



**Furry  
Friends**

Pet  
Assisted  
Therapy  
Services

Summer 2019



# Short Paws

The Official Newsletter of Furry Friends P.A.T.S.



## *A letter from your president*

The last few months have been super busy! In April, we had a Captain's appreciation dinner at China Stix in Santa Clara. I would like to thank Cameron for organizing this delicious dinner. In May, our new website went live and many changes have been made thanks to feedback from some of you. Watch out for more changes in the future. In June, we had a Furry Friends picnic for our volunteers and their animals. Thanks to Allison for putting on a fun event and goodbye and best wishes to her & her husband who are moving home to Dallas. The board will miss Allison.

When we switched to our new website, the cost to maintain our numerous email addresses was considerably more. So in order to economize, Furry Friends now has just four email addresses:

[info@furryfriends.org](mailto:info@furryfriends.org) - any general questions or feedback

[admin@furryfriends.org](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org) - any admin items

[specialvisits@furryfriends.org](mailto:specialvisits@furryfriends.org) - requests / questions for Special Visits

[critterdoctor@furryfriends.org](mailto:critterdoctor@furryfriends.org) - questions for Julie

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In order to ease the maintenance of our website, site descriptions will no longer use team photos and will have pictures of the entrance to sites. You can still send us your team pictures and we will add them to our website photo album.

Happy Summer!

Joan



Furry Friends' Second East Bay Team has formed! *From Left to Right:*  
Team captain, Muriel Kao with Monty,  
Nancy Ditzler with Abby,  
Jonelyn Weed with Joey,  
Deanna Mitchell with Keiki,  
Carol Lane with Louie

*(Photo taken by Julie Bond)*

## Furry Friends Apparel



Summer is officially here!

Increasing temperatures call for ladies' V-neck t-shirts to help you stay cool while taking your pets on visits.

NEW! Furry Friends pet badges for your pet's collar or leash!

You may conveniently order both of these online at the Furry Friends store:

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



## Looking for More? Right this Way!

A wider choice of apparel will provide an appealing and professional look for all Furry Friends volunteers.

*Below are three samples of items that will be embroidered or silk-screened with our Furry Friends logo. These items and more will be offered on the online store soon!*



## Last Call! Almost Gone, Won't be Back

Prices have been significantly reduced on our current stock of the Furry Friends winter apparel in a limited selection of sizes. On the website, you may order grey sweatshirts, grey or black fleece vests, as well as grey or black fleece jackets.

*These items will be discontinued once they are sold out.*

## Pets that have crossed the rainbow bridge

Cabo East

Abby Lauterbach

(Thank you to the Maryknoll FF Team that made a donation in memory of Abby)



## Thank You for Observing the Boundaries on Your Visits

Our insurance covers our members and their pets visiting as teams, during the regularly scheduled visits only.

If you visit outside these dates and times, you may not wear your Furry Friends attire, nor present yourself as a Furry Friends member.

Also remember that it is our furry friends who are doing the therapy.



**Furry Friends**  
Pet Assisted Therapy Services

Our mission is to consistently facilitate delivery of the love and affection of our volunteers and their pets. We enhance the lives and touch the hearts of people with special needs.

### Board of Directors

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#### Animal Behaviorist

Julie Bond



Do we have your correct e-mail address?

### If in DOUBT....

Send an email with your name and current e-mail address to [admin@furryfriends.org](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org)

**When sending in vaccine records for your pet, please let us know your pet's last name!**

# Critter Doctor

JULIE C. BOND, M.S., ANIMAL BEHAVIORIST



**Q** I am a relatively new captain in Furry Friends, but I've been a member for over a year and a half. On a recent visit, one member on my team showed up in a blue tank top. She had her badge on, but the shirt was plain without the Furry Friends logo. When I approached her about it, she told me that wearing a Furry Friends shirt wasn't necessary as long as you have your badge on, and in the hot weather, in particular, this isn't a problem. Can you clarify what situations or visits we can do with just our badges on?  
*B in Morgan Hill*

**A** Thank you for bringing this to my attention! ALL volunteers on ALL Furry Friends regular visits, special visits, Reading Buddies visits, off leash visits, parades, or other events MUST wear their badge AND some sort of Furry Friends logo apparel. ALL pets must be on a 4-foot purple leash as well. We have quite a variety of acceptable logo apparel items to choose from for folks who don't like the round neck t-shirts given out in class. We now have a women's v-neck shirt available, in fact! Or, you can choose a collared polo shirt, sweatshirt, etc. through our website store. More than one of our volunteers has a tank top with the Furry Friends logo on it that they wear on warmer visits, often paired with a Furry Friends ball cap. Again, all items can be ordered through the store on our website. The bottom line is this: You must wear some piece of Furry Friends logo apparel on every visit.

**Q** I have a new member on my team who has brought her dog to our visit twice with the dog wearing an emotional support animal harness. I know in class you talk about the difference between service animals and therapy animals, but I feel like this harness is even more confusing to the people we visit! What are your thoughts on this and what should I say to the volunteer, if anything?  
*M in San Jose*

**A** There is so much confusion out there with regard to the differences between therapy pets, service animals, and emotional support/comfort animals. So much confusion in fact that I am now handing out cards in class that clearly show the

differences for our new members. I also tell new volunteers that they should not put any kind of large harness on their animals as those harnesses block a large portion of the animal's body where we want the people we visit to pet our animals. This is just one of the reasons that Furry Friends does not have or endorse using harnesses with "therapy dog," or "pet me" patches on them. In addition, animals on visits with their handlers are there as pet assisted therapy animals; they are not serving as emotional support animals to their owners at that time. And our volunteers with service animals go to great lengths to let their dogs know they are "off duty" when on visits, thus removing working dog harnesses and vests so the animal knows what is expected of them. I will speak to this volunteer myself to make clear that while I understand that the dog is her emotional support animal, he must not wear the working harness with large letters labeling him as such on our visits.

**Q** My husband took a recent etiquette class so that we could attend visits together now that he is retired. He came home and shared some of the things you talked about in class which I really enjoyed as I've not taken the class in 6 years! In any event, he said you talked about the MRSA virus and possible spreading of the virus by our pets on visits. I totally freaked out! Could you explain this a bit more for me?  
*L in Santa Cruz*

**A** I'm so glad you asked! It is indeed the case that information gets added to my class presentations as the needs of our organization change. There has been quite a bit of coverage regarding the transmission of MRSA, Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, in hospital settings. Basically, if you or your pet have an open sore, MRSA can get into that wound and be transmitted to others. With our pet assisted therapy animals, the concern is that they become vectors or carriers for MRSA, not being affected themselves, but spreading the infection to other immune compromised patients we visit. One way to insure that our pets don't help spread MRSA is to not attend visits if they have open sores. Pets with serious skin allergies often have patches of irritated skin such as hot spots which are the ideal environment for MRSA to take hold. For visits with particularly immune compromised individuals, wiping down our pets with antibacterial wipes between patients can really help as well. So far, we've not had any issue on any of our teams or visits with MRSA. I've begun talking about it in class, however, as there are studies being done and the data is being shared in local newspapers, online, etc. I want to make sure our volunteers are always in the know!

**Q** I had so much fun at the recent Furry Friends volunteer picnic! Thank you to all involved in making that happen for us. I took some really cute, candid photos while I was there. Can I share those someplace with the rest of the folks who attended the picnic and might be in my pictures?  
*R in Menlo Park*

**A** Absolutely! You can email the photos to [info@furryfriends.org](mailto:info@furryfriends.org) and they will be forwarded to Kat Hsueh who is the board member in charge of putting together our newsletter and she can share the photos there. Or, you are welcome to share your photos on our Facebook pages or on our Instagram as well. Here are the links to those again in case you missed them in the last newsletter. And so glad you enjoyed the picnic! I had a great time too!

<https://www.facebook.com/FurryFriendsPATs/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/20731118047/?ref=share>

[https://www.instagram.com/furry\\_friends\\_pats/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/furry_friends_pats/?hl=en)

**Q** My dog LOVES doing therapy visits! He gets so excited when we first arrive that he throws his head back and gives what can only be described as a joy-filled howl! He isn't barking and he most certainly doesn't do it once our visit is underway. However, on a recent visit, the team captain expressed concern and said our dogs are not allowed to vocalize in any way on any of our visits. I wanted to get your take on this!  
*E in San Jose*

**A** I know the exact sound you are describing! We used to have a Beagle and she would throw her head back and "whoop" with joy! While we discourage barking and whining on our visits as those can be misinterpreted and are definitely clear signs of distress, those "whoops" are a bit of a gray area. I wouldn't want you to discourage your dog as he wouldn't understand why he was getting his happiness curbed. However, it may be the case that your team captain is more comfortable having your dog get his happy "whoops" out of the way before you enter the building for your visit. And there are certainly some visits where those "whoops" would make the people we visit smile and laugh. It really is up to the discretion of the team captain on that front. For dogs that bark or whine, however, my suggestion remains the same. Acknowledge your dog, assess what is wrong, and take them outside for a bathroom break, drink of water, or breath of fresh air whenever needed. I wouldn't want our dogs NOT to make noises as then we have even fewer ways of assessing their anxiety or stress on our visits. Being conscientious is really the key and taking into consideration the type of visit you are on and the sensitivities of others.

## Volunteer Picnic

Thank you to all who came to the Volunteer Picnic on June 9th.

If you have feedback or photos, please submit to

*info@furryfriends.org.*

### Upcoming Special Events and Visits - sign up now!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/index.cfm?go=c.SignUpSearch&eid=0FC5CBD66FC5F967&cs=09B5BADA8FBF8B637B7964025BCF9BC9&sortby=startdate>

8/5, 10AM: Camp Pals @ Santa Clara U

9/21, Details TBD: Bark in the Park

11/5, 11:30AM: University Prep Academy

12/5, 11:15AM: DeAnza College

Has your FF pet passed and you want to stay involved in Furry Friends?

If you are still wanting to do pet therapy but don't plan on training another animal or are in process of training, you may want to captain a visit without an animal. Being a captain without a pet is really FUN! You still get to love all the pets, talk to the students and school/site staff about what we do, and help direct traffic and answer questions.

Please contact [admin@furryfriends.org](mailto:admin@furryfriends.org)



### Who Can Attend Furry Friends Visits?

We are often asked if another family member, friend, or out-of-town visitor may attend your Furry Friends visit with you. Unfortunately, our insurance does not permit that. Only Furry Friends volunteers who are on our membership roster and who have attended the etiquette class may attend the visits. So please resist the impulse to bring anyone else with you on your visit.



## Volunteers who have hit milestone Anniversaries!



We want to thank everyone for his or her wonderful support and for volunteering with Furry Friends for so many years! We appreciate your hard work and dedication. We would not have the wonderful organization we do without all of you amazing Volunteers!

### *A Special Thank You to Daisy Karon*

Susan and Stephen Karon have made the decision to remove their little Daisy from the roster of Furry Friends. Daisy is one of the longest serving volunteers Furry Friends. Daisy is now 17 or 18 years old and has been a Furry Friends volunteer since she was 2. She is no longer able to enjoy her visits.

Stephen, Susan, and Daisy have thoroughly enjoyed their long-time association with the organization.

“Everyone does a phenomenal job in helping to make a bad day better for so many.”

They will miss the people at Sunshine Villa and the children at the Scotts Valley Library in the Santa Cruz area. Daisy also served at Pacific Coast Manor for many years while Susan was the team captain.



**Thank you, Susan, Stephen, and Daisy, for a wonderful run of 15+ years!**

## Furry Friends of the Month!

Keep those photos coming! Please send your favorite pet photos to [info@furryfriends.org](mailto:info@furryfriends.org)

**Hana Hirano**



July

**Daisy Karon**



August

**Jasper and Ling Ling Hsueh**



September