

Furry friends bring cheer to nursing home residents

By CAROLE FERGUSON
Staff Writer

Once a week the residents of Carol Woods Retirement Community Health Center gather in their lounge to await a visit from Carolina students who bring along furry friends.

Members of Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity take pets borrowed from the Chapel Hill Animal Shelter to the health center each Wednesday afternoon.

"The best thing is to see the expressions on the people's faces change," Betsy Kemeny, activity director for the Carol Woods Health Center, said. "The excitement and momentum of the whole room changes."

Kemeny said the patients really brighten up when the pets and students visit the center. She has noticed smiles from residents who never smile otherwise.

"They remember their own pets. The pet therapy allows people to express feelings of love," she said.

APO members Katrina Thompson, Anne Marie Walters and Vanessa Goss took two calico kittens and a mixed-bull puppy to visit the residents last Wednesday.

"How old is he?" one white-haired lady with a cane asked. She wanted to be the first to hold the puppy.

Another lady was more interested in the kittens.

"I love cats," she said, telling the

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students about a black cat that she used to have.

Two other ladies sat in the back of the room chatting and laughing as the other kitten played in their laps.

The animal visits provide much more than a ball of fur to pet. The visits give the elderly people something to look forward to on the day the pets arrive. The visits also increase opportunities for communication within the center. The residents can gather and have something to talk about.

Pet therapy programs were started in nursing homes in the 1970s after researchers found that animal lovers have always known — pets are good medicine for people. Pets can fill a need nursing homes often cannot — the need to give love and to feel needed.

Kemeny said that it might be good for the patients to own their own pets or to have pets in the home permanently, but she said that care of the animals would not be practical. The patients in the health center would not be able to care for the pets themselves, and staff workers already have duties that occupy them. However, independent residents of the apartments in Carol Woods can have their own pets.

The animal shelter chooses suitable pets to send to the home. The animals must be healthy and have good dispositions. This is necessary because the animals can undergo stress.

"They are held by lots of people. Sometimes elderly people cannot be gentle enough with them," one shelter volunteer said.

The shelter usually sends both dogs and cats, since the patients have different preferences. While the pets are enjoyed by the residents, the company of the students is also enjoyed, sometimes even more than that of the pets.

"Many of the people here were formerly in the academic community," Kemeny said. "There are a lot of professionals, professors and doctors."

Sophomores Thompson, from Charlotte, and Walters, from Durham, are the coordinators of the APO volunteer program. They said they have made friends with many of the patients and know them by name.

Thompson said she knows one lady in particular who seemed to be helped by the program. "At first she wouldn't let you touch her and she didn't want to look at the animals," she said. "After a few visits she became more comfortable and enjoyed holding the pets. She even smiled."



Retirement community resident Louise Saunders plays with a kitten from the animal shelter

DTH/David Minton

Carrboro Bicyclists Network peddles to improve rider policies

By LINDSAY HAYES
Staff Writer

The Carrboro Bicyclists Network (CBN) is more than a riding club — it is a public interest group with aims to improve bicycle policies in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area.

Working as a loosely-organized network for cyclists since the summer of 1986, CBN promotes bicycling and commuting in Chapel Hill, Carrboro and surrounding areas, said David Perry, editor of the CBN newsletter BIKE.NET. The network acts as the mouthpiece for cyclists to the town, he said.

But CBN does not have the manpower to affect policy changes in both Carrboro and Chapel Hill, said Heidi Perry, CBN secretary-treasurer. CBN members want to establish an affiliate group that will bring about changes through Chapel Hill town government, she said.

"We're starting a dialogue in Chapel Hill," Perry said. "People are beginning to take bicyclists' interests into account."

In Carrboro, two CBN members

hold seats on the Carrboro transportation advisory board, a citizens panel which advises the Board of Aldermen on transportation matters, Perry said. Carrboro takes bicycles into consideration when discussing transportation issues, he said.

"Whenever there is a project that involves bicycles, they want to hear CBN's opinion," Mrs. Perry said.

In Chapel Hill, bicyclists' needs do not have as high a priority with town government, Perry said. One CBN member holds a seat on the Chapel Hill transportation board, but town response is not as great as in Carrboro, he said.

CBN wants to see bike facilities built on the new 15-501/54 bypass, he said. CBN representatives have attended two rounds of public hearings to make recommendations that the bypass have a four-foot wide paved shoulder to serve as a bike lane, Perry said.

Members of CBN are also writing letters to the state Department of Transportation to voice their concerns for bicyclists' rights, he said. The group will keep track of bypass

developments to determine what subsequent action it will take, he said.

Another CBN aim is to ensure that the 1984 Bond Referendum for bike lanes on Hillsborough Street in Chapel Hill and Main and Greensboro streets in Carrboro are not overlooked, Mrs. Perry said.

"CBN was instrumental in keeping the bond referendum from being put on the back burner," she said.

The group requested several bike paths last April at the Transportation Improvement Program, a public hearing held by the DOT, she said. The DOT hears requests from citizens and town officials of various districts, she said.

Many of the projects CBN is concerned with are still in the planning stages, Mrs. Perry said. "The proof of our effort will be seen in the next four or five years," she said.

CBN has 175 people on its newsletter mailing list, Perry said. Anyone interested in receiving a newsletter can drop a note to CBN or call to get on the list, he said. There are no formal dues, although donations are accepted.

Campus Calendar

The DTH Campus Calendar appears daily. Announcements must be placed in the box outside The Daily Tar Heel office, 104 Union, by noon one day before — weekend announcements by noon Wednesday. The DTH will print announcements from University-recognized campus organizations only.

Tuesday

3:30 p.m. Career Planning and Placement Services will hold an interviewing skills workshop in 306

4 p.m. Hanes. Carolina Economics Association will hold a meeting for economics majors in 211 Gardner.

4:30 p.m. Career Planning and Placement Services will hold a panel on careers in the helping professions in 210 Hanes.

5:45 p.m. Anglican Student Fellowship will hold its fellowship night at the Chapel of the Cross. Dinner is \$2.

7 p.m. American Society for Personnel Administration will have an organizational meeting in 224 New Carol. All business and industrial relations majors are welcome.

North Carolina Student Legislature will meet in the Union. Check desk for room number.

STV will hold a general body meeting in 205 Union.

8 p.m. Students for Educational Access will meet in 220 Union.

Items of Interest

All Campus Calendar announcements are due by NOON on the day before they are to run in the DTH.

Health Careers Advising Office is having workshops for pre-health undergrads to improve interviewing skills. For info and sign-up, see bulletin board on second floor Steele Bldg.

Health Professions Advising Office is now open on a full time basis. Information about health related careers is provided by faculty and peer advisers.

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