



Happy “Tails” to Eddie and Janice

Shared by

Kansas City Hospice House Volunteer Director, Kane Foster

We say “goodbye” a lot at Kansas City Hospice House. We recently had to say “goodbye and happy retirement” to our longtime pet therapy team, Janice Young-Miller and Eddie, and it was one of our hardest good-byes ever.



Eddie had been with us for an amazing twelve years, so he knew every nook and cranny and everyone who keeps treats. It was always fun to introduce him to family members and staff. (“Oh, yes, and that’s Janice, Eddie’s human. “You do pet therapy, too, so you get it.)

Everyone knew that Thursdays were Eddie’s day, and they first listened for the beautiful piano music that Janice played before their visits. Then they listened for the jingle of Eddie’s tags as he trotted down the hallways, excited to meet people. Those who did meet him were treated to the feel of his soft curls and the lovely scent of Kiehl’s dog shampoo. No dog ever smelled better.

What most people don’t know about a hospice house is how warm, friendly, and inviting it is. Sure, people are sad, but they are also incredibly supported in that space. Most of them enjoy interaction with volunteers, and Janice and Eddie provided a special kind of interaction. Sometimes, they were a distraction for people. Sometimes they were entertainment for visiting kids, which Eddie enjoyed. Sometimes they encouraged people to share memories of their own beloved animal companions. Sometimes a patient even passed away after that gentle, comforting presence left the room.

In their twelve years with us, Janice and Eddie have been part of our family, and they have been part of the memories of hundreds of families who have spent time here. While we hate to have to say goodbye, we hope that Eddie will enjoy extra time with his humans and his furry crew at home, taking naps, eating treats, and maybe even reminiscing about all of the fun and pets he had here.

VOLUNTEER ANNUAL MEETING

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, December 9, 12:30 – 3:00

Shared by John McGee, Pets for Life Board of Directors

All active volunteers are invited to attend the inaugural Volunteer Annual Meeting. The primary business purpose of the annual meeting is to elect Pets for Life Officers/Directors. Following the business session, we will enjoy holiday/festive camaraderie. This year’s gathering will be at the Johnson County Library’s Blue Valley Branch, 9000 W. 151st Street, Overland Park, Kansas. Unfortunately, the library rules do not allow our pets, but hopefully, you will attend. Email invites to follow no later than mid-November.



PETS FOR LIFE – R. E. A. D. PROGRAM

Shared by

Fran Lancaster



A library patron was overheard to say, “Well, I am confused because I went to the library with my two children for READ to the Dog Program, but all I heard was purring and meowing!! Isn’t it supposed to be Reading Education Assistance “DOGS” – R.E.A.D. session???” Well, CATS are welcome to the R.E.A.D. Program! The gentle purring sounds were from Leo, our CAT hero, who was welcoming children to sit and read a kitty story to him. Leo would like to have more feline friends join him. Yes, he does know he will have to share the spotlight!!

Whether it be a Cat or a Dog, come and join the fun as children happily gather in our libraries to share a favorite book with a CAT or Dog.

HELP WANTED

ALL PETS FOR LIFE TEAMS!!

Are you interested in becoming a Saint Luke’s Hospice House-Pets for Life Dogs on Call Team?

The Saint Luke’s Hospice House Staff and Alexis Martin, Pets for Life Volunteer, have organized a session for those interested in learning more about this program. You will have a meeting, tour the facility, and see a DOC Team in action making visits with patients, families, and staff.

Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023

Location: St. Luke’s Hospice House, 3516 Summitt Street, Kansas City, MO 64111

Time: 11:30 – 1:30 - luncheon available

WOOF, WOOF MEOW, MEOW

Contact: Alexis Martin to sign up for this event.
Pets for Life Team, 913 652 9358
alexisamartin@hotmail.com

FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS!!



Cate Smith and Barney



In 2015 a twenty-one month old black lab named Barney joined our family. Barney came to us from Guide Dog Foundation in Smithtown, New York to serve as my husband, Tim's, guide dog. Barney and Tim criss-crossed the United States traversing every environment from crowded airports to hiking trails in the national parks. By mid-year of 2022, Barney started showing signs of slowing down. After seven and a half years of service, Barney retired in January, 2023.

Even though he is no longer able to keep us with the demands of serving as a guide dog, Barney still has a lot of energy and love to share. We witnessed over the years, the joy he brought to those around him. So, I decided to train with Barney as a therapy dog team. We earned the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen Certificate in January, 2023 and in April we completed the certification process with Pets for Life, Inc. Witnessing the joy on peoples' faces and seeing the excitement in Barney's tail when he is getting attention from those he visits, tells me this is what he was meant to do.

Currently we visit Meadowlark Estates and this fall resume visiting Corpus Christi Catholic Schools, both in Lawrence, Kansas.

Pets Helping People

Thank you Milo and Donnie Moberly for sharing "pets helping people" during Take A Paws-Mental Health Fair at Longview Community College!! The students were all smiles!!



Tips from Our Trainer

Shared by Kay Lampe, Pet Therapy Evaluator

In any educational environment focus and attention are critical. Just ask any parent or teacher if they can teach children without their attention. With our dogs, getting attention is the first step in training. When we understand that attention is a behavior, it's easy to understand that training a dog to have attention is the same as training a dog to sit or come. There is no point in teaching your dog to do things if he is going to ignore you when you ask him to do them. As with other behaviors, we start with a verbal cue for attention and then reinforce it in a way that becomes a default behavior. Since reinforcement is the key to increasing the probability of behavior, it's important to use something your dog really likes as a reward. So use high value rewards like boiled chicken, sausage or cheese cut up in tiny pieces.

The most natural cue to use for getting your dog's attention is his name. In most of our training classes and behavior consultations, the first exercise we have our clients perform with their dog is the "Name Game." It's a simple, but powerful exercise to teach our dog that his name is a positive sound and that paying attention to us brings good stuff.

The Name Game Exercise:

Start inside as a low level of distraction. Call your dog's name in a happy voice—remember, this is supposed to be fun for both of you. When your dog looks at you, praise him and toss him a yummy treat. Do this lots of times until your dog responds immediately when he hears his name. Gradually work in more distracting environments until you get a solid response in different situations. You might start in a bedroom then move to the kitchen then move to a garage or porch then move to the back yard, etc. Remember to add distraction very gradually and be quick and generous with the rewards.

Every interaction with your dog is a training opportunity to make sure to reward him when he gives you his attention in a distracting environment. The reward doesn't have to be food. It can be praise, toys, play or merely your attention. With time, he'll learn that paying attention to you is the best choice that he can make.

Thank You for Your Support



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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/>

Welcome to Our New Pets for Life Volunteer Teams!!

- Mary Rohr and Tia
- Crystal Shaver and Grace
- Carrie Homstad and Chance
- Frank Riotta and Louie Pancakes
- Micala Green and Kosho
- Alicia Trigo and Lassie
- Julie Harris and Penny
- Catherine Wooster and Boss
- Patricia Adams and Knickerbocker
- Janet Pence and Teddy
- Nancy Meredith and Rylee
- Tracie Wright and Baker
- Dana Hoepfer and Buddy
- Courtney Courtney and Kira
- Erin McIntosh and Nala May
- Mark Shore and Maggie
- Libby Rohr and Leo