



# Fairfax Pets On Wheels Winter Update

Winter 2017

## 30 Year Celebration at Barrel Oak Winery!

September 10, 2017, was a day to remember in FPOW history! Greeted by a picturesque Sunday afternoon at Barrel Oak Winery in Delaplane, VA, over 140 FPOW volunteers and guests (canine, feline and human) gathered to celebrate 30 successful years of dedication and commitment to our community.

The pet-friendly winery, beautiful vineyards and Piedmont countryside was the perfect setting for well-deserved relaxation and merriment. It truly was the perfect venue for the teams to be honored together – a beautifully memorable day!

As guests arrived, Volunteer Fairfax volunteers

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Madelynn Arnold, Nikki DiPalma and Kim Wilkerson.*

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## Holiday Shop and Donate!

Holiday shopping time is the perfect time to keep FPOW in mind! Amazon has a program that contributes a percentage of sales to nonprofit organizations. Here's how shopping can get FPOW contributions and it costs you nothing extra.

It is easy. Instead of going to **amazon.com**, go to: **smile.amazon.com** and when asked to which nonprofit you want to direct your shopping credits, type in "Fairfax Pets On Wheels."

Each time you buy from **smile.amazon.com**, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price.

As of November 2017, FPOW has received \$459 from shoppers who chose our program.

assisted FPOW in welcoming them and pitching in wherever the need, including snapping photographs and directing volunteers to the photographer, Carina of Fuzzypants Photography, for photos of the volunteer pet or team. We offered something a little different this year – 8”x8” metal prints, a new art medium, infusing dyes directly onto specially coated aluminum sheets – just beautiful! As always, we want to thank Volunteer Fairfax for their loving support of FPOW.

Our President, Nikki DiPalma, welcomed the enthusiastic group and offered words of thanks and appreciation for those who make our program one of the most outstanding non-profit organizations in Fairfax County. Perhaps we should say, THE most outstanding! Nikki noted that collectively, we have contributed approximately 150,000 hours of pet visitation in total over the past 30 years. Of course, numbers are impressive, but the pleasure of seeing an older person light up when one of our four-legged friends arrives, you know that the real value can't really be measured in hours or dollars.

Participants expressed their appreciation for our favorite DJ, Michael Gavin, lighting up the airwaves for our listening enjoyment in the party room and for the musical duo, Lewis and Gallagher, who played acoustic classic rock on the outside patio; the variety and exceptionally delicious food catered by Silver Spoon Caterers, including balsamic glazed salmon, chicken picatta and vegetable lasagna; the exceptional hand-crafted Barrel Oak wine and beer; and the hand-carved wooden dog, cat and bunny table decorations with dog treats at their feet. It should be noted that a special cat treat was offered to our beautiful feline volunteer in attendance, Pixie Phou Phou, but unfortunately, it was not her favorite. She really didn't seem to mind, though, and her human partner was very appreciative of the effort!

We were thrilled to welcome Pam Graff as our guest speaker! Jill Davidson, who worked with Pam at the FPOW office, introduced her as one who was intimately familiar with our program. She was the Volunteer Services Coordinator for the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging for 13 years, retiring in 2007. She was, without a doubt, the most outstanding coordinator and human being we could have ever hoped to work with.

As volunteers in the office, we were struck by Pam's energy and positivity to accomplish whatever was needed. Motivated by her belief in our mission, deep love of animals and the people we served, Pam helped make FPOW what it is today.

Pam was thrilled to be presented with a FPOW logo necklace, showing our appreciation for her unwavering support, and making her an honorary member of FPOW! Her speech can be found at the end

of the article.

Following Pam's heartfelt words of affirmation and encouragement, Nikki DiPalma named the impressive contributions of individuals who achieved bronze, silver and gold award hours of service in 2016:

**Bronze award (50-75 hours):** Wendy Boiles, Carol Chapin, John Coleman, David Dexter, Pat Dutton, Patty Kwapniewski, Linda Martin and Shelley Matthews.

**Silver award (75 - 99 hours):** Carol Aron, Brian Bryson, Mary Irick, Karen Pyeatt and Charlie Viall.

**Gold award (100-plus hours):** Kye Abboushi, Joe Ammann, Madelynn Arnold, Kathy Baker, Ruth Benker, Paula Burger, Bonnie Burnham, Terry Carroll, Jill Davidson, Carla Graham, Denise Kloeppel, Terry Patton, Beverly Powell and last, but definitely not least, Joan Violante.



*Madelynn Arnold*

We are pleased to say that we have a number of volunteers who have been with the program for many years of service:

**5 years:** Jill Barney, Ileana Castro, Sharon Celesnik, Margaret Clark, Diane Ehrig, Karen Finkel, Linda Koczera, Laura Guay, Beverly Powell and Patricia Winchester.

**10 years:** Elizabeth Breyer

**15 years:** Paula Burger, Patricia Dutton, Tracy Van Duston, David Rybak and Charlie Viall

**25 years:** Ruth Benker, Diane Bente and Barbara Witucki.

For the first time, **30 year recipients** were honored! Madelynn Arnold, Suzie Duvall and Kim Wilkerson (our illustrious founding member) have been with the program from the start and are contributing members to this day. To thank and honor them for their extraordinary contributions, each were presented with a beautiful sterling silver bracelet with the FPOW logo, designed by Aspen Jewelry Design in Herndon. To their delight, they gladly accepted!



*Kim Wilkerson with husband Mark, at right*

Nikki then announced the Shauna and Latshaw award winners. The Shauna Award was established in honor of a very special Irish setter of the same name. This year's recipient is the amazing canine, Harley Bryson, Brian's dog.

The Latshaw Award was established to honor outstanding FPOW volunteer, Mary Latshaw. This year's Latshaw Award winner is Denise Kloepfel. Please see the articles on award winners located on pages 8 and 9 in the newsletter.

Nikki concluded the official program with thanks to all who make our program so exceptional. This included thanking the amazing people of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Solutions Unit, letting them know that they have given our volunteers the greatest gift a passionate pet owner could ever hope for: the ability to share our beloved friends with others, and the opportunity to give back to our amazing community.

Volunteers were reminded to pick up their (very cool) commemorative FPOW wine glasses and that they were welcome to stay and continue to enjoy a beautiful day at the winery!

For all their hard work in making our 30th a memorable event, special thanks go to the celebration committee, Madelynn Arnold, Karen Beekman, Ruth Benker, Jill Davidson, Carla Graham, David Rybak and Joan Violante.

FPOW has so very much to be proud of, but we don't do what we do for personal recognition or praise, we do it to lift the spirits of those most in need, armed with our precious, gifted partners who communicate love in its purest form, making someone's world a better place, even for just a little while.

Kim Wilkerson recognized this need over 30 years ago, and we and countless others are forever grateful for her vision and leadership.

## Pam Graff's Remarks

Hello, it is a privilege to be here regardless of how I was recruited. I got a call from one of you who asked if I would be willing to say a few words at this event. I have always loved this program and

## Dates to Remember

**Newsletter Deadlines: February 28, June 30 and October 31, 2018.**

**New Volunteer Orientation**

**3 Jan 2018 7:30PM**

**Providence Community Center 3001  
Vaden Drive Fairfax, VA 22031**

**New Volunteer Orientation**

**7 Feb 2018 7:30PM**

**Providence Community Center 3001  
Vaden Drive Fairfax, VA 22031**

worked hard to get what it needed. Then I received an email from another volunteer saying she was glad I had agreed to be the “guest speaker.” It seemed a bit of a leap but because this is FPOW I accepted it. The only problem was I decided that I have to be very careful about semantics because a few years ago I volunteered to help with my high school 50th reunion and then started getting phone calls and emails that I was in charge!

So anyway I am here, very happy to see old friends and acquire new ones. And to see that the program is still attracting compassionate, caring people. When I started in the fall of 1994 we were in nine facilities. Today you are visiting in 17 facilities. To me that is a great deal of growth AND WORK. Getting a facility educated about FPOW and learning their expectations, find a liaison, and

recruit volunteers is no small task. Kudos to all who have participated in seeing that this happens.

In the thirteen years I worked for Fairfax Area Agency on Aging I was always amazed of the number and commitment of the volunteers. We went through some tough times such as getting on board with insurance and changing computer systems I don't know how many times but we always made it. The program is very labor intensive – all the paperwork – but all I had to do was visit one of the facilities during the time FPOW was there and I would go back to the office saying no matter what it takes to run this program it is worth it!

This program is unique in many ways. It gives you and your four legged buddy an activity to do together. Your visiting makes people feel good, happy, and that they matter. The residents you visit are the forgotten population in our society. You give them an opportunity to feel special. Many have had pets in the past and it gives them a chance to reminisce about the pets they use to have. It often gives the

residents who don't participate in any of the activities of the facility an opportunity to share bits of their lives. As we all know, there is nothing like the touch and attention of a pet.

Many of the residents either don't have families or family that visits. Often their friends have passed away or are unable to visit. So think about how their lives have changed. It can't be easy and this is only the social part of their lives. Then add on the physical and ones life has been

turned upside down. The lucky ones are those who have families who care. And those families are the ones that often let us know how important FPOW is to their loved one.



*Pam Graff and Jill Davidson*

FPOW is a program that draws attention. When I wear my FPOW T-shirt I am stopped and asked what it is. It's a unique program and educating people about what it is and the benefits to the volunteer teams and the residents always brings a positive response. Planting seeds about how one can volunteer with their pet and at the same time bring joy to those who are often written off as not being a part of our community.

By visiting these residents this is a chance to learn about the past, their accomplishments and way of life. Everyone wants to feel they contributed to society no matter how big or small and this gives them a way to share their stories. They are much more than that person in the bed or wheelchair. Your pets are the best conversation starters I know.

Making time to visit is not always easy. You have to be sure your pet is ready and then drive to your facility. Sometimes you are tired and just don't want to make the effort to go but then you think of your favorite residents or the one who is just beginning to respond to you or the one whose family has asked you to visit because their loved one is lonely and you get up and go because you don't want to let these people down. We all have a reason we volunteer. We are just glad you picked FPOW.

## Paws for a Cause

Once again, FPOW's sole fundraiser, Paws for a Cause, was held on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. The 22nd annual event was held on October 1 at Weber's Pet Supermarket with over 90 walkers and their pets. The cute t-shirt was designed by George Mason University graphic art student Juliana Haley and it was a big hit with the walkers. Sponsors Becky's Pet Care, Dulles Health & Rehab Center, Regional Veterinary Referral Center, and VCA

SouthPaws Veterinary Specialists & Emergency had information tables and giveaways for the walkers.

There was a raffle drawing for door prizes for all registrants and two \$50 Weber's Pet Supermarket gift certificates purchased for walkers who brought in pledges or donations to FPOW. One was given to Cynthia Underwood who brought in the most pledge money -- for the second year in a row -- and the other gift certificate was given to the winner of a random drawing among the other walkers with pledges or donations money.

Paws for a Cause is FPOW's only fundraiser which provides funding for insurance, paperwork, and volunteer appreciation. It is essential for FPOW's bottom line. Many thanks to everyone

who worked on the event, for those who sponsored the walk, and for our volunteers for supporting this effort. **See pages 10-11 for pictures and visit [www.fpow.org/events](http://www.fpow.org/events) to see many more!**

## Fairfax Pets On Wheels Month

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, at its meeting on September 12, proclaimed October as Fairfax Pets on Wheels Month in Fairfax County. The Board recognized FPOW on our 30th anniversary and made special note of almost 200 volunteers and their pets who donate more than 5,000 hours of pet visitation annually.

Many FPOW human and canine volunteers were on hand to witness the proclamation and Nikki DiPalma, FPOW President made the following remarks:

"Chairman Bulova and members of the Board of Supervisors ~ Good morning. On behalf of Fairfax Pets on Wheels Board of Directors and our





volunteers, both 2-legged and 4-legged, thank you for this most special proclamation.

As part of our anniversary celebrating 30 years of caring and sharing in our community, today's recognition allows us the public opportunity to acknowledge the extraordinary partnership that we have enjoyed with the county through the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Development department.

We are an all-volunteer program and donated more than 5,000 hours of pet visitation annually to 14 long term care facilities and three Adult Day Health Care Center. From a beginning of just 20 volunteers and their pets to a United Way and American Kennel Club therapy organization, our partnership with the Area Agency on Aging serves as a model for volunteer community based organizations.

Our strong partnership has afforded FPOW volunteers the greatest gift a passionate pet owner could ever hope for, the ability to share our beloved best friend with others and opportunity to give back to our amazing community.

We would like to present this flag to you, which was proudly flown over the Capitol on May 30, 2017, in honor of our current and continuing partnership to continue to "lick loneliness" in our community".

## Report on the State of FPOW 2016—2017

Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., had another very busy and successful 2016-2017 Program Year. We hit a milestone and celebrated our 30th year anniversary. During the year, through our all-volunteer organization, we continued the tradition of "helping to lick loneliness". We welcomed more than 48 new volunteer teams to our program during 2016-17. FPOW was honored by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors who presented us with a Proclamation recognizing our contributions to the county and its residents. October 2017 was officially proclaimed as Fairfax Pets on Wheels Month. We thanked the Board of Supervisor's by presenting them with a U.S. flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol on May 30, 2017 in honor of our current and continuing partnership to continue to "lick loneliness" in our community.

Throughout the year we contributed more than 5,000 hours of pet visitation to 14 long-term care facilities and three Adult Day Health Care Centers under the auspices of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging. The residents and senior clients truly enjoy our visits. Thanks to the staff of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging Volunteer Solutions and the Ombudsman Program. FPOW's partnership with

the Agency has allowed our volunteers to bring meaningful interactions with the residents of the facilities we serve.

FPOW's United Way application was once again accepted for inclusion in the United Way of the National Capital Area Campaign – remember to designate #8907 when pledging. FPOW was also in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC; #51148). Fundraising through United Way and CFC is crucial to FPOW's bottom line in allowing us to remain a successful program.

The Speakers' Bureau continued their monthly New Volunteer Orientation presentations reaching more than 115 potential volunteers. In addition, the Speakers' Bureau made presentations and/or staffed information tables at the Women's Club of Fairfax, Reston Pet Fiesta, Ventures into Volunteering, Shenandoah University and the Senior Saints at Holy Comforter.

FPOW's 22nd Annual 3k Paws for a Cause dog walk was in October 2016 and more than \$6,800 was raised. It was a beautiful day for a walk with more than 160 walkers and their pets in attendance. Special thanks to Madelynn Arnold for once again organizing this fun event.

On September 10th, we celebrated FPOW's 30th Anniversary year at Barrel Oak Winery in Delaplane, VA. We had over 120 in attendance. Many thanks to Jill Davidson and her team of helpers for its success for making our Anniversary so special. In addition, Carina Thornton of Fuzzypants Pet Photography took great photographs and pet portraits. At the event, FPOW recognized eight volunteers for giving between 50 and 74 hours to the program (Bronze Award), five volunteers for giving between 75 and 99 hours to the program (Silver Award), and 14 volunteers for giving more than 100 hours to the program (Gold Award).

There were also nine teams recognized for receiving American Kennel Club Therapy Certification. Winner of the Latshaw Award for Excellence was Denise Kloeppel. The Shauna Award went to Harley Bryson. Thanks to the Awards Committee

– Doreen Peters, Terry Carroll and Diane Ehrig for selecting winners from many deserving nominees. Thanks again to everyone who had a part in making this event special.

FPOW continues its partnership with the AKC Therapy Dog Titling program. Two received the Therapy Dog Advanced Title. All dogs – purebred and mixed breed – are eligible to earn the Therapy Dog titles. Also, it is important to note that AKC allows all dogs that hold AKC Therapy Dog titles (who are registered with FPOW, a recognized therapy organization, and have completed at least 10 therapy visits) to apply for AKC's Canine Good Citizen (CGC) title with no further CGC testing.

Karen Beekman did an outstanding job in updating our existing Merchandise website by revising our system for ordering FPOW merchandise using Square, an e-commerce provider to link our website for selling merchandise. The benefits were instant as the website shows items, tracks inventory, provides immediate notification of any item that is not available for purchase and collects immediate payment via credit (no more antiquated checks!). In addition, Karen designed and ordered new FPOW bandanas for our volunteer pets to wear proudly and created a new FPOW logo patch to enable members to order pet vests from ActiveDogs.com for their pet teammate.

The Board of Directors reviewed and updated 15 policies and procedures. This is a tedious exercise, but doing so is vital in keeping FPOW on point.

Ruth Benker, Director, Facility Relations, met with many of our Facilities to review the volunteer agreements and trained a new Facility Liaison for our new Dulles Rehab and Nursing facility. The facility liaisons provide the critical link between our program and our facilities; each facility has its own set of challenges and circumstances that are unique in providing pet visitation to its residents. Our liaisons are always willing and able to do what it takes to offer our services to the residents and help our volunteers meet the challenges of visiting.

The Temperament Testing Committee members

continue to have a full plate, making sure that every pet that becomes an FPOW volunteer has the ability to be an ambassador for our program. The testing team members have to be incredibly diplomatic when letting a potential volunteer know that his/her pet simply does not have what it takes to be an FPOW volunteer. There were approximately 97 teams tested and of those 80 teams passed the temperament test.

There are always so many people to thank for making FPOW successful with their devoted efforts. One group that deserves special recognition is the staff in the FPOW office – Ruth Benker, Madelynn Arnold, Jill Davidson, Joan Violante, Carla Graham, and Terry Carroll. Their ongoing dedication to the many tasks and all the paperwork that make our program happen are essential to the continued success of FPOW. Their continued contribution and dedication is crucial as they quietly and continually provide numerous hours to the program behind the scenes.

To all volunteers who serve on our various committees, (Merchandise, Office, Speakers' Bureau, Paws for a Cause, 30th Anniversary celebration, Temperament Testing, Nominating, Annual Photo Fund Raiser), we are very thankful that you have stepped up to the plate and remain grateful for all you do.

I would also like to thank the 2016-17 Board of Directors, who have helped me along in my first year as President of the Board. The Board was always willing to help with the many tasks involved in running the program with more than 170 volunteers both two- and four-legged. The Board was able to move FPOW forward and continue to meet new challenges. Special thanks to Ruth Benker and Madelynn Arnold for keeping me on track!

However, I would like to put a call out for additional volunteer

support on the Board and in other areas. As we all know, FPOW is an all-volunteer organization and the more hands the better. We could use help with Special Events Coordination, Temperament Testing, Newsletter, Fund Raising, Board Membership, Photography, Graphic Arts and Website administration. Any other talents you have that you could contribute would be welcome! Finally, thanks to you, our volunteers who make time in your busy lives to reach out to the residents.

You are not always aware of the good that you are doing by taking time to visit with your pet. Fairfax Pets on Wheels is truly a wonderful way to share your pet's love with other people.

As FPOW celebrates our 30th Anniversary we face new challenges, but we are well-poised to continue to grow, serve, and meet the challenges ahead. Our program is a bright shining light and is a testament to what works when like-minded people and their pets step up to serve the community.

## Mary Latshaw Award Winner 2017 – Denise Kloeppel

The Mary Latshaw Award winner for 2017 is Denise Kloeppel.



Denise has been a volunteer with FPOW along with her dog, Sport, since October 2014. She began visiting at Sunrise-Reston. In May, 2015, she added the Herndon Harbor Adult Day Health Care Center's monthly Tuesday visits. The bond she shares with her dog is wonderful to see – she has trained Sport to do several tricks and they never fail to entertain folks.

She has an empathetic manner in dealing with the residents she visits. Because of all that, when FPOW needed a new Facility Liaison for the new Dulles Rehab

and Nursing Center, Denise was offered and accepted the position and is now responsible for training new teams there.

She has organized several well-received events there to entertain the residents with our pets. She enjoys a good relationship with the Activities Director there which helps to strengthen the bond between the facility and FPOW. Since October 2014 she has provided over 335 hours to FPOW.

## 2017 Shauna Award

Congratulations to Harley Bryson winner of the 2017 Shauna Award.

Harley, a cocker spaniel who himself is a senior citizen at age eleven! Harley visits at Mt. Vernon Nursing and Rehabilitation Center with his human companion Brian Bryson.

Harley is dedicated to his visits at Mt. Vernon and begins in the Physical Therapy unit to encourage those who are working hard to recover from surgery or improve strength.

His next stop is the Activities Room where residents are often engaged in a group activity that they pause to give Harley many pets from his many fans in the facility. He wraps up his visits by making the rounds of residents' rooms to see those who want a friendly smile from Brian and a wag of the tail from Harley.

Harley has also represented FPOW at the Reston Pet Fiesta and the Fairfax County Venture into



Mary Kurtenbach with Moe and Linda Koczera with Jared at Arden Courts Fair Oaks



FPOW Halloween Parade at Burke Healthcare

Volunteering Fair. The Shauna Award was established in 1993 to honor the beloved Irish Setter of Susie and Bob Duvall, Shauna Marie Salisbury.

Thanks again to Marley, a volunteer pet who is making a difference in the lives of others!







## 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](http://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: February 28, 2018

### FAIRFAX PETS ON WHEELS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Executive Committee:

President – Nikki DiPalma

Vice President/Dir. of Administration – Madelynn Arnold

Treasurer – Patty Kwapniewski

Secretary – Paula Burger

### DIRECTORS

Director, Facilities Relations – Ruth Benker

Director, Volunteer Development & Education – Linda Martin

Director, Communications – Tracy Van Duston

Director, Volunteer Appreciation – Vacant

Director, Fund Development – Vacant

Director at Large – Jill Davidson

Director at Large – Doreen Peters

Director at Large – Terry Carroll

Director at Large – Diane Ehrig

Director at Large – Matt Watson

Newsletter 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. 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:

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



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