

Liaison Officer Report - Auckland AGM 2017

This year started off extremely busy and continues to be so. New applicant numbers have increased and perhaps the easiest way to show this is by a comparison:

Number of Auckland members end of December 2016: 60

Number of Auckland members to 20 May 2017 (4.5 months): 94

This includes 13 yet to be placed and, as at 20 May 2017, three new applicants have yet to be assessed.

The reason for the increase could possibly be the media attention via the new double page publication in the New Zealand Kennel Club magazine, Facebook promotion, Website searches, word-of-mouth, SPCA Outreach Pet Therapy restructure of their systems resulting in many who have made enquiry to them moving on to K9F instead. If anyone else has other theories, it would be good to hear them. It would be interesting to know if other regions in NZ are having the same increase. Kim is doing an amazing job in placements, this being a very labour intensive part of the system. Since Kim has taken this section of responsibility off me, I have found it easier to balance work/life/K9 Friends and my other volunteer time.

Probably the most frustrating part of the Auckland membership for both Kim and I is follow-up. We often find out "through the side door" that addresses or contact details have changed, members are no longer visiting, and (in one case) a member has died! I note there are a number of outstanding renewals and this could be the first indication that all is not as it should be. Even though I emphasize to all new Auckland applicants it is imperative to get in touch if their circumstances have changed, many do not for whatever reason. One job I would like to do over the next few months is to telephone all Auckland members to check if all is okay and to verify details. This should be done at least once a year. In the past, I have done this with email but the percentage of response is low.

Being able to access the new Wild Apricot website to update details as they happen has been invaluable to me and I wish to continue with this.

Elana Mass, our Auckland Member Support volunteer, has commenced Uni studies and can no longer assist us. However, Elana said she is happy to come back on board once these are over and Kim and I look forward to that day.

In summary, I look forward to being part of the committee this year and hope my contribution will assist this awesome organisation.

Rachel Butler (Assessor) and Kim Greubner (Placements)

Liaison Officer Report - Kapiti Coast AGM 2017

The year 2016/17 has been varied with periods of new applications followed by very little happening. We welcomed six new members and have two others temporarily not able to visit with their dogs and another two awaiting placement. Total number visiting is now nineteen.

While there have been a few issues to deal with, generally speaking things have gone along quite well. A group of greyhound owners in Kapiti has provided two of our new members and a third has just applied. Their dogs are retired from racing and have so far proved to be wonderful visitors as they are quiet and love being cuddled.

We have now reached a point where we have more people and dogs than places to visit so have started to double up where we can. Some of the local facilities have both rest home and hospital sections and we are sometimes able to provide dogs for each.

I intend to stay at the helm for as long as I can but will be looking for someone to arrange gatherings and other places to visit in due course.

Mary Fowler

Liaison Officer Report - Lower Hutt & Wellington City AGM 2017

The Wellington and Lower Hutt region started off steady this year and has recently grown quite rapidly with many applications flooding in. This is due to not only the attention attracted from the Canine Friends article featured in the NZ Dog World, but also from the organisation 'Grey Hounds as Pets'. A couple of Greyhounds joined the team earlier in the year and since then, it seems to be that every Greyhound joining us has seen a post on the Greyhounds private group saying what a great organisation we are and how the dogs do so well in their volunteer roles.

Back in April we took part in 'Dog Life Drawing' which was an exhibition for Flux at the Wellington Museum. This was outside of our normal scope of volunteering but it was a huge success! Our canines really showcased their calm and placid temperaments while they sat for half hour intervals being sketched, drawn and photographed for the public and local artists.

It's been a really great year and we've had some really wonderful additions to the team."

Victoria Caccioppoli

Liaison Officer Report - Manawatu Rural (including Levin) AGM 2017

At present we have 18 members of which 16 currently visit, 2 are support members with another two awaiting assessment and two still deciding if they will commit to join us. One of these applicants did not have her vaccinations up to date so she has been put on the wait list for when she can afford to do so, has been assessed but no further ahead there.

It has been a very good year with a brand new rest home opening in Feilding and us being asked to visit the Idea Home (IHC) in Feilding and Living Plus in Levin.

It was a shock to see the Oak Tree Suite (secure dementia) at Edale Aged Care in Marton however close due to financial problems.

New members have replaced those departing.

We have 7 rest homes in Feilding being visited with some lucky enough to have more than one dog visit and have visitors in 6 in Levin. Ranfurly Residential Care Centre in Feilding is our largest facility and covers all areas of care so there are 3 dogs currently working here. We would also like to visit Foxton but as yet do not have any applicants for them at this stage.

We have had a busy year as we do, with invitations from Massey University Student Assn twice during the year to destress the students during study week which is always a great success, and it was great to be back with the students of International Pacific College as invites ceased when Pam Peters returned to look after her parents in the States and this visit took on a Christmas theme. Amazingly we turned up in Christmas fare to find the staff had organised props etc for the students to also dress for the occasion. Invites also came from the Manawatu Garden Festival, Manawatu A&P Show at Manfield, some of us went down to Porirua for the Special Childrens Christmas Party and I took my dogs down to Camp Quality (children living with cancer) for their day at Ohingaiti organised by the local Lions Club. We have also joined with Palmerston North at Foxton beach and for Cahills Vet Hospital's Open Day. Unfortunately a Christmas get together in Levin was not supported so the idea was cancelled and hoped they could join us at Foxton Beach which some did. We did our annual Christmas visits dressed up to Ranfurly Residential Care Centre in Feilding and Edale Aged Care in Marton. All these visits are used as getting to know one another both dog and owner and are very successful as I send out an email and the response is pretty quick with yes or a rather disappointing no!

Oakie featured in the NZKC Dogworld giving readers an idea of his schedule on his busy day visiting in Feilding and Marton which was great. The keen photographers also gathered for our visit to Massey which also went into an issue of the NZKC Dogworld about our dogs destressing the students during their study time. An article also appeared in the Manawatu Farming Lifestyles in April with the title "Caring for the community with canines" and was a great advertisement for us even though it was written from my angle.

We have a really great team here in Feilding and Levin and are all great ambassadors for Canine Friends. It is a pleasure to be part of this team and Canine Friends

Ann Evans

Liaison Officer Report - Palmerston North AGM 2017

We have had a very busy year this past year. As with everyone else we have been flat out assessing new members and their dogs. We currently have twenty- two members in Palmerston North. Four members are not visiting at present due to illness, study and business commitments, therefore we have eighteen who are active.

I'd like to thank everyone, especially Ann Evans, for all their help for myself as a new Liaison Officer. It was also great to meet with everyone in Wellington last year. I learnt an enormous amount that day. Went away with my head swimming with all sorts of possibilities. We have dogs in all our Rest homes, some have one and others two. We also have a dog visiting Idea Services Vocational Day Centre and one visiting Living Plus Day Centre.

We have had a few outings as a group. First there was our Christmas function which was a great success, then in February we met at Foxton Beach on a very grey Sunday afternoon where the dogs had a play and after which (and as it started to rain) we all retired to the Simply Balmy Cafe for a coffee. I was amazed at the amount of members who turned up on such a miserable day. Thanks to Ann for coming all the way down with her dogs and Valerie from Levin as well.

We also attended an open day at Cahill's Veterinary Clinic which was very successful. We handed out plenty of pamphlets to interested parties and even scored one new member on the day. We then attended the Marton Harvest Festival, a great idea from Kate who lives out there, and all had a wander around with our dogs. In December a group of us also attended a meeting at Hancock Community House to relieve a bit of stress from the staff there. We are looking into the possibility of having a dog/dogs serve at the Family Court, to help relieve the stress of victims giving evidence, and children. I have put forward a proposal to them and am awaiting a response. I will follow this up in a week. We are also looking at the idea of visiting schools to teach children how to approach dogs and also to visit Special Needs Units. For this we will need a few more members but we are receiving new applications all the time, which is great.

Personally I have really enjoyed my first year helping Pam in this role and I am looking forward to the next, and I'd like to thank Ann for the opportunity.

Chris Partridge
Pam Allen

Liaison Officer Report - Rotorua AGM 2017

Rotorua has been ticking along well for the past year, with a number of new members joining and some leaving us also. Some of our older members have been struck with health problems and visit infrequently, but still want to be involved, which is awesome. Overall, we have roughly the same number of active members as last year.

We are visiting the following rest homes:

Cantabria,
The Gardens
Whare Aroha,
Fergusson,
Redwood

We are about to start visiting at a small rest home called Lara Lodge. We have been avoiding this one up until now because they have a vicious, dog-stalking cat which needs to be locked up before our visits!

We have not been visiting Makoha (small resthome) on a regular basis lately because the residents seem to be absent much of the time and the visits were reportedly very hit and miss. I will try and resurrect this when I have someone join as a handler that lives close by and can just pop in regularly with minimal fuss. Our handlers all reported making an effort to go visit and nobody being about!

We had a small (unconfirmed) safety incident a week ago, with a dog allegedly stepping on an old lady's foot at a rest home. The handler actually didn't think the dog had gone anywhere near the foot in question, but the resident did have a small injury, which could possibly have been caused by the dog. She is a very experienced, responsible and careful handler and Julie and I are very relaxed about her continuing her visits.

We have had a young girl (WINZ beneficiary) visiting rest homes and doing other tasks, such as dropping pamphlets around town and taking folks in wheelchairs with her on her Saturday morning rest home visits (they wheel around with her, chatting to the residents, while she looks after / handles her dog). She had to work 30 hours per week for 6 weeks volunteering, which was a huge boost for us, with rest homes getting LOTS of visits from her. She is just visiting one rest home now, but her mother is interested in doing the same, and may be joining as well. We need to further assess whether she can visit successfully and safely using her daughter's dog.

Our members are also involved in helping the wider community with their animals, with some doing therapy with people in wheelchairs, organising GAP (Greyhound rehoming), volunteering at the SPCA, walks with at risk kids, reading in schools with dogs etc. These activities are not Canine Friends initiatives per se, but belonging to Canine Friends certainly opens doors to wider community activities.

Kirstine Jolly

Liaison Officer Report - Taupo AGM 2017

All is well in Taupo with 9 volunteers (including myself) visiting the five rest homes.

I wish to make special mention of Lesley Cotterill and Sandy Pick who have been volunteers since I established CFPT here in 2009.

Since my 2016 report one volunteer has moved back to Australia and three have ceased visiting due to other commitments.

As mentioned in my last report, the Activities Officer at Summerset by the Lake requested visits and I have taken this up, visiting the Care Wing fortnightly with my Golden Retriever. Last Christmas CFPT's "Team Taupo" was invited to attend the Christmas party so four of our team attended. Needless to say the dogs were a huge hit – particularly due to their gorgeous Christmas adornments.

In February the editor of one of our local newspapers spent time with me at home discussing CFPT's work. This resulted in an article and photographs which generated five new applications. I have one (received yesterday) to action and the other four are now visiting. I believe this article has also featured in a Waikato newspaper with the necessary changes to contact names in the area.

Another of our volunteers, Amanda Simpson, is a secondary school teacher and prior to exam time takes her lovely cross-breed "Adam" to college to interact with the students. Amanda sees a significant drop in the student's stress levels due to "Adam's" presence and his visits have become a regular fixture.

Vicky Graham

Liaison Officer Report - Tauranga AGM 2017

Well hello from Tauranga.

It's been a busy year and I am not sure whether this has been the case all over N.Z or just here.

We have had a few younger people who love their dogs and want to share them with others. I have two ladies with lots of dogs. But they have chosen only one to do Pet Therapy. They have been really dedicated and are both enrolled in the hospital programme here.

If you caught our article in The Kennel Club mag you will see the work we are doing at the Tauranga Hospital. This has been going since October. It started with just four of our dogs and owners. Lynda and Ruff, Francesca and Wanda, Barbara and Greta and Gill and Poppy. These ladies visit the Mental Health Ward, HIA, Children's Ward and Long stay wards. They have been visiting every week or once a fortnight.

Now we have 8 more dogs and owners going in. The owner has to become a hospital volunteer. This involves a police check, signing a confidentiality agreement, and revealing any health issues. They need a referee which is me and then they have to do two online courses before they are ready for their visits. They have an id. for the dog and the owner. There are strict protocols to follow whilst we are in the hospital and it has been a learning curve for us all. We don't want to jeopardise this programme at all. Lesley or I go in with the dog and owner for the first 10 visits. This is to make sure all policies are being followed. Lesley is the Volunteer Coordinator for the hospital. She makes sure our volunteers are safe and cared for too.

Our other volunteers are spread around the area. There are three Labradors visiting Greenwood Park Village. The manager there is very keen. These dogs go in on Saturday mornings.

I have two dogs going to Optionz which is a brain injury day stay. We have a Labrador cross and an Afghan, so two quite different dogs. They love the time with the dogs and play ball or brush and play hair stylist to the dog.

The rest of my wonderful crew are scattered around the area, visiting retirement villages, hospices and nursing homes. It is becoming quite a busy little industry. I go to the hospital three times a week and then if I have any interviews or follow ups I try to coordinate it with that. I have decided I need a helper so I am going to discuss this with some of my dog owners. But you know what it is like! We all have busy lives and have our finger in lots of pies. I volunteer for St John as well and work two days a week. So all up life is busier now than when I had a real job!!!!

Janet Fosberry

Liaison Officer Report - Waikato AGM 2017

What a busy start to the year, Applications coming in at a very steady pace.

Getting through them, just! Have had some lovely teams come forward. I am working with the Waikato Hospital for 2 of the members. This takes time as they have their protocols to follow, but we are getting there.

We have had a team member, Liz Scott, working on a reading programme. Liz and Pauline Rukuwai will be taking part in this. I will attend the assessment night as well.

Just to keep you up to date on what is happening, Tracey from the Hamilton City Library has managed to organise a pilot scheme with the Western Community Centre, Nawton, with their after school programme attendees. This will be starting around the second week of the third school term, but before that Skye and Mac are to be assessed by Clare Brown and this has been organised for Thursday the 12th June, 6.30pm, at the Community Centre. The assessment sounds pretty vigorous with an estimated 40 minutes to be spent with each dog. As this will be a standard process for any future dogs, some of which may be supplied by Canine Friends, I wonder if you (as Field Officer North Island) would be interested in attending the assessment to get an idea of the criteria and standard required. If you, or another representative from Canine Friends, would like to attend can you either contact Tracy direct or let me know so I can get her okay.

Members are coming in from far and wide this year, from Otorohanga to Te Rerenga, a distance between them of 216.5 kms.

We have a total of 32 members in the area with 2 members waiting to be assessed.

Overall things have been going smoothly, which is very pleasing.

Judy Mcrae

Liaison Officer Report - Whitby to Johnsonville AGM 2017

The last 12 months have seen a steady increase in volunteer numbers with some peaks and troughs in receiving applications. I do sometimes wonder who I am supposed to be meeting. Volunteer numbers have risen from 22 in 2016 to 47 in 2017 and an increase in facilities from eight to 15. In addition to the 47 volunteers there are five approved members in our 'Support Group' who do not wish to be placed at a facility however are available for events like the Special Children's Christmas party.

I think the increase is mainly due to word of mouth as I have had difficulty finding the time to put up posters although most vet clinics and groomers have accepted fliers. I promote CFPT at every opportunity I get.

We bid a fond adieu to Hugh, Hazel and Paddy who have decided to retire after visiting at Harbourview in Papakowhai for approximately eight years. We wish them well in their retirement.

We organised a group of volunteers to attend at the Special Children's Christmas party and this featured in NZ Dog World in February 2017. We have also attended the Bunnings Community Fun Days to promote the organisation. We have featured in several of Carolyn's photo shoots at Harbourview in Papakowhai; Summerset at Aotea and a combined shoot with Victoria's Lower Hutt group held at Club Fido in Judgford. Copies of the NZ Dog World articles have been made available at vet clinics and cafés for people to read.

A couple of our volunteers have had babies during the year and two dogs (Teddy and Nia) have undergone surgery for crucial ligament damage. Congratulations and get well cards were sent from the group. We had one dog (Bengi) pass away after only being a therapy dog for a short period of time. We have enjoyed several get togethers, mainly along the Camborne walkway especially at high tide.

One of the major changes during the year was the renaming of our group from Kapi-Mana to Whitby to Johnsonville to reflect the geographical area we visit in. This was a group decision.

As well as not finding time to put up advertising I have unfortunately not been able to venture into the wonders of Wild Apricot.

I do however make sure I find time to email everyone on a regular basis and try my best to answer queries or solve dilemmas.

There is always capacity to take on more volunteers. My thanks to all my volunteers for their time and effort and (hopefully) reading my numerous emails to keep them updated.

Jean Barr