



Dogs On Call Inc.

Letter From The President

We have completed our 2018 membership re-enrollment and at this time we have 109 members. I know that every one of us in this group is at a different place in our lives and are able to give a different amount of time to a volunteer group. However, the key word here is that we are a VOLUNTEER group. Dogs On Call has many requests for visits from facilities that are medical as well as non-medical that we cannot fill. Are you able to volunteer at a new facility or join other teams at a hospital or library that would love more visits? Along with these requests, we offer 12-14 evaluation dates every calendar year so that our members can re-evaluate their Pet Partners right in Madison and hold four Pet Partner classes a year for people that are interested in joining the fantastic world of pet therapy.

You may ask why I am telling you this? At every evaluation we are required to have a volunteer crowd and a neutral dog team, as well as a person at the reception desk to help with traffic flow and to make sure testing dogs don't meet. If we can't rely on our members to volunteer to help with these evaluations, we may not be able to offer this many evaluations each year. At this time, we have committed evaluators that volunteer their time at every evaluation. If you are free to help at any of our evaluations or classes, we would love to have you. Without you, we can't continue to offer this number of evaluations every year.

Thank you for all you have done for this group and for all that you continue to do. Have a great summer and I hope to see you!

Laura & Shadow

DOC Member Picnic Date Set

The annual Dogs On Call picnic will be held on Sunday, September 16, this year. This picnic is for both the handler and their Pet Partner. Our host has a very large fenced in yard where the dogs can play and enjoy each other's company. DOC supplies water, hamburgers, and brats. We ask that members bring a dish to pass.

Mark this day on your calendar now and watch for more detailed information as the date gets closer.

Spring 2018



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Beyond Dogs On Call: Janet & Chewie

If you've participated in a visit at the UW or Edgewood you may have met Chewie (formal name Chew-bacca). At just over nine pounds, he is one of the smallest members of Dogs On Call. A therapy animal since August 2017, he visits the colleges, does the Read With Me at libraries, and is a monthly visitor to the Central Wisconsin Center where they just love him. His favorite visits are with children, but he enjoys attention from anyone who will give it to him.

With college visits slowing down and the weather turning nicer, Chewie and I enjoy participating in a variety of fund raisers for local rescues, humane societies, and other pet-related non-profit organizations. We've recently attended the Canine Crawl for the Dane County Humane Society, Czar's Promise Kick-off Event (a canine and pediatric cancer research group), the Fetch 5K dog jog (we only had to walk 2K), and the Q106 Pet Parade to raise funds for Occupaws (guide dog organization).

The highlight of our year so far occurred on May 5, 2018, when we drove down to Aurora, Illinois, to participate in the Annual Rover Rescue Pet Dog Show. Chewie is a Rover Rescue alumnus, adopted into our family November, 2015. We've attended the fundraiser dog show the past three years and this was by far his most successful year. He placed 2nd in the Fastest Recall contest (timed running event), beating out a Border Collie that was twice as tall as Chewie. He and I took first place in a new category called Mirror Image with our matching frizzed out hair and Wisconsin Badger outfits. His best event was the Costume Contest where he took 1st place with his hand-made police dog outfit that was a hit with everyone in attendance.

In June we will do another walk for Occupaws at Token Creek Park and in August we're headed to the Dog Days and Wiener Dog Derby at Wisconsin Harley Davidson in Oconomowoc.



Janet & Chewie

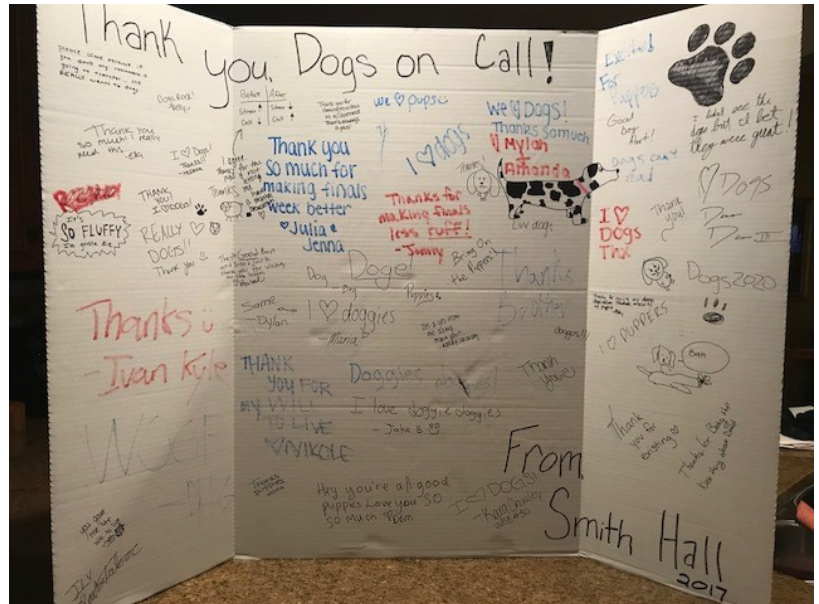




UW Smith Hall Shows Appreciation

One of the dorms we visit on a regular basis is Smith Hall. The staff and students always provide a warm welcome and they wanted to show their appreciation to Dogs On Call for volunteering with our pets. As we do not accept gifts for our work, and after some discussion, the students took up a collection and made a donation in honor of Dogs On Call.

I am proud to inform you that a donation was given to WisCARES (Wisconsin Companion Animal Resources, Education, and Social Services). This is a collaborative effort between the UW Vet School and the School of Social Work which focuses on social services, human health, and veterinary care (similar to pet therapy values). This group serves community pet owners facing financial problems and/or in need of social services or veterinary care so they can keep their pet companions.

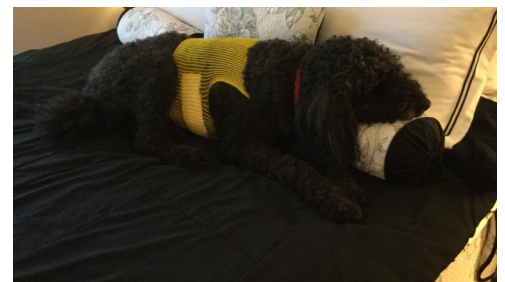


The students' expression of appreciation touched our hearts and make us feel proud that they reached out to WisCARES on behalf of pet therapy.

Todd Trampe- UW Events Coordinator

Baron is Back to Work

After a two-month surgical sabbatical, team Ja'nel and Baron are finally able to once again do therapy visits at Meriter and St Mary's. Baron got caught in barbed wire on Saturday night 3/17 and had emergency surgery. Then he needed two more surgeries to repair more of the damage that was done to his skin. It's been quite a journey for Baron, but through it all he never once lost his pleasing demeanor which is one of the reasons he's so good as a therapy dog. It's good to get back in the groove of doing things you love to do.



Ja'nel & Baron





The “Wisconsin Welcome” on Campus

As the academic year comes to a close, so does a busy year of UW visits. Our first visit was on September 8, 2017, at the Allen Centennial Garden as 13 teams greeted approximately 600 visitors. The year continued with visits to dorms, libraries, graduate schools, special events, club meetings, Edgewood College, and Madison College. Our final visit was held on May 8, 2018, as 12 teams visited outside the Helen C. White Library. A constant stream of stressed students facing final exams interacted with our pups and frequently thanked DOC for bringing our dogs and cats to campus throughout the year. It’s heartwarming when a student excitedly greets your pet by name because they remember them from a previous visit.

We completed 63 visits with over 45 different teams volunteering their time to help students cope with the rigors of college and life away from home and often their own pet. I want to thank everyone for encouraging students to relax and smile, to relate their family dog stories, and for helping students to experience “the best day of the year when the dogs come to visit.” I would also like to give a special thanks to Sherie Sondel and her boy Caleb for stepping in with extra support and help so Izzie and I could have a few nights off.

Enjoy your summer, as I already have five visits scheduled for the next school year... and
“ON WISCONSIN”

Todd Trampe & Izzie



Jasmine enjoying some
time with Bucky.



Izzie and Daisy enjoying
time with students.





COLUMBIA CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION ANNIVERSARY PARTY!

It's been four years since Dogs On Call started visiting inmates at Columbia Correctional Institution (CCI) in Portage. DOC teams were recognized at a lovely ceremony on May 17.

Teams participating were:

Ruth & Ike

Kay & Daisy

Joan & Shelby

Dale & Poppy

Sherie & Caleb

JoAnn & Molly

Marie & Dora (who recently retired, but her picture came along)

Karen & Pete

(Faye & Gandhi and Dan & Buddha visit CCI but couldn't attend the event.)

There were speeches of appreciation for the time and effort, mileage, and all the dog baths the handlers go through for every visit. The visits make a difference for the inmates in that they are more relaxed and happier after our visits. They enjoy petting the dogs, but conversation with our handlers makes a difference, too. One inmate told me that it makes them feel good to know that someone cares enough to come visit them.

After the ceremony, the teams stayed around for inmate visits. There were lots of smiles and seven very tired dogs.

On May 24th, we did a first-ever staff-only visit at CCI. Teams were escorted to several of the housing units to visit with staff who never get a chance to see the dogs.

Karen & Pete





HOSPITAL NEWS

Hospital Visits -- Not Just With Patients in Beds

If you're not keen on visiting bedside with patients, there are many other visiting opportunities at the hospitals. Here are some places our teams visit at Meriter and UW Hospital:

- Family and friends in the surgical waiting areas
- Other waiting rooms – Digestive Health Center, Family Care Center, Intensive Care Units
- Infusion Center at Meriter (patients in recliners)
- Maternity patients on long-term rest
- Patients and families in the pre-surgical admission area at Meriter (children on Fridays)
- Young children and teens at Meriter's Child & Adolescent Psych Hospital
- Patients in the psych unit dayrooms
- Staff – always and everywhere
- Gift shop, bank, pharmacy, administration office
- Special events – meet & greet the public at hospital events [e.g., Take Our Children to Work Day (see below), Alternative Therapies Week, Nurses' Week, stress reduction events for resident physicians]

So, it's not just sick people! I realized a long time ago, if someone is THAT sick, they don't feel like having any visitors anyway. But there are plenty of bored or lonely patients who would love a therapy dog visit.

Hospitals Host Volunteer Appreciation Events

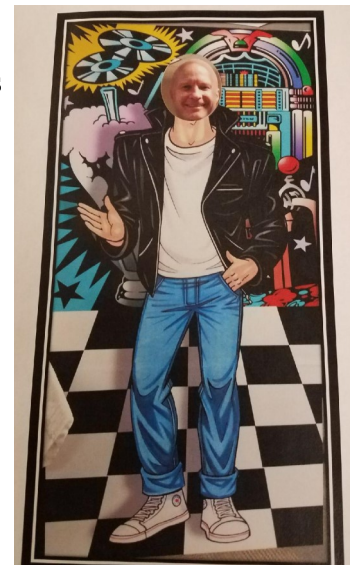
Meriter's luncheon was at the Marriott West and had a fun 50's theme. There was a 50's trivia game, 50's slang game, and lots of attendees wearing poodle skirts. You could get your picture taken as a poodle skirt girl, or like Jeff, as a greaser dude.



Karen & Pete, Ruth & Ike,
Andrea & Samantha



Chopper



UW Hospital's brunch buffet was a chance to visit with other DOC teams while the dogs napped by our sides or got plenty of attention from all the attendees.





Hospital News - Continued

UWHC Take Your Children to Work Day – In April, UW Hospital & Clinics held their annual Take Your Children to Work Day. Several dozens of employees' children have a full day of fun activities. The UWHC event coordinator told me the kids said they were most looking forward to seeing the Med Flight helicopter, having tacos, and meeting therapy dogs. In addition to the DOC teams, Pet Pals teams from the American Family Children's Hospital joined in. We had nearly two hours of visits with the excited and well-behaved young people who gave the dogs lots of attention. Thanks to these teams who attended: Kay & Daisy, Andrea & Samantha, Karen & Pete.

Nurses' Appreciation Week – We visit with lots of nursing staff on our weekly visits, but, for this event, the UWHC DOC teams were escorted to many additional units around the hospital for staff-only visits as one of the activities for Nurses' Appreciation Week. (See pictures posted on the DOC Facebook page.) All three nursing shifts were covered. New this year, we had one team each go to the UW Health East and West clinics for staff visits. Thanks to these teams: Kris & Journey, Kay & Daisy, Andrea & Samantha, Ruth & Ike, Karen & Pete, and Courtney & Chopper.



More Teams, Please!

Ike enjoys the attention

Now that you've read about all the fun the hospital teams have, why don't you join us? Our hospital programs have lost several dogs in the past months due to retirement and untimely passing. And, unfortunately, the great, hard-working dogs we have left are not getting any younger. I am always pleading for more teams to join the hospital teams, but we especially have a need now.

Contact Karen Peckham at karenp@dogsoncall.org for more information on several area-wide hospital options (several in Madison, but also Stoughton, Baraboo, Sauk Prairie, and Dodgeville).

This Is Why We Do This ...

From Sandy & Molly: "On a recent visit to Madison College library, I met up with a young lady whom we visited at the Meriter Psych unit. She said how much it meant to her to have visits from Dogs On Call when she was there. She & Molly made a connection during our visit & I was so pleased to meet up with her again."





Swap Retractable Leashes for Something Less Harmful

Judging by the number of people I see walking dogs on retractable leash devices, it appears they are popular. They are also unsafe for both people and pets, and there are alternatives that are inexpensive and don't take a lot of time or effort to learn to use.



A retractable leash is “not so much a leash as it is a length of thin cord wound around a spring-loaded device housed inside a plastic handle,” as veterinarian Dr. Karen Becker explains in her article “10 Reasons Not to Use a Retractable Leash.”

Pet stewards have told me the variable length – typically from 15-30 feet – and ability to lock them in place appeals to them so they may keep their dog close or let them go sniff about.

But the variable length is also one of the *most dangerous features* of the product.

One reason is dog handlers often lack the situational awareness, timing, and motor skills to lock the cord under exigent circumstances. That's why there are often local ordinances restricting the leash length.

I experienced such a situation in April when I visited the guardian of a fearful (dog-reactive) dog and met her in the hallway of her apartment building. As I worked to gain the trust of the dog, who has a bite history, a nearby stairwell door opened.

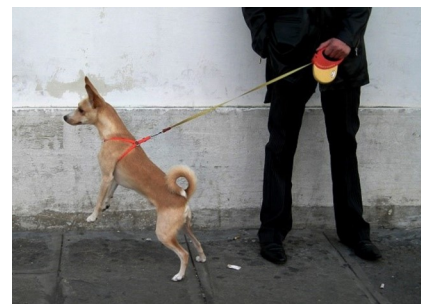
On the other side was a woman holding a device with two retractable leashes, each let out to the full length of 15 feet of cord, at the end of which were her two obnoxious reactive dogs. One dog, resembling a 25-pound Boston Terrier mix, burst through the open door and rushed up to the fearful dog I meant to work with. Luckily the other dog, a 50-pound pit-mix was further away.

This created an emergency in which my client scrambled to retreat down the hall and around the corner, with the Boston-mix in pursuit, as I tried impeding him with my training bag. My client was left bleeding, bitten on each leg. I was bitten once and bruised, all due to the utter lack of control or good judgment of someone who entered an apartment building without shortening the retractable leashes.

Another danger is that if the dog bolts or the handler jerks the leash, serious injury may occur to the dog, or those who may be entangled in the long cord. I saw this happen one afternoon while driving to an appointment when an older woman's small dog wandered into the street and she yanked it back. She had two dogs on retractable leashes and was paying no attention to either, who both wandered in different directions.

Sometimes the thin retractable cords break. Every retractable leash I have ever owned broke... leaving me with my dog 20 feet away and no safe way for me to shorten the lead. That was why I stopped using them years ago.

They also teach dogs to pull on leash. If the cord is let out and not locked, there is always tension on the leash and the dog is reinforced for pulling. If the cord is locked, then why use a retractable device in the first place?





Swap Retractable Leashes - Continued

The injuries are my biggest concern.

As veterinary critical care specialist Dr. Garret Pachtinger pointed out in his story on the Veterinary Information Network, a dog he treated for getting hit by a motorcycle might have been hurt more by the yanked leash than the collision.

Two types of (canine) injuries are most common, Pachtinger wrote.

“The first is muscular, such as a neck strain or sprain; the other is a cervical intervertebral disc herniation, which can be more severe,” he wrote. Whether the handler intentionally jerks the leash, presses the lock button as the dog has bolted or tries to yank the dog back to them, the damage is the same.

Among the most common effects are “back pain, lameness, incoordination, and/or inability to walk in the hind legs or all four limbs,” according to a fact sheet compiled by UC-Davis Veterinary Medicine.

These leashes can and do also cause injuries to handlers, as well.

Consumer Reports analyzed federal statistics from 2007 and found “16,564 hospital-treated injuries associated with leashes.” Of those, about 10.5 percent involved children 10 and younger; 23.5 percent involved injuries to the finger.

The most common injuries reported were burns and cuts, usually sustained when the cord came in contact with skin as it rapidly reeled out from the handle of a leash. Others occurred when the cord got wrapped around part of the owner or the dog.”

Flexi, the leading manufacturer of flexible leashes, includes a warning graphic on the handle of their products...demonstrating a cord amputating fingers. A printed warning notice may be found on the company web site.

The good news is if you're a retractable leash user, it's not difficult to change your habits.

I recommend a no-pull chest harness with a chest D-ring leash attachment and a 6-foot nylon or leather leash. And then pay attention when you walk. With every dog I walk, I scan the environment looking for dogs off leash or on retractable leashes. In either case, I turn and go the other way.

There are simply too many variables in which things can go wrong.

Retractable leashes are not often thought of as aversive, as shock, prong, and choke collars are, but they can cause serious harm to people and pets alike. The alternatives are better for everyone.

Daniel H. Antolec, CBCC-KA is the owner of Brooklyn-based Happy Buddha Dog Training and is a member of Pet Professional Guild and chairs the PPG Advocacy Committee.





Rooster

Washington Irving said, “There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love.”

It is this overwhelming grief that I am dealing with right now with the sudden loss of Rooster. I have lost many dogs in my lifetime, and it’s always heartbreaking, but never like this. Rooster was that “one dog” for me. Losing him so young, so suddenly, and while we were gone on spring break has left me scrambling to come to grips with this new reality. Writing has always been cathartic for me, so I want to tell you the story of Rooster.



In the spring of 2011, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. We were living in Montana at the time. Several times during my chemo sessions, there was a therapy dog named Turbo who would come into the treatment room to visit. Those visits were a huge bright spot during a very scary time. I knew right away that I wanted to do therapy work someday. The two dogs we had at the time, however, 2 Chessies, Rio and Bridger, were not going to be good candidates. Rio had a very nervous personality and Bridger was diagnosed with a heart condition as a puppy and they told us he would only live to be 3-4 years old. By 2011, he had made it to 8, but we knew we didn’t have a lot of time left with him. To say that was a tough year would be an understatement.



In February of 2012, my brother, a veterinarian, who was living in Indiana, sent me this photo.

This litter of puppies had come through his office from a nearby shelter, and he had fallen in love with one in particular.



Bridger was on heart meds at the time, and we knew the end was near, so I had to say no to that beautiful face. A few weeks later, Bridger passed away, and my brother sent me another photo.





Rooster - Continued

As summer camp owners, typically we need to get puppies in the fall to have more time to train them. It was April, way too close to camp, and too soon after losing Bridger, but we fell head over heels in love and knew he was meant to be ours. There was no way I could say no.

The fact that he was in Indiana while we were in Montana was not even an obstacle. My parents drove him halfway, meeting me in South Dakota, where I first got to hold that beautiful boy. Within days of being home again, I knew I had found my therapy dog. He was born for the job.

We were nervous that first summer at camp, that he would wander off into the woods and not come back. In fact, several times he would disappear for hours in the afternoon, and I would freak out. But it turned out that he had gone into one of the cabins during rest hour, fallen asleep in someone's bed, and stayed there the whole afternoon.



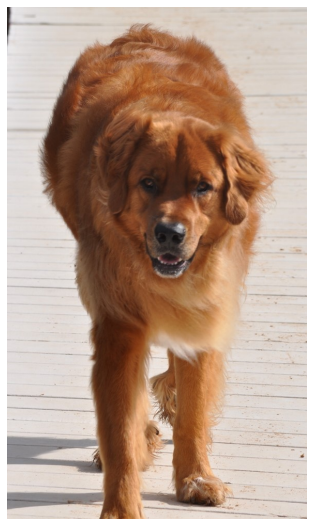
Rooster and I got registered in therapy work in the fall of 2013 and it has been a joyous 4 ½ years. He knew when I took a banana into the bathroom, it was time for a bath. (The boy LOVED his fruits and veggies!)

He knew when the pink backpack came out, it was time to go. I loved watching people's faces when they first saw Rooster...joy and amazement. I felt that way every time I looked at him. I felt like he was too good to be true, and I knew no matter how much time we got with him, it would never be enough. We just never imagined it would come this soon.

We called him the "Wal-Mart Greeter" at the dog park, because he would much rather stand at the gate to greet everyone who walked in than actually have to walk around the dog park. When we visited the hospital, he loved the psych ward more than room visits, because he could just lie down, and let everyone come to him. And dorm visits, crashed out on the floor, covered in eager hands? Those were his favorite.

I knew it would break me when he passed away, but I wasn't ready for it this soon. In the spring of 2012, he was my light at the end of what had been a very dark tunnel of a year. One line of our (Camp) Deerhorn Creed says, "To spread sunshine and good cheer, just for the fun of it." I can't think of a better line to describe Rooster. He brought joy and kindness to everyone he met.

It's always hard to contemplate another dog after the loss of one so special...but for our family, that is how we heal, and hopefully this fall there will be another gentle giant added to the family. I read a book a long time ago called "Sight Hound" by Pam Houston, and there were parts that really spoke to my heart. It's narrated by a dog named Dante, and he says in the book, "I wanted her to see that the only life worth living is a life full of love; that loss is always part of the equation; **that love and loss conjoined are the best opportunity we ever get to live fully, to be our strongest, our most compassionate, our most graceful selves.**"



Amy



New Member Profiles

Jeanne & Ed rescued 3-1/2-year-old Golden Retriever, April, from a bad situation. When living with the breeder, April was bred at nine months of age, lost all eight puppies, then was spayed. Since she was no longer able to produce puppies for the breeder, plus she was filthy, full of worms, and had an ear infection, she was sold at a bargain price. “Lucky for her, lucky for us,” says Jeanne.

April already visits at Attic Angel with Jeanne & Ed. They would like to continue to those visits, as well as visits to other skilled nursing facilities and schools.

Outdoor activities are favorites of the family, especially boating, fishing, biking, and traveling.



Marcie’s husband purchased Jake, a Bichon, at Animart in Madison. Jake, now 10 years old, will join Marcie as she visits at Agrace Hospice Care. She would also like to participate in the UW dorm visits, as she has four children attending school there.

In addition to spending time with her four children, she enjoys running, biking, and reading.

2018 Evaluation and Pet Partners Class Dates

Our evaluation dates for 2018 fill very fast. Please be sure to check your expiration date on your badge and sign up early for re-evaluation. Our remaining evaluation dates for 2018 are:

June 14, 2018
July 29, 2018
August 26, 2018
September 9, 2018
September 23, 2018
October 14, 2018
November 11, 2018





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