

## **President's Report 8 June 2023**

I was pleased to present my report at our fourth online AGM to provide an overview of events and initiatives for the last financial year.

Having worked through yet another challenging twelve months due to Covid, our priority has been to facilitate members to resume their visiting. Thanks to our Liaison Officers and members working with facility staff, we have seen the majority of our teams sharing their dogs once again.

We are always mindful of the importance of communication and I am pleased to note our membership level has remained stable over the past two years.

### **Strategic Highlights**

Our alliance with the NZ Society of Diversional and Recreational Therapists underpins our relationship with therapists in facilities.

We are currently working with the Society by way of a nationwide survey to gauge how we can improve our services in their places of work.

We are currently arranging a visiting programme to commence at Christchurch Women's Correction Centre and our teams have resumed at other Centres.

In August 2022 we were pleased to announce Mark Vette, renowned animal behaviourist, zoologist and trainer as our Patron.

Earlier this year we were accredited by the Ministry of Justice to undertake Criminal Record Checks. This requirement of District Health Boards and aged care facilities is becoming more apparent.

### **Operating Highlights**

Many of our Liaison Officers held events during May last year to celebrate our Founder, Eileen Curry, made even more significant following Eileen's passing the previous month.

As part of member recognition, we ran a second photo competition and gave our members the opportunity to purchase branded clothing.

### **Partnerships**

The 31<sup>st</sup> March saw our five year partnership with Ziwi coming to a close. This support has enabled us to extend our reach into communities and enhance our work by providing support and appreciation to our members.

Last September the committee had a very successful day of training and discussion with our Liaison Officers and Assessors, made possible by our partnership with DogsNZ.

This partnership also gives us access to New Zealand's "dog" community through monthly features in their Dog World magazine. This regular exposure over time has raised awareness of the value of pet therapy and has increased the number of applications from dog-savvy people who want to share their dogs with others.

Our sincere thanks to Steven Thompson, Director/Secretary and his team for supporting and recognising our work.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to our members for the immeasurably valuable work you do to brighten the days of others. Never underestimate the difference you make.

To our Liaison Officers - without you Canine Friends could not function. Many of you have given several years of commitment which is very much appreciated and heartening to know you share your experience with your members.

Rachel Butler, Vice President and Auckland Liaison Officer - Rachel not only provides unfailing support to me, but also manages our largest membership and provides new Liaison Officers with sound advice and knowledge.

Leanne Gibson, Secretary – Leanne brings a degree of professionalism second to none. Her role encompasses so many aspects of our operation and we all know she fills this with the utmost efficiency.

Paulette Shearer, Treasurer – Paulette has been a member for fourteen years and stepped into this role last year. She is also very willing to help with other aspects of committee work and be involved in member activities in Christchurch.

Beverley Jocelyn – Beverley has been a stalwart of Canine Friends for many years and her experience and passion continues to be clearly evident and appreciated.

Sandy Fea -Sandy is a long serving, dedicated member and Co Liaison Officer in Lower Hutt, collates and dispatches our newsletters and makes dog scarves when required.

Helen Moriarty - Helen has been hugely helpful in navigating us through the last two years of Covid and looks after our Health & Safety matters.

Scott Mansfield, Social Media Manager – Scott oversees our media channels. As part of his university studies he recently completed a Digital Transformation Project with Canine Friends being the subject. Parts of this project are included in our 2023/2024 initiatives.

Hannah Li, Applications and Supplies Manager – Hannah has initiated a new process for sending our new member kits and manages our supplies of scarves and stationery. As our Whanganui Liaison Officer, she is passionate about growing Canine Friends in her community.

Stephanie Robertson, Communications Manager – Stephanie recently joined the committee and brings a wealth of knowledge to this important part of our operation.

We have two committee members standing down:

Carol Drew , Volunteer Mentor – as a professional counsellor, Carol is passionate about the wellbeing of others and will continue in this role, however will not continue as a committee member. She is also our Liaison Officer for the Far North and is working hard to reach into her community.

Annette Sheridan, Membership Experience Manager – Annette stepped into this new role last year with enthusiasm and a commitment to ensuring our members feel appreciated.

Thank you both, you will be missed at our meetings!

To the entire committee – your energy, willingness and passion is a driving force. You each play an important part to ensure Canine Friends moves forward and delivers with professionalism, credibility and empathy. It is my belief we embrace traditional values and innovative ideas. Finally, let's acknowledge our dogs –

*We give dogs time we can spare, space we can spare and love we can spare, And in return dogs gives us their all. It's the best deal man has ever made".*

M. Facklam.

I ask that this report be accepted.

Vicky Graham

