

“Paws & Hearts”

Animal Assisted Therapy

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SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Executive Director
“Paws & Hearts”

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“Lucky” & “Scruffy” Waxman

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In Memorium

Valerie Zugates

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Summer in the desert and it felt as though we already had a taste of these temps back in March around the time our Spring Newsletter came out! Sheesh! What were the weather God's thinking?

Once I email our quarterly Newsletter, it gets filed in my rear-view mirror and I begin the next one. It is always a treat when I receive emails from those of you who take a moment to write and express how much you enjoyed the Newsletter. Trust me, those words of encouragement mean a lot! And just so you know, I only do the first version of the Newsletter. Our Board Vice President Karen takes what I originally wrote and makes it sound so much better. (She's been our Editor for 20+ years!) Then Tara, our amazing Graphic Artist turns it into the final version that you see. So, this is truly a group effort!

Back in late March our Book Club had the pleasure of meeting another local author. Our Book Club is open to all of our volunteers, and we hope that a few more of you will attend. We really do have a very good time once a month discussing the various books that each of us shares.

Enjoy our Summer Newsletter! (And keep those comments coming!)

- Richard Waxman

UPCOMING EVENTS

To Put on Your Calendars!

PET BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Monthly Meetings
1st & 3rd Wednesday
of the Month

VOLUNTEER BOOK CLUB

Last Wednesday of the Month 1:00pm

“TERRY'S” VIEWS


(“Lucky”, “Scruffy”, “Maddie” & “Bingo”
in thought)



This Newsletter I actually have a lot to share with our readers! I have now gone on quite a few visits to Amber House in Palm Desert. Amber House is a 6-bed Board & Care, and there are two of them across the street from each other. OMG, these homes are over-the-top beautiful! I feel like I'm in a Laura Ashley showroom! Beautifully decorated, spotless clean, and just a lovely professional staff. I think I've made a few inroads with some of the clients/patients.

One gentleman in particular, Skip, has really taken a shine to me. Skip is always sitting at the dining table watching TV when I visit. The TV gets muted when I am standing on the table right in front of Skip. I always put my front paws up on his shoulder and Skip strokes me, thanks me for visiting, and gives me a big kiss.

On the way out Dad gives me another kiss, actually many of them, whispering in my ear how proud he is of me for making so many people happy! This is what he's been trying to tell me ever since he brought me home, and now I finally get it! I really love these visits and my ability to make people smile!

 “Terry” Waxman

“Paws & Hearts”

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📘 www.facebook.com/pawsandheartsorg



DESERT CARE NETWORK
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

Almost from the beginning we have been providing Desert Care Network's Comprehensive Cancer Center with our *Canine Ambassadors*. A different 4-legged healer visits every weekday morning! Teresa Whipple the Executive Director says it best...

"We are proud to be the only hospital in the Coachella Valley that welcomes therapy dogs to support our patients and staff. Our 25 year relationship with Paws & Hearts is important to all of us at Desert Care Network's Comprehensive Cancer Center!"

Meet our Canine Ambassadors!!!



Monday – "Willie"



Tuesday
 "Shelby" & "Hudson"
 (& Drew!)



Wednesday – "Thor"



Thursday – "Ernie Banks"



Friday – "Muffin"



But let me take you back 25 years and show you how it all began!
 Teresa and I with my guys, "Lucky" and "Scruffy"
 This has always been one of my all-time favorite pictures!

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.

~ Volunteer Stories ~

This is one of the items in the Newsletters that I love to include because it gives all of our readers a chance to really understand how special these Pet Therapy visits are not only to the patients/clients we see but to the Volunteers themselves.

This issue's story is very personal to me because it happened seventeen years ago at Eisenhower Hospital... I'll let the story unfold here...

A different Volunteer Report this week, sort of a two-part story, one that begins with "Shelby," and her sore leg, and her trip to the vet after her visit to the Cancer Center to see the patients and staff who rely on her and her smiling face every Tuesday morning!

AS TOLD BY SANDIE, "SHELBY'S" MOM

Today I had to take Shelby to her vet to evaluate an injury to her back leg. We went there right from the Cancer Center so we still had our "garb" on - my shirt, Shelby's scarf. When we were ushered into the treatment room, Amber, Dr. Jackman's assistant, saw my shirt and started to cry. She became very emotional and started to tell "her story". When her son, Carter, was 7, he had a very severe asthma attack. She called an ambulance and Carter was rushed to Eisenhower Emergency. He was gasping for air and Amber told me she thought he was dying. It was horrible, scary, and she felt helpless as she watched her little boy struggle so much to hang onto life. At Eisenhower, he was evaluated, and then airlifted to Loma Linda because his condition was so critical. He was treated there - thankfully, successfully - and then brought back to Eisenhower for a pretty prolonged hospital stay. While in (as Amber described it), the very dark, sterile, and frightening environment for a 7-year old boy, a Paws & Hearts Ambassador dog came to Carter's room to visit him. Amber said it was like a miracle - his demeanor improved, he smiled, and started talking to the dog, and hugged the dog who had cuddled up next to him on the hospital bed. All Carter and Amber talked about was his "canine angel" who made all the difference for Carter and his rehabilitation. What's even better is that Richard Waxman, the director of Paws & Hearts, heard the story and invited Carter to be the poster child for the upcoming Dog Walk. Carter was thrilled!

Carter recovered and learned how to manage his asthma. This happened in 2005. Carter is now 27 years old. He and Amber talk about the Paws & Hearts experience a lot. Amber is so thankful and appreciative that this organization was there for her and for Carter!

- FINISHED BY RICHARD -

The dog they are referring to in this story was my boy "Scruffy" and I was the volunteer who visited with Carter and his Mom. Scruffy loved kids, and while he wouldn't tolerate a human cuddling with him, put him in bed with a child and he was all full of hugs and kisses and cuddles! Scruffy has been gone 11 years now, and I am so glad I got to hear this story again!



See Scruff, I told you you would never be forgotten!!



"Paws & Hearts"

42-600 Cook Street, Ste. 207
The Berger Foundation Building
Palm Desert, CA 92211

PLACE
STAMP
HERE



1st & 3rd
Wednesday
of the Month
1:00PM

For eleven years now we have hosted our monthly Pet Loss Bereavement Group the second Wednesday of the month at 1pm. We have doubled our sessions and now the group meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at 1pm in our office.

Losing a beloved 4-legged companion is pretty devastating, and if you are like so many of our attendees, you are a senior, living on your own, and that dog or cat was the best buddy you had.

Moving through the grief can seem impossible.

We've all been through this before and it never gets any easier.

If you need a group setting, or a one-on-one with me, just go to our website www.pawsandhearts.org and on the opening page you will see our Pet Loss Group information. Click on it, follow the prompts and sign up for the next meeting. I receive these registrations as soon as you submit them, and will give you a call to hopefully start the healing journey.

- Richard