
2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Bringing People and Animals
Together for Healing**

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Therapy Animals of San Antonio is an all-volunteer, 501 (c)(3) organization that has served Bexar and surrounding 10 Counties since 1989. As noted in our core standards, we are dedicated to commodious, safe, and therapeutic community service, as well as, the harmonious stewardship of our organization. We believe diversity of ideas and respectful creative conflict are strengths when all focus on a common goal: bringing people and animals together for healing. TASA continues to strive to meet or exceed nationally accepted standards for animal assisted activity and animal assisted therapy. Our organization is led by a Board that includes 4 officer positions and chair members whom are elected for two year terms. Board members include both individuals who are registered as an Animal Therapy Team and those who volunteer as individuals based upon their strong beliefs about the power of the animal-human bond and community service.

2019 Officers & Board

Gerald Dubinski, Jr. President

Lisa Lejk, Vice-President

Tamara Yates, Secretary

Beverly Oakes, Treasurer, Volunteer System Manager

Kathi France, Team Training Chair

Russell "Pat" Smutz, Evaluation Chair

Eileen Gaughran, Membership Chair

Linda Porter-Wenzlaff, Education Chair

Susana Holland, Phone Committee Chair

Erica Garcia, Webmaster Chair

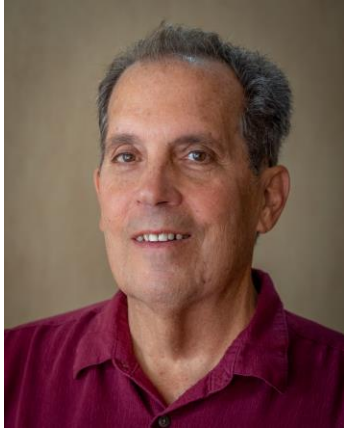
Danielle Lewis, StoryTails Chair

*Norma Brooks, Facility Assessment Chair

Mary Lou Wilson, Facility Assessment Chair

Kathy Meade, Advisor to the Board

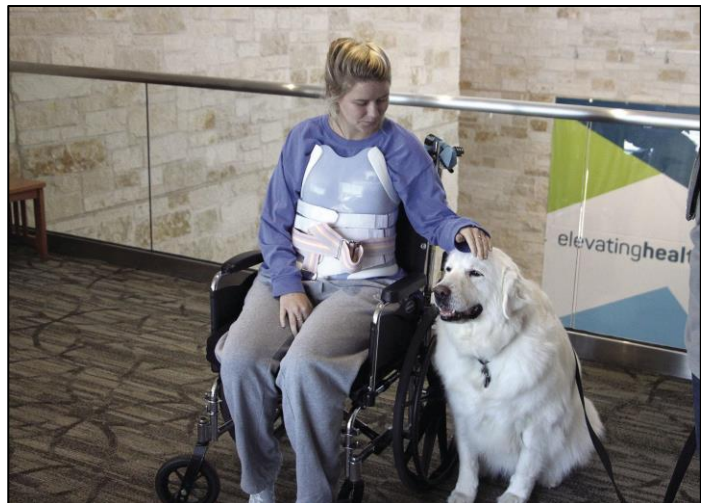
*This year included a tragic vehicular accident that took the life of Norma Brooks, our Facility Chair and Therapy Team. Norma and her canine partner, Shanti, were excited to be selected as "King Anbarkio" for the parade. Please see the Pooch Parade section that includes several photos in her memory.



President Gerald Dubinski, Jr.

It is a pleasure and honor to serve as Therapy Animals of San Antonio's President. As I review our accomplishments and growth this year, I feel privileged to be a part of this organization. Over 80 animal therapy teams and many additional supporting members volunteered and provided services to vulnerable populations within the San Antonio metropolitan area and surrounding 10 counties. Facilities included hospitals, senior living and memory centers, hospices, and specialty facilities such as the Ronald McDonald Houses, Krier Juvenile Justice Center, Children's Bereavement Center and schools. Therapy Dog teams also began responding when requested to schools following crisis events to provide support with counselors to students and staff as appropriate. As we enter 2020, our goals include expansion of our crisis intervention programming across a broader area within Texas in response to natural or man-made disasters. I am proud to state that Therapy Animals of San Antonio continues to grow in its community service and as an organization is in excellent condition.

Victoria (partner Graham Bishop) was featured in August in the Kerrville Daily Times in a newspaper article written by Tim Hernandez about animal therapy and their role in helping those with recovery at the Peterson Regional Medical Center. Victoria and Graham were also featured in a KSAT radio feature several weeks later.



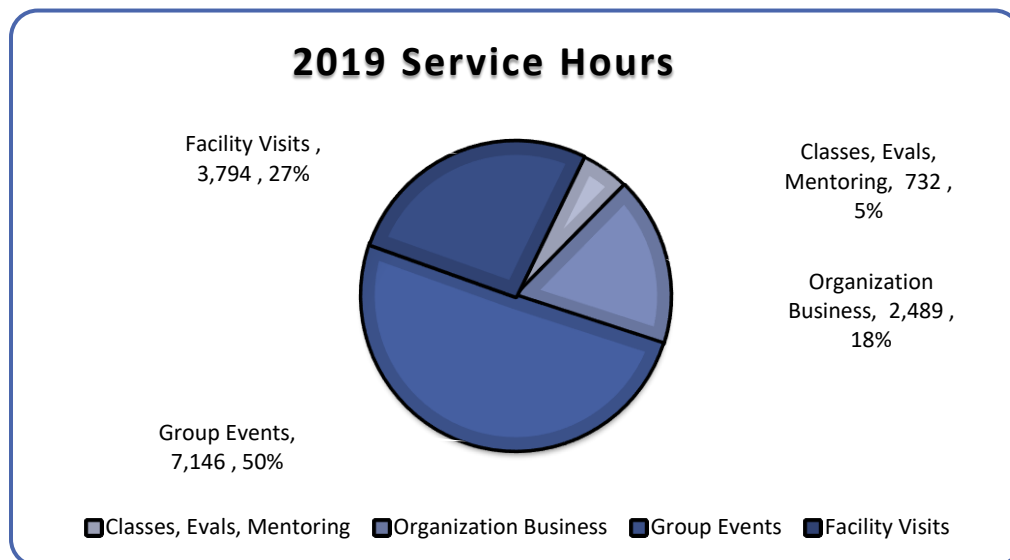
"Therapy that Matters"

Animal Assisted Activity and Animal Assisted Therapy

The primary mission of Therapy Animals of San Antonio remains the provision of animal assisted activity (AAA) and animal assisted therapy (AAT) to the vulnerable populations across San Antonio and the surrounding 10 counties. AAT involves a team working with a professional to provide specific treatment based on goals identified and documented by a professional for each visit. AAA is more spontaneous, without specific treatment goals, and is often described as a “meet and greet” contact.

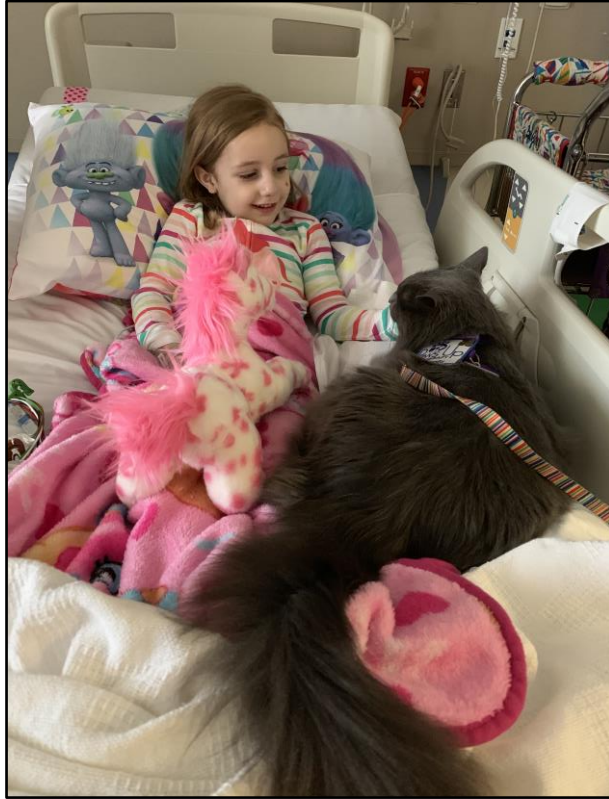
Service Metrics

Our teams provided more than 3,794 hours of animal assisted activity (AAA) and animal assisted therapy (AAT) at over 70 facilities. Many of our teams serve at multiple facilities in addition to attending group events as the team is available.



Facilities included care facilities (assisted living, memory, and day programs), hospitals, military programs, detention facilities, schools, and many other facilities where a vulnerable population were served by our animal teams. Several facilities, such as hospitals, Ronald McDonald Houses, and juvenile facilities have multiple teams visiting on a scheduled basis throughout the year.

Our presence in the community has also grown substantially via our group events. Sixty-five events (sixty-eight days) were coordinated by Malinda Red Cloud, Community Events & Presentations Chair. These events included presentations (16) and information tables (7); destressors (25); corporate visits (7) and conventions (3); event supports (3); parades (2); and military (troop) support (2). Many of the events were supported by multiple teams and 31 events included 50 additional non-team participants. It is noted that these numbers do not include our largest event and fundraiser, the Fiesta Pooch Parade.



Hospital Visit by Zane Grey (Cat)



Community Education



**Therapy Animals of San Antonio
Child Literacy Program**

TASA has a substantial presence in the school system. Our StoryTails program focuses on increasing the reading skills of younger school-age children, supporting literacy through the message that reading can be fun, and promoting overall life-skill development. The process involves the student reading an age-appropriate book to our animal team in settings that include schools and libraries. The



Reading to Duncan

combination of the loving acceptance of the animal and the enjoyment of the animal interaction allows reading to become fun and non-stressful. Research has documented measurable grade-level reading skill improvements made by students involved in animal assisted reading programs.

Teams review an online manual developed and updated in 2019 by our Education Chair, Dr. Linda Porter. This manual provides training and education for this specialized population. TASA is active in several schools (AAT) working with a school counselor and specific populations such as early education programming.

This year included the creation of critical incident response programming for several school districts. Specifically, trained animal teams can respond to a school's request following a critical incident and in collaboration with the School district counselors and staff may provide an added benefit to students and staff involved. While this program is still in its infancy, we are hopeful that our teams will provide an extra resource to the participating schools when these crisis events occur. This programming continues to expand as we concluded 2019 and entered into 2020.



2019 School Crisis Response Animals

ASA's program development will expand in 2020 to introduce a statewide Animal Assisted Crisis Response (AACR) Program. Experienced, specifically vetted, teams will receive specialized FEMA Certified Training, animal and human first aid certifications, as well as, how to interact with persons in crisis and to safely navigate environments that are physically and emotionally challenging. These CARE (Crisis Animal REsponse) Teams will have specific branding, equipment, and financial support to respond to crisis and disaster settings in Texas communities when requested by city, county, state or federal management systems. TASA CARE Teams will collaborate with professional responders to ensure coordinated, sensitive and timely support. Our standards and ethical responsibilities will continue to be a primary focus to ensure no harm occurs through our attempt to assist communities in times of crisis.

Membership

TASA had 178 members at the end of December, a number that reflects a gain of approximately 10%. Eileen Gaughran, our Membership Chair, maintains the membership database, sends out welcoming letters and renewal reminders. Memberships include both Teams and individuals who wish to support the animal therapy mission. We thank all members for their support!

Communications

The Telephone Committee, chaired by Susana Holland, consists of four volunteers who rotate weeks. The committee answered 304 calls to the TASA phone line in 2019 and initiated referrals as needed. Thanks to Susana, Mary Lou Wilson, Hilda Statz-Baida, and Dan Lindahl. Our communication system also relies upon our Webmaster, Erica Garcia who updates our website, tracks the year's events, and participates as one of our photographers for the evaluation process.

The Process of Becoming a Team

Animal therapy work requires emotional, intellectual, and physical capability. Since therapy teams work in a variety of settings, and often with vulnerable people, many unanticipated things can happen and much is not under their direct control. The human team member must know about, and have the ability to proactively assess the environment; and to anticipate issues for and with persons they might encounter. They also must demonstrate an understanding of how their pet partner responds to many different stimuli and exhibits stress. The animal must be able to respond consistently to the cues and directions their human team member gives them in addition to having an even temperament and solid training.

A prospective team initially becomes a member in TASA and selects an option of either a Pet Partner or a Local registration type. While each process varies somewhat, the same high standards that meet or exceed national best practices apply to both registration types and are fully supported by TASA. Initial inquiries, registration packets, scheduling for an orientation class, and providing other support is provided by the Team Training Chair, Kathi France. Additional support from others will follow as the prospective team proceeds forward.

Each prospective team (human only) completes either the Pet Partner or Local class. Both have online programming available and all potential teams attend an approximate 4-hour in-person orientation class designed to help the volunteers better understand TASA, the supportive process, and requirements. Thank you to the instructors Malinda Red Cloud, Brenda Leiser, and Linda Porter-Wenzlaff who have many years of experience and so willingly share information to help the teams achieve success.

After attending the class, individuals who are ready to proceed to an evaluation are scheduled by Russell "Pat" Smutz, the Team Evaluation Chair. The evaluation follows specific steps as determined by registration type, i.e. Pet Partners or Local registration. Both registrations follow national best practices and standards but do so with slightly different processes. Local Trainers

and all Evaluators reviewed a revised Local evaluation process in 2019 designed to increase each Local evaluating team’s self-direction with client interactions and to support ongoing interrater reliability and congruent education support for both Pet Partner and Local Evaluations. This continues to ensure that all of our teams are equally qualified no matter which registration process they choose.

The evaluations are manpower intensive with each requiring at least 11 volunteers. Forty-five individuals, many of which volunteered at multiple evaluations, supported the 7 Pet Partner and 8 Local evaluations during 2019 where 67 teams were tested. Lynda Melendez and Amy Gamber provided the Pet Partner evaluations while Kathi France, Audrey Charleton, Aileen Holeman, Linda Porter, and Tamara Yates provided Local evaluations. TASA is committed to providing resources, training, and ongoing evaluations of our Teams. All TASA members renew annually and both Local and Pet Partner Teams re-evaluate every two years. We also tested 3 Pet Partners Teams who we identified as a Public team and were not members of TASA. These Pet Partner teams are evaluated but no further support is provided by TASA.

TASA tracks the outcome metrics of each registration evaluation option each year as well as our collective outcomes. These help us identify opportunities for improvement in each as well as ensuring equity in both.

Combined Registration Types	Teams	Percent
Predictable/Routine	41	64%
Complex/Challenging	11	17%
Not Ready	12	19%
Totals*	64	100%

*3 Public Teams (PP) were not included

Pet Partner	Results	Percent	Local	Results	Percent
Predictable	13	65.0%	Routine	28	63.6%
Complex	2	10.0%	Challenging	9	20.5%
Not Ready	5	25.0%	Not Ready	7	15.9%
Totals	20	100.0%		44	100.0%

The process of becoming a new team is rigorous and it is not uncommon for prospective teams to need support or additional time and development to be fully successful. Each Team completes a mentoring process by accompanying two established teams in different environments. Additional support is available as needed and assistance is provided in locating a community facility that meets the team’s needs.

Community facilities who request services complete a brief online form or send an email to the organization. Requests are fielded by the Facility Chair, Mary Lou Wilson, who speaks with the facility contact. Based on this interview, she completes a facility form that provides a potential

team information about the facility, the population to be served, and facility expectations. This process also allows us to provide education to the facility. Teams are notified of the request and an interested team can then contact the facility to determine if the facility is a good match for both members of the therapy team. This coordination of information is integral to the overall mission and connecting teams with facilities. Mary Lou completed 23 new facility forms in 2019.

Our ultimate goal is a well-developed team that can engage across our communities of service with confidence and provide consistently positive human-animal interactions. We deeply value the many special people and animals who are committed to community service at this level of quality and know the dedication it takes. They are a gift to us all.

Collaborative Programming with the Community

Several community based programs support multiple-teams and Coordinators who are experienced teams are instrumental in helping mentor new teams and are a point of contact for the facilities.

Ronald McDonald Houses - serving children and their families during times of stress and separation from their local support systems. Three locations are currently served. Coordinator: Dan Lindahl.

Cyndi Taylor Krier Juvenile Correctional Treatment Center and **Bexar County Juvenile Detention Center** - promoting the rehabilitation and well-being of offenders and their families in a residential setting. Coordinator: Lynda Melendez.

University Health System Paws Up Program - serving Pediatrics and other areas with identified needs including visitors and staff. Coordinator: Beverly Oakes.

Military Programming (Air Force Dorm; Psychiatric Unit) - working with wounded warriors and their families as well as visiting the inpatients at San Antonio Military Medical Center. Coordinator: Pat Smutz.

US Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center – serves as the sole facility caring for combat burn casualties, beneficiaries, and civilian emergencies within the Department of Defense. Coordinator: Kaitlin Pruskowski.

Children’s Bereavement Center, Children’s Shelter - programming for a very vulnerable population with the mission “to foster healing for grieving children and youth, their families and the community” and “restoring innocence and strengthening families” respectively. Our animals put smiles on the children’s faces and give them a warm, furry body to hug. Coordinators: Steve & Kassia Fontenot.

Methodist Hospital – teams serving multiple areas within the facility and within the community. Coordinator: Gerald Dubinski, Jr.

Stories from the Field

The emotional impact of animal therapy visits is hard to describe. Our stories from the Field is a component of each of our Board meetings in an attempt to capture and share the qualitative impact of visits. Stories about patient engagement and their response to animal interventions provide many opportunities to reflect on our mission and the healing power of animals. At times, the special impact of our Animals is recognized publically.



Awards Ceremony
Children's Bereavement Center
February 1, 2019



Trip to the Capital in support of the SA Children's Shelter, February 6, 2019

Annual Meeting & Awards

The 2019 Annual Meeting was held at Pedrotti's North Wind Ranch, a facility located in the small town of Helotes, TX. bordering San Antonio. We thank Anthony Pedrotti for his ongoing support of this event and providing a wonderful facility, staff, and food for our organization. Thanks to Jeanne Melendez who was the attendance coordinator.

The Annual Meeting is open to all members and is required by our bylaws. As per tradition, the meeting opened with a Blessing of the Animals given by Pastor Dan Brown and was followed by a wonderful meal provided by the Pedrotti's. The meeting continued with recognition of new teams, general comments, Officer and Board reports, nominations and elections of Officers & Board Members, and then the Awards Ceremony which closed the meeting. We recognized multiple teams for their visits.

Several folks provided stories about the impact of therapy animals this year. After formally concluding the meeting, the newly elected Board met briefly as required by Bylaws. This meeting concluded our "administrative year" and we will resume monthly Board Meetings in January. Animal therapy continues year-round.

Selecting individuals for awards is a very challenging task as many deserve recognition. The members were selected for the 2019 crystal awards based on their outstanding contributions to the organization and community.

Linda Porter – Research & Program Development

Lisa Lejk – Pooch Parade Leadership

Sara Morgan – Rising Star

Wayne Stacey – Making a Difference

Murray Warner – Making a Difference

Marilyn Kruse – Making a Difference (cat)

Beverly Oakes – Making a Difference (cat)

Hector Melendez – Supporting Member

Dan Oakes – Supporting Member

Danielle Lewis – Board Service

The American Kennel Club provides an opportunity to apply for a "Title" that is earned by completing a set number of therapy visits with a therapy dog (either registered or mixed breed). Titles include Therapy Dog (THD), Therapy Dog Advanced (THDA), Therapy Dog Excellent (THDX), and Therapy Dog Distinguished (THDD). TASA recognized and awarded certificates to teams using the AKC visits criteria.

Certificate for at least 50 visits.

Diana Andrus & Roxy	K'Lynn Ball & Darcy Lynn	Tom Ball & Thomas
Nancy Carr & Buddy	Brianne Davis & Jax	Steve Fontenot & Bellin
Bev Hebert & Nikki	Diane Hook & Jonah	Raymond Hook & Jonah
Neven Jones & Lisa	Marilyn Kruse & Samson	Dan Lindahl & Moose
Walter Macias & Hans	Chris Manley & Cash	SuEarl McReynolds & Roscoe
Jeanne Melendez & Caroline	Sara Morgan & Hazel	Sandra Olsaver & Maddie
Russell "Pat" Smutz & Kira	Darby Stacey & Bisca	Wayne Stacey & Beau
Alicia Thompson & Isis	Murray Warner & Tuppy	

Certificate for at least 100 visits.

Christen Boone & Fritz	Diane Goldsmith & Krystal	Aileen Holeman & Prince
Brenda Leiser & Fred	Beverly Oakes & Zane Grey	Beverly Oakes & Tessa
Hilda Statz & Pierre		

Certificate for at least 200 visits.

Melissa Allen-Jones & Mylie	Gerald Dubinski Jr. & Bonnie	Kassia Fontenot & Bellin
Kathi France & Zac	Kathi France & Duncan	Jeanne Melendez & Pax
Carlynn Ricks & Hemi		

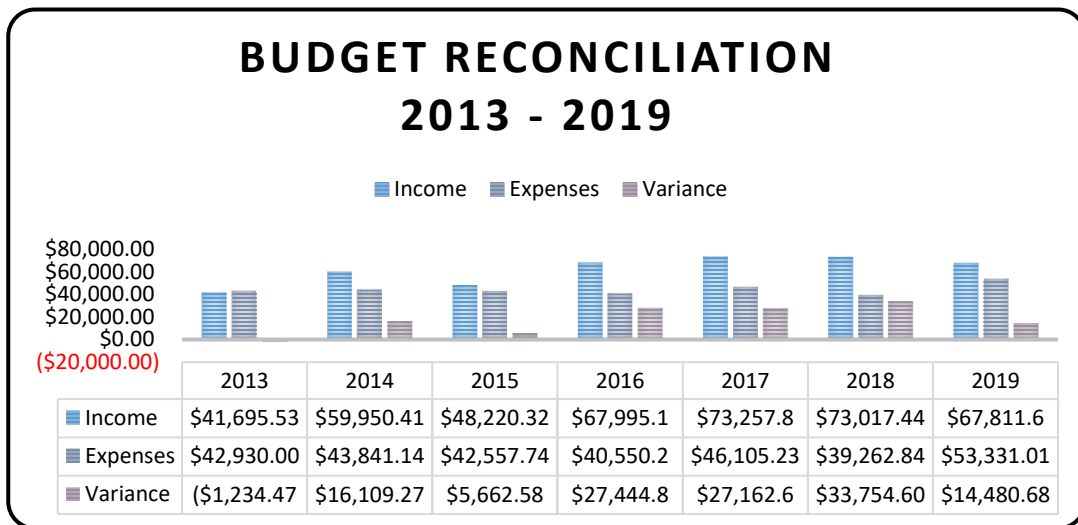
Certificate for at least 400 visits.

Graham Bishop & Victoria	Malinda Red Cloud & Bonnie	Pat Storlie & QT Kisses
Charlotte Wenger & Luka		

Financial Report

As an all-volunteer organization, Therapy Animals of San Antonio is extremely fortunate to have a stable financial situation as a result of the Fiesta® Pooch Parade and donations supporting our mission combined with good fiscal management. We are a GuideStar Exchange Platinum Participant.

Beverly Oakes tracks and ensures the organization’s financial soundness. As the Treasurer she is responsible for ensuring that we meet 501(c)(3) requirements, that we file documents supporting our income and expenditures for tax and auditing purposes, and that appropriate payments are made or collected. Our financial stability allows us to rent office space, support our members, and provide educational outreach to the communities we serve. Grant funding is set aside for specific purposes and program goals.



21st Annual Pooch Parade

The annual Fiesta® Pooch Parade winds its way through the tree-lined streets of Alamo Heights the last Saturday of Fiesta®. A family-friendly event, educational activities, informational booths, and a costume contest precede the parade. Shanti (partner of Norma Brooks) was selected as this year’s King Anbarkio. The Team represented TASA at many of the public events associated with Fiesta® in the months before the Parade.



King Anbarkio (Shanti)

Tragically, Norma was killed in a traffic accident about a week before the parade. Her two sons honored her memory by participating in the parade with Shanti in the King’s costume. Co-workers and friends also honored her memory by wearing yellow shirts with her picture on the front.

A special thanks to Vice-President Lisa Lejk who spent countless hours ensuring the Parade’s success and to Sandra Olsaver who coordinated Alamo Heights arrangements. This event requires a tremendous amount of volunteer time over the entire year to ensure that all permits, sponsorships, insurance, advertisements, police, and other needs are met.

Total Pooch Parade expenses in 2019 were \$20,508. Each year a design is selected that is used on brochures, advertisements, and 1,200 T-shirts that parade registrants receive. Parade day requires an “all-hands on deck” approach. More than 60 volunteers are required to work on the day of the event.

As our primary fundraiser, the sponsorships of businesses and community engagement in the Fiesta® Pooch Parade continue to be critical to our ability to offer quality services following national best practices to the vulnerable members of our community. We are profoundly grateful for the many opportunities that this support provides.



Gathering for the Parade



Leading the Parade

Thank you to our Best in Show sponsor



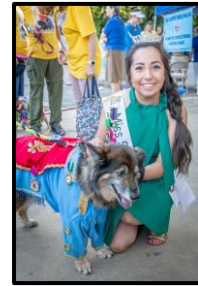


Thank you to all of our sponsors of the Annual Fiesta® Pooch Parade!!
You Help Us Make a Difference!

TOP DOG Sponsors (\$1000 or more)



Don & Mary Lou Wilson



Man's Best Friend Sponsors (\$500-\$999)

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David Scheys and
Angelica Wright





Unconditional Love Sponsors
(\$250-499)



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Dr. Linda Porter-Wenzlaff

In Memory of Bob-
Gilda Cruz-Romano

Dubinski-Weber
Family



Raleigh and Kathy Meade



Wagging Tail Sponsors (\$100 - \$249)

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Compassionate Care Veterinary Services

♥ Kodak-Misty-Willy-Fancy

♥ Zac, King Anbarkio VII

Susan Locke, D.D.S.

PAWSitive Solutions Dog & Puppy Training

♥ In Honor of Malinda Red Cloud

♥ In Honor of Luka

The Tiny Finch

In Kind Gifts

Buyers Barricades

Special Thanks

Alamo Retriever Club

Master of Ceremonies- Pat Durcan

National Anthem by-Wendy Middleton

San Antonio Dog Training Club

Holistic Pet Care-Maria Williams, DVM

MissionVet Specialty & Emergency

Q101.9 iHeart Radio

Waterstops-Erica Bevcar; Nancy & Mark
Rose

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO PASSED IN 2019

We mourned the loss of Norma Brooks
We mourned the loss of long-time member, Elizabeth Shively



Liz Shively with Faith



Norma Brooks (Shanti)