2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Bringing People and Animals Together for Healing

animal@therapyanimalssa.org
210-614-6734
Kathryn Meade  
President

This year we completed our 30th year of service. As an all-volunteer organization, the annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on our mission and to recognize our dedicated volunteers. Our volunteers are important ambassadors spreading the message of the power of the human-animal bond and bringing people and animals together for healing. Our organization continues to engage in proactive opportunities to serve our community.

We are grateful for the many community members and others who believe in our mission and who have supported our work through grants, donations, sponsorships, and memorials. This support allows us to serve those who are in a vulnerable population free of charge.

We strive to meet or exceed local, national and where applicable, international standards. This includes our ongoing commitment to professionalism and remaining current with new health policies that might impact our work and staying well-informed of national and international research in human-animal relationships. We are an affiliate member of the International Association of Human-Animal Interactions Organization (IAHAIO).

Our Board of Directors provides guidance as we adapt to the changes in the field of animal activities and therapy, the accompanying intra-organizational relationships, and overall community needs. We encourage our members to attend Board meetings and to be active members in all aspects of the organization. Contributions by many, both as a human-animal team and as individuals, are all valued and needed.

As the outgoing president, I have been truly honored to serve this organization and am excited about the future and the program development that is in progress.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kathryn Meade, President  
Therapy Animals of San Antonio
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal Attainment</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Electronic Policy Manual/Forms** |Continued to review programs and needs for further development  
• Revised new Team registration processes  
• Updated various policies within the Volunteer System for full membership access  
• Ensured and supported independent processes for Pet Partners and Local registrations processes  
• Scanned old records for electronic storage in the “cloud”  
• Conducted Evaluator and Instructor meetings to address changes and ensure processes that support teams and current best practices |
| **Increase consistent use of Volunteer System / capture real contributions** |Orientation to system upon joining  
• Reminders and support to use system offered periodically  
• Ongoing encouragement to report all service provided!! (volunteers contribute more volunteer time than recorded)  
• Ongoing monitoring of membership |
| **Increase or maintain our connections and networks with our sponsors, facilities, and community** |Holiday cards sent to facilities  
• Facilitated service through established member liaisons at high volume program sites  
• Continued educational presentations to various community organizations |
| **Build and maintain presence in the professional human-animal community** |Affiliate member of the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organization (IAHAIO) |
| **Funding** |Successful 20th Annual Fiesta® Pooch Parade  
• Funding from supporting donors  
• GuideStar – Platinum Level achieved  
• Continued good stewardship of funds |
| **Build and sustain membership capacity** |Identification, development and training of new evaluators and instructors to support new team learning and increased opportunities for evaluation  
• Improved mentorships and follow-up contacts for new teams |
| **Succession Planning** |Engaged members in governance – circulated agendas, minutes, invited to Board meetings, made 1:1 contacts  
• Sent Volunteer System general announcements and notices  
• Aligned membership interests and competencies with opportunities  
• Solicited members for open Board positions and other areas of organizational need |
Gerald Dubinski  
Vice-President

Gerald has worked to learn about all aspects of the organization with a focus on retention of teams. He has been very active in mentoring new members and visits with Bonnie at the Methodist and Methodist Children’s Hospital in addition to special group events. He achieved the American Kennel Club (AKC) Therapy Dog Advanced (THDA) Title, an achievement that recognizes his achievement of 100 community visits. He is well on his way to the next level that requires 200 visits.

Gerald stepped down from this position after being elected President at the annual meeting in November 2018. Lisa Lejk was appointed to fill the V-P opening.

Lynda Melendez  
Secretary

Lynda concluded her 4th year as Secretary, capturing the minutes of monthly meetings and sending out cards and letters as needed. At the annual meeting in November she turned over the reins to newly elected Tamara Yates for the upcoming two-year term. Lynda continues to be actively involved as a Pet Partners evaluator and coordinates the annual Animal Cracker’s Picnic. She registered two new therapy animals, Meg and Gabe during the year and visits regularly in the community.

Beverly Oakes  
Treasurer & Volunteer System Manager

Beverly is our long-time Treasurer, a position requiring many hours of careful work to ensure our finances are in order. She also manages the Volunteer System that tracks team and facility information and allows teams to access needed information such as manuals, insurance certificates, and other program-related information. She helps teams access their site and information in addition to running inquiry reports that allow our organization to document volunteer hours, places, and potential needs for support. Beverly mentors new teams and completes many therapy visits throughout the year with her dog, Tessa and cat, Zane Grey at locations such as University Hospital, Ronald McDonald Houses, StoryTails programs, in addition to many other special or group visits.
Eileen Gaughran
Membership Chair

Eileen’s responsibilities include tracking memberships, sending renewal reminders, and as necessary, archiving membership information. Sadly, this year we said goodbye to her long-time animal partner, Chica.

TASA membership remains strong, and experienced an approximate 10.5% growth this year. At the end of 2018, TASA had 157 members (includes families and individuals who support but are not Teams) compared to 142 at the end of 2017. As the year concluded, we had 85 registered teams.

Phyllis Blair
Phone Committee Chair

A committee of volunteers answered the TASA phone line throughout the year and responded to community inquiries or made referrals to the appropriate TASA member for follow-up. Thanks to Mary Lou Wilson, Dan Lindahl, Norma Brooks, Hilda Statz and Phyllis Blair. As the chair, Phyllis attends all Board meetings helping to shape organizational direction in addition to actively visiting in the community with her animal partner Curby and frequently participating in evaluations, providing the “neutral dog.” Phyllis completed a two-year term and helped transition newly elected member, Susana Holland to the position.

Charlotte Wenger
Webmaster

Timely updates to our website, tracking the year’s events, and providing feedback to ensure program follow-up and accuracy are Charlotte’s hallmarks. Her efforts in part included a quarterly ‘meet the teams’ project and facilitating organizational movement to electronic document storage. Charlotte critically examines policy, procedures, and helps shape organizational goals and direction. She visits a long term care facility with her therapy animal, Luka. Charlotte’s guidance and her attention to detail has been invaluable. She concludes her 4th year and will be assisting to train newly elected Ericka Garcia, in addition to enjoying visits with Luka.
Tammy Castro-Leduc
Quartermaster

Tammy monitors our inventory of vests, shirts, and patches and creates the annual Holiday cards that are mailed to our facilities. She and her partner, Viking, are working toward 200 visits.

Linda Porter-Wenzlaff
Education Chair

Dr. Porter-Wenzlaff is the Education Chair and is considered a national authority in the field. She created and modified several documents in 2018 that helped clarify existing policies in addition to developing a Local Team Training and Evaluator’s Manual. Her knowledge and research base allows TASA to ensure our policies are aligned with best practice standards and our ongoing commitment to professionalism. Her efforts provide a foundation for training our members for the foreseeable future. Dr. Porter-Wenzlaff also provided multiple citywide education programs, was interviewed on Texas Public Radio, participated in other interviews, and wrote a Pooch Parade article. An educators and evaluators meeting once a year helps ensure continuity. Dr. Porter-Wenzlaff is a frequent speaker at community events providing education about animal therapy and collaborates with national contacts to identify opportunities for growth.

Kathi France
Team Training Chair

As the Team Training Chair, Kathi France sent out 73 registration packets to prospective teams, answered process-related questions, and coordinated scheduling 44 people that attended a class. Thank you to our instructors: Malinda Red Cloud, Brenda Leiser, Carlynn Ricks, Kathi France, Linda Porter-Wenzlaff, and Melissa Allen-Jones.

Kathi is also an active team with both her Cairn Terriers, Zac and Duncan. They donate many hours visiting as a StoryTails team at a local elementary school, at assisted living and memory care facilities, at a children’s grief center, and special visits involving multiple teams.
Russell “Pat” Smutz
Team Evaluation Chair

TASA is committed to providing resources, training and ongoing evaluation of our Teams. An updated video demonstrating an evaluation was completed this year by Chris Manley. The process of becoming a new team is rigorous and it is not uncommon for prospective teams to need support as this process unfolds or to need additional time and development to be fully successful. Our ultimate goal is a well-developed team that can engage across our communities of service with confidence and provide consistently positive human animal interactions. We deeply value the many special people and animals who are committed to community service at this level of quality and know the dedication it takes. They are a gift to us all.

The evaluation process is coordinated by the Evaluation Chair, Pat Smutz, who visits with his partner Kira. This chair position requires good computer and interpersonal skills; flexibility; patience; and an understanding of the multiple components necessary to ensure all teams have an opportunity to evaluate and complete all required documentation for appropriate registration. No evaluation process is exactly the same and each process seems to have its own unique challenges.

Therapy Animals of San Antonio collaborates with community partners to help teams adequately train and prepare for evaluation. Two independent registration options are offered by the organization to provide flexibility to our Teams depending on their needs. Both have standardized processes that are research-based and that meet or exceed national best-practice processes. All therapy teams must re-evaluate at least every two years, a process that includes a veterinarian completing a health check on the animal and the volunteer passing a background check. Teams must be current with their registration in order to visit in the community and to be covered by insurance.

This year eleven evaluations were offered thus reducing the wait time for teams to evaluate. During 2018, 45 volunteers worked at least one and many volunteers worked multiple evaluations. Thank you to our Evaluators: Lynda Melendez and Amy Gamber (Pet Partners Evaluators) and Linda Porter-Wenzlaff, Aileen Holeman and Kathi France (Local Evaluators). Audrey Charlton and Tamara Yates completed the evaluator class and will be mentoring in 2019 with our experienced evaluators. Each year, the educators and evaluators hold a summer meeting to discuss process and procedures and to make changes as necessary to ensure our mission of meeting current standards are met.

We evaluated 58 teams (19 registering as Pet Partners; 39 registering as Local) in 2018. The success rate for Pet Partners teams was approximately 84% and 77% for Local teams. Of those passing the evaluation, approximately 35% were rated either complex or challenging. Pet Partners-Public teams (teams not affiliated with TASA) were evaluated but not counted in the above numbers.
**Animal Assisted Activity and Animal Assisted Therapy**

The primary mission of Therapy Animals of San Antonio remains the provision of animal assisted activity (AAA) and animal assisted therapy (AAT) to the vulnerable populations across San Antonio and the surrounding 10 counties. AAT involves a team working with a professional to provide specific treatment based on goals identified and documented by a professional for each visit. AAA is more spontaneous, without specific treatment goals, and is often described as a “meet and greet” contact.

**Service Metrics**

Our teams provided more than 4,382 hours of animal assisted activity (AAA) and animal assisted therapy (AAT) at 74 facilities. The hours of activity exceed the previous year’s hour totals by over 11%. Despite this increase, the number of requests from community facilities for our registered teams continue to exceed availability. Several facilities, such as hospitals, Ronald McDonald Houses (83 visits by 8 different teams), and juvenile facilities had multiple teams visiting throughout the year. Teams also provided 12 visits to special facilities and 1 out-of-area visit. These visits are typically designed as exploratory or a one-time visit.

Facilities include care facilities (assisted living, memory, and day programs), hospitals, military programs, detention facilities, schools, and many other facilities where a vulnerable population is served by our animal teams. Many of our teams serve multiple facilities in addition to attending group events as able.

Our service hours are shown in the pie chart. Most of our hours are making facility visits, followed by organization business which includes the nine monthly board meetings and the annual meeting. Hours volunteered for large events such as the Pooch Parade are not reflected in this chart.
Priscilla Williams
Facility Assessment Chair

Facilities requesting services complete an online form or send an email to the organization. These requests are fielded by the Facility Chair, Priscilla Williams, who speaks with the facility contact. She completes a facility form that provides potential teams information about the population to be served, the visit location, and program expectations. This coordination of information is integral to the overall mission and connecting teams with facilities. Priscilla concluded her Board term in November and the position was assumed by Norma Brooks.

Pat Storlie
StoryTails Chair

Our StoryTails Program focuses on increasing the reading skills of younger school age children, supporting literacy through the message that reading can be fun, and promoting overall life-skill development. The process involves the student reading an age appropriate book to our animal team in settings that include schools and libraries. The combination of the loving acceptance of the animal and the enjoyment of the animal interaction allows reading to become fun and non-stressful. Research has documented measurable grade level reading skill improvements made by students involved in animal assisted reading programs. Teams attend a program specific training class prior to providing this service in addition to being a registered team. Pat stepped down in November and Danielle Lewis was appointed by the Board to fill the StoryTails Chair position.
Malinda Red Cloud  
Community Events & Presentations Chair

Malinda coordinates community events and presentations that touch many lives. A total of 39 events were attended by 49 individual teams, many of which attended multiple events over the course of the year (equivalent to 239 teams). Approximately 5,494 people were visited at seven presentations, nineteen de-stressors, one booth/info table, ten events including four conventions/conferences and two other group visits.

At the Risk Insurance Management (RIM) conference, Sedgwick honored our organization with a $10,000 donation in addition to creating the displays promoting the benefits of the therapy animals.
Stories from the Field
The emotional impact of animal therapy visits is hard to describe yet makes significant impacts to both the volunteers and to those visited. Our Stories from the Field is now a component of each of our Board meetings in an attempt to capture and share the qualitative impact of visits. Stories about patient’s engagement and response to animal interventions, kids being able to enjoy being kids despite a correctional setting, increased reading skills, and so many more stories that reflect the mission and healing power of animals.

Even the professionals at the facilities often benefit and take a break for a moment from the daily stress.
Collaborative Programming with the Community

TASA Facility Coordinators have been designated for several community based programs that support multiple teams at a facility. Coordinators are experienced teams who are instrumental in helping to mentor new teams and are a point of contact for the facilities.

**Ronald McDonald Houses** - serving children and their families during times of stress and separation from their local support systems. Three locations are currently served. Coordinator: Dan Lindahl.

**Cyndi Taylor Krier Juvenile Correctional Treatment Center** and Bexar County **Juvenile Detention Center** - promoting the rehabilitation and well-being of offenders and their families in a residential setting. Coordinator: Lynda Melendez.

**University Health System Paws Up Program** - serving Pediatrics and other areas with identified need including visitors and staff. Coordinator: Beverly Oakes.

**Military Programming (Air Force Dorm; Psychiatric Unit)** - working with wounded warriors and their families as well as visiting the inpatients at San Antonio Military Medical Center. Coordinator: Pat Smutz.

**US Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center** – serves as the sole facility caring for combat burn casualties, beneficiaries and civilian emergencies within the Department of Defense. Coordinator: Kaitlin Pruskowski.

**Children’s Bereavement Center, Children’s Shelter** - programming for a very vulnerable population with the mission “to foster healing for grieving children and youth, their families and the community” and “restoring innocence and strengthening families” respectively. Our animals put smiles on the children’s faces and give them a warm, furry body to hug. Coordinators: Steve & Kassia Fontenot.

**Methodist Hospital** – teams serving multiple areas within the facility and within the community. Coordinator: Gerald Dubinski, Jr.

**Annual Meeting & Awards**

The Annual Meeting for 2018 was held at the Pedrotti’s North Wind Ranch, a facility located in the small town of Helotes, TX. bordering San Antonio. We thank Anthony Pedrotti for his support of this event and providing the wonderful facility, staff, and food for our organization. His space allowed for our posters to be set up for viewing and our therapy animals to join in the meeting. Thanks to Jeanne Melendez who was the coordinator for those attending.

As per our tradition, the meeting opened with a Blessing of the Animals given by Pastor Eaton and was followed by a wonderful meal provided by the Pedrotti’s. The meeting continued with recognition of new teams and general comments; Officer and Board reports; Nominations and Elections of Officers & Board Members, and then the Awards Ceremony which closed the meeting. Several folks spoke providing stories about the impact of therapy animals this year. After formally concluding the meeting, the newly elected Board met as required by Bylaws. This meeting concludes our “administrative year” and we resume monthly Board Meetings in January. Animal therapy continues year round.
Selecting individuals for awards is a very challenging task as there are many people who deserve recognition each year. The members below were selected for 2018 awards based on their outstanding contributions to the community and to the organization.

Thank You – Board Service:

Thank You:
Diane Hook (Making a Difference)
Diane Goldsmith (Making a Difference)
Pat Storlie (Community Service)
Chris Manley (Recognition of Service)
Mary Lou Wilson (Recognition of Service)
Beverly Oakes (Ongoing Dedication and Support)
“Bellin” with Steve & Kassia Fontenot (Contribution to the Field)

Financial Report
As an all-volunteer organization, Therapy Animals of San Antonio is extremely fortunate to have a stable financial situation as a result of the Fiesta® Pooch Parade, special donation or grant funding that supports our mission and good fiscal management. We are a GuideStar Exchange Platinum Participant.

Beverly Oakes tracks and ensures the organization’s financial soundness. As the Treasurer she is responsible for ensuring that we meet 501(c)(3) requirements, that we file documents supporting our income and expenditures for tax and auditing purposes, and that appropriate payments are made or collected. Thanks to past and current donations, our organization is financially sound and allows us to rent office space, support our members, and provide educational outreach to the communities we serve. Grant funding is set aside for specific purposes or program goals.
The annual Fiesta® Pooch Parade winds its way through the tree lined streets of Alamo Heights the last Saturday of Fiesta®. A family-friendly event, educational activities, informational booths, and a costume contest precede the parade. Congratulations to Bellin (partner of Steve & Kassia Fontenot), selected as this year’s King Anbarkio. They represented TASA at the parade in addition to many of the public events associated with Fiesta®.

A special thanks to Alicia Thompson, Kathi France, and Sandra Olsaver who coordinated parade arrangements. The event requires a tremendous amount of volunteer time over the entire year to ensure that all permits, sponsorships, insurance, advertisements, police, and other needs are met. Expenses for the parade were just under $12,000 this year. Each year a design is selected that is used on brochures, advertisements, and 1,200 T-shirts that parade registrants receive. This event requires an “all-hands on deck” approach. More than 60 volunteers are required to work the day of the event. As our primary fundraiser, the sponsorships of and community engagement in the Fiesta® Pooch Parade continue to be critical to our ability to offer quality services following national best practices to the vulnerable members of our community. We are profoundly grateful for the many opportunities that this support provides.

Thank you to our 47 sponsors of the 20th Annual Fiesta® Pooch Parade

Top Sponsors ($1000 or more)

North Park Subaru (Best in Show)
Petco Foundation
Las Palapas Franchise
Mary Lou and Don Wilson
Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming
Message from the Incoming President:

I feel honored and privileged to serve as the new president of Therapy Animals of San Antonio. My goal for TASA is simple but challenging: Insure that TASA grows, prospers and continues to be a premier animal therapy organization.

We are blessed with an increasing number of facilities that are requesting visits from our animal therapy teams. As we engage in creative opportunities for new community programming, we must increase our number of teams substantially to adequately provide service to both existing and additional facilities.

One of my goals will be focused on the support and retention of existing teams in addition to making certain that our new teams receive support from immediately after joining TASA and through successful and comfortable therapy team visitation.

I strive to have an “open door” and I am always available to offer help and answer questions promptly.

Thank you for your confidence.
Gerald Dubinski, Jr.
IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO PASSED IN 2018

Carolyn Parchman, Retired TASA Team Member

Fran, Partner of Phyllis Blair
Willie, Partner of Cindy Page
Cisco, Partner of Lucy Destin
Rory, Partner of Deb Parashak
Hailey, Partner of Deb Parashak
Callie, Partner of Gilda Cruz-Romo
Chica, Partner of Eileen Gaughran