



# Dogs For Life

*Training Service Dogs  
For Veterans*

## Scrapbook

2009



**DECEMBER**

# Paw Prints



## PAW PRINTS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

### Barking Up the Right Tree

By Sheila Lowenstein, Clouseau and X

After almost a decade of stops and starts & stays and heels, the four-acre Off-Leash Dog Park, founded by Executive Director Shelly Ferger, is open and going strong. The park's primary purpose is to provide funding toward DFL's Assistance Dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Programs and at the same time to provide a safe place for the public's dogs to play and socialize. The owners have a good time, too. Membership has grown to 154 owners and 188 dogs. Annual fees for park use are \$250, with 25% going directly to DFL Assistance Training and pet-assisted therapy programs. Assistance dogs attend without charge and "Collarships" are available to qualifying low-income dog owners.

Current programs offered include obedience classes (for the dogs, and the owners) on a \$5 per session, pay-as-you-go basis for members, \$10 for nonmembers and without charge for service dogs and the 4-H Dog Masters Club.

Thanks to the generosity of Dog Park Members, some of whom remain anonymous, the park has even further plans for future development and construction. The expansion fund-raising began just last year after the property was purchased in 2008. Two years ago disaster was averted when a donor contributed \$200,000 for its purchase.

Other donations from supporters like the John's Island Foundation, Coast to Coast Landscaping, individual donors and dog park members raised additional funds needed.

In Director Ferger's words, "The Dog Park is the 'Sea Biscuit' of Vero Beach. With so many ups and downs over the years and the ultimate success of the park, our story has been an inspiration to continue moving forward with our programs and plans. The pressures of the current economy make the therapeutic pet assisted therapy aspects and social opportunities of the park especially important for many people in our community."

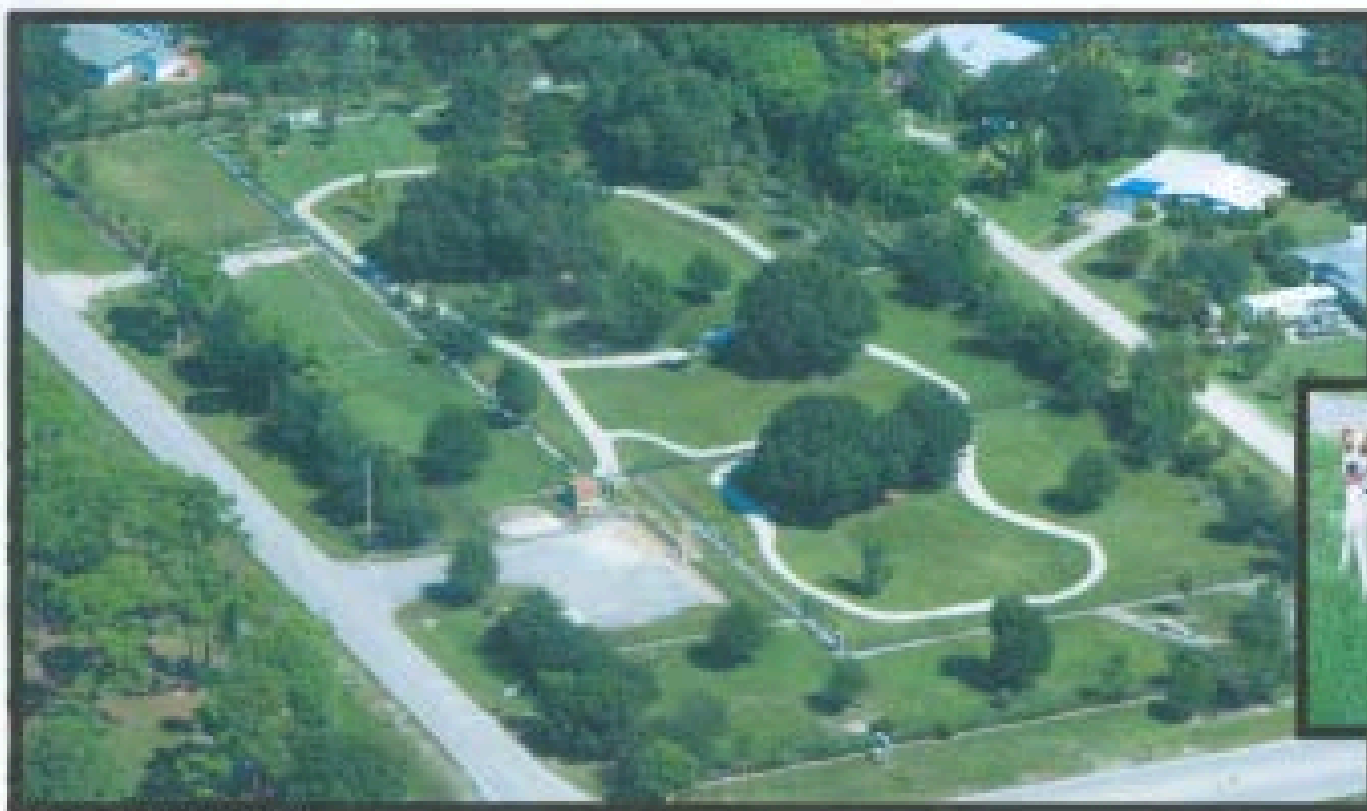
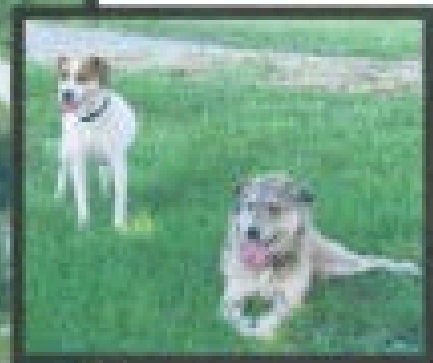


Photo Credit: Carl Miller

### Aerial View of Off-Leash Dog Park

12th St. & 16th Ave.  
Vero Beach



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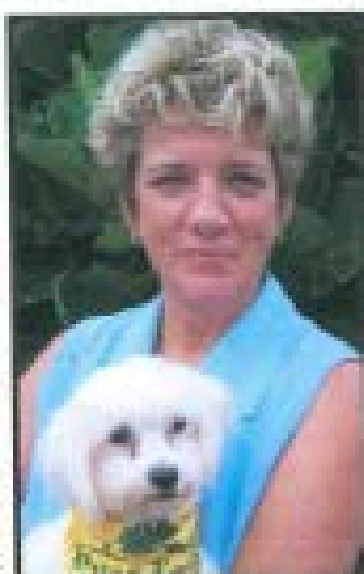
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## From the Founder & Executive Director

Bow Wow, Wow! What a turn out at the 8th Annual Canine Costume Parade and first ever Pet Expo at the dog park October 24, 2009. For many years, I have realized that people in Vero Beach love to do "fun things" with their dogs. A huge thank you to the sponsors, vendors and DFL volunteers who pulled together this "bigger than ever" event!



DFL Executive Director Shelly Ferger and "Sunny"

Thank you to Assistant State Attorney, Chris Taylor, for presenting for the fourth year the DFL Assistance Dog Workshop on November 10. Chris explained the laws regarding assistance dogs in public places and the penalties for interfering with an assistance animal. We also appreciate the United Way, DFL supporters, and sign language interpreter, Betty Gregory, for sponsoring this program. The DFL Assistance Dog Teams who spoke and demonstrated on behalf of the DFL program helped to make this session interesting as well as educational.

I especially appreciate the DFL Board of Directors for their continued enthusiasm in moving this organization forward with their professionalism and commitment to our long-range planning efforts.

Thank you to all who attended the DFL Donor, Member and Volunteer Appreciation Event at the dog park pavilion on December 5th. We look forward to showing our appreciation to our donors and volunteers each year. A special thank you to Sheriff Deryl Loar and Indian River County Sheriff's Office Director of Media Relations Jeff Luther for attending the event and announcing their partnership with DFL Pet Assisted Therapy with the Sheriff's Office Victim's Assistance Program.

The revamping of the DFL Website continues to be an invaluable resource of information on DFL, our programs and events. Check it out at [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).

And finally, please continue to recommend dog park membership and scholarship sponsorship to your family and friends during our Dog Park Membership Drive. We are proud of our park and want as many people and dogs as possible to have the opportunity to enjoy it!

## PAW PRINTS

### Dog Park Scholarship "Collarship" Fund & Memorial Garden



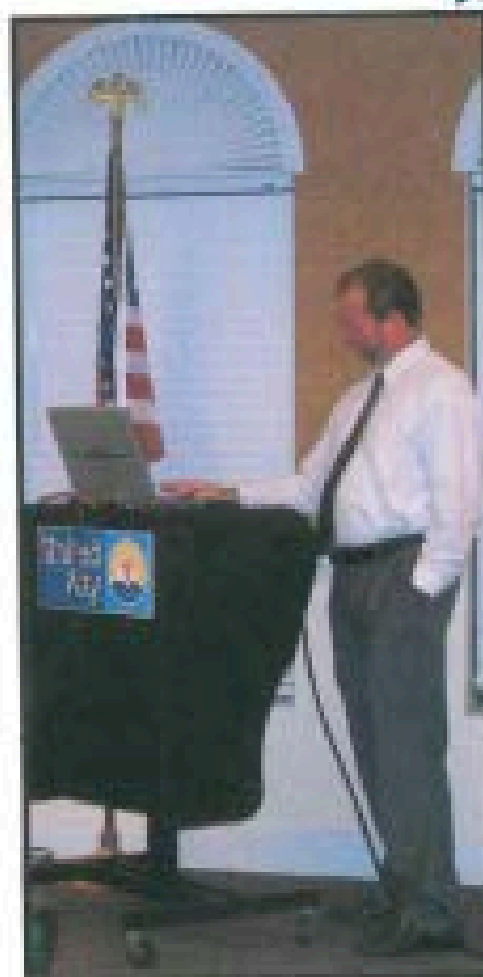
Sabrina Ferger (1995-2009)

Thank you to all of our friends and family who have donated over \$3,500 to the Dog Park Scholarship "Collarship" fund in memory of Sabrina Ferger who traveled to the rainbow bridge in October. The scholarship fund, which was broke, will now allow 17 "good dogs with meager means" to join the off-leash dog park.

Sabrina was a part of DFL during the past 10 years through: The pet assisted therapy program; dog obedience classes and since 2002 serving as dog park orientation (temperament tester) for over 500 dogs.

She is being remembered along with her big brother, Poco, on memorial stones at the dog park memorial garden.

For additional information on how your dog can be remembered at the dog park memorial garden or to donate to the "Collarship" fund in Sabrina's memory, please refer to the donation form at the end of this newsletter or contact the DFL office at 567-8969.



Smooth Coated Collies are becoming very popular as service dogs.

Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor presents the DFL Annual Assistance Dog Workshop on November 10.



### DFL Trainers Attend Workshop

DFL trainers attended the Assistance Dogs International Assistance Dog Workshop in Colorado in October where emphasis was on The Veteran Dog Training Programs. We look forward to continuing to plan the implementation of this program in DFL's Assistance Dog Program.

### Classes Back In Session

Dog obedience classes at the dog park are back in session with record attendees after a three month (hot) summer break. The 4-H Dog Master's Club and two DFL Assistance Dogs received their AKC Canine Citizen's Certificates in the first month.



L to R: 4-H Dog Master Caylin Rose with "Lou", DFL Hearing Dog Team Noline Coody with "Abby", DFL Service Dog Team Valerie Washburn with "Athena" and 4-H Dog Master Kelsey Murphy with "Toby".



Shelly Ferger with Jeff Gomez Coast to Coast Landscaping DFL In-Kind Services of the Year Award.

### DFL 2009 Volunteer Appreciation Award Recipients

Standing: Dutch Van Noren DFL Media Award, Shelly Ferger, DFL Executive Director, Ed Boatwright DFL Volunteer of the Year Award.

Seated: Deborah Cornell & Stella DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Award and Pat Scott & Holly DFL Assistance Dog Award.



An annual Family Affair with Fido.



One of the funniest costumes in the parade ... a black pug "spider" strolling down the path.



A darling parade participant with her pooch.

### HOWLING SUCCESS AT THE 8TH DOG PARK PAWRADE

By: Linda Liss, Committee Member

The 8th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade & Pet Expo on October 24, 2009 was a "howling success." DFL Founder/Executive Director, Shelly Ferger opened the program by introducing the Board of Directors and gave her welcoming remarks.

About 300 people, some with their dogs, arrived at the newly expanded Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park and visited the 30 dog-related vendors prior to the main event. This was the first ever Pet Expo and we had an outstanding turnout! The DFL "Bark Mart" that was held in the small dog area offered all kinds of items for sale and all proceeds will benefit the Dog Park Scholarship fund. Bob Hemstreet Professional Photographer was on hand to take pictures of pets and those proceeds will benefit the Off-Leash Dog Park. This year's Event Program was well supported by a wide assortment of sponsors and included an aerial view of the dog park as well as various articles about assistance dogs and Dogs For Life.

Over 100 dogs came in costume to participate in the parade much to the delight of all the visitors and each one was a winner! Following the parade, there was an

owner/dog look-alike contest that was such a close race the judges just couldn't decide on one winner. So all of them went home as happy winners, too!

The afternoon wrapped up with a number of raffle drawings of excellent products and services for pets that were generously donated by various local veterinarians and merchants.

Many, many thanks to all of our event sponsors, vendors and volunteers who made this event such a huge success. As a result of their support, DFL raised over \$10,000 and we hope that you will plan to join us again next year!

A big "WOOF, WOOF" thank you to Bill Painter for co-chairing the event along with DFL Vice President, Sharon Marshall, and to DFL Volunteers Pat and Ron Scott and Nancy Schwartz for organizing the Bark Mart.



Three of our pawrade participants all dressed up and ready to go!



Volunteer, Merv Liss, visits with Rustyn Hall of Artistic Canine Creations, one of our many vendors.



## Our Biggest Challenge

By: Kelli Beal, Director and Fund Development Chair

Did you know that 80% of US households donate money each year to over 1.5 million charities? As a fairly young non-profit organization, the biggest challenge to Dogs For Life, Inc. is to capture as much of those donated dollars as possible. The more DFL can capture, the stronger DFL's future and well-being. The stronger DFL's well-being, the more citizens and dogs DFL can help and in turn, our community will become stronger.

Now that the beautiful Dog Park expansion project is complete, DFL can shift more of its focus to fundraising. To prepare for this upcoming giving season, DFL Board Members and Shelly Ferger, our Executive Director, have attended recent seminars on successful fundraising.

In 2009, DFL received a \$25,000 matching grant from the John's Island Foundation. This money was vital in accomplishing the Dog Park's expansion. Additionally, as many of you attended our recent Howl-O-Ween event, you already know what a success it was. Through the generous support of our community, DFL raised over \$10,000!

Recently our Board President, Al Turner, in letters to many of our donors, challenged them to a three year financial pledge to help stabilize and secure DFL. These planned giving pledges will allow DFL to focus more on its important programs.

Other upcoming fundraising events will be: The 2nd Annual Golf/Bridge Tournament at the Vero Beach County Club on February 16th, an April 1st Fundraiser with Art Auction, and a March Dog Walk-A-Thon. Please be on the lookout for details about these events.

DFL has also submitted a grant request for funding toward lighting at the dog park. This is important for the safety of our dog park members but it is anticipated to also increase the membership. Increased membership means increased revenue to DFL. Another exciting grant potentially available to DFL this year would help fund expansion of the Pet Assisted Therapy Program. We will do our best, as usual, to make a strong argument for our mission.

As you can see, fundraising is constant and hard work. Each of you is an important part of our fundraising team. You help not only by donating your dollars but by also recommending DFL to your friends and family for dog park membership, obedience training and spreading the importance of the Assistance Dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Dog Training Programs. We welcome your suggestions for additional funding sources.

### DFL "speaks" at the Exchange Club of Indian River



L to R: Exchange Members: Scott Wallace, Dawn Redstone and DFL Board Member Tom Lowther

## Pet Assisted Therapy Preparing to Expand

The DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Program Volunteers are reorganizing and preparing to expand their unconditional love and comfort at the dog park memorial garden pavilion. We are very excited to be able to offer Pet Therapy at the dog park since the park expansion project has been completed.



2009 DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Teams



## Year End Holiday Appeal

DFL is thankful for your partnership and friendship over the year. We are grateful that we have been able to work with so many of our friend's and client's dogs this past year and for that we are thankful to our donors and volunteers.

Certified Assistance Dog Team "Valerie and Athena" have left their home in Vero Beach for a Jacksonville hospital to await Valerie's liver transplant. Her goal was to have her service dog Athena certified with DFL in time to take the trip with her, and this was accomplished on December 5th.

the comfort of a therapy dog team into this arena.



Indian River County Sheriff's Office Director of Media Relations, Jeff Luther, poses with DFL Executive Director, Shelly Ferger, Sheriff Deryl Loe and DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Award winner, Deborah Corneli with "Stella".

Indian River County Sheriff Deryl Lore has committed to partnering with DFL for a Pet Assisted Therapy Program in the Sheriff's Department Victim's Assistance Program and we are very excited to be able to bring the comfort of a therapy dog team into this arena.

Tedi, a companion dog who needed a new home, has found a great home through DFL's Companion Dog Adoption Program. Although not our mission, we do try to help out when asked to find an adoptable dog a home. The current state of home foreclosures continues to be a tragedy for dogs as well as people. 2010 will be a challenging year for all of us. We need the financial support of our donors and dog park members to continue to help change the lives of people and dogs in Indian River County.



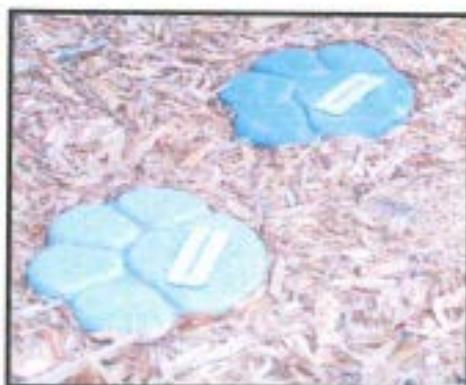
Valerie & "Athena", Service Dog Team Certifies on December 5, 2009.



"Tedi" has found a new home for Christmas.

From independence to comfort to education to recreation, DFL has it all and you are an important part of our team.

Thank you, and may 2010 be the best year ever for you and DFL!



## Dog Park Pet Memorial Stones Available

Would you like to have your pet(s) remembered at the dog park memorial garden? Now that the memorial garden has been established as part of the dog park expansion project, DFL is offering your pet's name to be displayed on a plaque attached to a dog paw stone in the garden. If you need additional information, please contact Shelly at the DFL office. 772-567-8969.

Memorial stones are available at a cost of \$250. Proceeds are used to benefit the dog park. Donor Bones will remain available to be printed in honor or in memory of a person or a dog at \$100, \$500, \$1,000 and \$5,000 levels.

# Mitzi loves to see her friends at the dog park

BY SHELLY FERGER  
YourNews contributor

When our golden retriever Taffy passed away, we both decided that we not want any more

Then came the headlines "Humane Society rescues Springer and Dacshunds from Noah's Ark. Good homes are needed for more than 100 dogs." We filled out papers to adopt a springer spaniel puppy. Two weeks before Christmas we brought Mitzi home to be our beloved pet.

My wife, Eleanor, immediately enrolled her in Dogs For Life's basic obedience class and joined their Off Leash Dog Park.

Things were going great when disaster struck. Mitzi was diagnosed with hip

problems and needed surgery at the age of 6 months. Coming out of the anesthesia the veterinarian called

tap the 911 phone to call for help if we need it along with other helpful tasks. Dogs For Life did this at no cost

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Things were going great when disaster struck. Mitzi was diagnosed with hip

problems and needed surgery at the age of 6 months. Coming out of the anesthesia the veterinarian called to inform us that her patent ductus had never closed at birth. This meant heart surgery. This surgery followed one month later. It took almost a year but Mitzi filled out and became a special part of our family.

Eleanor took her through the training and they became a DFL Pet Assisted Therapy team. Mitzi loves going to visit children and the elderly. At age 3½ we decided to train her as an in-home service dog.

Two trainers, Patti Schell and Beth Sexton-Stryker, from Dogs For Life came once a week to help us with her training. Mitzi can now

tap the 911 phone to call for help if we need it along with other helpful tasks. Dogs For Life did this at no cost to us. They are willing to accept tax deductible donations for this service.

Come 4:30 p.m., Mitzi starts going in and out of her doggie door looking to see if her friends have arrived at the park yet. That's when we know it's time to go.

Mitzi would love to have more friends that she can greet and play with. We probably will not remember your name but your dog's name will be remembered.

Come join the party and enjoy the fun and camaraderie.

# 4-H Clubs

## Club Report

### Horsemasters

By: Ahnna Suranofsky

Horsemasters enter the Holiday Season in full gallop!!!

A great group of new officers has been sworn in for the 2009 - 2010 year.

There has been great turnout at monthly horse clinics. We have been honored with gifted instructors Sandy Curl and Shannon Curl and we appreciate their talent!! All of our members are working hard with their horses. The continual efforts are paying off with advances in showing and training.

The Horsemasters 's judging team is starting strong and adding some hopeful new Junior members to learn for future years. A clinic is planed for Dec.12 in Gainesville.

Horsemasters continue to show their love for their country by supporting their troops with cards and supplies.



### Dogmasters

By: Zakary Martinez

The Dog Master's Club participated in the Dogs for Life annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Parade on Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009. We had a booth and sold cold bottled water to more than 80 people. Max Molter, Kelsey Murphy and their parents helped out Miss Violet at the booth. There were a lot of dogs and people in funny and cool costumes and they had prizes at the end which Kelsey got to announce the winners.

Since the ice was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jeff and Tammy Wilson of Wilson Masonry and Express Huntin' N Fishin' we were able to make a profit of over \$50. Not bad for our first ever fund raiser! Now we have gone from beginner's training to the intermediate level which is a lot of fun with the agility course. We hope to show everyone at the Fair how much our dogs and ourselves have learned.





WILL GREENLEE • Staff

Reyna Zurita, 38, and her dog, Hunter, stand near Zurita's home on Southwest Kaabe Avenue on Wednesday. Port St. Lucie police praised Hunter for his contributions in helping a 1-year-old boy receive medical attention after an apparent near drowning incident last week.

## Dog helps save 1-year-old PSL boy

BY WILL GREENLEE  
will.greenlee@scripps.com

**PORT ST. LUCIE** — Maybe it was Hunter's keen canine senses, or maybe it was something else.

Whatever the case, police on Wednesday said the 2 1/2-year-old pooch "was definitely a contributing factor" in saving a 1-year-old boy's life last week.

The chain of events that brought Hunter, his owner, Reyna Zurita, and 1-year-old Manuel Domingo together began last Thursday at a home in the 500 block of Southwest Baoy Avenue.

Domingo's guardian, Julia Pascual, was bathing Domingo and her 2-year-old son in a tub. She pulled the drain plug and was looking for baby wash under the restroom sink for three to four minutes.

When Pascual, 21, turned to check on the kids, she saw Domingo "face down in the tub not moving," a report states. Pascual, who told police she has no working phone at the house, told her 2-year-old son to stand by the door while

"Everybody said the baby is dead, do not touch the baby, I grabbed the baby, I gave it CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), I never do that in my life, I don't know how I do it but I did."

**Reyna Zurita, Hunter's owner**

she ran for help.

Apparently at about that time, Zurita, 38, was at her home on Southwest Kaabe Avenue when Hunter began barking. She opened the door and he ran out.

Not wanting to lose Hunter, whom she'd adopted three weeks ago in Vero Beach, she raced after him. Hunter reportedly ran to where Domingo was and sat down.

"Everybody said the baby is dead, do not touch the baby," Zurita said. "I grabbed the baby, I gave it CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), I never do that in my life, I don't know how I do it but I did."

Police Sgt. Richard Schichtel praised Zurita

for knowing enough to give "rescue breaths and turn the child on his side to allow the water to be expelled."

Police and St. Lucie County Fire District crews arrived shortly after that and continued efforts to help Domingo.

Once rescue officials began administering oxygen, Domingo began showing "signs of life again and his color started coming back," Schichtel said.

"I just want to thank God for (Zurita) and her dog,"

Pascual said. "Nobody else in this neighborhood heard me."

Pascual said she thought no one would help her.

"Even a car passed by, they didn't stop," Pascual said.

As for Domingo, Schichtel said he was released from a hospital. During a brief interview with reporters Wednesday afternoon, Pascual said Domingo was sleeping.

Pascual told police that Domingo's mother died when he was 3 weeks old and that his father was incarcerated. She said she has custody of Domingo.

Treasure Coast  
media of choice.

SCRIPPS  
Treasure Coast Newspapers

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints. The prints are of two sizes and are scattered across the white background in a non-uniform, random-like distribution.

**NOVEMBER**

# Wedding

## WEDDINGS

### Rustay – Matthews

**H**eather Kristyn Rustay and John Daniel Matthews were married June 27, 2009. The ceremony, officiated by Craig Rustay and Frank Ellis, and reception were held at Quail Valley River Club.

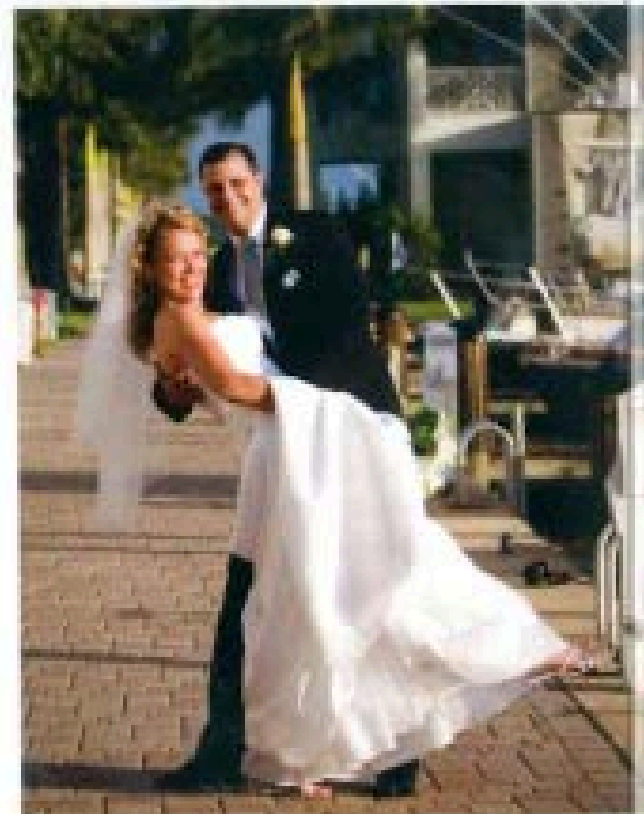
The bride is the daughter of Craig and Sherrol Rustay of Vero Beach. She received a B.A. in Elementary Education from Southeastern University and will be entering the university's Master's degree program for Educational Leadership. She is an elementary teacher at Master's Academy and works at Christi's Fitness.



*The bride and groom*

The groom is the son of Charles Matthews of Cocoa and Jody Cobia of Jacksonville. He is currently pursuing a plumbing journeyman's license at Indian River State College and is employed by Oliver's Plumbing.

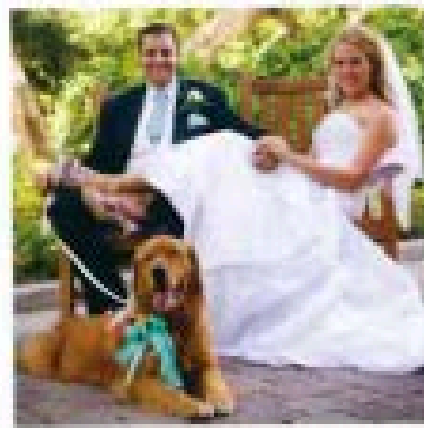
The couple honeymooned in Sanibel Island and reside in Vero Beach.



*Mr. and Mrs. John Daniel Matthews*



*The groom's parents Charles Matthews and Jody Cobia, the groom and bride, the bride's parents Sherrol and Craig Rustay*



*The groom and bride with "Mango"*



*Flower girl Danielle Rustay, Kim Rustay, the bride Kimberly Tappen, Eva Tappen and Jennifer Royce*



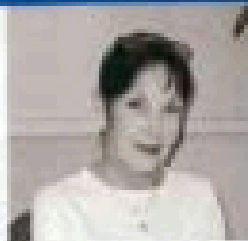
*The bridal party*



*Front row: Glenn, Danielle and Kim Rustay, the groom and bride, "Mango," Sherrol and Charles Rustay, Eva Tappen, Alex Tappen and the bride's grandmother Althea Rustay; back row: Christopher Rustay, Sean Rustay, Kimberly and Aaron Tappen*

# Good Cause

## IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS



BY ANN TAYLOR

*In a troubled economy, the Association of Fundraising Professionals is pioneering new ways to keep the donor dollars flowing.*

## ALL IN A GOOD CAUSE



Members of the AFPIR 2009 Board of Directors are all smiles after receiving a certificate from AFP International that recognized the chapter as a 2008 Ten Star Award honoree. The chapter also received a cash award for having the highest membership growth and retention rate among chapters in the 51-100 category. Front row, left to right: Robyn Ornel, Ginny Blossom, Kelley Williams. Back row, left to right: Dennis Bartholomew, Julia Keenan, Kelly Brown and Mary Hynes Beaman.

*"We give to others not out of a sense of obligation but out of a sense of pure appreciation for what our community has given us."*

— PHILANTHROPIST FRANK M. HUBBARD



Julia Walker, nationally recognized fund development professional and author of several books on fundraising, joins Kerry Bartlett, AFPIR's first president, at McKee Botanical Garden in May where Walker presented "Positive Fundraising in a Negative Economy" to AFP members and their guests.

When Ginny Blossom joined the Association of Fundraising Professionals she had little inkling of the impact it would have on her life. Membership in the not-for-profit organization wasn't something the Cleveland native-by-way-of-California transplant had in mind when she arrived in Vero Beach six years ago seeking a little rest and relaxation before moving on. Instead, she stayed and started working for the Indian River Medical Center Foundation where she met the person who introduced her to the AFP.

"I joined at the urging of my professional friend and mentor, Jan Donlan

(IRMC Foundation Executive Director), having no idea at the time what the organization would come to mean to me," says Ginny, president of the AFP's Indian River chapter and director of philanthropy for the Nature Conservancy's Caribbean program. "The AFP is really a network of friends and family who inspire mentoring and collaborative efforts. I receive calls frequently from fellow members seeking advice on how to handle certain situations and it is gratifying to be able to give them feedback based on my own experience."

The AFP represents more than 30,000 members in 200 chapters throughout the world who work to ad-

vance philanthropy – a major source of income for cultural, religious and humanitarian causes – through advocacy, research, education, and certification programs.

Sixteen fundraising professionals founded the Indian River chapter three years ago, largely because of a mutual desire to better tailor programs to local needs, challenges and goals. Initially sponsored by the AFP Treasure Coast chapter – which at the time covered Indian River, Martin and St. Lucie counties – the Indian River chapter has experienced phenomenal growth and today has 65 members. In rec-

The background of the entire image is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints. The prints are of two sizes and are scattered across the white background in a non-uniform, random-like distribution.

**OCTOBER**

# Howl-O-Ween

## Indian River County

SECTION B • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2009 • TCPALM.COM • 1R

### Getting into that Howl-O-Ween spirit



SAM WOLFE • Correspondent

Phoebe Lasswell, 7, fixes the hat of her dog, Schatzie, before the the eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade and Pet Expo held at the Dogs For Life Off-Leash Dog Park on Saturday afternoon. About 100 dressed-up dogs and hundreds of spectators attended the event, which is the organization's biggest event of the year.



Chuck Bateman, CLU, ChFC  
Auto-Life-Health-Home and Business  
1201 19TH PL STE A210  
VERO BEACH, FL 32960 PHONE (772) 567-1106

November 10, 2009

Dogs for Life Inc  
P O Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

Dear Shelly,

I thought you might like this for the DFL scrapbook.

I've also mailed a copy to Al & Pilar. That Mick is so cute in his "Surfer Dude" costume!

Sincerely,

*Sharon*

Sharon Marshall  
Insurance Account Representative  
Chuck Bateman, CLU, ChFC, Agent  
email: sharon.marshall.h74t@statefarm.com

/sjm

YOURHUB.COM • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2009



AL AND PILAR TURNER - Posted on YourHub.com  
Mick Turner, aka "Surfer Dude," is ready for the Howl-O-Ween parade.

## DOGS FOR LIFE OFF-LEASH DOG PARK MEMBER OF THE WEEK

# Mick and first-time dog owners learn and enjoy

BY SHELLEY FERGUSON  
Posted on YourHub.com  
Written by Al and Pilar Turner

As a first-time dog owner, the dog park has been a very special place for us and our dog, Mick.

We have all gotten an education at the park. Mick has learned important social skills. The other dogs and owners have reinforced his dog park training classes. He likes being chased by the other dogs at the park.

He is always eager to

play and greet each dog with their owners as they enter the park. We've found a great resource in the other dog owners, who are kind enough to share their experiences in the care and training of their pets. We had a lot of questions at first and luckily they offered great tips.

With this wonderful support, We fell so much in love with Mick that we got him a little sister, Lola!

Last year, we and Mick, alias "surfer dude," had a

great time at the Howl-O-Ween parade. It was a beautiful day that we shared with our family. There were lots of smiles everywhere. Every dog and owner was a winner.

For more information, call Shelly Ferguson, executive director, at (772) 507-6969 or visit [www.dogsforlifefl.com](http://www.dogsforlifefl.com).

This story was edited for space. For the full story, visit [YourHub.com](http://YourHub.com).

# Articles

YOURNEWS • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2009

## DOGS FOR LIFE MEMBER OF THE WEEK

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

My two basset hounds, Andrew Rufus (Roo Roo) and Luke Anthony are great am "basset" dors for two phenomenal organizations in Florida.

RooRoo and Luke were adopted from Suncoast Basset Rescue ([www.suncoastbassetrescue.org](http://www.suncoastbassetrescue.org)) and enjoy almost daily our very own Dogs For Life dog park ([www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com)) in Vero Beach.

The Dogs For Life park has benefitted my hounds in many ways. My bassetts are two of the leanest, healthiest and happiest hounds you will meet. The Dogs For Life Park addressed my concern of finding a safe place for off leash play, which I feel is essential to their mental and physical well being.

Dogs are naturally social animals that need lots of exercise. Although I have relatively low energy basset



ROBIN TAPOOL

Posted on YourHub.com

Andrew and Luke have a "howling" good time at the DFL's Off-Leash Dog Park.

hounds, for most dogs it would take a lot of hours walking on-leash to rival the energy a dog can expend in a relatively short amount of time at the park.

Dogs For Life, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that trains hearing and mobility assistance dogs. DFL operates the off-leash dog park on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue. To schedule an orientation call (772) 567-8969.

## Opinion

PAGE A10 • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2009 • TCPALM.COM

### PETS

## Canine companionship good for your health

Apparently, John Silvia, author of Oct. 27's letter of the day, knows little about dogs. Has he not heard of "seeing-eye dogs" that help the deaf or individuals with a limited ability to move?

Dogs "listen" to children read, visit the very sick in hospitals, go to homes for the elderly and bring cheer to the depressed.

It has been shown that petting a dog lowers the individual's blood pressure. A dog may provide protection in the home or announce the arrival of a stranger.

I have had a bichon for more than 15 years, and he has provided several of the services noted above.

I wonder if Mr. Silvia has given a "needy family a roof over their head, an old blanket to sleep on, and a bowl of food to eat."

Does he contribute to the Salvation Army or another group that helps those in need, as many of us do?

Julie Wack  
Vero Beach

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YOURNEWS • Indian River County • WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2009

## Jasper loves to socialize

BY SHELLY FERGER  
YourNews contributor

Mary and Jasper Mitchell have been members since 2000, and have watched the park grow until it became the beautiful facility that is today.

Not only do the dogs socialize with one another but so do the owners. Pet therapy at work.

Jasper is now 10 years old and he is an English cocker spaniel.

He travels back and forth from Connecticut to Florida and just loves riding in the car. He thinks of it like a big dog house.

Jasper just loves kids and has been brought up with our grandchildren. I gave

### DOGS FOR LIFE MEMBER OF THE WEEK

him to my husband Walter on his 80th birthday and when he saw Jasper he said "well now I've got to outlive the dog".

I can't say enough good things about the Dogs for Life and the training they receive to help people with disabilities live more independently. Dogs For Life, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that trains hearing and

mobility assistance dogs. They also train volunteers with their own dogs to provide Pet Assisted Therapy at other nonprofit children and senior facilities in Vero Beach.

DFL owns and operates the off-leash dog park on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue. To schedule an orientation call 772-567-8969.

SCHEPS MORE HANDICAPPED • 12 • 10:00 AM • WEEK OF NOVEMBER 23, 2009

Volunteer & Donor Appreciation to benefit  
Dogs for Life. 10 a.m. DFL Off-leash Dog Park  
Vero Beach. 772-567-8969

# VERO BEACH Hometown News

Vol. 6, No. 18 Your Local News and Information Source • www.HometownNewsOL.com Friday, January 9, 2009

## IN BRIEF

### Skydiving trip ends in fatality

The Federal Aviation Administration and Sebastian Police Department are investigating after one man suffered fatal injuries during a skydiving jump.

Daniel Kulpa, 22, of Cranbury, N.J., died on Jan. 2, after a jump with Skydiving Sebastian went awry.

According to the autopsy report, the cause of death was blunt force trauma. The toxicology report is still pending and results are expected in six to eight weeks.

Upon initial inspection of the skydiving equipment, police say that everything appeared to be in order, but an investigation is still underway.

No foul play is suspected, nor is there any indication of a suicide issue, Sebastian Community Policing Officer

## 'Collar' ships now available for dog park memberships

By Jessica Tuggle  
jtuggle@hometownnewsol.com

VERO BEACH — Aero's chocolate eyes darted from left to right, quickly surveying the park in front of him.

Like a flash, he took off running toward the edge of the property, stopping just short of the road, then running along the length of the fence, barking happily, at birds.

Aero, a Boykin spaniel, is one of about 180 dogs that enjoy the freedom of roaming in the Best Friend's off-leash Dog Park in Vero Beach.

"All I have to say is the word 'park' and he goes off and running to the door," said Hank Westphalen, Aero's owner.

Best Friend's is owned and managed by Dogs for Life, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving quality of life for people and dogs.

Currently, access to the 4.5-acre park is only available to members for an annual fee of \$250 per year for

"We have this thought that a dog of meager means is still a good dog, and should be able to enjoy themselves, too."

Shelly Ferger  
Founder, Dogs for Life

the first dog and \$50 for additional dogs. The membership fees help maintain the park and also partially fund the other ventures of Dogs for Life, pet-assisted therapy training and training for assistance dogs.

In light of the economy, however, Dogs for Life is now offering a limited amount of "collarships" to qualifying dogs and their families.

"We have this thought that a dog of meager means is still a good dog, and should be able to enjoy themselves, too," said Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life.

"We will also be trying out a payment plan to see if that will help people, too," she said.

Some qualifications for membership to the dog park include up-to-date inoculations for the animal; dogs must also be social and neutered or spayed.

All dogs are screened for temperament before becoming members, said Ms. Ferger.

"People really like that we screen each dog," she said. "Because, really, if your dog is dog-aggressive, you really don't want to find that out in a dog park," said Ms. Ferger.

The park is divided into two open areas, one for large dogs and one for small dogs.

Trees shade many areas of the park, a big bonus in the summer-

time,

said Ms. Ferger.

Aero and Mr. Westphalen have been members of the park for three years.

Boykin spaniels, like Aero, are bred for hunting birds, said Mr. Westphalen.

"That's why he runs around the fence all the time. He thinks he's flushing out the turkeys," Mr. Westphalen said.

Having a place for Aero to run and exercise safely is very important to Mr. Westphalen.

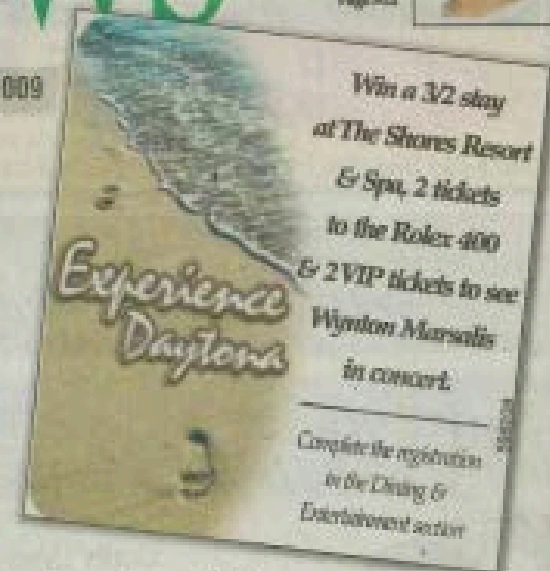
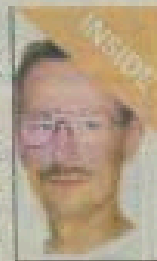
"He needed a place that was

See PARK, A2

## GARDEN NOOK

Tips for attracting hummingbirds to your yard

Page A2



A2 • Vero Beach

Hometown News

Friday, January 9, 2009

The park is open from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., and is free to enter, but the area is not enclosed, said Mr. Slezak.

A fence may be put up for an enclosed dog park at Michael Field in the next six to nine months, he said.

Many members echo the sentiments of Mr. Westphalen and find comfort in knowing that their pets will not be in danger of running after a squirrel and into traffic, said Ms. Ferger.

"Dog parks aren't just about dogs, they're about people too," Ms. Ferger said.

"Having a park like this is good for the dogs, because they get great exercise playing with other dogs and just running around," she said.

"Some of our older members come here and sit down under the trees and watch their dogs and visit with other people; it's really a big social hour," said Ms. Ferger.

"Some people even say that they wouldn't be able to have a dog if they didn't have someplace like our park to take them to for exercise," she said.

For more information about the dog park scholarship application process or about services and training offered by Dogs for Life, call (772) 567-8869 or visit [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).

From left, Fergus and Nessia, foreground, Scottish terriers owned by Nancy Harris of Vero Beach in the small dog park, run alongside Droopy and Lilly, owned by David and Treva Lambert, also of Vero Beach, in the large dog section of the Dogs For Life Off Leash Park last Friday.

Cliff Partlow  
staff photographer



## Park

From page A1

fenced in and this park is big and safe and the dogs are carefully screened," he said.

"We can come here anytime we want from 6 a.m. to dusk with our own private code at the gate. Aero thinks this is his own private country club," Mr. Westphalen joked.

The Vero Beach Recreation Department operates a public off-leash dog park behind the Bob Summer baseball field near the Merrill Barber Bridge, said Rob Slezak, department director.

# VERO BEACH

## Dog scholarships are available at dog park

Because a "dog of men-ger means is still a good dog," Dogs for Life Inc., which owns and manages the Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, has scholarships available to qualifying dogs and mem-bers of the public at the dog park.

Dog Park memberships help offset the cost of train-ing service dogs and volun-teers at other nonprofit fa-cilities in Indian River County, as well Dogs for Life's community outreach programs.

Membership to the off-leash dog park requires that a dog be inoculated, neutered and social. Annu-al membership fee is \$250 with the second dog from the same household \$50. Registration and orienta-tion is required prior to all memberships.

Contact the Dogs for Life office at (772) 567-8969 for scholarship information. Dogs for Life is a tax-deductible, nonprofit or-ganization.

From staff reports



**Dogs For Life**

**A non profit tax deductible organization**

Ask about our Scholarship "Collarship" Program qualifications

**OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**

12th Street & 16th Avenue

Join the dog park and help support Hearing, Service dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Programs



Membership requires dogs be inoculated, neutered, social and \$250/annual fee, second dog from same household is \$50. Orientations scheduled by appointment.

**772-567-8969**



## Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skins

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B6 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2009 • 1R



**Dogs For Life**

**A non profit tax deductible organization**

Ask about our Scholarship "Collarship" Program qualifications

**OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**

12th Street & 16th Avenue

Join the dog park and help support Hearing, Service dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Programs



Membership requires dogs be inoculated, neutered, social and \$250/annual fee, second dog from same household is \$50. Orientations scheduled by appointment.

**772-567-8969**

## Dog park helps Georgie Girl overcome fears

BY SHELLY FERGUSON

Posted on YourHub.com

This is Georgie Girl's story:

My early life was spent being abused and beaten. I was thrown out of a pickup truck on the highway and left to fend for myself. Then one day the Humane Society found me.

At a year and half old and blind in one eye, I was finished with the human race. But Margaret Talt saw a park in me and insisted make an effort to live. So she adopted me.

I was afraid of people and sounds. I would stay in my crate rolled up like a ball. I was determined never to trust a human again. It took months for me to trust my new family.

One day about two years ago, we were invited to a Halloween Party at the Off-Leash Park at 12th Street

and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

I did not want to go! But we did and Margaret won the raffle for a year's membership.

On no I thought, I do not want to be here. There are way too many people and too many dogs. Oh no — this is not for me.

Talk about fear, the first few times we went I stayed so closed to Margaret I looked like her third foot.

For the first six to nine months, I had to check people out many times before I would let them pet me. Well it is almost two years later and it does not take me long to size up anyone. Before you wanted to pet me now you want me to get my 50-pound butt off you lap!

To date, I will not walk on the city street because I am still afraid. Sometimes I scare myself. So starting

about 2 p.m. each day I start my antics. "It's time to go to the park." There I am a free soul. I can run, play with my friends like Jenny and Mitzie, take a snooze and do my business as long as Margaret takes care of it.

I cannot thank the Off-Leash Park and Dogs for Life enough. You have made it possible for me to enjoy life. See if you can recognize me at the upcoming Halloween Party on Oct. 24 from 3 to 5 p.m.



MARGARET TALT - Posted on YourHub.com

Georgie Girl is ready for the eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Pawrde on Oct. 24.

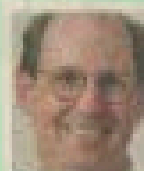
Expo from 3 to 5 p.m. Saturday at the off-leash dog park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Besides the parade, there will be an owner/dog look-alike contest and lots of vendors. The event is sponsored by Dogs For Life, a nonprofit that works with dog training, therapy dogs and operates the off-leash park. Admission is free. For information, call (772) 667-8969 or go to [dogsforlifefvb.com](http://dogsforlifefvb.com).

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009

# Garage Sales

Sell your stuff today!

VERO BEACH - Sat. 10-4 - 1200 16th Ave. of  
Gently used items at  
the Dog's For Life off-  
Leash Dog Park "Bark  
Mart" 772-667-8969



**TYLER  
TREADWAY**  
WHAT A  
WEEKEND

### POOCHES ON PARADE

The dogs get an early bite out of Halloween with the eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade and Pet



# INDIAN RIVER Press Journal

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Thursday, October 22, 2009

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## DFL Off-Leash Dog Park Member Of The Week

Contributed by: Shelly Ferger on 10/8/2009

### Halloween and Georgie Girl's Story

My early life was spent being abused and beaten. I was thrown out of a pickup truck on the highway and left to fend for myself. Then one day the Humane Society found me.

At a year and half and blind in one eye, I was finished with the human race. But Margaret saw a spark in me and insisted I make an effort to live. So she adopted me. I was afraid of people, sounds and anything. I would stay in my crate rolled up like a ball. I was determined never to trust a human again. It took months for me to trust my new family.

One day about two years ago, we were invited to a Halloween Party at Off-Leash Park. I did not want to go! But we did and Margaret won the raffle for a year's membership. On no I thought, I do not what to be here. There are way too many people too many dogs. Oh no this is not for me. Talk about fear, the first few times we went I stayed so closed to Margaret I looked like he third foot.

For the first 6 to 9 months, I had to check people out many times before I would let them pet me. Well it is almost two years later and it does not take me long to size up anyone. Before you wanted to pet me now you want me to get my fifty pound butt off you lap. (Ha Ha)

To date, I will not walk on the city street because I am still afraid. Sometimes I scare myself. So starting about 2 pm each day I start my antics, "It's time to go to the Park." There I am a free soul. I can run, play with my friends like Jenny and Mitzie, take a snooze and do my business as long as Margaret takes care of it.

I cannot Thank Off-Leash Park and Dogs for Life enough. You have made it possible for me to enjoy life. See if you can recognize me at the up coming Halloween Party.

Georgie Girl 100% Pure Lovable Mutt

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## DFL Off-Leash Dog Park Member Of The Week

Contributed by: Shelly Ferger on 10/14/2009

As a first time dog owner, the Dog Park has been a very special place for both me and my dog, Mick. We have both gotten an education at the park. Mick has learned important social skills. The other dogs and owners have reinforced his dog park training classes. He likes being chased by the other dogs at the park. He is always anxious to play and greet each dog with their owners as they enter the park. I've found a great resource in the other dog owners, who are kind enough to share their experiences in the care and training of their pets. I had a lot of questions at first and luckily they offered great tips. With this wonderful support, I fell so much in love with Mick that I got him a little sister, Lola!

Last year, Mick, alias "surfer dude" and I had a great time at the Howl-O-Ween parade. It was a beautiful day which we shared with our family, there were lots of smiles everywhere. Every dog and owner was a winner. Mick and I are looking forward to this years' parade and introducing Lola to the festivities. I hope Lola will live up to her "showgirl" name.

The 8th Annual Howl-o-Ween Canine Costume Pawrade will be held on Saturday, October 24th from 3 to 6 PM. The event will be at the dog park on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. The Pawrade starts at 4 PM. Past events have attracted more than 300 spectators and 75 dogs in costume. This year's event will be even bigger and better.

This year, the event will add the first ever Pet Expo where businesses may exhibit their products and services. Several levels of sponsorship and exhibit space are available plus businesses can place ads in the Event Program.

The event is free to the public and will kick off a New Expanded 4 ½ acre Dog Park membership drive. All parade entries will receive a prize and this year features the first owner/dog look-a-like costume contest. In addition, professional photos will be available by Bob Hemstreet, there will be a DFL Dog Bark Mart Thrift Shop, demonstrations, tricks for treats, and a raffle for a free Dog Park membership.

This year the event adds a "Vendors" section and "Bark Mart" Thrift type sale dog and household items from 11 AM - 4 PM. All proceeds will go toward the Dog Park which helps to fund DFL assistance dog and pet assisted therapy programs. For additional information, call Shelly Ferger, Executive Director, at (772) 567-8969 or visit [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com)

# Indian River County

SECTION B • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2009 • TCPALM.COM • IR

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

### Learn how your dog can be a trained assistance dog

The nonprofit Dogs for Life Inc. is hosting an assistance dog presentation at the United Way, 1836 14th Ave., at 7 p.m. Nov. 10.

The event is free to anyone who wants to know how assistance dogs are trained; if your dog may qualify to be trained as an assistance dog and business owners who would like to know how assistance dogs may affect their business.

Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor will outline the laws pertaining to assistance dogs and the penalties for interfering with an assistance animal.

Assistance Dog Teams will be present to tell how their assistance dog works for them and to answer questions.

For more information, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of varying sizes, scattered across a light lavender background.

# SEPTEMBER

# Dogs for Life announces park member of the week

BY SHELLEY FERGEE  
Posted on YourHub.com

Dogs For Life Inc., Off-Leash Dog Park, is 4 1/2 acres of clean, safe and fenced property at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

The park's member of the week, Nancy Seabolt, had this to say about her experience.

Truffle is our second briard. The first one, Brizle, was the best dog we've ever had so there was no question we would get another.

Truffle, who came from the best breeder of briards, joined us three years ago and is an excellent representative of the breed. She is from stock of show dogs that have won more than any other dogs in the breed.

They are French sheep dogs dating back beyond Napoleon. Thomas Jefferson brought the first ones to America where they have been, in small numbers, ever since.

I joined the dog park with Brizle as a charter member and have been going off and on ever since.

It is wonderful to see the dogs' reactions when we ask them if they want to go to the park. Brizle used to grab a toy and run all over the house, stopping where her leash is with her nose on the leash.

Truffle jumps up and down and runs to the door. I think I could even get her excited to see the vet if the vet were at the dog park.

There are separate large dog and small dog areas

with benches and walking trails for people. Drinking water and dog waste pick up bags and disposal are provided.

DPL is a nonprofit organization that does not receive any government funding.

Qualifying dogs for membership must be inoculated, neutered and social. The annual membership fee is \$250 with the second dog from the same household an additional \$50.

Membership fees help to support hearing dog for deaf and hearing impaired people, mobility assistance dog training for physically challenged people and Pet Assisted Therapy Volunteer Dog Training.

For more information, call (772) 567-8969 or visit [www.dogsforlifefvb.com](http://www.dogsforlifefvb.com).



NANCY AND TRUFFLE SEABOLT - Posted on YourHub.com  
Nancy Seabolt sits with Truffle.

VERO BEACH  
MAGAZINE

REPORT  
BOOK

146

CALENDAR

**OCT 24 Costume Parade:** Dogs for Life's 8th annual parade at 5 p.m., registration at 3 p.m., at the off-leash dog park on 12th St. and 16th Ave. 567-8969.

## Classes, Workshops & Excursions

**Coastal Preserves Alliance** offers excursions and events at the Sebastian River Buffer Preserve State Park. (321) 953-5004.

**Dogs for Life** offers training classes in dog obedience and behavior with Shelly Ferge, canine behavior trainer. Classes include Basic Training, Ongoing Dog Training, Rally Obedience and AKC - Canine Good Citizen Certificate. Classes are held at the Dog Park on 12th St. and 16th Ave. Dog park hours are from dawn to dusk. Annual membership fee is \$250/first dog; \$50/each additional household dog. 567-8969.

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# AUGUST

# Expansion

## Dog park expands with help of sizable donation

By Michelle Gentile  
For Hometown News

VERO BEACH — A local off-leash dog park is expanding with the help of a Florida lottery winner.

Wanting to remain anonymous, a devoted dog lover generously gave a sizable donation of \$200,000 to Dogs for Life, a nonprofit pet assistance organization and new owners of a dog park.

Dogs for Life founders were on the verge of losing the park for good when they were unable to raise \$275,000 needed to buy the property. Within a matter of a week they were back up and running.

"We were literally within one week before we had to close up shop when a private individual gave us the funds to buy the property," said Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life.

The good Samaritan was a 2002 Florida Lotto winner with a soft spot for puppies.

"She wants to remain anonymous, but it was so gracious and unexpected," said Ms. Ferger. "We try to give to the community by providing dog training for people who need assistance dogs and a safe property for people to exercise their dogs. Our supporters gave back to us when we needed them."

The park, which opened in 1999, and has given an area for approximately

9,000 dogs in the county to romp and roam around, has plans to expand.

The first phase of the expansion project will add 2 acres of land for patrons and additional memberships, which in turn, keep the park open and operating.

The second phase will add bathrooms, an office and possibly a pavilion.

Al Turner, Dog Park Foundation Committee chairman, estimates the park expansion project will cost approximately \$80,000, of which \$46,000 has been raised or pledged.

With the additional acreage and memberships available, the cost of a yearly membership went down from \$300 to \$250.

The park not only offers a place for dogs to exercise, it is also home to training assistance dogs for those with hearing impairment, disabilities and other ailments.

"We train hearing dogs to hear smoke alarms, a door knock, a telephone ringing," said Ms. Ferger. "We also train dogs to help people who may be unsteady on their feet, pick up something that has dropped and even place a an emergency 911 call."

What is unique about this training facility, said

See DONATION, A2



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

Dogs for Life board member Eleanor Bengyak relaxes with Mitzi, a spaniel rescued from Noah's Ark, at the off-leash park last Friday. Soon, thanks to a grant, she and park members will enjoy a newly expanded 4.5 acre park.

A2 • VERO BEACH

HOMETOWN NEWS

Friday, August 14, 2009

## Donation

From page A1

ning.

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What is unique about this training facility, said Ms. Ferger who has been training canines for 25 years, is the trainers become the trainers.

"A wonderful part of the program is that the client becomes the dog trainer,"

said Ms. Ferger. "It's a sort of pay-it-forward type of network of people all working to the same goals."

She added that because many people cannot afford to purchase assistance dogs, they actually rescue dogs that may otherwise be put to sleep and train them at home.

"You can train a dog for all different tasks and they really become the eyes, ears, legs and emotional support for their owners," said Ms. Ferger. "There is something in training we call 'the magic' and it's that unexplainable thing that happens between dog and individual."

Presently, the park can accommodate 300 dogs and memberships. Organizers are now starting to offer short-term payment plans for those who can't readily come up with membership dues.

Any dog must be pre-approved, spayed, neutered, up-to-date with vaccines and social.

"We really offer people a clean, safe environment for your pet," said Sharon Marshall, vice president, Dogs for Life. "The park is very important to the community. It provides a place for not only dogs to get together and socialize but for people too."

For more information visit [www.dogsforlifefvb.com](http://www.dogsforlifefvb.com).



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

Dogs for Life board member Eleanor Bengyak relaxes with Mitzi, a spaniel rescued from Noah's Ark, at the off-leash park last Friday. Soon, thanks to a grant, she and park members will enjoy a newly expanded 4.5 acre park.

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# New Board

B2 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • SATURDAY, JULY 4, 2009 • IR

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### SATURDAY

**Animals**  
**Dog Obedience Class:** DFL Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 10 a.m. Free. (772) 567-8969.  
**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 annual fee. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifefvb.com.

### LOOKING AHEAD

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### SATURDAY

**Dog Obedience:** Classes. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, 9:15 a.m. Reservation: (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifefvb.com.  
**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 year. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifefvb.com.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### NEW LISTINGS

**4-H Dog Masters Club:** Orientation meeting for youth and their parents. Indian River County Extension, 1028 20th Place, Vero Beach, 7 p.m., Aug. 18. Ages 8-18. Free. (772) 567-8969; DogsforLifeIRV@bellsouth.net

### Animals/Pets

**Dog Training:** Six-week class. Humane Society, 5330 77th St., Vero Beach, 1-2 p.m. Register: (772) 388-3331, ext. 19.  
**Dog Obedience:** Classes. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, 9:15 a.m. Reservation: (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifefvb.com.  
**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 year. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifefvb.com.

# Good For You

PAGE A11 • SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2009 • TCPALM

## Dogs for Life, Inc. names new board

Dogs for Life, Inc. announces its new board of directors for the 2009-2010 term.

Al Turner, president, is a civil engineer and a graduate of Stanford University's School of Business Senior executive program. He has been a resident of Vero Beach for the past five years and is involved a variety of community areas. Sharon Marshall, vice president, served on the DFL Board since 2005, and has served as past president.

Karen Mann, treasurer, served DFL as Treasurer since 2008.

Other members serving since 2008 and re-elected to the board are Eleanor Bengyak and Kelly Colmey.

Newly elected members are Kelli Beal and Tom Lowther.

Dogs for Life, Inc. is a non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs and owning and operating an off-leash dog park.

The organization is looking forward to continuing its board and fund development goals with the first being an expansion project at their 4 1/4 acre off leash dog park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

This project will enable DFL to increase memberships which help to fund the assistance and pet assisted therapy dog programs.

### AUGUST EVENTS

**4-H Dog Masters Club:** Orientation meeting for youth and their parents. Indian River County Extension, 1028 20th Place, Vero Beach, 7 p.m., Aug. 18. Ages 8-18. Free. (772) 567-8969; DogsforLifeIRV@bellsouth.net.

The record

B2 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2009 • IR

# 4-H Dogmasters Club





**JULY**

# Paw Prints



## PAW PRINTS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2009

### ALL ABOARD ~ New Captain and Crew Named to Dogs for Life Board

Dogs for Life installed a new board of directors at its recent meeting and named Shelly Ferger, founder of the non-profit organization, its Executive Director. DFL, which focuses on improving the lives of dogs and their owners through training, was founded in 2002 and now owns and operates the off-leash park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

New officers of the board are Al Turner, President; Sharon Marshall, vice-president; Karen Mann, treasurer; Eleanor Bengyak and Kelly Colmey, re-elected board members; Kelli Beal and Tom Lowther, newly elected board members.

*Continued on page 6*



DFL 09-10 Board of Directors (standing) Tom Lowther, Sharon Marshall, Eleanor Bengyak, Al Turner, (seated) Kelli Beal, Karen Mann, Kelly Colmey and assistance dog, Max.

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Carl Miller of DHI Advertising & Design with Odie & Maddie.

### Speaking of the Park

*DFL President Al Turner*

These are very exciting times for the off leash dog park. First, we are very pleased to announce that DFL received a \$25,000 matching grant from the John's Island Community Foundation for the expansion of the dog park. This grant, along with funds we received from our generous DFL donors, allows us to utilize the whole 4.5 acre property for the benefit of our members and their pets.

Our other exciting news is that the county approved our permit for the expansion project. Work has begun and we will keep the park open as much as possible. Our goal is to complete this project as quickly as possible and keep any disruption at a minimum.

Our big event this fall is our 8th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade and Pet Expo on October 24th. We have expanded our event to include not only the parade but the first ever owner/dog look alike contest, exhibitor space for businesses and other non-profit organizations, professional photo opportunity, NASCAR style "Nasdog" races and our fun "Dog Tricks for Treats."

*Continued on page 7*

#### PAW PRINTS

### From the Founder & Executive Director

Thanks to each of you that returned the recent DFL Survey. We always want and appreciate the input from our donors and members and will continue to ask you for advice from time to time.



I sincerely appreciate the DFL Board of Director's vote of confidence in hiring me as your Executive Director. A personal thank you to Past President Richard Leffew, not only for his outstanding leadership but, ongoing CPA services for DFL. I am absolutely thrilled to have Al Turner's experience and guidance to lead DFL during the 2009-2010 term.

The current challenges for the newly elected Board and are: continuing to focus on board and fund development, growth in our current programs, achieving accreditation with Assistance Dogs International and completing the dog park expansion project.

I am grateful to have been awarded a scholarship to the Association of Fundraising Professionals conference in March. It has given me the confidence to move full steam ahead with fund raising plans for our organization in spite of the current economic climate. As in the past, DFL continues to operate with the same fiscal responsibilities that are expected of a non-profit, donor supported organization.

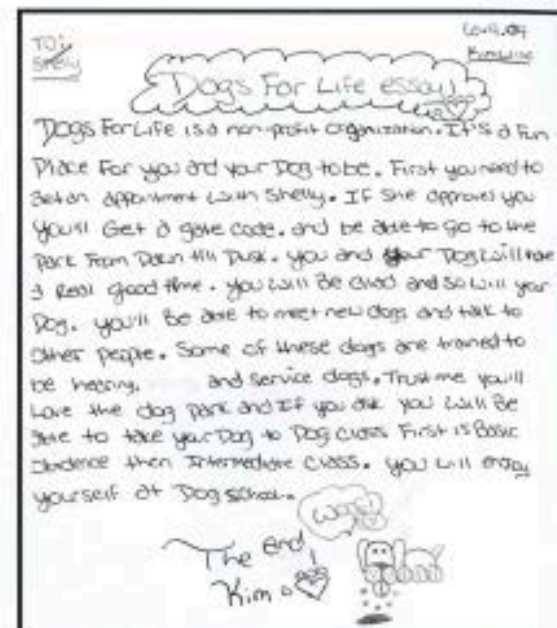
Most of you have received a notice of DFL's first ever Annual Appeal in February. Thank you to those of you who responded in the first wave, those that have not will be reminded in the future how much your support means to our organization. Operating funds are necessary each year and allows non profit organizations to plan ongoing programs and events into the future.

Special gratitude to our Dog Park Foundation Committee members and the newly formed Publicity & Marketing Committee members who are all working very hard for the DFL 2009-2010 fundraising and special events season.

Mark your calendar for the following upcoming events: DFL's 8th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade on October 24 at the off-leash dog park; In November DFL's Annual Meeting, Volunteer & Donor appreciation event will also be held at the off-leash dog park and the Annual Assistance Dog Workshop will be on November 10 at The United Way. DFL will host a very exciting combination golf and bridge tournament combination in February 2010.

And don't forget the importance of recruiting a new dog park member!!! Dog Park membership's fees are vital for supporting our assistance dog training and pet assisted therapy dog programs.

PAGE 2



### 4-H Dog Master's Club

The 4-H Dog Master's Club will be bigger and better this year than ever! Violet Krochmalny of the Agricultural Extension & 4-H office is helping to plan, organize and recruit youth for the Dog Master's program sponsored by DFL at the off-leash dog park.

Shelly Ferger has been a leader for the 4-H Club for the past 25 years and is looking forward to involving the Club in fundraisers and community service projects.

Our goal this year is to not only give the Club an opportunity to volunteer during dog obedience classes at the park, but to also allow them to accompany DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Teams when they are visiting local elderly and children's facilities.

If you know of a family with a child between the ages of 8 and 18 that would like to join the Club, please contact the DFL office right away at 567-8969.



Sofie Taylor, Kim Wise & Monika Vargas with "Mopsy" & "Mikky" Riley.

## ASSISTANCE DOGS BY BARBARA YORESH

It's amazing what a pint-sized hearing dog and a determined owner can accomplish on the international scene, but Vero Beach resident Beth Sexton and her year-old assistance dog Tigger recently became the catalysts for change to the service dog access laws in Spain. Thanks to Beth and Tigger, Spanish laws are changing regarding access to public places for people with service dogs.

Beth and Tigger, a toy poodle, learned assistance skills through training from Dogs for Life, Inc. which since 2002 has trained more than 40 hearing and service dogs in Indian River County and has certified 20 dogs. Dogs for Life, Inc. also assists disabled people throughout America and now Spain with information about training assistance dogs in their home for those unable to buy pre-trained dogs from various training facilities.

To participate in that program, a person must have a disability and be willing and able to train their own dog which is capable of being task-trained to mitigate that person's disability. Program participants are also asked to secure donations to sponsor the training costs of \$2,500-\$5,000 per dog/owner team depending on the tasks trained.

Beth, who is almost totally deaf as a result of an illness in her late 30s, previously owned an assistance dog named Bandit. In 1998, she and Bandit made a trip to Spain where Beth previously lived and found that assistance dogs and their owners were denied access to many public places as well as the famed Prado Museum in Madrid.

During that visit, Beth and Bandit appeared on Spanish television and conducted an educational seminar for Spanish government officials to promote the need for assistance dogs. Although there were some assistance dogs for the visually impaired in Spain, dogs to help the hearing impaired were virtually unknown.

Since that visit, some Spanish provinces have improved accommodations for assistance dogs, but like much of Europe, there has been an unfortunate lack of regard for the needs of citizens and visitors with disabilities.

During her most recent trip in April, Beth and Tigger appeared on a popular prime-time television show in Madrid. During the show, Beth related the difficulties she and Bandit had encountered during her trip in 1998. She also explained the role hearing dogs play and the need for service dog access rights. In a somewhat bold yet necessary challenge, Beth noted to the program host that the outlying provinces had made better advances toward service dog access than had Madrid.

"I was quite vocal about service dog access rights and asked the announcer if it didn't make him feel somewhat ashamed that Madrid was behind the hinterlands in changing their laws," Beth said.

The show host concurred and ended the program by promising to follow up and see if Beth and Tigger could visit the Prado this time. Happily, they did. The next day, Beth was interviewed on radio and repeated her plea for improved assistance dog laws.

Through her contacts with the Spanish Assistance Dogs Association, Beth gained their support in petitioning the government for special access papers for Tigger and herself during their visit. The association trained the sole hearing dog in all of Spain and told Beth that due to lack of awareness for the need for assistance dogs, there has been no demand for laws to be changed.

Upon her return back home, Beth received an email from the association indicating that the Spanish government wants to change the laws and will work in collaboration with the association to do so. Through Beth and Tigger's dedicated efforts, hearing dogs and service dog access rights in Spain will become a reality, thereby enriching the lives of those who need them.

Dogs for Life, Inc. will conduct its Third Annual Assistance Dog Workshop at the United Way on Nov. 10 which will be facilitated by Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor. For more information, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969 or visit online at [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).



"Tigger" a 1 year old toy poodle is trained to alert by making physical contact and then take Beth to sounds such as a door knock, telephone, alarm clock, and smoke alarm.

### "Memorial to Buster" 2003 - 2009



"Captain", Holly's new Mobility Assistance Dog.

## Dogs For Life Announces Proactive Committee By Bill Painter

Dogs For Life recently formed an exciting Publicity and Marketing Committee that will further help promote the organizations causes and help educate and inform the public of all of the happenings and events that Dogs For Life is involved.

The Committee, co-chaired by DFL Vice President Sharon Marshall and Bill Painter, includes committee members Laura Bonney, Joanne Findley, Linda Liss, Daphne Robb, Chase Rogers, Beth Sexton-Stryker and our in-house website guru Dutch VanNoren. The committee members combined valuable ideas, input and efforts has sparked a rejuvenated effort to promote DFL and the off-leash dog park.

The major purpose of the committee is to actively coordinate the publicity and marketing needs for DFL fund raising events, special activities and showcase events, while keeping fresh new informative material in the newsletter and website, as well as arranging and coordinating the DFL speakers bureau tour chaired by Carol Ceely.

Recently, the committee began to focus on revamping the DFL website spearheaded by committee member Dutch VanNoren. Dutch along with Web Design with Flair has brought a new polish and shine to the site. It is now more user friendly, with fresher graphics and even more pleasing visual offerings.

As always, the DFL website is your "one-stop shopping center" for all things concerning the organization.

The Publicity and Marketing Committee is very excited to be planning one of DFL's signature event, yes that is right ladies and gentlemen, the annual Howl-O-Ween extravaganza is right around the corner.

This year's event will be held on October 24th from 3-6 p.m. at the off-leash dog park located on the corner of 12th street and 16th avenue in beautiful Vero Beach. It marks the 8th

anniversary of the very popular canine costume parade and new pet expo. Sponsor levels will range from donations of \$25 to \$5000. Your help in funding the event is always both needed and greatly appreciated.

Other events will include a Dog Park Membership Drive in October, the DFL Annual Meeting with the Donor and Volunteer Appreciation Celebration and 3rd Annual Assistance Dog Workshop in November, and a combination Bridge and Golf Tournament in February 2010.

For additional information, please contact us at 772-567-8969 or visit our website at [dogsforlifevb.com](http://dogsforlifevb.com).

In advance, the P&M Committee would like to thank you for your generous support for our off-leash dog park. A place where our dogs HOPE we take them and a place where our expertly trained assistance dogs provide HOPE to those with special needs. Yes, folks, the dog park truly is a PARK of HOPE.



Get your Canine Costumes Ready for 8th Annual Howl-O-Ween Parade October 24th Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th St. and 16th Ave., Vero Beach.

## DFL & HSVB Join Forces to help our Veterans

Dogs for Life, Inc. is pleased to announce a cooperative effort with the Humane Society of Vero Beach & Indian River County, to place dogs in loving permanent homes.

DFL is always on the lookout for special dogs to re-home and train as hearing and service dogs for our assistance dog program. With the state of Florida expecting to receive the highest number of veterans returning from the Iraq war who will need hearing and service dogs, DFL is preparing to have additional resources to find dogs for training. We know, the HSVB receives many special, adoptable dogs that will fit the bill.

DFL President Al Turner and HSVB Executive Director Chalmers Morse have joined efforts to make dogs available to DFL for their assistance dog program. Director of Outreach Services Ika Daniel and Animal Care Manager Maria Ramirez, will screen potentially suitable dogs for training and DFL will match with appropriate applicants in need.

DFL is proud to be in a position to work with the local Veteran's Services in an effort to give back to the servicemen and women of this country. Both agencies are excited about the opportunity to find quality homes for shelter dogs. We appreciate the Florida Eagles Dog Chain Club for helping to fund this pilot program.



I believe you have it ... Nancy & Norine visit with Shelter Dog.

## HEART TO HEART The Paws That Refreshes by Maude's Mom

A dog, its eyes full of love, gently places its head on your lap and its kind heart into your hands. That gesture can turn a bad day around; take you out of your troubles, lift your spirits and even lower your blood pressure.

Through its Pet-Assisted Therapy Program, Dogs For Life brings that "paws that refreshes" into the lives of people at several care-giving and outreach facilities in our community. From training and certifying dogs and their owners, to managing a current team of twenty-one volunteers and coordinating sponsorship and visits at the various facilities, Dogs For Life provides the benefits of human and canine interaction to both caregivers and their charges.

Visiting dogs provide a portal to enhance communication and a welcome change of routine and distraction from pain and infirmity. They encourage children to read, the lonely to reach out and the infirm to lift and stretch their hearts, minds and limbs through the simple, profoundly healing activity of petting a creature which offers unconditional love.

Our photo shows Anthony B., a member of Our House Network Drop-In Center, a program of the Mental Health Association, sharing a moment of warmth and conversation with Dogs For Life volunteer, Nancy McCusker, and her golden retriever, Buford. Nancy and Buford are greeted unfailingly with showers of smiles and thanks as they spread the sunshine of canine charisma.

Sue Rux is Director of Operations at The Mental Health Association (MHA), an agency providing education, support, treatment and advocacy for people with mental illness. Our House Network is a program of the MHA specifically for people with severe & persistent mental illness, led by their peers who provide fun activities, education, recreation and support. Sue, a champion of Pet-Assisted Therapy, describes it as "a way to allow members to express caring and nurturing in a non-threatening setting where they don't have to be anything but themselves." She goes on to say, "Many of our members live alone, and with attrition in mental health services due to cut-backs, they can become

isolated. Coming here to visit with the dogs gives them something to look forward to and provides them with meaningful connection and structure."

Currently Dogs For Life Volunteers and their certified dogs visit the Boys & Girls Club in Sebastian, The Senior Resource Association in Vero Beach, Consulate Health Care of Vero Beach, VNA Hospice House, The Mental Health Association "drop in" center, Sun Up of Indian River County, St. Francis Manor, Indian River Estates, Indian River County School District Secondary Support and the Baptist Retirement Center.

In most but not all cases sponsorship is generously provided by good will and outreach organizations such as Exchange Club, Treasure Coast Pilot Club, 4-H Dog Master's Club, Kiwanis of Vero Beach and Friends of Dogs For Life.



Nancy McCusker and "Buford" DFL PAT Team visit with Anthony B.

## Dogs for Life, Inc. would like to know how you would like to be addressed

Please, make any changes below, clip this page, mail it to us, and we will make necessary changes.

In an effort to save costs on future newsletter mailings, DFL is setting up an e-mail data base for our members and donors. If you are not currently receiving e-mails from DFL please send us an e-mail at [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net) so that we may add you to our list. We will not share this information.

If you have not yet given to Dogs for Life, Inc. first ever 2009 Annual Appeal, please complete the form below, or for your convenience you may now give on-line at the DFL website: [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).

Bronze Contributor	Major Contributor	Benefactor	Patron	Supporter	Friend	Donor	Other
\$5,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$250	\$100	\$50	\$25	\$

Donations \$100 or more may be recognized on the "Donor Bone" display in the dog park entranceway. Yes, I will give \$100 or more and would like the following displayed on my donor bone - please limit to 30 characters

Donor Bones may be used as an "In Honor" or "In Memory" a pet, person's name or a business name may be listed.

PLEASE HELP US! - Send your tax-deductible donation today.

I would like information on how my dog could become a member of the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park. 25% of dog park membership fees are tax deductible and help to fund DFL programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have remembered Dogs for Life, Inc. in our estate plans. I/We prefer to be removed from your mailing list

Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution for Federal income tax purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, Registration # CH15831. You will receive a written receipt for tax purposes and regular updates through the Dogs For Life, Inc. Paw Prints Newsletter. \* A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800) 455-7152 within the state.

We are grateful for your support. Should you have any questions please call our office at (772) 567-8969.

## Speaking of the Park ... Continued from page 1

With the expansion of the park, we are actively soliciting new members, and we need your help. Increased membership in the park is vital to covering our expenses and contributing to our assistance and therapy programs. Please refer your dog loving friends to this great facility.

Dog park members were recently asked to participate in a survey. Overwhelmingly, members supported our assistance dog and therapy programs, scholarships, 4H program, training classes, events, shelter, companion dog adoption and doggie day care. 100% voted for the installation of restrooms. We hear your needs and assure you that they are a priority in the next phase of our plans.

We are sad to report that the scholarship fund for dog park memberships has run dry. If you feel it in your heart to contribute to this cause so that a dog and its family can enjoy our wonderful park, it would be most appreciated with a wagging tail.

We are very grateful for the companies and friends that contribute qualifying funds and/or services to the park and DFL. We are pleased to show our gratitude by placing your name or company on our sign on 12th Street.

Would you like to be on our sign?





P.O. Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

Website: [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com)  
E-Mail: [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)

**(772) 567-8969**

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### **LoPresti Aviation & Skydive Sebastian Benefit DFL**

July 4, 2009, Dogs For Life was chosen as the non-profit of the month by LoPresti Aviation and will benefit from donations made for their delicious breakfast buffet. Skydive Sebastian donated a tandem skydiving session to be raffled, and dogs were definitely "invited".

DFL presented our Assistance and Pet Assisted Therapy Dog Programs and informed the group of 100 people, 2 service dogs, 3 pet assisted therapy dogs and 1 Dachshund guest puppy of the benefits to DFL from public memberships of the off-leash dog park. A special "Thank You" to the LoPresti family, their staff, and Skydive Sebastian for sponsoring this fun event.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*"A non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet assisted therapy dogs and owning & operation an off-leash dog park."*



Captain Cheyenne LoPresti "Dives In" to help DFL.

# Expansion Grant



# Charity Breakfast

From: Dogs For Life  
Date: 7/3/2009 5:44:37 AM  
To: undisclosed-recipients  
Cc: [DogsForLifeVB@bellsouth.net](mailto:DogsForLifeVB@bellsouth.net)  
Subject: Benefit DFL @ LoPresti First Saturday is Tomorrow - Enter 2 Win a Jump

## ***Ever wanted to jump out of a perfectly good airplane?***

Tomorrow is your chance, enter a raffle to WIN!!

Dogs for Life, Inc. will benefit from donations for LoPresti's First Saturday Charity Breakfast, as well as raffle donations toward Skydive Sebastian's Free Jump.

Breakfast is at 9 AM with DFL Assistance Dogs and DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Dogs will join us at 10 AM, when DFL will give a brief program presentation.

Hope to see you there.. **Happy Independence Day!**



- Shelly, Founder/Executive Director Dogs for Life.

-----Original Message-----

From: David LoPresti  
Date: 07/03/09 05:26:35  
To: [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)  
Subject: Rememer LoPresti First Saturday is Tomorrow - Enter 2 Win a Jump



*Life is Short ... Fly FAST!*  
*Fly **GREEN!***

Dear Shelly,  
Come to First Saturday in Vero Beach!

---

**First Saturday at LoPresti**  
July 4th, Vero Beach

**"LoPresti First Saturday and Skydive Sebastian Team Up With a Great Offer; a Free Jump and a High Adventure Breakfast Benefiting Dogs for Life, Vero Beach"**

LoPresti Aviation will host another in their series of "First Saturday" events in the LoPresti/Vero Beach Avionics hangar on the north ramp of the Vero Beach Airport on July 4th starting at 9 am.

**LoPresti First Saturday is about connecting aviation to modern America.**



As a boy, Roy LoPresti hung around airports and airplanes every chance he got. However, what was possible and even common 60 years ago, is neither today. Roy bemoaned the loss of innocence and the lack of places for kids and pilots to meet. So we opened "LeRoy's Cafe" as a place for pilots and the community to "Hang Out". Later we added First Saturday to formally bring the two together once a month with a full breakfast, an interesting topic and a guest speaker. Any proceeds we generate goes to a charity or a worthy cause. In this way we get to give back to the community and provide a place for pilots to gather. Best of all we get to do what Roy wanted most...to share the dream of flight.

**The Speaker**, Jill Herrington - "Expert Sky Coach"

What does a dog have to do to get a little 4th of July Breakfast? A Lot!

Enjoy a delicious breakfast of eggs, bacon, pancakes, muffins, fruit and more. It will be followed by Jill Herrington of Skydive Sebastian speaking about what's new in skydiving. We will announce a raffle prize of a thrilling Tandem Jump (a \$195 value) from Skydive Sebastian.



If you want to know about skydiving this is your chance to find out all the in's, out's, up's and down's of this high adventure sport. Jill, an expert "Sky Coach," will be showing some awesome film footage of recent skydiving jumps. Jill will demonstrate all of the required safety gear and has great stories to tell about this thrilling sport. From shooting movies, group jumps, to freeflying, Jill will answer all of your questions.

Back in May, my son Mike (he is the video guy you see at our events), turned 21. We took him out to Skydive Sebastian for his first jump. It made for a birthday that the whole family will remember.



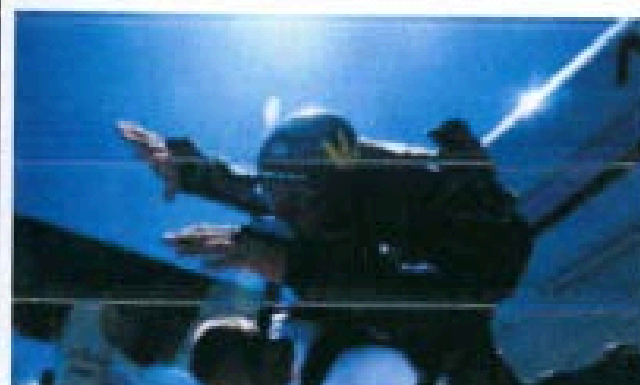
[click to play Video](#)

LoPresti First Saturday is a perfect way to start your 4th of July festivities! The whole family can enjoy a full hot breakfast, check out the planes and experience how exciting aviation and skydiving can be. This event is put on by LoPresti Aviation employees. You can visit them at [www.LoPrestiAviation.com](http://www.LoPrestiAviation.com) to see what is new at LoPresti Aviation.

Fly in, Walk in, or Drive in! At the Vero Beach Airport, north ramp, LoPresti Hangar, 2620 Airport North Drive. All welcome. Call Mimi Erskine 772-562-4757 for more details or to arrange for your organization or school groups to come. (How to get there: Turn off of US 1 at Aviation Blvd, take the first right after the railroad tracks, follow road all the way to the end)

**Win a Free Jump!**

**No more excuses!**



Skydive Sebastian is donating a free jump to Dogs for Life, Vero Beach. Contact Shelly Ferger at 772-567-8969 to get a ticket or buy them at the event.

If you want to schedule a jump or take a tour call 772-388-5672 or [email](#).

Hey, it's just a cool place to hang out. These people know how to have fun.

[Link here for directions.](#)

Every First Saturday event there are great door prizes. In July, attendees walked away with over \$3,600 in prizes. You never know what you might win.

### **The Charity**

While everyone celebrates the 4th of July at the LoPresti charity breakfast and watches Skydive Sebastian's thrilling video, it's the Dogs for Life that really benefit. All the donations go to this worthwhile program that trains assistance dogs. Shelly Ferger, the Founder and Executive Director of Dogs for Life of Vero Beach, is bringing her pal, Sabrina. She will talk for a few minutes about what the organization does...Shelly will do all the talking, Sabrina is just there to look cute and help clean up any bacon crumbs that may fall off your plate!



Dogs for Life is a unique, non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance, pet therapy dogs, owning and operating an off-leash dog park.

Their specialized programs prepare dogs to take their place in the lives and hearts of children and adults. Whether it is through a need for assistance, therapy, or companion dogs. Dogs for Life provides a new beginning for healthy, adoptable dogs.

The First Saturday Event is located at LoPresti / Vero Beach Avionics Hangar, Vero Beach Airport's North Ramp, KVRB, 2620 Airport North Drive. Call for information or RSVP Mimi Erskine, 772-562-4757.



[Download Poster](#)

**PLEASE RSVP  
USING THE LINK BELOW.**

LoPresti/Vero Beach Avionics  
Hangar on the North Ramp of  
KVRB

[Link for Vero Beach Avionics](#)  
Hangar opens at 9:am

Coffee and Pancakes start at  
9:00am

*Donations benefit:*  
**"Dogs for Life, Vero Beach".**  
Tech Talk starts at 10:00am

[RSVP Now!](#)



## The 4th of July is Going to the Dogs!

Contributed by: LoPresti Aviation on 6/16/2009

### What:

What does a dog have to do to get a little 4th of July bacon and eggs? Perhaps hang around at the LoPresti Aviation's "1st Saturday Monthly Charity Breakfast and Pilot Presentation." While everyone celebrates the 4th of July at the LoP charity breakfast and watches Skydive Sebastian's thrilling video, its the Dogs for Life that really benefit. All the donati go to this worthwhile program that trains assistance dogs. Shelly Ferger, the Founder and Executive Director of Dogs Life of Vero Beach is bringing her pal, Sabrina, to talk for a few minutes about what the organization does...Shelly will all the talking, Sabrina is just there to look cute and help clean up any bacon crumbs that may fall off your plate! After delicious breakfast of eggs, bacon, pancakes, muffins, fruit and more, Jill Herrington of Skydive Sebastian will be speaking about what's new in skydiving and one of those present will win a raffle prize of a thrilling Tandem Jump (a \$ value) from Skydive Sebastian. Jill will be showing some awesome film footage of recent skydiving jumps. It's a perfe way to start your 4th of July festivities as the whole family enjoys an inexpensive breakfast, checks out the planes and sees how exciting aviation can be. This event is put on by the LoPresti Family and you can visit them at [www.speedmods.com](http://www.speedmods.com) to see what is new at LoPresti Aviation.

Fly in, Walk in, or Drive in! At the Vero Beach Airport, north ramp, LoPresti Hangar, 2620 Airport North Drive. All welo Call Mimi Erskine 772-582-4757 for more details or to arrange if you would like your organization or school group to c (Off Aviation Blvd, first right after the railroad trackswest ofUS1.)

Where: 2620 Airport North Drive, Vero Beach

When: 9 am breakfast & 10 am presentation

Event Dates: This event takes place on 7/4/2009.

<http://tc.yourhub.com/VEROBEACH/Events/Day-Activities/Print-Content-627327>

6/17/2009

**BRIGHTLIGHTS & RED CARPETS**  
Tania Ortega-Cowan • [luminaries@scripps.com](mailto:luminaries@scripps.com)  
Indian River County

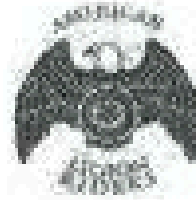
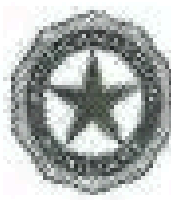
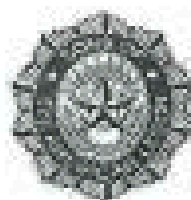
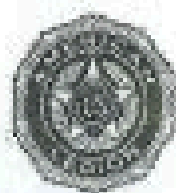
**LoPresti digs Dogs for Life**  
Start your July 4th holiday off high-flying! LoPresti Aviation's First Saturday Charity Breakfast & Presentation will feature Skydive Sebastian and your \$5 donation benefits Dogs for Life of Vero Beach. Come to the LoPresti Hangar located at 2620 Airport North Drive. The full breakfast buffet (pancakes, eggs, bacon, fresh fruits and muffins) begins at 9 a.m. Then, from 10-11:30 a.m., Jill Herrington of Skydive Sebastian will show wild sky-dive video footage and display skydiving equipment. You could win a tandem jump (a \$195 value) from Skydive Sebastian as a raffle prize. Shelly Ferger of Dogs for Life will bring her assistance dog, Sabrina. Call Mimi Erskine at (772) 562-4757 to make arrangements for your group to come.

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**  
**NEW LISTINGS**  
LoPresti First Saturday Events: Guest speaker Jill Herrington of Skydive Sebastian! Learn what the sport is about, film footage. LoPresti Hangar, 2620 Airport North Drive, Vero Beach Airport, north ramp, breakfast 9 a.m., presentation 10-11:30 a.m. July 4. Event will benefits Dogs for Life of Vero Beach. (772) 562-4757.

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# JUNE

# Shelly



American Legion Post #39  
1535 Old Dixie Highway  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Open Daily at 10:00 a.m.

Business Office: 562-9049  
Lounge/Flags: 562-9726

## Mail Call

<http://verobeach.com/americanlegionpost39>

May 2009 Newsletter

### Commander's Message

We now have all new air-conditioning and flooring in the club.

This month's meeting is for nomination of officers for next year. Roger Brown has been nominated for commander and I support him. I believe he will make a fine commander.

Not much to say this month.

God Bless one and all and our troops,  
"Chief" Jim "Patches" Watson

### Letter From 2nd Vice Commander

To ALL, Legionnaires, VFW, Auxiliary, and SAL Members,

On May 11, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Shelly Ferger, Founder of **DOGS FOR LIFE**, will give a report about her organization at our Legion Meeting. She will explain the need for a trained dog to assist people with disabilities. Dogs are trained to make 911 calls, make people aware of a ringing phone, and many other things.

A member of our Post, Ray Bagdy, is in the program as he has Multiple Sclerosis and has a dog to call 911. I have seen the dog do it!

Please attend the meeting. It will be very interesting.

For God and Country,  
Harald Brill  
2nd Vice Commander

American Legion Post #39 2008-2009 Officers	
Commander	Jim "Patches" Watson
1st Vice	Roger Brown
2nd Vice	Harald Brill
Adjutant	Steve Barentine
Judge Advocate	Fran Bloodlove
Chaplain	Mac Dent
Finance	Vikki Hartlaub
Sgt.-at-Arms	Steve Dume
Service Officer	Joe Marasco
Historian	Fred Cielins
Exec. Board	Don Reitmeyer Bud Johnston Bernie Spruch Tom Eason
Past Commander	Frank Deely
Sons of the American Legion 2008-2009 Officers	
Commander	Tom Everest
1st Vice	Gary Thomas
2nd Vice	Bob Pastor
Adjutant	Lenny Theroux
Judge Advocate	Buck Buckingham
Finance Officer	Lenny Theroux
Chaplain	Ron Jacobs
Historian	Walter Bellister
Sgt.-at-Arms	Fred Johnson
American Legion Auxiliary 2008-2009 Officers	
President	Patty Duan
Vice President	Debbie Megee
Secretary	Allison Johnston
Treasurer	Pat Costello
Chaplain	Bea Witherspoon
Historian	Judy Das
Sgt.-at-Arms	Linda Kern
Asst. Sgt.-at-Arms	
Exec. Board	Betty Bohse Linda Watson Connie Dume Missy Brown Stacey Shannon
Membership Chairman	Patty Gibson

Breakfast *EVERY* Sunday  
8:00 a.m. - Noon  
\$5.00 adults \$2.75 children  
Bloody Mary's \$1.25  
8:00 a.m. - NOON

## ON THE MOVE

### FERGER PROMOTED AT DOGS FOR LIFE

Shelly Ferger was named executive director of Dogs for Life, Inc. at the April board of director's meeting.

Dogs for Life, Inc. is a non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs and owning and operating an off-leash dog park at 12th Street and 16th avenues in Vero Beach that enables members of the community to share the enjoyment of the outdoors with their dogs.

Ferger founded the non-profit hearing guide dog and service dog organization in 2002.

A native of Vero Beach and the owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center since 1998, she is an

AKC Canine Good Citizen Evaluator, 4-H Dog Masters Leader and a member of Assistance Dogs International, Association of Pet Dog Trainers, The International Association of Assistance Dog Partners, The Association of Fundraising Professionals, and is an active member of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church.

Events are Treasures...We thought  
you might enjoy the enclosed  
as a permanent keepsake.

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*Congratulations*  
*We noticed*  
*you made the news!*

## CONGRATULATIONS

We noticed you made the news!  
We thought you would enjoy the enclosed  
as a permanent keepsake.

Cordially yours,

*Shelly Ferger*

## Shelly Ferger is AFP-IR Chamberlain Scholar

BY CYNTHIA FALARDEAU  
Posted on YourHub.com

The Association of Fundraising Professionals — Indian River Chapter recently named Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life, the 2009 Chamberlain Scholar.

Annually, AFP-IR sends a chapter-nominated Chamberlain Scholar to the AFP International Conference. The nominee must be a fundraiser who has never attended an AFP Conference.

The \$500 scholarship enabled Ferger to attend the AFP International Conference March 28-April 1 in New Orleans. The purpose of the AFP Scholarship is to promote and enhance the professional development of fund devel-

opment professionals in Indian River County and encourage involvement and membership in the AFP-IR chapter.

Sponsored by the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy, the Chamberlain Scholarship honors the memory of Ralph E. Chamberlain, CPRE, a founding member of the Greater New York Chapter and a longtime supporter of the foundation.

The Association of Fundraising Professionals — Indian River Chapter is made up of professional fundraisers who represent more than 85 nonprofit organizations in Indian River County. The AFP-IR exists to foster the development and growth of fundraising professionals and the profession, to promote high ethical behavior in the fundraising profession, and to preserve and enhance philanthropy volunteerism.

Go to [www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org) or [Kathy.Savage@afpnet.org](mailto:Kathy.Savage@afpnet.org) for more information.

**FERGER NAMED AFP-IR  
CHAMBERLAIN SCHOLAR**

The Association of Fundraising Professionals-Indian River Chapter recently named Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life, the 2009 Chamberlain Scholar.

Annually, AFP-IR sends a chapter-nominated Chamberlain Scholar to the AFP International Conference. The nominee must be a fundraiser who has never attended an conference. The \$300 scholarship will allow Ferger to attend the AFP International Conference March

**SUBMIT A LISTING**

Submit your announcement: Go to: [TCPalm.com/submit](http://TCPalm.com/submit) and select the Good For You form.

Online: View your announcement at: [TCPalm.com/your\\_stuff](http://TCPalm.com/your_stuff)

29-April 1 in New Orleans. The purpose of the AFP Scholarship is to promote and enhance the professional development of fund development professionals in Indian River County and encourage involve-

ment and membership in the AFP-IR chapter.

4-3-09

205 5558.

Shelly,

Congratulations to you!

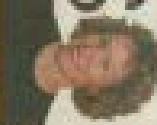
We at Riverside are proud of you!

Best Wishes,  
Alice**Shelly Ferger, Chamberlain  
Scholar**

Thank you, Cynthia Falardeau for letting us know that Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life, has been chosen by the Association of Fundraising Professionals - Indian River Chapter (AFP-IR) as the 2009 Chamberlain Scholar. She will also be going to the AFP International Conference later this month in New Orleans. AFP-IR is made up of professional fundraisers who represent more than 85 non-profit organizations in Indian River County. To learn more, visit [www.afpne-lorg](http://www.afpne-lorg) or contact Kathy Savage at [karn](mailto:karn)

• WEEK OF MARCH 23, 2009

**BRIGHTLIGHTS**  
Tania Ortega-Cowan • [luminaries@scripps.com](mailto:luminaries@scripps.com)  
Indian River County



Shelley - Congrats. on letting  
people know of the good works  
of Dogs for Life. It was  
particularly interesting that  
the article in the Press Journal  
emphasized Dogs for Life  
and mentioned the Dog Park.  
Take care. We love you  
Lida & Rosa -

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# MARCH

# Pet Cause



SAMI WOLFE • Correspondent

Beth Sexton, who is deaf, is alerted to a fire alarm by her dog Tigger, during a training session with her certified assistance dog. The 11-month-old dog, who has been in training for six months, also is being taught how to alert to knocks on the door, alarm clocks and ringing phones.

## Dogs For Life pet cause for deaf woman

Vero Beach resident will travel to Spain with her assistance dog to promote public access

BY BARBARA YORESH  
Correspondent

**VERO BEACH** — Bacterial meningitis left Vero Beach resident Beth Sexton almost totally deaf when she 38. But the former business executive has adapted well with the help of her second trained assistance dog, Tigger.

The pair will travel to Spain next month to promote the need there for access in public places for dogs that assist the disabled.

Sexton and Tigger, an 11-month-old toy poodle who learned assistance skills in record time, were trained through Dogs For Life, Inc., a local organization founded by Shelly Ferger that trains assistance dogs for the impaired. It also

### LEARN MORE

For more information about Dogs For Life, Inc. in Vero Beach:

- Call (772) 567-8969
- Visit [www.dogsforlifevb.com/](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com/)

operates an off-leash dog park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

"The dogs are task-trained to mitigate the person's disability," Ferger said.

Sexton is returning to Spain where she previously lived. In 1988, she and her former assistance dog — a dachshund named Bandit — appeared on Spanish television and gave an educational seminar to government officials and others to promote the need for assistance dogs.

"They knew nothing about hearing dogs and when Bandit and I tried to visit the Prado Museum, they wouldn't let us in. I spoke about the whole access issue," Sexton said.

Since then, some Spanish provinces have made provisions to accommodate

assistance dogs, but Madrid is still "behind the times" establishing laws to allow the disabled to have free access with their dogs, Sexton said.

"However, they told me they'd see what they could do to facilitate access. They have only one hearing dog in the whole country that was trained by the Spanish Association of Assistance Dogs," Sexton said.

She hopes that dogs assisting the hearing impaired will be accorded the same recognition as those who assist the blind.

Hearing dogs such as Tigger are trained to alert their owners to door knocks or door bells, telephones, alarm clocks, dropped objects and smoke alarms. Dogs can also be trained to dial 911 in an emergency.

"The quality of life for me has been enriched by leaps and bounds. It's a miracle to me," Sexton said, "and, the dog is an ice-breaker when I meet people."

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# FEBRUARY

# Giving Fair

IR • FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • B5

## Giving Fair coming to mall

BY JAN LINDSEY  
Correspondent

**VERO BEACH** — The Indian River Mall will be the site of an unusual sort of meet-and greet Saturday when the second annual Giving Fair unfolds.

More than 40 agencies will be present to provide information on their services and to discuss opportunities for giving, either of time or money.

"I don't think you can be too visible in a community when you are serving it," said Mary Jayne Kelly, executive director of the Cultural Council of Indian River County.

"When you go to the mall, it is a different group. They might not be coming down to 14th Avenue," where the organization places eye-catching art in the display window of its office.

The United Way of Indi-

an River County sees the Giving Fair as a two-way street.

The agency is looking for volunteers to fill out panels that decide which local agency programs will receive support from the United Way.

And it will bring bags to collect checks and cans for small change, Marketing Director Lisa London said.

In an attempt to make up a projected \$250,000 shortfall on its goal of \$2.5 million, the agency launched a new campaign Monday that it calls 2Weeks4Change, London said.

But the United Way has something for you, too. It will be giving away its new unemployment survival guide, which contains information on where to find help with the basics, including rent, utility payments, mortgage

### GIVING FAIR

**When:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday; children's area open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Where:** Indian River Mall, State Road 60 at 66th Avenue, Vero Beach

**For more info:** (772) 770-6255

**Who you'll meet:** Forty-four agencies will set up shop at the Giving Fair.

#### Here is a sampling:

- American Cancer Society
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County
- Cultural Council of Indian River County
- Dogs for Life
- HALO-Sebastian
- Harvest Food & Outreach Center
- Indian River Habitat for Humanity
- Sun Up of Indian River
- United Way of Indian River County
- Youth Guidance Donation Fund

payments and food.

Mall officials are billing the fair as a family event that gives people an opportunity to learn the significance of organizations in the community, speak with agency representa-

tives one-on-one and perhaps become inspired to give of themselves.

The mall will set up a children's area, where Darley the Clown will be making balloon art and face painting will be offered.

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# JANUARY

# Paw Prints



## Paw Prints Newsletter

January  
2009



Beth Stryker and DFL President Richard Leffew present Holly Amstutz with the Bandit Stryker Assistance Dog Award

### Inside This Issue

DFL 6th Annual Meeting	1
What's Now? What's Next?	2
Check out DFL's Revamped Website	2
Money Matters, For Scholars In Collars	
And "Thank You" From the Founder	3
Dog Park Expansion Project Update	4
Calendar of Programs & Events	5
DFL Donors, Volunteers & Members	6-10
Where We've Been & Where We're Going	11
Happy New Year & A Note From Pup Pup	12

## Kudos for Fido and Friends

During the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual DFL meeting held at the Dog Park on November 8, 2008, the gleeful crowd of about forty cheered the prospect of a bigger park with additional facilities, while enjoying the music provided by the Rip Tide Band, refreshments, door prizes, raffle, goodie bags, free t-shirts and the general congeniality of the day.

### 2008 Awards

**DFL Assistance Dog Program:** The very special Bandit Stryker Assistance Dog Award was presented by Beth Stryker to Holly Amstutz, and her service dog, Buster, in recognition of their loyal and continued service.

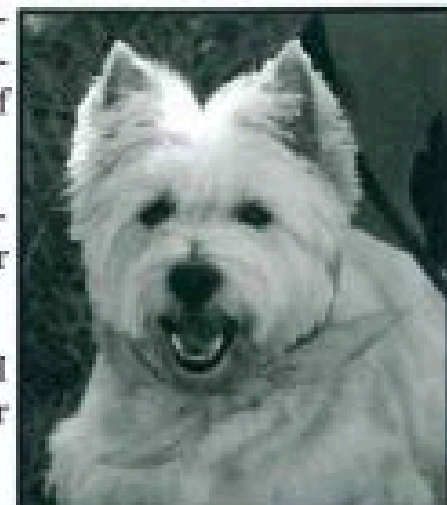
**Pet Assisted Therapy:** Gayle Montgomery and her therapy dog, Chance, and Michelle Smith and her therapy dogs, Buddy and Stripe, in recognition of their service and commitment to this important DFL program benefiting children and the elderly.

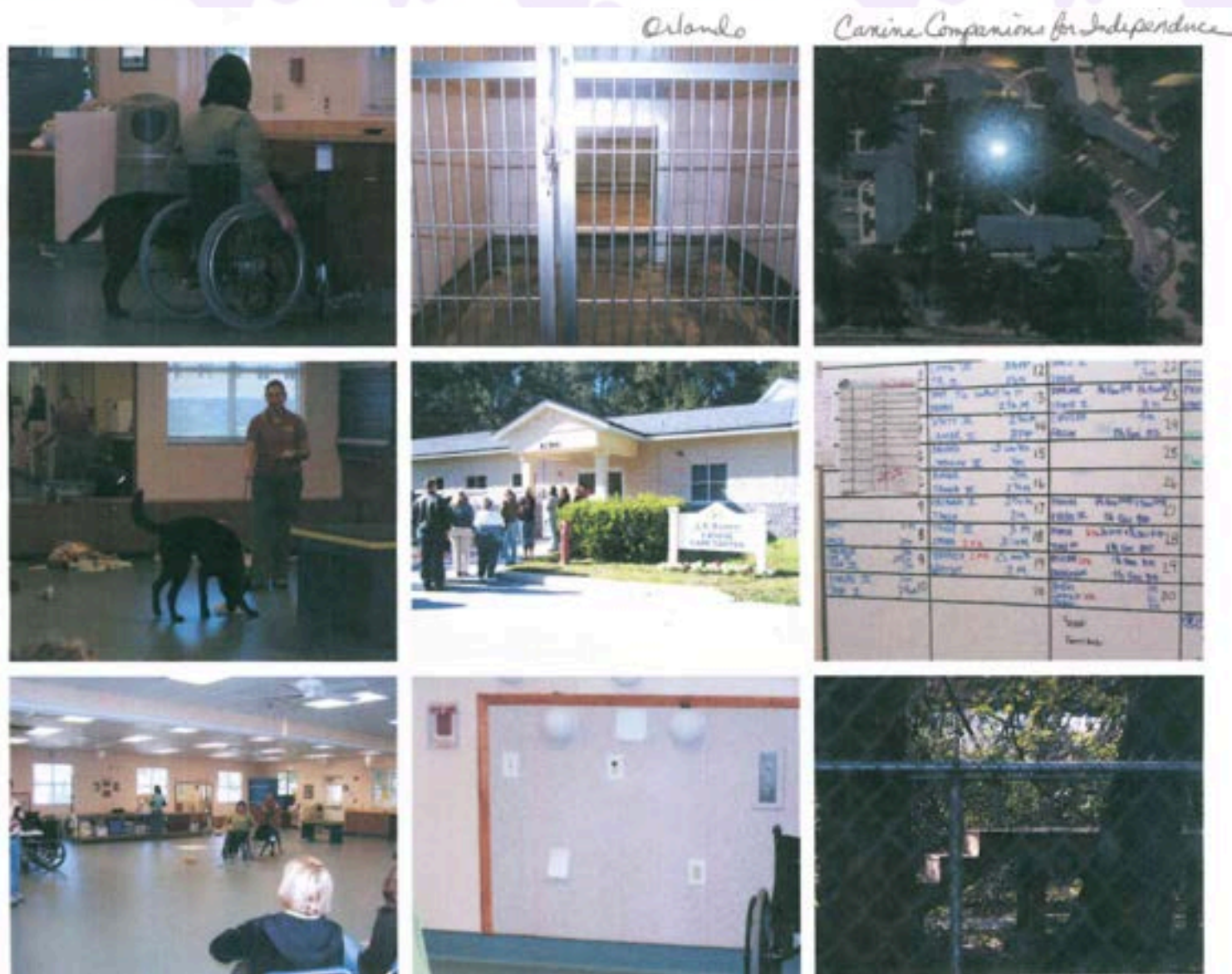
**Volunteers-of-the-Year:** Duane and Sharon Marshall for their outstanding dedication to DFL since 2000. They just might be Volunteers of the Decade!

**Media Award:** Barbara Yoresh of Scripps Howard in acknowledgement of her exceptional service to both the animal and human citizens of our community. Barbara wrote the article that inspired our Benefactor who guaranteed the purchase of the dog park property for DFL.

**In-Kind Services Award:** Jeff Gomez, Coast to Coast Landscaping, was recognized for his service and loyalty to the Off-Leash Park. He has been a sponsor since 2004.

**New DFL Logo and Assistance Dog and Dog Park bookmark:** Donated by DHI Advertising and Design. Kay Ruma, Maxx, and Eventmakers: Sponsored the chair and tent costs. Shelly and DFL: Provided for the band and refreshments.







# VERO BEACH Hometown News

Tips for attracting hummingbirds to your yard  
Page A-3



The Vero Beach Recreation Department operates a public off-leash dog park behind the Bob Summer baseball field near the Merrill Barber Bridge, said Rob Slezak, department director.

#### VERO BEACH

### Dog scholarships are available at dog park

Because a "dog of men-ger means is still a good dog," Dogs for Life Inc., which owns and manages the Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, has scholarships available to qualifying dogs and members of the public at the dog park.

Dog Park memberships help offset the cost of training service dogs and volunteers at other nonprofit facilities in Indian River County, as well Dogs for Life's community outreach programs.

Membership to the off-leash dog park requires that a dog be inoculated, neutered and social. Annual membership fee is \$250 with the second dog from the same household \$50. Registration and orientation is required prior to all memberships.

Contact the Dogs for Life office at (772) 567-8969 for scholarship information. Dogs for Life is a tax-deductible, nonprofit organization.

From staff reports



**Dogs For Life**

**A non profit tax deductible organization**  
Ask about our Scholarship "Collarship" Program qualifications

**OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**  
12th Street & 16th Avenue  
Join the dog park and help support  
Hearing, Service dog and Pet  
Assisted Therapy Programs



Membership requires dogs be inoculated, neutered, social and \$250/annual fee, second dog from same household is \$50.  
Orientations scheduled by appointment.

**772-567-8969**



## Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skins

For Advertising on this page, please call your sales representative or Cathy at 978-2248



B6 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2009 • 1R



**Dogs For Life**

**A non profit tax deductible organization**  
Ask about our Scholarship "Collarship" Program qualifications

**OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**  
12th Street & 16th Avenue  
Join the dog park and help support  
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Therapy Programs



Membership requires dogs be inoculated, neutered, social and \$250/annual fee, second dog from same household is \$50.  
Orientations scheduled by appointment.

**772-567-8969**

# Seizures

## Opinion

PAGE A6 • SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009 • TCPALM.COM

### MAN & NATURE

#### When seizures threaten, a boy's best friend comes to his rescue with aid and comfort

Our son, Amadeus, has epilepsy and has seizures. Penny is our dog.

Now, Penny knows when Amadeus is going to have a bad day, and will not leave his side. If we try to move her away from him, she will bark and freak out. She will not go.

If she thinks Amadeus will be OK, she goes to sleep in her bed with no fuss. If she senses a seizure is coming, she will jump up and run to our room to wake us up, and Amadeus will have a seizure a few moments later.

This is really helpful, as seizures are scary for little kids, and if one of us is right there, we can keep him calm and it prevents the episodes from escalating.

There are a few things about this that are really cool.

- We did not train Penny to do this. I can't get her to stop peeing on the floor, so this is not an example of brilliant animal training on my part. This is entirely the dog's deal.

- Penny is very active and boisterous. She plays rough with the other kids and will jump around like crazy, yet with Amadeus, she is extremely gentle and



Miro Posavec

Penny and Amadeus ... sleeping peacefully.

careful. If he is having a seizure she will lick his face and watch over him.

- Penny was only 7 months old when she started this.

Miro Posavec  
Vero Beach