



Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services' mission is to consistently facilitate the delivery of the love and affection of our volunteers and their pets. We enhance the lives and reopen the closed emotional doors of people with special needs.

We're Licking Loneliness!

Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services Achieves 100,000th Volunteer Visit

Annual "Diamonds in the Ruff" Walk-a-Thon Benefit for Furry Friends to be May 21

San Jose, CA – May 02, 2006 - Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services is proud to announce that our volunteers have completed 100,000 visits to hospitals, hospices, convalescent homes, children shelters, and other health facilities throughout San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties.

The oldest all-volunteer organization in the South Bay devoted to bringing the healing power of animals to the less fortunate, Furry Friends relies on community donations for its operations, and will host the popular pet walk-a-thon, "Diamonds in the Ruff" in Los Gatos Creek Park on Sunday May 21, 2006 at 10 A.M.

Diamonds in the Ruff participation fees, which go directly to help the organization, cost just \$25 in advance for each dog (or cat) with an owner (\$30 the day of the event). The 5-kilometer (3.2 mile) walk follows easy terrain and the event ends with a sponsor fair, entertaining games and rescue animal information. Download registration forms at www.furryfriends.org. To request forms in the mail call one can call 1-877-4FF-PATS or email admin@furryfriends.org.

Furry Friends 100,000 volunteer visit milestone is a landmark for the organization. Furry Friends has over 300 active volunteers visiting at over 60 locations. This is just a representative list of the facilities where Furry Friends visit:

- Agnew's State Hospital
- Camden Convalescent Hospital
- Channing House in Palo Alto
- El Camino Hospital Adolescent Health Unit
- Hope Rehabilitation
- Juvenile Hall
- Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford
- Mills Peninsula Hospital
- Mission Skilled Nursing
- Saint Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy
- San Jose Family Shelter
- San Tomas Convalescent Hospital
- Valley Medical Center Spinal Cord and Head Trauma Unit
- Veteran's Affairs Hospital, Hospice Unit

Sal Guardino, President of Furry Friends is excited about this milestone, "Our human and animal volunteers have provided countless hours of love, affection and warmth to others in need. I'm very proud of the work we do and the selfless dedication of our members ... the dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, rabbits, guinea pigs and livestock are our therapists and are always ready with a warm greeting for people who need a little love in their lives. Often, our volunteers are the only outside contact these people have from one month to the next. It's wonderful to see their faces light up when the animal comes into the room. What could be a better use of anyone's time than bringing joy to others? It's a great feeling."

Furry Friends was organized in 1983 by Judy Kell, whose nine-year-old daughter came down with a rare and aggressive form of cancer which eventually took her life. Judy noticed that one of the very few things that lifted her daughter's spirits was her interaction with her cat.

Judy, a veterinary technician by profession, consulted with Dr. John Quick, a veterinarian in Morgan Hill, and together with Dr. Cecil Agee, a pediatric physician, approached Lucille Packard Children's Hospital with the idea of bringing animals to the hospital. This was the first visit done by Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services. Furry Friends now has three teams visiting the kids at Packard every month.

About Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services is the South Bay's oldest all-volunteer organization devoted to bringing the healing power of animals to those less fortunate in our community. The Furry Friends mission is to consistently facilitate delivery of the love and affection of our volunteers and their pets. We enhance the lives and reopen the closed emotional doors of people with special needs. Furry Friends is a California non-profit organization that relies on the community for support; all donations are tax-deductible. Contact us at www.furryfriends.org or 1-877-4FF-PATS.

Furry Friends... We're Licking Loneliness

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