

“Paws & Hearts”

Animal Assisted Therapy

Fed. Tax ID #91-2096569

FALL 2017

NEWSLETTER

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Executive Director
“Paws & Hearts”

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“Lucky” & “Scruffy”
Waxman

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Drew Marefos

The date of this Newsletter is Fall, however it gets written in the dead of summer. And even though it is a *dry heat*, 118 is a *schvitz*, no matter what the weatherman has to say!

So, let’s focus on the lovely fall season we are blessed to have here in the desert. Snowbirds flock back to our valley, all the charities kick off their fall and winter fundraisers, and we are no different. Our big **Annual Dog Walk/Fundraiser** is right around the corner, taking place the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. Plans have been underway since July!

Our Pet Bereavement Support Group which meets monthly has been warmly accepted and hopefully has been a big help to those who have already attended.

Enjoy our Fall Newsletter and just think cool temps!

Richard Waxman

Upcoming Events to Put on Your Calendars!

Pet Bereavement Support Group

Monthly Meetings

Second Wednesday of the month, 1 pm

17th Annual Dog Walk/Fundraiser

Saturday November 25th

Registration begins at 9 am, Walk at 10 am

Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort

“Paws & Hearts” 74-133 El Paseo, Ste. 7
Palm Desert, CA 92260

(760) 836-1406 fax (760) 836-1426

E-Mail: Pawsandhearts@aol.com

Website: www.pawsandhearts.org

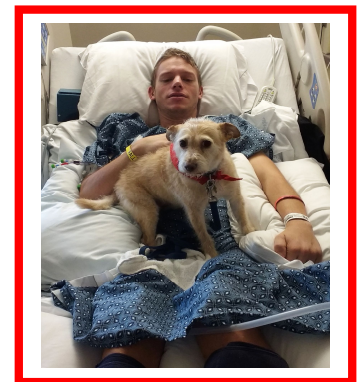
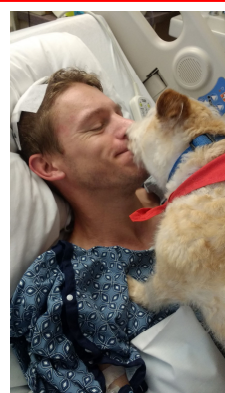
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pawsandheartsorg

“Maddie’s” Views (“Lucky” & “Scruffy” in thought)

What a hot summer it has been, but Dad has been very good at changing our afternoon visits at Desert Regional Medical Center to morning visits. And thank G-d for that valet parking--my paws never hit the pavement!

Of all the stories I could share, the best one is about my two visits with a young man by the name of Nolan. I just knew that Nolan was a huge dog lover from the minute I was placed on his bed. He loved all the kisses I gave him and he did his best to pet me. I was a good sport when Dad got Nolan’s hand working to stroke me.

Nolan’s Mom was there for our second visit and took amazing pictures. I wanted to share a couple of them!



“Maddie” Waxman

Highlights from Last Year's Annual Dog Walk/Fundraiser

76 Westways | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

Current Events

[Your guide to what's happening in SoCal]

NOV. 26 Paws and Hearts Dog Walk, Rancho Mirage. A commemorative dog walk, as well as Santa and Mrs. Claus photo opportunities. Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort and Spa, (760) 836-1406; pawsandhearts.org.

"Paws & Hearts" 16th Annual Dog Walk-Fundraiser



The crowd starts out on their walk.

Paws and Hearts' annual dog walk

SHIRLEY BREWEN SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

There was a lot of sniffing around at Westin Mission Hills' annual dog walk.

This fundraiser memorialized founder Richard Waxman's dog Scruffy who rescued between three days a week at Eisenhower Hospital for 14 years. This event included a light breakfast, a walk with Santa and a two-mile animal-assisted therapy program. More than 175 pampered pooches in all sizes and shapes arrived with their owners and were greeted by board president Ginny Tillmannshofer, CBS Radio personality Dan McGrath and Dan Ball from KMRB who was Grand Marshal.

At this time the animal-assisted therapy program has more than 30 teams of trained canine ambassadors with their human handlers. They lift spirits as they make weekly visits to area hospitals and long-term care facilities with their canine therapy.

At large board member



Scruffy COURTESY OF RICHARD WAXMAN

Drew Marefos joined eight years ago and takes Waxman's dog Maddie out each week to Desert Regional Hospital. He said, "I walked in a room, a male patient in bed with his wife sitting beside him. She said he wanted a visit but that he was blind. I placed Maddie on the bed and put his hand on the dog and he started petting her and smiling. His whole demeanor changed. It was like he could almost see the animal!"

Marefos also described his visits to a memory care unit, saying, "When I walk in the door the patients say, 'If it is Drew and Maddie then it has got to be Friday. I guess you can say that these dogs also help with memory.'"

I was curious as to why he doesn't take his dog and he said, "Because I'm a cat person." But I guess you can say that the program is part of it.

For more information go to pawsandhearts.org

November 10 to November 16, 2016

www.coachellavalleyweekly.com

PET PLACE PAWS & HEARTS, DISPENSING LOVE

The social season is here, and animal lovers can fill their calendars with lots of events that include their 4-legged companions. On Saturday, November 26, you can enjoy the 16th Annual Dog Walk Fundraiser for Paws and Hearts, a wonderful local charity where little paws work magic when they touch human hearts.

Paws and Hearts was founded in 2000 by a 4-legged fellow named Lucky. This joyful Poodle/Terrier boy always went to work with his human, Richard Waxman. They found their calling after a chance meeting with the nursing director at Valencia Palms Nursing Center in Indio. Lucky became a popular visitor at Valencia Palms for his remaining 12 years of life, curling up on patients' chests to offer love and comfort.

Today dozens of volunteer teams and their dogs follow in Lucky's paw prints, continuing his legacy of bringing comfort and healing to the sick and infirm in dozens of hospitals and assisted living centers throughout the Coachella Valley. Animal-assisted therapy involves the use of animals as a form of treatment, with the goal of improving the patient's social, emotional, and physical health.

Pictured here are executive director Richard Waxman's two therapy dogs, Scruffy

and Maddie, bringing loving comfort to a hospital patient. These two precious pups visited patients at Eisenhower Hospital three times a week with Richard. Sadly, 15-year-old Scruffy passed away in June after bringing joy to thousands of sick and infirm humans. This year's Dog Walk Fundraiser will be in Scruffy's memory.

Scientific studies confirm that contact with dogs lowers blood pressure, decreases anxiety and depression, and has a healing impact for many medical disorders. A 2007 study demonstrated that patients in critical care after heart failure have a significant decrease in cardiopulmonary pressure and anxiety levels upon receiving animal-assisted therapy. Dogs stimulate the minds of dementia patients. For patients confined to a hospital room or assisted living center, a visit from one of these canine ambassadors may be the highlight of their day.

What does it take to become a therapy dog? Richard Waxman has temperament tested over a thousand dogs for his program, and only half of those have passed his evaluation. Richard explains, "More often, the problem is the human owner. This is not a program where you get to brag about your dog. This is not about how cute your dog is or about its championship status. We're looking for dogs that are outgoing



and friendly. Your dog has to immediately make a friendly overture to the patient. If you have a really good dog who likes everyone, he's a good candidate for a therapy dog. The folks in long-term care want someone to LISTEN to them. The secret is the dog does most of the work, and his human is the facilitator.

There is no formal certification required to become a therapy dog. Every animal-assisted therapy organization does their own temperament testing and training. The relationship between the owner and the dog is key. If a dog appears reluctant during his visit with Richard, he is not likely to be a good candidate. The dog must be at least one year old, spayed or neutered, fully vaccinated, and with its current owner for at least six months. All breeds are welcome to apply, and large breeds such as Great Danes and Golden Retrievers

BY JANET MCAFEE



participate. Some cats have participated, but most of them don't like to travel in cars.

Richard explains, "You will never be more proud of your dog than when a patient tells you 'Your dog made my day' when he kisses their hand or takes a cookie from them. The dogs seem to know they've done a good job, and bask in the experience." To volunteer or for more information, call (760) 836-1406.

Paws and Hearts is now starting its 17th year of service to the Coachella Valley, and relies on donations. Check their website www.pawsandhearts.org. You can make a tax-deductible donation online or send a check to Paws & Hearts, 74-854 Velie Way, Suite 7, Palm Desert, 92260.

SAVE THE DATE, PAWS & HEARTS ANNUAL DOG WALK FUNDRAISER IS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26.

Registration is at 9am, the walk at The Westin Mission Hills Resort begins at 10am, 71-333 Dinah Shore Drive, Rancho Mirage. Minimum suggested donation is \$25. This is your chance to have a fun day with your dog. Each walker receives a t-shirt, continental breakfast, and treats for their pups. This will be a tail-waggin' good time!

jmcafee7@verizon.net

2017 Annual Dog Walk

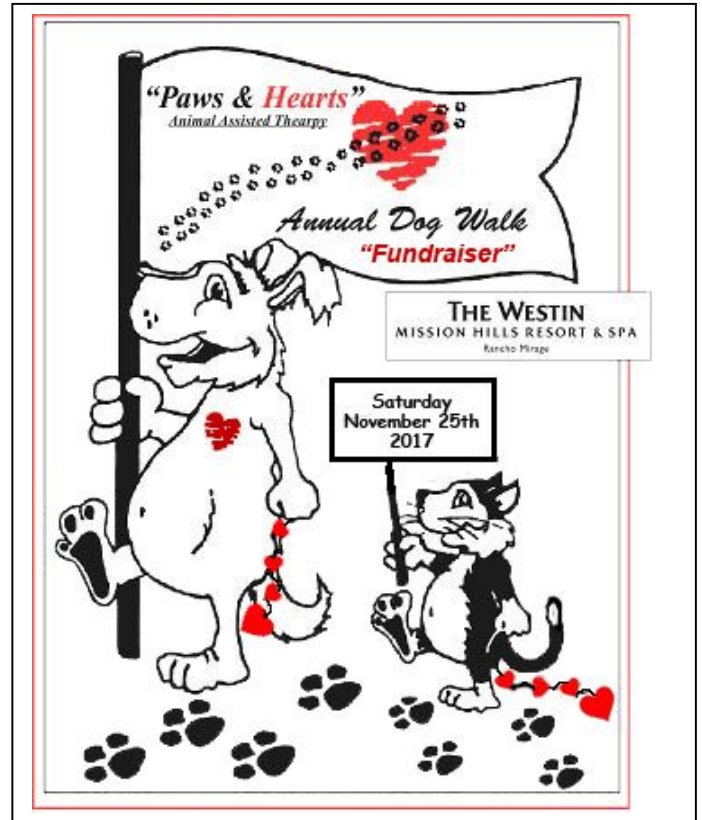
Can it ever be too early to mark your calendars for another dog walk?

Saturday, November 25th, (Thanksgiving weekend) will be the date of our 17th Annual Dog Walk-Fundraiser. Has it really been sixteen walks already?

As always, we ask our volunteers, donors, and supporters to come out to the walk and enjoy the morning with us. With our glorious weather we get to enjoy a great 2 mile walk around the Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort & Spa.

Santa & Mrs. Claus will appear again this year because last year's holiday photos were the best we've ever had!

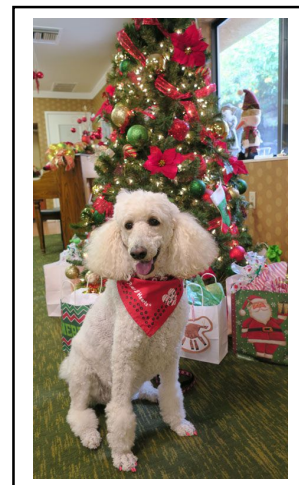
Raffle, continental breakfast, vendors, just a great morning to celebrate our work (and raise a few bucks in donations!)



Cathy & "Zoey" leave the valley, but not our hearts!

One of the 2-legged volunteers who has been with us the longest, Cathy, and her *Canine Ambassador* "Zoey" have left the desert. Cathy had been a volunteer with us since almost the start of "Paws & Hearts." Cathy has had four different dogs on the program, each one displaying its own special charm on therapy visits wherever they visited.

Cathy and her current Standard Poodle "Zoey" had been visiting The Fountains at the Carlotta Friday mornings for almost 4 years. Cathy was incredibly reliable, rarely missing a visit, and always sending in a great volunteer report. (Her last report is included on the opposite page.) Whenever we had a special event to participate in, Cathy was always one of the first to offer to help out. All of her dogs did amazing work, and we truly miss her and "Zoey," as do the residents and staff at the Carlotta!



Pet Bereavement Support Group

Our group meets the second Wednesday of every month, 1pm, at our office in Palm Desert. Each participant is asked to register on our website, www.pawsandhearts.org and to bring a photograph of their beloved dog or cat, (not on a cell phone.) So far the half dozen sessions have seen many faces from the valley come into the office and share love-stories of their beloved 4-legged companions.

It is our deepest wish that this new support group is really helping those individuals who have recently lost their companion animal. We are here to help. Just give us a call.



Volunteer Stories

Many 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.

The Fountains at the Carlotta – Cathy & “Zoey” Today was bittersweet because it was Zoey's last visit to the Carlotta. This has been a huge part of her life for over 4 years. We both got lots of good-bye hugs. There was one of Zoey's long time patients in the therapy room. The therapist was new and the patient told him Zoey is her favorite visitor. She leaned down for kisses, shook paws with Zoey, and rubbed her back. She said that Zoey is the light of her week and she is really going to miss her. She said Zoey always made her day better when she visited.

There were 2 ladies in a room, one was the patient and the other a visitor. They got really excited when Zoey entered the room. They had lost their dog and their vet told them to get a Poodle. They loved Zoey and said she convinced them how great Poodles are. They thanked us for coming.

The activity room had several patients and the activity director told them that this is Zoey's last visit. She said Zoey needs a lot of love today. One patient said “Zoey is a lovely girl.” Another patient massaged Zoey's back until her eyes closed. She said that Zoey is going to miss her massages and I agreed. An activity director came running down the hallway and said she heard this is Zoey's last visit. She gave us both hugs and said she is really going to miss us.

The Fountains at the Carlotta has been a big part of Zoey's life and so has “Paws & Hearts” and both have a special place in my heart.

Manor Care – Gayle & “Toby” Our first stop was in one of the PT rooms. There was a gentleman sitting in a wheelchair, with a brace that kept his left arm up at a 90' angle. He didn't respond to us as we walked up to him. The therapist said do you like dogs? He gave a small nod. I asked in Spanish if he liked dogs, and he said yes. Then the therapist told me the he was blind, so I picked up his right hand and laid it on Toby's head. I wish I had had a camera on his face. It lit up, and his smile was so big. He started rubbing Toby's head, scratching his ears, and smiling. He was saying in Spanish, beautiful dog, and sweet dog. It made him so happy. I told the therapist, "This is the reason we do this!" Later another lady was in bed, and we stopped by to say hi. She had just eaten, and Toby loves to search for breakfast leftovers on their clothes, so he was climbing on her, and nuzzling. I said, "Toby what are you doing?" She said, “He's loving me, he likes me, so you leave him be!” It was a very good day!

Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional – Mike & “Gus” Today Gus and I met a very nice lady. She was very troubled about whatever health issues she is having. When we first saw her she was curled up in a fetal position in her chair in the waiting room. She smiled and laughed when Gus introduced himself. She said that she really needed a dog today. Gus sat down and shook hands with her. Before I knew it he was standing up with his front feet in her lap (VERY rare for Gus). She spent a long time stroking him and telling him she loves him.

Our Mission Statement

“Paws & Hearts” is a leader in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy, (AAT) and it is our mission to enrich the lives of frail and special care cases that require the loving attention and affection that only a “four-legged” healer can provide.

Pet Bereavement Support Group at "Paws & Hearts"



We are here to help you get through this.....