



Fairfax Pets On Wheels Winter Update

February 2008



Front: Bacal Zelten, Loretta Swit, Chip Resweber; Back: Deborah Zelten, Owen Resweber, Brenda Pitts, Thunder Chopp, and Judy Chopp

A Gala Night to Remember

On Wednesday, December 12th 110 FPOW Volunteers and 13 dogs celebrated the final commemoration event for our 20th Anniversary. For one special evening, the Hyatt Fair Oaks was an amazing collection of remembrance and gratitude for all the many volunteers who have worked so hard to make our program so successful. The theme for the evening was "Celebrating 20 Years of Caring and Sharing in Our Community."

As guests arrived for the reception, they received a tee shirt in a specially designed paw print bag -- the first of many gifts to come. Choices included Paws For A Cause shirts back from 1996. Lining the way to the reception area were beautifully enlarged photos of volunteers and their pets, including photographs of Mary Latshaw and Shauna Duvall.

After the reception, guests were invited to the ballroom. At each place setting was a commemorative program and a gift bag. In the center of each table sat three beautifully custom decorated bottles of wine. Stars encircled the bottles of wine and small candles cast a warm glow at each table.

Rob Carroll, volunteer, served as Master of Ceremonies for our joyous event. After greeting all guests, Rob recognized the spe-

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Pam Graff Retires

On Dec. 7, Pam Graff retired from the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging after 13 years as the Volunteer Services Manager. Several FPOW volunteers attended her retirement party. They presented Pam with the "Pets of Fairfax Pets on Wheels" poster and read this Proclamation of Gratitude:

"Our greatest ally, advocate and friend you have made a difference in the lives of the volunteers who were under you. You served as a role model for us and because of you, the residents of long-term care facilities get our best. You have demonstrated that public servants can and do care. We wish you the very best in retirement and are thrilled that you are going to be a FPOW volunteer!"

Pam's family, friends, colleagues, former colleagues, and representatives from the volunteer programs under her unit were in attendance to wish her well. Pictured on left with Pam is Joan Bushing, a former colleague who traveled from PA to celebrate.



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cial guests who had been invited to attend the Gala including Pam Graff, who recently retired from the Fairfax Agency on Aging, her successor, Ruth Reagan, the FPOW Board of Directors, the members of the 20th Anniversary Gala Committee, and the honorary co-chairs, Loretta Swit, our Special Guest Speaker and Kim Wilkerson, Founding Member of FPOW. Rob then introduced Ruth Benker, President of FPOW.

Ruth spoke about the milestones, from the founding of FPOW 20 years ago to its present status as one of the finest small charities in Northern Virginia. She then described how the Gala Committee, starting two years ago, began planning for our 20th year: arranging for Loretta Swit and Kim Wilkerson, (at Loretta's urging) to be co-chairs for our Gala event, and coordinating the facilities' events by celebrating each month at a different facility.

The Committee also asked Tina Bonham to design our 20th Anniversary Banner, our Paws For A Cause T-shirt, the magnets in our gift bags and the Gala program brochure. Ruth also mentioned that we received special recognition from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors proclaiming April 2007 to be "Fairfax Pets on Wheels Month," and at a breakfast in April honoring

Kim Wilkerson and Jill Davidson as well as other county volunteers for their outstanding voluntary contributions.

Ruth paid tribute to those who assisted with particular aspects of preparations for the Gala event: Sabine Arndt, Facility Liaison at Powhatan for designing the 20th Anniversary Commemorative wine bottles that were given away at the end of the evening, Debby Weinstein for preparing the gift bags, Doreen Peters for her work in creating the beautiful FPOW poster. A copy of the poster was given to each guest as a remembrance of our special evening.

Ruth also recognized Deb Cloutier for planning and preparing the wonderful slide show of volunteers and their pets, the great MC, Rob Carroll who also serves with his wife, Helen, as Facility Liaisons at Mt. Vernon Nursing Center, and Dave Rybak, FPOW Historian for his role in creating the timeline and other items in the Gala Program.

Ruth recognized Co-Chair, Loretta Swit. Ms Swit arrived earlier in the week specifically to do publicity work for FPOW. FPOW was blessed by her willingness to do an interview with AARP Prime Time radio, and she recorded both TV and radio Public Service Advertisements that will assist us greatly in recruiting new volunteers. Ms. Swit's time, expertise, and professionalism made



Loretta Swit, Ruth Benker and Tracy Van Duston

these productions a resounding success. Finally, Ruth recognized Penny Pickett for her invaluable assistance in making connections with the Women in Film and Video, who enthusiastically volunteered their services to help with the PSAs.

Ruth closed her remarks with the following staggering statistic, particularly considering that we are truly an all-volunteer organization: the value of the hours of volunteer pet therapy services provided by FPOW to long-term facilities in Fairfax County over the past 20 years total more than \$1 million.

Dinner followed. While everyone was enjoying the camaraderie with friends and volunteers with pets at each table, the slide presentation was displayed on a large screen in front of the ballroom. A wonderful selection of photos showed FPOW in action.

As we enjoyed dessert, Rob, introduced Ruth Reagan, Director



Bob & Susie Duvall share art work of Shauna Duvall

Thanks for the Memory

■ In memory of Princess, beloved Terrier mix and FPOW pup belonging to Tracy Van Duston. From Kim and Mark Wilkerson.

■ In memory of Princess, one very special dog who was Tracy Van Duston's loving and loyal friend. They visited together at Powhatan. Princess will always be loved and missed. From Brenda Pitts.

■ In memory of Barbara Gresdo. Barbara was a dedicated staff member at Sleepy Hollow and a loving FPOW visitor with her husband, Dennis. She is deeply missed. From Pat Dutton, Carol Chapin and Nancy McKay.

■ In memory of Kaiyuh, Ch Marionhill's Moonlite Mischief CD CGC, June 5, 1992 – December 4, 2007. He was my beloved Siberian Husky and a FPOW visitor at The Virginian. He was a special dog and throughout his long life he touched the hearts of many. He was a show dog, an obedience dog, a therapy dog, and, when young, a casual sled dog. I miss him. Rest in peace, my special boy. From Dawn Thompson.

■ In memory of Mikie, beloved Pomeranian and

buddy of Cathy and RJ Colleli. From Kim and Mark Wilkerson.

■ In memory of Bentley, beloved Irish Setter who was loved and is missed by Susie and Bob Duvall. From Brenda Pitts.

■ In memory of Clementine, beloved companion and friend owned and loved by Mary Savitsky. From Brenda Pitts.

■ In memory of Cayenne, beloved and long time companion of Carole Peeler. From Jane Morse and Paul Dooley, Buchanan, VA

■ In memory of Copper, 13 year old Standard Poodle, who was loved by Penny Pickett. He was a handsome and popular guy and will be missed by the residents of The Virginian. From Debby Weinstein.

■ In honor of Loretta Swit, who gave of her time and talent to Co-Chair FPOW's 20th Anniversary Gala and also for coining our new motto "Touching someone's life & changing our own". From Kim and Mark Wilkerson.

of Volunteer Solutions at the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (FAAA), which is the sponsoring agency for FPOW. Ruth extended warm greetings and stated FAAA was proud of its long and successful partnership with our program. She noted that in 2006 FPOW volunteers provided 8000 hours of service. She also mentioned what joy the pets of volunteers who work at the FPOW headquarters office bring to the FAAA staff and other Fairfax County employees in the Pennino Building -- Lolly, Molly, Max, Chloe, Diego, and PDQ have become the official office dogs. Ruth concluded her remarks by thanking the volunteers and declaring it an honor to be associated with FPOW.

Next was the tribute to Pam Graff, former Director of Volunteer Solutions at FAAA, who retired on December 7, 2007. The FPOW Proclamation presented to Pam at her retirement party at the Pennino Building was read. It expressed FPOW's gratitude and appreciation for Pam's services at FAAA. Then Pam was presented with a specially inscribed Herend porcelain figurine of a dog and cat as a token of FPOW's gratitude for Pam's unending support and assistance to FPOW. Pam accepted the gift graciously, and said she would be coming back to

FPOW to work as a volunteer during her retirement.

Volunteers who were invited to bring their pets to the Gala were invited to the dais with their pets. Rob then described the Shauna Award and introduced this year's winner, Chip Resweber. Doreen Peters was also recognized as the Project Manager for the poster created for recruitment and advocacy of the FPOW program.

The Mary Latshaw award winner, Mary Savitsky, was then introduced. This award is given to deserving volunteers and corporate sponsors at our annual FPOW picnic.

Years Of Service pins and certificates were awarded to those individuals who served 10, 15, or 20 years with FPOW. See below.

20 Years of Service

Madelynn Arnold
Susie Duvall
Kim Wilkerson

15 Years of Service

Ruth Benker
Diane Bente
Margaret Linn
Carole Peeler
Debby Weinstein

10 Years of Service

Judy Chopp
Denise Elliott
Barbara Harding
Nancy O'Malley
Brenda Pitts
Owen Resweber
Elaine Sevy
Julie Steven
Anita Vergne
Barbara Witucki
Deborah Zelten

Ruth Benker introduced Kim Wilkerson as the mother and founder of FPOW. Kim, in her modest manner, said she found it impossible to thank everyone who helped her and the FPOW program. She said it was fun to be a part of the program from its inception and to watch it grow into a functional multi-faceted organization. She stated the most important part of FPOW hasn't changed, and that's the joy and happiness in

the residents' eyes when we visit with our pets. Kim thanked everyone for the honor of being Co-Chair with Loretta Swit, even though it took both Ruth and Loretta to convince her to participate. She said that Loretta was a consummate professional while recording the Public Service Announcements and whose expertise was invaluable. Kim thanked her again on behalf of FPOW for her generous donation of her time and talents on the preceding days.

Kim then claimed she wanted to show us the real FPOW and asked Board members to stand and remain standing, followed by anyone who served on a FPOW committee, those who had ever visited a nursing home with their pet, anyone who donated their time, celebrity, money, talents, or influence to FPOW, anyone who ever supported or enabled a family member to participate in FPOW, and finally, any who supported the FPOW mission in their heart or some other way. By this time everyone in the ball room was standing except for some of the pets who were snoozing by the sides of their owners.



Lovely tablescape.



Ray Batla, Sue Batla, Molly Nassetta, Colleen Nassetta, Paul Nassetta and Jennifer Fish

With everyone standing, Kim invited the other Gala Committee members to come forward. She asked everyone to pick up the candles at their place setting. With house lights dimmed, the ritual began with Kim's large candle giving light to the Committee members who in turn, passed the light to those nearest to them -- each sharing the light with those next to them until all the candles were aglow in the ball room. This was Kim's way of re-lighting the fuse for this dynamite organization called FPOW. So the light of FPOW was passed on through the audience. It was a poignant ceremony and demonstrated that "Together our collective light shines beyond what anyone could imagine. May this light continue to shine and grow brighter as we embark on our second 20 years of service."

It was at this point in the program that Tracy Van Duston, BOD Vice President announced

the establishment of the “Founder’s Award” – a scholarship award to worthy students who pursue animal studies, to make the world a better place thorough celebration of the human animal bond. This special award was FPOW’s way of honoring the Mother of FPOW, Kim Wilkerson.

Finally, Rob introduced our special guest Loretta Swit, actor, artist, and activist. Loretta spoke without notes and expressed her feeling that she was with her people there in the ball room, i.e. animal lovers. She said we owe a debt of gratitude to Kim Wilkerson. Kim, she said, has given her support to an incredible organization and without Kim there would be no FPOW. She reminded us that the outreach we do at FPOW continues to go on and on. Loretta mentioned that she has cared for and been lucky to encounter many, many animal species and loves them all. She feels we’re all connected and we don’t have to wait for a catastrophe to occur because it is with giving that we receive, and this caring and sharing truly brings heaven to earth -- and FPOW is how our volunteers do it.

Ms. Swit feels the work we are doing belongs in the realm of a higher power and our work is a true blessing to those we visit. She said she was overwhelmed and touched by the listening our volunteers do with their hearts. She mentioned how happy she was to offer her assistance to FPOW in the production of our new PSAs.

She also mentioned she is a Board Member of Actors and Others for Animals, an organization that involves bringing animals into schools, showing students how to relate to animals. She said this organization sometimes receives 100 calls an hour asking for help and not one of those calls is from dogs!

Loretta then invited Kim Wilkerson to join her on the speaker’s platform. Loretta presented Kim with a beautiful framed painting she created of SomeBunny, Kim’s beloved rabbit and FPOW teammate, who had passed away this year. The painting was done in pastel colors with the bunny in the center of the picture, surrounded by bunny angels. Loretta reminded all in attendance that, without Kim, they wouldn’t be here that evening.

Ruth made closing remarks and recog-

nized special guests Emily Pollon, Activities Director with Iliff Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Ruth presented Loretta with a framed copy of the Pets of Fairfax Pets on Wheels poster in appreciation for her devotion and support of FPOW, and also in gratitude for her work on the PSAs. Ruth again gave recognition to those who had contributed to the success of our 20th Anniversary celebration. It was a lovely conclusion to a beautiful night to remember.

To see more pictures from the gala, please visit:
<http://fpow20.homestead.com/files/index.html>

by David Rybak



Three 20th Anniversary Parties Are Fun For All

Inova Cameron Glen

On Saturday, October 27, 2007, a reception to celebrate FPOW’s 20th Anniversary was held at INOVA Cameron Glen Care Center in Reston. The reception, held in the large dining room, started with socializing and was followed by a party. Cameron Glen became the 9th nursing home facility visited by FPOW Volunteers and their pets to celebrate our 20th Anniversary year.



Front row L-R; Kathi Baker & Abby , Debbie Weinstein & (don't know her dogs name) , Karen Beekman & Teddy , Della Brown & Sassy Back row L-R; Paula Burger & Kelly , Patty Kwapniewski & Dolly , Candia Hudson & Nikita , Vicki Edgar & Eve , Sheila Consaul & Portia

Over 50 residents and many of their relatives attended, along with the Cameron Glen staff, FPOW President and Volunteers, Ruth Reagan, and Pam Graff. Nine dogs and one cat also attended the reception with their owners. This event had a Halloween theme which was clearly evident when the dogs and cat arrived dressed in costumes. The costumes included a hot dog, pumpkin, devil, and a witch, and the cat wore a Halloween collar.

Kathi Baker, Facility Liaison, thanked everyone and introduced the Cameron Glen staff who helped plan the party. She presented an Appreciation Plaque to Elissa Clark, Administrator, and introduced Julie Garcia, Assistant Administrator, and Lorie Spears, Recreation Therapy Director. This was followed by A Parade of Pets, where each pet was introduced and to show off their outfits as they strolled in front of the clapping and cheering audience.



Elissa Clark, Cameron Glen Administrator, received plaque from Kathi Baker

The traditional cutting of the cake for the residents, along with other snack foods and punch was a nice ending to a pleasant afternoon. Kathi even had a witch's cauldron filled with a variety of pet treats for our 4-legged friends.

Leewood

On Saturday, November 10, Leewood Nursing Center held its 20th Anniversary Party with residents, staff and FPOW volunteers in attendance. Judy Mitnick, Facility Liaison, and her team of volunteers created quite a festive sight with a balloon basket filled with beauti-



Raffi Daft



L-R Sue Hamilton & Christy, Joan Wilson & Chase, Suzi Rine & Bandit, Judy Mitnick & Piper, Christine Meier & Tiger, Marilyn Hady, Julie Daft & Raffi, Elaine Sevy with Ebony & Jeffie, Debby Weinstein & Max

fully wrapped note card gifts for each of the residents.

The volunteers introduced themselves and their pets, and Joan Wilson and Chase gave a great performance of their many talents. The residents then enjoyed a lively trivia game! Representing FPOW were Debby Weinstein, Brenda Oldfield, Christine Meier, Donna Kenley, Elaine Sevy, Joan Wilson, Judy Mitnick, Julie Daft, Marilyn Hady, Mary Spalding, Nancy McKinley, Susan Hamilton, Susan Spence, Suzi Rine, Tracy Van Duston, Jill Davidson, Brenda Pitts, and Ruth Benker.

Commonwealth Care Center

A delightful Thanksgiving Tea Party was held in the dining room of INOVA Commonwealth Care Center on Saturday, November 17th. This was the 11th event this year to celebrate FPOW's 20th Anniversary. Before the formal proceedings began, guests, volunteers and their pets mingled with the residents while Ms. Maggie Kause played piano music softly in the background for everyone's enjoyment. The dining room was festooned with beautiful autumn decorations including FPOW balloons. What a party!

Carl Powell, Director of Therapeutic Recreation at Commonwealth, welcomed the residents and all invited guests. He mentioned how the residents look forward to the visits of FPOW volunteers and especially their pets. He thanked FPOW for the joy and happiness that

the volunteers and pets bring to everyone at Commonwealth Care Center.

Tracy Van Duston, FPOW Vice President thanked everyone for coming to this Thanksgiving tea party and gave special thanks to Jill Davidson, Facility Liaison for her role in organizing the event with the Commonwealth Care Center staff. She expressed gratitude that both Pam Graff and Ruth Reagan from FAAA were able to attend. Jill Davidson said a few words of thanks to residents, their families, and others in attendance. She invited each of the volunteers with their pets to approach the podium and introduce themselves and their pets to the audience. There were 14 volunteer/pet teams present, plus Jill who also visits with her dog Lolly. Many of these volunteers have been part of the FPOW program for more than 5 years.

Jill made the plaque presentation to Carl Powell who accepted on behalf of all the staff working at Commonwealth Care Center. Carl repeated his gratefulness and appreciation for the FPOW program.

A special surprise was the introduction of Gail Gillespie, a flute soloist who plays in both The U.S. Marine Corps Band and the Alexandria Symphony. She played two short classical pieces and a few Irish songs including "O Danny Boy". The residents were delighted, several residents were observed tapping their feet to the music. A



Carl Powell, Director of Recreation, with Buddy Fish & Molly Nassetta

big hit was when Ms. Gillespie asked everyone in the audience to join her in singing America the Beautiful. This was a very touching part of the program, and made the theme of a Thanksgiving Tea Party even more meaningful.

Refreshments were served. Ms. Kause and Ms. Gillespie teamed up together to play a duet of musical hits from the past, which everyone enjoyed. The light refreshments, prepared by Commonwealth staff made this tea party truly a Thanksgiving event. Another special treat was the note cards, created by Colleen Nassetta, each showing a

different FPOW pet team photo. These note cards were distributed to the residents as gifts in remembrance of the celebration. It was truly a tea party none of us will forget.

Submitted by David Rybak & Ruth Benker

Special Family Send Special Thanks at Gala

Ruth,
I read that you are collecting stories about FPOW to be shared at the 20th Anniversary Celebration Gala on Wednesday, December 12, 2007 at the Hyatt Fair Lakes.



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Dear FPOW,

Fairfax Pets on Wheels has meant so much to me and my family. After my mother and father entered Powhatan Nursing Home in 2003, the visits from FPOW became the highlight of the week. We really enjoy seeing everyone and the pets, and it meant a lot to me that they included me in their friendship circle. The people in FPOW are great--they are the kind of people who go out of their way to help others. They are like a family and have supported each other in good times and bad, including the death of beloved pets, the adoption of new animals, and the birth of two adorable baby girls.

I am very grateful to FPOW and send best wishes to everyone for the holidays and the new year.

Pam Flory

12/10/07

Difficult, At Times. Rewarding, Always.

As many of us FPOW volunteers know, one of the most challenging places to visit within our participating facilities are the Alzheimer's wards. Alzheimer's patients are often confused or sometimes completely non-communicative. But Pets on Wheels volunteer Diane Bente makes it a point to visit the Alzheimer's wing of the Commonwealth Care Center with her dogs Piper and Chloe. And she's even managed to find some humor in doing so.

Diane says, "Piper is an all-white, small, fuzzy dog and one cold, winter night, I took her to visit an Alzheimer's patient. I had put a green sweater on Piper and one of the residents was petting her and remarking how much she liked my dogs. And then she got a puzzled look on her face and said, 'But I've never seen a green one before!'"

Diane also tells about another Alzheimer's patient who had not moved or even made eye contact with anyone in a long time. But when Diane put Piper gently down on her bed, she looked down at the dog and then reached out to pet him. "The nursing staff said she had not moved that much in months," Diane says. "After that,



Chloe Bente, Piper Bente, CJ Stone

I always took Piper to her and put her on her bed. She even smiled on occasion."

It's stories such as these and volunteers such as Diane that make FPOW what it is today. Diane began volunteering in late 1980's and often visits weekly with her friend and neighbor, Laurie Stone, and Laurie's dog, C.J. Diane first began visiting with a dog named Liebchen and now visits Commonwealth with Piper, who is a 15-year old Shih-tzu and Chloe, a 9-year old Shih-tze who is a Shih-tzu/Maltese mix.

Diane has also participated faithfully over the years in Paws for a Cause and is currently helping out with the Agency on Aging, trying, as she says, "to help get the paperwork sorted out!"

"The best part of volunteering is the feeling that you may have brightened the day for someone who is confined to a nursing facility. Sometimes you really form attachments to residents and then it really hurts when you go to visit the next time and their bed is empty."

Diane even suggests that communicating with the residents' families might be beneficial to all concerned, if everyone involved agreed to it. "Once," she says, "Laurie and I went to a funeral for one of our friends and the family did not know anything about FPOW. They were very interested to hear about our visits which had gone on for several years."

As Diane puts it, "Volunteering at Commonwealth just feels good. I have made many friends through the years and I enjoy watching the interactions between canines and humans. And I hope, if I'm ever confined to a nurs-

ing home, that pets will come visit me, also!”

And who knows? If that day ever comes, Diane might just get to see a green one...

By Julia Long



The Petiquette Of Visiting

We all joined the FPOW program for the same reason: Our commitment to brighten the day of our senior citizens, making them feel less lonely by giving and being compassionate, and to provide them with the companionship of a well-behaved pet. As the pet's owner, we are also faced with certain responsibilities, making sure a safe and pleasant visit is provided. As we all know, residents are often frail and their health condition not always optimal. Therefore, great caution has to be given to make sure that the person we visit is never in harm's way.

For example: You are the proud owner of a very happy goof-ball of a dog and every time he sees you, he's so happy that he jumps all over you. "How cute!" you may



Permitted For Use While Visiting The Nursing Home:

1. Gentle Leader;
2. Dog Harness;
3. Easy Walk Harness;
4. Buckle Collar;
5. Martingale Collar without Chain;
6. Leather Collar (round or flat);
7. Cotton Leash;
8. Leather Leash 4' and 6' (depending on dog's size)
9. 2' Leather Leading Leash.



Not Permitted For Use On Pet Visits:

1. Martingale Collar with Chain;
2. Flexi Lead
3. Prong Collar;
4. Choke Chain Collar;
5. Any type of string (clothesline; baling twine);
6. A harness which applies any kind of leverage to the dog

think - not so. Such behavior could put our residents in great danger of being seriously hurt. Don't forget - they are mostly wheelchair bound and don't have the ability to quickly turn away at the sight of a happily bouncing behemoth of a dog! Let's try to point out the dos and don'ts of pet visitations – a helpful tool for all our new volunteers and little reminder (and in my opinion, a very important one) for all our veteran FPOW volunteers.

So here it goes.....

1. Prong collars and choke chains are training tools of the past and they should stay just there: In the past, or in the bottom drawer of your basement armoire ! Their use in and around the nursing home facilities are NOT PERMITTED ! Not only is their use traumatic for the dog, it's also VERY DANGEROUS for the elderly person who may get caught in one of these contraptions. Therefore: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHOULD PRONG COLLARS OR CHOKE CHAIN COLLARS BE IN USE WHILE VISITING A NURSING HOME FACILITY !

A safe alternative is the use of a so called "Gentle Leader" (a.k.a. "Halti") or a simple collar combined

with a no-pull leading harness such as the “Easy Walk Harness”. Martingale collars without chain attachments are also allowed. (Check out Weber’s Pet Supermarket - they have an abundance of color and pattern choices and they are quite affordable.)

Another contraption that we NEVER want to see being used around the elderly is a retractable/flexi lead. PLEASE DO NOT USE THIS TYPE OF LEASH AT ANY OF YOUR VISITS - NOT EVEN JUST ONCE BECAUSE YOU COULDN’T FIND YOUR VISIT LEASH FOR SOME REASON. Keep a visiting leash in your car. That way you will always have one handy and won’t have to resort to this type of leash. This rule also applies to ANY event that is held by or for Fairfax Pets on Wheels, whether it’s promotional or recreational.

As an alternative we recommend the use of a 2’ to 6’ leather, cotton or nylon leash, depending on the size of the canine. The taller the dog, the shorter the leash should be. Also, a harness that applies any kind of leverage to the dog is not permitted. (For example: The “Sporn Harness”)

2. Never let your dog be off leash or out of control while visiting at the nursing home. CONTROL YOUR PET AT ALL TIMES ! In a safe area where there are no residents present, the pets are allowed to say “hi” to each other in a civilized manner.

3. Only the person who handled the dog during temperament testing is permitted to handle the pet during visits. You, the handler, are responsible for your pet’s actions and reactions. We love to see our young volunteers come along for visits with their parents. However, make sure that they do NOT handle the pet during the visit. Once they turn 18 years of age, we will be more than happy to see them at one of our temperament testing events to get certified to handle their dog. Until then leave the leash to your parent!

4. Nails have to be short and smooth. Never cut your pet’s nails on a visiting day ! After cutting, use a file or a sandpaper dremel tool to smooth them. The skin of an older person is often paper thin and can be easily injured. Also, do not show up for a visit with an un-groomed pet. It does not present an appealing picture if your pet has an odor, is matted or full of “debris” from your yard.

5. Do not let your pet interact with any other pet at the facility that is not part of the Fairfax Pets on Wheels program.

6. It’s important to remain ethical and never share any confidential information a resident may share with you. You may share information with staff if it is necessary and beneficial to the resident. Always be respectful of the person you are visiting. Always be aware of the policies at the facility you are visiting.



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7. Cats and bunnies have to be carried in baskets or be placed on a towel. They also should will also wear a harness or collar.

8. A little training goes a long way ! Make sure your dog has at least the basic level of training to help make him/her more controllable and reliable during your visits. Always be aware of your pet's stress level/tolerance.

Fairfax Pets on Wheels is a growing organization and the way each and every one of us conducts their visits reflects upon it. Should you be uncertain about the way to handle a situation, please do not hesitate to ask your liaison or alternate liaison for advice. They will be able to help you and/or refer you to someone who can provide the answers to all your questions regarding the program. Another option is to call the FPOW hotline at 703-324-5424.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this article, please feel free to e-mail me at binecritter@animail.net



by Sabine Arndt

Dates to Remember

BOD Meeting at Leewood: March 3;
7:00pm - 9:00pm

Newsletter Submission Deadline: March 30 to fairfaxpetsonwheels@gmail.com

BOD Meeting at Leewood: June 4;
7:00pm - 9:00pm

FPOW Annual Picnic -June 8
Lake Accotink, McLaren Sargeant Shelter, Springfield

Newsletter Submission Deadline: June 30 to fairfaxpetsonwheels@gmail.com

BOD Meeting at Leewood: Sep 8; 7:00pm
- 9:00pm

PAWS FOR A CAUSE: Oct 5
Weber's Pet Supermarket, Fairfax

From Mother Teresa

There is much suffering in the world - very much. And this material suffering is suffering from hunger, suffering from homelessness, from all kinds of diseases, but I still think the greatest suffering is being lonely, feeling unloved, just having no one.

There are different kinds of poverty. In India some people live and die in hunger. But in the West you have another kind of poverty, spiritual poverty. This is far worse. People do not believe in God, do not pray. People do not care for each other. You have the poverty of people who are dissatisfied with what they have, who do not know how to suffer, who give in to despair. This poverty of heart is often more difficult to relieve and to defeat.

I remember some time ago I visited a very wonderful home for old people. There were about forty there and they had everything, but they were all looking toward the door. There was not a smile on their faces, and I asked the sister in charge of them, "Sister, why are these people not smiling? Why are they looking towards the door?" And she, very beautifully, had to answer and give the truth: "It's the same every day. They are longing for someone to come and visit them." This is great poverty.



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. 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: March 30, 2008

FAIRFAX PETS ON WHEELS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Executive Committee:

President – Ruth Benker
Vice President – Tracy Van Duston
Secretary – Julia Long
Treasurer – Helen Carroll

DIRECTORS

Director of Facilities Relations – Madelynn Arnold
Director of Volunteer Development – vacant
Director of Communications – Kim Wilkerson
Director of Volunteer Relations – vacant
Director of Fund Development – Paul Dery
Director At Large – Deborah Zelten
Director At Large – Patty Kwapniewski
Director At Large – Colleen Nassetta

The Newsletter Committee Chairman: Kim Wilkerson
Editor: Denise Elliott

EDITORIAL POLICY

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