

“Pets for Seniors” Program



“*P*ets for Seniors” is a win-win program.

This is a partnership between the Parsippany Animal Supporters Society (PASS) and a senior citizen with the support of a qualified and participating local shelter or rescue group, and the management team from the senior housing development.

“You've probably noticed that when you pet a soft, warm cat or play fetch with a dog whose tail won't stop wagging, you relax and your heart feels a little warmer. Scientists have noticed the same thing, and they've started to explore the complex way animals affect human emotions and physiology. The resulting studies have shown that owning and handling animals significantly benefits health, can lower a person's blood pressure, and that in convalescent homes, medication use goes down when there's an animal present. In fact, pets may help elderly owners live longer, healthier, and more enjoyable lives.”



There are a number of explanations for exactly how pets accomplish all these health benefits. First of all, pets need walking, feeding, grooming, fresh water, and fresh kitty litter, and they encourage lots of playing and petting. All of these activities require some action from owners. Even if it's just getting up to let a dog out a few times a day or brushing a cat, any activity can benefit the cardiovascular system and help keep joints limber and flexible. Consistently performing this kind of minor exercise can keep pet owners able to carry out the normal activities of daily living. Pets may also aid seniors simply by providing some physical contact.

Studies have shown that when people pet animals, their blood pressure, heart rate, and temperature decrease.

Many benefits of pet ownership are less tangible, though. Pets are an excellent source of companionship, for example. They can act as a support system for older people who don't have any family or close friends nearby to act as a support system. The JAGS study showed that people with pets were better able to remain emotionally stable during crises than those without. Pets can also work as a buffer against social isolation. Often the elderly have trouble leaving home, so they don't have a chance to see many people. Pets give them a chance to interact. This can help combat depression, one of the most common medical problems facing seniors today. The responsibility of caring for an animal may also give the elderly a sense of purpose, a reason to get up in the morning. Pets also help seniors stick to regular routines of getting up in the morning, buying groceries, and going outside, which help motivate them to eat and sleep regularly and well.



We totally agree and want to help to match the right pet to a potential owner. Chances are good that by adopting a cat or dog from the shelter, the senior will have found a wonderful, loving animal who will be eternally loyal to his or her new “forever” family. Some pets have many times had difficult lives and were shuffled from home to home. They have so much love to give and will bond quickly

with the adopter that gives them their “forever” home. Many of the adult pets are also very mellow and often happiest resting at someone’s feet or in their lap. It is hard for a senior to feel lonely with a loving pet and companion near them at all times.



Many seniors have limited financial resources or need transportation assistance. After a senior has selected a new pet from a qualified participating shelter or rescue group, PASS will assist him/her by:

- ◆ If needed, transporting the senior and the new pet home to help them both settle in to their new family together.
- ◆ Provide a “Pet Adoption Kit” which might contain a new pet bed, litter box & litter, collar & leash, food & feeding bowls, together with a few toys.
- ◆ Provide financial assistance by paying the deposit required by the senior housing development for any senior having a pet. The deposit advanced on behalf of the senior, will be returned to the “Pets for Senior” Program in the event the senior no longer has a pet or no longer resides at the facility. We hope that this will ensure the continuation of available funds for new partners in the program.

We anticipate that the partnership will provide that the pets and older people can share their time and affection, and ultimately, full and happy lives. Though pets can't replace human relationships for seniors, they can certainly augment them, and they can fill an older person's life with years of constant, unconditional love.



Our ultimate goals are:

1. LOYALTY, LOYALTY, LOYALTY!

The new pet can sense that he or she was saved and will be eternally loyal to his or her new “forever” family.

2. BETTER HEALTH

Numerous studies have shown the health benefits that a calm, loving cat/dog can have on a senior citizen. Dogs need daily/weekly walks while cats require fresh litter, which can help the overall health of the adopter and adoptee!

3. COMPANIONSHIP

Adult cats/dogs will provide a senior with a 24-hour friend, who is ready to share love and companionship throughout the day, and the night. Neither partner will be alone.

4. NO TERRIBLE TWOS OR UNRULY TEENS

Adult pets are over the destructive stages, are usually housetrained and many already know some basic commands. Although some adult cats/dogs may require more frequent veterinary visits, their love and devotion will far outweigh the effort.

5. NO SURPRISES

Adult pets are full grown and their personalities are completely developed. When the senior meets with their new pet, they will instantly know how wonderful and loving he or she will be.

The “*Pets for Seniors*” Program is proudly presented
by the Parsippany Animal Supporters Society, Inc. (PASS)



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With the support of

**Qualified & Participating
Shelters & Rescue Groups**

and

The Management Team
From the
Senior Housing Development



*Please contact PASS for more information
on the “*Pets for Seniors*” Program*