



Dogs On Call Inc.



Letter From The President

As of this writing, the big news is, of course, the coronavirus. DOC is pretty much at a standstill. Most of our facilities have asked us to suspend visiting, including the University. We have cancelled our April Pet Partners workshop along with our March and April evaluation dates, and may need to cancel more. We have cancelled all our presentation visits for March and April. We have two large events scheduled for May, Puppy Up and Czar's Promise. Puppy Up has already moved to September, Czar's Promise will probably do so also. We have also cancelled all of our library Read With Me dates through April.

Pet Partners is extending expiration dates by six months for teams expiring March 30 and June 30, if they need it. We will look into adding more evaluation dates when possible to take care of the backlog.

So, in the meantime, members, sit tight and be safe.

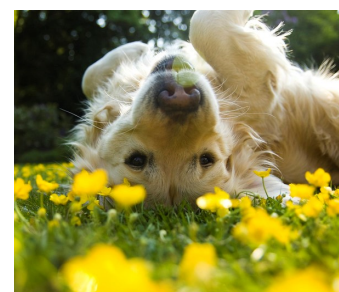
Artie

Mrs. Dawn

Matilda and I were packing up from our last visit at Meadowridge Library and young boy stopped us and asked if he could pet her. Of course, the answer was yes. He was quite knowledgeable about dogs and kind to Tilly. I asked this 6th grader how was school going and who his favorite teacher was this semester. The middle school is next door to the library and is where I went many, many years ago. Going good, he said, and I like Mrs. Dawn. A few days later, I met Mrs. Dawn at a work party...she is married to a co-worker of mine and was happy to hear about being a student's favorite teacher.

Lance & Tilly

Spring 2020



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Hospital News

WELCOME!

Allen & Lily at Meriter

Jodell & Jordy at UW Health Rehab Hospital

Amy & Bozeman at UW Hospital & Clinics

UWHC – HOME TO THERAPY DOG EXTREMES!

Meet our biggest UW Hospital therapy dog, Bozeman, a Landseer Newfoundland (135 pounds, since you're probably wondering). Bozeman joins Pete, a Welsh Springer Spaniel (40 pounds), and the smallest dog that visits at UWHC.

And here's Bozeman, the youngest dog in the UWHC program, age 1-1/2 years (with owner Amy) and Ike, the oldest dog, age 17 years (with owner Ruth). Zombie (with owner Karen) is not far behind at age 15.



ALL THESE AND PATIENT VISITS, TOO!

As if we're not busy enough with our regular patient visits, the hospital teams at Meriter and UWHC have helped at separate hospital-related events in the past year:

- Visit with Environmental Services staff at Meriter
- Visit with Lab Services staff at Meriter
- Visit with Administrative Professionals at UWHC
- Visit with Med School Residents at UWHC
- Puppy Love event for visitors and staff at UWHC on Valentine's Day
- Visit with Carbone Cancer Center staff at UWHC

Thanks to all the teams that have gone the extra mile to help with these events!





Hospital News - Continued

THANK YOU TO LONG-TIME TEAMS

Volunteer Appreciation Week isn't until April, but I want to be an early bird and publicly thank these teams that have been with the UWHC and Meriter programs for at least five years. Starting year is preceding their names.

UWHC:

2011 John and Gypsy and Hannah; Karen and Zombie and Shaka; Kay and Daisy; Pauline and Lady
and as Visit Captain
2013 Pat and Wilson; Yvonne and Daisy
2014 Andrea and Samantha
2015 Amy and Rooster and Bozeman
2016 Ruth and Ike

Meriter:

2009 Staci and Disney
2010 Karen and Zombie
2012 Andrea and Samantha, Pat and Wilson, Todd and Izzie
2014 Scott and Sazzy
2015 Mary Ann and Tate and Mac; Sherie and Caleb

Karen & Pete



Because we can never take
enough pictures of our sweet
dogs.





Full Circle 2.0

About 10 years ago, I wrote a newsletter article about how after visiting with our Berner Baloo for several years, my mom and family got a bit of pet therapy during her final days at Meriter from Lynn and Tootsie. So we gave and then received to make a full circle of therapy work.

A couple weeks later, when we went to pick up our pup Matilda, we found out that she was born the day mom passed away. Another circle began...

For the last 8 years, Matilda has been active visiting at many different events including libraries, dorms, and fundraisers. She was recently diagnosed with cancer that has required chemo therapy and a surgery. After her first treatment, the oncologist gave us a care package, a nice touch after a long and scary day. After opening it, we discovered it was donated by Czar's Promise, an organization for which she volunteered in the DOC booth at their inaugural run last year. So, for all she has provided to others these last few years, she is being returned the gift in part, by small acts of kindness and support by others. Full Circle 2.0.

Lance & Tilly

Cricket At The Colonial Club

Mike, Jan, and their Samoyed, Cricket, visited at The Colonial Club in Sun Prairie on March 12, on what was probably one of the last Dogs On Call events before the coronavirus shut-down. They gave a presentation at the monthly Memory Café event. (These events are for individuals with mild memory loss or cognitive impairment, accompanied by a caregiver or friend, to experience a program in a casual, no-stress environment.)

Mike and Jan entertained the audience, telling about how they became a Dogs On Call team, what was involved in the evaluation, and where they visit as a team. Cricket made the rounds, getting petted by the attendees, as Mike and Jan also told about her breed and distributed her trading cards.





Dane County Juvenile Detention Center Volunteers Needed

Madison and Dane County are, and have always been, a great place to live, but in the past year or so it seems that we've seen more criminal activity especially involving teens and particularly when it comes to auto theft. I know this first hand as in September one of our cars was stolen out of our garage – in broad daylight! Of course, it didn't help that my husband left the keys in the car, but you shouldn't have to worry about your car being stolen, especially right out of your own garage, right?! Why are so many teens engaging in this activity (and others) and landing themselves in trouble, some of them over and over again? I wish I knew the answer...but there is no one answer and whatever answers there are they are, no doubt, multi-layered and extremely complex. Many people say the system is broken, and perhaps that's true, but what can we do as individuals to help, even in any small way, to improve the system? We can try to support these troubled youth in the small way that we as Dogs On Call members can by visiting them at the Dane County Juvenile Detention Center (DCJDC) and showing them that there are people who care and who are willing to put in the time to make a positive impact in their lives.

Do all of the kids in DCJDC realize why we are there and/or appreciate us? No, but there are a good number of kids that really seem to benefit from our visits. I think it gives them a sense of calm and a taste of home (whether they have pets at home that they are missing or not) and it really does show them that someone cares about them...even if it is just a dog!! If trying to make a difference in the lives of these kids is something that you would like to try, please think about joining our DCJDC Dogs On Call teams. We visit from 1:00 – 2:00 every other Wednesday and Saturday alternating weeks and could use a few more teams to help ensure that we can bring at least two dog teams to each visit.

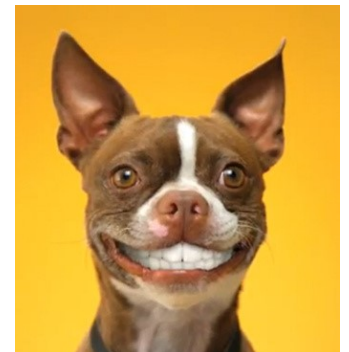
For more information or to sign up, please contact Beth Junge at beth@thekrusecompany.net

Thanks,

Beth

The World Health Organization has announced that dogs cannot contract COVID-19.

Dogs that were previously in quarantine can now be released. To be clear, WHO let the dogs out.





Therapy Dog Presentation

Members of Dogs On Call provided an awareness presentation to members of the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI. The Madison, Wisconsin, chapter meets monthly for breakfast and will bring in speakers to provide information on a variety of topics that benefit the local community. The following is the article that was published in their bi-monthly magazine.

The Madison chapter welcomed Scott and chapter member Ed as guest speakers. Scott and Ed are both volunteer members of Dogs On Call, Inc., a nationally recognized non-profit therapy animal organization that promotes the benefits of animal-assisted therapy. The organization offers basic volunteer training and evaluation of the volunteer and their pet to become a registered therapy animal team. The therapy program's mission is to provide service on behalf of those medical, residential, and educational facilities requesting visits.

The outreach programs engages in, and facilitates, animal-human bonding through the benefits of animal-assisted interactions provided by trained therapy animal teams of which Scott and Ed are members. They discussed the therapy program, which included the required training, registration requirements, and local facilities serviced. Each shared some personal experiences using their therapy dogs, but noted that the program is not restrictive to the use of dogs. Other therapy animals, such as cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, mini-horses, and even llamas have also been used to bring comfort and help children improve their child their reading and communication abilities.

Scott's therapy dog is an 8-year-old chocolate Lab named Sazzy. Scott and Sazzy provide service to patients, families, and staff at local hospitals, nursing homes, and memory care facilities. From 1973-1976, Scott worked as a bureau clerk in the Name Search Unit. He later worked for the Indiana AGs office, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, and in 1993, Scott moved to Madison where was employed with WPS Health Insurance.

Ed has a 10-year-old yellow Lab named Scout, rescued from a humane society in Northern Illinois. Scout has been registered as a therapy dog since 2015 and, together, Ed and Scout primarily focus upon serving the men and women at the Madison Veterans Administration Hospital, although upon request they also make visits to assisted living facilities, hospice centers, and University campuses. He served as a special agent in the Chicago and Milwaukee Field Offices of the FBI, retiring from the Madison Resident Agency (RA) in 2018. Scott and Ed did an excellent job of informing the chapter about the program's benefits.

Ed & Scout

Ed and
Scout



Scott and
Sazzy





Member Profiles

Amy lives in Lake Mills with three-year-old Luna, an Aussiedoodle, and Buddy, a Budgie (parakeet).

Amy's family has three high school/college age kids and visits with that age group are where Luna will focus. Amy and Luna are looking forward to visits on the UW campus and at the library in Lake Mills. Amy works at the UW and says, "I see how much the students miss their pets."

Spending time with her family is Amy's top interest.



Laurel and her husband were very careful before they purchased a dog. They got Standard Poodle Juneau, now five years old, from a breeder, and the breeder is also a veterinarian. That gave them an extra measure of confidence about the health of their dog.

Laurel is interested in visiting at the airport, UW campus, and "anywhere else we can be helpful."

Outdoor activities are a favorite; Laurel likes hiking, camping, and traveling.

Karen & Pete

Our Much-Appreciated Therapy Dog Visit

In January, my mom had an accident and was taken by ambulance from Escanaba to Marquette, Michigan by ambulance. She had compound fractures in her tibia and fibula (lower leg) and had surgery to install rods and hardware. After surgery, she developed pneumonia in both lungs and was put into a drug-induced coma in ICU. My sisters and I rushed up there from Madison and spent the next three days at the hospital.

While we there, a therapy dog named Gnarly and his handler, Maggie, gave us a visit. Gnarly and Maggie are Pet Partners! I have always been the handler with Sheba (dog) or Ben and Sir Huxley (cats). This is the first time I have been on the receiving end of a visit. After spending hours on the road and then hours in ICU, it was so welcome. Maggie was compassionate and caring and Gnarly was simply gnarly! I am so grateful for Pet Partners and Dogs On Call. I think I will always be a member even if I'm not a handler.

Erin & Huxley





Our Wonderful Visits

Jessie and I have had so many wonderful visits. All of our visits to the UW campus and Edgewood College are amazing. The students appreciate our visits so much; it really makes their day. Many of them collect the dogs' trading cards. One guy at the UW said he felt like a DOC groupie because he checks the calendars regularly and shows up whenever he sees there's a visit. The welcome-back visit to Allen Centennial Gardens was one of my favorites. There were 13 dog teams and 900 students. We were all busy the whole time. I heard one guy making a phone call near me, and he said to whomever he was calling, "You have to come down here; there are dogs everywhere."

A couple of visits to Meriter stand out. We spent time in the psychiatry day room. There were two teenagers, a boy and a girl, in the room. They both got big smiles on their faces when they saw Jessie. The boy's smile got even bigger when I asked if he wanted her to sit in his lap. He looked like he was in heaven when she rested her head on his arm. It was the same with the girl. She was really missing her dog and was really happy to see Jessie.

Another day, a nurse stopped us in the hall and said a patient had just had surgery that morning and was in a lot of pain. When she asked how he was feeling, he said he'd feel much better if he had his dogs with him. She asked me to stop in his room, and when I did, he was so happy to see her. He said he almost forgot his pain and petting her was exactly what he needed. His wife and daughters got their phones out and started snapping photos and came over to pet her, too. We always feel like the patients appreciate our visits, but this one was especially memorable.

Last week, a woman we visited said she was going to get emotional but that it wasn't that she was sad but rather than she was so happy to have Jessie visit. She went on to tell me all about her dogs from the time she was a child, showed me pictures of the cat she has now, and, with tears in her eyes, she said she hoped we knew the depth of good this does for people.

My Read With Me visits are also really special. I've been going to the Lighthouse Christian School, and the kids there are willing to work very hard at their reading when they can read to Jessie. Having a dog makes it so easy to communicate with little ones. When the organizer brought one little girl to me, I could barely hear her say her name. When the organizer left, though, she never stopped talking and just loved Jessie. Another little girl was afraid of dogs, so they brought her to me since Jessie is so little. It took her a while, but eventually she petted Jessie and, at the end, had Jessie in her lap.

This program has been so wonderful for me. I've been able to visit to many places and people I would never have had the opportunity to visit without being part of Dogs On Call.

Kay & Jessie





The Five Freedoms and Shirley

I had planned to write about a different topic, but life often gets in the way of our plans such as having to euthanize one of my pets yesterday. She was just shy of 15 years and that is very old for sheep. Her name was Shirley and she has a story to tell.



Shirley, May 2006

My wife and I first met Shirley in the spring of 2006 at a lambing event on a nearby farm. There must have been 100 sheep with scores of their babies, all available for petting and purchase. It was a working farm and the breeds were meant for human consumption.

Shirley's birthright was to become food for humans, but that was not her fate. Neither was it the fate of Bluebell or Pearl. We picked them to become our pets and assumed the role of guardians and stewards for the next one-and-one-half decades.

I vividly remember the next time I saw them, as I had finished working my midnight shift and was driving home along a country highway. It was May 13th, 2006...the day the farmer was going to deliver our lambs to their new home.

The highway passed by the sheep farm and a pick-up truck pulled just ahead of me with three lambs in the cargo bed. I followed them to my homestead and the barn which would be their home. They had grown from 15 pounds at the lambing event and ranged from 60-80 pounds upon arrival. The girls, as we called them, were unloaded and began exploring the stalls where they would sleep and the fenced paddock where they would graze.



Exploring her new home.

My wife and I were city folk who moved to the countryside. We had no experience keeping farm animals but had a wide range of pets over the years. Our approach to keeping sheep was based on a philosophy which I later learned was named [The Five Freedoms](#), established by the Farm Animal Welfare Council in Great Britain.





The Five Freedoms and Shirley - Continued

1. **Freedom from hunger and thirst**, by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor.
2. **Freedom from discomfort**, by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. **Freedom from pain, injury, or disease**, by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. **Freedom to express normal behavior**, by providing sufficient space and proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
5. **Freedom from fear and distress**, by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

They enjoyed their first year of life in a one-acre grassy paddock, which we later expanded to two acres. A large lean-to was built to shelter them from the elements, and I planted trees for shade. Mother nature offered a mature apple tree, which the girls appreciated in the fall. First thing each morning, Bluebell trotted to the tree and waited for me to arrive and pick some apples. Shirley and Pearl soon caught on and never missed a snack.



Labrador or lamb?

Charlie, our gentle yellow Lab, was a perfect companion for them. His coloration was more white than yellow, so he looked like a member of the herd, unless you looked more closely!

An additional grassy paddock was added providing another half-acre, and I built a portable lean-to for that space. One of my favorite memories is of a warm day when a gentle rain fell, and we all took shelter under the roof of the lean-to. The girls laid in a row to my left, I sat in the middle, and Charlie snuggled on my right.

I could have died then and there, happy and content.



Save room for Charlie and me!





The Five Freedoms and Shirley - Continued

On May 22, 2007 we added Fancy to our farm animal family. She was a beautiful 12-year old American Paint with a sweet disposition. Like Charlie, she proved to be a great companion for our sheep. When I checked on them in the evening, I often found all four sleeping in the same stall.

From the very beginning, we honored the Five Freedoms and gave them all a stress-free life with nutritious food and regular veterinary care. My daily mission was to feed the girls in the morning, let them out to their paddock, and clean the barn. At supper time, I brought them into the barn, fed them, and cleaned the paddock.

It never mattered how hot or cold it was, whether I was healthy or sick. I brought them into my life and had an obligation to their welfare. Besides, the hours I spent doing animal chores gave me time to think.

One of the first lessons I learned was how to get them to stop grazing and return to the barn. I could approach Fancy, put a halter on her and walk her to the barn, but how could I round up the sheep?

Ivan Pavlov answered that question for me. I installed a bell at the paddock gate and bought some cracked corn. When the girls were grazing nearby, I rang the bell, put corn in a feeding bowl and set it down on the near side of the gate. Then I opened the gate and stepped aside.

Shirley was the first to come trotting through the gate to eat the corn, soon followed by Bluebell and Pearl. In just five trials, they were reliably responding to the bell no matter how far away they were or if they were out of sight in their lean-to. Fancy soon caught on and would come running from 500 feet away.

That little bit of training paid dividends over the years when heavy thunderstorms rolled in and I needed to get the girls to the safety of the barn.

Shirley, as smart as she was, took it a step further. I stored corn in the tack room, and when I opened the door, it creaked. Before I knew it, every time I entered the tack room and turned around, Shirley was standing at the doorway waiting for her corn. Like the bell, the creaking sound had become a cue.

Life was good and a predictable morning routine developed. I gave the girls apples for a treat, and Pearl wagged her tail happily when I pulled an apple from my pocket. All three licked their lips in anticipation of the sweet treat.

Afterward, Shirley walked to a fence post in the barnyard and rubbed her side and neck against it. Bluebell went straight to a section of fence where she rubbed her butt, licking her lips the whole time. Pearl was happiest when I rubbed her velvet face and ears and then scratched her backside.

Things were not always peaceful, though. Over the years Shirley and Bluebell engaged in head-butting fights, like medieval knights on a jousting field. I never knew why they were fighting but the conflict never lasted long and they returned to grazing side-by-side.

The years flew by and, as the girls aged and began showing signs of arthritis, and I sometimes anticipated the end of days. By 2018, both of my Labradors were seniors, as were my sheep and horse. It seemed likely that they would be reaching the end of their lifespans in close succession.





The Five Freedoms and Shirley - Continued



Pearl and Shirley, 2015

Pearl was the first to falter and struggled to walk up the slight grade from the paddock to the barn. At times, it was nearly impossible for her to get up after lying down. Pearl began taking Meloxicam and as her pain subsided her mobility improved. Two years later, she remained spry and happy, despite her condition.

It surprised me when Shirley slipped and fell on the snow-covered ground one day and then again. One afternoon in January, I went to check on the girls and found Shirley had fallen onto her side and could not get up. Pearl and Bluebell meanwhile had no trouble navigating the slight incline or the paddocks. I wondered why Shirley was having such trouble.

The problem grew worse in the last few weeks, and then Shirley fell four times in one day. I made an emergency weekend call to the veterinarian two Saturdays ago and learned that Shirley had a significant heart murmur, and her arthritis had weakened her rear legs.

We put her on a heavy dosage of Meloxicam and a generous diet of grain and alfalfa. Shirley grew stronger and regained her steady mobility in a few days.

On February 8th, I spent the day at the 15h Annual Applied Animal Behavior conference and listened intently to presentations by Jennine Berger, DVM, DACVB, DACAW, CAWA. Dr. Berger serves as vice president, Rescue and Welfare at San Francisco SPCA.

She spoke extensively about animal welfare, citing the Five Freedoms as the foundation upon which animal welfare decisions should be made. Her next presentation was on making tough decisions about humane euthanasia.

As I listened, my thoughts returned to Shirley and tears welled in my eyes. I wondered if she would be the first of my pets to leave me. She was growing stronger, but there were several weeks of hard winter weather ahead and I was not sure whether there was time enough to make it to spring, when life would be easier for senior animals.

Monday the 10th arrived, and I suddenly found it harder to get Shirley to take her medicine. This persisted, and by Tuesday evening I felt growing unease. So long as she took her medicine, we had a fighting chance to keep her on her feet, engaging in normal social activities. But it was getting tougher.





The Five Freedoms and Shirley - Continued

Wednesday morning confirmed my dread as she appeared listless, standing with her head down, staring into the distance. She refused several offers of grain, alfalfa, and hay throughout the day. Shirley would not even eat the apple I held for her. There was nothing left of the feisty spirit and clever antics which I had witnessed for 15 years.

By late afternoon, my wife and I agreed it was time to fulfill our obligation to Shirley's welfare. She was no longer free from hunger and thirst, or discomfort. She was not free from pain or disease and could not express normal behavior. I had to conclude that she was distressed.

So were my wife and I.

We called the vet clinic and went to visit Shirley and the girls. The veterinarian and two technicians arrived at 3:00 PM, and we spent the last 30 minutes of Shirley's life comforting her. Shirley passed quickly and peacefully from our lives and we stroked and petted her.

I awoke this morning, and as I looked out the kitchen window, I saw a fresh blanket of snow, glistening in the sunshine. Beneath the window, a pretty Junco scratched the snow aside, pecking at the food I had put there yesterday. Appropriately, Juncos are also called Snow Bird.

He was the first bird to arrive at the feeder today. I thought, "The poor little guy is hungry, trying just to live another day." But a second bird arrived, and he was hungry, too.

The Cooper's hawk swooped down and grabbed the Junco in his talons, then flew a few feet away and pushed his prey deep into the snow. The hawk constantly turned his head, looking about cautiously for a minute or more. Perhaps he was aware of his own vulnerability while on the ground. Then he took flight, carrying his victim away.

It was a stark illustration that animals in the wild cannot enjoy the Five Freedoms. They express normal behaviors like searching for food, at their peril. They have no stewards or guardians. There is no one to care for their welfare and each day is a struggle to survive.

As pet owners, we take animals into our care. They are, in fact, captive. As such, we have a solemn duty to provide for them as best we can, from their first day to their last.

As Dr. Berger stated, "Always consider all Five Freedoms when assessing overall welfare, short term and long term." And so, I shall.

Goodbye, Shirley. We did our best for you until there was nothing more to do but grieve.

Photo credit and article by Dan

Farewell

<https://barksfromtheguild.com/2020/02/14/the-five-freedoms-and-shirley/>



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