

WINTER 2016

# Dogs On Call Inc.

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I look back on 2015, I am amazed at what a group of volunteers can do. Dogs On Call has held 3 Pet Partners classes, teaching a total of 46 students, with the hopes of them becoming Pet Partners teams. DOC has also evaluated 104 teams, some of these were renewing teams, and some of these were new teams. We now have three cats, one bunny, mini horses, and many great dogs and handlers in our group. I am excited to see what 2016 will bring for our group of fantastic volunteers.

I would like to thank each of you for the time that you give of yourself and your Pet Partner. Every visit you make affects someone's day, and from my experience, that has always been for the better.

May everyone have a happy and healthy 2016 - I hope to see each of you soon.

*Laura, Kooper, Oliver and Shadow*

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## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Dogs On Call Board of Directors would like to welcome our new Board members:

Faye A. - Treasurer

Erin H. - Director-at-Large

Liz M. - Moved from Director-at-Large to Vice President

We would also like to thank Artie B. for serving seven years on our Board of Directors as our Treasurer. Thank you for your commitment to Dogs On Call.

*Laura, Kooper, Oliver and Shadow*



# HOSPITAL NEWS - CONTINUED

## MEDICAL STAFF SAY DOG VISITS ARE “THERAPEUTIC”

Periodically, I receive special requests from hospital staff for in-room visits for a particular patient. You read in the last DOC newsletter about one patient, the one with the facial wound. Teams continued to visit him throughout his long stay to provide a distraction and give him something to look forward to.

Another call came in for a patient in a cardiology unit. Teams were able to visit this patient and the change in his outlook was dramatic. I received this note from the patient’s nurse:

“Thank you so much for helping us set up a time for XXXX to see the dog; he was still raving about it this morning when I came in!! Most of us have never seen him smile, and from what I heard, he was grinning ear to ear this weekend! ... Thank you all for being so helpful and therapeutic! Patients like XXXX really benefit from these meetings.”

And about two weeks later, this note from the nurse:

“Just wanted to let you know that XXXX went home today after months of hospitalization. We owe so much of his mental and emotional health these past couple of weeks to the pet therapy program and cannot thank you enough!”

Thanks to Andrea G. & Samantha and Lynn K. & Gypsy for multiple visits. They really helped this patient!

There are many opportunities for rewarding visits like these, in both in-room and dayroom locations and we always need more teams at the hospitals. If you’d like to explore volunteering at UW Hospital or Meriter on the west side or the UW Rehabilitation Hospital on the east side, I can talk to you about visits there and take you on a tour so you can see what they’re like before you go through the hospital’s volunteer process. Contact Karen at [karenp@dogsoncall.org](mailto:karenp@dogsoncall.org)

***Karen and Scout***

## WORT RADIO

On Sunday, Nov. 22nd, I did an interview with Sande Jonagold on the WORT radio station. This was also a call-in show. The topic was pet therapy and how it relates to depression and anxiety in women and children. Sande is a great interviewer and asked me all sorts of questions about Dogs on Call and Pet Partners. More importantly, she asked how and why pet therapy works to ease pain, stress, anxiety and depression. We talked mostly about dogs and their ability to give unconditional love and acceptance. I explained that we now know that simply petting a dog for 15 minutes helps to release the "good" hormones: serotonin, prolactin, and oxytocin. And petting a dog also helps to lower cortisol, which is the stress hormone.

I talked about the many places Dogs on Call visits throughout our communities. When I talked about the program DOC has in an elementary school and a middle school in Madison, a woman called in to say that her son is one of the students who gets to visit with the dogs in the elementary school program. This mom was very impressed with the progress her son has made since spending time petting and reading to the dogs. Mom said her son is now engaging in his classes and looks forward to going to school. He has encountered four dogs in this program and has all of their trading cards. Mom said he is very proud of these cards and has them on display in his room. It was a very heartwarming call and I thanked this mother for calling in to tell her son's story with the dogs.

The half hour went by very quickly and there were many more things to talk about. Everyone agreed though that this was just a start in letting the public know about pet therapy. Also that pet therapy works for big people and little people alike, no matter what age, sex, color of one's skin, socioeconomic background or educational status. Our pets simply don't care how tall you are or how much money you have in your pocket. The only thing that matters to them is being able to spend time with a human, being loved, and loved some more.

Sande Jonagold invited Dogs on Call back to WORT anytime DOC has something we want to talk to the public about. I found this time spent at WORT to be a very positive and heart-warming experience.

***Liz, Charlotte and Lovey***

**Jeff and Bella visiting  
at Chadbourne**



# MILTON HIGH SCHOOL VISIT

Dogs On Call members recently visited Milton High School. Below are the emails that were sent and received by Liz after our visit.

Thanks so much for inviting Dogs on Call in to visit with the students and staff at your school yesterday. We so enjoyed meeting everyone. And we were also impressed with how considerate and kind the students were to our dogs and to each other.

I hope the visit went well for the rest of the day. And that our dogs were able to offer some measure of comfort during such a heartbreaking time. Please let me know if you have any concerns or questions about the visit.

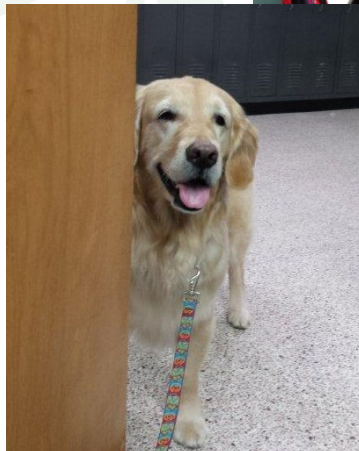
Thanks again. The students and staff of Milton H.S. will remain in our thoughts as you heal from the losses in your community.

Liz

How nice to receive your email; I was just about to write one to you! Thank you for your kind words. I will be sure to pass along your positive comments to our staff and students. I know it will mean a lot to many that you are thinking of us. Also we wanted to thank you so much for coming. I heard from many students that the Dogs On Call visit was "The best day ever," and so many students benefited from the visit. We also got so much great feedback from parents -- the visit was appreciated more than you can know. For me personally, it was a very healing experience and we so appreciate your organization.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your visit. What a wonderful thing it is you do.

**Zora waiting for  
students at  
Milton High  
School**



**Ellen and Zoey  
visiting with  
Students at Milton  
High School**



## NEW MEMBER PROFILES



**Marnie P.** of Spring Green has known her eight-year-old Belgian Tervuren for longer than most of us have known our dogs. Marnie owned Finnegan's mom and Finnegan was born right into Marnie's hands. He was the second of 10 puppies and Marnie says, "I instantly knew he was mine!"

Ciara and Peanut are two other Tervuren's that live with Marnie, as well as Charm, Nala, and Bash, the cats; Derbi, Smooch, Kali, and Baila, the horses; and five sheep who shall remain nameless.

Marnie hopes to focus on the VA Hospital with Dogs On Call, especially the PTSD and hospice units.

Spare time activities include dog shows, herding, and trail riding.



**Sally B.** adopted Mickey, a 7ish-year-old Terrier mix, from Fluffy Dog Rescue. Mickey was found running loose in Alabama, rescued by a nice man down there, and eventually headed north with volunteers from Fluffy Dog Rescue.

Mickey is Sally's only pet right now, but in the past Sally has owned three dogs, guinea pigs, birds, a gerbil, and a horse. She is quite fond of her son's chickens.

Sally recently retired from Meriter and she wants to take Mickey back there to visit. Other places of interest to visit are Meriter's Child & Adolescent Psych Hospital, long-term care facilities, dorm visits, and special events.

DOC isn't Sally's only volunteer interest, as she is also doing elementary school tutoring and helping at the Dane County Humane Society. Her free-time hobbies includes Packers' football, kayaking, and, like most of us, anything dog-related.



**Shaina H.** got Beau, a Chicago native and rescue, about four years ago. The now six-year-old Pit mix is joined in the family by Belle, a two-year-old German Shepherd mix; Nikki, a 14-year-old Miniature Pincher; and two horses – Magic, 13, a Quarter Horse Paint, and Muroc, 22, a Leopard Appaloosa.

Shaina's focus is on hospital visits – Sauk Prairie, Meriter, and the American Family Children's Hospital.

She is a busy woman at work and play. Work is at Dog's Best Friend training and pet store Nutzy Mutz and Crazy Catz. Play involves horseback riding, kickboxing, weightlifting, drawing, making wire jewelry, dancing, and sheep herding with Belle.

## NEW MEMBER PROFILES - CONTINUED



**Katie L.** joins Dogs On Call with a seven-year-old rabbit, Pikachu. Four years ago when Katie bought Pikachu, he was living in a cage in a garage. His life changed for the better when he joined Katie and her fish, Pedro. Katie also has a family dog in Ohio, an 11-year old Chocolate Lab named Cassie. Katie says Cassie whines at Pikachu's cage for him to be let out, knows what "Go find the bunny" means, and, when Pikachu hops around outside of his cage, Cassie follows him around and licks him.

Katie would like to share Pikachu with residents of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospice, as well as participate in dorm and library visits.

Being a veterinary student at UW-Madison consumes most of Katie's time, but she also loves to volunteer with all types of animals.

*Karen and Scout*

## CHILDREN'S MUSEUM SAFETY NIGHT – COMING SOON

This event, sponsored annually by partners of Safe Communities, is designed to provide fun, interactive education to youngsters and their families about how to be safe. There will be approximately 10 stations throughout the museum for kids to visit, one of which will be Dogs On Call. Handlers will give tips on how to properly greet a dog and, of course, the dogs are there for petting.

An email will be going out in February, asking for volunteers to take one-hour shifts for this fun, busy event. It will take place at the Madison Children's Museum on Wednesday evening, March 2, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This would be your dream event if your dog likes children and can remain calm through lots of activity and noise. Watch for the email call for volunteers!

*Karen and Scout*

# PET CANCER AWARENESS

*Dana, one of our members that recently dealt with cancer in her Pet Partner Pierre, shares this information from the UW Vet School.*

November is National Pet Cancer Awareness Month, and our oncology team members know all too well that cancer is a major canine health problem, affecting one out of every three dogs. Early detection is critical in fighting this disease. In fact, it was the key factor in achieving a positive outcome for Pierre, a 12-year-old French Poodle. We caught his cancer early during an annual exam and removed it through surgery. Now his prognosis is excellent. Look for his story on our website and in the pages of the Winter 2015-16 issue of On Call (you can subscribe online) in the coming weeks.



Given the vital importance of early detection, I have compiled for you a list of the top 10 signs of cancer in dogs. Should you notice any of these signs, don't panic—they don't necessarily mean your pet has cancer. But please schedule an appointment with your veterinarian so you can be sure. You can also make an appointment with the board-certified specialists of our Oncology Service by calling (800) 386-8684.

## **A Lump or Bump**

All lumps or bumps should be examined by a veterinarian and measured and sampled to make sure they are not of concern. Their size should be monitored over time. A mass can feel benign but actually be cancer.

## **Changes in Urination**

Increase in urination, called polyuria (PU), and abnormal thirst, called polydipsia (PD), can be signs of high calcium, which is associated with several common cancers such as lymphoma, and anal sac tumors.

Decreased urination, small/frequent urination, and straining to urinate (possibly with blood) could be signs of a bladder or prostate tumor. Recurrent urinary tract infections, especially in older dogs, should raise concerns as well.

## **Changes in Defecation**

Straining to defecate, blood in the stool, or long-lasting diarrhea could be signs of intestinal, prostate, or anal sac cancer.

## **Bad Smell**

This can come from anywhere, but in particular, if the mouth is the source, it should prompt a consultation with a veterinarian. A mass in the mouth, bad breath, and loose teeth are common signs of oral cancer.



# PET CANCER AWARENESS—CONTINUED

## Weight Loss

It is important to monitor your dog's weight. If pets lose weight unintentionally, this could be one of the first signs of cancer. Also keep an eye out for muscle wasting, especially in one area of the body (i.e., one leg or one side of the body).

## Lethargy

If your dog seems drowsy, listless, or unenergetic, especially if it's sudden or lasting more than a couple of days, you should consult a veterinarian. Also, look at the color of your dog's gums: if they are pale, this could be a sign of bleeding, and your dog should be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible. German Shepherds and Golden Retrievers commonly develop tumors of the spleen that can rupture and cause sudden lethargy.

## Decreased Appetite

If your dog does not want to eat or can't eat, it's time to see a veterinarian. If your dog only wants people food or treats instead of his normal dog food it could be a warning sign as well. Cancer can make dogs feel unwell, and sometimes nauseated, or can cause pain, all of which will decrease their desire to eat.

## Breathing Problems

Decreased energy for walks or normal games, panting excessively, raspy breathing, coughing, or a facial deformity should raise concern.

## Discharge from Anywhere

Nasal discharge, especially if it comes from one side, is bloody, or returns after antibiotic therapy, should prompt a visit to the veterinarian for advanced diagnostics. These could be signs of a nasal tumor.

Discharge from the mouth, eyes, vulva, ears, especially if they are smelly, recur after treatment, or do not respond to treatment, should raise concern.

## Pain

If pain lasts more than a few days or does not respond to pain medications, it could be due to cancer.

*This article is reprinted from The School of Veterinary Medicine, University Of Wisconsin, Madison, WI*

A [Compassionate Care](#) guest column by Dr. [Cecilia Robat](#), DVM, ACVIM (Oncology), Clinical Instructor of Oncology at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine

## THE TIME IS RIGHT

After a long career in therapy and at the age of almost 13, Sacajawea is retired. We expired the end of 2015 and are not renewing. It was a difficult decision, but made much easier when watching her walk rather stiffly at times and once in a while limping. The bathing, which always is quite an ordeal, has become much harder on her with the standing involved in the bath and drying process. Even getting in the car is a two-person job now.



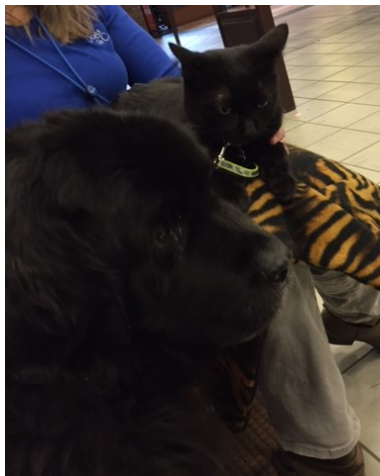
**Sacajawea and Charlotte at a DreamBank Event.**

Sach has been doing therapy work since she was four, first as the therapy dog of her breeder and my good friend, Joyce. Joyce re-homed her to me and we have been visiting for all these years at Senior Life in Reedsburg where I started my therapy work many years ago, Reedsburg Hospital, Meriter Hospital, VA Hospital, and many nursing homes. As she became older, we did the R.E.A.D. program. She has done more presentations and Dog Bite Prevention Programs than I can count. She was one of the demo dogs in Pet Partner classes and finished her career by doing the final Barnes & Noble gift wrapping event on Christmas Eve wearing her lighted collar.

Kay and Daisy have done many, many events with Sach and me. When I told Kay she was retiring, her response was, "I am sorry to hear Sach is retiring, but I understand. What a great ambassador of the breed. I will not forget the looks on kids faces when they saw Sach for the first time...the gentle fuzzy black giant. They were amazed at the size and often did not know where to touch the very soft fur. They would look and look to find the eyes. It was precious and she stayed so calm." I could not think of a nicer tribute to Sach.

She is ready to rest now, but I'm sure she will miss all her friends and their animals. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was part of my wonderful Sacajawea's career.

### Artie



**Sacajawea and Shadow at Barnes and Noble on Christmas Eve.**



**Sacajawea was our neutral dog for testing mini horses at Mane In Heaven.**

## BARNES AND NOBLE

Dogs On Call has been wrapping gifts and visiting with shoppers during the holiday season at Barnes and Noble in the East Towne Mall for a few years now. This, however, is the first year that it worked out for us to attend. Shadow and I attended two of the days we were there. My daughter, Tiana, is registered with Kooper and was able to attend one of the days with me.

I am so glad that we were able to fit this in during this year's holiday season. Artie has told me many times how fun this event is, and she was not kidding! There were many people in the mall that just came in to visit with us and ask why we were there. It is always fun to talk about our group with them and explain what our therapy animals do. For me, I heard many times each day that people didn't know that cats could be therapy animals, they thought that only dogs could do this type of work. I was impressed by all of the dogs within our group that were able to work right next to Shadow with no problem.

Tiana, Kooper, Shadow, and I hope to make it back next year to another Barnes and Noble gift wrapping-day. We do not charge to wrap gifts, people give us free will donations if they would like to. This year, our donations added up to \$380.21, the biggest day for donations was Christmas Eve. We worked a three hour shift on Christmas Eve, and received 141.87 in donations. Money raised at Barnes and Noble is used to help members pay for business cards, bookmarks, or baseball cards. If you are free next year during any of our gift wrapping-days, I would encourage you to sign up to come and enjoy the day with fellow DOC members.

***Laura, Kooper, Oliver and Shadow***





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### DOC Newsletter

The contents of the DOC Newsletter represent the views and opinions of the authors, and not necessarily those of the DOC organization or its members, nor does publication constitute any endorsement.

### Subscriptions

The DOC Newsletter is published quarterly and is available by E-mail to DOC members and representatives of organizations associated with DOC activities.

### Submission Deadlines:

News and Articles are as follows:

<u>Spring 2016</u>	<b>February 15, 2016</b>
<u>Summer 2016</u>	<b>May 15, 2016</b>
<u>Fall 2016</u>	<b>August 15, 2016</b>
<u>Winter 2017</u>	<b>November 15, 2016</b>

Articles written by members of DOC on any topic/subject that may be of interest to DOC members are welcome. Non-copyrighted articles or those that can be reprinted with permission are welcome as well.

Any article that is submitted may be edited for proper grammar or clarity.

Send all to: Laura K at:

[laurak@dogsoncall.org](mailto:laurak@dogsoncall.org)

