



# Pets as Therapy South Africa

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2019

## PAT supports Honey's Garden Medical Alert Dogs South Africa

At PAT, we as volunteers donate our time and energy to visit people in various facilities, but this year we had the privilege of donating funds to Honey's Garden, a non-profit company, that trains medical alert dogs in South Africa. Dogs trained by Honey's Garden have helped those diagnosed with diabetes, seizures, hearing impairments, psychiatric conditions, and various other physical needs.

Lucy Breytenbach spoke at the PAT Annual General Meeting in June this year and gave an interesting insight into the work she is doing at Honey's Garden Training Centre, and the cost involved in enriching the lives of children and adults with disabilities and ill-health, by matching them with quality task trained service dogs.

She explained how they are the first company to train Medical Service Dogs within South Africa (medical assistance dogs other than Guide Dogs, who are trained by the South African Guide-Dog Association for the Blind).



*Above right – Martin de Haas with service dogs in training*

*Left and below – Lucy Breytenbach of Honey's Garden talking at the Pets as Therapy Annual General Meeting in June 2019*



The donation from PAT will be utilised by Honey's Garden to contribute towards the basic cost of training for a hearing and seizure response dog for one of the beneficiaries of the programme (Mr Martin de Haas), as well as for repairs and purchasing of equipment used by Honey's Garden during the training of their service dogs.

We wish Lucy Breytenbach and her team all of the best with the incredible work they do and the difference they make in so many lives. Honey's Garden Training Centre is situated in Sunningdale, Western Cape. For further information, please visit their website at [www.medicalalertdogs.co.za](http://www.medicalalertdogs.co.za) 🐾

*Season's Greetings & Festive Wishes*

*May the holiday period be fun and fur-filling.*

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## Note from the Chair

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Pets as Therapy is looking at a number of new issues and initiatives that we will keep members informed of over the coming months. These include looking at the age of new dog volunteers, ideas for support and educational opportunities for volunteers and possibly funding a student bursary for animal behaviourism. We are also looking at some new items to sell to raise funds, such as Pet as Therapy branded licence disk holders, "Pets as Therapy Animal on Board" stickers and pens.

As always, we rely on donations and membership fees to continue running as a charity and any ideas or suggestions for future fundraising ideas would be most welcome. You are welcome to contact anyone on the Executive Committee, either myself (Chair), Leigh Tucker, Vice Chair, Karen van Wyk, who is now responsible for area coordinators and membership, or Margie Wood, Treasurer. Marieanna le Roux is kindly dealing with all media related information.

As we are entering the festive season I want to thank every volunteer and therapy dog for their dedication through this year. This season is about giving and sharing and our PAT volunteers and therapy dogs are sharing their love every time when they visit. Making a difference in someone's life is priceless.

May all of you be showered by blessings and love.

Chrisna



*Best wishes from the Executive Committee*

*Chrisna & Charlie, Leigh & Lincoln (& Jason), Margie & Rambo, Karen and Max*

## Visit to UWC during Mental Health Week

On 10 October 2019, PAT was invited by the Centre for Student Support Services (CSSS) and the Psychology Department at the University of the Western Cape, to be a part of the events for World Mental Health Day. The students had a wonderful morning interacting with the PAT team, and receiving some much-needed support. 🐾



*Left, Tene and Abi, Karen van Wyk, Hettie and Snippie*

*Above, Abi with UWC students Rego Sidzumo and Lauren Koopman*

*Above right, Tene and Abi with UWC students, from left to right, Cameron Lawrence, Tene, Amanda Hutson, Storm-Marie-Mostert, and Kelly-Joy America.*

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*Enriching lives through animal companionship*

## Visit to Bridge House School, Franschoek

Marieanna le Roux and Anna, and Dick Crane and Trixie, were recently invited to be part of the Grade 6 learners Wellness Day. It was a very successful visit and Bridge House are keen to have PAT back next year to potentially visit with some of the younger children. The school has also very kindly donated R800 to PAT, for which we are very grateful. 🐾



Left, Anna enjoying the attention, above, Marieanna & Anna, Dick and Trixie, and the Grade 6 Learners, right, Trixie listening attentively to Dick (permission given for use of photos)

## Volunteer Feedback: Nici Reed & Freyja, Helderberg

Freyja and I visit The Support Center in Somerset West every Thursday morning. We go and see the residents in the dementia unit.

They are all very special but this lovely lady Annagrett was really affected by our visits, as she thought that Freyja was her dog Sassy coming to visit every week. Her reactions from smiles to tears of joy were wonderful to see over the past two years.

Unfortunately Annagrett passed away in October. I sent these pictures to her son Gary (whom I met while visiting) and a short condolence note.

This is the heart warming reply I got.

It makes what we do at PAT all the more special.

Nici 🐾

*"Many thanks for the kind words and your unwavering support with mom.*

*Her love for animals was legendary and those are such beautiful pictures.*

*We will miss her dearly.*

*I would like to say on behalf of my dad and the family thank you for everything you did and the time shared with mom.*

*Much love*

*Gary"*



*Enriching lives through animal companionship*

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## Conference Attendance

### *Annual Animal Rescuer Conference Cape Town Animal Conference*

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In August and September 2019, PAT was represented at both the Annual Animal Rescuer Conference hosted by Rescue Rehab SA, as well as the Cape Town Animal Conference at UCT. PAT Vice-Chair, Leigh Tucker, presented at the Cape Town Animal Conference with a presentation entitled, "Animal-Assisted Therapies and Emotional Support Animals: Developing Guidelines and Competencies for Practice." 🐾

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### *Animal Assisted Therapy Conference*

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Dr Marieanna le Roux and Dr Magdie van Heerden both presented papers as this year's Animal Assisted Therapy Conference in Cape Town in May 2019. The conference, organised by Jelly Beanz, was held at the Durbanville Conference centre and was also attended by Chrisna Richard and Karen van Wyk. The papers presented were:

Dr Marieanna le Roux & Ms Charis Hawridge (2019) 'Animal-assisted activities for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder: Teachers', parents' & volunteers' perceptions.' *2nd Animal-assisted conference, Durbanville, 30 & 31 May 2019*

Dr Magdie van Heerden (2019) 'Combining animal assisted group therapy with community engagement: A pilot project with adults with intellectual disabilities.' *2nd Animal-assisted conference, Durbanville, 30 & 31 May 2019*



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### Welcome to our new volunteers...

Philip Slabbert & Oscar  
Tene Verwey & Abi  
Bruce Thwaites & Shadow  
Jenny van Zyl & Missy  
Sigrid Jefferies & Rover  
Tania le Roux & Angie  
Alta Visser & Panda  
Jean Welsh & Ferdi  
Elmarie Stodart & Bella



*Clockwise:*

*Philip & Oscar, Tene Verwey & Abi,  
Bruce & Shadow, Jenny & Missy, Sigrid  
& Rover, Tania & Angie, Jean & Ferdi,  
Elmarie & Bella, Angus, and Klippes  
with Bella*



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### ...and new PAT dogs

Angus joins Freyja, with Nici Reed  
Klippiies joins Silvi, with Elzabie van Wyk



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## MEMBER FOCUS

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### Diana Leighton & Huxley, Cape Town

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A funny incident occurred recently when I handed over a few kibbles to a delightful elderly gentleman to give to Huxley. However, he suddenly decided that the treats were intended for him and popped them into his own mouth! Much general consternation as he laboriously spat some out, but he had obviously retained a couple in his mouth which he chewed away with a rather bemused expression. Finally he turned to me, fixed me with a beady eye and said indignantly in a loud voice: "NOT NICE!"

Chats with the folk in the lounge are also an opportunity for me to interact with some very special people, many of whom I have become very fond indeed. I find it a privilege to share their positive outlooks and be the recipient of their smiles.

If time permits after visiting the lounge, Huxley and I then go on to some individual visits. Huxley sets off up the passage, thrilled with the prospect of locating some more of his special friends, and of course one-on-one time is always so rewarding.

By now it's nearly lunch time - how does the morning disappear so quickly! Time for Huxley and me to say our goodbyes and return home where an expectant Hogan eagerly greets his brother and submits him to a thorough inspection.

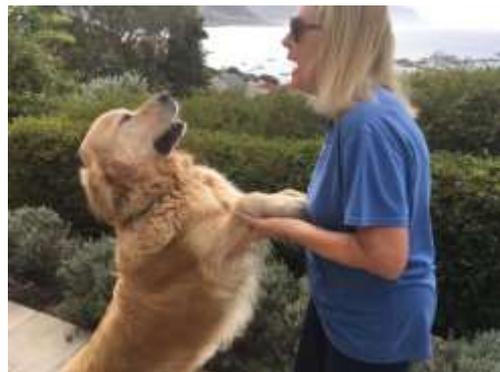
Now you know why, unlike most people, Monday is Huxley's favourite day of the week! 🐾

It's early Monday morning and Huxley already has an air of expectancy about him. Maybe it's the walk around the suburbs instead of our usual stroll on the beach that alerts him to the prospect of visiting his favourite "Oldies". He doesn't let me out of his sight for a second and the minute I don my yellow PAT t-shirt he bounds up the stairs to the garage with his brother, also a Golden Retriever named Hogan, in hot pursuit.

I unlock the car and open the garage door as Huxley hovers impatiently. He hops in and the last thing I hear as I start the engine is a mournful "woof" from Hogan who, I gather from my husband, then retreats to sulk until Huxley's return.

On arrival at the Care Centre I can barely restrain Huxley! Through the entrance we rush and with a cursory hello to Karen in the office, he heads off to find his beloved Amy, the Occupational Therapist who oversees our visits.

Mission accomplished, we start off in the lounge where Huxley happily says hello to everyone. He is delighted to show off his favourite toys and a few tricks, even more so if "treats" (in the form of doggie diet kibbles - like most Goldens/Labradors Huxley has to watch his weight!) are being doled out. His eagerness for the latter means many drooled-on fingers with wet wipes and a towel proving invaluable!



## PAT Volunteers Out and About

## NEWS & GALLERY



Left: The Durban team with Pam Naude, Durban Co-ordinator

Bottom right: Megan Durant and AVIVA DOG - ACE representing PAT at the Cape Handlers Dog Club as part of their very successful Open Day (Sunday, 24 November 2019).

Below left: Max (Karen van Wyk) visiting at Alta du Toit Aftercare



Earlier in the year, PAT Durban volunteers, Paula & Chelsea and Celine & Biscuit (pictured above right), created awareness for the dancing show "Dancers Love Dogs" at the Playhouse, by performing a routine with ballet dancer, Kate Holden. The team managed to assist in collecting funds for the Dancers Love Dogs Charity in aid of their mass sterilisation project. 🐾

### Donate to PAT

#### EFT

Name: Pets as Therapy  
Bank: ABSA  
Branch code: 632005  
Account: 4060 497 683

#### SMS (RSA only)\*

SMS "DONATE PAT" to 48748 (R10/SMS)  
SMS "DONATE PAT" to 40580 (R20/SMS)  
SMS "DONATE PAT" to 42646 (R30/SMS)

\*Free minutes do not apply. Errors are charged for. Admin charges do apply



### RAINBOW BRIDGE

#### In Memory

Whisper, Magdie van Heerden, May 2019

Callie, Celine Bentley, August 2019

Gus, Roxy Cole-Edwards, August 2019

Sebastian, Glenda & Henry Walters, September 2019

### WHO ARE PETS AS THERAPY?

PAT organises therapeutic visits by pet owners who volunteer to take their pets to visit people in hospitals, hospices, retirement homes, frail care facilities, special needs schools, residential centres, and a variety of other venues. PAT visits bring company, support, comfort, pleasure, stress relief and stimulation to those living either permanently or temporarily in these and other establishments. PAT is run entirely by volunteers.

There is a wealth of scientific evidence showing that the interaction between people and pets is therapeutic – physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially.

### CONTACT US

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