

"Paws & Hearts"

Animal Assisted Therapy

Fed. Tax ID #91-2096569



FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER

Board of Directors

President

Richard Waxman
Executive Director
"Paws & Hearts"

Vice President

Karen Gebala

Founders

"Lucky" & "Scruffy" Waxman

Secretary/Treasurer

Jeff Gobble

Kerry Hopps

Randall C. Miller

In Memorium

Valerie Zugates

Drew Marefos

President Emeritus

Virginia Tillmannshofer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is now the dead of summer in the desert as I work on this Newsletter, and you know what a brutal summer this has been weather-wise. For me, at least, I'm keeping cool by thinking ahead to our upcoming **Santa Paws** event in early December.

We have updated our little Board of Directors, and I have properly introduced our new board members and talked about past ones on the next page.

I've also spent a bit of time reflecting on December 1st because that is the date we became registered as a 501C3 25 years ago! Before too long we will be celebrating almost a quarter century of our existence in the Coachella Valley. How is it even possible that two-and-a-half decades have flown by so quickly!

With all the ups-and-downs of running a non-profit, and the worries about funding in the early years, I would give anything to be starting this all over again. I just want the next few years to roll along very slowly!

Enjoy the Fall Newsletter, and for those of you who are local, please come and see us on **Saturday, December 7th** and have your picture taken with **Santa**!

- Richard Waxman

UPCOMING EVENTS

Add to your calendar!

PET BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Monthly Meetings

Second Wednesday of the Month 1:00pm

VOLUNTEER BOOK CLUB

Last Wednesday of the Month 1:00pm

Santa Paws!!



Saturday,
December 7th
10am - 1pm



"TERRY'S" VIEWS

("Lucky", "Scruffy", "Maddie" & "Bingo"
in thought)



It's a good thing that I have a Dad who is so well trained that when we are at the office if I have to run outside to take a pish, he puts my harness and leash on and then picks me up and carries me to a shady spot!

We've spent a lot of time this summer in the office for some event that we aren't doing until early December. Honestly, back in June two men came into the office carrying these huge boards and erected something called a Santa back-drop. I don't know about you, but don't you think Dad ordered this a little early in the year? And don't get me started on that photo shoot in early August. All of those other dogs invading my space? Really?

And what's all this about the start of 25 years? Again, I'm having to hear Dad talk about "**Lucky**" and "**Scruffy**" and "**Maddie**" and "**Bingo**" and what great therapy dogs they were. Okay, so I may not be a therapy dog per-se, but I am a pretty good watch dog/greeter here in the office. No one barks louder or jumps at the window like I do!

There he goes again with that "25 year business!" OY!!

 "Terry" Waxman

"Paws & Hearts"

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🌐 www.pawsandhearts.org

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Introducing our 2024 Board of Directors



President Richard Waxman



Everyone
knows
this story!
Enough
said!

Vice President - Karen Gebala



Many of you know Karen because she has been part of "Paws & Hearts" for 20 years. Karen has been our proof-reader, sounding board, general advice department, and just about everything else to our growing organization. Her input and wisdom have just proven invaluable over the years and it was time she officially was recognized and became a board member.

Secretary/Treasurer - Jeff Gobble



Jeff joined the board last year to take over from Valerie after her passing. Most of our readers and supporters have heard us talk about Jeff and Tish. Tish was the CPA who helped found us 24 years ago. Tish has since retired, but Jeff has stepped up to help us out...and he can do an Excel spreadsheet a hell of a lot better than I can!

Kerry Hopps



Kerry has been a volunteer since May of 2019 with her amazing dog "Billy." Kerry sort of offered, and I sort of asked if she'd like to fill in for Drew and help with events. Kerry agreed, and now we have her help on our board!

Randall C. Miller



"Randy" has been involved with us for close to fifteen years now. Randy is the representative from Modern Woodmen. For years Modern Woodmen has been a corporate sponsor of our Annual Dog Walk, and this year they are a sponsor for

Santa Paws. Randy was extremely helpful to Valerie and me a few years ago with financial advice and it was about time he joined our board as his wisdom regarding financial matters has always been spot on!

Board President Emeritus Virginia "Ginny" Tillmannshofer



Is there anyone connected to "Paws & Hearts" who doesn't know who Ginny is? Kinda' hard not to know her because for most of our journey, Ginny has been around. She started out with her

Golden Retriever "Buddy" as a volunteer even before we had our first official office on Velie Way. Before too long Ginny offered to do a fund-raiser at her home, called it "Buddy's BBQ Bash," and handed over a check for a lot more than I'd ever raised in donations at that point!

Ginny actually asked if she could join the board and I jumped at that offer. Ginny was in my corner every step of the way. Not only was she a huge financial contributor, but she made up those amazing gift baskets and ran that raffle at all 20 Dog Walks!

Ginny retired from the board this year which is why I stepped into her pumps! I only hope I still have the energy in me that she gave us for two decades. Ginny, you were very good to me, and I will always be so grateful!

In Memoriam Valerie Zugates & Drew Marefos



What more could I say about Valerie and dear Drew? How they helped me out year after year with just anything I asked. And how many times do I look at their pictures in the office when I'm working on something and ask for their guidance? If they are watching from above, they both know how much I miss them, and how their efforts will never ever be forgotten.



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Animal Assisted Therapy



PRESENTS

Santa Paws!!

This year we are going to host a little event in our new office, Santa Paws!!
Think Santa in his chair, a holiday themed back-drop, hot chocolate, treats for the
dogs and the humans... and dogs for adoption from Loving All Animals!

Saturday, December 7th
10am – 1pm

We are inviting our volunteers and the community to come and join us!
Our resident Santa from our past Dog Walks will be on hand
to pose with your dog for your holiday photo!

Mark the date down on your calendar!

Cost: Gee, looks like this one is on the house!

But donations are always appreciated!

Sorry, no retractable leashes allowed. Your pup must be on a short leash!



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The Berger Foundation Building

☎ (760) 836-1406

✉ Pawsandhearts@aol.com

🌐 www.pawsandhearts.org

Please call or email with any questions

This event has been graciously sponsored by:
**The Comprehensive Cancer Center
at Desert Regional
& Modern Woodmen**



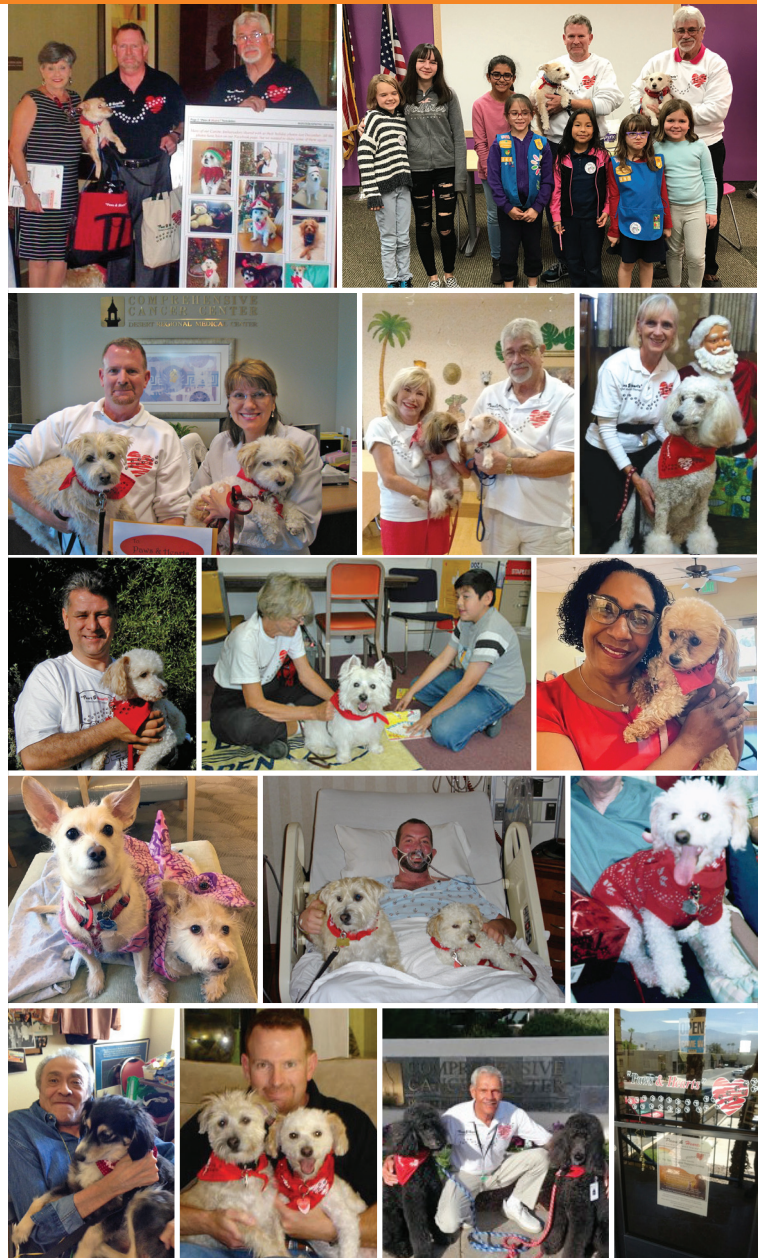
Is it almost the start of year 25? Is that even possible?

How can 24 years have flown by so quickly? A few years ago, "I think it was our 20th year", I ran a few vintage pictures in a Newsletter because they were so much fun to look at. I remember we didn't have a scanner in the office and Valerie took them home, scanned them, and emailed them to me. We now have a scanner, but do you think I can figure out how to use it? Where is Valerie when I need her? OY!

Most everyone who reads these Newsletters follows us, makes donations, comes to our events, and knows if it weren't for little **"Lucky"** there never would have been a **"Paws & Hearts."** That July 4th I found him as a stray was as we say in Yiddish, bushert, 'meant to be.' We were both in the right place at the right time, and this whole journey began!

By no means did any of this happen without many people pulling for us to succeed. I was lucky to have a ton of help along the way—from Phillip Valdez, who sold the chocolate chip cookies we baked one weekend as our first little fundraiser; to all the board members both past and present; to Gino LaMont from KMIR 13; to Chris McGuire from the H.N. & Frances C. Berger Foundation; to Drew and Valerie; all the first four dogs I had who all contributed; and to all the volunteers and donors over the years! Thank you! What a ride! I hope I can do it for another 20 or so years!

Enjoy a little look back in pictures.



Thousand Palms Thousand Palms Library presents reading program at local school

Thousand Palms Library brought their Paws to Read program to Della S. Lindley Elementary School in Thousand Palms in celebration of National Library Week. The library has teamed with the Paws and Hearts Organization, to encourage children to read by reading aloud to animal therapy dogs. Kindergarten through 2nd grade students read to dogs on April 11 and 12 in their classrooms. The "Paws to Read" program is ongoing at the library on Saturdays through May 7.

Angela Mason, 8, of Cathedral City.

Ann Rife of Rancho Mirage.

Kathryn Villagomez, 7, of Thousand Palms.

Carlos Villagomez, 7, of Thousand Palms.

Austin Wilson, 4, of Thousand Palms and Richard Wamann of Palm Desert.

~ Volunteer Stories ~

We are continually adding new Canine Ambassadors and their handlers--
Our volunteers have been sending in some of the most amazing reports from their weekly visits.
Each and every one of you are making such a difference in the lives of the
patients that you and your Canine Ambassador visit!

DAVID, STEPHEN & "STARRY"

The Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional

*Something a little different in this report—we had David & Stephen share with us
Starry's journey in becoming a Therapy Dog!*

Starry was born in Poland and brought to California with her sister as a puppy by a Schnauzer breeder during the pandemic. Unfortunately for the breeder, but fortunately for her, Starry didn't grow large enough to have puppies, so the breeder needed to find Starry a new home, and David and Stephen were lucky enough to find her.

As it turned out Starry had a purpose here in the U.S.---as a **Canine Ambassador** for "**Paws & Hearts**". Starry first began her journey as a Therapy Dog at Desert Regional Cancer Center in January of 2023. She was hesitant and confused on her first few visits to the Center and was scared to even walk into the elevators. She wasn't sure why she was in these large waiting rooms full of people or what she was supposed to do, but eventually she caught on to the fact that she was there to comfort people and receive their affection.

Starry has always naturally been a calm and well-behaved dog, and these qualities have come in handy at the Cancer Center. Once Starry realized why she was there, she has become more and more comfortable with her job, jumping up on chairs next to people unprompted so they can pet her, sitting on people's laps, or being hugged and kissed by complete strangers. Nothing fazes Starry. It's been so gratifying to witness Starry's growth into a **Canine Ambassador** who spreads love and happiness to cancer patients every Friday morning. She has definitely found her purpose there!



ABRIL & "OLIVER"

Rancho Mirage Healthcare

Oliver walked into Rancho Mirage Healthcare wearing his bright red working bandanna, wagging his tail as usual, and saying hello to everyone at the front desk!

Our first stop was Station 4, to see Mrs. Harriet. She is one of our newest patients, and ever since she moved into that room, Oliver and I check in on her every single week. Just like many other patients, she looks forward to Tuesdays. Oliver ran and jumped on her lap as her bed was lowered down in a very inviting way for a pup to jump right up! Oliver's jump gave her the biggest smile, her eyes got a little misty with joyful tears, and said to me--"You know, I've never had a dog myself, but now I have one." And she so very gently petted Oliver's head and looked at him in the eyes with tears of thanks!

And then one of the nurses told me I should visit Mr. Allan in Station 1. His dog recently passed away. He was very excited to meet Oliver, and so thankful for us, for stopping by his room. He said everything in his day was only going to get better because of Oliver's visit!

One of the activity directors told me that she has heard conversations among the patients, and they constantly talk about Oliver visiting them. She said we make such a difference in their days and they look forward to seeing us. I love the love we receive from them!

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 the frail and special care cases that require the loving attention and affection that only a 'four-legged' healer can provide.





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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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