



Dogs On Call Inc.

Fall 2019

Letter From The President

Excuse me, what happened to Fall? Somehow it feels like we skipped it! However, the short break we take from evaluations, events, and workshops in December and January will be nice. We will continue with our regular visiting, of course, and dorm visits will still be going strong. We have Wisconsin Dog Fair on November 10th and one more evaluation on November 17th. Our gift wrapping at Barnes & Noble for this year is still up in the air.

At our last board meeting, the subject of business cards came up, and our treasurer informed us that only a handful of members have requested to be reimbursed for a portion of the cost of their cards. DOC will reimburse us \$20 of the cost of our cards up to twice per year. That's \$40 per year you could be receiving back from your card cost! All you need to do is submit your receipt to Faye; fayea@dogsoncall.org, or send your receipt to Dogs On Call, PO Box 545, Poynette WI 53955. There is still plenty of time for this year, so dig out those receipts!

Thanks to all of you who are stepping up to do therapy work with your Pet Partner. It's your commitment and dedication that makes Dogs On Call the great, so well-respected group that we are. A sincere thank you for all you do!

Remember Our Policies And Procedures

A couple of things have been brought to our attention:

We have received reports of flexi leads being used on visits. This is definitely not allowed! Not only is it against policy, it will void your insurance in case of an incident. Please – no longer that a six-foot leash!

Also, we have heard of some not following the dress code. No blue jeans. Please dress in a manner that positively represents Pet Partners and Dogs On Call. Check the DOC Handbook for more details about our dress code. It can be found on the members page of our website.

Yes, we are strict about some rules, but that is why we are respected and sought after in the community. Please help us maintain the good reputation we have worked so hard to earn.

Artie

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Visiting at Mercyhealth Hospital in Janesville

October 8th was the start of Janesville Mercyhealth Hospital's therapy dog program. Two teams are involved right now for the start of the program. Jane and Bill with Morgan, and Sue with Molly. The staff was very excited to see us on our first day and Morgan's visit went well as she was introduced to staff and patients. It was hard for us to get through the lobby as visitors would stop us to pet Morgan. They wondered what a dog was doing in the hospital. As we were leaving the hospital, we passed a gentleman sitting outside. We saw the look on his face so we stopped and let Morgan visit a while. When we left, he said that had made his day.

The hope is that more teams can be added down the road. I'm sure Mercy Hospital is waiting to see how this goes with the two teams. To volunteer with Morgan, we did have to give up visiting nursing homes; the concern being the possibility of a *C. diff.* infection transfer.

Even though we aren't veteran volunteers with the hospital, we were invited to attend Mercy's annual volunteer luncheon at the Janesville Country Club a few weeks after our first visit. I'm sure there haven't been too many dogs in the Country Club! We were invited up front and Morgan was introduced to everyone. She was very polite - even with all the plates of food passing by her. She was very well received by everyone.

Jane and Bill & Morgan

Leaving A "Mark"



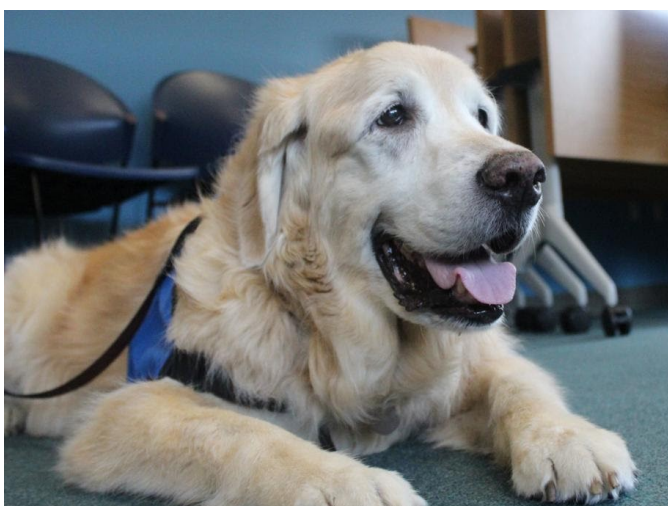
We were out on a Sunday afternoon and stopped by a local establishment on Lake Koshkonong that we know has bands. We usually bring Morgan along either by car or by boat to keep her acclimated to groups of people. Morgan usually draws people to her and one lady just had to leave her lipstick mark!

Goodbye Henry

We never want this day to come, but it, unfortunately, has for me, again. Henry was put to rest in August to join my other Pet Partners: Billet, Brandy, Love, and Sacajawea. For over 10 years, Henry helped with evaluations, workshops, and I can't even begin to remember all the facilities, presentations, and events. When I think of all the lives he has touched over the years, I am so proud of him!

I think Lynn described Henry perfectly when she said, "Henry was such a wonderful therapy dog and a great showman for all the Pet Partners classes! His gentle demeanor and soul were a calming influence to everyone who had the pleasure of petting him. Not to say he didn't have his goofy moments, but he knew when it was time to behave and 'work' a quality not all dogs have."

Thanks to all for your kind words and thoughts. For the first time in 15 years, I am without a Pet Partner, and it is such a strange, empty feeling. But I do feel comfortable that Henry is at rest now. Goodbye, Sweet Boy!



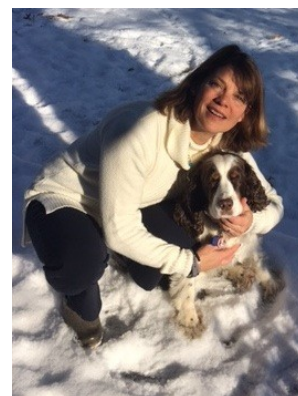
One of the programs at the Reedsburg Public Library involves the company of a furry friend. A twelve-year-old golden retriever named Henry, a registered therapy dog through Pet Partners, has been listening to children read at the Reedsburg Public Library. [Read about](#) how he's providing a fun and positive reading environment for people of all ages.

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

~Leo Buscaglia

Hospital News

Janesville's **Mercyhealth** hospital is excited to welcome Dogs On Call teams that will be visiting patients, staff, and visitors in their inaugural therapy dog program. Thank you Jane and Bill W. with Morgan and Sue R. with Molly! (More teJanesville's MercyHealth hospital is excited to welcome Dogs On Call teams that will be visiting patients, staff, and visitors in their inaugural therapy dog program. Thank you Jane and Bill W. with Morgan and Sue R. with Molly! (More teams are invited to join, too!)



Flu season is here! Volunteers at area hospitals are required to get a flu vaccination and update their annual TB questionnaire so they can continue to do therapy dog visits throughout the winter. These tests are at no charge to the hospital volunteers and are easy to complete with the many drop-in time availabilities.



The hospitals are always undergoing some **remodeling**, addition, or reconfiguration. Several new unit additions are complete at Meriter, and more are on the way. The big, bright rooms have plenty of room for therapy dog visits! Meriter's Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Hospital recently had the grand opening of their enlarged facility; they're looking forward to more therapy dog visits with their growing patient population. A while ago, UW Hospital opened their state-of-the-art neurology ICU and continues to welcome our dog visits.

At UW Hospital, we recently started visits with the **Emergency Department** staff. The visits take place in a hallway where the staff gathers for a pre-shift meeting. The short interaction with our therapy dogs is a relaxing start to their always-busy day



Hospital News - continued

An important reminder, when you are visiting any sort of health care facility (hospital, skilled nursing, or even assisted living), be on the lookout for any sort of isolation notice on the door of the patient's room. It might be a door bag with personal protective equipment (mask, gloves, gowns) or just a sign on the door (example shown). Sometimes a nurse will say it's OK to enter because the patient's test came back negative or they are going home. It is NOT OK to enter even in those circumstances because the room has not had terminal cleaning (disinfected). The nurses may try to be convincing, but just say no! DOC teams are NOT to enter these rooms under any circumstances, for the protection of you, your dog, and any people you might encounter after that visit. Also, if you meet a patient in the hallway who wants to pet your dog, ask first if they are under isolation precaution, as some patients are allowed to travel the hallways. If they says yes, then no petting!



Karen & Pete

This Is Why We Visit

Betty and I had a great visit at UW Hospital last week. The kind every handler has had, where you literally can't leave because you keep running into admirers. This particular visit we spent quite a bit of time in the Neuro ICU. Usually we focus on staff and family member visits in Neuro ICU because of the severity of patient injuries and corresponding sedation. This visit though, we were asked to visit eight (yes eight!) patients. Each patient was aware and grateful for the therapy dog visit, and many were able to tell me about their pets. This may be one of the most important results of DOC hospital visits, patients and their families smiling, pulling out pictures, and talking about their own beloved pets. Our last patient had been hospitalized for quite some time. Exiting the unit, her nurse thanked us profusely and said it was the first time she had seen the non-verbal young lady smile.

Visits to hospital Behavioral Health units are always very rewarding, usually relaxed and a favorite for Betty. Visiting SSM today, Betty had lively and happy interactions with probably ten patients. In the midst of these visits, a staff member came over to tell me that Betty's card had initiated a staff "pet board." She told me someone had posted Betty's card on a bulletin board in the office, and someone soon brought a picture of their pet, placing it next to Betty's. The next thing she knew, staff had posted over 50 pictures of their own pets. They moved the "pet board" to a much larger partition smack dab in the middle of the office. You can't miss it if you visit the desk, and that's just the way they like it.

Sheila & Betty

New Member Profiles



Allen lives in Verona with Lily, a five-year-old Golden Retriever. Lily's breeder asked Allen's mom to puppy-sit Lily for a weekend while the breeder went to a dog show. Lily never went back to the breeder!

To begin with, Allen is interested in taking Lily on hospital visits.

Audrey and Maggie, a nine-year-old Boxer mix, live in Fitchburg. Maggie is a southern girl, adopted when she was a puppy. She shares Audrey's attention with Gemma, another mixed breed dog.

Audrey would like to focus visits with Maggie on locations with younger people – UW dorm visits, the Dane County Humane Society, and whatever else comes along.

Horseback riding and playing volleyball are other interests of Audrey's.



Denise adopted Penny at two years of age after she spent those first two years of her life in an outdoor kennel. Penny loves her indoor life, says Denise, and shares their home in Reedsburg with companions Scarlett, a 12-year-old dog, three cats, and one horse.

Denise is eager to try a variety of visits with Penny – UW dorms, the airport, and the Read With Me program.

Kids are a favorite of Denise's; she works as a pediatric nurse. She also enjoys spending time with family, gardening, and knitting.

Karen & Pete

New Member Profiles - Continued



Labradoodle Charlee is the first pet ever (even as kids) for both **LuAnne** and her husband. Charlee came to the Madison family from a breeder ten years ago.

LuAnne is interested in taking Charlee to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and college campuses. She'd also like to explore the Read With Me program.

Practicing yoga is a regular activity for LuAnne and she loves the outdoors – biking, hiking, kayaking, and camping.

Amy is a long-time DOC member who suddenly lost her first therapy dog, Rooster, a Mastiff/Newfoundland/St. Bernard mix, at the age of six in March of 2018. Amy knew she wanted another therapy dog and also knew she wanted a Newfoundland. Rooster and Katniss, their five-year-old Shepherd/Collie mix were both rescue dogs, but, after careful consideration, they decided to go with a breeder this time. In August 2018, Bozeman, a Landseer Newfoundland, joined their family.

Bozeman will start slow with visiting and see what fits him best. Amy hopes to return to visits at UW Hospital and the UW campus.

Amy enjoys reading, hiking, doing hot yoga, and taking the dogs to the dog park. She says owning a summer camp keeps her family busy during the summer, but also the other nine months of the year as well.



Robin was charmed by a therapy dog when she was in UW hospital. (The dog was in the hallway and did a belly crawl to Robin. What dog was that?!) That's when Robin knew she wanted to be part of the program. She and Hank, her 22-month-old Australian Labradoodle, recently passed the Pet Partners evaluation. They are looking forward to visiting where they can "bring joy to those suffering from illnesses, loss, stress, or just needing a fur baby to pet."

Ten-year-old Shih Tzu, Reggie, is Hank's big brother.

Robin likes to read, spend time with family, and, being a cancer survivor herself, is passionate about volunteering on cancer benefit and fundraising committees.

News From The Docks

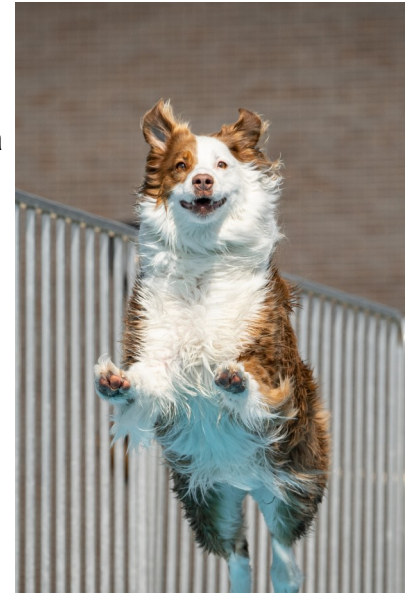
When it comes to dog competitions, there are plenty to choose from. Mia and I made an attempt at agility, but, just like me, she's a swimmer and not a runner. This past summer, Mia entered her fourth year of Dock Diving. We compete 2-3 times a year (as there is a lot of travel time during the summer), and she cannot get enough of it. Much like when we get to volunteer, Mia knows when we are going to a competition. She has specific toys that she likes to jump for! This year, we attended two jumps and she came out with two overall Divisional Championships with jumps averaging 16', her record is 18'!

People always ask me how you get started in dock diving. Just like therapy work, it is just something Mia had in her. She loves to swim, run, and play. The dog park in Stoughton does have a pier that we started jumping off of when we first started going. First, we practiced running in the water via the beach. At one point, I threw the ball pretty far and Mia, on her own, ran to the pier and jumped right in. During one of the end-of-the-year dog swims, we decided to try it for fun. SHE WON! That's when we decided to go into competition mode!

We do have a pool at the house with a dock, so that is where we do most of our practicing. She does need a good rest the day before competition so she can save up all her energy and fly high.

When Mia gets her ribbons, she wears them proudly with a big grin on her face! There is nothing better than seeing the freedom and love in your dog's face when they are truly invested in something they like to do. I'm so fortunate that we have been able to find two things that we can do as a family and Mia loves. Her little sister Nellie (who is sacred of everything) even comes to cheer Mia on! I'm hoping there are many jumps to come in the future!

Amber & Mia



Dogs Are Not Luggage

One of my recent puppy clients was a precocious fellow named Colt. He was hardly bigger than the family cat, and it was the first puppy the family ever had. From day one, we covered all the basics of raising a puppy, with an emphasis on keeping things safe and fun and applying the training skills in everyday life.

Each time I work with a “first time puppy” family, I am reminded of the enormous amount of work which is required of them and how easily they forget what I taught them. Coaching the owners is a larger part of the equation than teaching the puppy, in my experience.



I am not a piece of luggage!

One common mistake I repeatedly see is when a family member pushes or pulls the puppy like a piece of luggage at an airport terminal rather than applying the training.

I returned to the client's home for our session one afternoon and was greeted at the door by the five-year-old daughter and Colt. In her eagerness to let me in, the girl immediately pushed open the door and Colt likewise demonstrated his eagerness by moving toward me.

The girl screamed and launched herself at the startled puppy, mobbing it in the process. On other occasions, the mother had likewise automatically grabbed Colt with both hands, pulling him back from the door. Their actions were motivated by fear that the puppy would scoot out the door and be lost.

They forgot that Colt could wait in his kennel while visitors came and went, or could sit several feet away, or that they could use “Touch” to direct him away from the open door, or use “Find It” to get him searching for food several feet away, or could attach a leash and then open the door.

As the mother remarked, “It seems so natural for people to just grab a dog. Even my daughter does it.” I gently suggested that her daughter would learn whatever adult behavior was modeled for her, and that screaming and grabbing a dog could result in a bite. Especially with the wrong dog.

It takes a lot of repetition to learn a new task, with friendly and supportive coaching. I am quite certain that when I attended group training classes, I forgot things and made mistakes. I still recall how patiently the force-free trainer coached me along and praised my improvement.

We had also been working on kennel training for Colt. He was comfortably relaxing in his kennel on occasion throughout the day and spent his nights sleeping in it. Part of our conversation was about the maximum length of time a puppy should be kenneled. I used my dog, Buddha, as an example of what could go wrong.



Dogs Are Not Luggage - Continued

Buddha was a puppy in 2008 when his family lost their home due to the Great Recession. A friend of the family agreed to keep him. Unfortunately, he kept Buddha in a kennel up to 20 hours each day. When the family learned of this, they rescued him, but separation anxiety had already taken hold.

Colt was starting off correctly.

When I returned for another training session, I was sorry to learn that the owner recently had a very busy day and left him in the kennel for eight hours while she was away from home. From that day forward, Colt refused to go anywhere near the kennel. At bed time, the owner picked him up like a piece of luggage and forced him into the kennel, locking the door. Colt's fear of the kennel grew stronger.

I spent the better part of an hour working with Colt to change his opinion of the kennel. Three sessions later, it is still a work in progress. Fear learning is persistent and difficult to change.

The family loves their puppy and has been keen to accept my suggestions. Although mistakes occur, I have seen steady progress. At the end of the last session, the owner told me something which gave me cause for celebration.

With a broad smile she said, "Of all the things you taught us, I think remembering to apply the training and stop automatically (physically) controlling Colt has been the greatest lesson learned."

"Yes," I agreed, "I think people tend to treat dogs and cats differently. Imagine if you suddenly screamed and grabbed your cat, physically forcing her to do something. How would that go?" The owner shook her head and said, "Well, our cat would bite or scratch and then avoid us."

I nodded in agreement, adding, "Dogs put up with a lot from their humans, so it is tempting to just hurry up and force a dog to do something. Training gives us tools to use so the puppy learns how to make good choices and develop self-control. Shouting and grabbing cannot teach that."

Indeed, we spent that session working, teaching Colt how to sit on the stairway several feet from the front door and wait to be released when a visitor arrived or departed. He and his owner performed flawlessly, creating a calm environment and reinforcing one another by their mutual success. Now the daughter has a different force-free behavior to see her parents model for her.

I learned something too...how to be a better coach.

Dan



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