

Therapy Dog Chronicles

**A Publication of Paws for Healing, Inc.
Mending Hearts, Minds and Bodies with Gentle Paws
and Guiding Hands**

Summer 2020

A Message from our Presi-



To all of our volunteers.....human and canine.....

Well, where are we? The main concern always is that each of you is safe and healthy and taking care. This has certainly been a long endurance test for all of us and I know that I am anxious and ready to get things back to some kind of normal!

I have been reading a lot, and consulting a lot with doctors and online, and just simply don't have any good answers for Canine Therapy at this time. We are obviously in a hold position and it is all a wait and see for now so more patience is needed from each of us.

Two things have happened though that I think are very positive. Nationally, dog adoptions are up, which means that dogs in shelters are finding homes quicker than they normally would! So awesome. And also, I have seen more dogs being walked than ever before. I live in Napa in a neighborhood where many people have dogs and they walk dogs so my dogs and I know most of the animals in the area.....*or so I thought we did.* Since the Shelter in Place started, I have seen dogs and people that I did not know existed! EVERYONE has a dog and they are all walking them! Another awesome!

A Message from our President (cont.)

Actually, my dogs are so spoiled now, getting walked three times a day and enjoying it so much. And curling up at home....they are getting so lazy. I have been trying to do extra things with them to challenge them....playing hide and seek in the house, and rehearsing their sit, stay, down etc. commands. As I said, they are thoroughly spoiled, but it is all good.

So what is the future of pet therapy....I wish I had a firm answer for you. Right now, we will have to wait for guidelines and recommendations from veterinarians and our facilities. Since humans visiting people in assisted living facilities and hospitals is a phase 4 in the opening up plans for California, that obviously means that we are definitely at the bottom of the list for any visiting. That is kind of where the school visiting is also. I know though that some of our school volunteer visitors have been doing some facetime and zoom with some of the children—very creative and fun for the kids and the dogs! So our future may include our being creative with our visits but how that will happen, I don't know at this time.

I do know how much your visits mean to the patients and touching your canine is such an important part of that visit, but right now I simply don't know how that will look like in our future.

Do I sound discouraged? Yep, I am a bit. But I remain hopeful and I know that this will all end at some point. I also know that you are all dedicated to your dogs and to your volunteering and that you are all intelligent, creative people so we will try to keep thinking and sharing ideas and will see what happens.

Meantime, be safe...be healthy...do all the right things to keep you and your canine healthy and safe and mostly be patient. Thank you so much for all you do and all you have done. Woof woof!!

Sara DeCrevel for the Board for Paws for Healing



Sara walking her dogs one of the three times



DeCrevel pups practicing social distancing??

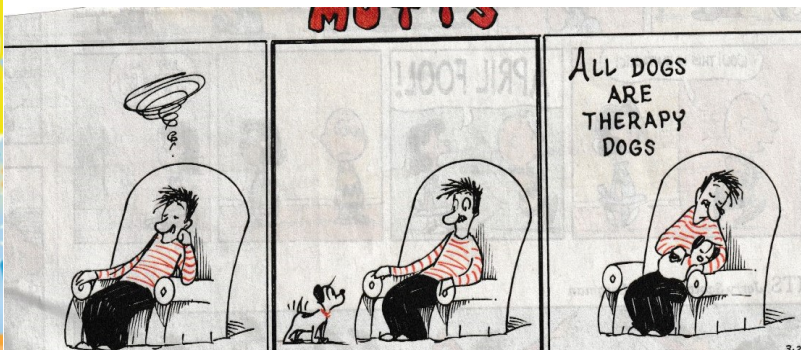
From an online article from South Florida Sun Sentinel publication

"There is nothing like a big smooch or gentle touch from a happy dog. But social distancing rules, due to Covid-19, have created a barrier between those in need of the special touch and the canine therapy dogs that provide the visits.

Examples of how the pet therapy visits benefit: An otherwise nonverbal senior talks during a puppy time visit. A child's reading skills improve as a dog lays or sits and listens attentively. A stressed individual's blood pressure lowers as he or she gently pets or strokes a pet visitor."

One therapy group in the East realized that they could do the following creative visits:

To build morale in the workplace, a pup can be top dog at a business Zoom meeting; a child can read to a dog on Face Time; a resident at an Assisted Living Facility can reach out for the pup at a window visit; creating a video of her dog doing tricks this was shared at the Assisted Living Facility to share on their room televisions.



LITTLE TIDBITS ABOUT YOUR DOG:

Is grain-free pet food better for my dog? *No, according to Your Dog publication—grains do not contribute to canine health problems and are used in pet food as a nutritious source of protein, vitamins, and minerals.*

How long can a puppy 'hold it' in his crate? *A good rule of thumb is it's the number of hours equal to his age in months plus one.*

When your dog licks your face, is he saying 'I love you'? *Sorry, to disappoint you, but again according to Your Dog, this is not necessarily true. Puppies may lick your face to say 'feed me'. Adult dogs may lick your face to say 'you are the boss'.*

How can I tell when my dog is overheated? *His tongue gets wider!*

What's the best way to prevent plaque buildup? *Brushing, at least every other day helps. It won't remove all buildup but it lengthens the time between expensive, professional cleanings.*





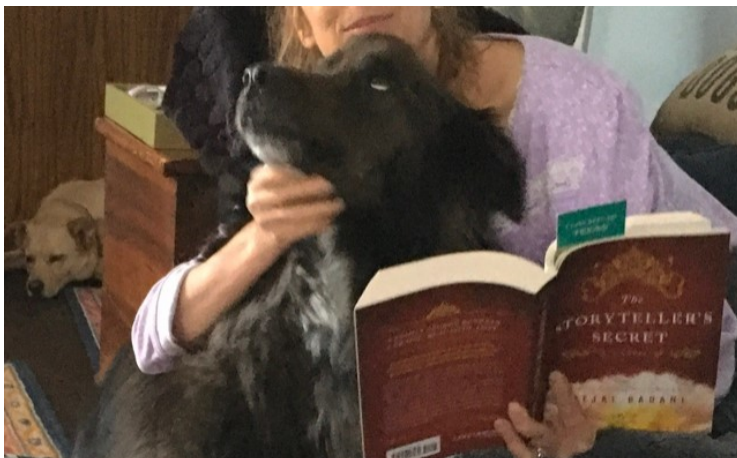
We're trapped in here for the duration so, let's wrestle



This where I'd rather be.



Cricket in her Bikini, she's ready to go swimming.



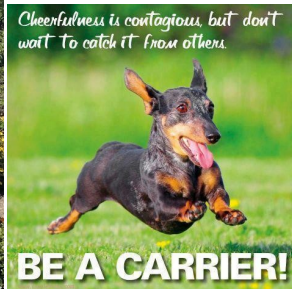
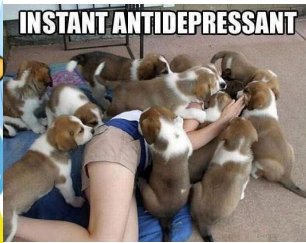
You're supposed to look at the book when reading.

Zoom meeting during COVID SHELTERING

(this is an edited version of an email from volunteer JoAnn Banayet)

“We usually go to the school and the kids read to my dog Moira, even though many kids say ‘I don’t know how to read’. (They are four and five year olds.) So they tell Moira a story or talk about the pictures in the books. During the Shelter in place with the schools being closed we are doing a weekly Zoom meeting with the kids. I read to them and let them interact with my dogs. The kids love it-- they sang Happy Birthday to my dog when they found out it was her birthday. I had put colorful leis on the dogs, and I wore a tiara for the ‘party’. My younger dog, Poppy, actually ripped Moira’s lei off her and shredded it! There were silk flowers all over the floor and the kids got a big kick out of that. One of the little girls actually played a song to my dogs, even though the teacher did not know she could play! Everyone clapped and cheered. So now we are planning to be more creative with our ‘visits’ and we are going to view a yodeling video and we will practice yodeling together. “

JoAnn added, “I have to admit, this is the best part of my week.”



1370 Trancas St. PMB 127
Napa, CA 94558
707-258-3486
www.pawsforhealing.org