

Meet the Furry, Scaly and Feathered Friends of 'Wesley Paws'

"Hi, my name is Mazel. Mazel means luck and I am a very lucky dog to be living at Wesley Palms. I am able to walk with the human who I live with three times a day throughout the lovely grounds at Wesley Palms. We have a newly renovated dog park that we visit often. My human enjoys looking up at the trees, birds and butterflies, while I am inspecting and sniffing each blade of grass. We often meet friends along our walk and we enjoy socializing with them. They like to pet me and I love it! At home, I look forward to my meals, snoozes and squeaky toys. So, you can see why I AM A VERY LUCKY DOG to be living here with her."



We love our pets at Wesley Palms.

Like Mazel's "human," resident Sima Oppenheimer Jacobson, every three months, other pet owners may enter the community's "Pet of the Quarter" contest (also affectionately known as "Wesley Paws"), by submitting an application with a brief autobiographical statement in their pet's "own words." From among the entries, the community's life enrichment team randomly chooses three pets and residents vote for their favorite to determine which proud little critter gets to take home the title of Wesley Palms "Pet of the Quarter." Winners receive a bundle of treats, snacks and toys. Their photos are prominently displayed in the community's lobby.

"It's a fun and friendly competition," said Wesley Palms Marketing Manager Sean Heuer who started the contest in fall 2021. "Because we ask the residents to submit an 'autobiography' from their pet's point of view, things can get really creative and fun. Residents are very proud of their pets and want to show them off. Some of the applications are funny and some are heartwarming."

"My name is Benito the cat, the unofficial 'Ambassador of First Impressions' over at our memory care neighborhood Summer House," reads one recent entry. "I belong to one of the newest and sweetest Summer House residents who can't stop gushing about how special I am to him. He's awfully special to me too."

Of course, the Wesley Palms' animal kingdom is not limited to dogs and cats. Hamsters, birds, fish, turtles and other furry, scaly and feathered friends have all called the senior living community home at one time or another and are all eligible to enter.

Many residents realize the competition can be stiff. Just ask Dr. Gloria Harris whose miniature poodle, Misty, recently entered the contest.

“Misty is my beautiful standard poodle, and can you believe the last time she entered, she lost to a cat? Misty couldn’t believe it – a cat!” Gloria said with her tongue firmly pressed against her cheek. “That’s okay, next time my canary Allegro is going to enter the contest. I have high hopes for him.”

One of the reasons pet owners and their pets love it at Wesley Palms is the nearly 40-acre park-like setting with beautiful landscape, walking paths, mature trees and a new off-leash dog park that hosts a monthly “Yappy Hour,” where dogs and their humans gather to frolic, play and socialize. For years, “Yappy Hour” was one of the community’s most popular events, where even non-pet owners could be found enjoying the camaraderie.

Resident Sue Heath loves that pets are welcome at Wesley Palms. The same about her best friend Gracie, a green-eyed tabby. “Pets make our lives so much richer,” Sue said, whose best friend Gracie is a green-eyed tabby. “Everyone here just loves Gracie and I could not be happier.”

Sean said if the competition remains popular there will be a “Pet of the Year” contest in which quarterly winners will compete.

“We definitely have a fun-loving group here,” Sean said. “We may have an ‘official’ pet of the quarter, but staff and residents all know that all of our pets and their owners are winners every day. No matter if you are a pet or human, you will feel like you belong at Wesley Palms.”

Editor’s note: When you call or visit Wesley Palms, please ask about the details of our pet policy.