



Short Paws

The Official Newsletter of Furry Friends P.A.T.S.

Vol 20 Issue 1

Spring 2012

Furry Friends Visit Monta Vista

On December 12, the day before first semester final exams, nineteen Furry Friends members and their eighteen dogs paid a special visit to Monta Vista High School in Cupertino. After our first successful visit in June 2011 we were again invited to come at lunch time as part of their stress relief program. Special thanks to Monta Vista Senior Danielle Kim for acting as our liaison to the school and for arranging the visit.

This is the email we received from Assistant Principal Dennis Plaza following our visit to Monta Vista High School in Cupertino..

Dear Rhonda,

Several students approached me to express their excitement and appreciation for allowing such an amazing group of Furry Friends on campus. It was enjoyable for the admin to see our students interacting with such well behaved canines. They had a ball. We hope all of you will be able to join us again in late spring for second semester finals. I also want to thank our MV Senior, Danielle Kim for introducing me to Furry Friends and the good work all of you do. I believe your visits will become a Monta Vista Tradition. Thanks to all and especially our four legged friends. They were Stars!

~Assistant Principal Dennis Plaza



Participants in the Monta Vista visit:

Maud Goldfield with Liberty
Heather Lilly with Carter
Nancy Wong with Niki
Dave & Bonny Morley with Jeremy
Stephanie Anderson with Zoë
Naomi Bloom with Cindi
Janet Gee with Mulligan
Julia Mitchell with Kitty (kitty is a dog)
Susan Pinheiro with Chloe
Patty Guthrie with Crystal
Danielle Kim with Mochi
Wynter Schuyler with Shep
Sarah Vaden with Sambuca
Wendy Sprague & Liz Sprague with Mollie
Kristy Sieverson with Ruby
Sandi Diamond with Mr. Darcy
Rhonda Hardy with Penelope

**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.

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Please Note...

When we visit a Furry Friends site we are visiting with the elderly, sick folks, kids in crisis and others. Furry Friends gives them a little time to be absorbed in something other than the things in their lives that aren't so terrific, such as an illness, and they can forget about those things while we are there. It's truly a privilege that we are able to provide this service with our wonderful pets during what may be a difficult time for those we are visiting.

During our visits, we need to refrain from asking any questions relating to their illnesses or life situations. Not only does this remind them of something they would like to get away from for a few minutes, but it is truly none of our business. Of course, some will offer information about what is going on in their lives, and we can/should listen and let them talk. But as soon as the opportunity arises, a good plan is to redirect the conversation to something else, such as asking if they have any pets. Likewise, we should not be volunteering personal information about ourselves or our families. If asked a question, respond as broadly/generically as possible and, again, redirect the conversation.

Thank you for observing the boundaries!

Furry Friends will now accept titers for distemper/parvo or FVRCP, if deemed appropriate by the animal's veterinarian.

Due to state law, titers cannot be accepted for rabies.

The vaccination form has been updated to reflect this change:

http://www.furryfriends.org/pdf/vaccination-form_1.c.v.1.c.pdf

*Pets that have
earned their wings*



*Buster Kirk
Dixie Reynolds
Stubby Tse
Obi Barker
Peanut Bruce
Rosie Premeau
Maggie Walker
Teruu McQueen
Sofie Brown
Cindi Bloom
Pearl Baenziger*

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner is Monday, May 7

Please join us...

Recently, you may have received an EVITE invitation and email about the Furry Friends Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. This is going to be a fun event for our members to get together and enjoy a yummy dinner while we recognize the dedication of our volunteers. In addition to dinner, there will be a raffle with a chance to win some great prizes. Tickets will be sold at the door and are \$5 each or \$20 for 5 tickets.

When: Monday, May 7th at 6:30pm

Where: Casa Lupe Mexican Restaurant, Campbell

Cost: \$5 for members and \$20 for non-members

You can pay online via <http://www.furryfriends.org/storeAccessories.html>

or you can mail a check to PO Box 5099 San Jose, CA 95150-5099.

(Please indicate number attending and Member Dinner on the check memo line.)

RSVP: michelle@furryfriends.org or respond to the EVITE by April 21, 2012

Looking forward to seeing you there!!



Want to Join an Off-Leash Team? Check the Dates Below

Several of our Furry Friends sites are off-leash visits: Juvenile Hall, Eastfield Ming Quong, Gilroy Children's Home, San Jose Family Shelter, Services for Brain Injury.

Our policy has been to evaluate dogs for off-leash teams during a 15 minute session at the end of the regular etiquette class. This really isn't sufficient to do a proper evaluation for these off-leash teams.

So beginning in 2012, we will be holding separate off-leash evaluation sessions, similar to how we are doing the Reading Buddies evaluations. The schedule for the off-leash classes is listed below, and the cost will be \$20. Classes will be at 1:30pm, in the Campbell area; details will be provided prior to the class.

If you are already a member of an off-leash team, you do not need to attend this class. This is for new off-leash team members only.

May 20
August 19
November 18



Critter Doctor Column

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

Q I am a long time member and I do visits with one of my dogs at two nursing homes, as well as a Reading Buddies visit. My dog loves all of her visits, but I'm thinking I'd like to add my new dog to our visit schedule. Do I have to do the etiquette class again? The Reading Buddies class? Do I have to complete any forms to add another dog? By the way: I'm team captain on one of my teams, if that makes any difference at all.

M. in San Jose

A Thank you for all that you do! You will, indeed, need to complete and submit paperwork for the new dog you wish to add to the program. If you go to our website, you can easily complete the forms online or download them and drop them in the mail. You will still need to complete the K-9 Aggression Screen form for your dog and have your veterinarian complete his/her evaluation, as well as respond to the questions regarding vaccines, recent fecal exam results, etc. You will also need to sign up for another etiquette class and complete that class before beginning visits with your new dog. Given that you have attended class once before, you do not need to attend the entire 90 minute class. You will just need to plan to attend the second half where we do the group evaluation with the medical equipment and the one-on-one evaluations of each pet. If you think this dog is a good candidate for the Reading Buddies program as well, then you will need to sign up for one of those upcoming classes too. Unlike the etiquette class, you will need to attend the entire Reading Buddies class as I'm actually evaluating the animals the entire time we are in class. Even when I'm lecturing and discussing expectations, I'm observing the dogs for fidgeting, anxious behavior, etc. Once your new dog has been evaluated at the Reading Buddies class, you are then free to begin taking him onto your visits at the library as well. Just remember, you can only bring one dog on each visit; if you want to bring both dogs and rotate them, you will have to leave one dog in the car and go out and switch mid-visit, as long as this is approved by your team captain and the facility.



**Do we 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

Critter Doctor Column

Q My dog and I attended the last Reading Buddies class in November. We did our first visit at the library last month and had such a great time, although I did have to wake my dog up once when he fell asleep! Anyway, I noticed something on that visit that I wanted to bring to your attention. I'll admit I didn't feel comfortable bringing this up to my team member; I figured as the newest team member, it might not be appreciated. Anyway, for the entire visit, this person sat next to her dog, but never once held onto her dog's leash. Kids came in, sat near the dog and even laid on him, and she never once picked up the leash. At one point, a little boy was holding the leash, but not her! I should point out that the dog was great; he never got up or even moved, but still...you said in class that we have to always hold onto our leashes regardless of what our pets might be doing. Should I have said something to the team captain? Is there something I should do next time I visit?

A. in Milpitas

A Thank you for the opportunity to address two important issues. First of all, any time you observe something that goes against our group guidelines, don't be embarrassed to bring it to your team captain's attention. If you feel the slightest discomfort about bringing it up during or after the visit, then go ahead and contact them following the visit, either by phone or email, whichever they prefer. These guidelines are in place for everyone's safety and the safety of those we visit. Second, with regard to holding the leash at all times, this is an insurance issue. Our insurance requires our members to be in control of their pets at all times. The fact that your team member's dog never moved during the visit doesn't excuse her from still having to be in control of the dog's leash at all times. A parent might interpret the owner's attitude as uncaring and the pet as not being under her control, and thus not feel safe having their child near that dog. On all Furry Friends visits, volunteers must be in control of their pets' leashes at all times. If a resident, child, patient, etc. asks to hold your pet's leash, you may allow them to hold a portion of the leash, but you still must be in control of the leash yourself as well.

Q I have a general behavior question. How are dogs supposed to greet each other on the street? Is it necessarily different than the way they greet other dogs on their home turf? What about on visits? How should our dogs be greeting each other there?

D. in San Mateo

A This is a great question! Dogs on leash, meeting on the street, are often a bit more on guard or wary when meeting an unfamiliar dog. Some dogs go through very exuberant greeting rituals, complete with jumping around, bowing, open mouth, and even whimpering or yipping. Some dogs may seem very stiff when greeting a strange dog, while others seem very self-assured, with loose body postures and a widely wagging tail. Most dogs are more protective on their home turf and will bark and behave defensively toward an unfamiliar dog. This is why it is often a good practice to introduce your friends' dogs to your dog off of anyone's home turf to help insure that that first meeting is a success. For the purposes of our visits, whether dogs are allowed to greet one another and socialize before a visit begins, is up to the discretion of the team captain. I know for a fact that some team captains like everyone to arrive for visits early so that the dogs can greet one another, smell rear ends, mark and re-mark the grass/bushes/etc. while others don't allow any interaction among the dogs on their team. As dogs become more familiar with other dogs on their team, we tend to see looser, friendly greetings over time, even if the first greeting was a bit tense or stiff. The bottom line? There is no single way that dogs are "supposed" to greet one another. You will see breed differences, sex differences, and age differences in greeting behaviors among dogs and past history of any given dog will obviously affect the way they greet other dogs in general.

Click, Shop, Enjoy... New Furry Friends Logo Store

We've gotten a lot of feedback over the past several months that our volunteers would like more choices in Furry Friends clothing and merchandise. Message received!! We created a brand new store and are offering many exciting choices for both you and your Furry Friend.

Choose from: (just to name a few)

- Men's & Women's Apparel
- Pet Items & Clothing
- Travel & Technology Accessories
- Drinkware & Coffee Travelers



The best part is that a portion of the proceeds from all items sold on the site goes directly to Furry Friends. The revenue earned from the store helps to ensure that our organization will be able to continue its mission and to expand our ability to provide Pet Therapy services to those in need. All items ship from Cafe Press and Cafe Press handles any questions about returns, shipping etc. Keep checking back as we add new products frequently.

Store Link: <http://www.cafepress.com/FurryFriendsPetAssistedTherapy>

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!



Sites Needing Volunteers

Furry Friends often has sites that are either new, or have had volunteers leave, and therefore are requesting more volunteers with pets visit. If you find any of the below sites interesting and would like to join or would like more information, please email admin@furryfriends.org. Please note that some may have restrictions, or be looking for specific types of pets.

Lifeways Senior Center, San Jose, 3rd Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.

This lovely on-leash site has great parking, a bright, happy setting, and seniors who absolutely adore dogs. Large and small dogs are welcome.

Belmont Village, Sunnyvale, 3rd Tuesday at 10 a.m.

This is an Assisted Living Community that offers assistance with daily living. Visits are also made to an Alzheimer's unit. Currently open to any interested volunteers/pets.

Grace Community Center, downtown San Jose, 2nd Saturday at 10 a.m.

A therapeutic recreation center, the only one of its kind in Santa Clara County. It serves the social, recreational, and therapeutic needs of adults with mental illness. The center members come and go during this indoor visit, petting the dogs and engaging with the volunteers - they love animals! We meet in the basement, so members and pets need to be able to negotiate about five step down. Pets should be fairly calm indoors since there is little room to run around. The members often have snacks, so the dogs shouldn't be too grabby - although the members are often delighted to share with the dogs. Sitting, shaking hands, and other simple tricks are much admired.

Gilroy Health Care and Rehab Center, Gilroy, 3rd Thursday at 5 p.m.

This is a large facility with over 100 residents. The facility offers full time skilled nursing for long term stays and for residents unable to live on their own. The facility also has a few people who are there short term for rehabilitation. Most residents are limited in their mobility, some are bedfast. Therefore, we visit the main area by going room to room providing one on one interaction and building friendships. There is also an Alzheimer's wing where we visit in a common area lifting the spirits of the residents there. The staff has been very friendly and the residents love the animals and welcome our visits.

Vista Manor Nursing Facility, San Jose, 2nd Tuesday at 9:45 a.m.

A 100 bed facility in San Jose located behind Regional Medical Center (formerly Alexian Brothers Hospital). The team visits a group of 12 - 15 people in wheelchairs in a large activity room first; then we visit people in their rooms who are interested in seeing the dogs. We also visit the physical therapy room if it is being used. Dogs remain on leash for this visit; dogs or cats of any size are welcome!!

Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall, 2nd and 4th Saturday at 9:45 a.m.

This is a facility for minors who are incarcerated. Volunteers are required to go through police screening procedures before their first visit. Our visits mostly take place outdoors with groups of youngsters and last about two hours. Typically about 12 volunteers attend each month. Active dogs often do well at this visit. Because many dogs are off leash and activity level is high, it is important that all pets be non-aggressive, even in hectic situations, and that owners of small animals monitor them to avoid accidental injury.

As always, please check our website' at <http://www.furryfriends.org/patsSiteNeed.html> for additional sites that are currently looking for new volunteers!