



Fairfax Pets On Wheels Spring Update

March 2015

Reflections on 23 Years of Visiting

With nearly 23 years of visiting in long term care facilities with my dogs, I am still amazed when a resident tells me, "You've made my day".

The reality is that they have made mine – even if they don't remember my name, but are quite clear that Teddy (or KC or Dusty) had given them kisses. I have made many friends through the years at the facilities, and when they have passed on, I have wept tears for them. There have been times when I thought I couldn't go back to the facility because memories of the resident that has passed were so strong. And, while there have been times when I took a week or two off to grieve, I remember that there are others at the facility who need the wonderful kiss of a furry friend.

This past October, a resident that I had visited for almost 8 years, passed away while I was out of town. She was 105 when she died – she had a lovely family who visited her daily, was loved by everyone who met her, was simply a wonderful woman who had experienced much, loved to talk about the birds that my husband and I would see on our birding outings and enjoyed puppy dog kisses.

I would send her postcards from our trips and she would have them on her corkboard when I returned. We would sit on her bed with Teddy (and KC before) sitting between us so that she could pet the pup while we talked. Teddy knew her from the time he was a pup – and knew how to get her to pay attention to

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You're Invited! Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

When: Saturday, June 13, 2015 12:00/Noon
Where: Frying Pan Park Pavilion, Herndon, VA

RSVP by June 3, 2015 by visiting www.tiny.cc/picnic2015

On the program:

- Latshaw & Shauna Awards
- Hours of Service Awards
- Canine activities
- Volunteer and pet portraits by Robin Burkett of PawPrints Photography www.pawprintsphotography.com.

Guests welcome but only FPOW-approved pets.

Don't forget to bring your appetite and dress your pets in approved attire (i.e., no flexi leads, chain leashes).

him, nudging her arm when she wasn't petting him enough. During one visit, she proclaimed, "You realize, don't you, that Teddy has no idea he is a dog".

He knew her name, her room, her bed – on our first day back after she had passed away, the Director of Activities found us and asked if we could visit a new resident, and she gave us the room number. On our way to the room, I realized it was the room of our departed friend – Teddy got all excited when he saw us going for the room, while I had a lump in my throat.

When we entered, Teddy's tail was in full gear, wagging away – as he looked up at the bed, he saw that it was not our old friend and he looked back at me as if to say, "Where's Virginia?" I was not ready to go into that room, but the new resident had already seen Teddy and put a big smile on her face.

She let Teddy get up on her bed while she petted him and told him, "What a pretty girl you are." I swear he rolls his eyes when folks say that – but, at the end of our visit, Teddy had made a new friend, and we parted with her saying, "Thank you for coming in – you have made my day." Oh, no, YOU have made ours.



By Ruth Benker

Volunteer Spotlight: Carol Chapin

Carol Chapin is a long-time FPOW volunteer who has been visiting at the Sleepy Hollow Nursing Home for the last 10 years and is a liaison at the facility. In addition to volunteering, Carol works as a Pet Trainer at the PetSmart located in Fairlakes.

She has been doing this work for eighteen years and enjoys introducing her students to FPOW. She has always had an interest in geriatrics and loves to use the time she has invested in training her dog in order for them to give time and attention to people who really need it.

Carol grew up in Upstate New York and she has a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology which has been very handy in dealing with both human and canine students. She came to Northern Virginia due to lack of jobs in New York. She found out about FPOW when she saw a little newspaper advertisement for the program looking for new volunteers. Two of her friends were already active and it seemed like a good opportunity to share her well-trained dog.

Carol visits with Rain a seven year old female Weimaraner and

the team enjoys agility and show obedience classes and Rain works as Carol's demonstration dog at work. While Rain enjoys visiting, she is a bit more of a reserved dog - and many of the residents like that aspect of her personality - not all the residents want a dog that rushes up to them. Rain gets excited when Carol gets out her



special leash and collar that she uses when they go on their visits. The team visits with two friends with their dogs and Rain loves the pack time, not to mention the occasional treat she gets! And being a German dog, she has a special friend at Sleepy Hollow who is German. She loves Rain and is so happy to see her. She speaks to her in her "native" language and laughs and claps her hands. She gives her commands in German and Carol uses tiny hand signals for Rain to comply. She loves the German dog who speaks German!

Another special experience while visiting at Sleepy Hollow was with her first FPOW dog, Hunter, another Weimaraner. There was a resident who had Downs' Syndrome who was interested in the dogs but was afraid of them. The man loved watching

Thanks for the Memory

■ In memory of Captain, a beautiful Doberman, who lived his life with quiet grace, love, and dignity. Captain always made the best of each day as well as the multiple hurtles life placed before him. Although he was less one leg from early in life, this disability only served to make his heart even larger. This wonderful dog is loved by John, Kristan, Levi, and Wyatt plus his extended family. He will remain in our hearts as a constant part of our family forever. From The Wilkerson Family.

■ In memory of Shelby, the much loved rescue of Lorraine Kostelnick. Shelby is one of the last from Oldies but Goodies Cocker Spaniel rescue. He and many other elderly cocker spaniels before him were offered a final, forever home with Lorraine. He will be greatly missed. From Susie and Bob Duvall.

■ In memory of Josephine who was the much loved cat of our daughter, Alyssa Duvall. Josephine was adopted from Cat's Cradle in Richmond, VA, in

2002. She lived with Alyssa for 13 years in The Fan, Midtown Manhattan, and lastly in the Bronx. She was a great comfort and friend to Alyssa and later to her husband, Tom Winship, and their baby daughter, Alexandra. Josephine's quiet presence in their lives will be very much missed. From Susie and Bob Duvall.

■ In memory of Theodore who was the beloved blind feline friend of Jill Davidson, Lee, and Lolly. TheoAdorable won the hearts of everyone who he met, and with his inquisitive nature and can do life mantra amazed everyone. Most folks who met Theo would never have known he was blind until Jill shared the fact. One amazing kitty and he will be missed. From Kim and Mark Wilkerson.

■ In honor of Boca and Sota, who are the lovely Black Labrador Retriever sisters, of Joseph and Anne Lortie. From Kristen Gutowski, Herndon Animal Medical Center.

Visit www.fpow.org/tribute to make an online memorial or tribute donation.

and always had a stuffed animal with him. Over time, as Carol talked to him about his animal and the volunteer dogs, he got braver and the volunteers would get closer. Finally, after a long, long time he indicated that he was ready for the dog to get up REALLY close. So, Carol brought Rain up and she knelt down next to him to be more comfort-

ing. He finally, after all this time, reached out his hand ... and petted ... Carol!!!! He looked at the dog and smiled happily all the while patting her on the head. A true victory of his spirit and bravery!

Carol thinks that a lot of training and socialization are very important to a dog's success as an FPOW volunteer. A dog that knows verbal and hand signals is able to move out of the way of the wheelchairs and carts quickly and can be directed go to the side of the wheelchair and sit and stay while being petted. Having the ability to call the dog to you quickly when needed and heeling through the halls is so much safer. The more control you have of your pet while you are visiting, the calmer you will be and the calmer and more controlled your pet will be. With good training, visits will be so much more enjoyable for everyone. Residents and other people in the facility who are afraid of dogs can relax when they see that your dog is under such good control.



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Dates to Remember

Newsletter Deadlines: January 31, June 30 and October 31, 2015.

BOD Meeting: June 1, 2015 7:00 p.m. – Fairfax County Government Center – Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Pkwy, Room 709, Fairfax, VA 22035.

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic: June 13, 2015, 12:00/Noon Frying Pan Park Pavilion, Herndon, VA. www.tiny.cc/picnic2015

BOD Meeting: September 14, 2015 7:00 p.m. – Fairfax County Government Center – Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Pkwy, Room 709, Fairfax, VA 22035.

20th Annual 5K Walk: Sunday, October 4, 2015 at 12:00 noon from Weber's Pet Supermarket 11021 Lee Highway, Fairfax VA.

In every class she teaches, Carol encourages people to go beyond just one class to get their dog well trained to be able to volunteer with FPOW. She introduces the idea in every class. She has people that come already wanting to join the program but some learn about it in class. It's wonderful to go to the picnic and see former students or read about them in the newsletter. It's great to have dedicated people who follow through with their dogs to give their dogs' love to the community.

Carol believes that bigger emphasis on training and socialization from the beginning so the volunteer teams come into the program already prepared to visit. She tells her students to not even consider volunteering unless their dog has passed the AKC

Canine Good Citizen test. If a "needs more work" assessment is given at temperament testing, it can be discouraging and many potential volunteers don't follow through on getting their pet into the program. She encourages people to consider training strongly before they sign up for testing

Carol believes - as the founders of FPOW knew years ago - and the health field is coming around to see, the medical benefits of the human/animal bond are many. It is rewarding to be part of the health benefits the residents receive from interaction with a person and a well-trained animal even if it is for a weekly visit. It's so nice to be able to do a lot for people who cannot do much for themselves anymore. Though it can be a difficult thing when people we have visited with for a long time pass away it's fulfilling to know that they had a brighter day because of FPOW's "love on a leash" came their way.



By Madelynn Arnold



WE NOW MAKE HOUSECALLS

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Or visit us online
www.HerndonAMC.com

Congratulations to our Photo Contest Winners

FPOW recently announced the 9th Annual Pet Photo Contest winners.

To see all of the contest winners and honorable mentions, visit www.fpow.org/photo.

The theme was "Happiness Is ..."



1st Place: Remington, Happiness is a friend and a ball to play with. He is Joe Ammann's dog who visits Burke Health & Rehabilitation Center.

2nd Place: Beau, Happiness is caring about people but also for his little slinky ferret. He is Barbara Harding's dog who is retired from The Virginian and Powhatan.

3rd Place: Niki, Happiness is flying through the air. Niki visits Leewood with Jackie Brady.

4th Place: Winnie, Happiness is a seat at the table and a full tummy. This is Jennifer Campbell's dog who visits Arden Courts-Fair Oaks.

Four Honorable Mentions include:

Rascal, Happiness is hanging out on our beach condo balcony in OC. Lisa Swinnerton's dog who visits Commonwealth.

Niki, Happiness is drinking a smoothie at a cafe.

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Remington, Happiness is crossing a creek without getting wet.

Remington, Happiness is a good Cuban ... stick.

Thanks to the staff at Town and Country Animal Hospital for judging this year's contest!

AKC Title Congrats!



Teddy Benker earned his AKC Therapy Dog Excellent Title on December 30, 2014.

Visit www.fpow.org/akc to learn more.



Are A Breed Apart

Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging
12011 Government Center Parkway, #708
Fairfax, VA 22035-1104



Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., is a volunteer program working with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104. FPOW Volunteer Hotline: (703) 324-5424. Visit www.fpow.org
Please use the FPOW Hotline number for nonemergency calls if you are an FPOW volunteer or currently in the pipeline. Someone will either act on your message or return your call if more information is required.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT FPOW NEWSLETTER: June 30, 2015

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EDITORIAL POLICY

This is your newsletter. Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., volunteers may contribute articles for publication. Articles will be reviewed by the editors. We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for publication. We cannot guarantee the return of documents or photos (if used). Because Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., is under the sponsorship of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, the FPOW Newsletter must be approved by the FAAA prior to publication. Letters to the editor are welcome and encouraged. Letters must be signed, but if requested, your name will be withheld.

All correspondence should be directed to:

Fairfax Area Agency on Aging

Attention: FPOW Newsletter

12011 Government Center Parkway, #708

Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

(703) 324-5411

Email:

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