

Companions, Inc.

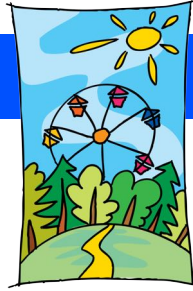


Paws for a Cause since 1986



The Tailwagger

August 2026



Fairbanks, Alaska



Hello to all our Companions volunteers,

The summer is flying by and so busy as usual!

SAVE THE DATE for a general Companions Membership Meeting on August 25, 2026. For a change we are going to meet at the Salmon Bake at Pioneer Park at 6:00 PM in the Winther Warming House. Food will be provided, and the space is covered, so come rain or shine! There will be more details in a week or two but please put this on your calendar.

I am so proud of our organization – we are meeting and exceeding our obligations, we continue to add new places to visit and we are financially sound, as Shirley's article will tell you. Pet Awareness Day was a huge success and thanks to all who helped. It is a big endeavor and takes all of us to make it successful and something Fairbanks people look forward to in early spring.

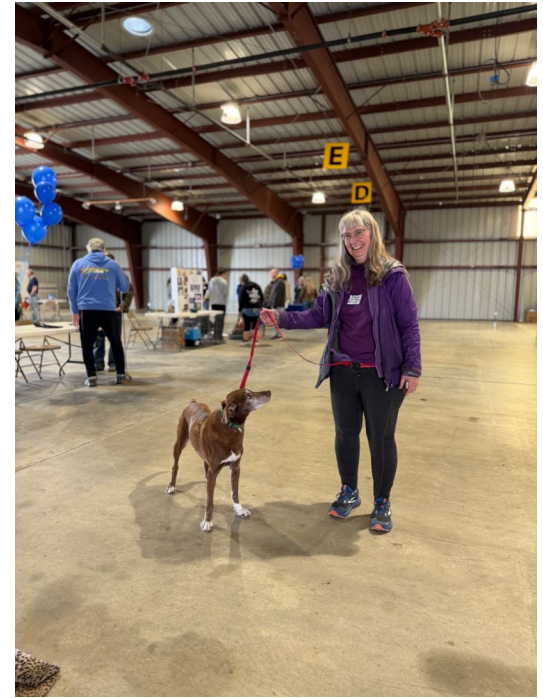
Take a look at our logo. It is a person in a wheelchair bending down to pet a dog. We have so many fun places to visit but we can't forget how we started – providing comfort to residents of the Pioneer Home and the Denali Center. If you are feeling a little unsure of how to visit these places, please contact either Dave Stewart or Joan McGlinchy – both Board members – who are very willing to show you the ropes again.

Companions Inc is celebrating our 40th birthday this year! We will throw a party at our October meeting (probably October 28) in conjunction with the costume party.

We do need some help. First, we need a committee to work out the details of our new logo wear. Next, we need a committee to plan the Halloween/ Birthday/Annual party. We are also looking for someone with spreadsheet expertise that can organize and evaluate the data collected when you log hours. We will try to do this 4 times per year. **Please consider helping out and either contact me directly (text to 907-388-7102) or at the meeting on August 25.** In addition, board member positions will be up for election at the October meeting. Join our crew!

As always, Pam has put together a great Tailwagger filled with information so please take the time to read it! Enjoy the next few of weeks of summer!

Kate Lamal, Companions, Inc. Board President



Pet Awareness Day Was a Tremendous Success!

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our volunteers, sponsors, vendors, donors, and community members, **Pet Awareness Day 2026 was an outstanding success!** This year's event raised **\$27,749.30**, making it one of our most successful fundraising events to date.

Highlights from the event included a very successful Silent Auction, our popular Companions Café, bake sale, vendor participation, Smooch the Pooch Kissing Booth, Canine Good Citizen testing, and the many generous donations received before and during the event. Every volunteer, donor, and attendee played an important role in helping us achieve this wonderful result.

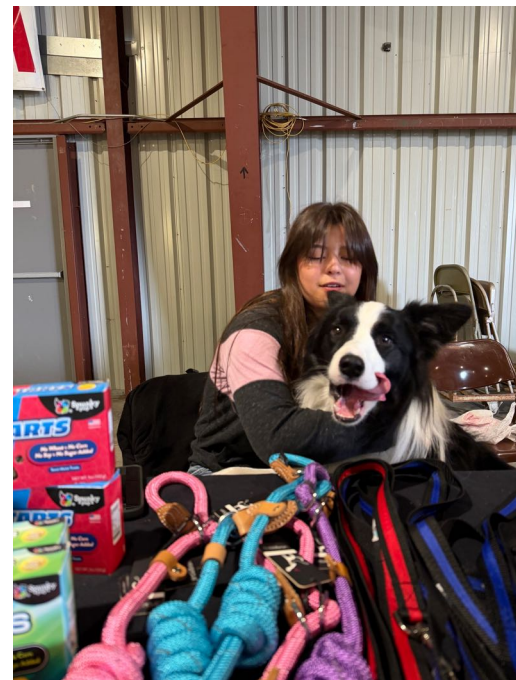
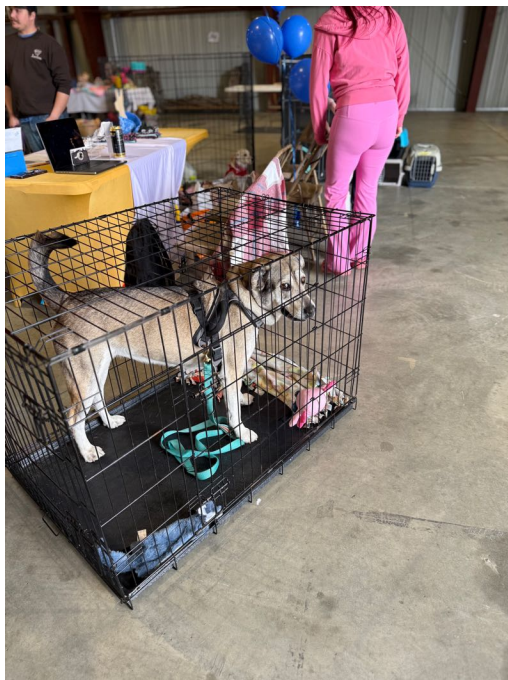
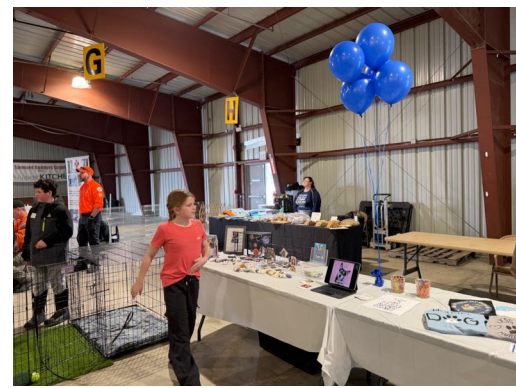
We are also excited to announce that **Lotto Alaska** awarded Companions, Inc. a **\$17,810 grant**. These funds will be used to purchase new volunteer membership uniforms and to help offset upcoming veterinary expenses for animals in our care that are not covered through donated veterinary services. This grant allows us to better support both our volunteers and the animals who depend on us.

Thanks to careful financial stewardship, successful fundraising efforts, grants, and the continued generosity of our supporters, Companions, Inc. remains in a strong financial position. As of this quarter, the organization has **nearly \$100,000 in total assets**, including funds held in our checking account, gaming account, certificates of deposit (CDs), and reserves carried forward from previous years. Maintaining healthy reserves allows us to respond to unexpected medical needs, continue our programs, and plan confidently for the future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to everyone who supports Companions, Inc. Whether you volunteer your time, attend our events, make a donation, or simply help spread our mission, you are making a meaningful difference in the lives of animals throughout our community. Together, we continue to build a stronger future for pets and the people who love them.

Shirley Winther

Companions, Inc. Treasurer and Pet Awareness Day Chairman





Thank you for reporting your visiting hours!

Thanks to you all reporting your hours on our website, we can now show our sponsors and donors just how much time we really do put in. Here are our recorded numbers for the past year. If YOU have not been reporting, please do so! If you need help doing so, contact a board member.

JULY 2025 through July 2026

Denali Center	101
FMH - BHU	92
FMH - other	150.45
Senior Center	43.25
Veterans Center	14.5
FRA Adult Day Care	39
Lathrop finals week	20.75
NP Library	52.5
Pioneer Home	32.75
UAF - SSC and Finals Week	216.5
PAD	107
Mutt Marchday	5.5
Forget Me Not Pet Festival	13
Fairbanks at 50+	20.5
Chasing the Winter Blues	11.4
Health Fairs	40.9
GVEA	6
Turning Point Counseling	8
TOTAL	975

How do I know when I can visit?

You really, really, really need to read our emails and the Tailwagger! Tailwaggers will list in general things we know are coming up, and **Erin Parcher-Wartes** sends out **signup.com** emails periodically where you can sign up in advance and will get a reminder. In addition, when you get an email telling you about an upcoming meeting, please COME!! We want and need your input!



Where Shall I Visit?

To the left, you can see a list of all the possible places you and your Companion dog can visit. Some, like the UAF SSC and FMH BHU have specific days and times, others, like NP Library are once per month, many, like Denali Center, the Pioneer Home, and FMH patient visits depend more on your own schedule, when you can fit in a visit. As Kate said in her President's Letter this month, we need to remember that first and foremost Companions was created to provide pet therapy visits to patients and residents in the hospital, DC and Pioneer home. While it might be more "fun" to visit st UAF and do special events, please remember that these full-time residents may be lonely and appreciate our visits more than they may be able to express. Maybe for each "fun" visit you do, you can fit in one or two visits to these places, too. Guaranteed to bring smiles.

And remember to record those hours!
Thank you!



An additional (NOT required) item that may interest you and your dog, from Sarah McConnell:

AKC (American Kennel Club) THERAPY DOG CERTIFICATION

Do you know that Companions, Inc. Fairbanks is listed as an AKC recognized therapy dog certification organization? We are! This means that dogs in good standing, having been screened by Companions, Inc., are eligible for AKC Therapy Dog titles. The titles range from AKC Therapy Dog Novice (10 visits completed) to AKC Therapy Dog Supreme (600 visits completed), and several levels in between.

Both Sue Royston's Mischa (AKC TDNovice) and Sarah McConnell's Bedbug (AKC TDExcellent) have completed the process and are officially recognized. The American Kennel Club Therapy Dog website will provide guidance in what information to gather and which forms to complete. Not to worry if your dog is not a registered pure breed, as AKC has a status "Canine Partners Special Listing" that Bug and most other dogs can qualify for (\$30.00 fee and form required), receiving her AKC "dog number" for recording.

Work with Kate Lamal or her designee Board Member with access to documenting your hours via the Companions Volunteer Hours tracking system. If your dog pre-dates the current tracking system, it takes a bit of gathering but those visits can count also. Kate now has a template letter that covers verification and meets AKC expectations. This letter fulfills Application Section 3: Verification.

The Therapy Dog Title application is \$32.00, since all Companions, Inc. dogs already have the AKC Canine Good Citizen Title. You receive a Certificate suitable for framing, a handsome medal, plus a large and small patch with the Title on them. You can also order some additional AKC Therapy Dog gear if you like – a 7.25" diameter magnet, small towel, and/or a 1" pin (see photos). Bug was hoping some special treats would be included and that the medal was edible but seems quite pleased to wear it. Congratulations Mischa and Bug!

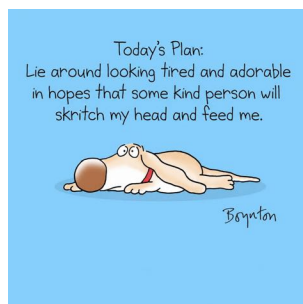


Does your Companions dog have their own “calling cards”?

If you have visited regularly for at least 6 months, do talk to the board about getting a box of Companions calling cards for you to hand out as you make your visits. Several of our members have these now, and they are very popular. Some of the folks you regularly visit may not remember the dog's name, and having one of their cards is an easy and fun reminder. And beyond that, we are finding they are great for handing out and making people aware of Companions. Here are some pictures of the cards in use:



The conversation had been brisk and pleasant when, suddenly and simultaneously, everyone just got dog tired.



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