



**Furry  
Friends**

Pet  
Assisted  
Therapy  
Services

Fall 2016



# Short Paws

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

## Membership fees increasing in November

We regret that rapidly rising costs for storage, postage & other items necessitate raising fees for membership & classes, effective December 1, 2016. In addition, Furry Friends will now charge organizations for Special Visits.

### The new fees will be

Single annual membership \$50

Family annual membership \$75

Class fees \$50

Special Visits \$100

We did everything we could to avoid raising fees, but it is no longer possible to deny the facts- Furry Friends existence depends on the fee policy that better reflects the new realities. We do not do fundraising and have not raised the fees in the past 7 years.



Furry Friends was asked to participate in the annual conference of the American Syringomyelia & Chiari Alliance Project, Inc. (ASAP) that was held in Redwood City in July. Syringomyelia, often referred to as SM, is a chronic disorder involving the spinal cord. We provided a stress relief session for a small group of children, teens, and parents that were at this event. Most of the people having this disorder had to go through several brain surgeries to remediate their symptoms.



**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**

Karen Davis

**Vice President**

Steve Wincor

**Secretary**

Kat Hsueh

**Treasurer**

Randee McQueen

**Directors**

Rhonda Hardy

Anne Tiry

Patty Guthrie

Joan Peterson

Michiko Cheng

**Administrator**

Loree McQueen



*Kika Chin*

*Honey Kirk*

*Willie Hinders*

*Tara Hinders*

*Martha Melia*

*Lulu Levinson*

*Flossie Garland*

*Molly Collins*

*Secret Smith*

*Guinness Steele*

*Holly Lancaster*

## 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 with your name and current e-mail address to  
[admin@furryfriends.org](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org)



## 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.



## 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!

## Fundraising, Grants and Gifts

When Furry Friends first began, grants were what kept our organization going without having to charge any of our members a fee. As the times changed grants were harder and harder to receive. We started doing fundraisers such as a 5K walk that in its best year brought in \$16,000.00 to fund the costs of our group. Members would do a Party Lite Candle party or a Tupperware party where the proceeds went to Furry Friends. Member signed up for E-script which also brought us in \$300-\$400 a month at our height of participation. Many people would donate to Furry Friends at Christmas time. As time has passed members stopped participating in fundraising events, giving donations during the holidays, changed to other groups for E-script and we eventually had to start charging a membership fee.

We are now at a point where our costs to keep this organization going, keep rising. We are doing things to reduce mailing costs such as emailing rosters and other information. We are handing out shirts, lanyards and clips during your class to save on mailing costs. We have attempted

to apply for a few grants but did not receive them. We require an application fee from any place that would like us to visit whether it is monthly or for a special one-time visit.

We are raising the dues, but that is not enough. We need to find other sources of funds. How else can you help with our costs? Many companies such as Apple, Google and others pay to a nonprofit such as Furry Friends for your volunteer time. If your company does, please think about signing up for it. If coworkers don't have a non-profit to send to for their volunteer time, ask them to sign up for Furry Friends. If you buy from Amazon, sign up for Amazon Smiles and have your purchases help Furry Friends. If there are other types of funding and Furry Friends has not signed up with that company yet, let us know and we will sign up so that donation can be received. During the holidays think about making a donation for Furry Friends.

If you have other ideas for fund raising please contact any member of the board or our treasurer, Randee McQueen at [Randee@furryfriends.org](mailto:Randee@furryfriends.org). Thank you

# Critter Doctor

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



*I have been a long time Furry Friends member, team captain, and participant in the Reading Buddies program. On more than one occasion, I have fielded questions about the Reading Buddies program with regard to how the program works, what the role of the librarians is during a visit, what to tell the parents who come with their kids, etc. Is there a document available that covers all of this information that I might share with my team?*

*A in San Jose*

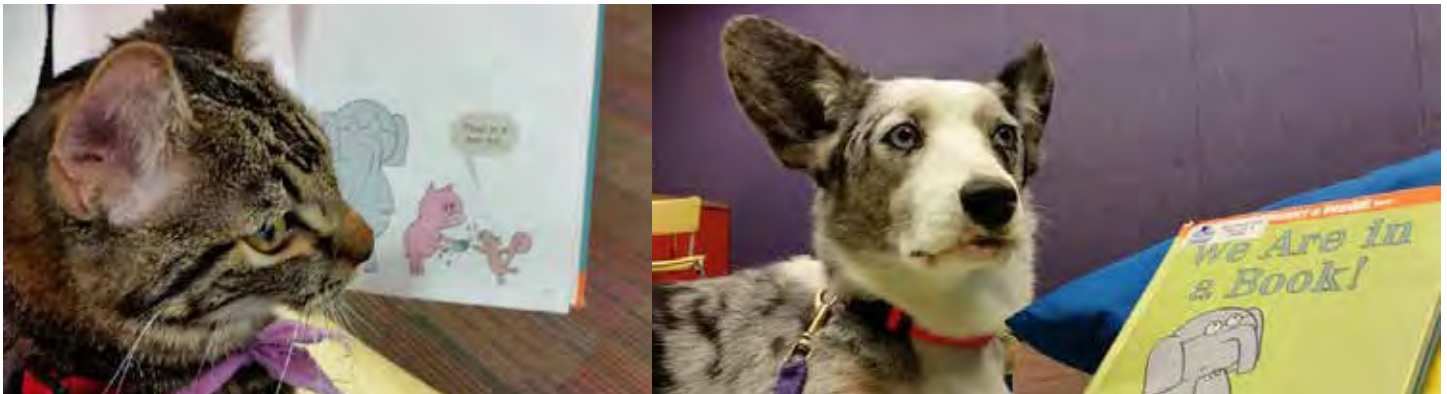
There isn't a document per se, but I will try to outline the program here as I think this information is useful to all members who are curious about the Reading Buddies program and as a refresher to those who participate, like you, and receive questions about how it works. So, here goes!

Reading Buddies visits are very different from our regular Furry Friends visits in that our volunteers and their pets are working one-on-one with a child, often while sitting on the floor, for a longer period of time. The animals are often in close proximity to one another and must remain in a sit/stay or down/stay on their mat or rug for the extent of the visit. We ask participants to bring a mat, blanket, or rug for their pet so that the animal will learn to lay calmly in place for these visits and so that reading kids can see that the animal is relaxed and sit with them on the mat/rug/blanket. Even though the Reading Buddies pet volunteers are lying down or sitting quietly, their owners must still hold onto their leashes AT ALL TIMES. While I always encourage our volunteers in all of our programs to watch their pets for any signs of fatigue, discomfort, agitation, or anxiety, it is crucial that any pet who is fidgeting, yawning or panting excessively, or showing other signs of anxiety be removed quickly from the room during a library or school visit for the safety of everyone in the program. This can be done by simply saying, "My pet needs a bathroom break. We will step outside and return shortly." This gives the volunteer a chance to assess their pet and determine if they can indeed return to the visit or if they should end the visit there.

The success of Reading Buddies programs like ours are well-documented. Children who read aloud to pets demonstrate increased confidence and improved reading scores. In schools, the calming influence of therapy pets helps to encourage children who are developmentally challenged, while libraries tend to focus on kids who simply choose to join the reading with pets programs because their parents want them to, or because they enjoy animals. Reading to animals improves literacy in children and nurtures a love of books and learning. Being in the presence of animals in ALL of our programs increases relaxation, decreases blood pressure, and decreases heart rate. Because our pets are attentive, non-judgmental listeners, children are more comfortable reading to them. Teachers and parents report that children in these programs see an increase in the words read per minute AND better overall comprehension of what they have read as reflected in their test scores. Learning to read with

confidence is stressful for many children. Those with learning differences may find reading aloud in class overwhelming. Practicing their reading with animals helps them to build confidence which transfers over to their interactions in class with their peers. Research going back over 20 years indicates that kids who participate in Reading Buddies type programs not only become stronger readers, but are the kids more likely to participate in their classrooms.

Our Reading Buddies volunteers are there to facilitate the interactions of the visiting children with the pets. Our volunteers do not correct a child's pronunciation or draw attention to missed words, kids getting stuck on words, etc. If a child asks for help with a word, our volunteers can offer encouragement, "That is a tough word. I don't think my pet knows that one either. Let's figure it out together." This helps kids feel less "put on the spot" and more like a reading partner, thus bolstering their self esteem.



Children do best in these programs if their teachers and parents do not hover. Hovering parents, in particular, lead to kids who remain nervous while reading to the pets. All of our Reading Buddies volunteers should feel comfortable suggesting to parents that they step off to the side or even out of the reading area or room for greater success. Many parents do not feel comfortable leaving their kids alone the first time they participate in the program. A little patience and educating parents to how our program works goes a long way. Reward the parents! Tell them they can take a picture of their child with your pet when they are done reading. Try to have the parents not sit with their child, and at the very least, stand away from their child. Some of the libraries where we have our visits have very involved librarians who work to get the kids organized for the visits and educate the parents on where they should stand etc. It also helps when the librarians can encourage kids to read one-on-one with the pets; if they come to the visit with a sibling or a friend, that sibling or friend should read to a different animal. Siblings and friends, much like parents, can inhibit a child from getting the most out of the Reading Buddies program. Even if a younger sibling can't read, they can still be a distraction. Encourage that younger child to select a book and show the pictures to one of the other pets. Even just showing pictures, or making up a story as they show an animal pictures, helps a pre-reading child gain confidence and enjoy what our Reading Buddies program has to offer.

Ultimately, we have measured the success of our Reading Buddies program by the number of requests we've received to extend our program to other libraries and schools in the area. Most importantly, we can see the enthusiasm and pleasure that our program brings to the children who participate. When the same kids keep showing up to read, bring their friends and siblings, etc. we can only assume that they must love the program and feel really comfortable with our volunteers and their pets. It gives me great pleasure as the instructor for this program (and one of its founders!) to know that we are supporting children in the community in their efforts to become stronger readers and more confident students.

As always, if you have any questions about this program or any of our other wonderful programs in Furry Friends, please don't hesitate to contact me.

## Furry Friends needs captains for the following two sites!

Please let us know if you would be interested in being a captain at either Moldaw Residents located at 899 E. Charleston Rd in Palo Alto or Palo Alto Sub Acute & Rehab located at 911 Bryant Street in Palo Alto.

Please contact [admin@furryfriends.org](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org) for more information.

## 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](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org). Please note that some may have restrictions, or be looking for specific types of pets.

## ID Cards...

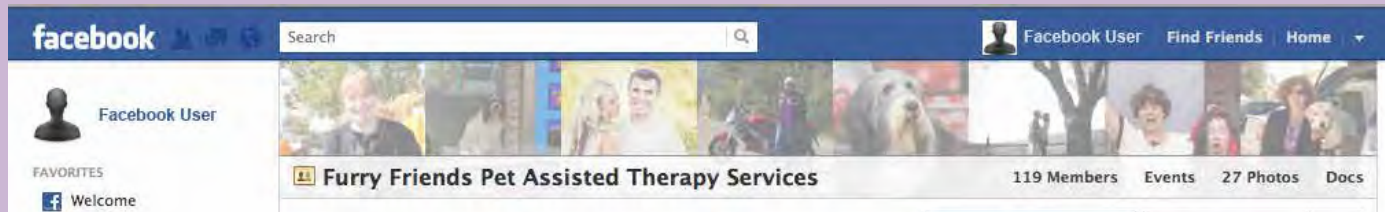
About 10 years ago we started making ID cards for our volunteers and their pets. It is a way to identify any of us at a site visit as a member of Pet Assisted Therapy Services. We were lucky that an individual asked us if there was something that he could help us get through a donation. We said, yes, an ID Card machine and program. He wrote us a check to cover the cost of both items. So we had ID cards and decided that along with the person and pet's name we would also put in the expiration of the person's membership and the expiration of the pet's vaccines.



Currently we have about 95% of the members and pets pictures. We would really like this to go up to 100%. If you do not have a card, please have someone take a picture of you, save it as a JPG and put your name in the title (ie Johnsmith.jpg) and email it to me and I will get a card out to you. If you have a pet that doesn't have a picture (there are few of those) please do the same. If you are a captain and not all your members have cards, please take a picture or get another member to help and send them to us.

*Thank you.*

*Randee McQueen- Treasurer and the card maker*  
email [projects@com-ctl.com](mailto:projects@com-ctl.com)



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!



Maya Wincor visits with Furry Friends all over the Santa Clara Valley as well as in the Gold Country. She recently was recognized by AKC receiving her Therapy Dog Distinguished Title for achieving her 400+ visits. She is also a member of the Alliance of Therapy Dogs where she visits at the San Jose International Airport. Be it Reading Buddies, Ronald McDonald House, or a Special Visit she relishes spreading her love to those in need. Along with her half-brother Aiden the two average 7-10 visits per month.

## Upcoming Holiday Events



### Los Gatos Holiday Parade Saturday December 3rd

Furry Friends is participating again this year in the Los Gatos Holiday Parade, which is held on the first Saturday in December. The parade is held, rain or shine. This is a fun event for volunteers and their pets. Look for an email with details on how to sign up and order your Furry Friends holiday sweatshirt – that's our "uniform" for the parade.

### Barnes and Noble Gift Wrapping

Furry Friends will be wrapping gifts at the Barnes & Noble store at 5353 Almaden Expressway on the following dates:

Sunday, December 18 – 9am to 4pm

Friday, December 23 – 9am to 4pm

Look for an email with more details and information on how to sign up. Space is limited, so first come, first serve.

## 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>

The new store features many exciting choices:

- Men's & Women's Apparel
- Pet items
- Travel & Technology
- Car accessories

All items ship from Cafe Press and Cafe Press handles any service, return or order questions.

Thank you as always for your continued dedication and support of Furry Friends!!

# Holiday Pictures

October 29, 30 and November 5,6

from 10 am to 3 pm

By appointment

contact Randee at [bash@com-ctl.com](mailto:bash@com-ctl.com)

2633 S Bascom Ave

Campbell CA

**\$30.00** (proceeds go to BASH, PATS or PAWS (whichever group you choose))

Randy Fishel will be taking holiday photos. Appointments will be made in 20 minute time slots. You will have the choice of 4 different back drops (winter and Christmas). If you have come before we have new backdrops to choose from. Bring a thumb drive and we will put all the shots taken for you to make your holiday cards or a picture for you wall.

This is some of what has been taken with the two of the backdrops. You can take your picture with your pet or just the pets.....your choice.

