



A Word From Pets For Life Director, Mary Sellar...



The year 2020 has brought changes and challenges, and now as it has nearly come to an end, 2021 is quickly coming into view. COVID 19 has tremendously impacted our ability to visit in person, however, it has not affected our volunteers devotion to Pets for Life, or passion for sharing their pets and touching lives.

The Pet Parades were very successful, as the volunteers were able to visit from a distance. The warm reception and smiles is proof the pets are able to make a connection even while practicing social distancing and being separated by windows.

The end of 2020 signifies a new beginning for me as I continue to learn and settle into my new role as Program Director. I am more than ready to take on 2021, and not only continue the work in progress, but move forward with new ideas. I am most excited to work with and get to know our volunteers, the board and everyone involved with Pets for Life.

In closing, sending out a huge heartfelt thank you, and wishing everyone **Happy Holidays, and a safe and exceptional New Year.**

PETS HELPING PEOPLE

Shared by Tom Klingner and Husker



Husker and I went to St. Luke's Hospice House every Tuesday for 2 years. Then of course we were shut down in March because of COVID and we haven't been back. It seems like we had a special moment al-

most every week. Husker was the perfect therapy dog for the setting. He would enter a room and go to each person, lean on them and after a scratch or pet, he would move to the next person. He literally would "work" the room. However, one visit still holds a place in my heart.

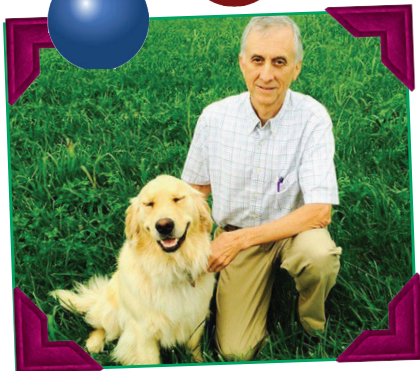
Husker and I entered the room. There were no visitors only the patient and she was in bed. She got real excited when she saw Husker. I got Husker up on a chair for better viewing and then something happened. She asked if Husker would be able to get in bed with her. That was a first for both of us. I thought why not. I carefully got that 60 pound dog on the bed and the patient and Husker cuddled together for 4 or 5 minutes and then Husker broke one of PFL's rules. He just couldn't restrain himself.

The kisses just flowed and the patient loved it. She was obviously a dog person! After I helped the patient clean her face, we said our goodbyes. Husker and I returned next week but she was gone.





Dr. Bock, DVM and Lida Rose



I recently retired from 45 years of veterinary practice. Daily I have seen the value people place on their pets. The human animal bond goes back as far in history as we can measure. This bond has survived this

long for a reason. Pets literally take care of us, as we are now discovering. I don't have to tell this group about the emotional bond between pets and people. Now we have discovered there is a physiological reason that the bond has survived and will continue. Our interaction with pets reduces our stress and anxiety, helps improve cognitive function, and reduces feelings of loneliness. Oxytocin and endorphin release helps lower our cortisol, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and also helps lower our blood pressure. The relationship with our pets obviously has mutual benefits.

Now I will address the seasonal timely topic, gastrointestinal foreign bodies. Each year as cold weather and the holidays approached, I learned I should prepare for GI surgery. The combination of people and pets forced inside together, increased stress levels, kids out of school, and routines turned upside down, all contribute to the opportunity for dogs and cats to swallow just about anything. The list of things they will eat is long, and includes but is not limited to the following: socks, underwear, golf balls, plastic toys, leather gloves, hair ties, rubber door stops, string, plastic toys, rubber balls, Christmas tree ornaments, and other unmentionables. Most of the things in this list travel into and through the stomach, but not much further, usually causing a blockage. Diagnosing the problem can be difficult, due to other possible causes and diseases that present with the same symptoms. The common garbage gut Fido dumps and eats the trash, will also present with the same symptoms (vomiting and abdominal pain.)

Surgery for the foreign objects is about the only solution, once the diagnosis is made, and the risk increases the longer the objects remain in the intestinal tract. I can recall a day close to Christmas about 20 years ago, when my partner and I performed seven abdominal surgeries, retrieving six foreign bodies in various locations throughout the intestinal tract of both dogs and cats. (One was suspected but turned up empty.) I always referred to that day as Black Friday, even though it was not the day after Thanksgiving. Instead, it was the day we were trying to close early for our holiday party. We arrived late.

One last foreign object I should talk about is Gorilla Glue. Once this glue is ingested by a dog and the material enters the stomach, it expands immediately and fills the entire stomach, stretching the stomach to such a degree, that nothing can get in or out. Getting this soccer ball sized foreign object out of the stomach is a true emergency, and it is life threatening. There is no time to waste.

We all want to enjoy the holidays, especially in the time of COVID. A little planning, preparation, and pickup and a watchful eye goes a long way to avoid a stressful trip to your veterinarian.

Thank You for Your Support



Doctors Morrill Foundation	\$1500.00
The Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation	\$2000.00
Elaine Feld Stern Charitable Foundation	\$1000.00
Friends and Family of Judy Thomasson	\$1010.00



MERRY CHRISTMAS



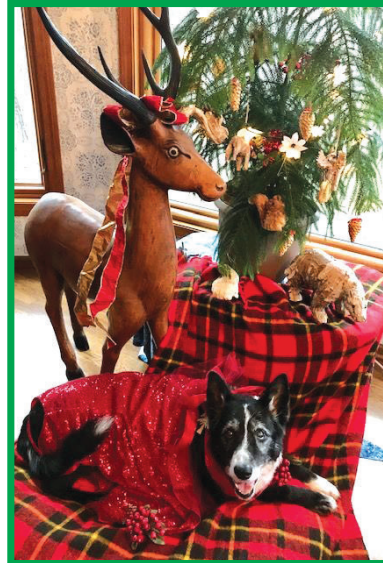
Barron has his stocking
ready!!
Donna Pearce



Elphie, Trixie, and Frappie waiting
for a Christmas cookie!
Linda Haney



Eugene with his buddies!!
Deborah Carr

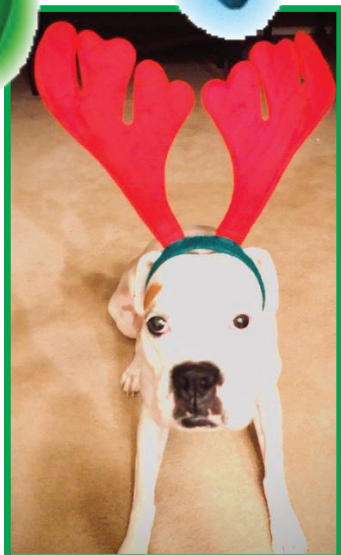


Bonnie and her reindeer
friend.
Kathy Swift



Brittany Backus and
Maggie picking out the
perfect tree.

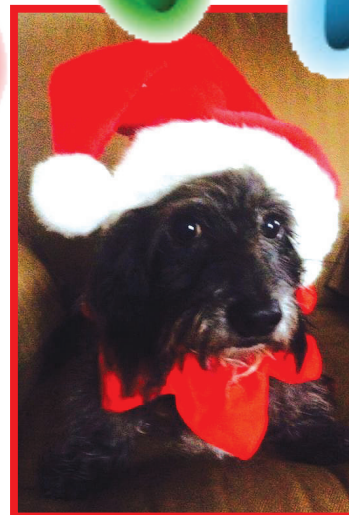




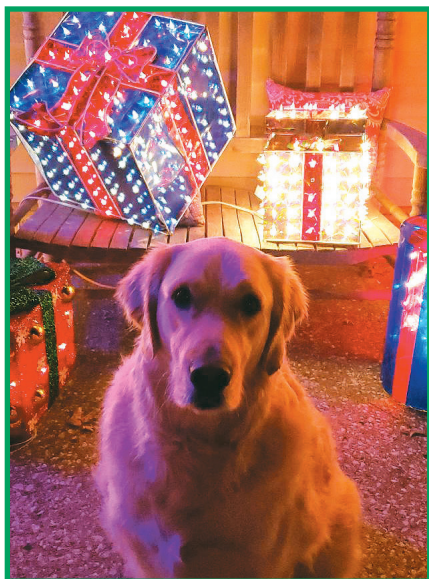
Bella is ready if Santa needs help!!
Michelle Glover



Emma is waiting by the tree.
Ann Westermann



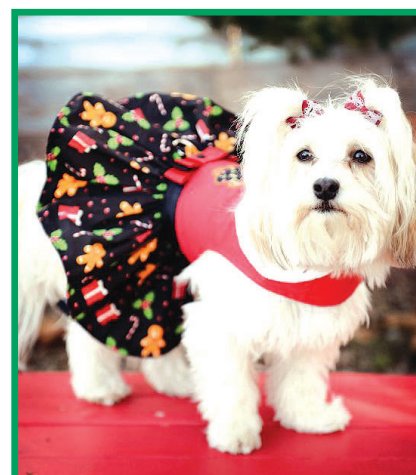
Eddie is ready for a Christmas Party!
Janice Young



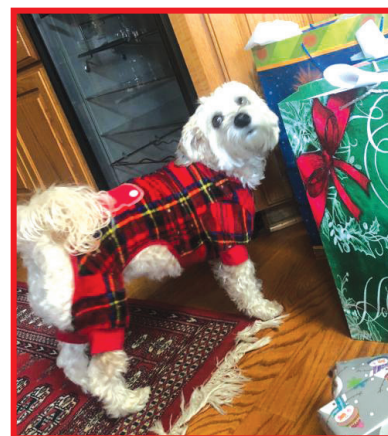
Ghost is waiting on the front porch for visitors.
Kathy Brock



Calvin in his Christmas tie
Karen Fitzgerald



Paisleigh in her favorite Christmas dress!
Heather Williams



Yogi is sure that one of these presents must be for him!
Susie Kaufman



Kenny and Esky waiting
under the tree!
Wendy Melland



Clementine and Abigail Rose help
make the front porch so pretty!!
Jean Hanson



Daisy is ready to party in her
Santa hat!!
Sue Freshman



Baxter in his favorite
Santa hat!
Cheryl Bradley



Rufus and his favorite
Christmas toys!
Debra Cook



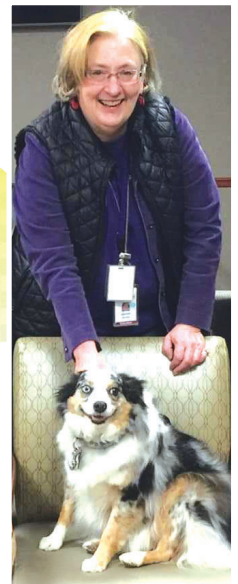
Trooper with a few of his
best friends. Carla Smith



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!

Kathy Madsen

I have two therapy pets, Marley, a seven year old miniature Australian Shepherd and Leo, a two year old Birman cat. I have been a volunteer for 15 years. Marley is my third certified dog and Leo is my second certified Birman cat. We have volunteered at a hospital, hospice, and assisted living. Both Marley and Leo are certified in the R.E.A.D. Program and also volunteer at an elementary school. Volunteering for Pets for Life has been one of the most enjoying, interesting and fulfilling things I have ever done. The amount of happiness the visits bring to many patients is almost indescribable and the animals love their work! Leo is the first cat certified in PFL as a R.E.A.D. therapy cat. Leo is also a show cat who has won many ribbons and attained the title of Grand Premier in the Cat Fanciers' Association.



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Don't forget to like our Facebook page at
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!



<https://www.instagram.com/petsforlifekc/>



Remember our New email address is:
petsforlife@kcpetsforlife.com

<http://www.kcpetsforlife.com>

Pets For Life, Inc., Executive Committee: Donna Amato, President; Joni Roeseler, Vice President; Marty Letourneau, Secretary; John McGee, Treasurer; Jack Sladkey, . Pets For Life Staff: Mary Sellaro, Program Director; Mary Gorman Volunteer Coordinator.

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