

# Dogs On Call Inc.

December 2014

## Letter From The President

As the calendar year draws to a close, I look back at all that Dogs On Call members have done in 2014 and I continue to be amazed at our members. DOC continues to add new facilities to places that we visit, but somehow we still are able to visit the places that we have been visiting since the start. Could we use more visits at most facilities? SURE! Everyone loves to see our Pet Partners everywhere we visit, they bring such joy where ever they go. If you are looking to add a few visits each month to your current schedule, contact a Board member and we will help get you started at a facility that you will enjoy.

Spend some time this winter curled up on the couch with your furry friend, thank them for the time they put in working. Give them a hug from me, the work they do is fantastic and touches so many lives in ways we may never fully understand.

Have a Merry Christmas—see you in the New Year,

*Laura, Kooper and Oliver*

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## 40 Years

**Congratulations!** Laurie, Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator, celebrated a milestone this year!

Laurie started her employment at Meriter (Madison General Hospital) on October 17, 1974.





## Hospital News

Welcome new teams:

Meriter Hospital:

Jeff and Mary with Bella and Sully  
Scott and Sazzy

UW Hospital:

Lynn and Gypsy

We're suffering from "aging dog syndrome" at the hospitals. So glad to have some new, (relatively) young pups join us in the last few months! But we always need more teams. There are lots of opportunities for dayroom and in-room visits at both hospitals, to cheer bored, lonely patients as well as friends, family, and staff. Flexible schedules offered, but we want a commitment of at least once-a-month visits (but more are always appreciated). Think about it for your 2015 resolution!

Contact Karen at [karenp@dogsoncall.org](mailto:karenp@dogsoncall.org) for more information.

***Karen and Raider***

## Columbia Correctional Institution News

The pilot program has been very successful and well received at Columbia Correctional Institution. We've gotten the green light to expand visits to the General Population units, which means more teams are needed.

Two or three teams visit at a time in the prison chapel. There are plenty of guards in attendance as well as other staff, but the visits are so relaxed and respectful that there is little difference from a hospital or dorm visit – except that the men haven't felt soft dog fur in years, sometimes decades. They are so happy for their brief visit and their calmer state has farther-reaching effects, benefitting their interaction with the staff and other inmates.

Yes, the facility is a substantial drive from Madison, just off I-39 in Portage. Visits are just once a month, on a weekday afternoon (which I know will preclude you workin' folks). A predictable team rating is fine, but you can't be shy about chatting. No wallflowers!

If you're interested, I'll be glad to tell you more about our visits. Email me at [karenp@dogsoncall.org](mailto:karenp@dogsoncall.org)

***Karen and Raider***

## Badger Kennel Club – Dog Fair

Once again, Dogs On Call was at the Dog Fair at the Alliant Center the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November. This is such a treat for our group as everyone who visits our booth is so interested in our therapy dogs and what we do to help people in our area. At the booth we provide information about our local group (DOC) and the national group, Pet Partners. We also spoke to booth visitors about R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs.) The Dog Fair attracts all kinds of dog lovers and they have a lot to see while they are there:

demonstrations by the police department canine unit, demonstrations of agility, flyball, obedience, plus almost every breed is represented. People are able to check out their favorite breed plus look at unusual breeds while also visiting some of the rescue group booths. Many of us also got some great deals at some of the vendors. I personally purchased a new crate, numerous t-shirts and sweatshirts – got some of my holiday shopping finished early! Many, many thanks to our dedicated volunteers that day: Pat and Wallace, Jeff and Bella, Mary and Sully, Amy and Rooster, Todd and Izzie, Liz and Charlotte, Gina and Button, Artie and Sach, Kay and Daisy, Nancy and Eva, Scott and Sazzy, Lance and Matilda, Bonnie, Laura, and myself. Please check out our teams in the pictures in this newsletter.

### *Jan and Ryder*



## YAYABA and the Aging Therapy Animal

When we teach the Pet Partners classes to potential handlers, one of the main concepts we teach is YAYABA – You Are Your Animal’s Best Advocate. This concept is important for new handlers to learn to protect their animal in all situations and to recognize when their animal may be stressed about a situation. New handlers need to recognize when their dog is not comfortable and is showing stress signs. Stress is exhibited in clusters of signs such as: panting, pacing, lip-licking, blinking, and shedding, to name just a few. (See the Pet Partners Handler Student Guide article, “Calming Signals” for more information.)

Experienced handlers may become lax in recognizing when their animal is no longer happy doing therapy animal work. Is your animal less trusting than he once was? Is he wary of new situations when, previously, someplace new was an exciting adventure? Does he still invite interaction with people? Is he distracted when visiting?

I know from personal experience that my dog no longer is interested doing bedside visits in the hospital. He is much more interested in looking out the window. I realize it’s time to stop. But in the hospital, there are other options, such as dayroom visits, which he is happy with (for the moment). His tail is still wagging when I get out his vest and say, “Do you want to go visit?” But I’ll be watching him. YAYABA.

It’s a hard thing to see your Pet Partner aging and realize he may no longer be happy doing therapy dog visits. Before stopping completely, you might try less active facilities or situations that don’t involve too much walking. Old dogs get tired!

You also need to examine if you are doing these therapy visits for your own gratification (which we all do, to a point) and ignoring the feelings and well-being of your animal. YAYABA.

On the Pet Partners website, you’ll find a free webinar entitled, “Renew or Retire,” presented by Patricia Tirrell. Watch this 26-minute presentation to learn about things to consider and the story of Tirrell’s therapy dogs – one blind Beagle that visited comfortably for years and one Portuguese Water Dog that she retired when the dog was just three years old.

I know my 11-1/2-year-old dog is quickly approaching the end of his therapy dog career. The transition will be hard for me, but it’s my responsibility to make it easy and pleasant for him. YAYABA.

*Karen and Raider*

**Badger Kennel  
Club  
2014**



## Scott and Sky



From Meriter Hospital's Volunteer Newsletter, "Newsline" Issue 34:

Volunteer Locker Room Question of the Month—"Tell us about your Volunteer experience today...."

I have been volunteering with my therapy dog "Sky" at Meriter for the past 4 years. It has been one of the most enjoyable and moving experiences of my life. We enjoy visiting all areas of the hospital, but one of the favorite places for us to visit is the patients in the Adult Psych unit. Not only are patients exceptionally welcoming of us, but the staff has been even more so. They see the difference that a warm, furry, loving dog can make in the attitude of the patients. It is often a challenge getting past the nurses to visit the patients. :>) I can take very little credit for the smiles or the tears of joy that are elicited when Sky works his "magic." Nearly every time we visit, one of the patients will break down while hugging and stroking Sky's amazingly soft fur. He brings tears of joy to people that often times have very little to be happy about. He is a "leaner," and has a way of snuggling in and making people feel like they are the most loved and important thing in the room. Sky doesn't care what one's politics are, or the color of your skin, or how much money you have, or what troubles you may have had in the past. He just wants to make everyone that he comes in contact with feel good. I honestly believe that Sky has never met a stranger. Each person that he meets he treats as though he is their best, long lost friend. I am the luckiest man on earth to have such a wonderful creature to share my life with. He has the most kind and loving soul of any living creature that I've ever met. He makes this volunteer job so easy. I simply walk around with a leash in my hand and Sky does all the work. I will continue to do patient visits with Sky until he shows me that he no longer has the ability or will to do so. At 10 years old, Sky will hopefully be a part of the Meriter Pet Partners volunteer team for some time to come.

## Member Profiles



Aleah K. visits with Kooper, an eight-year-old Sheltie, and Oliver, a four-year-old Siamese cat. Aleah does most of her Dogs On Call visits on the UW-Madison campus since she is a student there. Kooper and Oliver live in Baraboo with Aleah's mom and make the trek to Madison to see their adoring fans. Aleah also finds time for swimming, painting, photography, and "lots of art/design stuff in general."

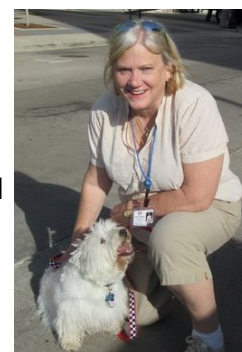


Tiana K. also visits with Kooper (see Aleah K.'s profile, above), taking him to various Dogs On Call events. That is, when she's not busy with swim team, band, and choir at her school in Baraboo. Tiana also mentions other cats Franklin and Aysia (in addition to Oliver), and a rabbit named Cornelius.



Diane P. is a fairly new member with Angel, an eight-year-old German Shepherd. Angel is a retired breeding female who came to live with Diane a little over two years ago. Diane and Angel are already quite experienced, as they are a Pet Pals team at the American Family Children's Hospital. Now, they conveniently walk down the hall from that facility to visit at the UW Hospital for Dogs On Call. Diane also enjoys gardening and snowshoeing – something for each season!

Denise S. was favorably impressed with what she learned at the Dogs On Call booth at the Women's Expo and thought she'd give it a try with Chloe, her eight-year-old West Highland White Terrier. Chloe shares Denise's attention with Teddy, a thirteen-year-old Aussie. Aside from attending to two busy dogs, Denise enjoys travel, photography, and reading.

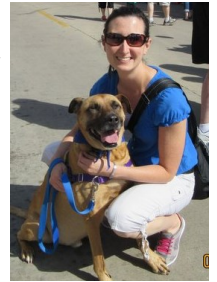


Catherine I. and Chance, her nine-year-old Doberman, were a therapy team in LaCrosse before they came to Madison. They are continuing their career with Dogs On Call, visiting the Ronald McDonald House and Meadowridge Library. Catherine also enjoys jogging and reading.

## Member Profiles-continued

Jen L. adopted seven-year-old Honey, a Yellow Lab, when she was a six-month-old puppy. A person was moving that couldn't take the puppy along, so Jen snapped her up. Additional family members are Bucky and Mama, two barn cats. Jen and Honey participate in the R.E.A.D. program at the DeForest Public Library and visit at the Meadows of Fall River Assisted Living Facility. Traveling, sports, reading, and long walks with Honey are Jen's spare-time activities.

Julie M. found Moses, a six-year-old Shepherd/Lab mix, at the Dane County Humane Society in 2012. His life turned around then, as he soon became a therapy dog with Dogs On Call, visiting at Wynwood Assisted Living and St. Mary's Care Center. Julie also finds time for lots of outdoor activities – running, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing – and visiting Door County.

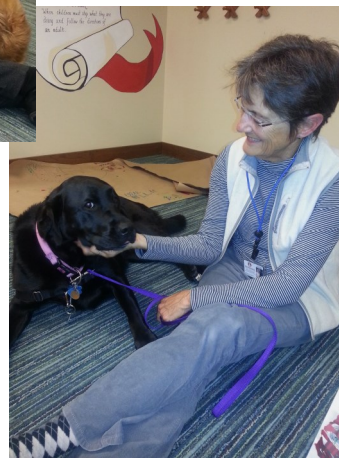


***Karen and Raider***

## New Teams Love Gilda's Club

Gilda's Club is a great place to start visiting and experiencing all the fun you can have with your Pet Partner. A wonderful organization, Gilda's opens their doors to Dogs On Call about 4 or 5 times each year. Usually the teams visit with the children of Gilda's Club members and the kids love petting our dogs. Our most recent Gilda's visit was not only fun for the kids but staff members and family joined in for the petting. The children colored pages for our members and even made dog biscuits. Many thanks to Dogs On Call volunteers: Scott and Sazzy, Amy and Rooster, Ellen and Zoey, Gina and Bella.

***Jan and Ryder***





## Pet Emergencies

Pet owners are emotionally invested in their non-human family members and the nightmare of a serious injury may be their worst fear. Mine came true July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. It was 41 days after my wife and I adopted Buddha.

He was a 16-month-old Labrador whom we rescued from a pitiful start in life, to give him a great new start. When he was struck by a car, our desperate goal was to save his life. Fortunately we prepared in advance.

If you have not planned ahead for a pet emergency, then I hope you will be inspired by this story, for it was only due to pre-planning that we were able to save Buddha.

Our preparation for pet emergencies began with a “First Aid for Pets” class, a one-day session offered by Howard M. Schwartz. My wife and I learned about basic first aid, practiced simple procedures, and went home with a helpful book.

Another great source was a “Pet Emergency Care” pamphlet, provided with compliments of Country View Veterinary Service. It offers simple but vital information to help you deal with your pet emergencies.

With these resources, I drew a list of supplies and went to a local pharmacy, stocking up on simple items. Back home, I put the supplies in two emergency first aid kits which I stored in the house and in the barn.

When Buddha came limping back to the house with a compound fracture of the right rear leg, I was able to take a first aid kit directly to him. Then I stabilized his condition and prepared to convey him to an emergency pet hospital.

As a former EMT, I understood the need to first stabilize the patient, and then transport (him) to a hospital. If you rush to toss an injured pet into your car and race to a treatment facility, you may end up conveying a corpse. Plan ahead.

Since I planned ahead, we knew where to go and remembered to call in advance, so the staff knew what they would deal with in 20 minutes. When we arrived, Buddha’s blood pressure had dropped to 71/19, but he was stable. The staff was ready and took over.

Without preparation, I think Buddha would have bled to death or died of shock. More than five years later, he is a happy dog with robust health and easily outruns our younger Labrador when they romp and play.

## Pet Emergencies-continued

Since then I found additional pet first aid resources such as American Red Cross, which sells a “Dog First Aid” book including a DVD. Another great help with cat and dog first aid is the “Pet First Aid” application for smart phones from Red Cross.org.

Over the years, we’ve had several dogs, sheep, and a horse. They all suffered injuries. There is no pet ambulance service, so owners must take the initiative. Preparing ahead enabled us to treat minor injuries and stabilize our pets for serious injuries requiring veterinary care.

Here are some resources to start preparing for the safety of your beloved pets, and for your own peace of mind:

### **First Aid for Pets**

Howard M. Schwartz

[HowardSchwartz@wi.rr.com](mailto:HowardSchwartz@wi.rr.com)

### **Dog First Aid**

American Red Cross

[www.RedCross.org](http://www.RedCross.org)

### **Your Veterinary Clinic**

Ask your veterinarian whether 24-hour emergency service is available. If your veterinarian does not offer that service, ask for a recommendation. Very likely they are prepared to refer you to a qualified professional in an emergency.

Several emergency pet hospitals exist in Dane County. They are not cheap since they provide a very high level of care around the clock. We spent \$200 adopting Buddha, and \$2,500 to save his life. It was worth every penny to preserve a member of our family.

### ***Dan and Buddha***

## This Is Why We Do This

Colleen and I visit at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital about four times a month. Yesterday, when we were on our way to work in adult rehab, we passed by the Emergency Room on our way upstairs. There was a woman outside the ER on her phone obviously under a lot of stress and looked like she had been crying. Colleen walked over to her and gently touched her hand, without any prompting from me. The woman looked down and smiled and then she gave me a grateful smile as well. It just amazes me how dogs seem to sense when someone needs some comfort.

### ***Pat and Colleen***

## Holiday Safety Tips for Pets

As the holiday season approaches, our pets can get into a lot of trouble. There's the tree. Besides using it as a toilet, dogs really do like to grab a branch and pull. Cats think it's a climbing post. The best thing is to put your tree in a room where the pets can't go. Of course, that's not always an option, so try to put it in a corner blocked off from the pets. Place aluminum foil or other kind of noise makers on the bottom branches. (Plastic bottles filled with coins or any kind of rattle makers work well, too.) Don't use tinsel – at all. If your pet eats it, that's a potential intestinal block. Ornaments shouldn't be on the lower branches, either. Besides being a choking hazard and another intestinal blockage, broken ornaments can injure paws or mouths. Also, avoid tree lights on the lower parts of the branches. Your furry buddies can get tangled in the lights and either cause a fire or get shocked if they chew on a wire. While warning you about decorations, fresh ones such as popcorn or cranberry strings really are an invitation to take a nibble and with that nibble, the whole tree can fall.

Besides the tree, holly, mistletoe, and poinsettia plants are poisonous to dogs and cats. If you use these plants, put them where your pet can't get to them. Also, be watchful of the seeds from these plants as they are as poisonous as the plants. As for food – we all know what happens when our pets overindulge: vomiting and diarrhea are just the mild ones. Your animals could end up in the emergency pet hospital if they get too many fatty foods such as turkey skins or gravy. Don't forget that turkey comes with bones, so watch that those scrap bones get into a trash can that can't be opened by your dog or cat. Onions or even onion powder are very toxic and if ingested can lead to anemia. Grapes and raisins cause kidney failure (which means keep the wine out of their reach, too.) We all know the dangers of chocolate, but coffee is also very dangerous.

We all want to celebrate the season with our furry friends, but the best advice is to keep them safe and not over indulge their tummies. A new toy, tennis ball, or bed is the best gift you can give to your four-legged family members. Perhaps a gift in their name to a shelter or rescue would be a great holiday gift for other pets in need, without endangering your own.

Have a safe holiday!

***Jan and Ryder***

## Isolation Precautions Are Serious!

Recently, DOC Board members have received several questions about therapy dog teams visiting with patients who are in isolation. Some important points for Pet Partners teams to remember:

-- If a patient has an isolation precaution sign posted on the room door, DO NOT ENTER the room.

Staff may say it's OK, the patient is going home that day or test results are clear – if the sign is posted, DO NOT ENTER!

The staff also may not understand that therapy dog teams cannot go in isolation rooms. It's no big deal for the staff to suit-up and go in, as they do it multiple times a day. Ask them to picture how the dog would fit in a gown and gloves!

-- It's a Pet Partners rule that you can't visit with patients in isolation, as well as common sense. Your Pet Partners insurance may be void if you break that rule, as well as endanger the health of yourself and your pet.

-- Patients with contact isolation causes (such as MRSA or C. difficile infections) can be out in the hallways, traveling for tests. (Occasionally, they may be in a common area, such as a dayroom, though it's not good policy to be there.) It's important to ask any patient you meet in the hall if they are in isolation before you let them pet your dog. (And they are not always in gown and gloves.) They can look, but not touch!

-- Learn to say "No" politely and don't be shy about it. The patients and staff will understand. You have to think about the best interest of yourself and your partner!

***Karen and Raider***

## The Twelve Days of Christmas (with a puppy)

On the first day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
A dead bird that fell from a tree

On the second day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree

On the third day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree

On the fourth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree

On the fifth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree

On the sixth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree

On the seventh day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



## The Twelve Days of Christmas (with a puppy) - continued

On the eighth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Eight socks went missing  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



On the ninth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Nine times the jumping  
Eight socks went missing  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



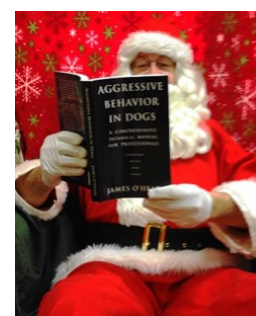
On the tenth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Ten spots of peeing  
Nine times the jumping  
Eight socks went missing  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



On the eleventh day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
Eleven hours of biting  
Ten spots of peeing  
Nine times the jumping  
Eight socks went missing  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



On the twelfth day of Christmas  
my puppy gave to me:  
12 bunnies running  
Eleven hours of biting  
Ten spots of peeing  
Nine times the jumping  
Eight socks went missing  
Seven ornaments falling  
Six hours of barking  
Five smelly things  
Four falling turds  
Three chewed pens  
Two playful shoves  
and a dead bird that fell from a tree



*Merry Christmas!*

**Dan and Buddha**



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### DOC Newsletter

The contents of the DOC Newsletter represent the views and opinions of the authors, and not necessarily those of the DOC organization or its members, nor does publication constitute any endorsement.

### Subscriptions

The DOC Newsletter is published quarterly and is available by E-mail to DOC members and representatives of organizations associated with DOC activities.

### Submission Deadlines:

News and Articles are as follows:

<b>February 15</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
<b>May 15</b>	<b>June 2105</b>
<b>August 15</b>	<b>September 2105</b>
<b>November 15</b>	<b>December 2015</b>

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.

Send all to: Laura Kuchta

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