bond, our animal behaviorist, and Loree McQueen, our administrator will also be participating in the meeting.

Attending a meeting is required. For those that are unable to attend either date, we will attempt a third day or other arrangements will be made. There may be a fee charged for separate arrangements.

Little issues at sites have been brought to the attention of the Board and we realized that we needed a refresher course on rules and confirm the reasons for the rules. We will go over what is and is not appropriate for visits (no pinch collars, ever, for example), and discuss how to handle various incidents or issues that might arise during a visit. There will also be plenty of time for questions.

For Captains that would like either a Fuji or Pogo camera, please let Loree know when you RSVP.

Please RSVP to admin@furryfriends.org with which date you will attend.

Membership Renewal

Name: _____

Additional names under the same address _____

Address: _____

City _____ Zip: _____

Phone # _____ email: _____

Individual $40 _____ Family : $60 _____

Send payment to:

PATS, Furry Friends
P.O. Box 5099
San Jose CA 95150-5099

or go to our website and pay using PayPal

http://www.furryfriends.org/memberRenewal.html

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San Jose CA 95150-5099