

Volunteer Newsletter



VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

AUGUST, 2004

Name the Newsletter Contest

Welcome to the inaugural issue of ADI's volunteer newsletter. We plan to publish the newsletter quarterly to keep you updated on new and interesting activities in the puppy petting arena, as well as other items of interest to our volunteers.

To kick off the publication of the newsletter, we're introducing a "Name the Newsletter" contest, open to all volunteers and other friends and supporters of ADI (staff excluded). Get those creative juices flowing and enter the contest soon. Deadline for entries is September 17. Using the form in this issue, submit your favorite name(s) to ADI. Submissions will be judged by a committee of Jorjan Powers, Margaret Bonkowski, and Jeanette MacDonald. Duplicate entries will be judged by earliest submission date.

What's in it for you? The satisfaction of seeing your winning name on the masthead of future issues of the newsletter, plus a T-shirt from the ADI store.

Copies of this and future newsletters will be available in the reception area at ADI, as well as on ADI's website at www.assistedog.org.

Get going! Enter today.

Our Family is Growing

Those of you who are regular puppy petters at ADI already know about our latest litter of puppies. If you haven't stopped in lately, let us introduce you to the "F" litter. Two males (Ford and Frank) and five females (Fort, Farrell, Filman, Florence, and Falduto) were born to Fee on June 4. The proud father was Ivan. As usual, all the pups have their own little personalities, and each one has a unique way of working its way into our hearts.

The "F" litter won't be "the babies" for long, however. Norton and Tay bred recently, and their offspring are expected around August 22. We'll have plenty of puppies to cuddle and play with, but on a limited basis. The "G" litter will be traveling to Sacramento to participate in a new program with at-risk teens. They will be available for petting in Santa Rosa two weekdays (to be determined) and Saturdays. Once the puppies are born, please contact ADI to find out their travel schedule. Your help in stimulating the development of the puppies through tender touch and socialization is very much needed and appreciated. We hope to see you often at the Institute.

Lightbulb Moment?



Do you have a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue of this newsletter? Submit your ideas to Margaret Bonkowski, Editor, via Cheryl Brighting at ADI, 1215 Sebastopol Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95407, (707) 545-3647, or cheryl@assistedog.org.

Volunteer Opportunities



Most of our volunteers enter ADI through the puppy petter route. However, we do have other opportunities for people who wish to become involved and help in other ways. What can you do? Here are just a few things that come to mind:

Facilities and Maintenance: Are you a Mr./Ms. Fix-It? We often have repairs or small construction projects available.

Office Support: Are you available on a regular or occasional basis to answer phones while the staff is at lunch or in a meeting? Could you help with special mailings? Is data entry your specialty?

Gardening: Do you have a green thumb? Would you like to plant and maintain our landscaping?

Hospitality: Do you enjoy entertaining? We often need food items (homemade or purchased) for various functions, e.g., cookies for graduation refreshments or lunches for training sessions. We also need people to greet and serve at these events.

Community/Public Relations: Would you like to help spread the word about ADI at special events? If so, you may enjoy doing booth duty at a fair, downtown market, dog expo, or other such event. Working alongside a staff member, you will not only dispense information about ADI, but learn more about the organization yourself.

Other: What are your special skills? In what other ways do you think you can contribute your talents to ADI? Let us know.



Volunteer In Action--Jeanette MacDonald
with Elman in the Santa Rosa Rose Parade.

FAQ's

Q: What is an Advanced Puppy Petter and how do I become one?

A: As volunteerism has grown at ADI over the last six years when the Puppy Petter's Club (PPC) was started, so has the organization of those volunteers grown.

To recognize the fact that volunteers were doing things other than puppy petting, an umbrella group called the Purple Circle (for ADI's purple and gold colors) was formed. The Purple Circle includes all types of volunteers, with puppy petters being the largest contingent. In general, regular PPC members work with puppies from birth through about twelve weeks (there are some long-term puppy petters who are allowed to pet older dogs due to a "grandfather" clause).

The Advanced Puppy Petter group was established by Dr. Bonnie Bergin several years ago to address the issue of working with ADI's older dogs. These volunteers receive special advanced training by Dr. Bergin, and are carefully selected by the staff. Candidates are adults who have been puppy petters for an extended period of time and who exhibit abilities and potential to address the needs and behavior problems of our "teenaged" dogs.

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We Value Your Input

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Early in 2004 ADI conducted a Puppy Petter's Club survey. We appreciated the input we received from over 100 respondents, and were especially pleased with the level of support indicated in the surveys returned. The great majority of respondents expressed positive opinions about their puppy petting experiences at ADI. There were also a number of good ideas about how we might improve the puppy petting program and volunteerism in general at ADI. We have already implemented a number of changes as a result of the survey.

- We now conduct puppy petting orientations in smaller groups with separate classes for adults only and adults with children
- In response to safety concerns expressed by some people (for the pups and the volunteers), new puppy petters must be at least kindergarten age, and only puppies from birth through about 12 weeks (while they are in the small puppy play yard) may be petted and played with.
- We're trying to keep our volunteers better informed of what's going on at the Institute and how they can help ADI accomplish its mission. This newsletter is just one of the ways, but come in and check out our reception area for other innovations.

The input received from our volunteers on the 2004 survey was very valuable and is helping us refine our volunteer program. If you have any questions or concerns in the future, please do not hesitate to discuss them with a staff member or an Advanced Puppy Petter.



Steering Committee

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In an effort to build on the synergy that a formal group often provides, a volunteer Steering Committee was formed recently. The group is comprised of Advanced Puppy Petters Margaret Bonkowski (Chair), Cheryl Collins (Hospitality Coordinator), Jeanette MacDonald (Puppy Petting and Orientation Coordinator), Marilyn Calderon, Lynn Farmer, Karen Hesketh, Marilyn Hillendahl, Al Johnson, and Susie Newland. ADI Community and Public Relations Director, Jorjan Powers, is the staff representative.

You may be hearing from Steering Committee members as they need your input and assistance on projects around ADI. To familiarize yourself with who they are, you'll find their pictures hanging on the reception room wall. If you have questions or want to help in any way, please talk with them. As always, Jorjan Powers and Community and Public Relations Assistant, Cheryl Brighting, will also be glad to help you.



FAQ's, Continued from Page 2

The size of the Advanced Puppy Petter's group is quite small and new members are selected based on physical ability and dog handling skills. For some it may seem an honor to be selected for this group, but by no means does it diminish the role of "regular" puppy petters. Institute staff consider early puppy petting to be the foundation of our service dogs. We need as many loving hands and hearts as possible to work with our young puppies during their formative first twelve weeks.

Name the Newsletter Contest

Entry Form

Please print:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NO. _____ E-MAIL _____

A maximum of three entries may be entered in the contest:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Please send your entry to ADI, 1215 Sebastopol Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95407, Attention: Cheryl Brighting.

All entries must be postmarked by September 17, 2004. Duplicate entries will be judged by earliest submission date.