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Newsletter of Meals on Wheels and More

NEW PARTNERSHIP PROTECTS MOWAM CLIENTS' FURRY FRIENDS

"She's my only real company, since I can no longer communicate with my wife."



MOWAM Client Joe Bachicha and his dog, Amber

Joe Bachicha cradles his little dog, Amber, as he describes just how much the poodle-Yorkie mix means to him.

and the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation (TVMF) provides free veterinary care to some clients of our P.A.L.S. (Pets Assisting the Lives of Seniors) program.

A TVMF representative took Amber to Austin Vet Care, one of several veterinarian clinics participating in the partnership. At the clinic, Dr. Jon Brandes not only treated Amber's paw, he also discovered the dog had an ear infection, and he prescribed medications to cure both ailments. In addition, Amber also got all of her vaccinations and a year's supply of flea medication and heartworm prevention. Best of all, the entire vet visit didn't cost Joe Bachicha a dime.

In the next room, Bachicha's wife, Margaret, sits in a wheelchair, her memory and her ability to talk wiped away by the ravaging effects of dementia.

The Bachicha's, who have been married almost 60 years, raised three daughters together and in their younger days used to ride matching "his and her" Harley Davison motorcycles.

Now, though, it's rare for the couple to leave the house since Margaret's condition makes it very difficult to do so.

It's no wonder then that the 79 year old man and the 6 year old dog have bonded. Spend a few minutes around the two and it's apparent they're wild about one another.

So, Joe was worried recently when Amber developed a problem with one of her paws.

Fortunately a new pilot program between Meals on Wheels and More

When asked why Austin Vet Care is involved in the program, Dr. Brandes says it's because TVMF makes it so easy. "There's no sacrifice on our clinic's part because TVMF pays for everything. We're doing the easy part!"

TVMF Director Leah Ann Tibbits says the decision to partner with MOWAM was an easy one. "Our board of trustees wanted a way to give back to the community and at the same time have a direct impact on animals in Central Texas. This partnership seemed like a natural fit", she adds.

A few weeks after the trip to the vet, Amber's paw and ear, are back to normal. For that, her owner is very glad. Knowing that acute medical care for his beloved pet is possible brings Joe Bachicha peace of mind. "I don't know what I would do without it," he says with a relieved sigh. o

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