



Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.

Info from Fairfax Pets On Wheels

December 2023



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Looking Back at 2023

2023 was a year of getting back to normal, and FPOW did it right!

We welcomed more than 20 new people/pet teams this year to help us fulfill our mission. In June, we celebrated both new and long-time volunteers at our picnic at Frying Pan Park.



During the year, FPOW's speakers bureau volunteers attended various events throughout the county to let people know about our organization and to pique interest of potential new volunteers.



FPOW volunteer Koa Ammann poses with Navy Vice Admiral Michelle Skubic, Director of the Defense Logistics Agency, at DLA's October CFC Kickoff event at Fort Belvoir.

Most importantly, we were back in full force, doing what we love to do: helping to lick loneliness for the residents of our FPOW family of long-term care facilities. And whatever the occasion, our volunteers added just the right touch to make the day special!

Max Beekman and Katie Burnham were puttin' on the Ritz for their Halloween visit at Sunrise-Reston.



However You Celebrate...



... FPOW's board of directors sends wishes for the happiest of holidays and a safe, healthy 2024 to our dedicated volunteers, the residents and staff at our participating long-term care facilities, and all of you who continue to [support us](#) in our mission.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

All-volunteer Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.
connects pets with residents of long-term care facilities in Fairfax County.
Visit fpow.org or call (703) 324-5424

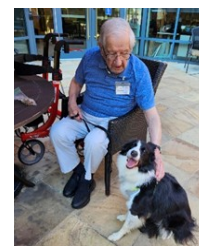


Ellie: Therapy Dog in Training

By Barbara Kuckenbecker

I adopted Ellie from Blue Ridge Border Collie Rescue. What stood out about Ellie when first I evaluated her for the rescue program was how much she loved people. I felt right then that she had the potential to be a therapy dog.

Ellie, a border collie, had been living on a farm, so I thought I might be able to use some help transitioning her to noisy suburban living — and ultimately — to a nursing home environment. Enter my 98-year-old father-in-law, Mac, who lives independently at Goodwin House Alexandria.

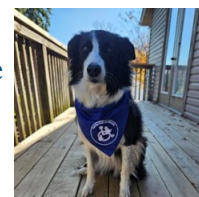


Mac totally embraced the idea of training Ellie for her important future job, and so we began visiting him at Goodwin House. We spent the hot summer afternoons in Mac's 12th floor apartment, helping Ellie get used to Mac's walker, which terrified her at first. She grew to accept the revolving front door, elevator rides and busy common areas.



With cooler weather, we moved to the courtyard and pathways on the Goodwin House campus. Mac and Ellie were quite the attention getters as we walked around the grounds or through the first floor common areas. Residents and staff stopped to pet Ellie and give her treats. Mac enthusiastically explained that we were training Ellie to be a therapy dog.

Good news! Our months-long project has been a success. Ellie passed her FPOW temperament test on November 11, and soon we will start visiting Vierra Falls Church.



May 2024 is FPOW Month!



FPOW is the featured pet organization for May 2024 in a calendar celebrating the 25th anniversary of [Becky's Pet Care](#). FPOW was honored to be the only non-rescue organization featured in this special gift for animal lovers throughout Northern Virginia who receive Becky's in-home pet-care services. Secretary Madelynn Arnold got her copy from founder Becky O'Neil at the anniversary celebration.

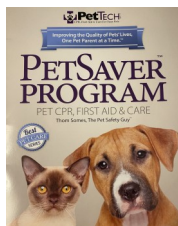
Helping Our Pets and Ourselves

By Diane O'Brien

Director of Volunteer Engagement



Pet CPR and First Aid Class



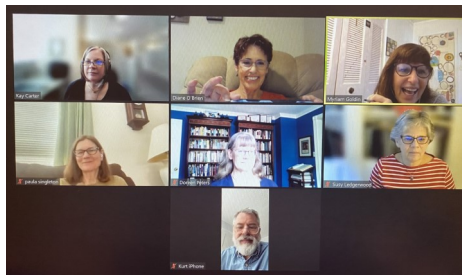
In May, FPOW volunteers attended a Pet CPR & First Aid Class taught by Jake Harmon, a certified Pet Tech trainer at Affectionate Pet Care in Fairfax. Karen Finkel, Jennifer Pindell and Diane O'Brien received hands-on guided practice in Pet CPR and step-by-step instructions to address a variety of pet emergencies. Topics included assessing your pet's vital signs, restraining and muzzling, rescue breathing, choking management, and bleeding protocols, as well as how to respond to fractures, poisoning, snake and insect bites and overheating — and what to include in a Pet First Aid Kit. Each volunteer received a Pet CPR & First Aid Certificate, a reference manual and a greater level of understanding and confidence in knowing how to assist their pets in an emergency.



Online Self-Care Seminar

To help our volunteers better deal with the challenges and stresses they may encounter in the course of our work — and to help prevent burnout and compassion fatigue — FPOW offered a free Self-Care Seminar geared specifically for FPOW volunteers through Fairfax County's Volunteer Solutions.

Early in November, FPOW volunteers participated in a 90-minute Zoom session that was led by clinical psychologist Myriam Goldin and hosted by social worker Kay Carter. Through supportive guided discussion questions and activities, participants shared thoughts and ideas about situations they've found stressful in the course of volunteering, as well as the various coping strategies that have been helpful in dealing with their feelings. The session ended with a brief guided meditation exercise, leaving participants feeling calm, relaxed and ready to continue with their rewarding work as FPOW volunteers.





Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging
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Letters to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. Letters must be signed, but if requested, your name will be withheld.

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