

# “Paws & Hearts”

Animal Assisted Therapy

Fed. Tax ID #91-2096569

WINTER/SPRING 2011

NEWSLETTER

## Board of Directors

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Virginia Tillmannshofer

### *Vice President:*

Richard Waxman

Founder, Executive Dir.  
“Paws & Hearts”

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## *Executive Director's Message*

For any of us who are full-time residents this has been one of the coldest and wettest winters in history. For me, it is almost like being back in Toronto, minus the snow. Even “Lucky” and “Scruffy” are complaining about going out for those early morning walks! “Too cold Dad, go back to bed.”

We are now into our 11<sup>th</sup> year and I continue to praise our volunteers for their tireless weekly visits, volunteer reports and overall commitment to the organization. Many of you worked very hard at raising donations for the dog walk, and I can't thank you enough for contributing to our financial stability.

We have a couple of volunteer events coming up that I hope everyone will attend, and as always I look forward to meeting potential new Canine Ambassadors and their human counterpart who will find their way to our door this year!

*Richard Waxman*

## **Upcoming Events to Put on Your Calendars!**

### **Take Your Dog to the Movies Cinemas Palme D'Or**

**April, 2011**

(check our website for the exact date)

### **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Dog Walk/ Fundraiser**

**Saturday December 3rd, 9am  
Westin Mission Hills Resort**

### *.... “Lucky” & “Scruffy’s Views*

Since Dad is on this theme of rain and damp cold weather, my brother and must add that trudging into Eisenhower Medical Center three times per week in the rain has left us both a little cold. We are suggesting Dad start valet parking the car, carrying us into the hospital, and forgetting that long walk he insists upon taking us before the visits!

We've had a good few months with some very memorable visits recently, and my brother and I have to say that the extension to the hospital is very nice indeed. Just a lot more walking for us!

Most of the patients we visit are very grateful for the time we spend in their rooms, sitting up on their beds in close petting range. I continue to excel at visiting with all types of patients, but “Scruffy” is at his *therapy dog best* with children. We visited with 14-year-old Luis the other day, and it was “Scruffy” who rolled on his back and gave a great big smile while Luis was petting/playing with him. According to the nursing staff this was exactly the therapy that Luis needed!

Lately, there have been more than a few doctors who have given us praise for the visits and even asked us to stay when they were seeing their patients. Proof positive that Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) is working so well!

*“Lucky” & “Scruffy” Waxman*

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### *Donors, how would non-profits exist without them?*

Seems as though we are always talking about donations, but that is how all non-profits exist, run their programs, and offer their services to the community. As non-profits are not allowed to sell merchandise like a retail shop, we have to rely on donors who see the value in the mission and wish to support efforts with donations.

These days everywhere you turn money is tight. If you have money invested the interest rate is not yielding a great deal, as a result, your income is cut, and the trickle down effect causes non-essentials to fall by the wayside, and that usually begins with donations to local charities.

Non-profits have the same expenses that all businesses have - - rent, utilities, insurances, payroll, office supplies, payroll taxes, etc. etc. - - and these expenses must be met each and every month so that the agency can continue its mission to the community.

Some agencies have entire departments dedicated to cultivating long-term donors, setting up legacies and living trusts, while small agencies spend all their time working the program that they pledge to provide to the community. Never mind that a lot of Executive Directors, yours included, wears most of the hats. This can be very rewarding but it is also quite tiring at the end of the day when there is no staff to delegate to. And planning a major fund-raising event single-handedly like our yearly Dog Walk/Fundraiser takes quite a few months to plan and execute.

So how does a small non-profit find sustainability? We must make sure that the community knows our very existence is only guaranteed by the amount of money in the bank. It is just that simple. All agencies have budgets, and we are quite lucky that our budget is around 100k per year and in years past that has been attainable. Last year was a bit of a challenge due to the economy, but I am hoping that this year's donations are up.

I'm sure that all non-profits wish they had unlimited reserves socked away to weather rough patches so their programs were ensured to run without any worries of being downsized or cut.

For years I had trouble asking for donations and justifying my very existence, however it has become somewhat easier after 10 years. It looks as though we have withstood the test of time and that our Animal Assisted Therapy Program has truly become a part of the community, and is very welcome in all the facilities we visit. We certainly receive enough words of praise from all the patients and folks we visit. We currently have 45 active volunteers out in the community, visiting each and every week, and the impact our *Canine Ambassadors* is making is evident by the number of thank you calls and letters I receive in the office.

Please help us ensure that our program continues to grow and send a donation check in the enclosed envelope. Every single dollar raised, helps immensely!

*Richard Waxman*

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### Wrap-up of the 2010 Annual Dog Walk

Our December 4, 2010 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Dog Walk was amazing. We were blessed with excellent weather, the biggest turn-out ever, which all resulted in the most dollars raised in the last few years. As always, we thank our generous donors, volunteers and corporate sponsors for making the commitment to support our yearly event. To all the corporate sponsors thank you!

Atria Palm Desert  
 Ruth & Morris Beschloss  
 Bones-n-Scones  
 Braswell Family Senior Care  
 Burgess North American  
 California Nursing & Rehabilitation  
 Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional  
 Country Villa Rancho Mirage Healthcare  
 Eisenhower Medical Center  
 Lund & Guttry, LLP  
 Mills Insurance  
 Kent Mossman  
 Natura Pet Products  
 Palm Springs Volvo  
 The Fountains at the Carlotta  
 Bruce Vaughn C P A  
 Vista Cove at Rancho Mirage  
 Windsor Court



We must also thank our friends at The Westin Mission Hills & Resort in Rancho Mirage. Mayra Cisneros and her staff really make our event spectacular and we can't thank them enough for hosting for the fifth time.

As always our friends at **KMIR 6** were our media partners. The morning crew Brandon Behle and Christina Pascucci were our Grand Marshalls and kicked off the 2-mile walk. As always, thank you John O. for taking the mike and acting as our announcer!

*Save the Date of our 2011 Walk*

***Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011***

## Upcoming Events and Fundraisers

Upcoming events and fundraisers that the board has put together for our volunteers and folks in the community will be listed by date and function. It will be noted whether the event is open only to volunteers or the entire community. All upcoming events will be board approved and hosted through the office of "Paws & Hearts."

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### **Take Your Dogs to the Movies**

Cinema Palme D'Or

April 2011

Check our website for the exact date

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### **Annual Halloween Dog Costume Party**

Vista Cove at Rancho Mirage

Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 10 am

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### **"As Good As New" Official Thrift Stores for "Paws & Hearts"**

Please be sure to visit our thrift shop, *As Good As New* located at 44 855 San Pablo Ave. #3, Palm Desert, behind the Angel View Thrift Shop, (760) 341-4660. The store is full of great items and the merchandise changes daily.

*As Good As New* is a terrific way to generate donations for our organization. A whopping 50% of all sales are a donation to us, so your purchases are very important, and your donations of household goods keeps a customer coming back.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO SEE GARAGE SALES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, PLEASE CONSIDER ASKING THE SELLER IF THEY WOULD DONATE THEIR UNSOLD GOODS TO US. WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO ARRANGE PICK UP.

Keep in mind that we are able to *pick up* all of your large donations, so items such as furniture, televisions, even computers can benefit us, but please keep in mind that all items must be in *working* and *saleable condition*. So next time you are cleaning out the house, please give us a call and we will be only too happy to schedule a pick up!

**Hours of Operation: Monday – Saturday 10 – 5, Sunday 11 – 4, (760) 341-4660**

## Volunteer Stories

*A few of our readers have asked where our Volunteer Stories come from. Our volunteer teams visit their assigned facility each and every week and part of their commitment is to email into our office a weekly report, complete with their visitation story. Some day, these stories along with photographs will be turned into a book because the stories are heart-warming and the patients/clients we visit truly treasure their weekly visit.*

California Nursing & Rehabilitation Jonathan & "Zoe": "Zoe" was dressed in her red winter rain coat and got a lot of comments about her "holiday outfit." One of the residents had her nurses call button on because her pain was really bad but when the nurse told her she had to wait another 30 minutes she said that was OKAY because "Zoe" is here now and she has reduced the pain! "Zoe" gave out several holiday cards, with her Santa picture from the Annual Dog Walk to many of the long-term residents and all the recipients were quite pleased.

Monterey Palms Dan & "Sherlock": "Sherlock" was great with his two new tricks. He will spin around twice on the spin command (most of the time) but the big hit trick was hugs. A person in a wheelchair crosses their arms and says 'hugs' and "Sherlock" climbs onto their laps and gives them a kiss right on the nose! It was a big hit today!

The Fountains at the Carlotta Linda & "Tater": We had a lot of fun on our visit today. "Tater" wore his reindeer hat and I wore my Santa hat. The residents thought he looked really cute. There were quite a few people in the recreation room. "Tater" offered some encouragement and was interested in the ball activities. Guess he thought he could do a better job!

Windsor Court Assisted Living Scott & "Toby": There was a photo board of "Toby" in his Santa Suit with the residents displayed which was very cute! "Toby" was very well behaved today and spent more time with the Alzheimer's patients per the staff's request. Many of the residents are thrilled to have a brief visit with "Toby" as we pass them in the lobby area or in the hallways. We get to see a lot more residents this way!

The Lucy Curci Cancer Center at Eisenhower Syree & "Cali": It was very nice today, the staff gave "Cali" and I gifts for Christmas. "Cali" received her own special gift which was a bag of rawhide Christmas chews! The staff told us how much we mean to the patients and to them as well. I had a patient well up with tears when he said good-bye to "Cali" today as it was his final treatment. He said he would try and schedule his follow-up appointments on Tuesdays so he could visit with "Cali". The patients really love what we do!

Desert Regional Medical Center Joe & "Bob" & "Zoso": After spending much time roaming the two waiting rooms in the *Comprehensive Cancer Center* we trotted over to pediatrics and visited two boys. The younger boys eyes lite up when he saw us and a large smile came over his face. He moved to the edge of the bed so he could put his hands in "Bob" and "Zoso's" hair. It was the highlight of his day and when it was time to go he began to cry. We heard him continue to cry as we walked down the hallway, but were so happy to visit him and cheer him up.

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Once again we are excited to announce that the Cinemas Palme D'Or is going to host another *"Take Your Dog to the Movies"* fundraiser. We are working on a date for April, so watch our website for updates.

