

PAWSitive Therapy Troupe Quarterly Meeting Minutes / Newsletter

October 4, 2009

1. Present:

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Chris Szubert | Laura Dejmek | Jeanne Tarwater |
| Elizabeth Zott | Margo Sorrick | Carol Pisanko |
| Linda Guhr | Linda Nemeth | Dixie Sherry |
| Jennifer Voss | Lisa Jo Clark | Tiffany Bohn |
| Barb Kann | Debbie Arkin | Lorelei Collins |
| Mary Beth Turek | Karen Click | Jim Click |
| Linda Chiaramonte | Julie Bereckis | Diane Lauer |
| Nancy Pignotti | Becky Jankowski | |

Absent:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Paulette Allan | Donna Angeleri | Susan Avers |
| Penny Brcich | Marianne Firlit | Wesley Gosselink |
| Mary Helen Kuehn | Kristin Ludwig | Lisa McCarthy |
| Colleen McLachlan | Ed Pariser | Catherine Rupp |
| Linda Sechel | Virginia Sensenbrenner | Kerrlyn Stachowicz |

2. The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM by Becky Jankowski.

3. Welcome / Goodbye:

- a. We welcome Ed Pariser and his Bernese Mountain Dog, Otto. Ed lives in Oak Park and is planning on doing Loyola Pediatrics visits as his schedule permits.
- b. We say goodbye to Kim Muszynski, who will be moving to Florida this month. We will miss you, Kim!
- c. We also say goodbye to Marge Lauterjung, one of our most faithful volunteers for the past 8 years. Marge and her dogs are retiring from Troupe therapy work, although Marge will continue to try to do therapy visits on her own that are closer to her home. We will miss you, Marge, but have a happy retirement!
- d. We say goodbye to Rose Daniels, who is dropping out of the program for now due to her busy work schedule. She may come back to the Troupe at a later date.
- e. We send our deepest sympathies to Lisa Delcase, who lost her beloved Jazmin last month to heart failure. Lisa and Jazmin were a wonderful team to watch. We will miss you both...

4. Visit Updates / Changes: Please make a note of the many changes in our regularly scheduled visits due to the holidays in November and December:

- a. Nov and Dec Hines Spinal Cord / Blind Center visits moved ONE WEEK EARLIER due to holidays

- b. Oct Hines 15 East / Psych unit visit moved ONE WEEK LATER due to staffing conflict.
- c. Mooseheart visits moved ONE WEEK LATER to Nov 15, Nov 29 and Dec 15.
- d. Mooseheart visit CANCELLED for Dec 20
- e. Hines Nov Thursday Psych unit visit moved ONE WEEK EARLIER due to holiday
- f. Maplebrook READ visit MOVED TO FRIDAY, Nov 20 due to holiday
- g. Loyola Pediatrics visits CANCELLED for Dec 23 and 30

5. All READ visits are now posted on calendar:

- a. Briar Glen school in Wheaton alternates the 1st Monday and the 1st Tuesday of each month from 1-2 PM
- b. Hodgkins school in Hodgkins is the 1st Friday of every month from 9-10:30 AM
- c. Tate Woods school in Lisle is the 2nd Wednesday of every month from 11 AM-1 PM
- d. Scheisher school in Lisle is the 3rd Thursday of every month from 1:30-2:30 PM
- e. Maplebrook school in Naperville is the 4th Thursday of every month from 12:20-1:20 PM
- f. The only school with a limit is Briar Glen, which currently has set a limit of two dogs per visit. All other schools welcome as many teams as can make it! Plan on arriving about 10 minutes before the assigned start time to sign in at the school office and get settled in your READ area before the children arrive.
- g. I received a call from the social worker at Indian Prairie School in Naperville. She is looking for therapy dog teams to work with emotionally / developmentally disabled children. Karen will follow up on this, and get back to me with further information about program goals and possible dates/ times. Jennifer and Mary Beth expressed an interest in working with this school. I will email the information as soon as I receive it from Karen.

6. **READ Registrations:** Anyone wanting to participate in the school READ programs this year MUST be READ registered with Intermountain Therapy Animals, the founders of the READ program. I will place another order for READ manuals—they are a few dollars cheaper if I order them in the Troupe's name. You will need to pay for your own manuals, however. The cost has been \$37 in the past. The manual has all of the information that you need in order to take READ test in the back of the manual. This completed test, along with your proof of Delta registration, is sent into Intermountain Therapy Animals. They will send you back a READ registration badge. I noted that Carol, Linda Guhr and Dixie are all interested in starting in READ—I will let you know when the manuals have arrived.

7. READ / Therapy Dog Booklet from Ashley Salee:

- a. Karen has all the information that Ashlee will need from you if you are interested in having her make up your dog's special Therapy Dog Booklet to share with children at hospital or school visits. This information includes both photos and text. Karen will email the requirements to the entire group, and if you would like Ashlee to do a manual for you, you can email everything back to Karen, who will get it to Ashlee.
- b. Once the booklet information is compiled and printed, you will be responsible for taking it in to a local printer or Office Max to have it laminated. Karen thought that the cost of laminating was under \$10.

8. **Double Leash / Off Leash Reminders:** Please remember to bring an extra leash to put on your dog if there is a possibility that you will be doing double leash walking with a patient or student. This is both a Troupe and a Delta policy—for your dog's and your client's safety, you must always have control over your dog. Also, remember that dogs are NOT to be off-leash during visits. Again, this is a safety issue—your dog must remain under your control at all times. This includes such activities as throwing balls, Frisbees, etc. Delta Society policy is very clear—dogs are NOT to be off leash at any time.
9. **Christmas Eve Visit:** This year we have been invited to for a special Christmas Eve visit in ECC at Hines. Many of the patients in ECC will not be able to go home for the holidays; many have no homes and / or no families to care about them. Our visits let them know that we have not forgotten them! This is a very special, rewarding visit that we have done in past years, but not recently. Please consider coming if your schedule permits. You do need to have completed the Hines orientation and need a Hines ID badge, so consider getting this done in the next couple of months if you want to make this visit. We dress in our holiday best, with Santa hats on, and the dogs are attired in festive collars or headgear. I know that in past years, doing this visit on Christmas Eve brought everything back into perspective for me.
10. **National Make a Difference Day:** The USA Today's National Make a Difference Day will be held on Saturday, Oct 24th. We are partnering with the Hinsdale Humane Society to visit as many senior homes and hospitals as possible on this day. The Troupe will have special visits at both Hines Spinal Cord Injury / Blind Center from 10 AM-noon and at Fairview Baptist Home from 1:20-2:30 PM. Phillips Florists have donated fresh carnations, and local schools and scout troops are making drawings. Both the flowers and the drawings will be given to each patient visited on that day. Volunteers without dogs (friends, family members) who want to participate in these visits are also welcome to join us and help out with distributing the cards and flowers. There may be a reporter / photographer from USA Today or a local newspaper along on the visit to record the event.
11. **Website Reminders:** I am really trying to keep the "Announcements" current on the homepage of our Members site. Please do check this each time you go to the website to keep abreast of changes, new events. Etc. The newsletters will be posted in the "Files" section of the Members site. I will be emailing an updated Directory to everyone each quarter—that will not be accessible on the Members site for now. **Please make sure to send in your photo and biographical information to Deb Manning, our webmaster so that she can post all of our dogs on the "Meet Our Dogs" page.** The "Therapy Dog of the Month" biographical form is in the "Files" section—you can open it, add your content, and save it on your computer, and send it directly to Deb Manning at debmanning1@gmail.com.
12. **Fundraising Updates:**
 - a. **Donations this quarter:**
 - Memorials for Don's mom: \$375
 - Happy Dog Barkery fundraiser in August: \$110
 - Dancing Paws honorarium in August: \$50
 - b. **Expenditures this quarter:** website hosting and updates: \$300
 - c. **Fundraisers planned:**

- i. **Barnes and Noble Gift Wrapping** Nov 28, Dec 13 and Dec 18—many of you have already signed up for this event—I will send out an email asking for specific 3 hour shifts as we get closer to the dates. Due to space constraints, the shift limit is 3 people and no more than 2 dogs. If you want to leave your dog at home and just come yourself to wrap, that is fine. Your dog will need to be able to lie quietly at your feet while you are busy wrapping. He must also be able to be calm with the other dog very nearby.
- ii. **Tastefully Simple party:** Kim has forwarded the contact information for the person that she worked with last year. Is there anyone who would like to host the party this year? Please let me know, and we can get something scheduled. Last year we made several hundred dollars on the Tastefully Simple event.

13. **Troupe Item Orders :**

- a. **Name Tags**—those needing name tags include Collins, Bohn Pariser, Pisanko, and Sorrick. McCarthy and Clark have misplaced their name tags—there is a charge for a replacement. I will let you know the cost when I place the order.
- b. **Troupe clothing:** The Troupe has agreed to buy each member one polo shirt with the Troupe logo on it to wear for visits. Additional clothing items can be ordered, but you will have to pay for those items yourself. Other available clothing includes polartec vest (grey only), and shirts, various sweatshirts and hoodies. Our clothing supplier can put our Troupe logo on any of these items. Please make sure to note our Troupe colors—royal blue or gray. The polo shirts run on the small side, so make a note of that when ordering. I will send out an email asking for selections, colors and sizes. If everything is ordered through me, we save on shipping and I can pay Pam, our supplier, with one Troupe check. Those of you ordering additional items can send or give me checks to cover those extra items, once the order is in. I will distribute the clothing as I see you all on therapy visits. I will also place an order for Troupe bandanas for the dogs.
NOTE THAT YOU MUST WEAR TROUPE LOGO CLOTHING ON ALL THERAPY VISITS. The group also concurred that our current policy requiring dogs to wear Delta vests while on therapy visits will continue as it is. For visits to AAT facilities such as McNeal hospital, the vest can be removed to make petting or brushing easier for the patient. The vest must be put back on, however, when leaving the hospital.
- c. **Calling Cards:** All Troupe members receive calling cards (similar to baseball trading cards) for their dogs. Our cost is \$35/100 for first time time dogs, and \$30 /100 for reprints. You need to send in your dog's photo and the following information to Ken, our printer. His email is kszubert@comcast.net. The information needed includes:
 - i. Dog's name
 - ii. Dog's Breed / Date of Birth
 - iii. Dog's Owner (s)
 - iv. Year Delta Registered
 - v. Favorite Toy
 - vi. Favorite Treat

- d. **Bookmarks for READ program:** Those of you doing the school READ programs also receive bookmarks for your dogs. Ken also prints these for us—all he needs is your dog's photo and breed. Our costs are \$30 /100 for new dogs and \$25 / 100 for reprints. The bookmarks are given out to students that read to your dog during the school year—one bookmark per student.
 - e. **Stickers:** Mary Beth has also offered to do the setup for READ stickers, which would cost significantly less. These stickers could be used to supplement the bookmarks when children already have a bookmark but still would like a token that they read to a dog that day. They could also be used in place of bookmarks when a large volume of children reads each visit, such as the program at Tate Woods. For stickers, you need to email a photo of your dog to Mary Beth Turek at mb.turek@sbcglobal.net. Mary Beth will do the setup, and then I will take it to a local copier to copy in bulk for each of you.
14. **Delta Testing:** I will be doing another Delta test at For Your Canine in Schiller Park on Dec 19th. This session is just about full, but I can probably fit in another dog or two if you find that you are expiring before the end of the year. Otherwise, please wait for our Troupe test session sometime later in the winter.
15. **Therapy Dog Class:** I will be offering a completely revised therapy dog training class in mid-January. This class will emphasize hands-on training techniques.
16. **Dancing Paws Update:** Anyone interested in becoming a part of the Dancing Paws freestyle group is more than welcome to join us! We practice at our house 1-2 times per month, usually on Friday evenings. We have loads of fun designing new dance routines, both group and solo. No experience is needed—just a commitment to learn canine freestyle movements and practice them at home. We spend the first 30 minutes or so of each meeting going over new dance steps. Here are our upcoming events:
- a. **White Christmas**--this will be our holiday pageant at Hines and Fairview. All of the dances will either be group dances on-leash or duets / trios that may be off-leash.
 - b. **Nutcracker for 2010**—this will be a major undertaking that will involve the entire Troupe. It will be our major fundraising effort next year. Those not part of the Dancing Paws can help out with costumes, set building, ticket sales, site location, etc.
 - c. **Our regular dancing performances** that include three group dances and several solos. We give these performances periodically during the year at senior homes, hospitals and libraries.
17. **Reminder on Visit Requirements:** Just a reminder that you do need to do at least 10 therapy visits each year to remain a member of the Troupe. Special events and dance practices count for ½ of a visit each. Although we all love to do the “fun” shows, parties and other community events, our first commitment must be to the people that we visit—the patients and the students in the hospitals, nursing homes, and schools that are part of our program.
18. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM. The next meeting will be scheduled for the first or second week in January.