

## A Few Words from Our Pets for Life Director

*Many Sellano*



*Happy New Year!* I can't believe it is 2021, but here we are. We have quite a bit of catching up to do from 2020.

Plans are underway for Volunteer Team Evaluations to begin. Everyone will be receiving information in the coming weeks. We have not received word when we will be able to resume visiting, but now is a good time to begin working with your pet and being prepared for the evaluation.

There is a new step being added to the evaluation: The dog will take treats gently from the evaluator's hand. You will be asked to bring one treat

which your dog enjoys to your evaluation. The evaluator will take the treat at the beginning; it will remain out of sight and will be given to your dog at the end of their evaluation. The dog is to take the treat gently, and not grab or snatch the treat out of the evaluator's hand.

We had the opportunity in December to have a virtual visit, via ZOOM, for a local elementary school. The visit was used as a special treat for a child. Debi Cook and Rufus did a great job navigating the visit, answering questions and showing off Rufus' tricks. It was definitely enjoyed by all and a big thank you to Debi and Rufus.

In closing, remember.....

"Such short little lives our pets have to spend with us, and they spend most of it waiting for us to come home each day. It is amazing how much love and laughter they bring into our lives and even how much closer we become with each other because of them."

*John Grogan, American Author*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!

**First Name:** Patty

**Your Therapy Pets:** My therapy partner is Coconut, a miniature poodle, who is 9 years old.

**What types of facilities do you visit?** We visit a care center in the memory care and rehab area. We also greet participants who come for senior services or care groups at an area church.

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Pets for Life?** We enjoy meeting new people and making them smile, often the dog gives them a memory of pleasant times in the past to share with us.

Share a random fact about you or your pet. Coconut likes to "dance" on her hind legs because the people react so positively.



## An Ounce of Prevention.....

The quote attributed to Ben Franklin, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is as true today as it was in the 18th century. I'm referring to the measures pet owners must take to prevent serious and often life threatening diseases for their pets, and in our case, allowing them to be "pets for life."

I realize I'm probably preaching to the choir here. Pets for Life people are probably at the top of the list for good preventative care for their pets. However, it's a new year, and a few reminders will never hurt. I'll just mention a couple of pet health risks that sometimes fly under the radar.

Leptospirosis, referred to as "lepto", is a disease that has been around forever. It is spread by urine from rodents or wild animals. Once it gets into water or soil, the bacteria can survive for weeks or months. All it takes for an animal to contract it is contact with a mucous membrane (drinking contaminated water), or contact with skin that is abraded or irritated. Symptoms of the disease can be anything from chronic kidney disease, to rapid kidney or liver failure and death. With more dog parks and suburbia moving into areas where wild animals are frequent, leptospirosis is common. Vaccines today are more effective and less reactive than in the past. I have seen deaths from lepto in backyard dogs who had never left the yard. Fences do not keep water from draining into and pooling in your yard, and it is surprising what kind of wild-life and rodents appear in the yard while we are asleep. Diagnosing leptospirosis can be a challenge, as it can present with many symptoms. In a challenging case of illness in dogs, I tried to remember to never rule out lepto as a cause. Lepto is usually included in routine vaccinations, but it's always good to ask your veterinarian if it is included, and for his or her opinion on the vaccine.

I know, it's January. What's the risk of tick borne disease? Two years ago, after walking my dog along the edge of a field in January, I had to extract a tick from my own neck the next day. These ticks are out there just waiting for a victim. All it takes is temperatures above freezing for a little while, and they are ready for a meal. Yes, ticks are more prevalent in spring and fall, but it is important to use tick protection for your pet year round. Diseases caused by bites from ticks to pets include ehrlichiosis, borrelia (lyme) rocky mountain spotted fever, tularemia, and anaplasmosis. I have a lot of gross tick stories, but they are not rated PG. The topic is too broad to broach here, but trust me, these diseases are all bad. Your veterinarian can discuss and prescribe the best preventative for your pet and your situation. And, preventatives always work better on or in the pet, as opposed to sitting in the container unused. Most veterinary reminder systems will help keep you on track. Most veterinary reminder systems will help keep you on track.

*Dr. Bock DVM  
and Lida Rose*



### **Thank You for Your Support**

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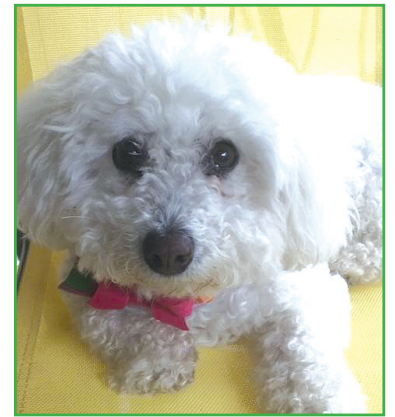
# Pets Helping People

I am really proud to say Rosi became part of Pets for Life in the summer of 2019. She is a rescue dog that I've had since January 2011. Rosi is a Bichon/Poodle mix and loves everyone. She is especially fond of children.



After our training with Pets for Life, I decided to start volunteering at the St. Luke's Hospice House. Rosi always seemed to have a sense of what to do each time we entered a patient area. I fondly remember the time we went into a room with a young man in the bed. I asked the family if he liked dogs, to which they responded "YES"! I then asked if I could put Rosi on the bed with him, and when I did, she immediately went to him and laid her head across his arm. We all knew it brought him great comfort, and the family asked to take pictures so they could share them at his "Celebration of Life" service.

I learned quickly that volunteering at the Hospice House not only brought joy to the people who were being cared for, but also the families of those patients. It was a nice diversion from their daily routine of sitting with a family member, and Rosi gave them something fun to talk about.



Rosi and I also volunteer at various care facilities. Because of the Covid Virus, Pets for Life asked volunteers to come with their pets and walk by the groups of people who were sitting outside. It was a "Parade" for patients! Now that it's cold, we haven't been able to do that, but come Spring, it will be fun to bring a smile to peoples' faces once again.



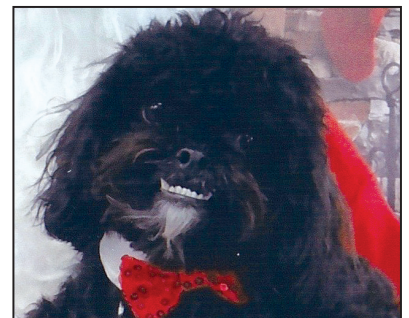
We also went through training for the R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) program, but because of the Covid Virus, we never did get started at a facility. Hopefully that will happen in our future.

We are anxious and ready to get back to our volunteering, and hope vaccines will be given soon so it will be possible.

## Happy New Year!

*"It is amazing how much love and laughter that pets bring into our lives and even how much closer we become with each other because of them." - John Grogan*

Say, "Hello" to Maximus. His favorite Pets for Life Volunteer is Shari Beikmann. He would like everyone to know that he is sooooo glad that 2020 is over!!! He is ready for 2021 and hoping to get back to visiting before too long!  
We love you Max!!!



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!



**First Name:** Robbi

**Your Therapy Pets:** Gunner/Lab mix 12½ years old and Sabre/Golden Retriever 10½ years old

**How long have you been volunteering?** Since April 26, 2010; 10½ years with Pets for Life

**What types of facilities do you visit?** We visit residential facilities that serve children and veterans.

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Pets for Life?** I love sharing my gentle dogs with others. It's so wonderful to see how they affect people of all ages in a very positive way!

**Share a random fact about you or your pet.** Both Gunner and Sabre were adopted from Wayside Waifs.



Don't forget to like our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pages/Pets-for-Life-Inc](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pets-for-Life-Inc). We post lots of fun PFL updates and trivia, and occasionally we have giveaways! Stay in the loop, join us on Facebook!



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