



Fairfax Pets on Wheels, Inc

# Fairfax Pets On Wheels Fall Update

October/November 2011

## AKC Therapy Dog Program

Touching Hearts. Changing Lives.



## The AKC Therapy Dog Title

We are delighted that the American Kennel Club has approved FPOW as a recognized therapy dog organization!

The AKC created a program recognizing the work of therapy dogs and their owners who have given their time and helped people by volunteering as therapy dog and owner teams. The goal of the program is not to certify dogs for therapy work, but to recognize the achievements of therapy dogs. The AKC Therapy Dog Program awards an official AKC title to dogs who have worked to improve the lives of people they have visited.

Here are the steps to the application process:

1. You must register with AKC. You can register as a purebred dog or as a Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL—formerly ILP), or you can enroll in the AKC Canine Partners Program (for mixed breed dogs).
2. You must have documentation that you are an FPOW volunteer and that you have made the required 50 visits. (Note: 100 FPOW visiting hours are the equivalent of 50 visits.) You can request this documentation by emailing [dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov). FPOW will mail you a letter certifying your visits, which you can attach to your application for the title.
3. Submit the application, fees, and FPOW certification letter to the AKC.

Visit: [www.akc.org/akctherapydog](http://www.akc.org/akctherapydog) to learn more and to download the application.

When you earn the title, please let us know so we can celebrate too.

Email your good news to [dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov).



By Liz Breyer



## 2011, A Blustery Yet Successful Paws For A Cause

Sunday, October 2 was a dreary cold fall day but Fairfax Pets On Wheels' 16th annual Paws For A Cause walk was held between rain showers.

There were over 197 walkers who were pre-registered for the event and approximately 29 on-site registrants who decided to come out to the walk despite the weather. Walkers received

a teal colored shirt with a jaunty design to wear as they walked through the neighborhood behind Weber's Pet Supermarket in Fairfax City.

Weber's has generously sponsored the walk since

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its inception providing a staging area for the event and helping with logistics.

After walking through the neighborhood, walkers and their pets returned to Weber's parking lot to enjoy a cupcake and learn if they had won one of the terrific door prizes. All walkers who had gathered donations/ pledges were entered into a special raffle for a \$50 gift certificate. The winner was JoAnn & Bill Plitt. Another Weber's gift certificate was awarded for the person bringing the highest number of pledges. This year's winner was Tracy Welch an Iliff volunteer. These donations/pledges brought in over \$2,000 to FPOW coffers.

The walkers also met with representatives from Great Falls Animal Hospital, Hope Center for Advanced Veterinary Medicine, Becky's Pet Care, Poodle Palace, Cameron Glen Health & Rehab Center, and Regional Veterinary Referral Center, six of our wonderful sponsors who had set up information tables at the Walk.

Over \$15,000 was raised for the program. Paws For A Cause also serves as a good way to introduce potential volunteers to the program. The orientation sessions after the walk are always full of people who have enjoyed the event and want their pet to be involved in such a worthwhile program.

There are many folks who work together to make this event such a fun time for human walkers and four-legged participants. These helpers include registration table workers, the pit stop helpers, set-up and tear-down crews, those tabulating the pre-registrants and ordering the t-shirts, and many other behind the scenes workers. Thank you one and all!



Save the Date for next year's walk:  
October 7, 2012

Submitted by Madelynn Arnold

## Mic Check at Majestic Mo'mints

After a tour of the Fairfax Public Access studios and a microphone check on Wednesday, September 21, DJ Mo of Majestic Mo'mints, spent the next hour highlighting the Fairfax Pets on Wheels pro-

gram. DJ Mo's mission is to "talk with the "Movers" and "Shakers" from within our communities who make a difference in our lives. The purpose of the show is the 3 E's -- Educate, Enlighten and Empower listeners to be more and do more!"



DJ Mo of Majestic Mo'mints

Kim Wilkerson, Founding member of FPOW, Tracy Van Duston, President, and her teammate, Precious, Ruth Reagan,

Director of Volunteer Solutions/Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, and Ruth Benker, Director of Communications, and her teammate, Teddy, shared 3 microphones while explaining the FPOW mission,



Ruth Reagan, Ruth Benker, Teddy, DJ Mo, Precious, Tracy Van Duston, Kim Wilkerson

# Thanks for the Memory

■ In memory of Buddy who was the canine pal of Trudy Weller. Buddy was her special friend who was taken suddenly at 14 years of age and will be greatly missed by his owner. From Kim and Mark Wilkerson

■ In memory of Patsy who was the beloved 16 year old Australian Shepherd mix of the Astin Family. Patsy followed her Army family from Georgia to Kansas to Virginia. She will be greatly missed by Cindy, Michael, Caleb, and Cora. From Susie and Bob Duvall

■ In memory of the “Gang of Six” who were the beloved Dachshunds of Joyce Delong. Joyce offered each one a second chance and they lived happily together until each one went to the Rainbow Bridge. Hooper was the last one to pass away when he was 18, Lucy when she was 13, Docker 16, Mini 16, Cinnamon 15, and Hershey at 15. They will be missed by Joyce. From Susie and Bob Duvall

■ In memory of Mercedes. From Sandra Riggins, Vienna, VA.

the challenges of running a non-profit volunteer organization, ways for folks to get involved with FPOW and the upcoming 16th Annual Paws for a Cause 3K fundraising event. Also, a book, A Dog’s Purpose by W. Cameron Bruce, was included in the discussion for DJ Mo’s book club.

We would like to thank DJ Mo for highlighting FPOW and making the participants, including the furry ones, feel right at home. Precious and Teddy were SO relaxed they can both be heard snoring. For the rest of us, it was a great experience.

In case you missed the show, a link to the web-cast is available at [www.fpow.org/media](http://www.fpow.org/media). Majestic Mo’mints can be heard live every Wednesday at 7PM. The station is Fairfax Radio, and is simulcast on Cox, Verizon Cable Channel 37, Comcast Reston Channel 27 ([www.fcac.org](http://www.fcac.org)) or Download the Application on your phone (Tunein).

Submitted by Ruth Benker



## Volunteer Spotlight

Our volunteer spotlight this quarter is on Lynn and Dave Gelman, who serve as liaisons at Sleepy Hollow Nursing Center. The couple joined FPOW approximately two years ago, and became liaisons

To make a tax deductible donation to the FPOW Memory Book in someone’s memory or honor, please send your check with brief letter to the FPOW address listed on the back of this newsletter (including pet/person’s name, to whom you wish acknowledgement mailed, and a brief detail of the occasion).

Also you can visit [www.fpow.org/tribute](http://www.fpow.org/tribute) to make an online memorial or tribute donation.

Your memorial will be permanently entered into the FPOW Memory Book, an acknowledgement will be sent, and the announcement will appear in a future edition of our newsletter.

a year ago. They feel FPOW provides a way for sharing the warmth, fuzziness, and love of their pets with people who may not regularly have warm interactions with visitors. The Gelmans have gone through Speakers’ Bureau training and want to become more involved with the program this fall. Lynn is also interested in starting a visiting group for abused women and children.

Lynn and Dave live in Arlington. Lynn works as a dental hygienist and Dave is a consultant in alternative fuels and energy efficiency. Their daughter, Samantha, is a pharmacist who lives in San Diego with her husband Jeff. Due to their belief that pets provide unconditional love and support to their owners, the Gelmans have adopted numerous dogs for themselves and their daughter over the



past 20 years. Samantha missed her family's dogs so much while at college she asked to adopt a dog while living in Richmond. The Gelmans complied, and Samantha adopted Noir, a black lab who, upon graduation, moved with Samantha to San Diego.

Lynn and Dave grew up as children of Federal employees. Lynn attended 6 schools in 8 years and relied upon her dogs for emotional stability and unconditional love in an unstable family environment. Dave grew up without pets due to his and his siblings' childhood allergies.

Back in 2006, Lynn found Destiny, a border collie mix, in a parking lot. Destiny was covered with mange, underweight by a third, and had clearly escaped from her previous home. Initially, Destiny was quarantined at the Gelmans' veterinarian for 2 weeks. She was treated for fleas, mange, and malnutrition. Later, after an unsuccessful search for Destiny's owner, Destiny was microchipped and spayed. Destiny found she had a new home that was everything she could have hoped for.

Soon the Gelmans learned that Destiny was "born to visit." Initially, they watched Destiny gleefully visit with the veterinarian's front office staff when they made their daily visits during Destiny's quar-

antine. Later, they would observe Destiny working the crowd at the dog park, where she had minimal interest in the other dogs in favor of their owners. Dave often says she is an anomaly of the canine kingdom – the only dog whose tongue is directly connected to her heart.

A few years ago, Lynn finally decided it was time to look into finding a way for Destiny to visit but thought Destiny needed a small partner. She found a Cairn Terrier on Craig's List who was being re-homed for the third time in 18 months. Lynn visited him, tickled his ears, played with his toes, rubbed his belly, and talked baby talk to him, to see if he would tolerate potential poking and prodding that might accompany pet visitation. Diesel was quite compliant and readily became a new family member at "Club Pet" (as the Gelman home is referred to by friends and family). To this day, he often spends part of each evening resting on Dave's chest almost like a baby.

The night before visiting at Sleepy Hollow, both Destiny and Diesel get bathed. Destiny has begun to take that as a cue that a visit is coming and happily cooperates. The residents seem to notice (and appreciate) that the dogs are soft and fuzzy when they get there. There's no question that Destiny



lives to visit. Destiny would do it all day if she was allowed to (and she didn't overheat in the nursing home). She loves to bathe each resident in kisses until her obsessive friendliness is re-directed. Diesel loves to strut down the hallways and go into rooms to see what he can get into. Diesel really does provide a small lap-dog size package to complement the larger Destiny.

There are a number of special moments when visiting. One such example happened recently. Lynn was orienting a new volunteer this past summer when the volunteer took her dog to an elderly oriental woman who did not speak English. At first, she hesitatingly petted the dog and smiled. After a few moments, the resident began to giggle like a child over the interaction. Repeatedly, she pulled her hand away from the dog, only to then place it again on the dog's head, giggling the whole time. On subsequent visits, the woman is always eager to visit with "her dog" Destiny. Thus, pet visits can often transcend the language barrier.

Lynn and Dave have indicated that they are very grateful to have FPOW as a means for visiting individuals who appreciate visits from furry friends.



Submitted by Madelynn Arnold

## SIT/STAY!

### Emphasis on "Team"

It sounds so easy - take your wonderful, loving dog to a nursing home to visit the residents. When you get there, though, there are slippery floors, strange smells, loud noises, people on walkers and in wheelchairs, equipment in the halls, people who don't like dogs or are afraid of dogs, food (and the occasional pill) on the floor, and all sorts of attractive trash in the wastebaskets—which are strategically placed between you and the person you are trying to visit.

How are you going to get your dog past all of those

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## We Believe...

At West Financial Services, we believe in supporting our local community and encouraging volunteerism. That's why we proudly sponsor Fairfax Pets on Wheels in recognition of their work to improve the quality of life for Fairfax area residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

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distractions and focus him or her on the job at hand—visiting?

The most important thing to remember is that you and your dog are a team. Your dog can't do this job alone; he needs your help. Your dog's job is to visit, to provide love and unconditional acceptance. Your job is to support him. How do you do that?

First, you need to know your dog. How is he feeling during the visit? Is he happy? Stressed? Bored? Tired? Is he having a good time, or is he ready to go home? If you know how your dog is feeling, you can adjust the visit so that it is a positive one for him and for the residents you are visiting.

You need to be an active participant in the visit, interacting with your dog and guiding him--not just unleashing him on the residents. The safety of the residents is our first concern. You need to make sure your dog is with you and under control while visiting and not just freely wandering at the end of the leash. A short leash, held firmly, can communicate that this is a visit, and not playtime.

In some cases you may need to position your dog so

that a resident can pet him. In some cases you may need to coach the resident on how best to pet your dog. Each situation is different, and your active participation will ensure the best possible visit for the residents and for your dog.

You need to communicate with your dog, and your dog needs to respond to you. Although formal obedience training isn't required, it helps a great deal if your dog will respond to certain commands. A solid sit/stay or down/stay will help you get control in chaotic situations.

Teaching your dog to "leave it!" (or "drop it" or something similar) will keep him safe—away from the food or pills on the floor and out of the waste baskets--and will ensure that your dog doesn't forage for enticing crumbs that may have spilled onto a resident's lap or clothing. "Heel" or "with me" will help you move your dog through crowded hallways. It's nice to have a "get close" or "let's visit" command to move the dog close to the bed or the chair so the resident can pet the dog.

With your help and support, your dog will be able to do what he does best—brighten the day of the people he visits.

It's a team effort.

Submitted by Liz Breyer



[Many thanks to Facility Liaisons Sabine Arndt, Jeanine Goldberg and Kathi Baker for their thoughtful and useful suggestions!]

## Coffee, Tea & FPOW Donation?

On Monday, September 12, the FPOW team of Tracy Welch and Kate, her four legged beauty, hosted a morning coffee at their lovely Vienna home. Tracy sent out the invitation to her friends suggesting that they join her and Kate for coffee and that the money they would normally spend on

their morning coffee be brought along and deposited in the dog bowl as a pledge donation for her and Kate for the 16th Annual FPOW Paws for a Cause 3K Walk.

Nineteen people and 15 dogs participated in the



gathering. Tracy put out a spread of food, coffee, teas and juices that could rival any bistro brunch bar. The dog bowl netted \$155! Not bad for a morning coffee!

Tracy, a pilot for American Airlines, and Kate are relatively new volunteers with FPOW and have both become instant hits at Iliff Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Submitted by Ruth Benker



## Photographers Needed

Do you have a digital camera? Do you enjoy taking pictures? Do you have a couple of hours every other month or so to give to FPOW?

We are looking for additional folks to take digital photos of volunteers who pass their temperament test for their badges. If you think you'd be interest-

## Dates to remember

**BOD Meeting at Leewood: December 5, 2011, 7:00 pm.**

**Newsletter Deadline: December 30, 2011**

**BOD Meeting at Leewood: March 5, 2012, 7:00 pm.**

**Newsletter Deadline: March 30, 2012**

ed in being a part of the FPOW Photo Badge Team, please send an email to [ruth.benker@verizon.net](mailto:ruth.benker@verizon.net). Training will be provided.

## Iliff Pet Adoption Event

Iliff Nursing and Rehabilitation Center hosted a pet adoption event on Sat., October 22, 2011. Kathi Baker with Abby and Joan Violante from FPOW Speakers' Bureau staffed the FPOW booth.

The Friends of Homeless Animals Shelter, a no-kill facility from Loudoun County, was present along with some of their favorite residents who were up for adoption.

Several very interested families attended the event searching for that special pet and stopped by the FPOW table to learn about our mission.

Submitted by Joan Violante



## Report on the State of the Fairfax Pets on Wheels, Inc. Program 2010 - 2011

Fairfax Pets on Wheels, Inc. saw yet another very busy and successful year during Program Year 2010 – 2011. I'll recap the year in brief:

1. More than 8,000 hours of tail wagging and unconditional love were provided by over 300 volunteer teams to 12 long term care facilities having over 1,500 beds. Plans are now in place to grow our program to two more facilities in the Fairfax County area over program year 2011/2012. A special thank you to Madelynn Arnold for overseeing and implementing this monumental effort.
2. We once again had our United Way application accepted for inclusion in the United Way of the National Capital Area campaign (remember to designate 8907 when pledging).
3. We were included in the Combined Federal Campaign (designate 51148 when pledging).
4. We spoke at numerous United Way fund raising events and had information booths at Reston Pet Fiesta, Happy Howl-a-Ween, and the National Capital Cat Expo.
5. We had our 15th Annual 3k Paws for a Cause Walk in October, 2010 where we raised almost \$9,000.00 and plans are well underway for our 16th Annual 3K Paws for a Cause on Sunday, October 2.
6. In June 2011 we held our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event in Reston at the Frying Pan Farm Park. A special thank you to Kathi Baker for planning this wonderful event, to Robin Burkett for taking the great pics for our FPOW pet trading cards, to King Creole Catering for great food and last but not least, FPOW's official DJ Michael Galvin for providing foot stomping and tail wagging entertainment.
7. We awarded the Latshaw Award to long time FPOW volunteers Joan Violante & Patricia Leader for their continuous commitment to the program. Emily Atkinson, Activities Director at Iliff Nursing Home was also awarded the Latshaw for her continuous and unwavering support of FPOW and Iliff's residents.

8. The Shauna was awarded to Lucy, Patricia Leaders' Black Lab who visits Cameron Glen. Lucy has been an active volunteer since October 2008 and has never met a resident she does not like! She's so patient and knows just what to do when she trots through the doors of Cameron Glen. Well done, Lucy!

9. An AKC Rally Event was featured and was a huge hit at this year's volunteer appreciation event! Over 20 dog and handler teams took on the Rally course at the picnic and they all did a fabulous job! A Rally course can contain from 10-20 stations. At each station the team has to perform a specified exercise. The higher you go in Rally, the more challenging the exercises become. Our 11-station course contained mostly Novice level stations—sits, stays, various heeling exercises, and the like. Thank you Liz Breyer for this wonderful educational event.

10. We honored 35 Hours Award Recipients, 10 Bronze recipients (50 to 74 hours), 5 Silver recipients (75 to 99 hours) and a whopping 20 Gold recipients (99 plus hours). Volunteers, job well done!

11. The Temperament Testing Committee has continued to work on strengthening its policies and procedures. We've been working under the new test now for about a year and we are close to reviewing it for effectiveness. During this program year



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alone, 143 pet teams passed temperament testing. Hat-tip Temperament Testers and pet teams!

12. The American Kennel Club has certified FPOW as an AKC-recognized therapy dog organization and as a result, FPOW is listed on AKC's website which has a link to our website.

13. We conducted monthly FPOW orientation sessions and temperament tests for new volunteers.

14. We sponsored our 6th Annual Pet Photo Contest "Chillin" – winners' pictures are proudly displayed on our website.

15. We continue to recruit and train additional volunteers for the FPOW Speakers' Bureau – the



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FPOW sanctioned group of qualified volunteers who speak with a united voice to represent the program and respond to a growing need of speakers for our program.

16. The Korean Broadcasting System visited Iliff Nursing Home and filmed FPOW volunteers at work, one of our monthly new volunteer orientations, and a temperament testing session. KBS featured FPOW on a news program geared at encouraging more South Koreans to volunteer in their communities.

17. We have produced a budget that not only addresses the program year needs but also the strategic needs of the program.

18. In spite of the continued downturn in the economy, FPOW's donations have grown.

19. In March 2011, FPOW hosted CGC Testing for FPOW Volunteers. Thirteen dogs and handlers attend this event with 11 dogs earning their CGC designation! Thank you Liz Breyer, Sabine Arndt, Patty Kwapniewski, Debbie Zelten, Jeanine Goldberg, Carla Graham, Laurie Stone, Barbara Harding, Denise Elliott, and canine volunteers Tessa, Bicaline and Dolly

20. Are you on Facebook? Become a fan of "Fairfax Pets on Wheels." Do you "Tweet"? We "Tweet" too! Follow @FPOWORG.

21. I would like to take a moment to remember the FPOW volunteers, pets and long time program supporters who traveled over the rainbow bridge this past year. A heartfelt "Thank You" for your service and support. You will forever live in our hearts. We love you and miss you.

Program year 2010-2011 has been my 3rd year as the President of the Board of Directors of this amazing organization. I have some ideas to continue to raise the visibility of FPOW that I would like to continue to push over the next program year. Our work in the community is important.

Our mission is to care for a population that is often given lip service but easily forgotten. We will never know the impact our visits have. I know I speak for many of us that we feel that we take more away from our visits as individuals. What could be more rewarding than sharing our beloved companions', unconditional love with someone. I think this is the



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magic of what we do and what makes this organization thrive.

From 20 volunteers and their pets to a United Way supported agency and a recognized AKC Therapy Dog organization and our partnership with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, FPOW continues to serve as a model for volunteer community-based organizations.

I would like to extend a very special thank you to the 10/11 Board of Directors. So much was accomplished this year. We took on project after project after project. Each and every time you all stepped up to the plate and consistently hit home run after home run.

I worried constantly about overwhelming people and burning them out. I stretched this board to its

limit and not one member flinched. The educational initiatives, the progress on policies and procedures, and the change of venue for the volunteer appreciation event were all met with great success. Make no mistake, this was one heck of an outstanding board. Thank you seems inadequate.

To all the volunteers who serve on committees, (Merchandise, Office, Speakers' Bureau, Paws for a Cause, Picnic, Temperament Testing, Nominating, Annual Photo Fundraiser) we are blessed that you have stepped up to the plate and are grateful for all you do. Thank you.

To all the facility liaisons and alternate facility liaisons, as the crucial link to the program, our facilities, our volunteers, the Board of Directors and the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, without you we would not be in 12 facilities.

Complementing the Temperament Testers, you are expected to ensure that potential volunteers are suitable in our facility settings. We expect you to wear many hats with a bag of tricks to handle every kind of situation and volunteer, human and four-legged. You do so, ultimately doing us proud.

To all the FPOW visiting teams, human and most especially our furry friends, whether you give one hour or 10 hours a month, never underestimate the impact of your presence in the lives of the residents of the long-term care facilities.

You have made someone's day brighter, have been the highlight of their week, and have made them realize they are not forgotten. The good our furry friends do can not be measured in dollars and cents. Your caring presence is the reason we have a waiting list of facilities wanting our wonderful program.

To the staff of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging Volunteer Solutions Unit and the Ombudsman program, our 20 plus year partnership with you as you provide ser-

vices to the residents of Fairfax County serves as a tremendous point of pride-- that, as citizens of this community, we can share in the responsibility of helping those who are less fortunate than we, who find themselves without the comfort and love that a wagging tail can produce. Your professionalism and dedication to public service and volunteers are vital to our success.

A special thank you to Laurie Stone, Kim Wilkerson and Kathy Georgen, CPA for heading up our United Way Application efforts this past year.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the honor of serving you –

Submitted at the FPOW Annual Meeting on September 12, 2011.

By Tracy Van Duston, President, Board of Directors, Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.



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# Pics from 2011 Paws For A Cause...

Visit:  
[www.fpow.org/events](http://www.fpow.org/events)  
for a slideshow  
with hundreds of  
pics!





## 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

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](http://www.fpow.org)  
Please use the FPOW Hotline number for non-emergency calls if you are a FPOW volunteer or one who is currently in the pipeline. Someone will either act upon your message or return your call if more information is required.

## DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT FPOW NEWSLETTER: December 30, 2011

### FAIRFAX PETS ON WHEELS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Executive Committee:

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Newsletter Committee Chairman: Kim Wilkerson, Editor: Denise Elliott

### 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. In addition, 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, Suite 708

Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

(703) 324-5411

Email:

[dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov)



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