



Pals

Winter 2014

From behind the pile . . .

It is hard to believe that another year is coming to a close. And what a year it has been for PALS! At least in my mind it seems that way. We seem to be gaining momentum, and what better time for that than when we are entering our 30th Year! Wow! What a milestone! You have so much to be proud of!

Specials visits were up in 2014. We increased the number of facilities that PALS visits at, brought close to 80 new volunteers into the program and increased our media presence significantly. And 2015 is bringing even more incredible things PALS way!

We have three new programs starting, our new revamped evaluation process will be put into action (see inside for details) and we are celebrating our 30th birthday! How incredible of a year is this going to be!

But first, let's take a moment to first finish off 2014. Enjoy the time over the holidays with family and friends. Take some time to do something you have never done before—enjoy each moment to its fullest!

It is time for the PALS office staff holiday break, but before we leave I would like to share these words of novelist Oren Arnold, "Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect."

Thank you all for making my 2014 wonderful. See you in 2015!

Diana



2014 Snapshot

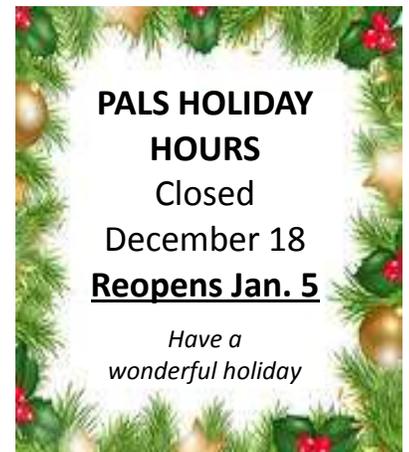
Active volunteers	294
Total hours volunteered.....	31000+
New volunteers	78
Special Visits.....	133
New facilities	3
PALS Dogs.....	248
PALS Cats.....	9
PALS Bunnies.....	2



PALS HOLIDAY HOURS

Closed
December 18
Reopens Jan. 5

Have a wonderful holiday



PALS Palliative Care visiting team to be created

The New Year will see the creation of a new team that utilized to visit on an on-call basis specifically for Palliative Care units. This team is being developed in response to the marked increase in demand that PALS has seen for a need in this area and a willingness in its volunteers, as usual, to step up and fill that void.

This group of individuals will be different though, from other teams, in that this will not be the groups regular placement, but rather an as needed—when needed visit. In addition, the members of this team will received additioned training and courses before they are able to visit. This is due to the challenges they may face visiting in an end-of-life care environment and PALS commitment to ensure that the volunteers receive the best support possible.

If you are an active PALS volunteer in good standing and are interested in putting your name forward for this incredible opportunity, please contact Diana at the office, either through email at Diana@palspets.com or by phone at 403-680-1796.

We are anticipating a large response to this call for volunteers, and will be choosing the team carefully and without prejudice, so please if you are interested put your name forward.



PALS volunteers invited to be part of study



Last year PALS visited the campus of St. Mary's University on two separate occasions. As a follow-up to these very successful visits, St. Mary's researchers, Dr. McArthur and Dr. Syrnyk, are seeking to find out: What Makes a PAL? They are looking to gather information about the special people, and their pets, who make these events so successful.

More information regarding this study will be provided via email in early 2015.



We're launching an enhanced evaluation process in 2015!



The therapy animal industry and practices have evolved significantly since PALS' inception 30+ years ago. After spending a year researching and consultation with other therapy animal organizations and animal welfare experts on best practices, I'm pleased to make you aware of some exciting enhancements being made to PALS evaluation days in 2015:

New evaluation process – New PALS evaluation criteria has been created using therapy pet industry best practices and Alberta Health Services regulations as a guide. The new PALS evaluation criteria will be similar to the “Canine Good Neighbour” evaluation used by the Canadian Kennel Club, with therapy-specific tests included.

New evaluation site - We've “made do” with the PALS office over the years, conducting evaluations in tighter-than-ideal quarters, and sadly we know that some animals have not been successful at the evaluation solely because the venue was too small. We're partnered with Two Paws Up to provide space for our evaluation days in their beautiful space located at 9827 Horton Road SW.

Cat and bunny evaluations will continue to take place at the PALS office and will be scheduled on an “as required” basis.

CALL FOR EVALUATORS

We're looking to train more evaluators in January & February to help our evaluations run smoothly in a larger space.

Interested candidates must have a full range of physical mobility, be able to attend evaluation days and have good dog sense.

INTEREST?

Please send an email and expression of interest to diana@palspets.com

Note: Evaluators must commit to attending one evaluator in-service annually.

Wondering how the new evaluation process may impact you?

Here are some of the questions we're anticipating from our valued volunteers about the evaluation process:

When this take effect?

After January 1st, all dog/handler teams will be evaluated to our new evaluation standards. Our first evaluation day for new volunteers and age re-screens will take place in April 2015.

Will all pets be required to participate in the new evaluation process, even rescues?

All dogs will be evaluated using our new evaluation process, starting on January 1st. Cat and bunny evaluations will continue to take place at the PALS office and will be scheduled on an "as required" basis.

Do I have to do the new evaluation process?

All dog/handler teams wishing to be active PALS volunteers will be required to participate in the new evaluation process when their certification comes up for renewal on their pet's 5th, 10th and age rescreen anniversaries. There will be no "grandfather" clause.

Why was the previous PALS evaluation criteria changed?

The therapy animal industry and practices have evolved significantly since PALS' inception 30+ years ago. The enhancements made to the PALS evaluation criteria were made after a year of research and consultation with other therapy animal organizations, Alberta Health Services and animal welfare experts. We are confident that our new evaluation practices will enhance the safety and wellbeing of PALS human and animal volunteers, as well as the individuals we visit.

Are you making it harder for people to volunteer with PALS?

Our new evaluation process ensures a consistent standard of behavior and temperament (and evaluation criteria) for all dog/handler teams coming into the program using a wider variety of criteria to see the dog/handler "in action". The new criteria will be available on the website starting in January 2015, so new and existing volunteers can familiarize themselves with the evaluation stations and prepare their pet accordingly.

If my pet isn't successful in the new evaluation process, what happens?

As with all PALS evaluations, if a dog/handler team isn't successful at evaluation, the evaluators will discuss areas for further practice with the handler and advise if participation at another evaluation would be beneficial.

I'm confident that the enhancements we're making to PALS evaluation criteria will increase the safety and wellbeing of our dog/handler volunteer teams as well as the safety of the individuals we visit.

2nd Annual PALS Volunteer Awards



We are looking for 3 volunteers to help select this years recipients of the Volunteer Awards. **If you are interested in being on this short term committee please email Diana at Diana@palspets.com.**

Awards are giving out in three categories:

- ◆ PALS Volunteer of the Year
- ◆ PALS Team Lead of the Year
- ◆ PALS Volunteer Animal of the Year

Awards are given out at the PALS Annual General Meeting in April of 2015.

Details on how to nominate your choice(s) will be emailed out in early January.



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

PALS HOODIES ARE IN!



Give the office a call!

403-250-7257

Dental Care for your Pet

Prevent Periodontal Disease

Periodontal disease, which is disease affecting the teeth and gums is very common in dogs and cats. It can affect animals both young and old. Dental care for your pet can prevent the development of periodontal disease. Dental care can prevent tooth loss, sore gums, decrease bad breath, reduce bacterial growth in the mouth, and prevent the migration of the bacteria in the mouth to organs such as the heart, liver and kidneys.



How do I know if my pet has dental problems?

You may notice bad breath, discoloration of the teeth, loss of teeth, or reddened gums (gingivitis). Often, there are no obvious signs to the pet owner. The best way to identify dental disease is a thorough examination by your veterinarian. Your veterinarian may recommend that you initiate some care for your pet at home, or he or she may recommend a dental cleaning be performed. Complete evaluation of the extent of the dental disease often requires anesthesia or sedation.

What can I do for my pet at home?

There are several options available, some of which include brushing the teeth, special diets, oral (mouth) rinses, and chewable treats. Please discuss with your veterinarian or animal health technologist what homecare program would be suitable for you and your pet.

What is involved with a dental cleaning?

This is a procedure that is done under general anesthesia at the veterinary clinic. Your pet's health will need to be evaluated prior to the general anesthetic. This initially involves a thorough physical examina-

tion. Often the veterinarian will also recommend preanesthetic blood testing and intravenous fluids. With modern anesthetic agents and monitoring equipment, anesthesia in veterinary medicine is now considered very safe. Blood testing and intravenous fluids can help minimize any risk or complications associated with the anesthetic.

The procedure itself involves a thorough examination of the mouth by an animal health technologist and a veterinarian working as a team. This may include some dental xrays. The animal technologist is responsible for the cleaning. The cleaning of the teeth involves scaling (removing plaque and tartar from the teeth, both above and below the gum line), polishing, and antibacterial rinses and/or fluoride treatments. Sometimes a tooth can't be saved and it needs to be extracted (removed) by the veterinarian. Some veterinarians are trained to do more advanced procedures such as root canals.

After the dental cleaning, your pet may require antibiotics if there was evidence of infection in the mouth. Your pet may also need some analgesics (painkillers).

Together we can help your pet enjoy improved dental health.

As published on the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association Website (www.abvma.ca)





SAIT Puppy Room



Art Market



Inn from the Cold Special Visit



U of C
Puppy Room



St Ambrose Puppy Room



Art Market



Puppy Room



Art Market



Cocktails
and Critters



Children's
Hospital



Telus Spark



SAIT Puppy
Room



Breakfast TV



Wentworth Hallowe'en



Telus Spark

cocktails for critters

MODELLING by PALS

Featuring: Fergus Kempenich, McDuff Connery, Jasmine Slater, Maggie Sandwith, Chaser Yaschuk, Berkley Franklin, Harry Lee, Ruby Yaschuk, Sheba Barron, Charlie Witzcak and Raven Hughes





PALS memberships are due!!



and membership has it privileges!

PALS members:

- receive either a reduced fee or no charge to workshops hosted by PALS.
- Voting privileges at the AGM
- PALS quarterly newsletter
- Discounted admission at any event that PALS hosts



The most convenient way for all concerned is to go to our website www.palspets.com, click on PALS Members Zone and then scroll down to the Renew Membership box and click on it. You can pay your membership online using a secure PayPal, by personal cheque and mailing into the office or by calling the office with your credit card number. However you would like to do it, we are more than happy to help you out.



**If you have any questions please
do not hesitate to contact the
office and Diana, Joan or Linda
would be happy to help you**

403-250-7257