



Pets on Wheels Program Goals

- reduce isolation and loneliness through social engagement
- provide unconditional acceptance through contact with animals

Research shows that interaction with animals can benefit individuals both physically and mentally. These benefits include reduction in anxiety, a decrease in blood pressure, and increased mobility through tactile stimulation.

“One contact with Winston, my Cocker Spaniel, and a switch seemed to turn on for the elderly residents – passivity was replaced with broad smiles and recognition.”

Funding

Pets on Wheels relies solely on community support and an annual “Paws for a Cause” fundraising campaign.



www.mhamc.org

Mental Health Association (MHA) promotes mental wellness and supports those with mental illness by sponsoring and implementing advocacy, education and community service programs.

A private, nonprofit, United Way (#8151) agency, MHA has served Montgomery County residents for over 50 years. **MHA currently manages 11 major direct service programs for children, teens, families, senior adults and individuals with long-term mental illness.** Over 1,000 volunteers implement programs under the direction of MHA professional staff.



licking loneliness!

Pets on Wheels



Mental Health Association
Your Leading Mental Health Resource

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United Way #8151/CFC #88462



Pets on Wheels links volunteers and their special pets (both dogs and cats) to lonely, isolated residents in extended care facilities throughout Montgomery County. Since 1983, the Pets on Wheels program has served the community by providing regular visits to thousands of residents.

We Serve

- The institutionalized elderly who are sometimes forgotten
- Individuals who are frail, ill or dying
- Those with developmental disabilities or mental health issues
- Residents who may be withdrawn, confused, depressed, and unable or unwilling to participate in activities



“The resident beamed with pleasure when she lifted Zoe into the air.”

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers join Pets on Wheels because they want to share their furry friends and – together – give back to the community.

Volunteers

- Are at least 21 years old
- Have compassion for the elderly
- Have their pets screened for temperament and suitability
- Provide documentation on pet health
- Attend orientation training
- Agree to visit twice a month for one year

“Bill, a hospice patient, requested a special visit with a dog. Monica, my sheltie, entered his room, approached the bed, and laid her head on the his shoulder.

**Bill put both arms around her neck
and just hugged her for the longest time.”**

“Visiting with Lily evokes a lot of stories and emotion, but most importantly joy from the spirit of living in the moment.”



We Visit

- Nursing homes
- Assisted living facilities
- Group homes
- Hospitals
- Rehabilitation centers
- Hospice settings
- Adult daycare settings