

FALL 2017

Dogs On Call Inc.

Badger Kennel
Club

Sunday

November 5

10:00—4:00

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Letter From The President

With the first forecast for a few snowflakes mixed in with rain on the weekend and a fire burning in my fireplace to warm the house, I start thinking about year end and the new year. While the new year may seem like it is a long way off, Dogs On Call is already receiving requests for visits well into 2018 for the Read With Me program, and I am sure that Todd is putting dorm visits on the calendar for second semester.

We have four Pet Partner classes and twelve evaluations scheduled for 2018. If you are available to help, please watch your email; we would love to see you at an evaluation as part of the crowd or with your Pet Partner as our neutral dog team.

As always, we have many more requests for visits than we can fill. If you are looking for someplace to add to your visiting routine or just starting out and looking for a place to start, please talk with our facilities director.

Evaluations

Thank you to everyone and the dogs that help with the evaluations each month. It is a huge effort to organize, setup/take down, and work through the actual evaluations each time they are held. I understand you may only be in the room for a few minutes each evaluation, but these real-life interactions are what help us really see how comfortable the teams will be on a visit.

There are not enough thank-yous for Artie, who schedules and re-schedules (even during an eval) the teams, uploads scores, and provides constant encouragement for teams and the other evaluators, and to Gina who checks everyone in and out and keeps us on schedule.

Please consider helping with an evaluation or two in 2018.

Lance & Matilda



Halloween Hazards for Pets

Halloween has always been my favorite holiday. A bag full of treats and scary costumes make me happy, but these things can be a real terror for some pets. Hazards come in two flavors: environmental and edibles.

I once trained a Dachshund puppy named Sparky* and he was a happy little guy, until he entered adolescence and a developmental fear stage. Then he became alarmed at every person passing by his home. He often stood guard at the window waiting for scary things to bark at.

For Sparky, environmental things threatened him.

His owners called me to help Sparky a few weeks before Halloween. We agreed since Sparky was already frightened by passersby, the prospect of dozens of strangers wearing costumes parading up to the front door and entering the home would likely terrify him.

Some intensive training and behavior modification enabled Sparky to develop confidence and he coped very well with the 70 or so Trick-or-Treat visitors the family hosted Halloween evening. Had the owners not planned ahead, poor Sparky would have been spooked.

Greeting Halloween visitors repeatedly through the afternoon or evening could easily allow frightened dogs or cats to rush out the door and become lost. Any holiday or special event in which people are coming and going can expose pets to risk. July 4th is the single busiest day of the year at pet shelters due to frightened animals getting lost.

Preparing a pet-safe haven, as Sparky's owners did, gives pets a secure and comfortable place to go, preferably with a companion and toys to play with.

A safe haven is a space set aside for a pet to be away from guests and visitors, secured by a door. Locking the door prevents accidental release. If a family member can remain with the pet during the activity, then engaging in play or training games provides companionship and distraction.

A professional pet sitter may also be engaged to fill that role. If nobody is available to help, consider placing your pet in the safe zone with food-filled toys to play with, such as a Kong, Wobble Kong, or Magic Mushroom. Food-filled toys give a dog a joyful activity to engage in over a length of time.

Calming music such as iCalmDog or Through A Dog's Ear reduces stress. Lavender essential oil has a calming effect, as does an Adaptil diffuser for dogs, and Feliway for cats. Zylkene is a safe canine calming product derived from cow's milk and comes in powder or capsules.

To prevent the alarming repetition of knocking and doorbell ringing, you may station yourself outside the front door wearing a costume, offering treats before children startle your pet. Enjoy yourself greeting Halloween spooksters and spare your pet the distress.

Halloween Hazards for Pets - Continued

Your veterinarian may also prescribe fast-acting anti-anxiety medication for the event. Many of these options have been suggested to me by several board-certified veterinary behaviorists to reduce anxiety and fear.

While the noises and interruptions of Trick-or-Treaters are obvious problems, less well known are the dangers posed by treats.

Some fruits and candies can sicken pets and should be kept away from curious animals through strict management. Keeping a dish full of treats by the door may be convenient for humans to hand out, but may also be snatched by hungry dogs when nobody is looking.

Most people know chocolate is harmful to dogs, but it is also bad for cats. Solid chocolate is worse than a thin coating, and dark chocolate is more dangerous than milk chocolate. The danger of chocolates depends upon the type and quantity consumed, and the body weight of the dog.

Theobromine and caffeine in chocolate are to blame for toxicity, according to Scott Fausel, medical director of VCA Sinking Spring in Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania.

Grapes and raisins are even worse, and eating a single one could kill a dog. Justine Lee, D.V.M., DACVECC, DABT board-certified veterinary specialist in emergency care and toxicology, warns, "When ingested by dogs, grapes and raisins can cause acute and irreversible kidney injury."

Many years ago I fed my Labrador, Samantha, grapes as a treat. She survived my stupidity, but that was just dumb luck. Now I know better.

Those who prefer sugar-free treats should know that xylitol is an artificial sweetener found in hundreds of products including gum and candies. Eating even a little may cause severe liver damage or death. Fortunately, a list of products containing xylitol is available.

The safest strategy is using careful management, keeping treats and pets away from one another, and carefully inspecting each treat your child brings home. Children may enjoy offering their treats to pets, so careful supervision is critical.

If you suspect your dog has eaten something harmful, you may call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) or Pet Poison Helpline (855-764-7661) 24 hours a day, year-round. Also identify in advance the emergency veterinary clinic nearest your home and post that information on your refrigerator beside the poison hotline numbers.

You may also consult your veterinarian prior to the holiday and seek emergency advice for "What if" scenarios. It is hard to think clearly and remember things during a crisis, so written notes will help you do what is most beneficial and in a timely manner.

Planning ahead can keep your kids and pets safe to enjoy the creepiest holiday of the year. Happy Halloween!

* A fictitious name

Daniel H. Antolec, PCT-A, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

Hospital News

Welcome to these new hospital teams!

At Meriter:

Ja'nel & Baron (Standard Poodle)

Mary & Happy (Shih Tzu/Bichon mix)

At UWHC:

Marie & Lulu (Cavalier King Charles Spaniel)

Are You Curious What Hospital Therapy Dog Visits are Like?

How about a tour of Meriter or UW Hospital, to see where we visit? Because of privacy and infection control concerns, DOC teams have to be official hospital volunteers before they can actually visit in patient rooms. But the next best thing I can do, to give you an idea of what the hospital environment is like, is take you around on a tour of all the units we visit. You'd be going around as a visitor might, but with more insight as to how a therapy dog visit would be conducted in each unit.

If you're interested in a tour of either facility, let me know.

karenp@dogsoncall.org

Eudaemonia = Happiness, Well-being

Eudaemonia is the name of an event held periodically for residents (as in medical doctors) of the UW system. The goal is to "reduce burnout, strengthen connections, and promote activities that improve psychological well-being." Dogs On Call was asked to be part of the event. Five UW Hospital teams will be performing their calming magic with dozens of residents in November.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

~Elizabeth Andrew

Hospital News - Continued

Area-Wide Hospital Visiting Opportunities

With the new partnership of UPH-Meriter and UW Health, more patients will be having procedures and spending their recovery time at Meriter. That means we'll need more teams who can commit to visiting at least once per month (though more often is welcome). This includes Meriter's Child and Adolescent Psych Hospital on Madison's west side.

That partnership doesn't mean UW Hospital will have fewer patients to visit. They will have as many as ever, plus we've expanded the number of units we visit there, so more teams are needed there, too. And, unfortunately, we've lost a couple teams due to aging dogs, so new teams are needed more than ever.

The UW Health system also provides opportunities for patient visits on the east side of Madison, too, with the UW Health Rehabilitation Hospital and UW Health - The American Center facilities.

Another hospital visiting opportunity is the Veterans Administration Hospital in Madison, a popular place to help veterans who are healing. (Artie Berning is the person to contact if you want to help at the VA Hospital – artieb@dogsoncall.org)

And if you don't live in Madison, we have hospitals for you, too! Stoughton Hospital, Sauk Prairie Hospital, Reedsburg Hospital, Upland Hills in Dodgeville, and St. Clare Hospital in Baraboo all welcome Dogs On Call teams for visiting.

Contact Karen Peckham at karenp@dogsoncall.org for more information.



Ike, Pet Partner with Ruth, after a particularly busy UW Hospital visit. Hard workin' dog!

“What is Barn Hunt?”



That’s the first question I’m asked when I tell people about Pete competing in Barn Hunt trials where he finds rats. The second question is, “They’re LIVE rats?!”

Barn Hunt is a fairly new dog sport based on the talents and skills of rat catchers – humans and their dogs – that would rid farms of rats and other vermin. You’ve probably seen examples of Terriers and other go-to-ground breeds wildly focused on going after their prey. Barn Hunt is a little more controlled and all breeds and ages of dogs can be successful participants. I’ve seen dogs from a miniature Dachshund to a Newfoundland participate in Barn Hunt. Different hunting styles, but both successful!

Picture a fenced-in area, about 20’x20’, with straw bales piled in various configurations. They are stacked two high (in beginning levels) or three high (higher levels), and there is a tunnel made of bales that is either straight, L-shaped, or U-shaped, with up to five turns, depending on the level of competition.

To answer that second question, yes, they are live, hand-raised, well-cared-for rats. They are put in PVC tubes with plenty of ventilation holes and treats. The rats are monitored closely for signs of stress and switched out with rested rats, if necessary. The PVC tubes containing the rats are hidden around the straw bales, covered by loose fluffs of straw. A dog is brought into the ring and released. The hunt is on! The dog has a certain amount of time to accomplish three elements in any order – 1) climb on a bale with all four feet, 2) go through the tunnel, and 3) find all the rats. The number of rats varies with the level of competition, as does the time allotted to find them. There is one more complication: Some of the hidden tubes have just rat litter (bedding) in them or are empty tubes; the dog has to find the actual live rat tubes.



When a dog finds a rat, hopefully they have a definite sign that they have found a live rat. Some dogs are very subtle -- they freeze, twitch an ear, change the position of their tail, or cock their head. Other dogs are more demonstrative and pounce on the tube, bark, and dig at it. The handler then calls “RAT!” and, if the dog really did find the tube with the rat, the judge will say “Congratulations!” If the handler calls “RAT!” and it’s not the tube with the rat, the judge will say, “No, I’m sorry,” and you’re done for that round.



Pete has been to four two-day trials. Our first efforts were not very successful, though he had a lot of fun climbing on the bales and running around the course. But with a little practice with a coach, in what I call “rat class,” he caught on. Pete now talks to me with little chirping sounds and digs at the tube when he’s found the rat. Since last spring, he earned his Novice and Open titles (finding one and two rats, respectively, in three different sessions) and recently earned one leg of three on the way to getting his Senior title (finding four rats in each session).

You can see from the pictures that Pete is eager to go when released and enjoys celebrating when he’s successful. We have a lot of fun working together, he gets to exercise his good sniffer, we’ve met lots of nice people, and made new friends. That’s a win, even if we don’t get a ribbon!

Karen & Pete

(Photos by Rob Duberstein)

100

In May, Matilda had her 100th visit as pet therapy dog. It was at the Ronald McDonald House in Madison. For Tilly, it was just another day, but the engineer side of me tried to quantify all those 100 visits:

- 300 or more new people we were able to meet
- 100 baths (lots of loads of laundry, boxes of Cheerios for treats, and hours of time in a bathtub with a big furry dog)
- 200 hours (8.3 days) in constant contact with Tilly during the actual visits (remember, don't drop the leash!)
- 100 hours (4.2 days) traveling to/from the visits

It all adds up to me being the luckiest guy in the world to be able to spend this amount of time with our pup!

Lance & Matilda



Yeah, that's Matilda!

My father-in-law is a school crossing guard down the street from the library where Matilda and I visit once a month for a Read With Me session. Last week, he was crossing a couple of his regular elementary kids and asked where they got all the books they were carrying home. They told them at the library by the school. He knows we visit there, so he asked if they have ever read to the big black dog that goes to the library from time to time. The younger boy said, "Yeah, that's Matilda!"

Lance & Matilda

Baron's Visit

Baron, my standard-size poodle, and I go to St Mary's each week. One of the floors we always stop at is the Cardiac floor. There was a gentleman there who it was hard to tell how old, but probably in his 50's. Because of the type of Down's Syndrome he had, he wasn't able to speak. When Baron and I walked in the room, he got very excited and squeaked with delight. Baron walked right over to him and laid his head in the gentleman's lap. The man was so happy he had tears in his eyes, which made me tear up. It was a rewarding visit and brought home to me how wonderful it is to be a therapy dog team. Ironically, October is Down's Syndrome Awareness Month. A truly rewarding experience for us and I'm sure for the patient as well.

Ja'nel & Baron

New Member Profiles



Amber of Stoughton had been looking for an Australian Shepherd and had an instant connection when she saw Mia's picture on the breeder's website. Mia is a red tri (like her mom) and Amber relates that she "was the 'calm one,' who would watch and then participate with her brothers and sisters." The connection became even stronger when Amber discovered that Mia was born on the same date as her cousin. The cousin was like a brother to Amber and lost his life on his 24th birthday. Mia became Amber's therapy dog right away, as Amber's horse died the day before picking up the puppy from the breeder.

Thinking Mia needed a friend, a dog-shopping trip to Lucky Mutts Rescue resulted in Nellie, an Australian Cattle Dog/Border Collie mix, joining the family. Amber said that Nellie is the one that played the most with Mia, so that clinched that deal. Nellie is 2 years old now and Mia is 3-1/2 years old.

Amber and Mia hope to work with children in some capacity as a therapy dog team. In addition to Mia's therapy dog skills, she is a champion dock jumper, acts as team mascot at softball games, plays fetch, and enjoys "just swimming around."



Chris got Jasmine, an English Cream Golden Retriever, from a breeder and realized a life-long dream to have a Golden. Jasmine, now six years old, lives in Verona with Chris and her family.

Chris's daughter received a visit from therapy dogs when she was in the hospital and Chris says it really cheered her daughter. Chris would like to do the same by taking Jasmine to visit at children's hospitals, as well as nursing homes, the UW dorms, and participate in Pet Partners' Read With Me and Walk With Me programs.

Family activities are a focus of Chris' spare time, along with jogging and Zumba.

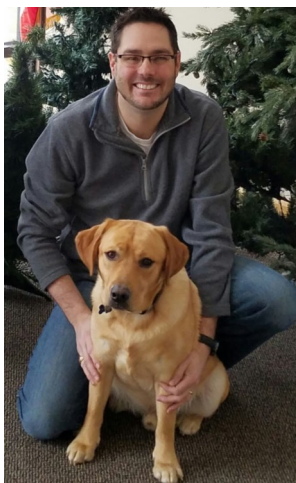


Glaucio lives in Madison with Emma, his three-year-old Australian Shepherd mix. Emma was adopted from a dairy farm in Darlington. Emma and her sister were the last to be adopted.

As a Dogs On Call member, Glaucio has a wide variety of places he'd like to visit with Emma – prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, and libraries.

For over a decade, Glaucio has been working with dairy cows and he loves them. His large coin collection is another interest.

New Member Profiles - Continued



Jared adopted his English Yellow Lab, Hooper, from Occupaws. Hooper was training to be a service dog for the blind, but was found to have minor dysplasia in his front elbow and was not able to continue in the program. Hooper's trainer was a member of the church where Jared is the pastor and knew he was interested in therapy dogs, so the match was made!

Hooper is two years old and has a Shepherd-mix best buddy at home, Bailey, who is also two years old.

Jared and Hooper have already been visiting at nursing homes and hospice centers in his home area of Mt. Horeb. Now that they are DOC members, they plan to expand their visits to hospitals and other facilities.

Jared, his wife, and two daughters enjoy boating, hiking, visiting state parks, and, along with Hooper and Bailey, meeting lots of dogs and their owners at the dog park. Another favorite activity of Jared's is building and restoring cars and motorcycles in his shop.

Janet and Chewie, a 2-1/2-year-old Chihuahua/Yorkie mix, live in Oregon. Chewie came from Rover Rescue of Illinois in 2015, reportedly from a hoarding situation in Indiana. Janet says, "Fortunately he was well socialized and loves most everyone he meets."

Chewie started his therapy career with Elliott, Janet's 11-year-old cat.

Elliott had surgery for cancer in his jaw and Janet says Chewie was very attentive, keeping Elliott company and grooming him.

The Read With Me program is a goal for Janet since Chewie loves children. They'd also like to try nursing homes and the UW dorm visits.

Janet loves to cook, ride motorcycles, and attend events where Chewie can come along.



Sandy lives in Cambridge. She got Springer Spaniel Molly, now two years old, from a breeder of hunting dogs, but with the idea of being a family companion. She's enjoying that life, with lots of walks in the woods and agility work. Sandy says they got involved in therapy work as a way to spend time together and to give back to the community.

Molly does share the family's attention with an older Springer named Sophie.

Sandy would like to get involved with the Read With Me program, dorm visits, the hospital programs – "wherever needed!"

Sandy also enjoys for gardening, knitting, music, and hiking.

Events

We have had a busy year of events, wrapping up with the Badger Kennel Club Dog Fair in November. As long as I have been doing therapy work, I never get tired of the joy our animals bring to the public, especially at places like Barnes & Noble, where the public does not expect to see animals. Thanks to all who have shared their Pet Partner at these events, and to those who come without an animal to talk to the public and do traffic control.

A few things we have noticed at events that we might want to keep in mind for next year:

Don't let go of the leash! - This needs no explanation, except don't let go of the leash!

Keep an eye on your animal – Often we have to call a handler's attention to the fact that while they are talking to someone, their dog is behind them, and someone, usually a child, is interacting with the dog without the handler's supervision. Keep your dog in front of you, that way you can converse with the public and just glance down to make sure all is OK.

Photos – Pet Partners policy says that everyone in a photo must sign a photo release, even those in the background. This is impossible to do at events, so be careful of photos you take. Sometimes we can get a nice picture of someone from the back petting our animals, but it hard to do at events. It's really best if we don't take pictures, especially of children. We get photos sent to us that we could never publish, some with the leash just hanging there because the handler is taking the picture. We do allow the public to take all the pictures they want.

So much to remember! Wouldn't it be nice if we could just concentrate on letting the public enjoy our animals, and forget all this "stuff"?

But, unfortunately, that's not the world we live in today.

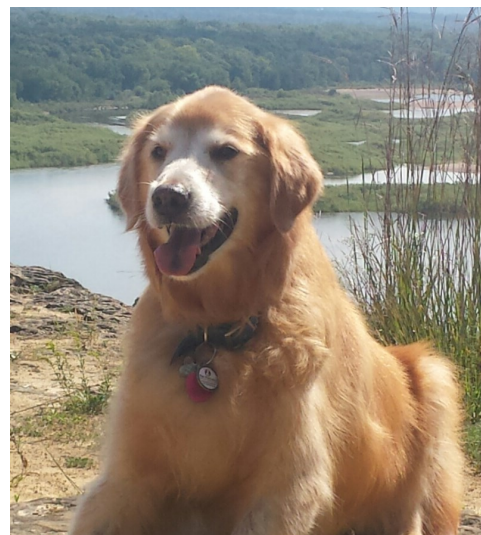
Artie & Henry

Dana and Ozzie

Ozzie and I would like to extend an enormous thank you to Dogs On Call for the opportunity to be Pet Partners over the last six years. We have really enjoyed our visits on campus, at special events, and especially at the University Hospital and the Rehab facilities. The multitude of sweet interactions and genuine smiles from the clients, as well as Ozzie, made this such a rewarding experience. Sadly, Ozzie, at 15 is losing his footing easily and has a real hard time on linoleum and tile floors, so we thought it best to hang up our scarf. It has been a wonderful time meeting new two- and four-legged friends. Keep up the great work and who knows.... There may be an Ozzie Jr. in my future.

Best wishes

Dana & Ozzie



We need your Help

When an email comes asking for help with a DOC event, a dorm visit, presentation, or evaluations, please help if you can. We have such a large group, 130 members, but sometimes it has been necessary to send out second requests for help. We are all certainly busy with our "real lives," but consider helping out when possible. We would really appreciate it.

Treats For Your Canine

During my shadowed Dogs On Call training session with my Ori-Pei, Bella, at Four Winds Manor in Verona, I spoke to a woman who seemed very excited to see my pup. She said she used to operate Three Dog Bakery on the west side of Madison and was very happy to see a pet therapy dog come by. So happy, that she wanted to share one of her natural dog snacks recipes with me.

I asked, and she said it would be ok to share the recipe with the group, so here you go.

Feel free to share out.

Homemade natural dog snacks: from Three Dog Bakery Cookbook

Ingredients:

2 cups whole wheat flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

1 cup natural peanut butter

1 cup skim milk

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

In a bowl, combine flour and baking powder.

In another bowl, combine peanut butter and milk.

Add wet mix to dry mix and mix well.

Place dough on floured surface and knead.

Roll dough out 1/4-inch thick and cut into desired shapes.

Place on greased baking sheet.

Bake for 20 minutes.



Adam & Bella



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