

# PAWSitive Therapy Troupe Quarterly Meeting

January 3, 2010

<b>Present:</b>	Linda Chiaramonte	Chris Szubert
	Catherine Rupp	Virginia Sensenbrenner
	Diane Lauer	Nancy Ptgnotti
	Linda Nemeth	Lisa Jo Clark
	Tiffany Bohn	Jennifer Voss
	Lorelei Collins	Elizabeth Zott
	Dixie Sherry	Linda Guhr
	Mary Beth Turek	Margo Sorrick
	Julie Bereckis	Barb Kann
	Penny Brcich	Karen Click
	Mary Helen Kuehn	Laura Dejmek
	Deb Arkin	Carol Pisanko
	Kristin Ludwig	Becky Jankowski
<b>Absent:</b>	Donna Angeleri (excused)	Susan Avers
	Paulette Allan	Lisa McCarthy
	Colleen McLachlan	Ed Pariser
	Linda Sechel	Kerrilyn Stachowicz (excused)
	Jeanne Tarwater	

## 1. **Welcome and Goodbye:**

- a. We regretfully said goodbye in 2009 to the following: Rose Daniels, Deb Heemskerck, Kim Muszynski, Lisa Delcase, Marge Lauterjung, Wesley Gosselink, and Marianne Firlit. Thank you for all your faithful work, and we will miss you!

- b. We welcomed the following new members in 2009: Tiffany Bohn, Lisa Jo Clark, Lorelei Collins, Linda Guhr, Mary Helen Kuehn, Kristin Ludwig, Lisa McCarthy, Ed Pariser, Carol Pisanko, Linda Sechel, Margo Sorrick, and Elizabeth Zott. We are so glad that you have joined us, and we hope to share many hours working together during 2010 and beyond.
2. **Records Needed:** I need proof of current rabies vaccinations, negative fecal tests and a copy of your current Delta ID badge. You can either email them to me or send them via snail mail. This is a Troupe requirement—I need to have the most current information on hand for everyone, just in case I need to produce it quickly for one of our visit locations. Those of you who visit Good Samaritan will also need to give Janice Dunham yearly updates on this information. I will be sending out an email listing the information that I am missing from everyone. That is my New Years task for later this month.
3. **Website Updates:**
  - a. **Website Meet Our Dogs:** the website “Meet Our Dogs” page is missing the following dogs: Diva, Bailey, Abbie, Sadie, Gracie, Show Low, Shade Spark, Jasper, Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Wolffy, Andy, Mikey, Grace, Sammy, Mack, Corky, Basil, Tex and Gus. Please forward your photos to our webmaster, Debbie Manning at [debmanning1@gmail.com](mailto:debmanning1@gmail.com) as soon as possible.
  - b. **Please remember to check the “Members Site”** for announcements, which will be right on the Members Home page, and also for updated meeting minutes in the “Forms tab.
  - c. **Our Troupe Directory** will be emailed in an attachment to you each quarter. Please download and print it for your reference. I have made quite a few additions and revisions this quarter. So please do print the latest copy.
  - d. **Calendar Additions:** We have added back the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday Hines visit. The new location will be the Mental Health waiting room and Audiology. Kathy Harms will continue to be the Recreation Therapist coordinating this visit. Meet her in the Psych building lobby at 10 AM.
4. **Visit Reminder:** please let me know about the visits that you are doing so that I can be sure to add your name to the website calendar and also to my own paper calendar. If you tell me after the fact, I can add you to my paper calendar, but not to the website.
5. **Site Leaders:** Site Leaders play an important role in making sure that our therapy visits are all covered and supervised effectively if I am not there. As site leader. You are responsible for checking in with the staff contact person (whoever will be escorting us around). You are also responsible for confirming via email to me after the visit that was present. Sometimes there may be volunteers who show up who are not on the calendar, or there may be people who are signed up who do not make it. Either way, this helps me to ensure that we have the most accurate information possible. As site leader, you will also be in charge of mentoring new volunteers, once they have completed their orientation with me. Occasionally you may be the one doing the orientation, if I cannot be present. We continue to need site leaders for:
  - a. Hines ECC-Tiffany Bohn will be site leader for this visit. Thanks, Tiffany!
  - b. Little Friends—Debbie Arkin will be site leader for this visit. Thanks Deb!

- c. Good Sam—still no volunteers for this visit.
  - d. Scheisher—Elizabeth Zott will be site leader for this visit. Thanks, Elizabeth!
  - e. 15E/ Psych—still no volunteers for this visit
6. Mooseheart Update: Kristin discussed the unique characteristics of the Mooseheart visit. She emphasized the importance of maintaining continuity in the children’s lives. For this reason, she feels it is important that volunteers committing to this visit understand that they need to visit regularly—at least once each month. For 2010, this visit will involve planned therapeutic activities with the dogs, under the supervision of the Mooseheart counselors. New volunteers must attend the first visit without their dogs in order to understand and be prepared for the complex interactions involved.
7. **Visit Reminders:**
- a. **Please remember that dogs are required by Delta and Troupe policy to be on leash at all times. Not only must the dog be on leash, the handler must be holding on to the leash!** Please comply with this safety requirement—remember that if something were to happen while you were not attached to your dog, your liability insurance would be not cover you. Dogs can startle at sudden noises, patients can step on dogs, there can be sudden movements that attract the dog’s attention—any of these things could cause the dog to move suddenly and possibly injure a patient or visitor.
  - b. **Safety with Children** (APDT Article): Please make sure that you are watching your dog carefully at all times when visiting with children. Consider whether or not your dog truly enjoys interactions with children. If he / she is more comfortable around adults (as my Bonnie is), then do not hesitate to stay with adult visits. Children do so many unpredictable things around dogs, and their faces are right at dog level. It is up to us to make SURE that we are watching our dogs closely every second. We need to be our dog’s advocate for not allowing actions such as finger poking, tail pulling, face kissing, sudden hugging, etc. PLEASE BE CAREFUL!
8. **Troupe Items:** the following items were distributed:
- a. **Clothing:** Bandanas, Polos, Aprons—every team receives a Troupe polo shirt, apron and dog bandana free of charge. Additional items may be ordered from our supplier, Dogwares at [www.dogwares.com](http://www.dogwares.com). Identify yourself as a Troupe member when ordering, so that Pam can direct you to Troupe-appropriate items and colors.
  - b. **Calling Cards / Bookmarks**—everyone should now be up to date on Troupe calling cards (for everyone) and bookmarks (for those doing school READ visits only). I will be placing another order this summer to replenish our supply.
  - c. **Stickers**—Mary Beth has formatted a template for READ stickers that can be given to children at our READ visits to make our bookmark supplies last through the year. Each child gets one bookmark per dog per school year. If the same child reads to that dog again during the school year, the child receives a sticker instead each time. If you would like stickers for your READ visits, please email your dog’s photo to Mary Beth at [mb.turek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mb.turek@sbcglobal.net) and she will format the sticker page for me. I will then take it for copying, and I will either give you the sticker sheets on a visit or mail them to you.

9. **Delta Testing:** The following members need Delta testing—Penny (recerts for both dogs), Laura (recert), and Carol (new dog). You may reserve a test slot for either of the following dates:

- a. New Intro to AAT class starts Jan 14—test will be in late Feb
- b. Lyons test on March 30. I will be doing testing at Lyons on a quarterly basis.

**10. 2009 Troupe Summary:**

- a. Our total visit hours were up 50% over the 2008 numbers—well done! We lost the courthouse visits and one of the READ school visits in 2009, but we added Mooseheart, Little Friends, and Briar Glen School to our calendar.
- b. You will note that Jan, Feb, Jun, Jul had the lowest total visit hours. Let's work to improve that this year.
- c. Remember that everyone needs at least 10 hours of visits each year, not including special events or dancing practices to remain a member of the Troupe. Your hours are prorated if you joined the Troupe during the year. A review of the visit hours on page one shows only three volunteers who did not meet the minimum requirements in 2009—Jennifer, Mary Helen and Chris.
- d. Additional hours listed on pages two and three include non-visit hours such as fundraisers, parties, practices, etc. Although these hours do not count in your 10 hour minimum, they are very important as well in helping the Troupe with various other activities. The final total on page three includes all of these hours, as well as your visit hours.
- e. Troupe meeting attendance is also listed. The policy requires that everyone attend at least two meetings each year. If you joined the Troupe during the year, your attendance requirement was again prorated.

**11. Financial Summary 2009:**

- a. Our current balance is \$4362—up almost \$800 since Jan of 2009.
- b. Last year's balance \$3456
- c. Total Expenses versus Total Receipts—we are approximately \$1000 ahead. This is an improvement over 2008, but we still need to keep planning our fundraising efforts for this year. Approximately \$650 of our income for 2009 was from memorial donations—something that we cannot assume will happen again this year.

**12. Additional Visit Opportunities:**

- a. Costigan Open House next week—Penny spoke about her initial experience there earlier last year. It sounded like Costigan needs to do a lot more planning and preparation before we would be able to consider this as a Troupe visit. Penny will keep us posted on their progress.
- b. RML Specialty Hospital in Hinsdale—again, this is an acute-care institution that needs to write a policy for therapy dog visits before we would be able to consider adding this visit. They are supposedly working on this—I will keep in touch and report back if and when RML is ready to consider us.

**13. Goals for 2010:**

- a. Visits—we talked about adding the following:
  - i. DuPage courthouse visits—Tiffany will check and report back

- ii. Library evening visits—possible North Riverside and / or Woodridge. Karen will check on this and report back.
- iii. Ronald McDonald House—I will check on this and report back at our next meeting
- iv. Additional Public Education—Pet Expo, Navy Pier, Barkapalooza, IKC show—the issue with the larger venues is the rental fee. We cannot collect in donations what it costs to rent the space. If the venue offers free space, then we would absolutely consider participating. Please let me know if there is a venue that you would like us to do—I can coordinate scheduling and booth materials.
- v. Senior Home Sharing—for those who would like to do additional visits that are not part of the Troupe calendar. Please talk to Karen...

**b. Fundraising**

- i. We need to add a “Make a Donation” tab on the website—I will follow up on this.
- ii. Nutcracker will be our main focus this year
- iii. We should also consider another Pampered Chef and Tastefully Simple party
- c. **Additional**—Laura would like to see a “Prayers for Pooches” tab on the website—she would be happy to help with prayers for people or dogs, as well as grief counseling for those of us who might need that assistance. I will follow up on this as well.

14. **Nutcracker Committees Needed:** Since this will be our major fundraising effort for 2010 and the money that we bring in will benefit everyone, we all need to be involved in some way with helping this be a success. Therefore, we need volunteers for the following committees:

- a. **Site procurement**—Deb Arkin, Mary Beth Turek, Catherine Rupp, Becky Jankowski
- b. **Costumes**—Penny Brcich, Kerrilyn Stachowicz, Virginia Sensenbrenner, Dixie Sherry
- c. **Set Design**—Linda Chiaramonte, Jennifer Voss, Chris Szubert
- d. **Sponsor Solicitation/ Marketing**—Kristin Ludwig, Lisa Jo Clark, Karen Click, Mary Beth Turek, Penny Brcich
- e. **Ticket Sales**—Lorelei Collins, Dixie Sherry, Linda Guhr
- f. **Dancing Paws practices**—I will email a schedule of regular practices. We will need to commit to probably two practices a month, with homework as well! All current Dancing Paws members are automatically dancers in the Nutcracker. We welcome additional dancers as well....

15. The meeting concluded at 4:30 PM. Please watch for email messages about upcoming events and practices. I hope that I assigned everyone to the correct committees. My notes were kind of confusing. If you were NOT at the meeting, but would like to volunteer as a site leader for Hines, or Good Sam, please let me know. You are also welcome to volunteer for any of the Nutcracker committees and / or to join the Dancing Paws.

Stay warm and enjoy the calm after a busy holiday season!

Becky