

## Upcoming Events

**Next Assessment  
Day  
30/06/2012**

**Report Forms are  
due for December  
2011**

[http://  
www.deltasociety.co  
m.au/december2011](http://www.deltasociety.com.au/december2011)

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## Letter from the Editor—Liz Woodward

### Assessment Day

The 3<sup>rd</sup> March saw my first involvement with assessment for Delta for 2012. We had a record number arrive to test out their skills as possible Delta Dogs,



and the majority passed with flying colours.

We have so many new facilities that have joined up with Delta and we are always looking for volunteers to fill these positions. If you know of anyone who you think would be a great volunteer team, direct them to our website. Our next assessment day is 30<sup>th</sup> June and training is on the 7<sup>th</sup> July.

We have changed the reporting system to better fit the quarterly reporting process, therefore it is important that you complete the DECEMBER report located on the left, this will close off reports for 2011 and the next reports will be for the period January-March.

### *Vale Popeye*



Popeye passed away late last year at the ripe old age of 11. He visited at the Sydney Kids Hospital for eleven years. He was the first dog to visit intensive care and the first into oncology which led to all the wards being open to dogs. He was the only dog to go to the operating theatre and recovery wards. In his time he flew to Adelaide for Delta to pioneer a visit at the children's hospital, while accompanying a 90 year old lady who would not fly without him due to her anxiety. Popeye was the only pug ever to do the Dogs NSW Endurance Test- a 20 km run which made him famous, however His finest achievement was the love he gave to everyone.

# **Resolution Buddies**

*By Alissa Knell*

OK, it's now officially 2012. One year after I dedicated 2011 as my "Year of Creativity", two years after my "Year of Living Green", three years after..., well, you get the idea. Each January, people the world over, with real or imagined dedication, look at their lives without the rose coloured glasses and commit to a life-style change of some sort. Trouble is, by the time February and March roll around, we've made so many excuses for not following through, our real or imagined dedication is long gone and we quietly slink back into our old ways. In fact, research shows that after 6 months, only about 46% of us are still resolute. However, research also shows that by enlisting the support of a friend or family member, we are more likely to stay on track. As dog lovers, we see our dogs as both friend and family, so why not involve them in our quest for a healthier, happier 2012? Here are some ways to "buddy up" with your dog to help keep three of the most popular New Year's Resolutions. And the best part – it's good for both of you!

## **1. Stay Fit and Healthy**

Exercise is a very important key to maintaining a healthy weight and lifestyle for you and Fido. One of the best forms of exercise is walking. It's a low-impact workout that gets you out of the house and doesn't require much, if any, in the way of money to get started. A decent pair of walking shoes for you and a good leash and collar for your dog is all you need. Walking elevates mood, improves cardiovascular health, and helps with weight loss. Physically, dogs benefit in much the same way, by keeping the weight off and the heart healthy. Mentally, dogs enjoy the stimulation they get from experiencing new sights, sounds, and smells from the environment. If both of you are new to exercising, it's good to be checked out by a doctor first. Once you get a clean bill of health, grab your best friend and hit the trail!

## **2. Help Others**

Whether it's formally volunteering at one of the many charity organisations who need help or by checking in on a sick neighbour, giving of ourselves to others is one of those things with a huge boomerang effect. We always feel like we get back 100 times more than we give. In fact, the Delta Society is looking for volunteers to help. Check out page 3 of this newsletter for more info.



## **3. Learn Something New**

Learning a new skill or increasing our knowledge in a certain area is important in keeping our minds sharp and our lives enriched. The same is true for our dogs. There are many opportunities for both of you to expand your horizons and learn something new together. One example is to enrol in a dog agility class. Agility is a great way to combine New Year's Resolution #1 and #3. It offers a challenging physical workout for you and Fido and keeps both of you on your toes (or paws) by developing communication strategies needed to successfully navigate through a complex series of obstacles as a team. Want a lower-key activity? How about teaching your dog some new tricks? Teaching your dog to shake, roll over, or pick up their toys, is a fun way to incorporate training into your daily routine. Lessons learned from teaching the tricks can also be used to reinforce other basic obedience skills like sit, drop, and stay. Einstein would be proud!

So, for 2012, let's resolve to recognise that Man's Best Friend can help us be even better, and in the process, enhance the amazing bond that already exists between us.



On page 2, we talk about New Years resolutions and this year, the Sydney branches New Years resolution is to create Team Leaders. We are putting a call out to volunteers in the program to help us meet this goal.

In the Sydney branch, we have over 230 volunteers from Kiama through to the Central Coast and service over 190 facilities with more volunteers and facilities joining daily.

Currently, we understand that volunteers require a certain level of support in their role and feel that they could benefit enormously from an interactive forum that can address their concerns, provide advice based on experience as well as just listen to the wonderful stories. The Therapy Dogs Branch in Sydney is currently looking at establishing 6 team leaders in the four quadrants of Sydney as well as South & North Coasts of NSW.

### Requirements for this volunteer role

A team leader would need to possess the following skills/attributes to be able to perform this volunteer role:

- 🐕 A minimum of one years' experience as a Therapy team in their area
- 🐕 A genuine interest in improving communication with volunteers and be able to discuss issues and rewarding experiences with them
- 🐕 The ability to make regular contact with each volunteer in their area on a quarterly basis
- 🐕 Assist with organising buddy visits for new volunteers
- 🐕 Assist in the recruitment of new Therapy teams when required
- 🐕 Availability to showcase the program through local shopping centre fundraising displays
- 🐕 Organising events to have face to face meetings with volunteers.

Training will be provided to volunteers wishing to take on this role as well as regular meetings with other team leaders.

### Remuneration

- 🐕 All telephone expenses will be reimbursed to the successful applicant.
- 🐕 Any other expenses will be reimbursed at the discretion of the Sydney co-ordinator.

Please contact Liz via email ([liz@deltasociety.com.au](mailto:liz@deltasociety.com.au)) or phone (02) 9797 7922 for more information or to express your interest in becoming involved.

*Would you like to learn more about dog behavior and training?*



Every year Delta offers 2 day weekend seminars in capital cities by leading veterinary behaviourist Dr. Gaille Perry and renowned animal trainer Kerrie Haynes-Lovell. These weekends will provide you with the latest information on dog behaviour and training and are suitable for all levels of experience. If you think this seminar may be of interest to you, check out the Delta website or click on this link <http://www.deltasociety.com.au/Programs/Seminars>

**Our next seminar is 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April 2012.**

## Thank you to our sponsors

Delta Society Australia along with all our volunteers wish to thank the following sponsors for their generous donations to the Delta Therapy Dogs Program. These donations enable the Society to provide regular visits to nursing homes, retirement villages and hospitals and ensured the overall success and growth of the program in Delta's Sydney/Central Coast.

-  Robatech Australia PTY Ltd
-  Elite Automotive repair PTY Ltd
-  Shrubsole Rabbit & Co
-  Rotary Club of Bega Inc
-  Tom Ainsworth
-  Killara Public School Student Representative Council

## Welcome to our new facilities

The start of 2012 has seen more facilities joining our program, these facilities and you as volunteers make up the match that keeps Delta moving forward. The list of new facilities includes

-  Blue Mountains Disability Service-
-  Sylvanvale Foundation Miranda
-  The Laurels
-  Prince of Wales– Mental Health Rehab unit
-  Illawarra Diggers
-  North Sydney Cancer Centre
-  Princess Juliana Lodge
-  Linburn Nursing Home
-  Mayflower Aged Care
-  PRA Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia
-  Beresford Hall
-  St Elizabeth Aged care
-  Disability Services
-  Tarban Hospital– Macquarie Hospital
-  Lansdowne Gardens—Wycome Rd
-  Northcourt Aged Care
-  St Vincent's Hospital dementia
-  Warrina Hostel
-  Carrington Nursing Home

We also have vacancies in some of our existing facilities so if you are interested in seeing where is available, send me an email or call for a chat.