



Journal and Activities of PFH Canine-Assisted Therapy Teams
Volunteering in Napa, Sonoma, Solano and Marin Counties

Volume Ten, Number 1 • January 2008

2008 Marks 10th Year of Volunteer Work — It's Time to Party!

Dear Volunteers and Friends:

Thank you for making 10 years of service possible to thousands of people in our communities. The names of those who have made canine-assisted therapy possible in Napa, Solano, Sonoma and Marin would fill our newsletters and there is no means to adequately thank you all... except to make Paws for Healing and our services even better in the coming years.

To honor our teams and celebrate their work, PFH will hold its annual Appreciation Tea on February 23 at the Veterans Home in Yountville. Special guests include Jim Johnson and his renowned band of musicians

who will entertain us with tunes from the 40's and beyond. Make sure to look for your invitations in early February.

Want to help? Anyone who would like to contribute to this very special event with a donation of time or peoplepower, treats or beverages, raffle prizes or decorations, please contact Brat Zinsmaster or Jennifer Golick at 707-258-3486 (PFH hotline) or email them in care of PFH at info@pawsforhealing.org.

We hope those who have seen what our canines and volunteers do will help make this event a memorable way to thank them for their devoted work.

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Important Infection Control Update: Please Read New Information for Safe Therapy Visits

With the emergence of more resistant strains of bacteria, infection protocols are more important than ever to keep dogs, handlers and patients safe. The following information is taken (in part) from the January 2008 Whole Dog Journal article, “Defeating the Resistance,” regarding staph infections and other zoonoses that dogs and humans share.

Therapy animals have become an accepted and welcomed adjunct to patient care in hospitals, nursing facilities and rehabilitation programs throughout the US and many parts of the world. Dogs have also become part of reading programs in schools and libraries to foster a child’s confidence in a secure, non-judgmental atmosphere.

Yet, in all animals (humans included), there are some diseases that can be shared between the species and are known as zoonotic illnesses. Between dogs and humans, for example, ringworm and staph infections are the more common diseases that may be passed from one to another when infection protocols are not followed.

CJ Puotinen, author of “Defeating the Resistance” in WDJ, writes that, “For decades, public health officials warned that the

overuse of prescription antibiotics and antibacterial soap and hand wipes could lead to the growth of ‘superbugs,’ drug-resistant bacteria that are difficult if not impossible to control.”

Although the prediction has become a reality, Poutinen also reminds readers that proper hand washing techniques with soap and water is the first defense against infection.

Secondly, there are powerful natural essential oils that can also effectively control bugs like

MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*). Oils that can be used safely when diluted as directed include oregano, thyme, clove bud, cinnamon bark, savory, lavender, and tea tree. These essential oils can be used as cleaning aids in the house, for washing bedding, dog uniforms and people’s clothes.

Cinnamon bark oil, for example, is a powerful skin irritant

Paws for Healing focuses much of its training on infection controls and site and safety protocols. Our volunteers are well versed in procedures and dedicated to their volunteer job. That is why our teams can help foster a safe environment in which to visit patients, residents and children.

Legitimate Concerns about Infection can be Addressed through Reasonable Protocols

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and should never be applied to a dog's or person's skin. But a few drops in laundry water will disinfect towels, bedding, clothes and uniforms. (Studies have also shown that some of these oils—when given appropriately and in diluted form—work better than the most potent antibiotic.)

Another researcher, Mary G. Enig, PhD, is a leading expert on fats and oils, and her work shows that “the inclusion of coconut oil in the diet [for dogs] could and should be utilized for its preventive and healing properties.” Another and very surprising antidote to staph is manuka honey in a dog's diet. A teaspoon to a tablespoon of the New Zealand honey can be given up to twice daily (depending on weight) “to fend off harmful bacteria.”

What else can be done to prevent your canine from getting or spreading bacteria like MRSA?

Puotinen suggests using microfiber cleaning cloths to wipe off your dog to keep him or her clean. (PFH also recommends wiping off a dog's feet after visiting with either a clean microfiber towel or with antibacterial hand-wipes.)

Don't visit if you or your dog have open cuts or sores, and please get your veterinarian's

clearance before resuming therapy visits after any kind of surgery.

Dogs (and humans) should be clean and bathed before visiting. The “mini spritz” bath for dogs that PFH demonstrates at trainings is a quick and effective precaution that can be done even an hour (or less) before scheduled visits.

Make sure to routinely wash the canine uniforms, leashes and collars, as well as any sheets or bedding used in the car to transport your pet. Poutinen advises disinfecting crates, bedding or uniforms and leashes by adding 20 drops of clove or oregano oil to a quart of water (or 5 drops to a cup) in an aromatherapy diffuser and spray in the air (avoiding pets and humans) and over the objects you want to sanitize.

The good news is that staph and the MRSA strain remains rare in dogs: the bacteria does not adhere well to dog hair, and most dogs are able to resolve MRSA spontaneously over time. Moreover, by incorporating the infection controls routinely, every team can ensure that pet therapy will be a safe and valued service in the medical community.

See page 8 for a list of resources for the items and information related to staph, MRSA and precautions.

CAT from the other side of the bed

A Different Perspective by Nanci Caron

Nanci Caron is an Occupational Therapist at Napa State Hospital and an Assistant Canine Evaluator for Paws for Healing. She has contributed several articles to the newsletter and developed an insightful video on the effects of animal interaction with her clients.

I've provided canine-assisted therapy with my dog, "Duke," since 2001; we are one of the teams that work at Napa State Hospital. Like all of the PFH volunteers, I share my pet with others, so that the lives of patients may be a little less isolated, lonely or stressed.

As a PFH provider, I have seen how my dog brings comfort and companionship to patients, and I know the benefits of pet therapy from that perspective. A year ago, however, I was on the other end of the pet therapy process. Instead of being the giver, I learned what it felt like to be the receiver. My dad, age 80, suffered a stroke in September, and was hospitalized in a nursing home in Wilmington, Delaware.

That fall I took a week off work to fly back to visit dad. Knowing how much he loved animals, I contacted the "Just Fur You" Pet Therapy Program in Wilmington before my trip. I made arrangements with the director for dad to have visits from their volunteer teams. This wonderful program, much

like our own, reached out so generously.

They arranged for 3 different teams to visit during the days I was there by his side.

The teams included a lovely couple who volunteered together with their two big Labs. Dad was delighted to have their company; the dogs had boundless energy and engaged in playful interactions.

Another team was a young woman with her Boxer. Dad talked for weeks about the big

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Bo, my buddy, my friend.

Saying Goodbye by Lisa Stewart



Bo was one of PFH's first bulldogs to visit veterans in Yountville. He and his comrade, Winston LeBrun, were especially beloved because their breed is the mascot for the US Marines. An impromptu visit to the Home on Thanksgiving Day was joyous: Bo ran and rolled in the grass, nuzzled old acquaintances and seemed never to have skipped a day there.

When something or someone has touched your heart, your memory of it will last a lifetime.

Bo and I would like to say "thank you." We have enjoyed our many years with Paws for Healing. So many things and so many people have touched our lives.

We are in the process now of saying goodbye to Bo. He was diagnosed with a brain tumor in November, then the size of an almond, and today, the size of a golf ball. We know his stay on this earth is not long and we will not let him suffer.

In writing this article, I have thought of so many things we have done together. His favorite, by far, has been being a volunteer. His years at the Veteran's Home...WOW. Could he make them smile and laugh. He loved to perform; to roll over, to shake, and to nuzzle up to the wheel-

chair bound. So many of the veterans in Section F waited for him in the lobby every Monday morning at ten.

When I started working full time, we began volunteering at the Queen of the Valley because it was closer to home. Bo would walk down those long corridors and people would stare. A bulldog in the hospital? Very few people ever walked by without touching him or wanting to know what we were doing. The patients enjoyed his bedside manner and the hospital staff would stop what they were doing so they could watch his cute little waddle down the hall.

There are so many stories I could tell. It is just amazing how this gentle-soul-of-a-dog has touched so many lives. He knew who needed extra love, sat by those not many would find so

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How children learn from canine buddies

A Dog in the Classroom

Jeanne Lemosse is an artist and instructor who volunteers with her dog, Allegro, at Elmer Caves Elementary School in Vallejo. She recently began giving art classes there to the children as well. Her comments and insights below reflect how children can learn with the help of a special canine.

In November, Allegro and I visited a kindergarden class to introduce the children to the kind of work service and therapy dogs can do. The children sat for nearly an hour, quietly listening, asking questions and touching Allegro, a gentle Italian Greyhound.

I explained that dogs help people in hospitals who are sick and sometimes have to stay in

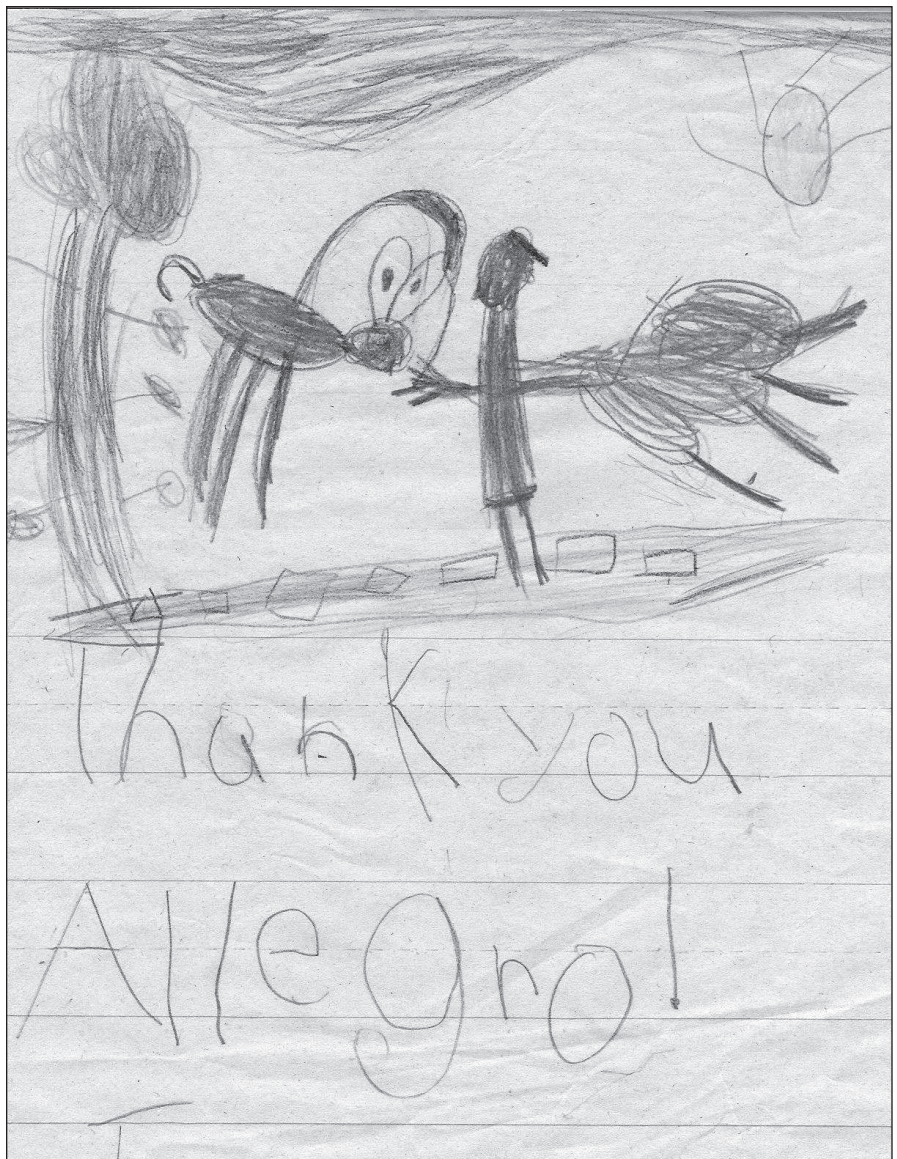
bed for many days. They are often sad and lonely, but when a dog like Allegro comes to visit, they smile, talk, and sit up in bed in order to pet him. That interaction helps them feel better.

When the children went back to their desks, Allegro and I passed out notes to the children, thanking them for their kindness. Each note was “signed” by

cont. next page

Research studies and anecdotal evidence (like Jeanne’s observations) prove animals can play a vital role in children’s lives. Animals teach children how to be kind, can calm them, give them confidence, and make them feel worthy.

When children feel capable, they learn more easily because they are focused and relaxed. Their blood pressure goes down, their anxiety level decreases, and they tend to work together rather than compete with one another. The bottom line: test scores and reading levels increase — at no cost to schools.



Allegro scores with kids...

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Allegro with his paw print. The children were quite impressed that Allegro knew how to spell their names correctly.

The experience was so heartwarming because many of the kindergardeners had never seen or known a dog that wasn't a guard dog. Even though some were initially afraid, they all were eager to learn about how dogs can help people, not just frighten them.

We were asked to stay while the children drew pictures of Allegro and write thank you notes. They were careful to spell his name properly, and wrote it better than they did their own names. The teacher told me afterward that her "high energy" kids were particularly engrossed in their work and there was an unusual calm, relaxed air in her classroom that day.

Some weeks later, the teacher told me that one of her students had asked if Allegro might visit her Grandfather who was very sick. She knew the dog could make him feel better.

A Renewed View of Canine Therapy, cont. from page 4

kiss he got from that Boxer, and about how much he enjoyed the sweet dispositions of both the dog and owner.

The team that really stole his heart, however, was a woman with her small white Bichon. this dog "sang" when the owner played the harmonica! What a fun, uplifting afternoon for dad, and for all who shared in the laughter during that visit. Dad held that little dog on his lap for a long time, stroking it, and talking about happy memories with animals he had in his life.

That week was my last with dad, who died in February of 2007. Up until the final days of his life, dad spoke to me on the

phone about those pet therapy visits. He relived those happy moments over and over again in his mind, and in conversations with others. Photos taken during those visits were on his bulletin board by his hospital bed. Through dad's experience, I learned first hand how it felt to be "on the other side" of the pet therapy process. It felt comforting, uplifting, and loving.

It sometimes helps to see things from a different perspective. The work done by all of us has great potential to be meaningful and healing. I saw just how wonderful it was - when I "saw" it through the eyes of my dad.

Bo: Honoring a life well lived

cont. from page 5

lovable and let so many different hands touch him. And all with such a patient love.

My eyes fill with tears every time I think about having to say goodbye. One thing that does lift my heart is knowing that I was blessed to have been a part of such a special dog's life. Bo, my buddy, my friend.

Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole.
—Roger Caras

Keeping Bugs at Bay from Whole Dog Journal

Resources and Information

What is Whole Dog Journal? WDJ is a publication that is not supported by advertising and its mission is to present an objective review of holistic health care methods. The information provided is not a substitute for veterinarian care, but is presented to enhance a dog's health through non-invasive techniques and reliable research on natural adjunct treatments. The publication is also dedicated to nonviolent training techniques in order to deepen human respect for canines. Its authors include veterinarians, researchers and professionals in a variety of health care and training fields.

Please contact the journal at WholeDogJ@aol.com for more information regarding subscriptions, reprints or its articles.

Bella Moss Foundation (England) Information about dogs, cats, and MRSA. Phone (011-44) 78-6087-9079. pets-MRSA.com. or the bellamossfoundation.com

Nature's Gift (Madison TN) Essential oils, organic and wildcrafted, plus Germ Beater disinfecting blends for household use. naturesgift.com

AromaDog (Leicester, MA) Essential oils for dogs, including Quick Fix Antiseptic Blend for wound treatment and Lickety Spritzer for protecting against infection. (508) 892-9330. aromadog.com

Manuka Honey USA. Honey from New Zealand (800) 395-2196 manukahoneyusa.com

Terry Magic. microfiber cleaning cloths. magicmicrocloth.com

Tergo cleaning cloths. Ultramicrofibers.com

PFH is Honored by the Work and Support of our Special Volunteers

by Joanne Yates

It is with mixed feelings that I write the introduction to our donations column. While so many donations honor our friends, two- and four-footed, we also pay homage to those who are no longer with us.

Florence Stegman passed away on Thanksgiving weekend and I'd like to think that her beloved Buddy, the family golden who died several years before her, accompanied her across the Rainbow Bridge.

When she began helping at trainings, Florence wanted everyone to call her "Grandma" instead of Mrs. Stegman. Later, she helped make fleece blankets and dog pulls for our fairs, and for years stamped the donation envelopes for each issue of the newsletter (which totalled into the 1000's for every mailing). Even when she was finally hospitalized, Grandma worried about how we'd have the envelopes ready for the summer newsletter.

She was much more than a volunteer: Florence loved her son's cooking and adored his wife, whom she always said was like a daughter to her. She revelled in seeing her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren—including Suede, the "new" goofy golden she helped to spoil with treats and love. She was a respected member of the Eastern Stars, but more than anything, she was a model for relishing and appreciating every day of life.

In Honor of Dr. and Mrs. O'Hanlon
 ♡ Gail Silvestri

In Honor of Nancy Langholff,
 because she is so dear.
 ♡ Marianne Morrisey

In Honor of Joanne Yates
 ♡ George & Florence Fletcher

In Honor of my 8 great grandchildren
 ♡ Larna Womack

In Honor of Rita & Mel Mikkelsen
 ♡ Carol Little

In Honor of Laurel Saville & Ned
 Lecky "for all the sweet paws in the
 program."
 ♡ Carole Saville

In Honor of Danica & Wyatt
 ♡ Jack Gordon

In Honor of Lili and Rosie
 ♡ Marlene Kniveton

In Honor of Ashby. We love you!
 Linda Goldfarb

In Honor of Reilly Hornberger:
 Reilly, you Rock!
 ♡ Love from Ruby Short

To Ruby from Reilly Hornberger:
 wishing you happy holidays!
 ♡ Jim Hornberger

In Memory of
Florence Stegman, a dear lady known
 as "Grandma" and a dedicated
 supporter of Paws.
Agatha Bishop ♡ Joan Clamp
John & Jackie Dickson
Linda Dreyer ♡ Barbara Feero
Tom & Mary Lou Gracy
Jim and Jeanne Hornberger
Michael Laforge ♡ Clare LeBrun

Donations, cont. from page 9

*In Memory of Florence Stegman
Jerry & Lynne McClaine
Jim and Nancy Mounter
Eunetta Pickett
Rose & Milt Totman
Randy & Lea Stegman
Sandy and Nellie Yates*

*In Memory of Cherie Cuneo
‡ Joanne Yates*

*In Memory of John Ruppenthal
‡ Randy & Lea Stegman*

*In Memory of John Pereira & Sam
‡ Jerry & Lynne McClaine*

*In Memory of Margaret Michaels
‡ Randy & Lea Stegman*

*In loving Memory of Juanita Nichols
‡ Jim Hornberger*

*‡ In Memory of Bear
Thomas Seltzer*

*In Memory of Cody, my yellow lab—
forever in my heart ‡ Gail Alexander*

*In Memory of Maggie, the loveliest,
sweetest Labrador & best buddy of
Winston ‡ Clare LeBrun*

*In Memory of Maggie LeBrun,
well loved by Jack & Clare
Randy & Lea Stegman
Don & Joanne Yates ‡ Kodi Bernat*

*In Memory of Sullivan
Barbara Rees*

*In Memory of Boo Tye
Nancy & Duncan Kelso*

*— Tail Waggers (5+) —
Deassa Binstock
Echo Evensen
Cecily Jordan ‡ Jane Joyaux
Laura Merkner
Diane Moore
Margery Smith
Irma & George Starke
Larna Womack*

*— Paws Up (25+) —
William Austin Hayne
Laura Merkner
Nikki & Travis Pacheco
Joan Sullivan
Jim & Robin Wernli*

*— High Five (50+) —
Canon Creek Service
Janice Braun
Milt Carrigan
Laura Dohrmann
Missy Doran
Janeann Erickson
Mildred Mansfield*

*— Best Friends (100+) —
Roberta Oswald
Audrey Rose
Gail Silvestri
Trent Vannieuwborg*

*— Pack Leader (250+) —
Anonymous donation at Santa Paws*

*— Honorary Team (500+) —
Nikki Godfrey
Medtronics matching donation
in honor of
Nikki Godfrey's volunteerism*

*— Top Dog (1000+) —
Chris Williams*

Your Support is Always Welcomed



If you would like to make a donation (no gift is too small), you may do so in honor or celebration of or in memory of a friend, relative or beloved pet. Or you may choose to sponsor a team by underwriting part of their expenses. Forms are provided below. Woofs and thanks!

Thank you for supporting our canines that bring comfort and joy to so many people in health care or in schools in the North Bay area. Those of you who would like to participate in our program, please consider a donation* that will help defray the costs of volunteering. Our dogs and humans are very grateful for your help at any level.

- I. Antiseptic Wipes & Water Bowl \$10.
- II. Safety Leash, ID & Collar 15.
- III. Therapy Vest or Bandana 25 .
- IV. Total Team Package 50.

You may sponsor one team at any level, two or more teams at any level, or sponsor a team package for one or more of our volunteers.

I can sponsor _____ team(s) at \$_____ per team to underwrite volunteer costs.

Enclosed is a check for _____ Please send my acknowledgement to:

If you care to make a contribution* to Paws for Healing to honor or in memory of a beloved friend, please provide us with the information that will enable us to acknowledge the person, family and companion animal. The enclosed envelope is for your convenience.

In Honor of _____ **or**

In Memory of _____

Send acknowledgement to: _____

Message _____

* All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. PFH is a 501 (3) (c) non-profit corporation. All donors will be acknowledged with a letter as well as those families or individuals who are honored or remembered.

Paws for Healing, Inc.
1370 Trancas Street, PMB 127
Napa, CA 94558

Winter 2008 Calendar

*Trainings and Events are held at the
Community Education Center, Napa,
unless otherwise indicated.*

10th Anniversary Tea Feb. 23
at the Veterans Home
Training Seminar March 8 & 15



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How dogs help kids — pg. 6

