September 2014



Letter From The President

Fall seems to be approaching by the weather forecast this week, but that does not mean that things will be slowing down for Dogs On Call. It just means we will be switching gears!

We were busy this summer with safety presentations, kids' camps, and summer R.E.A.D. programs. It is time to gear up for fall with our fall DreamBank event on October 4, the dorms will be requesting visits soon, and libraries and schools are getting their R.E.A.D. programs set for the fall and winter sessions. Along with all if this, we have our regular visits to Meriter, UW, and the VA along with many nursing homes and assisted living facilities to keep up with.

Jan will have our annual Badger Kennel Club event coming up, as well as visits to Gilda's Club.

As you can see, there is something for everyone! If you need help getting started, or finding a new place to visit with your Pet Partner, please contact a Board member.

Our annual Dogs On Call picnic will be held on Sunday, September 21. Please watch your email for a separate email with directions. I hope to see everyone there. Your Pet Partner is invited!

Laura, Kooper and Oliver

Important For All Members!

When you joined Pet Partners, you signed a volunteer agreement that says you agree to abide by the current Policies and Procedures. No matter when you signed the agreement, Pet Partners considers their members responsible for keeping track of any changes or updates to their Policies and Procedures. To do this, go to petpartners.org, click on the "Therapy Animal" tab, then "Volunteer Team Resources, " which requires a login. When you're on the page "Resources For Registered Teams," scroll down to "Policies" and you'll find the most recent "Policies and Procedures" document. Please be sure to open the link for the most up-to-date version – even though it says June 2013, the document itself is dated August 2013!

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Hospital News

Welcome to these new DOC hospital teams!

Meriter:

Lynn and Gypsy (Black Labrador Retriever) & Maggie (Goldendoodle) Janet and Sadie (Shepherd Mix)

UW Hospital:

Diane and Angel (German Shepherd)

You Don't Have to Visit Patients' Bedside at Hospitals!

We are trained how to work with different patient populations and are familiar with the benefits our dog visits bring. But sometimes, the DOC teams visit more hospital staff than patients – and that's OK!

Hospital teams often have seen a string of nurses come from behind the unit desk, each saying, "I really need some dog love today!" Whether it's the loss of a patient, difficult care of a patient, or just the general busy day, staff benefits from our visits, too.

As a new addition to therapy dog visits at UW Hospital, DOC teams there recently began visits for **staff-only** at the hospital's Emergency Department (ED). UW Hospital's ED is particularly busy, as the hospital is one of two Level I trauma centers in the state, serving adults and children. With two Med Flight helicopters constantly transporting the ill or injured, this ED sees the most critical injury, burn, and illness cases in addition to "regular" emergency patients. A short time ago, the ED set a state record – 195 cases in 24 hours. Last year, patient visits to the UW Hospital ED totaled over 47,000.

On a recent day, the department treated but couldn't save two patients, one being a young child. While all losses are hard, these two cases were especially difficult for the staff. "I wish the therapy dogs were coming today," said one staff member. Unfortunately, no teams were available that day. I felt bad that we couldn't help, especially since our name is "Dogs ON CALL"!

But when teams do stop by, the word spreads quickly throughout the ED. Available staff come out for a quick pet and some calming breaths. Soon, a call comes that another Med Flight is approaching. After one last pat on the head, they turn and quickly go back to get ready for a new patient.

Sometimes dogs (and people) don't feel comfortable visiting at patients' bedside in hospitals. But there are lots of other opportunities to cheer patients, families, and staff at both Meriter and UW Hospital – dayrooms [(physical rehab units, adult psych, and child & adolescent psych (Raider's favorite!)], families and friends in surgical waiting areas, hallways, and family lounges. For information on the rewarding hospital visits, email karenp@dogsoncall.org.

Karen and Raider

Columbia Correctional Institution News

The new therapy dog program at Columbia Correctional Institution (CCI) has been a success, both for the inmates, prison staff, and for DOC members. A recent "call for volunteers" to visit the facility netted 15 teams who are interested in participating in the program (in addition to the three teams currently visiting). CCI staff members are working on the logistics of expanding the program, having more visiting DOC teams and more inmates participating in the program. As you can imagine, there is high staff involvement, but I heard that there are a LOT of CCI staff hoping for dog visit duty! Plans will be finalized as soon as possible. Thanks to all the teams that responded!

For more information on this program, contact Karen at karenp@dogsoncall.org.

Karen and Raider





Who Controls The Windows In Your Car?

YOU control your windows from the driver's seat, not your dog! I was out running errands with my Lab one day. Five miles north to one stop, ten miles south to the drive-through bank. I could just as well have been doing a hospital visit with my dog. My black Lab was in the back seat. The window was barely cracked open, as I don't feel it is safe to let a dog stick its head out the window and have its eyes collecting gravel and rocks. But dogs do love that fresh air! Being in the seat right behind me, I really could not see my dog in either mirror. All of a sudden, my gut told me to look quick, so I did, only to find that Bo had stepped on the window control, rolled it down, stuck his head out the window to enjoy the fresh air. He shifted his weight on the window control, rolling the window back up and was choking himself. I still hate to think of what might have happened had I not looked.

Sue, Murphy & Nikki

Member Profiles

Jodi T. adopted Finch, a Great Dane, from the Green County Humane Society when he was ten weeks old. Now Finch is 2-1/2 years old and shares the household with Zuri, also a Great Dane, and three cats. Jodi, Finch, and Zuri are all new DOC members and are just getting started. Plans are to visit the Ronald McDonald House (for Finch) and the R.E.A.D. program (for Zuri). Outside interests for Jodi are gardening, biking, and training for summer triathlons.



Kathy W. lives in Lodi with her Pet Partner, Gypsy, a 4-1/2-year-old Catahoula/ Cattle Dog mix, and Rose, a nine-year-old Collie and "Lassie look-alike." Kathy was looking for a dog to replace another Collie, Lucky. Even though Gypsy is far from a Collie, she knew better and chose Kathy through Affinity Rescue in Pardeeville. Kathy says Gypsy "has become the best dog I have ever owned." They visit at Our House Assisted Living in Lodi, the Central Wisconsin Center, and the B6 unit the VA Hospital (a favorite of Gypsy's). Kathy's other interests are reading, music, holistic health practices (such as Reiki and acupressure), and enjoying the beautiful Wisconsin rural area she lives in.

Pat W. and six-year-old Standard Poodle, Buttons, live in Sun Prairie. Buttons came from Oakhill Kennels in Portage. Pat and Buttons visit and entertain residents at Kindred Hearts Assisted Living in Sun Prairie and Pat helps with evaluations. Pat also enjoys sewing, knitting, and traveling.

Megan M. adopted Monty, a Pembroke Welsh Corgi, from Lakeshore Pembroke Welsh Corgi Rescue in St. Louis, MO. When he was adopted at two years old, Monty had been a stud dog in a puppy mill that was closed down. Monty is now 10 years old and has blossomed from a shut-down dog into a sociable companion who loves to meet new friends. He meets many of those friends at the special events he and Megan attend; Megan plans for them to participate in the R.E.A.D. program, too. Also at Megan's home is a two-year-old Corgi named Cricket, and four Domestic Short Hair cats: Greyson (14 years old), Dewey (16 years old), Mootsie (12 years old), and Alex (6 years old). Other than attending to her animals, Megan enjoys website and graphic design, drawing, and photography.



Mary W. lives in Deerfield with Sully, a five-year-old Chinese Crested Powder Puff. Sully came from Shelter From the Storm rescue group and joins a household with six other dogs, two rabbits, two rats, one hedgehog, two parakeets, seven hens, one rooster, two goats, and "an assortment of reptiles." Mary and Sully visit at the Ronald McDonald House. As for other activities, Mary says, "Obviously, I spend a lot of time taking care of animals," but she also finds time for reading, listening to music, watching movies, and spending time with her grandsons.

Karen S. has two Pet Partners. Shaka, a 10-year-old Akita mix, was a rescue from North Carolina. Zombie, a nine-year-old Dutch Shepherd was from a breeder and "too nice to be a police dog." Both dogs are familiar sights at many DOC activities, including dog safety events, UW dorm visits, visits to Meriter, the VA, and UW Hospitals, and participating in the R.E.A.D. program at the Fitchburg Library. Karen and the dogs also participate in agility and flyball; Karen is also a part-time instructor at Dogs Welcome.

Ginny W. is a Pet Partner with Amy, a nine-year-old West Highland White Terrier. Ginny previously owned Amy's grandmother and then got Amy. They visit at the Oakwood memory care unit.

Above And Beyond

A special thank you to Deb and her great English Springer Spaniel, Swing. While Gina and I were visiting the Community Living Center at the VA Hospital with Button and Sacajawea, we met a really nice man who loved dogs and told us about his Springer who he had lost a short time ago. I relayed this info to Deb, who is also a VA volunteer, and Deb made a point to visit this man so he could meet Swing before he left the hospital. Thanks, Deb, for doing extra to make one of our veterans just a little happier that day!

Artie, Sacajawea and Henry

Dog Bite Prevention Programs

Dogs On Call members presented 14 Dog Bite Prevention program so far this summer, speaking to almost 400 kids, ages 4 - 12. We presented to Dane County Humane Society's Camp PawPrint for our 2nd year, and for about our 10th year, Safety Town organized by the Madison Fire Department. We presented for the 1st year at the Dane County Fair. Other locations include Chavez Elementary School, Orchard Ridge Elementary, Kennedy Elementary, and First Unitarian Church.

The program was originally aimed at what to do if a strange dog approaches you, but we are learning that most of the bites come from a dog the child knows, and usually because the child did not know how to behave properly around a dog. We are now including information on being safe and appropriate around dogs you know, such as not using your dog as a stool or pillow, learning about a dog's body language, and paying attention to what a growl means.

Thanks to all the DOC members and their wonderful dogs for making these presentations successful!

Todd & Izzie, Dan & Gandhi, Faye & Buddha, Mary & Sully, Lynn & Gypsy, Julie & Moses, Gina & Button, Karen & Zombie, Marie & Dora, Barb & Murray, Ginny & Amy, Jodi & Zuri, Kay & Daisy, Pat & Buttons, Lorelie & Logan, Megan &

& Zora.

Artie, Sacajawea and Henry

Dog Safety—Why Do We Do This?

Monte, Pat & Wilson, Liz & Charlotte, Artie & Sacajawea, and Barb

Yesterday, I was at friends' house with my Golden Retriever puppy (4 months old) and she was being her jumpy self; she loves kids. When she jumped up on their 3 year old, and he started to move around to get away (which just made puppy more excited), they reminded him "be a rock." He hit the ground, curled up in a ball and puppy left him alone! He did it again when she jumped, same result. Turns out their older son went to Safety Town last summer, came home and showed the other kids what he learned. So fun to see that it really works, and that the kids remember the lesson!!

So there is my testimonial for Safety Town!

Barbara and Zora

Safety Saturday

Many, many thanks to our wonderful DOC members who volunteered for Safety Saturday on June 14th, 2014. The Madison Capitol Square was literally filled with thousands of people who looked at displays and took part in the numerous safety demonstrations. Sponsored by the City of Madison Fire Department, booths were located in the arms of the Capitol Square crossroads and featured a variety of safety equipment, life-saving demonstrations, and, of course, Dogs On Call.

All of our dogs were incredible as fire alarms and sirens were constantly going off, fire engines and ambulances were moving past the teams throughout the morning, and our pups encountered wheel chairs, walkers, strollers, backpacks, and food hanging so close to the dogs it was only a lick away. If you thought the Pet Partner evaluation was distracting, that is nothing compared to what goes on at Safety Saturday.

Meriter Hospital again allowed DOC the use of a portion of their booth and, while Meriter volunteers were demonstrating Heimlich maneuvers, Dogs On Call teams were greeting crowds of all ages. Our teams explained to the visiting kids how they should always ask to pet a dog first and then pet after the owner has said okay. After the quick lesson, kids were able to pet all the canine Pet Partners and then received the dog's baseball card or picture.

The point of Safety Saturday is to educate parents, children, and the public in general on ways to make safe decisions about such things as wearing bike helmets, using smoke alarms, and being safe around dogs. As the Farmers Market was also occurring during Safety Saturday, there were plenty of people around to see the booths and our teams.

Many thanks to our wonderful teams who volunteered: Lance and Matilda, Michelle and Kenny, Denise and Chloe, Nancy and Eva, Karen and Zombie, Julie and Moses, Jeff and Bella, Mary and Sully, Linda and Luna, Kay and Daisy, Sue and Molly, Emma and Sophie, Donna and Izzy.



More Photos from Safety Saturday



Tips For Visiting

If you remember from your Pet Partners class, the instructors always tell potential members that a Pet Partners team cannot enter an isolation room. Yes, the human part of the team can gown up and enter a room, but what about our animal partners? In the photo, Laura and Karen attempt to show the impossibility of "gowning up" Laura's dog, Kooper. This always brings lots of laughs from the class as poor Kooper endures the gowning-up process, but the demonstration stays with the participants when they become Pet Partners and visit at hospitals. Hopefully, those of you who are already DOC members and didn't see this demo (it was introduced this year,) will also remember to never visit patients in isolation rooms, as your Pet Partner can pick-up contaminants in the room and transfer them to other patients or you.

Jan and Ryder



Daisy's Treats

A smile...as we exit the CLC (at the VA Hospital) and have passed through all the doors to the entry area across from the chapel, there is a greeting desk and, nearby, a closed window that leads to an office. In the past, a very kind employee who worked in that office thought the dogs should have a treat. She had a bag of aromatic Beggin' Strips in her cupboard above her desk. When she would see Daisy coming, she would open her window and be ready to share a treat. My input was she could share after we were done working and on the way out of the building. She felt special sharing and dear Miss Daisy would not miss any form of food. However, the lady now works in a different location and not in that area. Daisy has not forgotten. As we leave CLC and get to that window, she sits down and looks at the window, of course hoping a treat will once again fall out for her. I don't think so, Daisy!

Kay and Daisy

Evaluators Practicum

Recently, our own Lynn M.(a Pet Partners Team Evaluator Instructor), conducted an evaluator's practicum for potential new Pet Partners evaluators. Dogs On Call hosted the event in Madison and assisted Lynn with scenarios Pet Partners evaluators might experience during an evaluation. DOC member and new evaluator, Karen, practices with Laura and her kitty, Oliver, during a practice evaluation involving a cat. To become an evaluator, you must be a Pet Partners member for at least two years and have at least 50 hours volunteer experience. Then, a potential evaluator completes an application, and, if approved, completes the on-line course and then completes the evaluator practicum. Practicums are offered throughout the U.S., but occur on a limited basis. The last practicum in Madison was four years ago. Most local evaluators watch numerous DOC evaluations and then become scribes before actually doing a 'hands on' evaluation. If you are interested in becoming an evaluator, please see the qualification guide at the Pet Partners web site.

Jan and Ryder





Gypsy At The Fair

This is not so much a tip as a story about what we should all know by now, and certainly always remember - our dog comes first.

The Dane County Fair committee invited us to do our Dog Bite Prevention program, and one of our volunteers was new member, Lynn, and her wonderful Black Lab, Gypsy. Lynn and Gypsy had attended other presentations and did a great job, but, for some reason, Gypsy could not settle down that day. Lynn did all that she could to help Gypsy - water, taking her out, then back in, but poor Gypsy could not settle. Then Lynn discovered the problem - there were pheasants in the room next to us.....and Gypsy hunts! Poor Gypsy!

As much as Lynn wanted to stay, she did what was best for her animal and left. She told us later that she hated to leave, but remembered what she was taught in class - you are your dog's best advocate, your dog comes first! Good for you, Lynn.

Artie, Sacajawea and Henry

This Is Why We Do This

Gina and Button were visiting the Acute Care Unit at the VA Hospital. When entering the unit, one of the nurses asked Gina if she could go into a room, that the veteran did not want to come out. Gina explained that usually this unit is a common room visit, but if the nurse would stay in the room with her and Button, she would be glad to go in, to just come and get her when the patient was ready.

Gina proceeded to the area where we usually visit, and, in a while, a veteran came and sat down next to her and Button, talking about dogs he had and petting Button. Later, another veteran, using a walker, slowly came down the hallway to the visiting area, stayed for a little bit, then left.

When Gina was leaving, she saw the nurse and said that she was glad the veteran finally decided to leave his room and make his way to the visiting area. The nurse informed Gina that it was not the man with the walker that she had been referring to, it was the man who had been sitting right next to Gina and Button all the time! He had not eaten or been out of his room for two days, but got up, showered, and brushed his teeth so he could go out to see the dog! One of our "This Is Why We Do This" moments.

It always amazes us how just a short time with one of our animals can make such a difference. Do you have a This Is Why I Do This Moment that you would like to share with us? We would love to hear them!

Artie, Sacajawea and Henry

Welcome New Members

Welcome to Dogs On Call, Inc.

Renate & Maggie - Goldendoodle
Signe & Kyla - Irish Water Spaniel
Lori & Mickey - German Shorthair
Debra & Dollar - Labrador Retriever
Gretchen & Bode - Goldendoodle
Diane & Angel - German Shepherd
Stephanie & Norman - Labrador Retriever
Dana & Pierre - Toy Poodle
MJ & Harley - Golden Retriever
Scott & Sazzy - Chocolate Lab
Nancy & Buddy - Golden Retriever
Julie - without a dog
Tracy & Tiberius - Great Pyrenees



Gypsy's Visit

I am so proud of Gypsy and our visits to Central Wisconsin Center and would like to share some of our experiences there. We have been visiting since January of this year, when we went to Murphy Hall for the first time. Staff are so helpful and welcoming, and have built a round table for Gypsy (and another Pet Partners team who visits as well on alternate weeks) to jump up on, so the residents, who are in wheelchairs and carts, can see her. She now hops up on the table without prompting, after greeting each person of "her" circle and then the staff bring residents up to her one by one. She is a cattle dog, and thrives on eye contact, which is sometimes difficult for the residents to give her, but manages to bring a smile or even a glance often. For the population we are visiting, this is a BIG accomplishment. Gypsy is fearless of strange noises, respirators, and apparatus, and seems to be able to see the spirit inside. We have added another unit to our visits there now, which serves the community by evaluating young people for wheelchairs, meds, therapy, etc. This group is a lot more interactive, and Gypsy is now stealing the show with kids who are able to respond more. We recently sat on the floor with a five year old with cerebral palsy who could not talk but could communicate. We went through "eyes, ears, nose and tail"---which brought a laugh when C. tried to find HIS tail. Central Wisconsin Center is a challenging but safe and fun place to visit and would love more Pet Partners. If any other teams are considering it, Gypsy and I give a two thumbs/toes up.

Kathy and Gypsy

Jimmy At The Library

About a year ago my dog, Jimmy, and I were accepted as both a Pet Partners Therapy Animal Team and a R.E.A.D. team. Jimmy is very calm and friendly around children, so I was eager to begin scheduling library visits. Not surprisingly, I quickly learned he enjoyed the experience. A recent visit confirmed the positive impact of these visits. A mother sat down with her two young children next to Jimmy and me. The boy read first, propping the book up so only he could see it, reading quietly. He had some difficulties. Next, his sister read, and she also had some difficulties. The boy was gently petting Jimmy while his sister read. Then the boy said he was going to read another book. This time he read with the book flat on the floor, while petting Jimmy. His reading was improving and I noticed the confidence in his voice growing. His sister asked to read another book. She, too, read with more confidence. After the session ended they both pleaded with their mother to come back to read more to Jimmy! Both children were beaming with pride after each reading two books and it was a wonderful experience to witness!

Jean and Jimmy

Dogs On Call Dress Code

There have been recent questions about the Dogs On Call dress code. While fall is approaching and the time for wearing shorts may be coming to an end, the Board feels we need to clear up any summer dress code questions at this time.

It is OK for both men and women to wear shorts to events and on visits if the facilities allow them. Just remember, your shorts must be "walking length." NO "short" shorts or athletic shorts are ever allowed. Blue jeans are also not allowed in the DOC dress code, however, you can wear jeans that are other colors. Please dress business casual on all visits.

Canine Early Warning Signs

During my police career, I frequently dealt with people in crisis, that bore uncommon loads of stress, and reached their tipping point. They were normal folks who simply reached the limit of their ability to act rationally. Everyone has a threshold, and they reached theirs.

Trying desperately to cope with their ordeal, something triggered their behavior. Usually it was a combination of events that, had they occurred singularly, they could have coped with. The result was frustration, inability to communicate their feelings, and an outburst of aggressive behavior.

They were not "aggressive" people and their behavior wasn't abnormal. Rather, they acted out of proportion to their circumstance because they lacked coping skills.

The same thing happens to dogs, and it is incumbent on all of us who interact with dogs to learn to recognize the signs of a dog pushed to its limit.

I sometimes work with dog owners whose beloved pet growled at, lunged, snapped, or bit someone. They are shocked and question why their dog acted that way "for no reason." What they didn't realize was there actually was a reason.

Dogs don't bite out of the blue. Like humans, dogs have emotions and 90% of bites are inflicted by fearful dogs. They communicated their concerns to the humans in their proximity, but nobody responded to them.

When a dog in a scary situation tells its owner but is ignored, the dog must escalate to more obvious expressions. The sequence may be subtle and is based in canine body language. Dogs and humans speak different languages and nobody taught us how to understand one another.

I never knew about canine communication until working in a dog daycare. Initially, I only understood the end of the process: growls, lunges, air snaps, and bites. It was like reading a sentence and only grasping the meaning of the exclamation point. I found myself reacting, wondering what I missed.

My co-worker was good at comprehending the language of dogs and intervened before things turned violent, but was unable to tell me what she saw. I undertook a serious study of canine communication and was then able to participate in conversations with dogs.

My path to understanding began by attending a presentation on the topic of canine body language by Sarah Kalnajs, a local certified trainer and behaviorist. I studied her DVD ("The Language of Dogs") and Brenda Aloff's book ("Canine Body Language: A Photographic Guide") repeatedly until the concepts were clear to me.

While working five years in a dog daycare, I used a video camera to record hundreds of canine interactions. At night, I studied each recording frame-by-frame, looking for individual body language signals and watching them in clusters. Returning to work, I set a goal of identifying a single body language behavior as many times as possible each day. One day I looked for play bows, on the next day it may be lip licking, or soft eyes, or any number of other signals.

I learned to recognize when dogs felt stressed, tense, frustrated, frightened, or compelled to act out. Finally, I understood what was happening and intervened to avert the growls, lunges, air snaps, and bites. I suppose the dogs felt relieved I understood what they were telling me.

Most dog bites to humans occur because the person does something the dog perceives as threatening, and the person continues to engage in the behavior in spite of warnings. Early stress signs include looking away, moving away, lifting a paw, lip licking, closing the mouth, staring with a "whale eye," freezing in place, and growling.

What often follows is a snap in the air or a bite. The dog tries desperately to NOT bite the person. Adult dogs have 42 teeth perfectly designed to rip flesh from and to crush bones, yet they seldom do so. That is bite inhibition.

Canine Early Warning Signs—Continued

We hear about dogs mauling toddlers, but, according to Dr. Ian Dunbar, 99% of bites are no worse than a scratch. As a veterinarian, trainer, and founder of Association of Professional Dog Trainers, he describes such bites as lunging with no contact, or teeth touching the skin without causing damage. Of those dogs that actively display warning signs, only 15% actually bite.

Dogs account for about 15-20 human fatalities annually.³ About half the victims are children. By contrast, in 2011, there were 3.7 million child abuse cases in the United States, resulting in 1,750 deaths.⁴ Clearly the most dangerous animal in the home is not the family dog, or the dog living next door.

So how dangerous are dogs? According to researcher J. Bradley, people are at greater risk from "front-porch steps, kitchen utensils, five-gallon water buckets, bathtubs, strollers, stoves, lamp cords, coffee-table corners, Christmas trees, balloons, or bedroom slippers." In "Aggressive Behavior in Dogs," author James O'Heare puts things in sharp perspective on page 17, describing numerous things more harmful to children and adults than dogs.

Fear is the cause of much canine aggression, as experts such as Dr. Sophia Yin point out.⁶ To prevent dog bites pay attention to the dog's early stress signals. If the dog displays stress or fear, identify the stressor in the environment and either remove the stressor or remove your dog from it. When a dog feels safe and calm, there is less reason for aggressive behavior to develop. Dogs are amazingly safe animals and bites are nearly always preventable. It is not all about the dog; we must do our part as well.

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

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

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