



PALS PRESS

Newsletter of Calgary's Pet Access League Society

FALL 2004

Inside this issue:

United Way	1
Commitment	2
Casino	2
Art Market	3
Fundraising	3
Uniforms	4
PALS Shirts	4
PALS is 20!	4

Dates to Remember:

- * Pet Expo - Oct 29-31
- * Art Market - Nov 18-21
- * Bingos: Nov 22, 2004
Jan 22, 2005
Mar 23, 2005
- * Casino - Jan 27, 28 2005
- * PALS Picnic June 19 2005

UNITED WAY DONOR CHOICE PROGRAM



Do you know that you can select the recipient of your United Way donation?

The United Way has a Donor Choice Program that allows you to do just that. If you would like to see your money go towards supporting the PALS program all you need to do is:

- 1) Choose PALS Pet Access League Society as the designated recipient of your donation
- 2) Provide the Charitable Registration # 10781 1879 RR0001.

** It is imperative you quote this number, if not, funds will not go to PALS.

What a great way to make a difference --- a few dollars deducted each pay cheque. Each of you, as PALS volunteers, knows what that difference feels like each and every visit.

United Way is a great vehicle to enable us to continue our good work. Obviously, the more awareness generated for PALS will enable more visits that, in turn, will create more smiles for those we visit and hugs for our fur children.



COMMITMENT - from a Team Leader's Perspective

I made a good decision one day a few years back. In fact, it was a great decision. One that has cemented my belief and spirit of volunteerism. I chose to take my commitment to a new level. My team is the BEST TEAM IN THE WORLD. They are a colorful group with personalities that sing. I want to be a part of the excitement this clan generates at each and every visit. That is, when everyone shows up.

Wouldn't it be nice if I would receive a phone call or an Email if someone were unable to make it due to say, a broken toe. Oh, I know, you won a trip to Mexico and were in such a rush to pack. Seriously though, I wait and wonder. Is everything OK? Did someone get hurt? Or is seriously ill? I want to know because I truly care about my team.

Then comes the part I do not relish ... I have to make up excuses when the people ask "Where's the big dog with the big wet nose?" or even better, "I've been waiting all week to see Spunky, where is he?" My eyes drop, my chest falls a bit, and I meekly say that "I don't know – they made a commitment to be here." I'm sure everything is fine (I hope) and we continue with our visit. Oh sure, I'm disappointed when only 2 out of 5 of my team are at a visit, but what about the people at the facility? They are expecting a loud and laughing bunch of people and pets to come crashing in on their world for one short hour. An hour they have been looking forward to for what seems like an eternity.

You've been there you know the power of numbers. It's simple, the more happy people and happy pets that can invade the sterile halls of a facility, the more happy faces we leave behind. But remember, we always promise to be back. Some days I leave my visit thinking that was so GOOOOD, we should stay longer. I know my PALS pet is tired and likely really thirsty so I do what I must do. We say our farewells, I thank my team (the BEST TEAM IN THE WORLD) for the wonderful visit.

I want to see you all next visit because you are the heart and the spirit of this whole big thing we do together. I have to be there for you guys --- it's my job. See you next time!

BIG NEWS - We Have Our Casino Dates!

January 27 and 28 in the New Year is our "CASH COW". We are fortunate to have our casino booked for 2005. That is a Thursday and Friday night. We could sure use a few dedicated people to flesh out our shifts. Here's a quick refresher of what you could be doing at the casino:

The General Manager - The big kahoona! Responsible for the total operation and control of it all.

The Banker - Yup, gets to touch the cash. Busy during opening, shift changes and closing of casino. Math skills helpful.

The Cashier - Not recommended for colour-blind volunteers. You cash in chips and make change, have your own float. Requires concentration and accuracy in addition to manual dexterity.

The Chip Runner - A mover. You courier chip orders from games tables. Busy at opening and closing. Can you carry up to five pounds of chips?

The Count Room Supervisor - No, you are not required to handle cash. Works with Financial Control Supervisor recording cash counts and game wins and losses.

The Count Room Staff - Ya hoo! The fun stuff --- sorts and counts cash. You must like money and be good working with your hands.

If you are interested in any of the positions, please fill out the enclosed Casino Volunteer form and fax it to the office at 250-9273.

Thanks.

ART MARKET NEWS

Now that summer is over, I have started sifting through all of the responses to my request for Art Market volunteers. I have begun scheduling and I'm currently confirming the availability of those who offered their services for this important fundraising event. It looks like we still need a few people to help out so, if you would like to volunteer at this event, please contact the office or email me at artmarket@palspets.com. There are openings for all shifts but mainly Friday Nov. 19 PM shift (4:30pm-8:30pm), Saturday and Sunday all shifts. I am particularly looking for Booth Relief volunteers and Raffle Sales people.

Please see the attached Volunteer Sign Up Form and fax it to the PALS Office at 250-9273 or you can e-mail me the position, date and time you are available at artmarket@palspets.com.

I had briefly described in a previous newsletter some of the changes made to Art Market this year and thought that I would elaborate a little more as I feel they are so positive. First of all we received an offer that we could 't refuse from the company who produces the Art Market. They were approached by a purveyor of pet related products who was willing to sublet our booth for basically the same amount of money that we make off of booth sales. Same amount of money for a lot less work. No procuring suppliers, set up, inventory control, booth volunteers, money handling or tear down. Plus we wouldn't have any costs to upgrade the PALS booth to Art Market standards. Remember this show is becoming increasingly upscale and our booth would have to reflect this. We still have our PR booth and we would still be doing the booth relief work so those sources of income would not change. It doesn't take a lot of logic to determine that there were huge advantages to accepting this offer, and the Board of Directors approved these changes last Spring.

You may have also heard that those doing booth relief will be responsible for a larger number of booths. Also the shift times have been shortened and hopefully this translates into very little "stand around" time. So if you want to shop you'll have to schedule time before or after your shift. We want your volunteer time to fly by so we are planning on keeping you busy.

All of these changes have allowed us to reduce both the overhead and the total number of volunteers that we need for this event. Fiscal responsibility coupled with an increased respect for our volunteers' valuable time. I look forward to meeting you all at Art Market this year. I am very appreciative and encouraged by the support and positive response you have shown me so far and I anticipate a very successful and FUN Art Market.

See you in November.

Susan Douglas, Art Market Volunteer Coordinator

BINGO UPDATES AND OTHER FUNDRAISING NEWS

Many thanks to those of you who volunteered, some at the last minute, for either or both of our June 15 and September 23 bingo dates. Finding bingo volunteers has never been easy but it has become increasingly difficult for a number of reasons. Our bingo coordinator Audrey Giefer probably has the most difficult job of anyone in this organization and I commend her on her dedication and perseverance that ensures we have enough volunteers for each event.

Still the death knell for bingo is sounding. Partial non-smoking bylaws, other forms of gambling and other changes have already had an effect on bingo attendance and, when Calgary goes smokeless, we can expect bingo revenues to disappear.

This means that we must develop other sources of revenue generation in an already over saturated market. How does a little program survive when larger more visible charities are often failing in their efforts to sell gala or raffle tickets? How can we compete with organizations that have paid staff whose only job function is funding development or media relations? We can't, but then again we don't need as much revenue as the larger organizations do. We run on a shoestring. Wages are kept to a minimum, our employees have no benefit package and almost every stick of furniture in the office was donated. Sure we have the latest in computer technology but it is cost effective because we don't have to hire as many employees. We also have the office, but is there anyone in the group who would be willing to host pet screenings, orientations, meetings, hundreds of interview sessions and store the multitude of records that we keep in their home? Oh and don't forget there would be Sandra, Joan and their respective pets arriving for work each weekday. I suspect not, at least not for long.

So what do we do? Well the PALS Board is looking into developing alternative sources for funding but, in the meantime, we would like each of you to take a small amount of time to see what you can do as an individual. Obviously there's the United Way's Donor's Choice Program. Does your employer have a community funding initiatives program in place where you could apply for a donation? Maybe your employer has a matching donation program. How about a donation through the Calgary Foundation to Marg and Ray Ellard Memorial Fund? After all PALS is the sole recipient of an annual grant from this fund. How about arranging for PALS to receive the proceeds from the sale of mulligans at your company's annual golf tournament? Be creative and keep it simple.

*And remember it is not the individual amounts but rather
the amount of individuals who help out that counts.*

SHIRTS, SCARVES and LEASHES

PALS Pets and their loyal caregivers work very hard to get in and stay involved with our organization. You know what I mean, you have all navigated the hoops and the hurdles --- and you made it! You are an elite group of dedicated souls that make a difference each and every time you support PALS at the visits. That said, wearing your PALS shirt, name tag, and ensuring your pet is outfitted with the scarf and leash will signify your pride and commitment to our cause.

Part of our jobs, as visitors, is public relations. Having the visual show of PALS blue is an awesome showstopper. People stop and take notice because they know something special is happening. And, indeed it is! WE'RE WITH PALS AND PROUD OF OUR ACHIEVEMENT.

Guess what? There is another reason we must strive to always have our pets wear their scarves and PALS leashes. It's a very serious issue with our insurance company's liability coverage. You see, the short leashes are designed to protect # 1 (your pet) from a number of dangers. We, as caregivers, will always put our pet's safety first. What the leashes do (other than identify our PALS team) is prevent your pet from accidentally ingesting pills on the floor. Or, if you're not careful, your pet may get on the elevator without you and you'll be searching the facility. (I'm sure you'll laugh about it someday) Was that a pill Fido ate or was it a candy? The short leash gives you, the eagle eye scout, a chance to check out the unknown treasure your pet has found before he can swallow.

Our insurance company's liability coverage for PALS hinges on two things: One, we must pay the premiums. Two, that we do not have any claims. It is very possible that should we ever have a claim, they would discontinue coverage. That means PALS would be no more.

Now you know the scoop on the fuss about the "uniform".

It's a small price to pay to outfit our troops --- our working animals.

Besides, I think we look sharp and ready for action.

HAVE YOU EARNED YOUR PALS SHIRT YET?

By now most, if not all of you should have volunteered enough "extra" hours to have earned one of our PALS t-shirts. If you do not yet have one please contact the PALS office so we can make sure that you receive yours.

We'd hate to miss anyone!

PALS TURNS 20!!!

In 2005 PALS will be celebrating its 20th anniversary. To celebrate this important milestone PALS will be hosting a huge picnic on June 19th, 2005 at Riveredge Park. If you would like to coordinate this event or help in any way, please contact the PALS office at 250-7257 or email us at info@palspets.com

FINAL WORD

Well I hope that you've guessed by now that PALS had a "guest writer" for most of this newsletter. Her name is Kathy Morgan and she and her pet Mocha have been volunteers with PALS for the past six years. Kathy is currently between jobs so is helping us in the office as an occasional break from her job search. When I handed her this assignment she jumped in with both feet and, I'm sure you'll agree added some energy to my tired and worn out scribbling.

Thanks Kathy and I'll take you up on your offer to help with the future newsletters.



Charitable Registration # 10781 1879 RR0001

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Paul Rintoul
Vice President: Gus van Heusden
Treasurer: Paul Klaassen

DIRECTORS

Jim Heaton
Brian Jack
James Miller
Dr. Irene Phillips
Angie Young

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Sandra Johnston

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Joan Andersen

PET ACCESS LEAGUE SOCIETY

3019 - 21 Street N.E.
Calgary, Alberta
T2E 7T1

Telephone: 250-PALS (7257)

Fax: 250-9273

E-mail: info@palspets.com

Website: www.palspets.com

Newsletter Editor: Denise Ronsky