



**Furry
Friends**
Pet
Assisted
Therapy
Services

Short Paws

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

Summer 2015

College Essay: Common Application # 4

“Would you like to pet a dog?” They glance towards the floor where my little brown dog, Hannah, wags her tail. As Hannah and I walk through the entrance, we are greeted by the same patients, two older men and a red-headed lady sitting in wheelchairs. Eagerly petting Hannah, they tell me how soft she feels and how chunky she looks. Hannah and I wander in and out of the many rooms asking patients the same initial question. Some do not understand, others are sleeping, a few say no, but most happily invite Hannah onto their beds. I have been volunteering at the nursing home, Courtyard Care, for seven years, so this routine has become second nature to me. I joined the program, Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services, with my mom when I was ten years old.

As I grew older, I began to visit without her, which gave me a sense of independence. At first it was difficult for me to see these patients in physical and mental decline, but then I learned to focus on the importance of bringing happiness to the patients. Some can talk for hours and hours about their childhood memories. Even if they have already told me the same story, they tell it again with even more enthusiasm than the first time. One older man enjoys describing his childhood border collie, and how the dog liked to chase cars and eat ice cream. Animals not only give a sense of comfort to these lonely patients, but also a form of familiarity that they are able to relive when Hannah and I visit with them.

Any environment where there are animals bonding with humans is where I feel perfectly content. At the nursing home I am able to experience this environment with the patients. The simple action of petting Hannah can make them smile and feel happier. This is why I also like to have animals

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**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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Just a reminder...

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!



**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

*Pets that have
earned their wings*



Rusty Roo Brown

Muppet Guthrie

Jordan DiLeonardo

Honey Niemann

Shasta LaFetra

Busby Papier

Woofers Gabe

Frazier Starbuck

Mulligan Gee

College Essay: Common Application # 4

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around me, which was never a problem for me growing up because my mom is a veterinarian. Through the years I have had various pets from my first pet rat to my most recent addition to my animal family, my horse. Everyday I interact with animals whether it is at the barn where I care for and ride my horse or at the veterinary clinic where I have a part time job. The best feeling is coming home from a long day of school, and being greeted with slobbery kisses as my dogs greet me. I personally know the sense of comfort and pure joy one can obtain just from hugging their pet, but also the emptiness one feels when their pet passes away and this bond is broken.

Animals are dependent on humans, but humans are also very dependent on their pets. This is why I can picture myself as a veterinarian. I can see myself one day wearing a white lab coat with a stethoscope around my neck helping sick and injured animals. Being a veterinarian does not only mean helping animals, but also their owners. The passionate bond between a pet and their owner is something that I know very well. Although this career has its challenges, I would look forward to waking up and going to work every morning because it would mean working in my favorite environment.

Megan Seidel
21 September 2014

We've partnered with Cafe Press to bring you more choices in Furry Friends logo items

The best part....a portion of the proceeds from all items sold on our 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.

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

ID Pictures

For the past 6 years Furry Friends has give an ID card to each of our members and to each of their pets. The pictures were taken at the class. Many people over the past few years asked to have new pictures put on their cards because they changed their hair color, lost weight, changed their haircut etc... Making a new card takes from 7-9 minutes. We have decided we will not make new cards for free. From now on you will need to pay \$10 and MUST send the picture to us in the correct format. Each picture MUST be titled with your name...i.e. john.smith.jpg.... You can not send a pictures that says image001.jpg. It must have your name on it. If you don't have a card and want to send us a picture we will do that for free.

Furry Friends and Stress Relief Visits

For the last couple of years, Furry Friends has been doing visits upon request for stress relief. This happens to be a busy time (late spring). If you haven't been on one of these visits, a team goes to a local college, university, high school, or even a special event such as a wellness camp. These events are similar to a regular visit, but instead of seeing a small group of people, you are potentially seeing hundreds.

We had events in Santa Cruz, San Jose, Milpitas, Cupertino and Santa Clara with more coming over the next few months. Our recent visit to San Jose State was sponsored by their Health Services department. It was during finals week and they were looking for our Furry Friends to de-stress the students. We had a group of 10-12 Furry Friends who interacted with students, faculty, and staff. Each Furry Friend was surrounded by anxious guests wanting to pet, talk to, and get kisses from our team of Furry Friends (several dogs and a cat).

Milpitas high students were treated to a lunch time visits from our Furry Friends as part of their healthy living day's activities. Monta Vista High School students in Cupertino had just completed two weeks of high anxiety Advanced Placement exams and were delighted to pet and cuddle during our lunchtime visit.

Other recent visits included a visit to Santa Clara Law School for their de-stress during Bar Exams, a visit to DeAnza College and a visit to Santa Clara University for Camp PALS.

Look for email notices to come from the Furry Friends administrator to announce these special visits! All special visits are on leash and require badge, shirt and leash!



Dates to Remember 2015

Etiquette Classes

July 26

August 23

September 27

October 25

November 15

Reminder!!

Furry Friends volunteers, please remember to let us know if your phone number, email address, or mailing address change, or if you are no longer able to do your visits. We don't know unless you tell us! To update your information, contact Loree McQueen, admin@furryfriends.org.

Sites Needing Volunteers

New sites are opening all the time. Please check new sites needing volunteers on the website at <http://www.furryfriends.org/patsSiteNeed.html> for additional sites that are currently looking for new volunteers!

If you would like to join or would like more information, email admin@furryfriends.org. Please note that some may have restrictions, or be looking for specific types of pets.



Furry Friends attends various events throughout the year to promote interest in therapy pets, both to prospective volunteers, and in some cases, to a population that may be interested in having our pets visit. Emails are sent throughout the year looking for members who are willing to come to these events and speak with people about Furry Friends, most often bringing their Furry Friends pets along. Recent events so far in 2015 included:

Morris Foundation K9 Cancer Walk, April 19th

Coastal Dog Owners Association Spring Dog Festival, May 17th

There have been several smaller events where somebody has gone one on one to discuss Furry Friends, when invited and after clearing it with the Board of Directors; there are too many of those to mention. If you are invited to speak about Furry Friends, feel free to email the Board and ask for assistance!

We will need volunteers to help out at several additional upcoming events, at least:

- NARF Walk-a-Thon, Los Gatos Creek Park, September 13th (informational booth only)
- Bark in the Park, San Jose, September 19th
- Fall Furry Flurry Walk-a-Thon, Los Gatos Creek Park, October 25th (Volunteers are invited to walk and raise money for Furry Friends, and an informational booth will also be at the event)
- Los Gatos Holiday Parade, December 5th (Looking for volunteers to walk in the parade)

For more information regarding working shifts at the NARF Walk-a-Thon or Bark in the Park, please email patty@furryfriends.org. For more information regarding the Fall Furry Flurry or the Los Gatos Parade, please contact..... And as always, watch your email for other upcoming events!

Sadly, we lost a beloved member of our family when Hyzy Hornyak passed away suddenly March 27, 2015 at the age of 57. She was known for her love of her family and all of her animals. She was a competitor in dog obedience and rally. We knew Hyzy, and her beloved Papillion, Veronica as devoted member of multiple teams working with kids at Ronald McDonald House, Reading Buddies at Morgan Hill Library and Rebekah's Children's Home in Gilroy. Hyzy was a caring, loving person with a warm heart and a constant sense of humor. She had always said "Not to ever mourn her passing but to remember her in life as always smiling and making people laugh." She will be greatly missed.



Looking back, it would be an understatement to say that I was apprehensive prior to meeting Hyzy and Veronica for the first time, in spite of the glowing recommendation by Joanne Vente that Hyzy and Veronica were members of her Reading Buddies-team who would be "perfect" for our off leash, children's-home team. Anyone who has been on our team can tell you that we are more than a tight-knit group that works with troubled kids in a closed-environment. We are a family and, as Captain, I am more than a little picky about who joins "our pack." Little did I know when I first met Hyzy and her little "blinged-out" Papillion, Veronica that I was meeting the personification of everything the Furry Friends Organization and our team stands for.

The connection between Hyzy and Veronica and me was instantaneous, and also not unique. You couldn't help but love them at first-sight either. The kids could always tell that the attraction was mutual, and it was magnetic. Even more amazing was to watch this "Magnetic- duo" do their thing with the kids. Oftentimes she would break the ice by drawing in a group of kids with Veronica's new blingy outfit. Other times she would bring Veronica's obedience equipment and go off to a more open area with a group of kids who sat enthralled as Veronica demonstrated her training and obedience skills. Still other times, when there was an especially troubled kid, who needed something less exuberant and personal, Hyzy would go off to the side and, with Veronica, they would find a way to reach the kid and make things better. Still to this day, I don't know how Hyzy always seemed to know exactly the right thing to do for the kids, but she did, and she did it. I guess that explains why kids would wait in line to read to Veronica if she was busy at Reading Buddies, or walk Veronica at the children's home. When it came to kids, Hyzy and Veronica were literally like the Pied Piper, and it was a privilege to watch.

Beyond the intuitive empathy Hyzy demonstrated toward the kids she worked with, it was her passion and her dedication to Furry Friends and our team that stood out. As a captain, I always knew I could count on Hyzy: She rarely (if ever missed) a visit. A testament of their dedication is that Veronica received an AKC Therapy Dog/ Excellent Title for completing over 200 therapy-dog visits, and that is on top of her CD, CDX, and UD titles. Anyone who competes in obedience understands what an accomplishment that is.

Our pet-therapists teach us to live in the moment because life is short, but Hyzy's passing caught us completely by surprise. I can, however, genuinely say that this is one case where the sense of sadness and sorrow over the loss of a loved one is thoroughly overshadowed by the joy and sense of privilege felt for the time we had. As she wanted, Hyzy has truly left behind a legacy of love that lives on in every kid she touched, and they are many.

-PHIL CAMPEY



Does Your Employer Have a Gift Matching Program?

Many employers in the Bay area have a gift matching program, where they will match charitable donations made by their employees, up to a certain dollar value. Does your employer have such a program? If so, keep that in mind when making your tax deductible donations to Furry Friends!



Critter Doctor Column

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

Q: I have been a Furry Friends member for almost 8 years and I've been a captain for the last 5 years. I have become increasingly concerned about the way some of our members excuse bad behavior on the part of their pets. It seems like every visit I'm telling one team member or another to shorten up their leash, keep their dog out of another dog's personal space, move to the side to let someone and their dog pass in a hallway, etc. Frankly, it's become so frustrating that I'm actually thinking about giving up my role as captain. Policing bad behavior (by people or their dogs!) is NOT why I signed up to be a team captain. Is there something you can do?

M. in San Jose

First, let me just say how sorry I am to hear that the situation has gotten this bad on your teams. At any time, you and any other team captains, are welcome to reach out to the board and let them know that you need me to come out and do a site visit. During that visit, I could address these issues and thus take the pressure off of you. I agree...it IS frustrating. On the last several site visits I've conducted for our group, this was the number one issue I observed.

We all know that our pets must be on leash and that the leash must be under our control on all Furry Friends visits. This does not mean that owner responsibility stops with a leash that is attached to an appropriate collar. Each member is responsible for watching the behavior of their pet. Dogs should not be given enough leash to charge at other dogs or at people. Dogs should not be allowed to drag their owners over to other dogs and get into that other dog's face. This is rude behavior and dogs know it. Dogs who get in other dog's faces are likely to get snapped at...not something we want to see on our visits. I've actually observed dogs trying so hard not to snap; they turn their head, gaze avert, lick their lips submissively, etc. all in an attempt to get the rudely behaved dog out of their face. When that doesn't work, they have to step it up and bark/growl/or snap.

What we need here is a return to polite behavior. Owners standing on their leashes to keep their dogs from charging or getting into other dog's faces. Stepping to the side in busy hallways, tightening up on the leash to allow others to pass. Watching dogs for staring is a big deal as well. I had one Furry Friends member report that a dog stared at her cat, up close, for a full 10 minutes during a Reading Buddies visit where there was a child reading to the cat! When she mentioned the dog's behavior, the owner acted surprised that this was a problem. Staring is an obvious threat for both dogs and cats. Well-mannered dogs and cats will look away to try to avoid confrontation and diffuse the problem, but if another dog or cat persists in staring, a con-

flict can ensue. As pet owners, we must watch what our animals are doing. If we see them staring intently at another animal, we need to redirect their attention to avoid a potential problem.

I know that this may seem quite obvious to many of our members, but the fact that this issue has been brought to my attention numerous times would seem to indicate that it does bear repeating. Please be good pet owners. Watch your animals. Don't let them invade the space of other pets. Don't let them charge at other animals or at people. Be conscientious and redirect your pet if you catch them staring intently at another animal. Give each other enough space to effectively do what we are there to do...lick loneliness.

If you continue to have problems on your team with this issue, M, please let me know. I am happy to come out and make everyone aware of the importance of good leash control and watching pets during the visits. Please don't leave the organization or give up your captain position. We can and will do everything we can to insure that this becomes less of an issue on all of our visits.

Mark your Calendars....

Volunteer Dinner on Tuesday September 29th at Harry's Haufbrau

5:30 appetizers, 6:15 Dinner, discussion to follow dinner.
More information will be send out in August.



Fall Furry Flurry on October 25th - At Los Gatos Creek Park

It will be a fun day with your dog. You can sign up to walk the 5K fundraiser if you would like to and then there will be a variety of games and contests for you to participate in with your pet from bobbing for weiners to a costume contest. There will be a partial agility course set up for people to try and we will be doing CGC testing.



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Holiday Pictures

Coming in November!

All proceeds will go to Furry Friends PATS



Who Can Attend Furry Friends Visits?

We are often asked if another family member, friend, or out-of-town visitor may attend your Furry Friends visit with you. Unfortunately, our insurance does not permit that. Only Furry Friends volunteers who are on our membership roster and who have attended the etiquette class may attend the visits. So please resist the impulse to bring anyone else with you on your visit.