

“Paws & Hearts”

Animal Assisted Therapy

Fed. Tax ID #91-2096569

SUMMER 2020

NEWSLETTER

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I had pretty much written this newsletter in February before the corona-virus. While the Newsletter is still a look-back at our 20 years, I have updated the original version and have addressed what we are going through as a non-profit.

First and foremost, our office is still open part-time because we’ve been blessed with donations trickling in every week. So thank you letters need to be sent out, bills paid, and plans made for the future.

I know that each and every **Canine Ambassador** is anxious to go back to visits. Trust me, Maddie & Bingo are howling on Wednesday mornings, not understanding why Uncle Drew isn’t picking them up to go on their weekly visit at Lucy Curci Cancer Center.

I am not sure of the format—virtual or in-person—but *hopefully* we will have our yearly dog-walk and we will have our Volunteer Luncheon. We just need to see how getting back to the new normal looks so we all stay safe.

Richard Waxman

Upcoming Events to Put on Your Calendars!

Pet Bereavement Support Group

Monthly Meetings

Second Wednesday of the month, 1 pm

**20th Annual Dog Walk/Fundraiser
Pancake Breakfast!
Saturday November 28th**

Registration begins at 9 am, Walk at 10 am

Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort & Spa

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“Maddie’s” Views (“Lucky” & “Scruffy” in thought)

Okay, so what happened to twice weekly visits that Uncle Drew used to take Bingo and me on? There is no wrestling with Dad to get those bandannas on Wednesday and Friday mornings, and quite honestly if Dad looks at my brother and me one more time and says, “God you guys are great company,” we are going to bite him! When do we get to go on visits again?

The year started out with a bang.....boy were we busy! In January there was the group of Girl Scouts we made a presentation to, and then we did that 2-day trade show for the Foundation for Educational Administration. OMG Bingo and I were hugged and petted and photographed by so many people. Dad & Drew talked about the benefits of Pet Therapy in classroom settings endlessly, and together the four of us got a lot of valuable information out there!

We understand that the world has changed a lot, and that visits will take a long time to come back, but like all our **Canine Ambassador** volunteers, we are very anxious and ready to head back out there to make people smile!

“Maddie” Waxman

And it all began.....Chapter Three

There are so many wonderful memories, it always hard to decide on what highlights to work into stories for the newsletters. For now, let's start from where we left off in the Spring Newsletter..... It seemed like the days turned into months, and the months into years, and while there were always financial challenges and hopes for brighter tomorrows, somehow the years started adding up. The rent seemed to get paid, the insurance policies were covered, printing costs were taken, and even I eked out a small salary those first few years. I just never stopped hoping and planning because I always believed in moving forward. I remember very vividly being very discouraged because there truly was no money coming in and thinking it was time to pack it all in, but I went on a visit at Eisenhower and a patient took my hand and said, "You have no idea what your visit meant to me today." And I thought, I guess I'd better keep on plugging away!

"Lucky" and I continued to make visits to Eisenhower Medical Center, new volunteers kept coming on board, and the Desert Sun was very generous with articles, updates, and coverage on our progress. NBC Palm Springs-KMIR was always very gracious in having us on to talk about the program. There were always calls from interested potential volunteers. Some of the temperament tests worked out, actually most of them did, and only a few did not. Some of our very first and original volunteers are still with us, with different Canine Ambassadors, but still going on visits.

Very early in our existence "Lucky" and I found another side-kick. "Scruffy" (that was his name!) came into our lives, and it was actually Phillip who trained him to work with Lucky on visits. The two of them, actually the three of us, were inseparable for years on visits and at special functions in the valley. You never saw one of us without the other two. Both boys are long gone now, and as their pictures adorn the walls of the office and my home, their memories and their commitment to making people feel better are never far from my heart.

About seven years into this whole thing Drew came into our lives. We were lucky that Drew was retired and had plenty of time on his hands. Within months of our friendship he was helping out at the office, assisting on visits, and before too long his partner Emelio started stuffing and getting the newsletters ready for mailing. Then we used to send out the newsletter 4-times per year, but Emelio never complained. Three days after I dropped all the bits and pieces off to him, he'd call and tell me that everything was done and ready to be taken to the mailing house. Have I mentioned that Drew isn't quite as fast at this as Emelio was?!



Our Velie Way office. I can't believe we spent 16 years there. It doesn't seem possible!

Other Articles that have been published about us over the years!



Highlights of the 13th Annual Dog Walk

Taking One Giant Step for Pet Therapy

Paws and Hearts to hold annual dog walk to raise funds for therapy programs.

by Richard Womann
Community Contributor

On Saturday, Nov. 30, Paws and Hearts will hold its 13th Annual Dog Walk/Fundraiser at the Westin Mission Hills Resort and Spa. The yearly fundraiser will celebrate the work that the Paws and Hearts' Animal Assisted Therapy program are doing.

The centers work very hard throughout the year, visiting to hospitals, long-term care facilities, cancer hospitals and Alzheimers' centers. The patients and residents that these therapy dogs visit really love the time they spend with the dogs. Last year alone, a group of over 110 thousand people made over 110 thousand visits to people in these kinds of facilities.

Once again, it is time to make plans for the Annual "Paws & Hearts" Dog Walk. It's to hold a paw in support of the therapy dogs who visit all of these hospitals, health care facilities and cancer centers, by coming out.

Walkers are asked to raise donations in their dog's name. Pledge sheets are available on the Paws and Hearts' website. Each walker who participates will receive a commemorative dog walk T-shirt and dog bandana.

The Paws and Hearts Dog Walk raises donations for the organization's pet therapy program, which sends friendly dogs to various hospitals and health care facilities to brighten a patient's day. This year's walk will be held on Saturday, Nov. 30 at the Westin Mission Hills Resort and Spa.

Photo courtesy of Richard Womann

PAUSE FOR PETS

Television stations KNMR8 and KPSE My 13, home of the Valley's Pet Finder, are also supporting the cause. KNMR8 Today hosts Gloria Rodriguez and Thalia Hayden will serve as the Grand March of the walk.

Paws and Hearts invites all Palm Desert residents and their well-behaved dogs to attend our two-mile walk around the lovely grounds of the Westin Mission Hills Resort and Spa. Donation sheets can be found at most pet stores in the valley, or by visiting pawsandhearts.com. The organization asks that participants get sponsors in their dog's name and turn in their pledge sheet and donations the day of the walk.

Paws and Hearts also offers a wonderful continental breakfast for all the walkers, and a ton of water and dog treats provided by Rescue-Spawners for dogs big and small.

In addition, Santa Claus will be on hand for holiday photos, and raffles for various gift baskets will also be held during the event. Registration for the walk begins at 9 a.m., and the walk officially sets off at 10 a.m.

Richard Womann is the executive director of Paws and Hearts, which is located at 74-854 Vella Way, Suite 7 in Palm Desert. For information on the event, and to inquire about volunteering, please call Womann at 760-836-1406.

Our Mission Statement

"Paws & Hearts" is a leader in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy, (AAT) and it is our mission to enrich the lives of frail and special care cases that require the loving attention and affection that only a "four-legged" healer can provide.



Emelia Earhart School Presentation, 2005 ?



A visit to Eisenhower Medical Center



A few years ago "Scruffy"
"Maddie" and Dad were
dressed as Volunteer Fire-
fighters for the Joslyn Senior
Center Halloween Health Fair!

*A few more vintage
Photos !*



Yours truly and Rita Steffen winning a local dance competition! Reading program, Thousand Palms Library

Let's go back in time and share some amazing Volunteer Reports from the past!

In the Spring issue we had remembrances from Ann and this issue we are featuring Cathy, and the three **Canine Ambassadors** she has had with us over the years!

Reflecting over the past 16 years with "**Paws & Hearts**" these are some favorite memories.

Sisters--Tiffany and Sadie, visited The Lucy Curci Cancer Center. Sadie was known as the "Kisser Girl." She would greet each patient and follow them to their chair and give them a kiss and paw shake. One lady would always come in and say, "There is my kisser girl," and then lean down for her cheek kiss. Tiffany would hear a patient in the dressing room, stick her head under the curtain and there would be giggles, and a lady saying, "There is my beautiful girl." *Many of the patients said that coming for treatment wasn't so bad with Sadie and Tiffany there.*

Tiffany visited Windsor Court and would head right for the elevator every week! One man was always in his room and we were told not to visit. One day a social worker asked if we would visit him. We followed her in and he got the biggest smile seeing Tiffany. He said that he loves dogs and is really lonely. He asked if Tiffany could come back every week! She gave him several kisses and he smiled the entire time.

Zoey has visited numerous facilities the past 8 years now. She loved the library visits. When children read to her she would put her head on their lap, kiss their hand, then get rewarded with a treat from the child.

At one of the long-term facilities Zoey and I visit, we were approached by a man, who asked if we would come to his wife's room. Zoey put her paws on the bed and kissed her hand. The lady got a big smile, and the husband got tears in his eyes, and said that is the first smile he has seen in a long time.

Zoey was in the activity area in memory care. The patients were gathered in a circle around the piano and a lady was playing it. One of the patients asked if Zoey would dance with him. He took her paws and she stood up and danced with him. There were many laughs and even the staff said this was the happiest they had ever seen the patients.

Zoey visited with a man who had lost his wife the day before. The staff said he was really distraught. Zoey went up to him, laid her head on his lap, and kissed his hand. He rubbed her head and said she is really a bright star to his day.

After all of these years and hundreds upon hundreds of visits I am still amazed at the power of Pet Therapy and what it does for seniors in compromised positions residing in care facilities. I am so grateful to be part of this amazing work! Cathy & "Zoey" Robinson



Pet Bereavement Support Group

Our group meets the second Wednesday of every month, 1pm, at our office in Palm Desert. Each participant is asked to register on our website, www.pawsandhearts.org, and to bring a photograph of their beloved dog or cat (not on a cell phone). We started the fourth year this April, and we have seen many faces from the valley come into the office and share love stories of their beloved 4-legged companions who have passed away. We are here to listen.

