



Furry Friends
Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Summer 2017



Short Paws

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

Summer Camp visit to the Dublin SPCA

Julie Bond and Desi give campers an opportunity to learn about Furry Friends.





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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Roster information!

Hi Captains!

Bet your wondering why I'm always pestering you about getting me the rosters to me quarterly if not monthly by just sending me an email after each visit.

Furry Friends uses the rosters for:

- Yearly pins to volunteers are only given out to current volunteers – meaning they are currently visiting a wonderful site.
- This includes the 5 year, 10 year, 15 year pins.....
- Knowing if volunteers are visiting allows the Captains to make sure the vaccinations are all up to date. I do send out a vaccination notice the month before but I rely on the Captains to help out to make sure they follow through.
- Important documentation for AKC Therapy Dog Certification as they must have so many visits to become certified.
- Also, it's my way of knowing if the site is still open to new volunteers
- Please contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance!

Loree McQueen
Furry Friends Adminnistrator
admin@furryfriends.org



**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

Wine Night! Come to our First Annual Furry Friends Fundraising Event- have some wine, bid on our fabulous silent auction items, and support your favorite cause!!



Winery Mixer & Silent Auction

Wed, Oct. 11, 2017 at 6PM

Testarossa Winery

300 College Ave.

Los Gatos, CA 95030

Humans, 21+ yrs only please!



For more information, scan with a QR reader
or go to <http://bit.ly/FFwinery>



Reminder!

We are looking for photos of our Furry Friends for the upcoming calendar. Please, only the animals, no people.



Critter Doctor

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



Q I have been a member of Furry Friends for 3 years and my husband just took the etiquette class so he can volunteer too. I am on a Reading Buddies team with our dog and my husband wants to do those visits too. Since our dog is already approved for visits, can my husband take him too?

L in San Jose

A I am so glad you asked this question as there seems to be a lot of confusion surrounding the Reading Buddies classes and visits. All human volunteers interested in the Reading Buddies program must complete six months worth of visits before they are eligible to take a Reading Buddies class and have their pet assessed for that program. This six months worth of regular visits can include both on and off leash visits. Doing those visits helps new volunteers to better understand the way our organization works, how we always visit as a team, etc. Team captains are valuable resources and can help guide new volunteers and advise as to whether they think a pet is a good candidate for the Reading Buddies program. We have definitely had volunteers who were very interested in the Reading Buddies program but whose pets did not pass the evaluation. We have also had to routinely re-evaluate pets for the program and many pets have aged out of the program, becoming infirmed, making sitting or laying down for an hour quietly uncomfortable for them.

Now, to answer your specific question! Your husband just took the etiquette class, so he will need to do six months worth of regular visits before he is eligible to take the Reading Buddies class. Even though your dog has already passed the class, he cannot do Reading Buddies visits with the dog until he has done his 6 months worth of regular visits AND taken the Reading Buddies class (your dog will not need to attend again). YOU can, of course, continue to do the Reading Buddies visits with your dog since you have completed all the requirements yourself. If you have any other questions, please let me know!

Q I love being a member of Furry Friends and would really like my kids to get involved as well. I know that they can get school volunteer hour credit as well. How would I go about getting them involved in the program? Do they have to take the class too?

J in Palo Alto

A It is such a joy to share your volunteer experience with your children. We have had many young people participate in our program over the years, both for community service credit, and just because they wanted to volunteer. We have even had young volunteers in our organization who didn't have their own pet, but handled the pet of another volunteer on their visits! The minimum age for a child to visit with Furry Friends is 12; children under 12 may not participate or attend visits. Children between the ages of 12 and 16 must be accompanied by an adult Furry Friends member

on their visits; this adult need not be a parent, but the adult must be a Furry Friends member. Some of our visit sites require members to be over the age of 18 to visit there (juvenile hall, for example). I have discovered that many nursing homes, senior care facilities, etc. LOVE having young people on the teams that visit there as young people bring so much enthusiasm and fun to those visits! If your children are over the age of 12, you can sign them up to take the etiquette class and become a member. They do not need to bring your pet to the class as that pet has already been approved for the program.

Q When I attended class recently with my new dog (my previous dog had passed away), I noticed several people in the class feeding their dogs treats. I know you talked about not using treats on our visits during class, but I feel like they shouldn't have even brought treats to the class...it was so distracting for my dog, and I know I wasn't the only person there who felt this way :(

M in Santa Cruz

A I totally get what you are saying; food is distracting and I remember several dogs in your class being completely focused on the treats being handed out to the neighboring dogs. I will ask Loree if she can add a line to the letter she sends out to new volunteers attending the class asking them to refrain from bringing treats. I think it is good practice for the new volunteers to begin working with their dogs without food in the class setting. Thanks for the heads up on your point of view on this as well!

Q I don't want to be rude or assume that I know animals better than anyone else...but, I honestly cannot understand how a new dog on my team passed the class! He is super-rambunctious and jumps all over the place. I realize that last week was his first visit, but at what point should someone say something to this owner about her dog?

T in Los Altos

A I appreciate your candor. It falls on me to use the information pet owners give me regarding their animals, add in what their vet says, and combine my observations from class to determine if I feel a pet has potential for our program. Some pets are more active than others and are best suited to less structured visits where their enthusiasm doesn't put anyone at risk. In a recent class, for example, we had a lovely, young Labrador attend. This dog is incredibly sweet, but has a ton of energy better suited to chasing a ball on an off leash visit; needless to say, she passed the off leash class with flying colors! I always try to point new volunteers and their pets toward visits I think they will enjoy AND have success doing. I definitely discuss in class how to control pets who jump up for attention and I do things designed to make pets jump on me during my evaluation so that I can reiterate how to get that behavior under control. Having said all this, it can also be the case that the dog I see in class isn't the dog who shows up to the visit; now, I am not saying that the volunteer is bringing a completely new dog. What I am saying is that the dog may have behaved differently during the class than what you saw on your visit. We have certainly seen dogs in the class who behave shyly, or act like they are at a vet appointment. We have seen pets whose owners swear their dog has never bitten anyone before as the dog bites me! If, on your next visit, you truly feel this dog's behavior is risky to your visit, mention it to your team captain and we can schedule a time for me to come out and observe and make recommendations. There may be some very easy things to do to get this dog's behavior under control so that everyone enjoys their visit. Or, it may be the case that I need to find a different team that better suits this dog's needs.

Maddie Elkin Helps Out Furry Friends to Earn Girl Scouts Silver Award!

Maddie Elkin received her Girl Scouts Silver Award. Her project involved doing PR for the Reading Buddies program, using the visits at the Los Altos Library as a template. She created bookmarks of the team pets to hand out during visits, as well as creating flyers to go up around the town of Los Altos, and talking about the program at local schools. She greatly increased the number of readers on the visits and her enthusiasm and professionalism was really appreciated. Maddie also provided Julie Bond with the templates from her work to use at other Reading Buddies sites.



September 12, Jessica Mangold, Julie Bond and Desi did a presentation to the Santa Clara Women's League about Furry Friends.



photo credit to Marti Ragone of the Santa Clara Women's League

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!