

The purpose of life is not to be happy — but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all. \*

— Leo Rosten

\* I might offer that happiness comes from doing the above.—ed.

## APRIL

15 - Book Discussion: A Dog's Purpose by W. B. Cameron @ Rincon Valley Library. 6:30 pm

16 - Sonoma State: Stress-Less Event for Students. Outside, 11:30 to 2:30 pm.

18 - Book Discussion: A Dog's Purpose by W. B. Cameron @ Main Library (downtown). Noon

18 - Certification Class. 10am to 4:30pm - Sonoma

25 - ROP Class. 10am - Noon. Evaluations. 1pm to 4pm - Sonoma

## MAY

2 through 9 Murphy's Irish Pub offers special menu to support 4Paws!

9 - Human Race. 4Paws Booth, Fun Run and Walk. 7am to Noon

## JUNE

5 - Super Kids Camp Sonoma State. ROP. 10am to Noon.

Enchanted Hills Camp for the Blind runs from June through August.

**FLASH:** Michelle Lua and Whitney named "Volunteer of the Month" at Brookside Elem in Sebastopol!

Whitney Lua



### Learning - Saying "Hello"

A useful greeting for people sitting in wheelchairs is, "say hello." The goal is having your dog rest its head in a person's lap for petting. Have your dog sit directly in front of you. Pat the inside of a knee and use "say hello" to cue your dog. If your dog knows "touch", use that to target your knee. Reward with a treat. Repeat and encourage your pet to leave its head for longer periods of time by delaying a treat (or petting if that's the reward of choice). Your pooch will soon "say hello" and make a new friend.

A foxtail embedded between toes and the open, infected lesion it created.

### Social Therapy - Connections

We all need to feel relevant, but patients or elders in healthcare who are separated from family and friends often become depressed, angry, or uncooperative. It's easier to pull the covers up over your head than to face reality. How do dogs reach people in hopeless



situations when others can't? Perhaps it is the tens of thousands of years over which the two species have learned to communicate without language.

And the communication continues: a patient in a coma awakens when he is nuzzled by a cold nose; an unconscious hospice patient reaches out to pet the dog that visited her for months before. A man speaks coherently to his family through the fog of Alzheimer's when a dog sits next to him.

Neuroscience is proving that dogs' and humans' brains are similar, and, while our center for language and abstract thinking might be bigger, canines are just as capable of making decisions, understanding an abstract concept like fairness, and then creating a system to demonstrate and teach others what fairness looks like.

### Nutrition - Proteins



Protein is a primary nutrient that dogs need to survive and comes from animal- and plant-based sources. The most common form of protein in dry dog food is "meal" and its quality depends on when, where, and how it is rendered. Protein from soy, wheat, corn or peas is a cheap substitute for animal protein, and is less digestible and of lower biological value.



While animal meal is better, it is made from animal parts unfit for human consumption, unless the packaging says differently. If animal by-products are mentioned, that means heads, feet, hide, feathers, and viscera are included. While those are sources of protein, they are largely indigestible and have little nutritional value.

Don't panic: All meal is not inferior, especially if it is a limited-source protein and the food is grain free. If you want to know more, contact the manufacturer for the source of the food's protein and where it is rendered. Or go online to the Pet Food Advisor for current reviews of dog foods and what the list of ingredients really means. You might also consider cooking for your dog, or trying dehydrated or frozen raw foods. The Whole Dog Journal is an excellent source for both those topics as well.

## March Blast

### 4Paws News, Updates & Activities

**News** Whoo-hoo! Murphy's Irish Pub in Sonoma is going to be our restaurant sponsor for the Human Race Restaurant Week! They will offer a special menu choice and then donate a percentage to 4Paws. Details to come.

You'll receive more info about the Human Race, including ways you can help the day of the event, tips on fundraising, and why your work is so important to others.

**Updates** Did you know in 2014 that you – you and your canine therapy bud – comforted over **4600** people in healthcare. And while you were busy doing that, ROP teams coached **7400** children at schools and libraries. Way to go! Thank you **12,000+** times for making peoples' lives better by being there for them. Astounding work!

**Activities** Teams going to our Sonoma Stress-Less Event on the 16th may attend for an hour (or less) between 11:30 and 2:00 pm. If you know when you will come, help us plan by indicating your preferred time: 11:30 to 12:30; Noon to 1:00 pm; 12:30 to 1:30; 1:00 to 2:00pm. Then confirm with Michelle: mannlua@aol.com

**Kudos and Shout-Outs** Thanks to Robin Raike with Munchkin who will represent 4Paws at the book discussion of A Dog's Purpose by W. Bruce Cameron. Join them and meet the author on April 18 at the Central Santa Rosa Library. Joanne Yates will be at Rincon Valley with Rudy on April 16. Please join us!

From Craig Madison, 3rd -grade teacher at El Verano about 4Paws ROP Teams! *[The students] are so comfortable and really want to show what good readers they are becoming. I cannot emphasize enough how something so simple can create such a special time in class where children feel safe and love to do what they are learning.*

A big round of applause for our ROP volunteers at El Verano Elementary School in Sonoma, and a very heartfelt thank you to Jane Wicklund, Maggie, Mara Kahn and Fenway for managing the program and special events.

**4Paws has a new library and volunteers:** Sheila Butterfield and Bindi, and Gene and Gail Graser with Hunter have been coaching students at the Windsor Public Library for the last 3 years! Welcome and thank you for your dedication to these students and their families.



### Wellness - Seasonal Danger: Foxtails

Foxtails can kill your pet. They enter between toes; in eyes, ears, mouth, and nostrils; into urinary tracts or soft tissue. They travel through the body, lodge in organs, and create dangerous infections. Painstakingly check your dogs' feet, coat, and legs after any walk. Go to **WebMD** (search *foxtails*) to learn about other signs and symptoms.



Bindi Butterfield and ROP Student.