

Liaison Officer Updates AGM 2021

Auckland : Rachel Butler

Auckland has now got back on track after the Covid lockdowns, and all active members are resuming their regular visits to their respective placements. As at 25 April 2021, we have 125 active members, 21 non-visiting members. Some of those members are doing extra as “Buddies”, Group Events and the odd one-on-one visit as well.

Of particular note this year is the addition of our volunteers now going to General Hospitals. We have had Auckland and Middlemore Hospitals on our books but can now happily say North Shore has been added, with Waitakere Hospital being a WIP from the inside. The word is getting around, ward by ward, how beneficial pet visiting can be to the patients in their care. Many of these ward requests are in the mental health sector.

2020-2021 has seen a reduction in Group Events primarily due to Covid. Our long-standing Events Manger, Nicole Wallace, has retired from this role and it has been taken over by Julie Warder. Without this extra help, Group Events would not be able to be undertaken. Huge thanks to Nicole for past service and Julie for our future.

Once again, I am also extremely grateful to our placements officer, Kim Greubner. With such a huge membership and more being added weekly, Kim’s efficiency and support is invaluable.

Another of our Auckland (and Committee) volunteers, Carol Drew, has created a new role as Volunteer Mentor. Carol is well qualified and more will be forthcoming on how this will work for our volunteers nationwide. Thank you, Carol, for putting so much time into this new service.

It was with great disappointment that the Auckland team missed this year’s LO appreciation day (thank you Covid again!!) but that seems to be the new normal regarding travel plans nowadays. However, looking at the big picture (i.e. the World) we have so much to be grateful for in the continuation of Canine Friends Pet Therapy in NZ.

Anyhow, onward and upward for Canine Friends Pet Therapy. I can’t see my workload dropping off any time soon!

Blenheim : Wendy Reynolds

From sunny Marlborough,

Marlborough is a fantastic place for retirement, a small town, with 8 rest homes and another to be built. We have a modern Public Hospital a private Hospital, and a Hospice, two large day care services, Alzheimer’s and Totara, two home support services.

We have 17 visiting members, some husbands, and wives.

16 months ago, 7 members transferred from the SPCA visiting group to Canine Friends Pet Therapy, this was not an easy transition as some members found our guidelines and rules difficult. Although a big majority were happy with the changes and enjoy the support they now receive.

It has been a difficult year for me, as it has been for most with rest home closing its doors on and off, members losing interest during all the closings.

We have had a dog die just before they started visits, 3 members retire, due to family and health, 2 want to stay and just be on casual call but listed as non-visiting members. 1 member wanting to visit a rest home with dog but not through Canine Friends Pet Therapy while retaining another placement at a different rest home.

Last week we had a sudden death of a member. This is going to be a gap that will be hard to fill as he was very well liked, by the people he visited.

On a happier note, we had a very well attended Christmas party (see photo). We entered a Christmas tree display for the week before Christmas this was in a large hall, I hand made the tree decorations using photos of therapy dogs.



I am a member of the Older Person forum. This is run and funded by the Marlborough District Council. Meetings are every month, all members are from organisations that support seniors of Marlborough, this is a direct link that I can promote Canine friends pet Therapy.

We had a stall at the Marlborough District Council's Senior Expo. I have received a thank you card from the council for having our dogs at the expo. This is so special as our town has not been pet friendly in the past.

The highlight for the year was the Liaison Appreciation day in Wellington.

Christchurch : Carol Millican

As we are all aware 2020 was an exceptional year around the World with a Pandemic spreading the Covid 19 virus to every country. I feel we are fortunate to live in New Zealand which is a small country that can close its borders therefore decreasing the chance of new cases arriving here. Due to the Lockdown from 25th March 2020 until 12th May 2020 there were no Canine Friends members visiting any retirement villages, nursing homes or hospitals so our members were on hold until it was safe to return.

By the end of June 2020, we were keen to meet up again to talk about Canine Friends visits and establish our Buddy system in Christchurch. Following on from that meeting we now have Helen Pullar who is acting as the co-ordinator for any new members who would like a little more support from our longer-term members.

It was exciting to return to visiting in early July and the long break made staff and residents appreciate our wonderful dogs even more.

Several events were cancelled due to Covid restrictions. In August 2020 the large Canterbury Pet Expo was cancelled, and our annual Canterbury University visit was rescheduled. However, we managed a social dog walk in September 2020 to the Groynes Dog park. The dogs enjoyed a swim which was wet and muddy so great for everyone to see.

December 2020 came around quickly with a successful pre-Christmas dog walk along the Avon, no swimming this time! We had a good number attend and took lots of lovely photos for the Canine Friends newsletter.

After many years in the role Lois Lang resigned from her Assessors role with Canine Friends in December 2020 leaving a big gap to fill. However, since February 2021 we have increased the number of Assessors with our existing members. I am grateful to Debbie Rule, Tania Lee, Barry Amer and Bev Kennedy for volunteering and giving their time to assess new members.

I also appreciate the time Gabriella Robertson spends organising our social events despite having lots of other activities and family commitments.

In March 2021 we attended the Liaison Officers Appreciation day in Wellington where we were well represented. We are now organising our Founders Day walk in Rolleston on 1st May hopefully it will be fine and lots of members and dogs will attend.

Far North : Nicky Dobson

A quick note from the Far North

We now have a visiting member in the Far North. Louise Armstrong and her Border Collie, Kai, have recently started visiting Radius Baycare Haruru (just outside of Paihia).

I am assessing another applicant this week with a view to visiting the Kerikeri Retirement Village.

Foxton/Levin : Sue Clarke

As it was the same for all areas we had a disrupted visiting year overall but luckier than some areas that we had less lockdowns which affected us. We managed to celebrate a belated Founders day on 14th June with a shared lunch at our A&P showgrounds venue.



On 31st July we were asked if we would put on a sort of display of some of our dogs at the Levin War Veterans Rest Home in Levin to amuse the residents. This was very popular and soon all the other Homes we visit asked for one too! Each dog did its own little repertoire of tricks after introducing themselves

and their dog and where they visited. Dogs name and age were an essential part of the introduction! We then all did some formation heel work around the space in the centre of the lounge and then we mingled with the residents. At Christmas time we did another five of these group visits to other Levin Homes. The Christmas display group at Levin War Vets Home and Reevedon Levin



We celebrated Christmas with a social shared picnic lunch and get together on 20th December.



During the year we lost some of our stalwart visitors for one reason or another but have been lucky enough to gain some new members as well.



A few of us joined in with the Palmerston North group activities as well. UCOL visit in July 2020 plus a rostered visit to the NZ Rural Games in March and a lunch at Foxton plus a play on the Beach in March 2021.

On the promotion front we represented Canine Friends at the Dogsnz stand at the Wellington Pet Expo in November 2020 and also as part of the Horowhenua Dog Obedience club stand at the Horowhenua AP&I show in January.



We look forward to celebrating Founders Day 2021 on 23rd May

Hastings : Chris Patridge & Katja Williams

June 21st, 2020 the Central Hawkes Bay group met for lunch at Norsewood. A lovely day and we all had a great time.

I attended a few visits with Manawatu. They call me their honorary member which is lovely, and I love catching up with them all.

Oct 20th, 2020 Ann Evans and I gave a talk at Waiapu Centre in Dannevirke. Was their pet day and we were asked to come along. Ann has since started visiting them on a regular basis.

Oct 25th, 2020 Hastings/Central Hawkes Bay get-together.

Dec 5th, 2020, I attended a group Christmas visit at Woodlands, Palmerston North.

I was away from 15th December till 20th January.

Katja and I have regular coffee meetings.

The Prison is doing well. Unfortunately, one dog out with injury (and has since passed away). Our thoughts go out to Andrew and his family at the loss of their beautiful Felicity as we all know how difficult it is to lose a beloved furry family member.

With Covid interrupting things it has been a fairly, quiet year.

Kapiti : Lynley Evans

2020 was certainly a different year. Our visits were interrupted several times over the different Covid levels in different parts of the country. To complicate matters more rest homes had different visiting expectations at this time. Despite all of this we managed to keep up reasonably regular visits and brought a smile to many of our residents' faces.

Presently we have 23 members including two honorary members. We have another member who has been assessed but who does not wish to be placed yet because she is caring for family members. All rest homes in our area have at least one dog visiting.

Jim and I took over two years ago from Mary Fowler as joint liaison officers. At the end of February 2021, Jim resigned his part of the role and I would like to thank him for all the work he did. Until I find another person to share the LO role, I am happy to continue to fulfil the role on my own.

Over the year we had a number of group walks around off lead areas in Kapiti. We are indeed lucky to have so many beaches, rivers, and parks to walk in. The people and dogs who attended these appreciated the time together, finding value in getting to know each other and the dogs loved their walks. As we walked past another group of people on one walk it was commented on how well behaved our dogs were.

It was great to share Founder's Day with Wellington and Whitby areas. Most special was the opportunity to have a good chat with Kapiti's two honorary members and learn some more about the area's history from them. Both dogs and people who attended the event had a fun time.

Lower Hutt : Rachel Davison

Our Founders Day on May 1st was a great success, and it was lovely to see some non-visiting members attend as well. A fun day for all especially the dog retrieve session in which the dogs had to retrieve a saveloy back to their owners, sad to say no dogs succeeded but they really enjoyed the saveloys!

We were honoured to host Upper Hutt members as well and of course our Founder Eileen Curry who had many words of wisdom for us all.

The past year has been a mixed bag and as many have said the numbers of applications have increased greatly, I think due to Covid and the need people now feel to be part of a community and to help others. We have had a younger generation apply lately and more male applicants that usual which is really nice.

Surprisingly, I have had a spike in the numbers of applicants that do not respond to various contacts regarding assessments, 2 in the last few months and previously to that I can only remember one in the past 3 years.

I would like to thank Brenda Kenworthy and her dog Zoe a Black Russian who met 3rd year Otago University medical students as part of their community training. This is the 2nd year they have requested this and wanted to learn how our organisation contributes to the health and wellbeing of individuals in our area, and how we assist with health needs within our community, and what barriers there maybe to the provision of these services. It was very well received by the students and part of their training that they really enjoy.

Lower Hutt currently has 23 active members, and 12 non visiting members. Two successful applicants are being placed this week and there are 2 new applicants awaiting assessment.



Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt Founders Day Celebration 2021

Manawatu : Ann Evans & Kaye Harkness

Well, it has been a year that at times has been most frustrating and naturally very confusing for our rest home residents. Just as we plan a visit, off we go again into Covid restrictions although we must say we are not in the same league as our Auckland members. Our membership in the Manawatu has remained about the same, new ones coming in and others due to work commitments or health have had to reconsider their regular visits, some we have been lucky enough to keep as support members as they still want to support our organization which means so much to so many.

As per usual we have lost some of our beloved mates which always leaves a big hole to fill as usually they have given many years of service. At least three or four of our members have also shifted out of the area with as far as I know only one continuing with visiting.

We have dog teams in all our Manawatu rest homes with one facility in Feilding being a large rest home, hospital, dementia and apartments enjoying the visits of 6 different dogs. We continue our Palmerston North Hospital visiting on a weekly roster thus having different dogs every Wednesday and Thursday marching through reception area to our allocated wards. We have reserve dogs so as to never let them down which works very well. Arohanui Hospice is visited by 2 different dogs and we also visit Marion Kennedy Centre. One comment brought to us was from the Hospice visits when asked for comment to go on their Facebook page about our visits was “the best part was they will be coming back” amongst the normal comments. We are shortly hoping to restart our Reading in Schools with 2 members interested in doing this as had stopped this due to new children policy coming out. The DTs have done a fabulous job during the lockdowns especially with residents who cannot understand what is happening and their regular visitors cannot come in for that chat or hug. They really went the extra mile in inventing more activities to keep their minds busy. All our members said ‘we got lots of hugs, some tears but the dogs certainly had a lot more pats than normal!’ when we got back into our normal visiting. Many of our members did keep in touch with their facilities by sending letters, photos, videos of their dogs when unable to visit and several DTs expressed their gratitude as was a great help in a new talking point that they recognized. Mind you our dogs were just as excited to see all their friends when they could as well. Some members reported they had to hide the red scarf!!

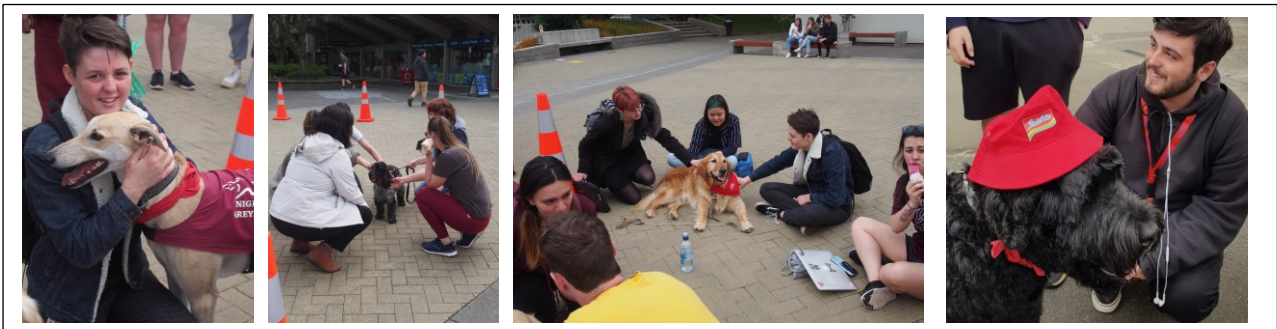
Our involvement with HCN Unit of the Ministry of Children was taking great strides with the children we visited loving the connection but with new policy in place we have had to forgo that although had great praise for those we had helped over the years.

An invite from Age Concern in Palmerston North to have a chat turned out a bit flat as they have started a dog therapy programme of their own and wanted to know how we assess our dogs and until they got it going properly would we fill in the weekly needs. Unfortunately, we both agreed to disagree, and I left with they would do their home visits as they were able and if wished we would visit anyone in the rest home environment who especially asked for a special visit but as to date I have heard nothing more.

One of the local Kindergartens approached a member to bring her dog in to visit on a regular basis but this was not approved due to the fact it dealt with children. The same applied to various primary schools who had asked for a visit.

We celebrated our Founders Day 2020 on June 13 with a luncheon at one of our dog friendly cafes followed by a walk along the Manawatu River. This coming year will be a bigger event hopefully.

We have continued with our group invitational visits to Massey University and UCOL for Study Week and also this year invited to be part of Orientation Week although as it happened Massey orientation was cancelled but we still managed UCOL. It was so good to see all the students as our last visit was actually livestreamed to the students as due to Covid they could not see us but needed our therapy. IPU have also had several student visits and has been horribly affected by Covid as they rely on overseas students so did wonder if we would return as have visited them for many years now. On our last visit although not a lot of students plus staff came to see us Sue our organizer wanted us to know that our visit was more important than ever as many of the students we would usually see were studying through Zoom from their country and so the lecturers were sitting at their computers all day long with lessons and needed the therapy but I least there is hope that it may stay open by being able to do this. She hoped we could do more visits just with a small group of dogs. On our invitational visits we only take the numbers they ask for and can cope with due to either small spaces or request. Unfortunately, when the email goes out to members it is often the first to reply who get to attend.

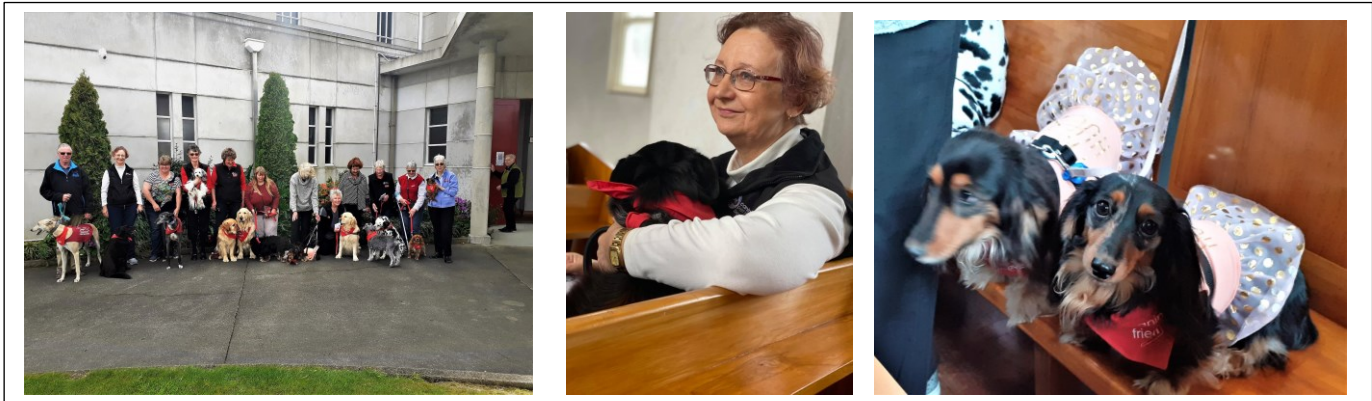


Freyberg High Students once again enjoyed a couple of visits which include a special visit to their special needs unit by a few of the dogs which is always a hit.

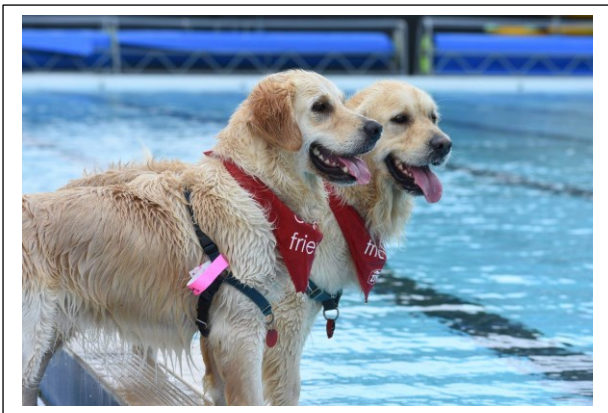


We finally got to the children at the Palmerston North Public Library after several cancellations so was pleased to be invited to an after-school programme afternoon with the theme of our dogs. We usually visit during their holiday programme but since these kept getting cancelled, we instead went to their after-school programme. It was called "Liblab", and the children enjoyed discussion about our dogs and what they knew about dogs, had stories and it was appropriate that we had Arlo the dalmatian with us who of course had a famous story about him and then Thumpa who may not look like a rabbit as his name suggests but they found a story for him as well. They then all made a kennel with a dog in it out of strong paper. Amazingly if the dog they made was a dalmatian it had to have the same number of spots as Arlo including the ones on his nose and the Thumpa dogs had a big wavy tail and a big smile.

We were delighted to attend the Animal Blessing Service at St Peters Anglican Church, Palmerston North as a group. There was also some trepidation as to taking our dogs into a Church, but they did fabulously well, all were blessed and even one of our members who had lost her mate lit a remembrance candle. Thumpa helped me speak about Canine Friends to those present and then we all enjoyed a cuppa afterwards and a gentle stretch of the legs around their grassy paddock out the back then we went out to lunch at Café 116.



As the charity of choice Canine Friends members went along to the Makino Pool in Feilding's "Dogs in Togs" Event and enjoyed the afternoon, enlisted not only a lot of interest but gained some new potential members, even managed to produce a couple of dogs for the was a one-off and the SPCA was chosen this year as we had to decline due to policy.



We were invited to the NZ Rural Games which is held right in the middle of the city in the Square over a weekend in March. As per normal many of the public we had met at other events or while visiting their family spied us and needed an extra pat or cuddle from our dogs and a big thank you to us for sharing our dogs. A roster system of morning/afternoon for the 2 days worked very well. We even got our photos in their coffee-table book about the Rural Games from the start to now so that was impressive.



Our Christmas period seemed to keep us extra busy as a group. We entered ourselves in the Ashhurst Christmas parade and got straight behind the band so marching forward was the word, very enjoyable but it was a cold wintry day but hopefully it will happen again next year, and we might also have a site there for

afterwards as it then forms a Market Day. We managed 8 Xmas group visits between Palmerston North and Feilding with some rest homes wishing to be on the list for next years visits.



Some of the Woodlands Team in Palmerston North

Ranfurlly Residential Care Centre Xmas in Feilding

With a lot of our normal community events cancelled like the Manawatu A& P Show and then having so much happening in November/December and with all our visits we always include a lunch together for those who wish, so we decided to hold our get together when things had quietened down so finally had our day at Foxton Beach at the end of March when we invaded the Ocean Beach Eatery and then most went down to the beach for a thrilling time with our dogs. Some would say finally got to the beach or even a get together that did not have a group visit attached. We planned but as with other areas these can easily be cancelled as Covid still lurks around us.



Everyone is enjoying their involvement as part of our group whether it is joining in on our totally optional invitations or a lunch or a get together but they are enjoying their visiting in their facility and those they meet. All the facilities are becoming more focused on what we bring for their residents and asking for more visits.

It is really great to be part of such an enthusiastic group of like-minded teams, all enjoying the moments we share our dogs with others bringing smiles laughter and all those wonderful stories to be told.

Kaye Harkness and Ann Evans

Joint LOs for the Manawatu

Nelson : Margaret Scaife

Nelson featured in the Canine Friends Pet section of the May 2021 Dog World. A great read. Well done Margaret and the team.



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Around the regions: Nelson/Tasman

supplied by Vicky Graham, President

Margaret Scaife, Canine Friends Pet Therapy Liaison Officer for the Nelson/Tasman region, tells the story of visiting in this part of the country:

Nelson/Tasman is a large and diverse area encompassing city, villages and countryside. We have 22 members and visit three hospitals, the hospice, a senior day care centre and 10 rest homes. Our members live from Atawhai, northeast of Nelson, through to Wakefield, Motueka and Murchison.

As Liaison Officer and Assessor for this area, I am privileged to meet a lovely variety of caring people and their Canine Friends. In over three years I have assessed just two dogs that were not yet ready for visiting because of their youth and enthusiasm: we have to

ensure that elderly people do not get bumped or their skin grazed by bouncy pups.

Once a team is assessed and has received the Canine Friends 'uniform', it is time for them to be introduced to the facility they will visit and go through initial procedures to ensure health and safety. This process has become even more stringent because of Covid 19. Once all this is finished the team visits weekly or fortnightly for approximately one hour. It is immensely rewarding to hear the positive feedback from them and the facilities reflecting the joy they bring to the residents. Because we are so spread out our visiting teams seldom manage to get together to socialise, but it is always great to hear how their visits are going. 🐾



Just as our area is so diverse, so are our Canine Friends. Two of our longest serving dogs are no longer well.

A stunning black Rottweiler, Tui belle (right), has visited at Motueka's Woodlands with Lorraine Smith for many years, but is now quietly retiring because of her age and fragile health.

Jammu is a stately German Shepherd (left) and long-term visitor at Stillwater Gardens in Richmond, and later The Wood in Atawhai. She and her owner, Lorraine Lindsay, have each had health challenges, but are soon to begin visiting again.

If you and your dog would like to join us, please visit: www.caninefriends.org.nz

14 May 2021

Queenstown : Beryle Ravenwood

I am extremely proud of our wonderful team both here in Queenstown and in Cromwell. We have had a steady number visiting on a regular basis, our home visits are bi-weekly on a Monday 1 week in Queenstown and 1 week in Cromwell and School every Monday during each term.

Our Founders Day celebration is coming together and will be held in the next few weeks.



Our numbers have remained steady with 1 new member to be assessed and a new care facility coming on stream in July in Cromwell.

I have just had word that our current facility in Queenstown is to be replaced and the build will take around 3 years to complete.

We have weathered the COVID-19 shutdowns in School and our Care Facilities well and look forward to a year of being able to share our very special canine friends and the love and joy they bring without interruption.

Wishing you a very successful AGM and an exciting year ahead for Canine Friends Pet Therapy

Rotorua : Julie Cowell

Visiting Members	12
Non-Visiting Members	2
Awaiting Assessment	2
Awaiting Payment	2
Awaiting Placement	1 They are waiting to receive their welcome pack

Our Founders Day meet up is on Sunday 16th May. We were due to have one on the 8th May but this was cancelled due to rain.

We are waiting to hear back from Rotorua Hospital regarding visiting. We are now visiting a new mental health establishment. It currently has 3 residents but is increasing to 7 residents. I have an ex-nurse and her dog visiting. The first visit went very well.

I currently have all our rest homes here in Rotorua covered and some have 2 volunteers and their dogs visiting.

I have a new dog who is ready for visiting but at this stage I will use him for back up when any volunteer is unable to visit.

I have just assessed an ex-guide dog and his handler. Astra was trained as a guide dog but was diagnosed with a possible low-level hip dysplasia so was withdrawn from the program. He was

adopted by a vet nurse and her vet husband so will be perfect for visiting. If we get into Rotorua Hospital, Astra would be perfect for that option. I have had another request from the local hospital, so the staff seem very keen for Pet Therapy. Still waiting to hear back.

I have another volunteer waiting for assessment. This lady is a lawyer and would like to use her dog in the court house to help calm witnesses. Her dog is a golden retriever, and they have both been in my obedience class. She has taken him into the courthouse previously and was a great success.

Taupo : Vicky Graham

We have 20 members – 17 visiting and 3 non-visiting/group events members.

The five rest homes, hospital and hospice are well covered by our teams.

Once again Taupo District Council supported us by waiving our dog registration fees and are also willing to offer free micro-chipping.

Despite Covid-19, we have had a reasonably active year.

On 27 September local real estate firm Harcourts held a Hound Day and invited various dog-related organisations to take part, all funds raised are donated to SPCA Taupo. In true Taupo community spirit, we joined in this fun day.

In October we were invited to the Toi Ohomai Institute Take A Paws Day following a successful event in 2019. This was well attended and enjoyed by all. Amanda Simpson, one of our



longstanding members and teacher at Taupo-Nui-A Tia College arranged a group visit on 13 November when many of us spent time with senior students prior to their exams the following week. The area of the college grounds was ideal with lots of seating, grass and trees. It was an extremely fun and rewarding visit. I invited a journalist from our local newspaper who thoroughly enjoyed her time with us and submitted a full-page article the following week.

Amanda reported it was especially rewarding to see some of the more reserved students who prefer to spend their lunch break alone join us for the duration of our visit.

On 12 December Taupo Dog Training Club held an Open Day to promote and showcase responsible dog ownership and display the many types of activities and dog sports. We had member/dog teams interacting with the public and explaining what Canine Friends is about.

On 20 February we enjoyed a lovely relaxing picnic lunch under the trees on my front lawn. The dogs had a great time in and out of the paddling pool, pottering around enjoying each other's

company and keeping very keen watchful eyes on the delicious food.



I wish to thank our wonderful Taupo members for their commitment and contribution to our organisation and to our town – a beautiful place where we live, work and play.

Tauranga : Anna Briffa

On Friday May 14th, 11 Tauranga members joined together at the Raft bar and Café to celebrate Founders Day. We had a 'guess the dog' competition and the winner received a fun Founders Day trophy. Two members present received their certificates thanking them for their one year of service.

Visiting Members	37
Non-Visiting Members	2
Awaiting Assessment	2
Awaiting Placement	1



Waikato : Yvette Shore

The Waikato region stretches over quite a large area. As at 31 March 2021, we had around 60 visiting volunteers covering the area plus another 15 non-visiting members. We also had eight people on hold, who for various reasons, were unable to visit for 1-2 months although most are allocated to facilities already.

Over the year, I have tried to phone all our Waikato volunteers individually to see how they are going and to ensure they are happy (yes, I found there were a few who had given up visiting but failed to let anyone know!) I hope to start the exercise again shortly.

There were approximately 45 new applicants who were assessed and placed – about 20 in Hamilton, six in Cambridge and the rest in outlying areas (Whatawhata, Morrinsville, Te Kuiti, Te Kauwhata, Maramarua, Whitianga, Matamata, Thames, Putaruru, Whangamata, Pukekohe,



Tokoroa. Especial thanks to Liz Scott, who looked after most of these assessments with Christine Nielson doing those in the east of the region.

We sadly lost two of our furry buddies who died during the year. We also had a few non-starter applicants who were/were not assessed but who either lost enthusiasm or like some others, were waylaid by injury or illness.

We had one minor health and safety incident where a dog jumped up and scratched a scab on a resident's leg. This was not strictly the volunteer's fault as one of the family had taken the dog by the lead for a photograph.

There are currently over 75 facilities in our region with ever more mushrooming and at present, we have volunteers visiting in all but four of those located in Hamilton. We also have two volunteers who make monthly visits to Waikeria Prison (in rotation). We have volunteers visiting six wards at Waikato Hospital plus one or two hospitals in smaller towns. Three of our volunteers also work as Reading Buddies under the Hamilton City Council initiative.

I would love to have had more group visits, but we had only two invited events. The first was at a local church - an animal blessing (complete with a calf) on the feast of St Francis of Assisi. The other was a visit to the Inclusive Unit at Hillcrest High School in Hamilton where the students baked special dog biscuits for their furry visitors. There were around a dozen students in wheelchairs, and they absolutely loved having us there. We also had a presence at a small Hamilton Dog Expo in November. It was worth the effort of setting up a stall. We were kept on our feet with an amazing number of enquiries from people interested in Canine Friends. Thank you also to Waikato volunteers Lisa Pulman and Boomer who came to help out. It was great to meet a number of our other volunteers from throughout the region who came and introduced themselves as well.

In an effort to recruit in Te Awamutu where we are short of volunteers, I made a special visit and personally delivered recruitment flyers to all veterinary surgeries, library, etc., I carry a few posters to distribute whenever I head out of town.

The re-establishment of a Waikato Facebook page has been a great success and I hope this will continue. We now have 64 members and it's wonderful to be able to share news in such an easy way. Scrolling through the many posts and photos, I am filled with admiration for our volunteers and how they obviously give so much pleasure to so many people.

My hope this year, is to start group visits to tertiary institutions. This is not only for students but so that we can feel more of a community among ourselves. I also hope to organise some smaller group gatherings for volunteers in 'dog-friendly' cafes throughout the region.

2020 has been a busy year despite Covid. I am humbled by the people we visit, as well as other volunteers who give their time. It is rewarding but no one could say that volunteering is always easy. I even had one volunteer give up because she hadn't realised the extra time and effort it took her to groom her dog before each visit. For the joy we bring, it can be difficult to face the constant deterioration and loss of friends we have made. Even when facilities may not acknowledge their efforts, I hope that we as Liaison Officers, can offer our volunteers encouragement and support so they feel valued on a continuing basis. With this in mind, I would love to have more contact with other Liaison Officers as I think we could be a helpful source of knowledge and inspiration to one another.

Wellington : Helen Moriarty

Wellington membership is currently sitting at 46 and has been in the mid-to-high 40s for several years. We are seeing a surge in new applicants who are still in the workforce, and most of these people had heard of us by word of mouth. This 'young demographic' creates a challenge for placement, since many are not available to commit to a regular visiting day during the working week or at a time the aged care facilities most welcome Canine Friends.

Wellington has a wide variety of aged care facilities, ranging from smaller family trust-run care homes to those affiliated to the Presbyterian and Anglican churches, and the corporate villages operated by Ryman, Summerset, Ultimate Care, Alvida and very soon Bupa too. In addition, we have a number of facilities specialising in dementia, both day care and long term residential, plus a residential facility for younger people living with disability.

Our DHB is pro-active in encouraging volunteers at the Wellington Regional Hospital, including the mental health unit (but not the Childrens' Hospital). CCDHB requires all volunteers to first attend a volunteer induction course and undergo a police check. Our local hospice also welcomes Canine Friends.

Often our new applicants state a preference to work with children, which is a scarce opportunity here in Wellington. Most Wellington schools have a strict no-dog policy, which precludes Canine Friends from participating in reading buddy programmes. However, this year we have introduced a member as a reading buddy to one school after the Board made a special exemption for Canine Friends for remedial reading purposes only.

A big thank you to Wellington members who also put up their hands and paws for special events in 2020-21. Members attended: Victoria University and Massey University for pre-exam weeks and orientation; Special Children's Christmas Party; Age Concern suburban groups. We were invited once again to the Life Flight Trust Open Day 2021 but this was cancelled in the wake of the level 2 alert and the Auckland lock-down.

We look forward to thanking our members at our upcoming Founders Day event which will be a combined social gathering with the Whitby-Johnsonville and Kapiti members.

Whanganui : Hannah Li

Visiting Members	9
Non-visiting Members	6
Awaiting Assessment	1
Awaiting Payment	1
Awaiting Placement	1

I have made a few connections with the Jane Winston manager and we have been invited to do a presentation in June to talk to people which are living inside the retirement village/individual homes. We might get requests from them after the talk.



I have visited all active members in Whanganui in their assigned location in April. April has been a very busy month for me, and we are looking forward for our Founders day event which we could have our group photo taken and will be sent to the local newspaper for a full story to introduce Canine Friends. Hoping in this we can recruit more members.