

SHORT PAWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FURRY FRIENDS P.A.T.S



visits have resumed!

How can you prepare?

COVID-19 has changed the way animal assisted volunteers share smiles and joy with the public, with many of us choosing to do window visits, Zoom calls, Instagram Reels and TikToks. It is each facility's decision when to resume therapy visits based on the population they serve. Many sites are requiring evidence of vaccinations, and Furry Friends follows all the required infection prevention guidelines designed to minimize the risk of spreading all unwanted germs, including COVID-19. While some of our Furry Friends may have enjoyed the extra walks, attention and treats of the past 12+ months, many are eager to return to their adoring fans. So let's talk about the variety of personal protective equipment we may encounter on a visit to a school or medical facility.

- 1. Masks & Face Shields:** Facilities require masks to be worn at all times - so take the time at home to socialize your Friend. Put on the mask you will be wearing at home and talk wearing your mask. Let your Friend hear how different your voice will sound on the visit and use a fun, upbeat tone to communicate that you're happy and the mask means good things will happen.
- 2. Hand Sanitizer:** A dizzying variety of hand sanitizers - with different ingredients, different smells, different consistencies, and from different dispensers await your Friend. Prepare your Friend for as many different possibilities as you can, starting at home and expanding your training to sanitizing stations in public areas (parks, home improvement stores, etc.)
- 3. Gloves:** Some people/patients are choosing to wear gloves during visits. Pet your Friend with a glove on as well as immediately after removing the glove as your hand will smell and feel different each time. Rub the gloves together in case they make noise. Essentially de-sensitize your Friend to gloves in the same way as masks and face shields.

Please, arrive prepared - you and your Furry Friend. And don't forget your badge and to check with your Captain and bring your vaccination cards if required (Furry Friends does not track nor maintain evidence of vaccinations). Looking forward to seeing you all very soon!

letter from our president

Hello, Furry Friends!

As you know, Furry Friends has recently resumed doing visits at some, but not all, sites. Thank you to all the captains who have reached out to your site contacts. We also sent letters to many sites asking them to get back to us with their plans to resume visits (or not). For sites who haven't responded to us, our vice-president, Sal Guardino, has been stopping in at those sites to get feedback from them. Thank you, Sal, for your efforts!

Some sites have resumed visits; some are still in a holding pattern; some have shown no interest in starting up visits again. This information changes on a daily basis, and we are doing our best to keep the web site updated with current information.

We are also trying to keep the web site updated with current site requirements around COVID. Masks are a universal requirement; some sites require that our volunteers provide proof of a COVID vaccine, and others do not. Furry Friends, as an organization, cannot require the COVID vaccine, but if you want to visit a site who does require that, you will need to be prepared to provide proof to the site.

There are sites who are ready to resume visits, but there is no team captain. And as you all know, having a team captain is a requirement - no captain, no visits. If you are willing to take on a team captain role, please reach out to Tara, admin@furryfriends.org. It's really not a lot of work!

Speaking of team captains, we are planning another captains training session for Saturday, October 16. Details are on page 6 of this newsletter.

Stay safe, everyone!

Anne

critter corner

JULIE BOND, M.S. ANIMAL BEHAVIORIST



My kids just got a rabbit this summer and she's super sweet and lovable. She gets along great with our dogs and our cat and we've even litterbox trained her! I remember you talking in class about how we can do therapy visits with animals other than dogs and cats, but I don't remember what you said with respect to how to do that. Help! *M in Willow Glen*

A: Congratulations on your newest furred family member! I will very much enjoy meeting her at an upcoming etiquette class. Basically, the rules are the same for all new animals coming into our program. You must have had the new pet for at least 6 months, and in the case of a bunny, the rabbit must be at least 8 months of age before you attend a class.

Your rabbit needs to be evaluated by your veterinarian for suitability to our program and to ensure that your rabbit is free of parasites. There are no vaccines that are required for bunnies and you won't need to fill out the canine aggression screen form (obviously!) since this isn't a dog! I will definitely include information on my evaluation about how your bunny does with the unfamiliar animals and people in class, as well as the information you provide me on how she is at home with your kids and other pets.



critter corner continued...



I just came home from one of my pet therapy visits early because the facility has changed their COVID-19 visitor guidelines and we all need to wear N95 masks for our visits from now on (I was wearing my cloth Furry Friends mask when I arrived!). I wish I'd known about this before going to the visit, but my team captain said that they never told her either. It was a real bummer that they didn't have any extra masks to spare so that we could still do our visit. What are your thoughts on this? *D in Palo Alto*

A: I understand your frustration. I had a similar experience on one of my recent visits as well. I'm the team captain and I checked in advance on any changes and was told it was "business as usual."

When we arrived for our visit, we now needed to go through an online check-in service, have our temperatures checked and recorded, and wear N95 masks to visit with the memory support patients (any style mask was okay with the senior living residents).

Basically, we all just need to be patient and understand that we are living in an ever-changing environment with regard to COVID-19. Now that there are variants out there putting the immune-compromised, elderly, etc. at a higher risk, even when vaccinated, we need to expect that our visits may be altered. I'm guessing that more facilities will ask us to refrain from using cloth masks, instead requiring N95's or double masking with surgical masks. There may even be teams where face shields are required to visit. Having temperatures taken, showing vaccine cards, and refraining from visiting if you feel sick or have been exposed to someone showing signs of illness are still the norm.

While Furry Friends as an organization cannot require our members to get the vaccines, the facilities we visit most certainly can and we must abide by their rules. As booster vaccines start being made available this Fall, it may be the case that our volunteers need to show that they've had the booster in order to do visits at certain locations. It's important that we continue to share information with each other on what we are experiencing during our visits. I will continue to share updates here and on our social media, both on Facebook and Instagram.



Adrian Wilcox High School Visit



I have recommended Furry Friends to my neighbor who has two adorable little dogs that I think would be great at pet therapy! She said that when she signed up for the class, she indicated that she'd be bringing her husband along to help hold the leashes of the two dogs during the class, though he isn't planning on being a member. She was told that she can't bring him unless he's signed up for class as well. She would only be bringing one of the dogs on a visit, she just wants them both evaluated so she can choose who to bring. Why can't her husband help her out at class?

N in San Jose

A: We definitely have Furry Friends members with one or more pets that have been evaluated and certified for visits. While members can only bring one pet on a visit if they are visiting by themselves, they can bring more than one if they have family members willing to bring those additional certified pets, as long as those family members have also gone through our etiquette class and are certified as members of our organization.

Both the one pet per volunteer on a visit and only certified volunteers who've completed the etiquette class on visits are rules established for safety and insurance purposes. Your neighbor can do one of three things:

1. She can choose to bring both dogs herself and have someone at class hold one of the dog's leashes for her as she's getting the other dog evaluated;
2. She can convince her husband (or another family member or friend) to become a member as well and they can be in control of one of the dogs during class;
3. Or, she can choose to bring each dog separately to a different class - so that she only has to control one dog at a time herself.

Anyone who has been through the etiquette class with one pet is welcome to come to a second class at the halfway point, just in time for the group and individual evaluations; they are not required to sit through the lecture portion of class twice unless they would like to. And for all of our members:

Please make certain that the only people attending your visits are people who've completed the etiquette class and are current volunteers. You cannot bring friends or family members on any of your visits, even just to see what we do, unless they are part of our program.

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we're licking
loneliness!



events & highlights

Calling all Furry Friends & Volunteers!

Please join us for at the **Mask & Volunteer Appreciation Event** for refreshments and desserts (hosted by Troop 466 Eagle Makers Scouts). Andrew Borjigin will *pass out his **FREE**, newly designed **FURRY FRIENDS MASKS** to all attendees.

Mask & Volunteer Appreciation Event

**November 7th
2 pm - 4 pm**

Los Gatos Creek Park
1250 Dell Ave.
Campbell, CA 95008

[RSVP required](#)

Captain Training

**October 16th
10am-12pm**

[Captain's Info](#)

Etiquette Classes

**October 24th
10:30 am
1:30 pm**

[Sign up here](#)

Cancelled for 2021

Los Gatos
Holiday Parade
Barnes & Noble
Gift Wrapping

GET READY! Send in vaccine records for your pet. Always let us know your pet's last name!

furry friends eagle project

by Andrew Borjigin

My name is Andrew Borjigin and I have been a volunteer with Furry Friends for the past 4 years. I am a Junior at Homestead High School in Cupertino and a Boy Scout in Troop 466. This fall, I will be working on my Eagle Project, which is the capstone project for Scouting and a requirement to earn the Eagle Scout rank, the highest rank in Scouting. This project must demonstrate leadership, have a positive impact on the community, and work with a local organization as a sponsor.

As it came time to tackle my Eagle Project, I thought about the different organizations I could help. When thinking of organizations to work with, the most obvious answer which came to mind was Furry Friends, an organization which offered me and my dog Tuffy, a white fluffy Havanese, an opportunity to bring joy to others, as well as help me develop my confidence in talking to older adults at the Vi, a retirement community in Palo Alto, for many years. Going to the Vi and watching people's faces light up as they pet Tuffy and interact with me and other volunteers has been a rewarding experience.



Tuffy

When it came time to explore ways to help Furry Friends, with Covid still rampant, I realized that Furry Friends could use masks - not just ordinary masks, but newly designed reusable Furry Friends branded masks, which members could wear over their disposable face masks during site visits. In addition to masks, I thought it would be an amazing opportunity to help organize an appreciation event for Furry Friends in order to celebrate the return to in-person site visits and bring the volunteers together. And then I thought - what if I could combine these two things into one project?

In the coming weeks, I will help organize the Furry Friends Mask & Volunteer Appreciation Event, an appreciation event where members and their pets can come together outside, socialize, and pick up a Furry Friends mask. There will also be delicious desserts, such as cake, cookies, and drinks. This event is scheduled at Los Gatos Creek Park (1250 Dell Ave, Campbell, CA 95008), on November 7th, so please keep this on your radar. Additionally, I am in the process of designing Furry Friends masks for every member of Furry Friends!

Last but not least, I would like to thank Furry Friends for the wonderful opportunity to serve as a volunteer these many years and give back to this amazing organization through my Eagle Project. I am proud to be a member of Furry Friends.



Created in 1911, Eagle Scout is the highest rank of the Scouts BSA (formerly Boys Scouts of America). Because it takes years of hard work, service, and determination to become an Eagle Scout, this prestigious milestone is recognized across the country and the world



editors note

Just not feeling it - We visited the Almaden Rehab Center last week - the first time since March of 2020. I was excited - Koda "seemed" excited. He's done well on Special Visits this year... minded his manners and was keen to spend time with the kids. But last week - once inside - he started exhibiting stress signals. Yawning. Panting. Leaning and turning away from Residents. Dilated pupils and sniffing avoidance (trying to disengage from his current circumstance). All his classic anxiety signs. And then... he jumped up on me. Koda doesn't "jump" - it's not his thing.

It was clear he was not happy, relaxed, and enjoying himself. Koda has "tells" that indicate to me that he was ready for the visit to be over - pulling toward the door, sitting or lying down and refusing to get up. Despite MY enthusiasm to see our Residents again, I needed to listen to my Friend. I didn't want to let my Team down. I didn't want to let the Residents down. But - Koda just wasn't feeling it. He wasn't trying to be cute -he was clearly communicating what he needed and it is always my job to be his advocate, to make sure he feels happy, safe, and secure on our visit.

So I reminded myself that even the best, most social, most outgoing, and happiest of therapy dogs get stressed and so, it was time to leave early. Yes, I was disappointed after a year of wondering how the Residents were doing. But, I know that stress is an unnecessary discomfort for any Friend to experience, and it could increase the risk of an accident. So we said our goodbyes and will try again in next visit.

As you begin to participate in visits again - remember to listen to the signals from your Friends.
Jacqueline



trick & treats!

Vet Approved! These dog biscuits are great, because you probably already have the ingredients around the house. Use these dog-friendly ingredients: peanut butter, rolled oats, banana, egg, and a little bit of bacon for that extra yummy flavor. If you're out of bananas, it can be subbed with 3/4 cup unsweetened apple sauce or mashed pumpkin.

INGREDIENTS

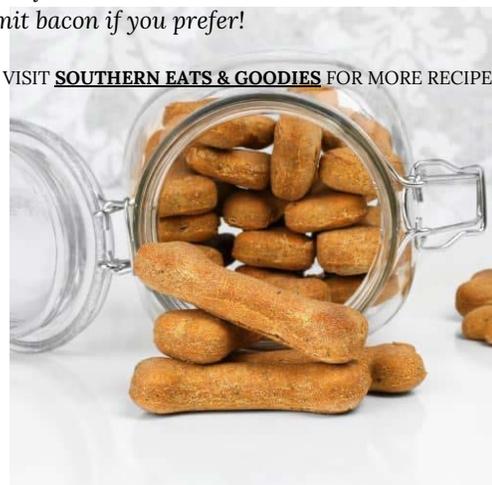
- 1 cup oat flour or pulse rolled oats in food processor
- 1/4 cup peanut butter smooth, all natural, no artificial sweeteners
- 1/4 cup finely crumbled crisp bacon, fat trimmed
- 1 banana very ripe, mashed
- 1 large egg

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat your oven to 350 F.
- In a medium bowl, use a hand mixer to fully combine the **oat flour, banana, peanut butter, egg, and crumbled bacon.**
- On a clean flat surface, roll out the dough mixture to about 1/3 inch thickness.
- Use your cookie cutter to cut the individual biscuits, or shape with hands, and place them onto a parchment-lined or non-stick cookie sheet. (If you need to lightly grease your cookie sheet, use a small amount of olive oil.)
- Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until golden and dry.

**omit bacon if you prefer!*

VISIT [SOUTHERN EATS & GOODIES](#) FOR MORE RECIPES



board of directors

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admin@furryfriends.org

ANIMAL BEHAVIORIST

Julie Bond



friends beyond the rainbow bridge

- Pet: Catalyst Owner: Joni Yabut
- Pet: Stretch Owner: Janet Gee & Rod Ngai
- Pet: Molly Owner: Janet Gee & Rod Ngai
- Pet: Finn Owner: Sister Gemma Wilson
- Pet: Ivan Owner: Brenda Swiney
- Pet: Sachi Owner: Vickie Miyaoka
- Pet: Zoey Owner: Kai Deering

"Over the Rainbow Bridge you went.
 I always knew you were Heaven sent.
 I cherish our time spent together.
 'Til we meet again,
 I will love you forever".



anniversaries

2 Year

- Doris Atkinson
- Francisco Rovira
- Karla Orduna
- Jihwon Im
- Sophia Im
- Justin Hang
- Maryse Pebworth
- Sylvia Christopher
- Dick Swanson
- Faun Maddux
- Sal Guardino
- Terri Hoover
- Joanna Stacey
- Kathleen O'Donnell
- Bonnie Emerson
- Michael Emerson
- Patricia Williams
- Carol Lane
- Jonelyn Weed
- Nancy Ditzler

3 Year

- Hiroko Yoshida
- Bob Boucneau
- Kristin Boyce
- Elizabeth Basile
- Isabelle McNeil
- Kerry Miller
- Mike Armfield
- Tavie Armfield
- Nat Maple
- Zoe Miller
- Miriam Malone
- Sonja Vaes
- Tory Bers
- Carol O'Brien
- Diane Rudy
- Kassidy Tolbert
- Mitch Mariani II
- Lynn Klein
- Paula Cue

4 Year

- Alex Borjigin
- Andrew Borjigin
- Sarah Borjigin
- Julie Gallinat
- Freya Sands
- Sandy Martin
- Greta Patterson
- Kristi Patterson
- Janette Schoeppler
- Carol Laucella
- Leigh (Pete) Trowbridge

5 Year

- Sidney Mygatt
- Ginger Chao
- Joan Wagner
- Linn Joanis
- Susan Day
- Zach Boone
- Sandra Delvin
- Dorothy Parrish
- Linda Nelson
- Edith Sutterlin
- Emma Bigge
- Sharon Andrews

10 Year

- Howard Dernehl



“
we're licking
loneliness!

membership renewal form

Name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: (Primary) _____ (Other) _____

Email Address: _____

If someone else in your household already receives the Short Paws newsletter, please check below to remove your name from the mailing list:

Remove me from the mailing list

Please indicate if you could help with:

- Phone calling (calling existing volunteers)
- New Volunteer Recruitment
- Computer work (email, data entry, web pages, database)
- Publications (newsletters, brochures, forms, etc.)

- Evaluating New Sites
- Being a Team Captain
- Social Event Assistance
- Membership on the Board of Directors

you can mail this form to:

Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services
P.O. Box 5099 San Jose, CA 95150-5099

and you can email this form

to: admin@furryfriends.org

or you can

[click to renew online](#)



Reunited and it feels so good!