



# PRINT QUARTERLY

A Program of The Albany Damien Center  
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## PAWS Fundraiser “Tails of the City” HUGE Success!

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008- The Albany Damien Center’s PAWS Program held their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual “Dine for PAWS” at the Washington Park Lakehouse. With record numbers in attendance, the event grossed over \$32,000. Joe Posa, AKA Joan Rivers, welcomed guests with her usual wit and fashion commentary, as the musicians of Maalwyck entertained guests with classical strings during cocktail hour. Our presenting sponsor, Old Daly Inn Catering Company, provided a buffet of delicious food and Albany’s Park Playhouse performed a “sneak peek” of their summer production “West Side Story.”

Many thanks to our Honorary Chair Rachael Ray and her personal assistant Michele Boxer for their support and

donation of items to our silent auction which included tickets to the Rachael Ray show, personalized autographed cookbooks, a set of RR knives and RR cookware. We’d like to thank all of our sponsors who supported the event, as well as, those who donated to our silent auction, and of course the organizing committee for their commitment to make this event the success it was! Congratulations...

PAWS NY Capital Region assists people living with HIV/AIDS in maintaining and caring for their pets. We provide individualized support, information, supplies, quarterly pet clinics and assistance at no cost to eligible residents of the NY Capital Region. Pets are important for health and emotional well being. For people living

with HIV/AIDS, the mental and physical health benefits of having a pet are even more important. In addition to providing companionship, pets give their owners joy and comfort and unconditional love so needed while dealing with this terrible disease. PAWS NY Capital Region was started locally by a caring group of AIDS service providers, veterinarians, persons living with HIV/AIDS, local funding agencies and other community members who saw the need for this service. The Albany Damien Center administers the program locally. PAWS groups all over the United States have played a vital role in ensuring that people living with HIV/AIDS are not forced to give up their pets when they need each other the most.

## A Special Thanks to the Dine for PAWS Committee, Volunteers, Honorary Committee and Sponsors!



*Dine for PAWS Committee members Katie Markey and Michael Dunn enjoying the evening.*



*The Official PAWS greeter ready to meet guests.*



*PAWS member Linda Williams talks about what the PAWS program means to her.*

# ALLERGIES IN DOGS AND CATS

BY DAVE CHICO, VMD, MPH

Allergies occur in dogs and cats just as they do in people and the late summer and fall are prime periods for seasonal allergies in pets. Our pets are often sensitive to the same substances that cause allergies in humans. Allergies occur when an animal has an abnormal reaction to a common substance (an allergen). Allergens can be mold, pollen, dust, dust mites, fleas and other protein containing substances. An allergic reaction can occur when the allergen is inhaled, swallowed or comes into contact with skin. In some cases, allergies are caused by food items.

The signs and symptoms of allergies are a bit different in animals compared to people. In people, allergies usu-

ally produce nasal and sinus congestion, sneezing, coughing, wheezing, headaches, runny eyes, and occasionally, skin rashes or itching. Dogs with allergies are typically very itchy and may spend large amounts of time licking or chewing their paws. Cats with allergies often develop rough, scabbed areas on the skin or develop moist and inflamed areas of skin which lose hair. Dogs may also develop secondary bacterial infections of the skin (pyoderma) or yeast infections in the ear (otitis externa). Animals with food allergies may also exhibit vomiting and diarrhea in addition to skin problems.

A diagnosis of allergies in the dog and cat is typically based on history and re-

sponse to treatment. In some cases, a veterinarian may perform blood work or other testing to determine what the animal is sensitive too. Combinations of over the counter medications, prescription drugs, supplements, shampoos and diets do well at controlling symptoms. Some dogs may receive hyposensitization injections as a form of treatment. These injections are prepared containing specific amounts of the offending allergens and are administered on a regular basis. This allows the animal to build up a tolerance to the allergen.

Pets with non-seasonal allergies may have allergies to ingredients found in their food. Animals may develop allergies at any point in their

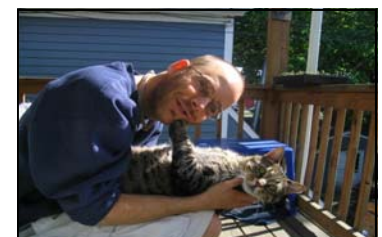
Pets with non-seasonal allergies may have allergies to ingredients found in their food. Animals may develop allergies at any point in their life, even if they have consumed the same diet for years. Animals may be allergic to poultry, beef, wheat, or corn ingredients which are commonly found in many commercial diets. A veterinarian can help select a specialized diet free of common allergens to determine if an animal has a food allergy.

Each pet is unique as is there response to treatment, medication and diet. Regular veterinary care and careful monitoring at home is essential for long term success when treating a pet with allergies.

## NEW COORDINATOR FOR PAWS PROGRAM

We want to extend a hearty welcome to Steve Hendrickson, who assumed the position of PAWS Coordinator at the end of June. Steve grew up in Earlville, a small central New York town where there were more cows than people. He attended SUNY at Fredonia and from there received a double B.S. degree in psychology and sociology. Steve has been very active in the HIV/AIDS field since his high school years, when he volunteered for STAP out of Binghamton. His work in peer education during college led to volunteer, intern and staff positions in several AIDS Service organizations around New York state. From 2002 -2007 he served as an HIV Test Counselor and Community Outreach Worker at the AIDS Council of Northeastern NY. After a year hiatus, Steve returned to Albany and was selected to run both the PAWS program and the Thrift store.

In Steve's own words: "I had always admired Perry's work here at the Damien Center as I watched it grow into the safe and supportive place it is today. I am very excited to be here now contributing to the mission of the Damien Center. I have always had pets and I know the support and comfort they can give. I have big plans to make the program great. As a pet owner of a wonderful cat, Kitty, (I know, I know... but the name really fits him) I am happy to help people when they need it most. Pets truly are wonderful support and knowing that your pet is cared for when you can't do it really gives people comfort."



*PAWS Coordinator Steve Hendrickson with his cat "Kitty".*

### PAWS Advisory Committee

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