



# Pals

Fall 2014



## From behind the pile . . .

Many years ago, my grandmother gave me a Pooh Bear for my birthday. Little did I know that with that gift would begin a lifelong love for that amazing little fellow who was brought to life in my mind through the word of AA Milne and his journeys of the 100 Acre Woods.

The words of wisdoms that were shared through Pooh's journeys with his pals Roo, Eeyore, Tigger, Piglet, Christopher Robin, Kanga, Rabbit and Owl seemed to be, at the time, aimed at my young mind and heart. Now however, I realize that they were meant to be carried with me and drawn upon as needed, when the situation presented itself.

Now you are probably saying to yourself, WOW, PALS Executive Director relies on the wisdom of a storybook about a yellow bear to help her lead the organization. This could be scary! But fear not! The little guy, who often self-proclaims to have no brain, is a pretty bright little guy. And his quotes are often pretty thought provoking—at least to me.



To me, Pooh and his adventures were about change and learning how to grow with and accept them. To listen to the reasons why they are happening, not necessarily always agreeing, but trying to understand all sides.

PALS has gone through quite a bit of growth and change over the past year, and there is more coming. While it may not always appear to be obvious why the change is necessary, it is always important to try to understand why it is happening. What is equally as important is to your part in the change and how important your feedback and involvement is.



One Pooh quote I love goes like this: *“When you see someone putting on his Big Boots, you can be pretty sure that an Adventure is going to happen.”* Well, PALS has its Big Boots on and we are going on an adventure. New programs, new procedures and policies. We love that you are all a part of it and that there will be new volunteers coming on board as we continue.

What PALS does is so incredibly important, and without you it would not be possible. I hope you will be as excited about the changes that are happening in the New Year as we are.

Dana

My door is always open if you have any questions.

# Bats test positive for rabies in Southern Alberta

A Silver-haired bat was submitted to a veterinary clinic on Aug. 18, 2014 in Pincher Creek, AB after a 3.5-month-old puppy had captured it. The bat was tested for rabies in the CFIA lab; results confirmed that it was infected.

The owners of the puppy have elected to place their puppy under a six-month supervised quarantine as it was too young to start its normal course of rabies vaccinations. The owners are also consulting with the Medical Officer of Health for any human health concerns.



This occurrence serves as a reminder to Alberta pet owners that the rabies virus is indeed present amongst some species of bats in Alberta, and that vaccination against rabies is the best defense. We strongly encourage you to talk to your veterinarian about vaccinations.

This is the second confirmed case of rabies amongst the bat population in Alberta this year; both cases were in

Southern Alberta.

*Article originally posted on Alberta Veterinary Medical Association Facebook page.*



## THANKS VOLUNTEERS!

For the second year, PALS volunteers have stepped forward to man our concession booth at the Shaw Charity Classic. We had a blast serving up bratwurst, hot dogs, grilled cheese sandwiches, and of course lots of beer! There were a couple of days that were a tad chilly, but PALS volunteers are troopers! Thanks again!

## VISITING VOLUNTEERS PLEASE NOTE

**No beds, toys or treats are allowed to be brought with you to visits!**

This policy is for the safety of your own pet and to ensure the visiting enjoyment of everyone who is participating.

**If you have any questions please contact the office at 403-250-7257**

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



November  
20 to 23  
Telus Convention  
Centre

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR

Booth Relief Shift times: 11:30—3:30 pm  
and 4:30—8:30 pm

And with your PALS Pet at the PR Booth  
Shift times: 10 to noon; noon to 2 pm;  
2 to 4 pm; 4 to 6 pm; 6 to 8:30 pm

Call 403-250-7257 or email  
diana@palspets.com



**PAY YOUR 2015  
PALS Memberships Dues  
before Dec. 31, 2014**

and your name is entered to win this collectible  
**Thomas Kinkade Christmas Express Train**  
(steam locomotive and tender, track not included), valued at \$99.00 (no cash value)  
RENEWING MEMBERS ONLY

Donated by Mereski Jewellers,  
Fort Macleod



Can be paid through PayPal, by  
credit card, cheque or you can  
drop by the office and pay cash.

## Check out the new PALS website!

Design donated by  
Heather Johnstone  
and RADIUS Creative

THANKS SO MUCH!!!!

**RADIUS** CREATIVE

**APPLY NOW!**  
Complete the application forms necessary to become a PALS volunteer.

**PALS INTAKE PROCESS**  
Would you and your pet like to be part of a PALS therapy team? Find out how to apply and what to expect.

**PALS MEMBER ZONE**  
For existing PALS volunteers. Post all of the forms, schedules and other information you need.

# Visiting in an end of life care environment

## What is End-of-Life Care?

End-of-life care refers to the care of a person with a terminal illness or condition that has become advanced, progressive and incurable. The focus of treatment is on relieving and preventing the suffering of the person. It generally uses a multidisciplinary approach, relying on input from doctors, pharmacists, nurses, chaplains, social workers, psychologists, and other health professionals in offering care to relieve suffering in all areas of a patient's life. This allows the team to address physical, emotional, spiritual, and social concerns that arise with advanced illness.

Families and friends are generally involved in making decisions and supporting the person throughout the process.

## How Can a Dog Contribute?

The therapy dog with a gentle, accepting nature can become an important part of the care team. Patients, visitors, and staff will look forward to their special time with you and your dog, even if it just for a few moments. Those who are in an end-of-life environment are subjected to many medical procedures, a loss of independence, bad news, depression, anxiety, loneliness, to name but a few. The soft touch and the break from the routine of the day offered by your dog will help to relieve some of the feelings associated with these challenges. Your dog might also provide some much-needed motivation to complete difficult tasks such as eating or walking a set distance.



## What to Expect in an End-of-Life Care Environment

- Be aware that a patient's condition can fluctuate greatly from one visit to another. Expect that some visits will be shorter or longer at times and perhaps even cancelled because the patient is not feeling well enough. Always ask if the person is interested in a visit when you arrive.
- Although a person is in the final stages of life, he/she still has needs, hopes, and something to contribute. Patients still derive pleasure from even simple gestures such as brushing or cuddling your dog.
- Patients may become emotional when you first meet them with your dog.
- Often this is related to the fact that your dog reminds them of a pet they may have lost or had to give up because of their illness
- Your visits benefit not only patients, but their families and friends. They may spend many hours at a patient's bedside and are likely to relish the short respite that your visit provides.
- You will be visiting a busy environment, filled with a variety of sights, sounds, and smells. Be sure to give yourself and your dog sufficient time to adjust to this environment.

## Some Tips for Visiting in the End-of-Life Care Environment

- Many patients count the days until your dog's next visit, as they may be limited in their activities, mobility, and interests. Try not to miss subsequent visits
  - Encourage staff to let you know if they have met someone who might benefit from your visit. Because patients pass away on a regular basis, you are likely to meet a few new people each time you visit.
- Don't feel that you have to be engaged in conversation for the duration of your visit. A quiet exchange between the person and your dog can be as just as beneficial. Also, there is no need to discuss the person's illness or personal circumstances, unless he/she initiates it. Try to focus on other aspects of the person's life if you do talk.
- Take time to visit with staff members, as they greatly benefit from a few moments with you and your dog.
- Be aware of your own state of mind and the emotional impact that your visits have on you and your dog. Watch for signs of "compassion fatigue."
  - Remember that you will be overhearing confidential information that is not to be shared with anyone.
  - If a staff member arrives during one of your visits, offer to return or to reschedule your time. Health care professionals are extremely busy and end-of-life care often requires care to be delivered at precise time intervals.
  - If you remain flexible, the staff is likely to offer you some flexibility as well.
  - Find out if you should wake the person up if they are sleeping. Many people are crushed to find out they have missed out on a visit because they were not awake. If the person does not wake, leave a note indicating you stopped by.
  - Never attempt to move or feed a person. This is best left to qualified staff who are aware of the patient's specific needs or restrictions.

## In the Final Days

- Consider continuing to visit even if the person is unconscious. This will allow you to continue to visit close ones who have come to enjoy your visits.

## A Final Note

Visiting someone who is in an end-of-life care environment can appear daunting at first because it forces us to consider death and dying. It can, however, be an extremely rewarding experience, as everyone - and your dog - provides many opportunities for laughing, caring, and living. In order to make your experience manageable and gratifying:

*Know what to EXPECT, always show RESPECT and take time to REFLECT.*

# Charity Golf Tournament

This past August, PALS was very fortunate to be the charity of choice for the BDC Charity Golf Tournament. PALS was represented on the links by Jill Chambers, Paul Hughes, Brett Plaizier and Kelly Lee. Before the tournament started Lindsay Franklin and Berkley and Wendy Bull and Maria helped out selling mulligans and 50/50 tickets.



PALS President Holly Yaschuk was on hand at BDC office to accept the cheque for their fundraising efforts. Marylou Connerly and McDuff and Dana Swystun and Lily joined in the festivities and together they received a cheque for over \$21,000.00 for PALS.



### **PALS Pet Health Assessments**

must be submitted yearly for all visiting pets

All visiting pets must have up-to-date **Rabies Vaccinations Certificates** in their PALS files

Please ensure that you have submitted these to the office for your pets!

PET HEALTH ASSESSMENT FORMS CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE

**Are you interested in ordering a PALS hoodie?**



**Give the office a call!  
403-250-7257**

We need to know how many people would be interested before we can order



# SAIT Mental Health Week Puppy Room

