

New Graduates ~ Lives Changed Forever

**Our 2025 graduation ceremony may be behind us,
but we're still celebrating our newest teams and their accomplishments on the path to graduation!**



Rosemary Aquino and Yogi

Rosemary is a retired New York City police officer. She was at ground zero when the World Trade Center towers came down on 9/11/2001. She experiences anxiety and health issues from toxin exposure. She continues to lose friends and former colleagues to the same exposure, and had stopped socializing. She and Yogi have been together since he was a puppy. Yogi calms her when she is stressed and lays with her in bed when she is hospitalized. Dogs For Life taught her to "trust your dog." Their training helped Rosemary, with Yogi, to get out and meet people again. Rosemary and Yogi have established a strong emotional connection, which extends as well to her son Jon, who suffers from epilepsy.

Juan Soto's service dog, Antonella, gave him back his life. Eighteen months ago, he couldn't leave his house. He was tense, subject to depression, always on high alert, angry, and hypersensitive to sharp noise. His two tours as a sergeant with the Army's 4th Infantry Division in Iraq, 2005-07, and again 2008-09, left him with flashbacks to the stress, mortal danger, close combat, ambushes, snipers, RPGs, IEDs, and other hidden explosive devices, and the trauma of retrieving the bodies of his buddies. His infantry company lost 20 out of 100 men during his first tour in Iraq. He is forever grateful to Dogs For Life for helping him train Antonella, a big dog with an even bigger heart. She grounds him and brings him back to the here and now, out of the anger and depression that still, but much less often, plague him.



Juan Soto and Antonella

The Path to Graduation



Owner and dog teams attend weekly training sessions at the DFL Training Center for up to one year. They train in basic obedience, advanced obedience, and specialized task work necessary to mitigate the owner's unique disability.



Teams complete their Assistance Dogs International Public Access and Task Work Tests.



DFL awards each team identification as a Certified Service Dog under DFL's accreditation. Graduates may don a service dog jacket bearing DFL's signature logo.

Milestones like these don't just happen. We are grateful to our incredible sponsors whose support not only funds DFL's mission, but also brings hope and independence to our clients.



ADI & DFL: Better Together!

Celebrate with us on August 4, 2026 at Noon

Pointe West Country Club, Vero Beach

**\$75/ticket includes lunch – Tickets available at
www.dogsforlifevb.org or call (772) 567-8969**

Join Dogs For Life on August 4, 2026, for a special event celebrating International Assistance Dog Week (IADW) and the birthday of DFL Benefactor and Honorary Board Member, Kathi G. Schumann.

Guest speakers will include DFL Board Member Terry Treat (USA), County Commissioner Laura Moss, Indian River County Sheriff Eric Flowers, DFL trainers, puppy raisers and some of DFL's recent graduates.



Mrs. Schumann and Miss B

This year, Assistance Dogs International (ADI) is promoting IADW with its "Better Together" campaign. We all know that we achieve more and experience greater happiness when we unite, support each other, and work together toward a common goal. This is especially true in the context of raising and training service dogs for veterans, first responders, and other disabled individuals.

Behind every successful DFL service dog team is the support and cooperation of an entire community: ADI and its network of partner organizations, DFL's staff and volunteers, trainers, puppy raisers, clients who continue to give back, and of course, corporate and individual sponsors. DFL's upcoming event will recognize and celebrate members of the DFL community, all of whom work hard to produce DFL's impeccable service dogs and successful service dog teams.

Without a doubt, the DFL community is BETTER TOGETHER!

Ways to Give... Any Amount Helps



Check: Make checks payable to Dogs For Life, Inc.

Mail to: 1230 16th Ave. Vero Beach, FL 32960



Credit Card: Use a credit card to donate via our website, 24/7
at dogsforlifevb.org.



Wire Transfer of Cash: Contact Dogs For Life, Inc. at (772) 567-8969 or Northern
Trust Securities, Inc. at (800) 621-4482 for wire instructions.



Legacy Gift: Join DFL's Legacy Society by naming Dogs For Life, Inc. as a beneficiary
of your will, bank or brokerage account, IRA or other retirement account,
trust, life insurance policy, or other estate planning vehicle.



You can help DFL put more of your donation to work by opting for electronic acknowledgments.

To switch to email receipts, contact us at office@dogsforlifevb.org or call 772-567-8969 with your preferred email address.



Patriots Awards and Graduation Ceremony



Military Themed Celebration and Fundraiser

Congratulations 2025 Graduates + Award Winners



Graduates David Reese & Tilly, Rosemary Aquino (NYPD) & Yogi, John Wagner (USMC) & Freya, Carol Trotta & Max



Award Recipients Debra Mill, Sally Bricker & Nick, Linda Reeve, Ron Garrison (IRCSO) & Buddy



DFL CEO Shelly Ferger with staff members Chris Consi, Jessica Carrillo (USAF), Ashley Conard, Laurie Bridges



DFL Trainer Marcia Adache & Kai



DFL Puppy Raisers Tom and Holly Harmon with Rocket



John Wagner (USMC) & Freya with family



Veterans Council of IRC Chairman, Dr. Michael Fortunato (USAF) and Bethany Fortunato



Gold Star Family Michelle Dale (DFL Vice President) and Ken Dale (USA)



DFL Board Members Linda Barberi and Terry Treat (USA)

EVACUATION PLAN

BE PREPARED. PLAN AHEAD. EVACUATE TOGETHER.

★ SERVICE DOGS STAY WITH THEIR OWNERS – IT'S THE LAW. ★

DON'T FORGET IMPORTANT PAPERWORK TO HELP PROVE OWNERSHIP AND ENSURE YOUR DOG'S CARE!

-  Create a folder on your phone with photos of these records so they are always accessible.
-  Current photograph of you and your dog together.
-  Medical records, vaccination dates, and your dog's microchip ID number.
-  List of medications your dog takes.
-  Proof of ownership, including registration or microchip enrollment confirmation.
-  Feeding schedule, medical conditions, behavior notes, and your veterinarian's name and phone number.

BE PREPARED: PACK A DOG EMERGENCY KIT



YOUR DOG EMERGENCY KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
|  Water (3+ days) |  Leash & Harness |  Important Documents |
|  Food (3+ days) |  Collapsible Bowls | |
|  Medications |  Towel & Blanket | |
|  First Aid Kit | | |

If conditions are not safe for you, they are not safe for your dog either. Always follow all evacuation orders and never leave your dog behind. Make your plan before a storm and know your options for evacuating, sheltering in place, or seeking temporary shelter.

AT THE FIRST MENTION OF A PENDING DISASTER

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|  Make sure your dog's collar is securely fastened with legible ID tags. |  Keep the team together whenever possible. |
|  Have your portable supply kit ready to grab-and-go with supplies for you and your dog. Consider making duplicate bags just in case. |  Place copies of emergency contact phone numbers on the neck of your dog's collar, in your wallet, and in your dog's vest. |

★ BE PREPARED. STAY TOGETHER. YOU AND YOUR SERVICE DOG. ★