



PET PAL TALES

A newsletter for the volunteers, sponsors and friends of Therapy Pet Pals of Texas, Inc.



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2025 IN REVIEW
VOLUME XXXVII

PET PAL TALES is published by Therapy Pet Pals of Texas, Inc. for its volunteers, sponsors and friends. Therapy Pet Pals of Texas, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation sharing "unconditional love" through pet therapy.

Board of Directors

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Nancy J. Gray, *Executive Director*
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Darrin P. Jensen
Directors Emeritus,
James D. Lashmit
Megan S. Medica

Mission Statement

- ♥ Recruit and train volunteers for work in pet therapy, and promote the human/animal bond through pet visitation programs.
- ♥ Work with health care staff and medical professionals in various institutions where pet therapy programs would enhance the quality of life for the patients.
- ♥ Provide institutionalized patients an opportunity for bonding with pets through weekly visits.
- ♥ Promote and publicize pet therapy through workshops, seminars, lectures, and discussion groups in order to elevate public awareness on the importance of pet therapy.

Corporate Office

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TPPT'S 2025 VOLUNTEER REPORT

Last year our volunteers provided **5,522 HOURS** in loving service to their community! They traveled (at their own expense) **38,335 miles**. Most important of all, Pet Pals were responsible for **69,069 SMILES** placed on the faces of the nursing home residents and hospital patients in the facilities we proudly serve!

TPPT takes great pride in the totality of our volunteers' commitments and their caring hearts. Because of them, there is an abundance of love and companionship in many Texas healthcare facilities. Our loving *Pet Pals* "spread sunshine" wherever they go and make many lonely hearts truly happy!





ANNUAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS



CONGRATULATIONS TO TPPT'S 30 YEAR HONOREES!



Volunteering with TPPT for the last 30 years has been extremely rewarding for me as well as my current and previous Pet Pals – Pembroke Welsh Corgis Poppy, Zelda, Marge, Chuffy, Tommy & Freda, and Tibetan Spaniels Clem & Glory. We have visited countless residents at many facilities, have brought big smiles from just about everyone we met, and have made some very good friends along the way. It makes my day when I see how much joy our visits bring to our senior population. I am so glad I found TPPT when I moved to Austin back in 1994. It is a wonderful organization and I am proud to be a member!

Jane Adams
Austin

Not pictured:
Dr. Tom Bradfield
Austin

CONGRATULATIONS TO TPPT'S 25 YEAR HONOREES!



Nancy Gray
Austin



Jim Icenhower
Austin



Karen Icenhower
Austin



Lana Newlander
Austin

CONGRATULATIONS TO TPPT'S 20
YEAR HONOREE!

CONGRATULATION TO TPPT'S
10 YEAR HONOREES!



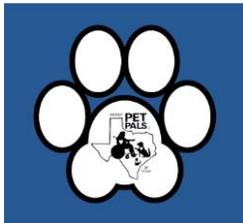
Dixie Tischler
Austin



Sheree Feldman
Houston



Jill Gunn
Austin



All of our inspired volunteers have demonstrated their dedication to TPPT by their incredible service records! They have been invaluable to TPPT's growth and success, and their devoted commitment to pet therapy is clearly obvious! These honorees serve TPPT in many diverse areas. They are enthusiastic Trainers, Q/T Class Evaluators, and Special Events Committee members.



Dena Taylor
Houston



Nedy West
Austin

CONGRATULATIONS TO TPPT'S OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS!



Roberta Pryor
Austin

TPPT takes tremendous pride in presenting the **Outstanding Volunteer** awards to these two honorees. They have been truly amazing in their dedication to pet therapy. Not only have they gone that “extra mile”, they have gone many extra miles in service to their cherished friends in many nursing homes and hospitals.

We congratulate **Roberta & Doug** and sincerely **THANK** them for their loving and faithful service to TPPT!



Doug Hart
Houston

THANK YOU, JUDY & STEVE RUNYAN!

These beautiful awards, which are proudly displayed by TPPT's Outstanding Volunteers, were designed and donated by **Judy and Steve Runyan**. Tony Leonard had donated these very special awards every year for 16 years, until his death in 2006. His daughter, Judy, vowed to keep his legacy alive and, along with her husband Steve, has continued making the wonderful **Tony Awards** since then! They continue to honor us with their talent, generosity, and loving dedication to TPPT!



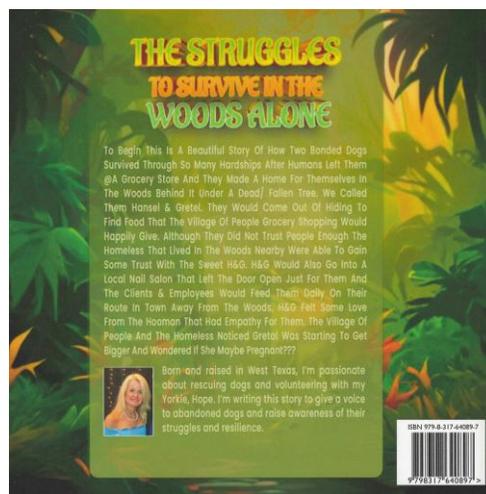
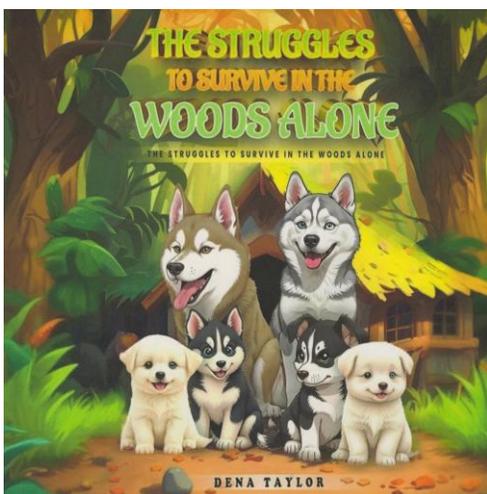
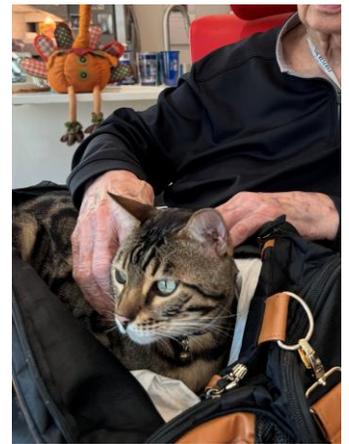
PET PALS IN ACTION IN 2025!



Meet Benji and How He Became a Therapy Cat

By Cassandra Kahler

One day, my husband was with his mom at the hospital while she was having some tests done. While Terry was out in the waiting area, a man stopped by with his dogs as part of a pet therapy program. My husband and this man chatted for a bit, and my husband mentioned how we had a cat at home who had the potential to be a therapy cat. Turns out the man was Mike Gray with Divine Canines, and he said while the program he was working through didn't take cats, his wife Nancy worked with a different program, Therapy Pet Pals of Texas (TPPT), and they have had cats in their program. Shortly there after, I contacted TPPT and found out that their requirements for cats were pretty simple: be current on vaccinations and be of a temperament that can tolerate on demand petting. Benji and I were invited to the TPPT office, and Benji was judged of appropriate temperament to be a therapy pet pal. Our training consisted of three visits supervised by an experienced volunteer to potential destination facilities. Our visits went well, and we became fully certified as TPPT volunteers. We visit two facilities each twice a month (one per Saturday), and Benji sits in his bag and visits anyone who wants to pet his super soft pelt-like coat. Unlike some of the dogs in the program who are excited to go on their TPPT visits, Benji is not keen on his job. He actively avoids me and even grumbles at me when I gather him to get ready to volunteer. He somehow knows the difference between when I'm approaching him to get him ready for a hike vs when it's time to go volunteer. However, despite his grumbling, he is the best best boy when we are doing our volunteer visits. He is always patient and calm with the people who pet and visit with him, and this is not always the case with me or the vet! I think he senses how much he helps with his warmth and softness.



**TPPT Member
Dena Taylor is a
published author!
Check out her book,
which is available on
Amazon!**

TPPT 2025 Honors Banquet Houston



TPPT 2025 Honors Banquet Austin



FAITHFUL FOUNDATION

FRIENDS

Therapy Pet Pals of Texas is blessed by the wonderful foundations that have been so generous in their support of our mission and goals. We take pride in listing those who donated in 2024.

The RWH Foundation has been a friend to TPPT since 2007. TPPT is blessed and deeply honored to continue receiving support from the RWH Foundation. We are grateful for their generous gift in the amount of \$8,000! We are so thankful for their continued support for 18 years! **THANK YOU!**

The Donald D. Hammill Foundation has been a dedicated friend of TPPT since 2009. We are truly grateful for their donation of \$7,000. They are friends who recognize the many health benefits to be derived from our Pet Pal visits. **THANK YOU!**

The ForeSight Foundation of Austin has been a treasured friend of TPPT for **24 years!!** We are humbled and gratified by their faith and very generous grants to TPPT. Special thanks to Jennifer & Brooks Newbill who are devoted believers in pet therapy for their grant of \$5,000. **THANK YOU!**

The Medallion Foundation is a loyal and dedicated foundation in their funding of TPPT. We are once again grateful for their donation of \$5,000 and delighted by the continued faith and trust that is placed in our organization. **THANK YOU!**

The John Medica & Megan Salzman-Medica Charitable Fund has been an incredibly faithful supporter of TPPT for **28 years!!** Their loving gifts have been very generous and given continuously every year! We extend our heartfelt gratitude for their continued support and generous grant of \$5,000. **THANK YOU!**

The Ed Rachal Foundation of Corpus Christi has continued to bless TPPT with a generous donation in 2025 of \$5,000. We cannot thank them enough for their continued support over the years. **THANK YOU!**

The Ray & June Smith Charitable Foundation has been a good friend and a caring supporter of TPPT for many years. We are extremely thankful for their caring donation of \$5,000. Their generosity enables TPPT to continue sharing love and companionship with residents in healthcare facilities. **THANK YOU!**

The Nanette C. Wickham Charitable Foundation has demonstrated their steadfast support for TPPT for over 10 years. We are extremely grateful for their wonderful donation of \$2,500 in 2025! **THANK YOU!**

The Lind Family Charitable Foundation have been dedicated and faithful supporters since 2005. They understand the significance of what a vital role pets play in adding quality of life to those people who are no longer able to have a pet of their own. We thank them for their donation of \$2,000. **THANK YOU!**

The Shomos Family Foundation, Ltd. We thank our friend and former Pet Pal volunteer, Monica Shomos, for her continued support. We are grateful to the Shomos Family Foundation for their 2025 donation of \$2,000. **THANK YOU!**

The Arnold Foundation has been giving TPPT their support for **24 years!** As one of our long-term supporting foundations, their friendship is a source of great pride to TPPT. We thank them for their generous grant of \$1,500. **THANK YOU!**

The R.H. & A.Q. Lawe Foundation is a long-term friend and supporter of TPPT. In 2025, they honored TPPT with a most generous donation of \$1,000. **THANK YOU!**

The Abbott Foundation of Austin is a friend TPPT made in 2011. We thank them for validating our volunteer efforts with their faithful, caring gifts and their belief in TPPT's mission and goals. We are grateful for their donation of \$750. **THANK YOU!**



MEMORIALS - DONATIONS MADE IN MEMORY OF...

<p><u>"Sadie"</u> Pet Pal of David & Lynn Ashley By TPPT Office Staff</p>	<p><u>"Samantha"</u> Beautiful kitten of Chuck Bucan & Robert Parker By Joy Parker</p>	<p><u>Lisa Lively Reed</u> By Janet M. Stucky</p>
<p><u>"Bella"</u> Pet Pal of Soledad Ramirez By TPPT Office Staff</p>	<p><u>Mildred Bradford</u> By David & Lynn Ashley</p>	<p><u>Dwight Horner</u> By Debbie Conner TPPT Office Staff Mary Horner Kathy Grosch</p>
<p><u>"Lucy"</u> Pet of Donna & Winston Parrish By Gail Beardsley</p>	<p><u>"Ethel"</u> Pet Pal of David & Lynn Ashley By TPPT Office Staff</p>	<p><u>"Camarena"</u> Pet Pal of Mary Horner By TPPT Office Staff Tish Crahen Mary Horner Kathy Grosch</p>
<p><u>"Jas"</u> Pet Pal of Arlen Zander by TPPT Office Staff Arlen Zander</p>	<p><u>"Darby"</u> Pet Pal of Tish Crahen By Mary Horner</p>	<p><u>David Ashley</u> Pet Pal member By Elaine Braslow Kathy Grosch TPPT Office Staff Virginia Klunder</p>
<p><u>"Riley"</u> Devoted companion of Chuck Bucan & Robert Parker By Joy Parker</p>	<p><u>Debbie Conner's Sister</u> By Mary Honer</p>	<p><u>Dennis Doherty</u> Former Pet Pal member By Tish Crahen</p>
<p><u>"Autumn"</u> Pet Pal of Julie Humble By TPPT Office Staff</p>	<p><u>"Cody"</u> Beloved pet of the Alexander Family By Gerald & Peggy Lively</p>	<p><u>"Gunner"</u> Pet Pal of Marianne Hohman By Teddi Jackson Nancy Holchak</p>
<p><u>"Gia"</u> Pet Pal of Brenda Hampton By TPPT Office Staff</p>	<p><u>"Ernie"</u> Pet Pal of Rhonda Gregg Hirsch By TPPT Office Staff Mary Horner</p>	<p><u>"Cooper"</u> Beloved companion of Carol & Charlie Coleman By Gerald & Peggy Lively</p>
<p><u>"Bronson"</u> Devoted companion of Dax Dobbs & Garry Davis By Rita Dobbs</p>	<p><u>Terri Pass</u> Pet Pal member By Mary Horner TPPT Office Staff Tish Crahen Sandra & Naomi Gray</p>	<p><u>"Chewy"</u> Sweet companion of Cindi & Wayne Blackburn By Gerald & Peggy Lively</p>
<p><u>Anne Stephens</u> By Tish Crahen</p>	<p><u>"Boyou"</u> Beloved companion of Kristin & Derek Shipp By Gerald & Peggy Lively</p>	<p><u>In Honor of "Bella Grace"</u> By Joy Parker</p>
<p><u>"Duke" & "Governor"</u> By Susarta Family Charitable Fund</p>	<p><u>Kahryn Lashmit</u> by Tish Crahen</p>	
	<p><u>Pat Kalil</u> by Tish Crahen</p>	

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

- Jane Adams
- Marilou Cantoni
- Tish Crahen
- Joan Eurey
- Lesa Favreau
- John Fung
- Bernice Gates
- Helen Gaw
- Mike & Nancy Gray
- Mark Grosch
- Jill Gunn
- Mary Hall
- Adele Hanson
- David & Jo Nell Harlow
- Marte Hersey
- Mary Horner
- Cassandra Kahler
- Cheah Ling Liew
- Patti McGraw
- Patty Moran
- Brenda Raup
- Steve & Judy Runyan
- Joan Shirley
- Patty & Clif Steed
- Rick & Nedy West



CORPORATE & BUSINESS SPONSORS

- AMD
- Boeing
- Camp Lucy
- County Line on the Hill
- Dell
- ExxonMobil Foundation
- HCA Healthcare
- Healthy Pets Bee Cave
- IBM
- Kendra Scott
- Lake Travis Chamber of Commerce
- Macy's
- Microsoft
- National Instruments
- Nulo Company
- New York Life
- RecognizeGood The Foundation
- Visa, Inc.
- Westlake Animal Hospital

Newsletter submissions:

We are delighted to receive Pet Pal pictures for our newsletter! Also, if you would like to submit a short story (or just a paragraph), send it, along with an appropriate picture, for publishing in the next edition of **PET PAL TALES**.

Website additions:

TPPT has space for the addition of many more pictures on our website! If you want to share a picture of your Pet Pal volunteering, send it to the TPPT office and we will be happy to publish it on our website:
www.therappetpals.org



PET PAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

No matter how many new volunteers TPPT certifies each year, there can never be enough to fill all the healthcare facilities!

We urge our Pet Pal members to share the joy and rewards of being a volunteer. Ask your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to visit our website and view the pictures there. They will see the happiness pets give and want to be part of such a heart-warming experience!

Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Training/Testing available. Contact TPPT Office at 512-347-1984 for contact information.

