



# Dogs For Life

*Training Service Dogs  
For Veterans*

# Scrapbook

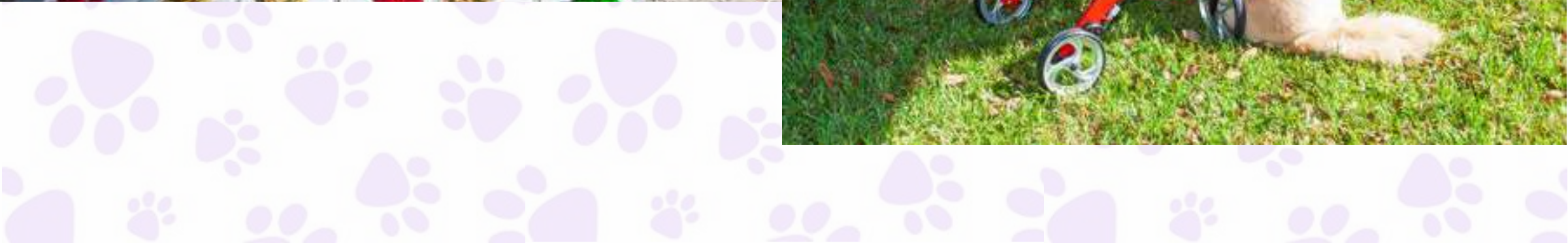
2020



**DECEMBER**

# Annual Christmas Party





# Veterans-specialty healthcare outside the VA

**Patrick McCallister**  
pmc@veteransweekly.com

Kris Hasenauer was at Florida State University when the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks came. He was studying medicine to become a physician's assistant, so went to the Army recruiter and asked what he could do to help the nation.

"I made a career of special operations medical," he said.

Now he owns Emerald Medical in Fort Pierce aiming to serve as many Veterans as possible. While there are medical generalities that apply to everybody, groups have special considerations and needs. That's true for Veterans as any other.

For example, on the extreme side, Veterans have a higher risk for conditions such as multiple sclerosis and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS. A doctor knowing that fact about Veterans can be the difference between taking weeks instead of months or even years to get a proper diagnosis and treatment.

"We're taking TriCare patients now," Hasenauer said.

## Homecoming

Hasenauer finished his youth on the Treasure Coast.

"I went to high school here. My dad was in the military and retired here," Hasenauer said.

Of course, as said, Hasenauer went off to college then joined the military. He was active duty until about 18 months ago.

"Then I came home and started all this up," said Hasenauer.

By "this" he means a company that specialized in taking healthcare all over the world — wherever clients needed it.

"Oil platforms, construction jobs overseas," Hasenauer explained.

But, he wasn't quite ready to give up the combat boots.

"I'm still in the National Guard," Hasenauer said.

He's in the 30<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion is headquartered in Florida and is part of the US Southern Command.

## COVID came along

The upstart portable medical business was just starting to break in its new shoes —

"When COVID hit, all our overseas staff evaporated overnight," remarked Hasenauer.

So, Hasenauer was thinking the company had qualified medical staffing and proper equipment, but no work. Now what with the SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 on the loose? The staff, made up most-



Photo courtesy of Emerald Medical

Army Veteran Kris Hasenauer is owner of Emerald Medical, a new general practice in Fort Pierce. Emerald Medical specializes in treating Veterans. Jasper is a service animal from Beach's Dogs for Life united with Hasenauer. He's become the mascot of Emerald Medical.

ly of Veterans, like Veterans, and of the 21 million in this country only about 9 million get Department of Veteran Affairs healthcare.

Hasenauer decided to get some space, throw out a shingle and look for some of those 12 million Veterans who aren't enrolled in the VA.

Some of those VA patients are getting some of their services outside the Veterans Health Administration, because of different programs designed to ensure they get needed healthcare one way or another.

"We're partnering with them so we can take VA patients and treat as many Veterans as we can," Hasenauer said.

## Speaking of COVID

With a highly contagious airborne bug around, Hasenauer said Emerald Medical is doing two things for patients. One is increasingly common telehealth. The other harkens back to a time few remember.

"We do house calls," Hasenauer said. "Instead of having to go to the doctor, we'll come to you."

That doctor, by the way, Dr. Edil Josue Agosto, is still serving in the Army Reserve. He's bilingual, too, speaking Spanish.

Emerald Medical is at 117 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St., suite 5, in Fort Pierce. The phone is (772) 307-9840. It's online at [www.emerald-medical.com](http://www.emerald-medical.com).

# Holidays for Heroes

## Christmas Military

### Packages



Some of the packages have arrived, big shot out to you and Dogs for Life for making it happen!!



**NOVEMBER**

# Veterans Day at Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary





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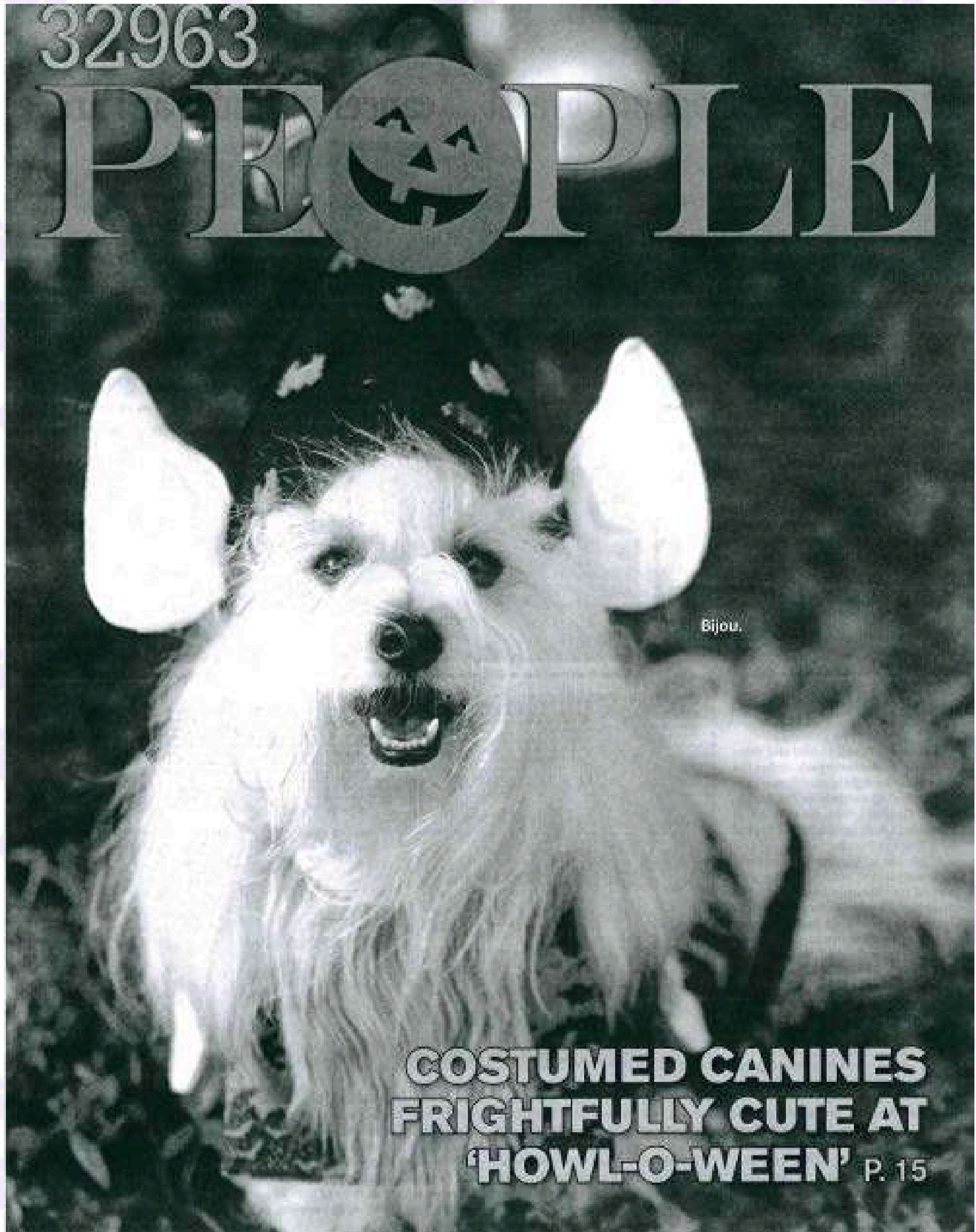






**OCTOBER**

# News Coverage



PEOPLE

# Costumed canines frightfully cute at 'Howl-O-Ween'



Barbara Gomez with Lola.



Kari Valencia and Bailey.




PHOTOS COURTESY OF DFL

The woosy Dogs For Life Off-Leash Dog Park was all pumped up for the 20th annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade last Saturday. Eagerly anticipated by area pooches and their humans, the popular event featured a wide assortment of cleverly costumed canines. The creativity didn't disappoint, with outfits ranging from a diminutive pooch and her human dressed as candy corn, to a black Lab mix sporting Batdog wings and a Welsh Terrier charmingly channeling a rebra. Underwritten by Prinz Schumann, whose human, Kachi Schumann, is DFL board president, the Howl-O-Ween festivities included a substantial array of raffle and silent-auction items. There was also a thrilling demonstration by Sheriff's Office Dep. Ryan Holly with K-9 Ruckus and Dep. Shane Joeger with K-9 Doc. The robust list of sponsors support the principal mission of DFL, which is to train support dogs for veterans and individuals with disabilities. ■

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# Bonz has scary good time at 'Howl-O-Ween'

## Hi Dog Buddies!

One of my absolutely FAVORITE events of the fall is the Dogs for Life Howl-O-Ween Parade. Some of you poocheros have probably been in it, right? I always get a kick out of the Cool Kibbles costumes. Me, I wear the same outfit every year: I grab my snazzy hat with the "Press" badge stuck on it, an go as a Hardworking Reporter.

The Dogs for Life campus is real nice an woody, an they always have it all spiffed up with FUN-kins and posioned colored leafs, an not scary scum-crows. They have music too, by a human called Hubs Jim for some reason, an he always sings this hub-LARRY-us song, "Why Don't You Love Me Like My Dog Does?" Didja know that it was written by a human from here named Scotty Emeric?!

Dogs for Life has been doin' the Parade for 140 years in Dog, an this year, cuzza that scary virus that's makin' everybody a likkle Dismal Dog Biscuits, the humans had to wear masks, too. But not Halloween ones.

I introduced myself to a little Chi-huasha, Cliff Page, who was dressed like a PIE-rat. He told me he's a rescue pooch, and his human, Kathy, found him at H.A.L.O. up in Sebastian.

A pair of little white pooches identified themselves as Bjou an Miss Lili Seam. They had beautiful, silky hair so long they looked like they were floating. Bjou was wearin' an orange an black vest and a pointy hat with pointy ears on the sides. "I'm a Gah-NOME," he told me proudly. See, I even have a BEAREN! Indeed, he did.

"An I'm a bel-uh-REE-nuh," chimed in Miss Lili, pirouetting in her white an orange tutu over black crinolone. They both had colorful ties in their topknots. "These are our humans Debbie an Art," she said. "In case you didn't know, we're

Coton de Tulears." (I'm glad she told me cuz I was gonna hafta Google it.)

A good-lookin' black Lab mix was obviously eager to check everything out, an was pullin' his human along with considerable determination. I inquired about the cool black wings he was wearin'. "I'm Baidog," he told me. "My actual name is Kuzco Cross. An this is my Dad, Ian. He's Hannan. My Mom's Kelly."

I caught up with a poocheroo dressed like a ZEE-beuh, with ears anna mane even. Way cool. "I am Fergus Higginbottom," he announced. "I am a Welsh Terrier, an this is my human, Ima. It's our first time at this event. Quite a bit of fun, don't you think?"

"Totally," I agreed.

A very waggly, freely pooch wearin' a red heart-shaped cape with crossed pink ribbons on it hollered, "Hey, Mr. Bonzo." She looked like a Boxer mix. I trotted over. "I'm Baby Cakes Talk, an this is my Mom, Margaret."

"Pleasure to meet you, Miss Baby Cakes," I said. "I like your outfit."

"Why thank you, Mr. Bonzo. Mom says the pink ribbons are for Breast Cancer Awareness. It's a Very Bad duh-ZEES humans are fighting, an I'm helping."

"That is a very important an serious contribution your making, Miss Baby Cakes," I told her.

"I hope someday we can make it go away forever," she replied.

The minute I spotted Prince Pullam an his human, I started laughing, an trotted over for a closer look. They were both dressed like that duh-licious white, orange and yellow candy corn. They even had little hats. "My Mom, Sandy,

crow-SHAYED our costumes all by herself. Aren't they Totally Cool Kibbles?"

"Also-woofin'-lately," I agreed.

Jasper Hasenauer, a white Lab, is a congenial Dogs for Life-trained service pooch who had brought his entire human family with him. "I'm workin' so I'm not wearin' a costume," he explained. "But my little human brother Galen likes to pretend he's a dog, so he's wearin' a dog costume today. This is my



Dad Kris. I'm his Service Dog. An this is my Mom, Carly, and my sisters Kares an Kallani."

"What a great family you have, Jasper," I told him. "Yep, they are," he agreed.

Willow Macey is a soft-spoken American Pit Bull Terrier who was dressed as a bumblebee, with round yellow wings. She introduced her Mom Connie; her human brother Kendall; an her pooch brother, Spirit, a German Shepherd, who was wearing a NASA vest.

Cuzza that Virus, the recent Dogs for Life class graduation got postponed, and was rescheduled the same day an place as the Parade, so I got to meet an congratulate a couple of the 18 proud graduates.

Poppy Mandeville, a Golden Doodle, was rockin' a purple leash and harness ensemble with her Service Dog name an stuff in yellow letters. She introduced

her proud Mom, Tammie. "Wood, I'm glad I made it to graduation," she said. "That was a tough course!"

"You're not woofin'!" agreed graduate Spencer Bergmann, a Jack Russell mix, relaxin' with his Mom Sue. "But now, look how much we can DO!"

One of my favorite parts of the Howl-O-Ween event is when those big, impressive K-9 deputies an their humans, from the Sheriff's Office, demonstrate some of their Seriously Cool Kibbles moves. So K-9 Buckus and his partner Deputy Holly, and K-9 Doc with his partner Deputy Joergen showed how they sniff out explosives; an how they stop bad guys, an how they can even jump out of their pieceee vee-hickle an help their human partner if they need to. I was happy to learn the K-9s don't go on calls when there is shootin' involved.

Every year, Headin' home from the Howl-O-Ween Parade, I always wish I had more room in my column, cuz there are always so many clever costumes an Cool Kibbles poocheros. Plus, Dogs for Life trains pooches not only so they can learn Basic Dog Stuff an won't make their Forever Families nuts; they also train pooches to be service dogs for veterans and other humans who have disabilities, which is a big responsibility that only dogs can carry out. It makes me proud bein' a Fellow Pooch.

Till next time,

The Bonzo 

## Don't Be Shy

We are always looking for pets with interesting stories.

To set up an interview, email [bonzothecolumnist@gmail.com](mailto:bonzothecolumnist@gmail.com).

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# Luminaries

October 19, 2020

Indian River Co., St. Lucie Co., Martin Co.



**Dogs For Life Howl-O-Ween,**

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

### COVER STORY

# Dogs for Life a lifeline for veterans, first responders

Katherine Bauman

Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Dogs For Life was founded in 2002 by CEO and Director of Training Programs Shelly Ferger.

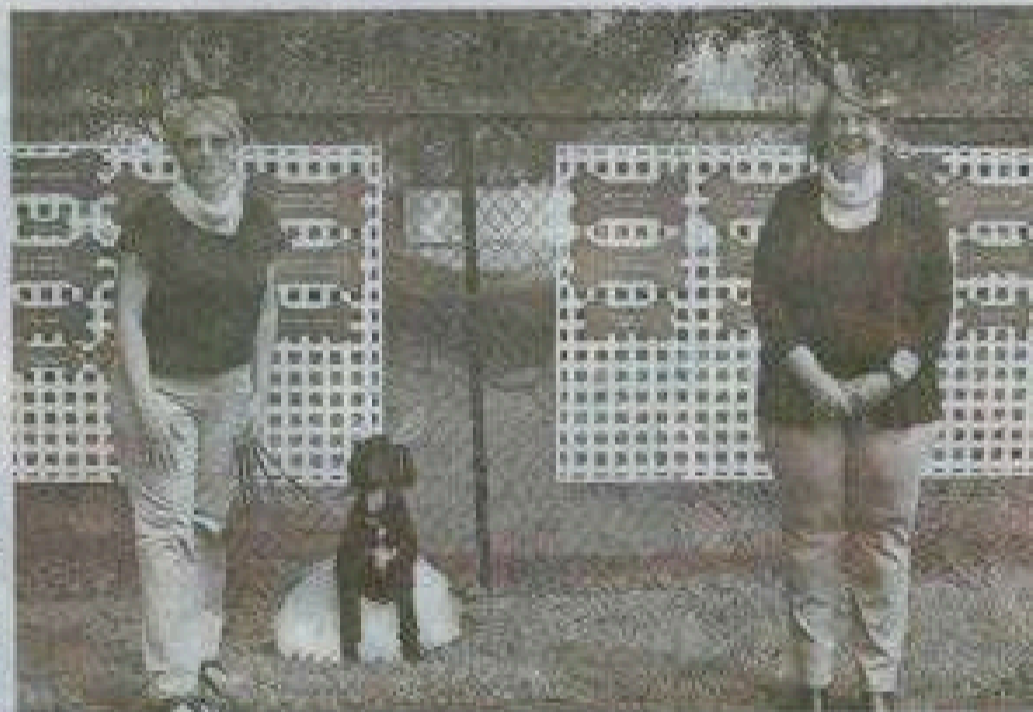
DFL is a nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for veterans and other disabled individuals through training service dogs and operating an off-leash dog park.

The agency programs include Service Dog Training, Volunteer Veterans Training Veterans, Foster Dog/Puppy and Dog Park Ambassador Program.

Service Dogs are trained at no charge with a special emphasis on veterans and first responders through a certification program that "task trains" dogs to assist veterans with hearing and mobility challenges, as well as the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD).

PTSD tasks can include waking from a nightmare, creating a distraction, providing deep pressure for calming effect and reducing hyper-vigilance. Hearing dogs alert their owners to a door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm, or other sounds a person with a hearing impairment may be missing.

Mobility Dogs are trained to assist with rising from a chair, picking up a phone, and retrieving a fallen object tasks that can be impossible to a person with a physical challenge.



Shelly Ferger, DFL CEO and Director of Training Programs with Kim Prado, DFL Director and Howl Event Chair at the driveway of the Training Center located at 1230 16th Ave. in Vero Beach. DUSTIN TACKETT, CITRUS THREE MARKETING

Indian River County has over 15,000 resident veterans, of whom 2,600 have a service-related disability. Many veterans prefer service dogs to traditional medications and tend to isolate and find it difficult to integrate back into society after serving in our military.

Since 2010, DFL has been accredited every five years by Assistance Dogs In-

ternational (ADI). It is noteworthy that DFL is one of only five organizations in the state of Florida to hold this accreditation.

In 2014 DFL moved to their current administrative training center located at 1230 16th Ave. in Vero Beach; graduating 16 assistance dog teams of the 24 enrolled. The exposure increased inquir-

### On the cover

Standing are Suzie Gomez DFL Director with Prince, Shelly Ferger, DFL CEO, Kim Prado, DFL Treasurer with Sunny. Seated are Eddie Boatright, DFL Director with Sassy and Linda Barberi, DFL Volunteer Coordinator with Zoey. They are getting ready for the Howl-O-Ween Mask-A-Rade Fundraiser Oct. 24 at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park 1230 16th Ave. in Vero Beach starting at 4 p.m. Call 772-567-8969 for more information. Photo by Dustin Tackett, Citrus Three Marketing

ries for the program, which rose over 50% in 2015. Many of those inquiring were veterans referred by ADI, The Veterans Administration and other veterans.

DFL partners with the Indian River County Veterans Council, Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County and American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County hosting Veteran PTSD Recovery and Group Support Meetings Mondays at 7 p.m. at the Training Center.

As the world changes, Dogs For Life will also change as we strive to address the needs of our disabled clients in our community and beyond.

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ADVERTISING SALES

# A Nose for Good

A FOUR-LEGGED DEPUTY CAN SAVE LIVES WHEN TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

**D**ogs have long been loyal and fearless partners of men and women in law enforcement, but not all K-9 officers are built the same. Images of sleek, racy shepherds are what come to mind most often, but there is a place for a droopy, methodical type that lives to track.

In 2007, Deputy Brian Reimsnyder proposed the acquisition of a search and rescue dog for the Indian River County Sheriff's Office. A bloodhound breeder offered a puppy to the department gratis, and IRCSO took a chance on Dixie. "She came at 8 weeks of age with no training, just the innate ability to use her powerful nose," says Reimsnyder.

"I've been a patrol dog handler and still am," he adds, "but working with her was very different than working with a shepherd or a Malinois. Those dogs have totally different motivations."

Before the pair worked their first search together, they had to get past the puppy stage. "I have been around dogs for many years, but this one had my number for awhile. Until they get some maturity, they do not excel at obedience, to put it mildly," he laughs.

While Dixie may not have come from a long line of working bloodhounds, she contributed to life-saving missions. One search that stands out in Reimsnyder's mind happened when the team was deployed to



Deputy Reimsnyder with K-9 Dixie, who retired in 2019 at age 12

help find a missing 11-year-old autistic boy. "The search had begun with deputies on foot and in vehicles, so I was not called in with Dixie until close to midnight, nearly eight hours after the boy was reported missing."

When they arrived at the apartment complex where the boy lived, Reimsnyder saw the potential difficulty for Dixie. "There was quite a bit of what we call contamination at the scene. Different people had been in and out of the entrance, so she would have to pick out the boy's older scent from all the rest." Dixie sniffed the boy's pillow case thoroughly and put her nose to the ground.

"First the dog will search, or cast, a radius," he explains. "There is a change in the dog's behavior when she picks up the scent; she gets almost a frantic, urgent look and may backtrack or cross a track," he explains. "She'll do a head check, almost like a double-take: I can see that clearly. Then, I may put a little back pressure on her, just a slight pulling back on the harness. If she pulls me through that cast, I am pretty confident she is on the right track."

Dixie sniffed her way out of the complex into the darkness, leading a relieved Reimsnyder directly to a culvert. "I saw his shoe first. Dixie is trained to sit in front of the person she finds, and when she did,



In more ways than one, K-9 Willow is growing into her role as Dixie's replacement.

the boy woke up and looked right at us."

Dixie shone again during a search for a missing elderly man. "The man's son told me, 'My dad always walks south when he leaves here,' so Dixie sniffed an article of his clothing, led me out of the house and made a hard turn to the north," recalls Reimsnyder. "I thought, 'O.K., let's see this play out.'" Dixie did not waver in her northward direction and soon found the father, who had fallen into a depression on the

golf course near his home and could not get up.

Patrol dogs have high prey drives. Their focus on the sleeve, or bite work, is its own reward for these more intense dogs. In contrast, search and rescue dogs work for praise. "We always talk with the person we found; sometimes they are a bit overheated or disoriented. I'll often ask the person if they will praise the dog, too," Reimsnyder says.

"Whenever we deploy a search and rescue dog, we assess the environmental

factors that may affect the scent; there are hundreds of competing odors out there and she must pick the right one." Every human being has a unique scent that falls to the ground in the form of skin rafts that we shed constantly. Skin rafts consist of skin cells, hormones, bacteria and other elements that give each person a unique scent signature.

Even though the relationship between dog and handler is a working one, Reimsnyder wants people to understand the loving

# Ask Amy

amy@verobeachmagazine.com

My dog Carly is having spay surgery next week. The doctor said she has to wear a cone to keep her from scratching or biting at the stitches, but I am afraid she will hate me for putting it on her. Can I take it off her sometimes if I am watching her?

- Emmie in Vero Beach



Your veterinarian has seen many cases in which the patient licked or chewed at stitches and the surgical site became infected. An abundance of caution is appropriate, but you can absolutely take the cone off for walks and trips out to the yard, and even in the house if you have Carly on leash and are keeping very close watch. That being said, if you go to the kitchen or the phone rings, keep Carly with you so she doesn't sneak a quick bite at the stitches, which will itch as the site heals. The cone should be on unless you are in complete control with eyes on the dog. This is just a two-week interruption in her normal routine, so keep her safe and sound and I'm sure she will forgive you.

My friends and I were talking about pets and the pandemic, and we got into a friendly debate. Are dogs and cats happier with us home all the time, or do they prefer some alone time when we are out?

- Liam in Stuart



I am coming down on the side of pets loving our presence at home. That is, as long as we are engaged with them and not just hunkered deep down in the sofa with eyes glazed over, staring at the TV. It isn't just dogs that want to interact with us; cats, birds and pocket pets enjoy a bit of active fun, too. My sister and I had gerbils when we were young, and our mother let us take them into the hallway, close all the doors and let them run around and play with toys, which they enjoyed immensely. Your pets will respond to quality interactions that put their needs front and center. Time spent with your pet is never time wasted.

bond that is formed. "These dogs are part of our family, our partners. But we outlive them, which is, by far, the hardest part of this job." Reimsnyder noticed Dixie slowing down and decided to retire her, and she died on Aug. 11, 2019, at age 12.

Now he has a new partner, Willow, an 18-month old bloodhound, to fill the void left by Dixie both personally and professionally. Unlike Dixie, who was donated from a pet dog breeder, young Willow has the pedigree and working lineage that promised a good search and rescue dog. Willow was provided to the department through the Jimmy Ryce Center, which sponsors bloodhounds for law enforcement to save precious time in the search for missing children.

The eager Willow follows in Dixie's footsteps and excels in ways that amaze Reimsnyder. On hard surfaces such as sidewalks or parking lots, scents burn off faster in the sun, and the wind can blow them across the pavement into cracks or toward curbs. "Willow can track across a parking lot with no trouble," he says.

She got her chance to test this ability when the pair was called to track a missing person. "His wife told us he had some dementia and did not return from a walk. Willow tracked his scent out of the housing development and across

TRUE TAILS



K-9 Willow is a full-fledged deputy, badge and all.

Old Dixie Highway to a strip mall where people were waiting for a business to open," he recalls. "There was plenty of contamination there, so we stopped and asked people if they had seen an elderly man matching his description. We were pointed north and our helicopter spotted the man at the base of the 17th Street Bridge resting under a tree." The man had walked more than 3 miles. While Willow did not make the find, she pointed deputies in the right direction.

IRCSO's Sgt. Christian Mathisen heads Special Operations, which includes the K-9s and handlers. "Our guys love these dogs like they love their children," he says. "If they don't have kids, the dogs are their kids." The job entails a minimum eight-year commitment, with the dog as a constant companion at home and at work. "Brian is our unit trainer for the Vero Beach Police and the Sebastian Police, in addition to our sheriff's department." Every Wednesday of the year, Reimsnyder runs K-9 teams through complex exercises in various locations. "They may replicate a deployment to see how it could have been improved, explore problem solving and take on real-world scenarios," says Mathisen. "This is a lot of work."

Besides Willow, Reimsnyder is never without his patrol dog, a 10-year-old male Belgian Malinois named Kobi, who possesses the polar opposite personality of the bloodhound. A new patrol dog, Remy, also a male, is joining Reimsnyder's household to transition into the aging Kobi's job. Asked how that will go over with the established male dog, the deputy responds with a laugh. "Not well, if experience is any guide. That is why I wanted a female dog for search and rescue. There is quite enough testosterone here without a third male dog." His vehicle is equipped for two dogs to ride with him for his entire 10-hour shift, and he always has both at the ready to serve, protect and find. 🐾

# 20th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade



**Dogs  
For Life**  
*Training Service Dogs  
For Veterans*

**20th Annual Howl-O-Ween  
Mask-A-Rade  
Dog Costume Pawrade  
October 24, 2020**



**Event Underwriter**  
Prinz Schumann



#### Schedule of Events

Entertainment by  
Hobo Jim

3:00

IRC Sheriff's Office  
K-9 Unit Demonstration

4:00

Next Generation Veterans  
of IRC Color Guard

Mask-A-Rade Pawrade

5:00

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# Rhett Palmer Radio Show



# Vero Beach Magazine and Luminaries of the Treasure Coast



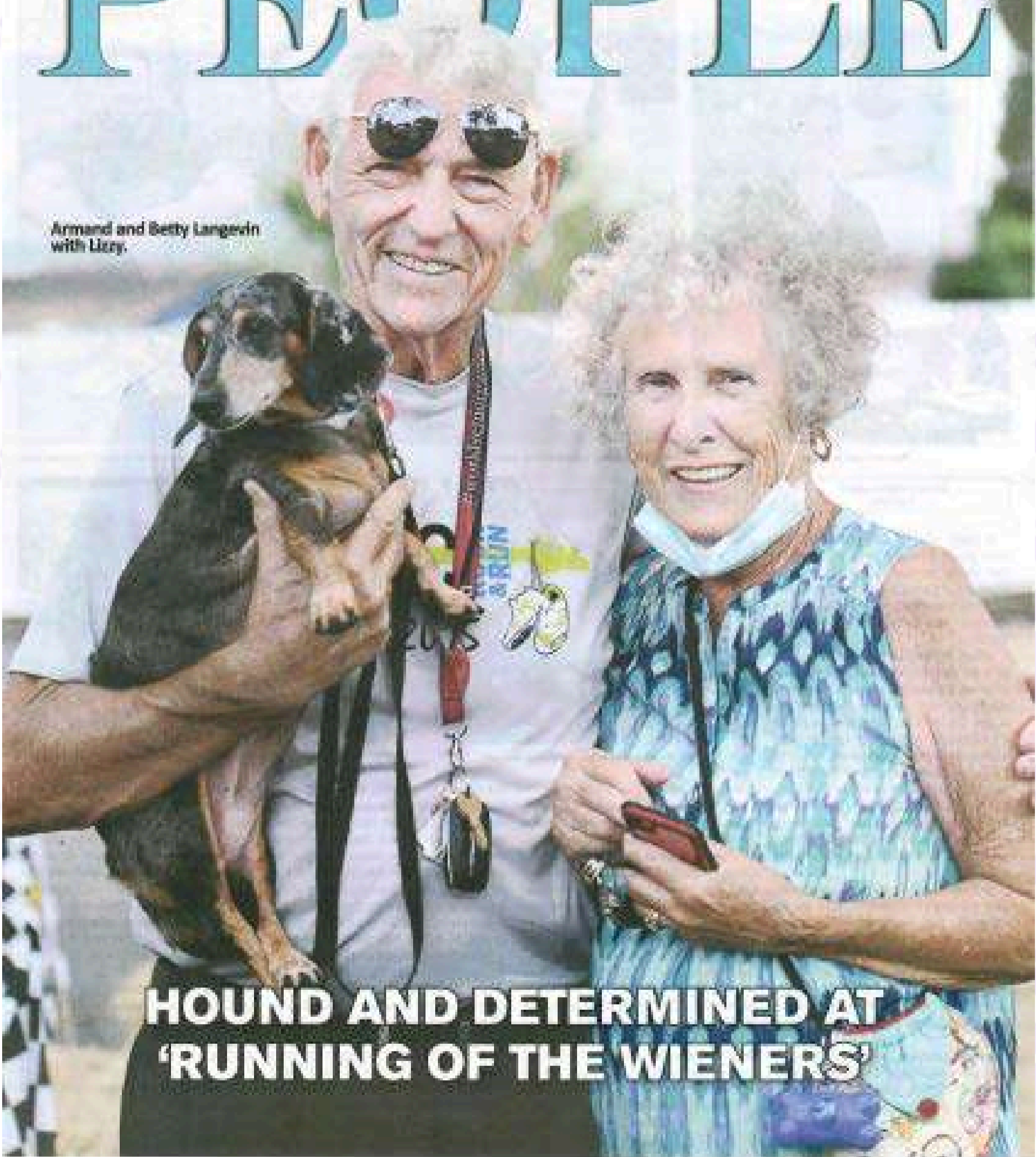
# Veterans Council Clay Shoot



32963

# PEOPLE

Armand and Betty Langerin  
with Lizzy.



**HOUND AND DETERMINED AT  
'RUNNING OF THE WIENERS'**

PEOPLE

# Hound and determined at 'Running of the Wieners'



Pete and Lora Anderson.



Beth, Selena and Durkin with their dogs.

BY STEPHAN LUKAT  
Staff Writer

A pack of dachshunds put their best paws forward recently during the sixth annual Running of the Wieners at Paredolia Brewing Company to benefit the H.A.L.O. No-Kill Animal Shelter's Angel Medical Fund.

Other breeds attempted to blend in with the dachies, including a pair of great Danes in wicker costumes, while owners and fans sipped on sudsy Paredolia beer in honor of Oktoberfest, a familiar celebration where the breed originated.

The dachshunds raced for prizes and strutted their stuff in the costume contest, all to support the nonprofit's mission to provide a no-kill safe haven for homeless pets and, ideally, find loving homes for them.

Jacque Petrone, H.A.L.O. founder and executive director, said many animals are surrendered to the shelter with medical issues their owners can't afford to treat.

"We're trying to be there for them and their pets. We're really struggling this year to keep the Angel Medical Fund replenished," she said.

As an example, she said a cat with a urinary blockage had been left on their doorstep just that morning and was undergoing a \$5,000 emer-



Wendy and Grant with their dog Lolo.



Allison, Jacque and Bob holding Jenny and Rex.

gency procedure that afternoon.

"I guarantee you that he was really loved. It was just somebody who couldn't afford to take care of him, so they did what they thought was going to give him the best chance," said Petrone, adding that community support and fundraisers are critical to their operation.

Attendees received their fair share of sloppy licks from two pups rescued from the Virgin Islands. They were among the 27 animals re-routed to H.A.L.O. when the Nashville shelter they were intended to go to was affected by Hurricane Laura. One of the lucky pups was adopted during the event, and the other was garnering interest.

Allison Bostes, H.A.L.O. direc-

tor of development, said that with folks staying at home, they have seen a significant increase in fosters and adoptions, but conversely, their intake has increased by 24 percent since the beginning of the year because of people losing their homes or jobs during the pandemic.

Recently, thanks to an Impact 100 grant, H.A.L.O. has partnered with nonprofits that serve the county's most financially vulnerable residents. Their first Impact Clinic supported Senior Resource Association clients, and on Nov. 15 they will assist United Against Poverty clients.

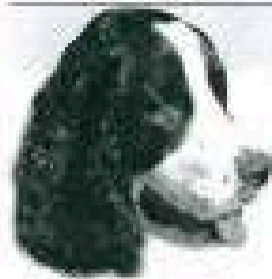
In 2019, H.A.L.O. saved 1,323 animals and helped 1,171 find their forever homes. Another aspect of their mission is to promote the im-

portance of spay/neutering and vaccinations. Bostes explained that just one unaltered female dog and her offspring can produce 47,000 puppies in only six years. In seven years, one female cat and her offspring can produce 570,000 kittens.

On Oct. 31, the shelter will host HALO-WEEN with adoption fees waived that day. This year's annual gala, a virtual one, will run from Nov. 30 to Dec. 12. The Faux Fur Ball will have volunteers delivering gourmet meals from Wild Thyme Catering, with wine or champagne, and there will be an online raffle and paddle raise.

For more information, visit [halo-accufl.org](http://halo-accufl.org).

PETS



# Bonzo says K-9 Odie's livin' large as a retiree

Hi Dog Buddies!

First off, I'm sending out a Big High Five to all those fellow pooches serving alongside human partners in law enforcement, steppin' up an puttin' themselves between us an Bad Guys. Pooches like this week's innerviewer, I was Super Crispy Dog Biscuits Excited headin' to the Sebastian Pleece Department to meet Officer Odie Cole (Ret.), a Belgian Malinois.

We parked behind the Pleece Department under a tree. Pretty soon Odie an his partner drove up in their Special K-9 vee-hickle. Odie is an impressive, squared-away pooch, short, reddish-brown coat, excellent POSS-cha. His partner was in uniform but Odie wasn't, having recently retired.

I stood as straight as I could and tried to not look too excited, as Odie came over for the Wag-an-Sniff.

"Hey there, Bonz! Sup! I'm Officer Odie Cole. Ackshully not 'Officer' anymore. Just call me Odie. I only just retired in July, an I'm still gettin' used to it. This is my Dad (an partner) Officer Roy Cole. My Mom Nicole's workin'."

"It's a great pleasure to meet you, Odie," I said earnestly, feelin' more relaxed. "Thank you for your service! I'm eager to hear your story, so just go ahead whenever you're ready."

Odie sat up arrow-straight, an began. "I was born in the Czech Republic, and raised from puppyhood to be a K-9. Not all of us qualify, though, cuz the training's hard, an you gotta have all the right stuff."

"Like what stuff?"

"You gotta be smart, healthy, strong, fearless. You gotta be able to concentrate and not get scared or distracted by ANYthing. An you totally gotta be alert an obey your partner every single second no matter what."

"Woof!"

"Dad needed a new partner cuz his previous partner, Yoda, retired for health reasons. Pleece departments over here mostly get dogs from YOUR-up, cuz they have the toughest standards. Anyway, I got picked, an flew over to begin my law enforcement career. I was 14 months old, an still a 'green dog,' so Dad continued my training till I was ready to stand beside him as his partner, an official SPD K-9 officer. It was a proud moment. My training took about 6 months, then there's continuing education an evaluations. Dad says I do great cuz I'm 'a pleaser,' an it's true. I ALWAYS wanna make Dad happy. When I'm workin', he calls me a high-strung ball of fire, always givin' 150 percent. Fact is, Bonz, us K-9s consider our police work fun, cuz we learn by praise an rewards. Since we're from Europe, we learn commands in different languages (I learned in Czech), an over here our partners mostly keep using those commands."

"Makes sense. So, how many other K-9s are with the SPD?"

"Well, there was us; then Cpl. Reno an K-9 Officer Bovic; Officer Irwin an K-9 Officer Sama; an Officer Smith an K-9 Officer Ghost. We're called Dual-Purpose Dogs cuz we can do patrol an NARC detection. About 10 of us K-9 teams, from Sebastian, Vero Beach and the Sheriff's Department, get together every Wednesday to practice our skills, so we can work with each other when the need arises. It sometimes gets a liddle intense cuz we're all Alphas with big egos, but we work around it. Teamwork. That's what it's all about."

"You must have lousa stories!"

"I've brought down some perps, for sure, but I gotta be diss-CREET. One time we got a call about a Bad Guy who was STALKING, an had sneaked in somebody else's house. We hid in the backyard bushes. The Bad Guy stuck his head out the door to check if the coast was clear. He didn't see us, so he started walkin' toward our bush. Well, I let go with my SNAREBARK! (It's EXTREMELY LOUD, FUH-BOW-SHUS and SCARY an makes Bad Guys think I'm gonna bite their face off.) Anyway, Boom! that guy instantly hit the ground and hollered 'I give up!' I didn't hafta lay a paw on him."

"Cool Kibbles!" I exclaimed. "How's retirement goin' so far?"

"It's takin' some gettin' use to. I miss the job. A LOT. Plus, Dad's trainin' his new partner, Douglas, a German Shepherd. We get along pretty good. Doug's still real young. But, Dog, do I hate watchin' 'em head to work, leavin' me behind. That's tough. I know it's hard on Dad, too."



Odie

there; could be 5 minutes or 6 hours.

"Don't get me wrong, Bonz, I've got it great. Mom an Dad're wonderful. Doug's cool. I have my own room, an my own bed; Dad's always buyin' squeaker toys an stuffies cuz I rip out the squeakers and shred a stuffie to fluff in seconds. Even those 'indestructible' Kongs don't stand a snowball's chance. I have so much energy it's hard to sit still. I specially love spinnin' real fast."

"Do you like swimmin'?"

"Not really, although, during training, we drilled in ditches, canals, rivers, the ocean, on boats, even trained from a chopper."

"Paw-some!" I exclaimed.

"But it's not all chases an excitement. We're also trained to be patient, level-headed an gentle, like when we visit schools. The kids love us. When a liddle 5-year-old comes up we are always calm an cool. I personally love hangin' with liddle human peppers."

Heading home, I was imaginin' what it'd be like in Odie's paws. Exciting, for sure, protectin' people; chasin' Bad Guys; facin' Danger; never knowin' what the day will bring. The biggest excitement in my life is jumpin' in the pool when the heater's off. Just give me my comfy bed, my pool, leash walks, lotsa TLC from Grandma an Grampa, an the occasional muffin, an I'm good to go.

Till next time,

The Bonz

## Don't Be Shy

We are always looking for pets with interesting stories.

To set up an interview, email [bonzothecolumnist@gmail.com](mailto:bonzothecolumnist@gmail.com).

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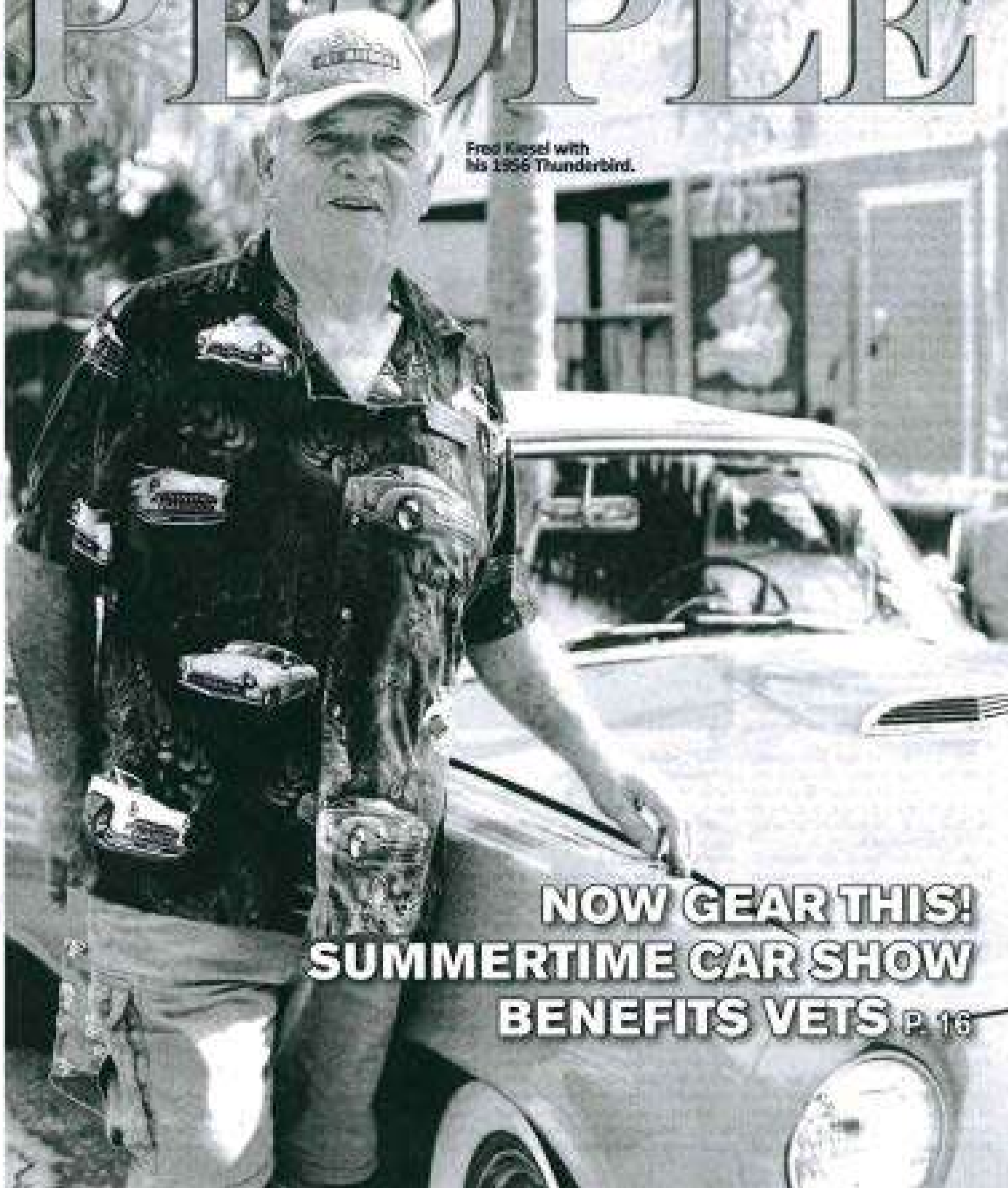


**SEPTEMBER**

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# PEOPLE

Fred Kessel with  
his 1956 Thunderbird.



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PEOPLE



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# Now gear this! Summertime Car Show benefits veterans



BY STEPHAN LAMAY  
Staff Writer

Car enthusiasts revved their engines and made their way to the Elike Lodge for a Summertime Car Show sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of Indian River County. The show took the place of the 10th annual Father's Day Car Show, which was pushed into the summer due to the pandemic shutdown.

Proceeds support the veterans' assistance and hearing programs provided by the Vietnam Veterans of IRC, a subset of the Veterans Council of IRC.

"We've got about 30 booths now where we're able to house veterans," said event organizer Craig Washow, a Vietnam veteran and Elike Lodge member. Recently, he said, they have concentrated on providing these homes with furnishings, kitchen necessities and "creature comforts."

The group also assists veterans to transition to civilian life and support themselves by connecting them with needed services and benefits.

"People need hearing and assistance with jobs so they can get on their feet. It's our mission to get them under a roof. If we can help them get benefits from the government, it helps to defray their housing costs," explained Washow.

In February, VVIC members conducted Operation Stand Down, venturing into the woods in search of homeless veterans, providing the homeless with sleeping bags, coats and food, and bringing them to the First Baptist Church of Vero Beach for a hot meal and clean clothes.

"We're what we call 'boots on the ground.' It's a payback for their service," said Washow. "We all survived with small medals. We just want to be out there to offer a helping hand, a kind thought and to see what we can do to help people."

A wide range of more than 110 cars lined the street and filled the Elike Lodge parking lot, each with a story of its own, which graciously were happy to share.

Youngsters were drawn to a 2018 Dodge Charger, the baby of the bunch, while a 1928 Chevy Woody drew the attention of the more mature crowd. Sweet rides like a candy apple-red 1978 Buick Skylark convertible held its own alongside a 1963 Studebaker, and a 1966 El Camino stirred a debate over its age-old question, "Is it a car or is it a truck?"

Meetings are held at 6 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at the Vietnam Veterans of IRC office, 696 2nd Court. For more information, visit [vvc.org](http://vvc.org). ■

PEOPLE



Paul Hughes climbs up a 1968 Chevy El Camino truck.



Lisa Peckham with her 1988 Model T Ford.




Neil and Louise Hyde with their 1933 Ford.



Linda Fennell.





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# Dogs of Dorian

ONE YEAR AGO, FLORIDA ANIMAL SHELTERS, RESCUE GROUPS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS SPRANG INTO ACTION IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE DORIAN

**M**ack deftly bounces downstairs on three muscular legs, his long tail held high and nose in the breeze. He is a Bahamian "potcake" dog, a mixed breed named for the leftovers of a local pea and rice stew that would stick to the bottom of the pan and commonly be fed to dogs. Mack has a bright future with new owner Laura Baughman. "I had been looking on local shelter sites every day for a month, but no other dog caught my eye like he did," says Baughman. "He has been through so much but is such a happy dog."

The 50-pound brown, gold and black dog survived Hurricane Dorian with a

severe shoulder injury, and his leg had to be amputated. Like the hundreds of other dogs and cats that were welcomed to waiting shelters and foster homes in Florida, the resilience and friendly demeanor that potcakes are known for is still alive and well in Mack.

Even before the 180-mph sustained winds were finished with the Bahamas, shelter directors here had plans in place to help pets and people. "When the first pictures came in, I was on the phone to people I knew who had planes or large boats," recalls Lauree Simmons, president and founder of Big Dog Ranch Rescue in Loxahatchee Groves. "During our first rescue mission, we were



Laura Baughman adopted Mack, who was airlifted from the Bahamas to H.A.L.O. after Hurricane Dorian.

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chasing each other, playing tug of war, wrestling or just lying together," she says. "Theo inspires us every day. I can only imagine how scared his mom, Epic, felt being outside during the hurricane and all alone with seven little lives depending on her."

Perhaps no dog has shown a stronger will to live than Miracle, the puppy that lived for three weeks on Abaco pinned under a large air-conditioning compressor and yards of metal sheeting, subsisting on a tiny amount of rainwater. Finding this

dog took high-tech equipment and a lot of patience.

"We had heard about a man from California, Douglas Thron, who wanted to test a heat-seeking drone to find animals trapped in the debris," says Simmons. "We called Cesar Milan, whose ranch was close to Thron, and arranged to have it tested there." The drone picked up Milan's dogs easily, and Thron boarded a red-eye to Florida that evening. Simmons gave him her seat on the charter to the Bahamas next to Sean Irion, her go-to rescuer.

Once on Abaco, the drone picked up four heat signatures, and dogs were pulled out of some precarious places, but Irion thought he heard a quiet whimper and asked for the drone again. At less than half his normal weight, with a body condition score of zero, the trapped dog needed immediate help. "From the time my team saw Miracle, it took only three hours to get him freed, in the air and in our veterinary hospital," says Simmons.

Miracle's tail wagged

slightly just at the tip, as if the effort to move the whole tail was too much, and his recovery was slow. Now, one year later, he has more than doubled his weight and lives with Brianna and Clark Beaty and their three young daughters in Palm Beach. Their application won out from more than 10,000 submitted.

Simmons reports that many of the more than 300 dogs found by her team were owned. It is important to note that there was a mandatory evacuation after the hurricane, and



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Theo's mother, Epic, kept her seven pups safe during Hurricane Dorian. Theo has found a home in the U.S. with Stephanie Anderson.

responding to requests to find lost pets via landmarks and street signs, but all those were gone. We started using Google Earth to see what the landscape looked like before the storm, and used hand-held GPS devices while on the ground. We had more luck with each successive trip."

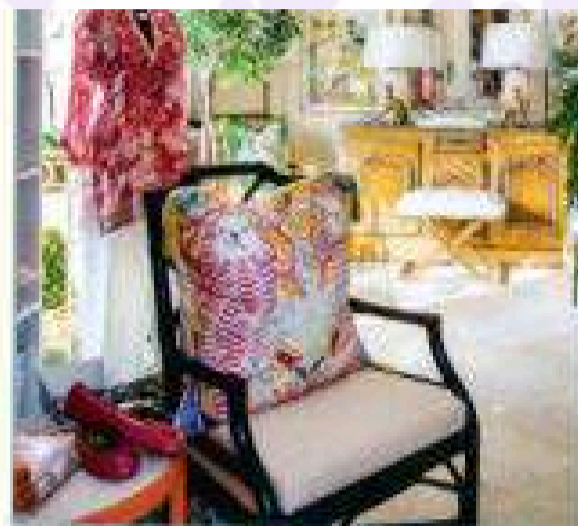
Director Tip Burrows of the Humane Society of Grand Bahama thought the organization's new structures, built a full 6 feet higher than the water rose during Hurricane Matthew in 2016, would suffice. "We were not in a mandatory evacuation zone," Burrows says. "Had we even suspected the storm surge would be so violent, we would have done things very differently." In the aftermath, the focus shifted to shipping survivors out to safety. Burrows had plenty of experience sending adoptable animals off the islands. "Our adoption rate here is only about 10%, so our shelter began Operation Puppy Lift in 2000, working with reputable shelters and rescues in the U.S."

One of those shelters is H.A.L.O. in Sebastian, helmed by Jacque Petrone. The two shelter directors have been friends since 2015, when H.A.L.O. assisted Burrows with a confiscation of guinea pigs and rabbits. After Dorian finally moved north, 83 dogs, including Mack, and one cat were flown to Fort Lauderdale and then driven to Sebastian. Allyson Bootes is director of development at H.A.L.O. "Potcake dogs, as the locals call them, are generally very friendly and social. All 83 dogs were in excellent spirits, even though many had skin burns from exposure to saltwater and leaking gasoline," recalls Bootes. "Volunteers, staff and Dr. Marcus Kramer worked into the night to triage each animal and get them fed and settled in."

Some, like Mack, had more severe injuries, but his new owner says his three-legged stance doesn't slow him down. "When my boyfriend and I went to meet him at H.A.L.O., he jumped right up on us and kissed us both," recalls Baughman. Car rides were totally new, and Mack showed some anxious moments. Stairs were a puzzle, so the couple carried him a few times before the dog caught on. "We are so glad he is here with us now. He has years of spoiling and love ahead of him. He deserves it."

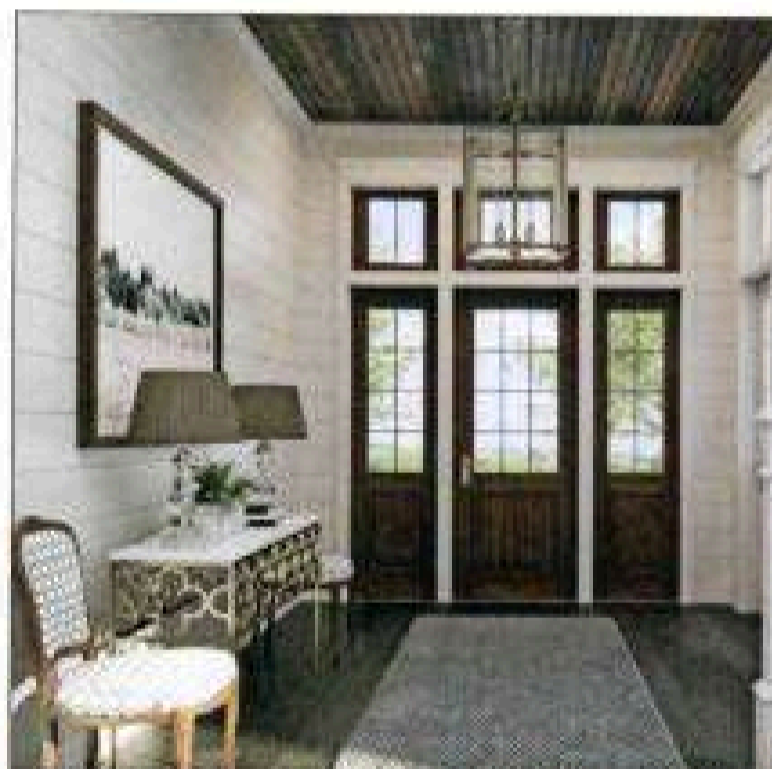
Another dog that found refuge at H.A.L.O. is Theo, a short but substantial brindle dog that has a mother's love to thank for keeping him and six siblings safe for almost three weeks under a vacant house. His mother, named Epic, was found and rescued with her newborn pups on Grand Bahama when another dog was approached by volunteers and Epic peeked out from her hiding place.

"We were looking for a playmate for our youngest dog, Riley," says adopter Stephanie Anderson. Theo and Riley bonded in short order. "The two of them are constantly



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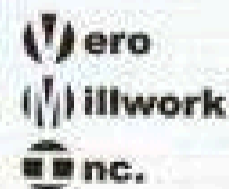
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# Ask Amy

amy@verobeachmagazine.com

I got a Lab from show lines, and I want to use his retrieving skill to exercise him. One problem: He has no retrieving skill. He will chase a ball, but sometimes halfway there he'll just stop or get distracted. Sometimes he'll get it but just lie down with it. How can I get him to play ball?

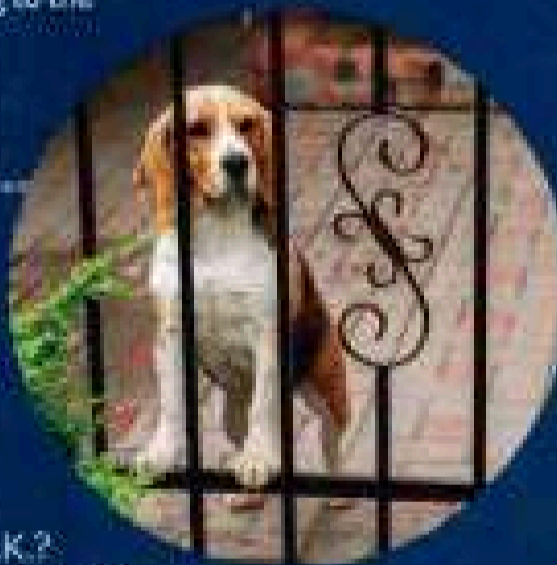
- Matt in Vero Beach



I can see why you would assume that, being a retrieving breed, he would have that innate ability. Your dog has the ability but not the motivation. Try this: Put a long leash on him and find a hallway in your house where you can close doors to bedrooms. Crouch at the open end of the hall with him and hold the leash loosely. Tease him with the ball by tossing it up and catching it yourself, or roll it down the hall fast so it hits the baseboard and comes all the way back to you. Then, when your dog looks intrigued, say "Take it!" and roll it down the hall again. If he grabs it, say "Bring it!" and reel in the leash with little to no pressure. Just the movement of the leash should help him follow it back to you. Don't take the ball right away; just praise your dog for his retrieving prowess. Do this two or three times only, and end the game by going to the kitchen for a nice treat. You both have earned it.

My beagle mix, Barney, is starting to act out toward visitors. Anyone coming into my house has to squeeze by him first at the outer gate, then at the door. It's 50-50 whether he nips at them from behind as they walk in. He doesn't bark or give warning, but he does stare at the person. How can I convince him that visitors are O.K.?

- Leah in Delray Beach



Barney is likely conflicted about what he is supposed to do, and not getting the guidance he needs. As a result, he is torn between curiosity and territory defense. His access to the front gate allows him to watch the world go by all day. If he stares at them, they walk away from him, so Barney may think he is doing a terrific job keeping people out. Lock your gate and have visitors call you or ring the bell first. Then, come out with a leash and put it on Barney. Now you can give verbal commands like "Come" along with treats to redirect the dog's attention back to you. Bring your guest inside but keep the leash on the dog. Encourage your visitor to toss treats in Barney's general direction to improve guest relations.

pets were not allowed to accompany their owners on commercial boats or planes off the islands. Big Dog Ranch Rescue found all but four owned pets they sought and orchestrated 90 joyful reunions in both Florida and the Bahamas.

"One owner waded through waist-high water holding her labradoodle, but the dog was swept out of her arms by the current. We found him and set up the reunion," says Simmons. "We were asked to look for a Chihuahua at Pelican Point on Abaco. Despite his fat little body, he could really run, and my guy Sean had to chase him for an hour before finally catching him with a big net. The family was elated."

The entire effort was a multigroup cooperation at all levels. The International Fund for Animals deployed search and rescue teams on Abaco and Grand Bahama and worked with GreaterGood.org and Wings of Rescue to deliver supplies and evacuate animals. Hundreds came to Florida by private planes, charters, and even a 240-foot yacht that sailed from Fort Lauderdale and picked up more than 50 pets. Concerned citizens donated money, time, supplies and expertise and stepped up to adopt or foster pets.

We may often wonder about the real impact of our contributions, but one look into those grateful, furry faces makes the value incalculable. ✨



**AUGUST**

# Well Wishes

August 16, 2020

Dear Shelly:

Thank you so very much for your nice letter and contribution to Dogs For Life in memory of Cornelia.

I know you and Cornelia had a very good friendship. She always admired and thought very highly of you.

I enjoyed reading about Dogs For Life and the good

job you are all doing. It is a great organization.

Hope you are doing well. Take care. God Bless.

Warmest personal regards

Rene' and  
Mitzi



and working with  
you. The P for P  
was an over-the-top  
success and a great  
time was had by  
all that attended.

With friendship,  
Laura  
"Linda"

ps.  
if you are having  
a wrap up meeting I'd  
love to attend

Dear Shelly,  
Just a quick note  
to give you a huge  
Kudos for a job  
well done!!

You fought through  
adversity and your  
will and dedication  
helped you heal!

We are all so proud  
& thankful of you  
for your tireless efforts  
for DFL.

Saturday was a  
pleasure helping out ←

Kathi I:

Happy, Belated  
Birthday Gary I  
missed tea. I think  
this is first year in  
5 I couldn't make it.

Best to you and  
yours for all you  
do to help us  
many as you can.  
Please give John my  
regards also.

Love & Respect  
Patti Keller  
11/21/2011

# Recognizing Foster Families During Assistance Dog Week



# Breakfast Generosity

Thank you so much. Your  
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tip. Again thank your group for  
dining with us.

Jamie

UTU Grad Class  
8/26/2020

Bob Evans  
FARMS



**JULY**



BY AMY ROBINSON

# Dog of Action

THIS DO-IT-ALL DOG WITH GERMAN ORIGINS IS AS AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE

**M**y first dog training job was at a thriving kennel in Chicago, converted from a 1930s brownstone. The business owners kept their clients' dogs on the first floor and lived upstairs with five German shepherds and a pug. The entry was not spacious, and it was often humorous to see people trundle in with a poodle or retriever only to feel the unflagging scrutiny of these dignified dogs. All five would gaze down their long noses at canine interlopers small or large, noisy or compliant, and wait patiently but alertly for any command from the kennel owner. These dogs shaped my respect for the breed and seemed to embody the description of the ideal German shepherd.

The German Shepherd

Dog Club of America states, "The first impression is of a strong, agile, well muscled animal, alert and full of life," and adds, "The ideal dog is stamped with a look of quality and nobility – difficult to define, but unmistakable when present." While the German shepherd originated in Germany, the dog's popularity in the United States is steadfast.

In 1889, a medium-sized yellow-and-gray wolf-like dog caught the attention of Capt. Max von Stephanitz at a dog show in Karlsruhe, Germany. The dog impressed him as a primal type, supple and powerful, steady and intelligent. He purchased the working sheepherder on the spot, formed the German Shepherd Association and soon wrote the German shepherd breed standard based on



Samantha and Daniel Crisafulli's 2-year-old German shepherd, Rex, joined the family when he was a puppy.

# Ask Amy

amy@verobeachmagazine.com

My new 5-pound puppy, Fitz, is adorable, but he barks a lot at all times of the day and sounds much larger than he is. I can't tell if he needs something or is just demanding attention, but it always happens when he is in his pen in my living room. How do I know, and how can I stop the noise?

- Briana in Vero Beach



In his mind, he sees no reason you can't spend every waking moment playing with him. If it is just the two of you, look for entertainment for him beyond your walls. Take him for a walk in Riverside Park under the oak trees or along Ocean Drive, or look for a friend with a puppy that might enjoy a play date. Any of these quality outings will help tire him. At home, invent interactive games, such as rolling a ball down a hallway and bouncing it off the baseboards while he tries to run it down. Try offering him a puzzle toy. Work on your obedience training. When his eyes start to droop, the pen will be a welcome place for him to wind down.

I just attended a dog training class with my new adopted dog where we are supposed to use treats for every little thing the dog does. Really, I was hoping not to use treats at all. Should I stick with it or try my way?

- Charlie in Port St. Lucia



Watch your dog's face for the answer to your question. Is he interested in you during class? Does he respond to cues and enjoy the treats and praise? If your sweet new dog is at all attentive, I'd stay for the duration of the class. Treats are the "primary reinforcement," in that treats are rewarding all by themselves, and when you couple the treat with a new action he is asked to perform, the treat and the praise make that action more pleasurable for him. He needs to get paid for a job well done with something he values, whether that is interactive play, ball throwing or treats. Use all three at different times when practicing at home. If he doesn't know which reward to expect, but he knows it will be fantastic, you will both go to the head of the class.

mental fortitude and working utility instead of beauty.

By 1925, Germany was holding a national conformation show to award the title of "Sieger" ("Champion") to the best male and female shepherds. Von Stephanitz was invited to judge the Morris & Essex Kennel Club Show at the New Jersey estate of Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge that same year. Such was the heightened interest in the breed that von Stephanitz had to judge the males on day one and the females on day two. He believed the direction of the breed had moved too far toward a boxy, stout type, and so awarded the coveted Sieger title to Klodo von Bosberg, a longer-bodied, lighter dog with a sweeping, effortless gait. Klodo's line influence remains today.

German shepherds had been very useful for the German forces in World War I, and American servicemen came home with stories of the dogs' feats of bravery. Many even brought German shepherds home with them. Films starring Rin Tin Tin and his predecessor Strongheart, whose 1922 movie "The Silent Call" debuted in Los Angeles and drew 600,000 ticket holders, more than the entire population of the city, enhanced the public's adoration. These dogs were wholeheartedly adopted into the American

## Work Ethic

The German shepherd's curriculum vitae shows its versatility, just as Capt. Max von Stephanitz intended

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MEDICAL ALERT/CANCER DETECTION

GUIDE DOG/HEARING SERVICE

OBEDIENCE

PROTECTION

HERDING

THERAPY



VERO BEACH  
MAGAZINE

FALL  
2020

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culture, but, torn between love of the breed and hard feelings over World War I, the American Kennel Club eliminated the word "German" at the 1917 Westminster Kennel Club show, opting to call entrants "shepherd dogs" or "Alsatian dogs." That name stuck until 1977, when "German Shepherd" was once again sanctioned.

Those who seek out this do-it-all dog as a pet often do so to the exclusion of other breeds. Daniel and Samantha Crisafulli of Vero Beach own two, having obtained an adult dog, Roman, six years ago from Hillsborough County Animal Control and then adding a puppy two years ago. "Animal Control emailed me a bad photo of just Roman's head and we drove right over to get him," Sam recalls. "He was barking like mad, but when they let him out of the cage, he practically hugged me."

At the time, the couple's children were aged 3 and 7, and Roman took to family life right away. "That very first day, my daughter sat next to him and lightly combed his hair," Sam says. "I saw the appreciation coming from him then, and it is still there."

As their children grew, they added Rex, now 2 years old. Sam reports that the first couple of times the puppy trod on Roman's bed or committed some other unseen transgres-

sion, Roman would snarl convincingly but make no contact. "From then on, they were pals," she says. "Now they race after each other, feint left and right, and jump in and out of the pool. If you take a swim you had better like company."

Both Sam and Dan can attest to the breed's famed dedication to family. "They are really interested in us, not as much other people." Roman is the serious dog, patrolling the perimeter and shadowing anyone who rises from a chair. Rex is the comic relief, showing off his goofy side by letting the kids put swim goggles on him and rolling in the grass, legs kicking. Dan and Sam plan vacations that include the dogs. "Where we go, they go with us. In North Carolina, they both saw snow for the first time and wanted to be out all day, even in single digits," says Dan. "We'd like to stick with this breed going forward, since we know what it takes to nurture these guys: socialize, train, exercise and repeat."

There is much debate about the quality of German- versus American-bred shepherd dogs, with the main differences in appearance being the topline, or slope of the body. The German-style shows a dog with a fairly level back and more upright hocks, which equate to our ankles, in back. American show dogs have more of a



Rex provides comic relief to Roman's more serious nature. Both dogs, though, love jumping in and out of the pool.

dramatic downhill slope, and the hocks are much more angled, sometimes looking a bit spongy as they go through their gaits. American dogs tend to be larger and heavier in the bone. German dogs are still tested for working ability and temperament, follow-

ing the same standards put forth by von Stephanitz, while the American breeding standard has no such requirements.

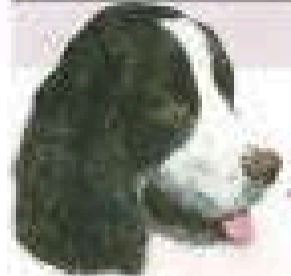
Breeding for looks alone has been blamed for health problems in German shepherds and other breeds. A BBC documentary

in 2008 exposed the show dog industry as being complicit in rewarding extreme examples of breed standards to the detriment of the dogs, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals expressed "concern about the unacceptably high levels of disability, deformity and disease affecting pedigree dogs."

Despite the challenges facing purebred dogs, the German shepherd has retained the No. 2 spot in the U.S. for a decade, the top 10 since Rin Tin Tin's reign, and is one of the most recognizable breeds in the world. Dutch avant-garde artist Wim T.

Schippers, creator of the famous peanut butter floor installation upon which gallery patrons could draw with their fingers, was so convinced of the breed's uncanny intelligence that he produced an experimental play starring six German shepherds as the sole actors. An internet search reveals a 1986 clip of his play "Going to the Dogs," during which a dog paces, stands on a chair and barks loudly out the window while audience members giggle nervously. Perhaps this was Schippers' point, as he was often heard to say, "Nothing is as clarifying as confusion." The theater was sold out. ✪





## PETS

## Bonzo says super Sassy is a devoted daddy's girl

### Hi Dog Buddies!

This week I interviewed Sassy Martin, a beautiful Golden Retriever with a lotta responsibility (an really big paw). Although she's just 3 in Human, she's already graduated Service Dog Training. Not every pooch who starts that training makes it all the way through, cuz it's WAY harder than your basic Sit-Stay-Shake stuff, so I knew she'd have Special Skills, an I thought maybe she'd be a Very Serious Pooch, maybe a little intimidating.

But she wasn't, an trotted right over for the Wag-an-Sniff.

"Good afternoon, Miss Martin. Thank you for agreeing to share your story."

"My pleasure," she said. "Please call me Sassy. This is my Dad, Partner, an RFF, Perry. Since he says it's OK for me to be Off the Clock while you're here, I can roll-LAX, an we can have a nice Yap."

"Excellent!" I opened my notebook. "So, how did you two find each other?"

"Well, Dad was in The Military an then a K-9 piece officer for a long time, 234 Dog Years. He was an expert at dog training, an his K-9 partner was Jazz. Then they got hit when they were in their piece car and got hurt Real, Real Bad. So Dad an Jazz hadda retire. Dad had a whole bunch of surgeries an was havin' a very tough time, an then Jazz went to Dog Heaven."

"Oh, Woof! That's awful!" I exclaimed.

"I KNOW. Well, even though Dad was a little wobbly, havin' a lotta trouble gettin' around, an hearin', an rememberin' stuff, he was still a Great Dog Trainer, so, he started

bein' a volunteer with Dogs For Life, that school where dogs get trained to help veterans an others who have Various Health Issues."

"I'm very fuh-mill-yer with it," I said. "I have several pooch pals who've trained there."

"Cool Kibbles!" Sassy said. "Well, Dad got another pooch, Hope, who was a wonderful, helpful fren. One day Miss Kathi (the biggest Dogs for Life supporter EVER), bought Dogs for Life two Golden Retriever puppies to start special training. One of 'em was, well, ME. We got named Big Sis an Liddle Sis. (I was Liddle Sis.) Dad was workin' with us trainees so we knew each other. He was a good teacher an I was a really good student. Since us trainees usually need Foster Family's while we're in school, Miss Shelly (she started Dogs for Life 133 Dog Years ago) an Miss Kathi asked if Dad would be my Foster Human. It was Okey-Dokey with him an Hope, an Extra Okey-Dokey with me. I was 1 by then."

"Then, in March, Hope got sick an went to Dog Heaven, an we were feelin' Dismal Dog Biscuits. But, un-be-knownst to Dad, Miss Kathi an Miss Shelly had been noticein' when Hope was startin' to really slow down, an they had Sneakily Planned to get Dad to Foster me so we'd already be together when Hope hadda go to Dog Heaven, an I'd be all trained an ready to Step in As Dad's Forever Service Dog."

"I swallowed a couple of times. "That is a Moving an Totally Crispy Dog Biscuits story, Miss Sassy. Tell me about your life now."

"My No. 1 Mission in Life is to Take



Care of Dad. I'm always by his side. I'm right there when he's wobbly, or like, if he doesn't hear the doorbell, I check to see who's there, then I stand by the door or go put my paw on his knee. If his cell is ringing an he can't find it, I sniff it out and pop it in his top. When we go grocery shopping, I walk right along beside him. If he's dub-pressed, or in pain, I'm Right There lettin' him know it's gonna be OK. Honestly, Mr. Bonzo, I always know what he's thinkin'."

"I have great admiration for that, Miss Sassy," I said with the utmost sincerity. "Frankly, I thought you might be, you know, a little more stern and tough."

"Some service dogs are. But ones like me are considered softer. I'm not tough. I'm quiet an reserved. I like to know what I'm gettin' into, rather than leaping in with all fours."

"That works for me. So, whaddya do for fun?"

"I LOVE BUNNIN'! At the Dog Park, me an my posse run our ears off I see Big Sis sometimes. Then there's GIGI, a Golden like me; Bo, a Chocolate Lab, an Bob, Bo's human. An I have a big basket of toys. I'm also a teeny bit obsessed with Rabbits. I wouldn't never ack-shually catch one. It's just the cha-

sin'. They sit outside waitin' for me to come play. Dad hangs my leash right by the door cuz, if it wasn't on me, and I spotted a rabbit, POOF, this well-trained, uber-obedient 2-year-old Golden Retriever would be - GONE. I don't know what gets into me, Bonzo. Truly I don't. It's an issue I'm tryin' to overcome."

"Probably a good idea," I opined.

"I get regular mani-pedis an hair-cuts at my salon, South Paw. I keep my hair short cuz Dad can't vacuum, an I can't either. Me an Dad love takin' road trips in my truck, a Cool Kibbles Chevy Colorado. Dad took the backseat out an had it refitted, specially for me. It's All That Anna Bag of Pupperoni! We've been to Minnesota, Kentucky, Indiana an Ohio. Ohio's where I get to hang out with a buncha my Besties - CHIGGENS! I love those goofy feather-dusters."

"Chiggen's? Are you Woolfin' me?" I asked, astonished.

"Not at all. At first, I tried to get 'em to run with me, but they're not really into runnin'. So we just take liddle walks, talk about stuff, ponder Deep Questions like "Which came first ..."

Heading home, I was thinkin' how amazin' it is that The Right Dog an The Right Human so often just seem to find each other, out of all the dogs and humans in the world.

Till next time,

The Bonz

### Don't Be Shy

We are always looking for pets with interesting stories.

To set up an interview, email [bonzothejournalist@gmail.com](mailto:bonzothejournalist@gmail.com).



**JUNE**

# Treasure Coast Jeep Club





**MAY**



# MOJO, a lovely and lively Lab, charms the Bonz

## Hi Dog Buddies!

This week I yapped with a super pretty Chocolate Lab, MOJO Kouns, who has a very interesting job: She's a sorta Big Sister/Teacher for puppies in training at Dogs for Life to be service dogs for disabled veterans.

MOJO was right at the door, waggin' am jumpin' (up, NOT on), like she was on springs. She came right over for the Wag-an-Sniff. Her coat was like chocolate velvet an she had big golden eyes.

"Good morning! Miss MOJO. It's a pleasure," I said in my suave pooch-of-the-world voice.

"Likewise, Mr. Bonzo," she replied. "This is my Mom, Linda. My Dad (I call him Colonel Sam), is elsewhere." She led the way to the sunny paddy-o.

"I'm excited to learn about your Very Important Job, but first, I'm curious about your unusual name."

MOJO laughed. "Lotsa humans an pooches think I'm a boy, cuzza my name. Ackshully, I was named after golf balls."

"Wait. Wha-at? Did you say you were named after golf balls?"

"It's true," she said. "See, my Mom's a golfer: they're humans who like to tromp around long, funny fields with fellow humans. They carry bags fulla long sticks, or get other humans to carry 'em. They whop a liddle bitty ball with one of the sticks an then they walk (or ride in special carts) to wher-ever it lands, and whop the ball again. An keep whoppin' it till they get to the end. There's ditches full of sand and liddle ponds scattered around, and

"I KNOW, right? Anyway Mom's golf balls all had the same name, MOJO, an she always thought it'd be a Cool Kibbles name for her next dog. Which was ME."

"Good story! So, how'd ya find your Forever Family?"

"Almost seven years ago, when I was only 8 weeks old, Mom was Dog Shoppin' on The Net an saw my pickshur. Needles to say, I was an irresistible chocolate fluffball. I was living on an Amish farm in Pencil-VANE-yuh and they hadda ship me inna PLANE to here. When Mom an Colonel Sam came to pick me up at the airport, the humans in charge told 'em they'd never seen a happier puppy than me. Most pooches get all concerned and nervous, but I thought it was a Crispy Dog Biscuits ad-VEN-shure!

"I've always been a cheerful grrrl, never chewed shoes or anything. I did have a bit of Separation Anxiety, tho. When Mom and Colonel Sam were going out for the first time after they got me, they put me in my nice crate. WELL, I Totally Freaked OUT. Was I going back to Pencil-VANE-yuh? Were they going away forever? What if I had to Do My Doody?"

"Colonel Sam said, 'Let's let her outta the crate and see how she does.'"

"Mom said, 'OK, but if she tears stuff up, ITS ON YOU!'"

"Well, I was positively, absolutely NEVER goin' back in that crate, so I decided I'd be the Best-Behaved Dog EVER. Now I have the run of the house, an there's NO WAY I'm gonna mess



easy-going personality, they thought I'd be great at helpin' new trainee puppies learn the ropes (I don't know why they call it that. There weren't any ackshul ropes), and learn how to get along with each other, before startin' official Service Dog training."

"What does that In Tail, EXACTLY?"

"Well the puppy trainees come stay with me here, usually for about 10 days. I'm kinda like a Big Sister. We play, I show 'em about swimmin' so they won't be scared of it, an I explain about gettin' along with humans an fellow pooches, which is real important. Not every dog makes it. If you snap at stuff or get nervous and distracted, you won't pass. Bein' a Service Dog is a Great Honor, anna Great Responsibility."

"So, I have a buncha liddle fluffballs runnin' all over, nibblin' my ears, tumblin' around. I love 'em but it's eck-ZA-WST-ing. An those pointy liddle puppy teeth are SHARP. My first puppy trainees were Golden Retrievers, Big Sis an

her convertible, the wind in my fur, ears flappin'. It's ex-ZILLA-rating! Travelin's cool, too. Once we drove up to Savannah an stayed inna Very Fancy, Dog Frenly place. Mom says it was GORE-jus. There was a place for pooches to play, an dog biscuits for us, anna Happy Hour for us an our humans. The rest-runts are pooch-frenly too.

"An I have tons of pooch pals: My pooch posse is Kelli, a mini-Golden Retriever; Chico, a Bichon Frise from across the


street; Maggie's a Standard Poo; an Annie's a Chihuahua. I like to watch the birds an squirrels. Once I saw this big ol' turtle. An there's GADORS in the water, so we hafta be CAREFUL. Specially my smaller, Snack-Size frens."

"Speakin' of snacks, any favrites?"

"If I eat my dinner all up I get a Frosty Paws. Soon as my dish is empty, I run to the Fridge and stare. I also enjoy the occasional marrow bone."

Woof, did the time go by fast! Headin' home, I was thinkin' about MOJO's Very Important job helpin' turn silly, eager pupsters into Service Dogs, standin' by their veteran partners no matter what. I was also thinkin' about Frosty Paws. I'm sure there'd be room in our freezer.

Till next time,

The Bonz 

## Your Very Beach Newsweek™

MOJO laughed. "Lotsa humans an pooches think I'm a boy, cuzza my name. Ackshully, I was named after golf balls."

"Wait. Wha-at? Did you say you were named after golf balls?"

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I shook my head. "Humans! Go figure."

"I've always been a cheerful grrrl, never chewed shoes or anything. I did have a bit of Separation Anxiety, tho. When Mom and Colonel Sam were going out for the first time after they got me, they put me in my nice crate. WELL, I Totally Freaked OUT. Was I going back to Pencil-VANE-yuh? Were they going away forever? What if I had to Do My Doody?"

"Colonel Sam said, 'Let's let her outta the crate and see how she does.'"

"Mom said, 'OK, but if she tears stuff up, ITS ON YOU!'"

"Well, I was positively, absolutely NEVER goin' back in that crate, so I decided I'd be the Best-Behaved Dog EVER. Now I have the run of the house, an there's NO WAY I'm gonna mess THAT up."

"Wise move. So, tell me about your job, an your off-work time."

"Mom's a volunteer with Dogs for Life, and Colonel Sam's a director of the Veterans Council. Cuzza my cheerful,

official Service Dog training."

"What does that In Tail, EXACTLY?"

"Well the puppy trainees come stay with me here, usually for about 10 days. I'm kinda like a Big Sister. We play, I show 'em about swimmin' so they won't be scared of it, an I explain about gettin' along with humans an fellow pooches, which is real important. Not every dog makes it. If you snap at stuff or get nervous and distracted, you won't pass. Bein' a Service Dog is a Great Honor, anna Great Responsibility."

"So, I have a buncha liddle fluffballs runnin' all over, nibblin' my ears, tumblin' around. I love 'em but it's eck-ZA-WST-ing. An those pointy liddle puppy teeth are SHARP. My first puppy trainees were Golden Retrievers, Big Sis an Liddle Sis. An Savannah, a white Lab. Now they're with their own veteran partners. I like knowin' I helped make 'em successful Service Dogs."

"An when you're off work ...?"


"I love going for rides with Mom in

"Speakin' of snacks, any favrites?"

"If I eat my dinner all up I get a Frosty Paws. Soon as my dish is empty, I run to the Fridge and stare. I also enjoy the occasional marrow bone."

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Till next time,

The Bonz 

# Covid Lockdown

6 • MAY 7, 2020 • VETERAN VOICE

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

### \*\*IMPORTANT NOTICE\*\*

**Dogs for Life, Vero Beach, has made the following announcement:**

Dogs For Life's operations will continue with the following precautions:

- Group training classes will be held outside
  - In-home training is postponed
  - Wednesday's Trainers Workshop classes are postponed until 4/8
  - The Off-Leash Dog Park will remain open.
- Be Smart!**
- Keep gatherings to 10 people or less and stay 6 feet apart
  - Wash your hands or sanitize before and after pressing buttons to dog park access gates
  - Soap pumps are provided at water stations as always
- Be aware that germs can stick to your dog's fur  
**If you're sick, stay home!**

6 • APRIL 16, 2020 • VETERAN VOICE

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

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**If you're sick, stay home!**

## Dog training deemed essential by Indian River commissioners

### Dogs For Life

On April 1, Dogs For Life, Vero Beach, closed its doors and dog park to all operations when Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis declared a quarantine "stay at home" order due to COVID-19. DFL employees were prepared and began working from home.

On April 20, after the Indian River County Commissioner's office — in conjunction with the Indian River County Sheriff's Office — deemed DFL's Service and Hearing Dog Training essential, training began for two service dogs and two veterans at a time, twice a day. Trainers were able to accommodate all 25 dogs and clients back in training the first week!

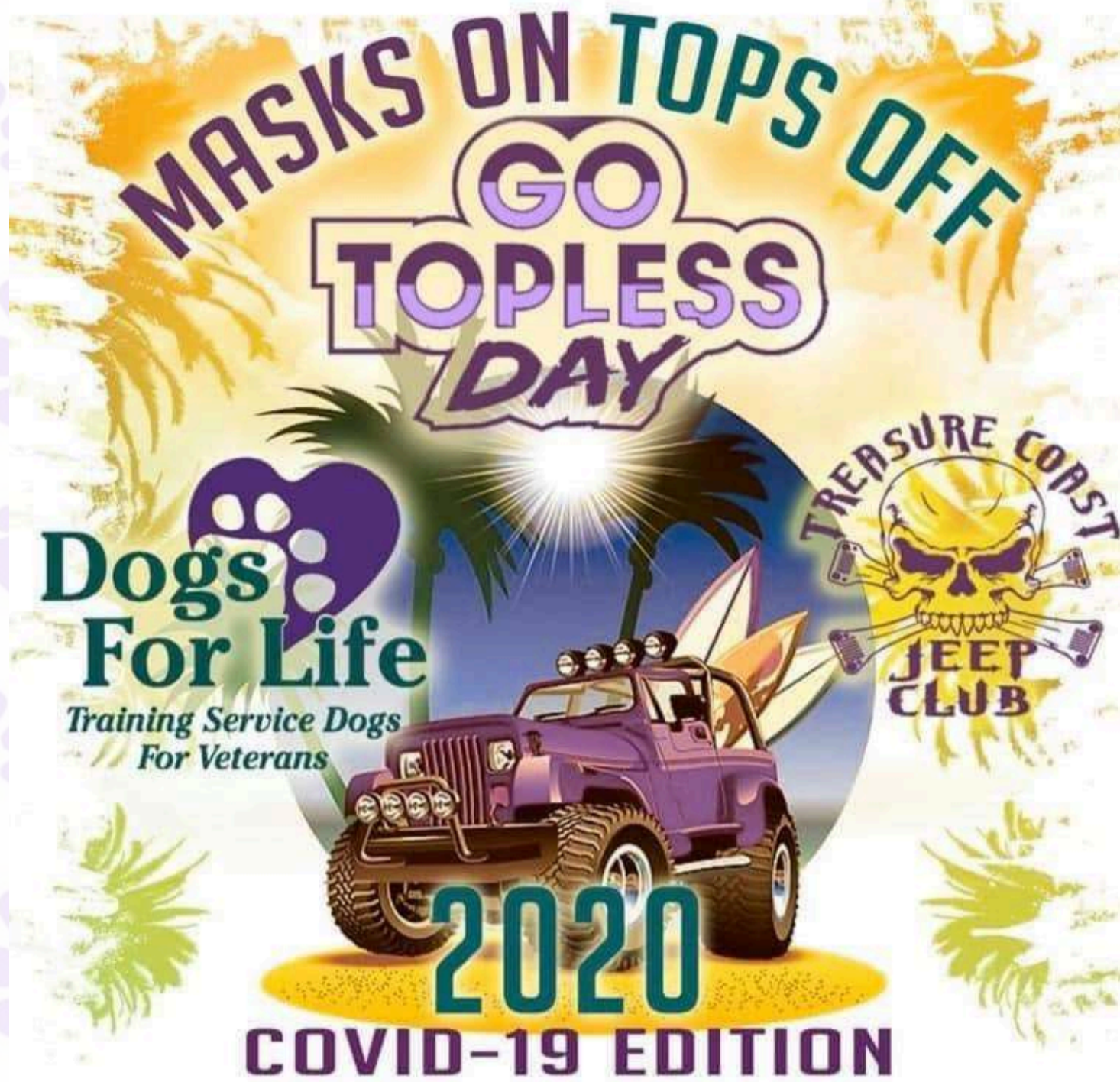
While at the Training Center records are kept of attendants and their temperature. Hands are washed and masks are worn. Dog on dog interaction is kept to a minimum, and all training sessions are limited to less than an hour.

DFL looks forward to being able to get our Veterans Training Veterans Workshops under way again and opening our off-leash dog park, just as soon as we get authorization from the State and County.

PTSD Support Groups that had been accessible on a virtual platform, are now in session again at the DFL Training Center. Please contact our office for additional information at (772) 567-8969.

In the meantime, we want all of our members, clients and volunteers to maintain social distancing, wear a mask and stay strong.

# Treasure Coast Jeep Club Fundraiser





**APRIL**

## Letter to the EDITOR

### Dogs For Life update — ready to allow service dog training, need supplies

*To the Editor:*


At this point during the COVID-19 pandemic, Dogs For Life has been deemed essential by the Indian River County Commission and the IRC Sheriff's Office to open within safety guidelines, i.e. wearing face masks, washing hands and social distancing for Service and Hearing Dog training only.

Currently we are not allowing the dogs to mix. Dogs and owners are distancing in separate areas of the park.

The DFL Off-Leash Dog Park will open to our members absolutely as soon as possible. This will be when we receive authorization from IRC and have adequate disinfecting supplies.

In the meantime, so that we are able to open the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park within safety guidelines we're asking, if possible, our members to donate any of the following items:

- Hand Sanitizer
- Disinfecting Soap
- Lysol
- Bleach Cleaning Products
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper



**Dogs  
For Life**  
*Training Service Dogs  
For Veterans*

Please drop off supplies Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 2-4:30 p.m.

Our hope is that when the county is ready, we'll be ready!

Additionally, the Annual Hearing and Service Dog Graduation Ceremony and Donor & Volunteer Awards, originally scheduled for April 4, has been postponed until further notice. Until we can celebrate in person, we will be featuring and congratulating our Graduates and Award Winners through social media and email.

**Dogs For Life**  
**Vero Beach**

# PTSD Support Group Meetings

## PTSD Support Group Meetings

**Veterans Only**  
Mondays 7:00 PM

**Veterans & Non-Veterans**  
Saturdays 11:00 AM

**Families**  
Saturdays 9:30 AM

Facilitators:

Thomas R. Metzinger, USMC, LCSW, Therapist  
Michael Wright, USA, (Ret.), RCSWI/MCAP



Dogs For Life  
Service Dog Training Center  
1230 16th Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
(772) 567-8969  
[www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)



**211'S MYFLVET 1-844-MYFLVET or 2-1-1**  
**Veteran to Veteran Support, Linkage to**  
**Services & Suicide Prevention ... 24/7**

### **COUNSELING/MENTAL HEALTH**

Behaviorial Health Center	(772) 563-4666
Mental Health Association (MHA)	(772) 569-9788
MHA "Our House" Drop In	(772) 778-4444
Mental Health Collaborative Connections Center	(772) 217-3663
NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)	(772) 532-5554
New Horizons of the Treasure Coast (Vero Beach)	(772) 778-7217
Suncoast Mental Health Centers (Vero Beach)	(772) 564-8616

### **HEALTH CLINICS/HOSPITALS**

TC Community Health	(772) 257-8224
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### **VETERANS/CRISIS LINE** **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

IRC Veterans Service Office (Sebastian)	(772) 589-6597
IRC Veterans Service Office (Vero Beach)	(772) 226-1499
VA Medical Center (WPB) & women's programs	(800) 972-8262
VA Outpatient Clinic (Vero Beach)	(772) 299-4623

\*Also ask your VA Social Worker & Whole Health Coordinator

**211TreasureCoast.org**

# Robert Bowman Memorial

*In Loving Memory*



**Robert Bowman**

May 28, 1921 - April 18, 2020

The smile you wore, the  
way you talked and a  
thousand more things we  
remember.

*With admiration, respect  
and love, All of your "Girls"*

# Impact 100 Grants

© TCPALM.COM | TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 | 2A

## Impact 100 awards grants to Indian River County nonprofits

**Janet Begley**

Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

VERO BEACH — Big Brothers Big Sisters, Camp Haven, Children's Home Society, The Source and the Treasure Coast Food Bank are the five winners of \$100,000 grants from Impact 100.

Three other nonprofits each will receive \$6,827 merit grants, including the Ocean Research & Conservation Association (ORCA), The Arc and the visiting Nurse Association of the Treasure Coast.

For the first time, awardees were selected via a virtual membership meeting April 23, where 44% of members attended via Zoom.

Members viewed 5-minute videos from each of the eight finalists and then cast votes online or by mail. Overall, 75% of Impact 100 members cast ballots in the 2020 grant process.

Impact 100 was founded in 2008 with the idea 100 women each donating \$1,000 could make a transformational difference in the community. The group now includes more than 500 members.

Since its inception 12 years ago, Im-

Impact 100 has distributed more than \$4.6 million to nonprofit organizations.

"Our nonprofits need these grant dollars more than ever," said Amy Acker, Impact 100 president. "Of course, I was disappointed that we could not be physically together to celebrate the amazing year we have had. But right now, that is secondary to the urgency felt by all of us on the board to keep our process going and find an innovative way to award our grant dollars this year."

The choice this year was harder than ever, with many worthy organizations applying for funding, said Suzanne Carter, who chaired the 2020 grants process.

"In these challenging and uncertain times, the need among those served by our nonprofit community is greater than ever," she said.

Winners of \$100,000 Impact 100 grants are:

‡ **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Indian River County, The BIG Mission:** This project will recruit veterans and service professionals to mentor and engage struggling, disadvantaged youth in Indian River County.

‡ **Camp Haven:** Grant will help fund

new multipurpose services and programs building that will be the meeting place for training, psychological counseling, AA meetings and more.

‡ **Children's Home Society, Dodger-town Elementary Community Partnership School:** Creates a program that will assess and address school community challenges and implement a school improvement program that will provide behavioral health services, after-school enrichment program and parent engagement services.

‡ **The Source, Dining with Dignity Food Truck:** An employment skills training program that offers culinary training to help resolve the greater issues of hunger, homelessness, poverty, underemployment and chronic unemployment. The food truck offers a mobile extension of this program to the greater Indian River County community.

‡ **The Treasure Coast Food Bank, Mobile Mercado, Indian River County:** Treasure Coast Food Bank will introduce a self-contained roving grocery store on wheels and food access point that will meet Indian River residents where they live, work and play.

Winners of \$6,827 Merit Grants in-

clude:

‡ **Ocean Research and Conservation Association, Inc., ORCA Center for Citizen Science:** The Citizen Science Program will educate and engage community members in solving the problems that are leading to the degradation of the Indian River Lagoon.

‡ **The ARC and Atlantic Classical Orchestra Collaborative Music Program:** This program will allow people with varying degrees of ability an opportunity to learn about musical genres, how to play instruments and perform with the Atlantic Classical Orchestra.

‡ **Visiting Nurse Association of the Treasure Coast, VNA Home Health Music Therapy Program:** This is a music therapy program specifically for VNA Home Health Patients with chronic conditions.

To be considered for Impact 100 funding, grant requests must fall into one of four categories: family; health and wellness; education; and enrichment and environment.

Of the nonprofit organizations applying for 2020 funding, more than a dozen became quality grant applications, with eight finalists selected in March.

# Covid Updates

4 • APRIL 2, 2020 • VETERAN VOICE

## Letter to the EDITOR

### Important graduation ceremony postponed for Dogs For Life

#### To the Editor:

It's with a heavy heart that Dogs For Life has decided to postpone our Service/Hearing & Veteran Dog Graduation BBQ and Donor & Volunteer Awards Ceremony originally slated for April 4.

Everyone has worked so hard and is so deserving of recognition, but with the current state of affairs surrounding the COVID-19 we feel it is the safest thing to do.

We will, however, look forward to holding this special event as soon as possible and will keep you posted.

Dogs For Life's operations will continue with the following precautions:

Group service and hearing dog training classes are being held outside

In-home training is postponed until further notice

Wednesday's Trainers Workshop classes are also postponed

The Off-Leash Dog Park remains open

#### Be Smart!

Keep gatherings to 10 people or less and stay 6 feet apart

Wash your hands or sanitize before and after pressing buttons to dog park access gates

Soap pumps are provided at water stations as always

If you're sick, stay home!

**Shelly Ferger**  
Founder/CEO  
Dogs For Life



Courtesy photo

Dogs For Life CEO/Founder Shelly Ferger is keeping important missions going during the coronavirus crisis.

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

### \*\*IMPORTANT NOTICE\*\*

**Dogs for Life, Vero Beach, has made the following announcement:**

Dogs For Life's operations will continue with the following precautions:

- Group training classes will be held outside
- In-home training is postponed
- Wednesday's Trainers Workshop classes are postponed until 4/8
- The Off-Leash Dog Park will remain open.
- Be Smart!
- Keep gatherings to 10 people or less and stay 6 feet apart
- Wash your hands or sanitize before and after pressing buttons to dog park access gates
- Soap pumps are provided at water stations as always
- Be aware that germs can stick to your dog's fur
- If you're sick, stay home!**

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## PTSD Support for Veterans moved to a virtual platform

**Shelly Ferger**  
Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

VERO BEACH -- Due to the crisis facing some military veterans, Michelle Dale, president of American Gold Star Mothers of IRC and Jason Patzer, Com-

mander of Next Generation Veterans of IRC, have moved the PTSD Support Group Meetings to a virtual platform.

The meetings will be held on Monday nights at 7 p.m., Saturdays at 11 a.m., and Families of Veterans on Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

Through a grant received by Dogs For

Life, Inc. PTSD Support for Veterans who are facing financial strain will receive telephone support with therapist Tom Metzinger, USMC, (772-321-6998 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Michael Wright, USA, (Ret.) (912-332-0271 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.)

Veterans can join the Zoom meeting

by pasting link into your browser: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/932594097> - Meeting ID: 932 594 097; One tap from mobile device: 9292056099; 932594097 #US (New York) or by phone at +1 929 205 6099 US; +1 253 215 8782 US; +1 301 715 8592 US.

# Vero Beach Magazine

## Listen and Learn

HEARING DOGS ARE ALWAYS ON THE JOB, PROVIDING PEACE OF MIND WITH A WAGGING TAIL



BY AMY ROBINSON

Cokie the labradoodle pauses over the chew toy she is worrying. She cocks her head at the sound, motionless. The sound repeats and Cokie quickly stands up and paws her owner. "Good! Good girl," says her owner, Judy, who acquired the apricot-and-white puppy from a breeder in Colorado who assured Judy that the dog would make a good service dog when she matured. We are teaching Cokie to alert to a handful of sounds: the doorbell, a door knock and Judy's cell phone ring tone.

Cokie has some big paws to fill; her predecessor, Bailey, also a labradoodle, was trained at Dogs for Life

in Vero Beach to become Judy's hearing dog.

"Private persons have the right to train their own dog per the Americans with Disabilities Act, but temperament is everything," says Shelly Ferger, CEO of Dogs for Life. Although Bailey graduated from its certification program, Dogs for Life declined to take Cokie on, citing her shyness as a potential roadblock to performing her duties when out in public. Ferger did encourage Judy to start the training herself using the same task-oriented approach that worked with Bailey.

Teaching Cokie to alert Judy to selected sounds involves task training, just



Despite initial signs that she may not have the ideal temperament to succeed as a service dog, Cokie has exceeded all expectations.

like obedience training in which the dog performs a task that is owner-directed. For Cokie to learn to hear on behalf of her owner, we want the sound itself to motivate the task; no command is forthcoming. Judy has lost some hearing in one ear and anticipates some diminished ability in the other ear; so teaching Cokie now is good planning.

To begin, we encourage a "touch" behavior by placing a piece of painter's tape on Judy's pant leg. Judy points to this spot, says "Touch," and when Cokie investigates, praise and a treat follow. The dog is quite happy to do this easy task and sits expectantly in front of her owner.

After a few repetitions, we add the sound of the cell phone, which has a distinct,

shrill ring. At first, Cokie looks around the room and out the window, but when Judy offers a little help by pointing to the tape on her leg, the dog paws the spot, nearly tearing the tape.

Extra treats follow to mark the behavior we like. Next time the phone rings, the dog should recall the happy fuss we made when she alerted to the sound.

Stress is certainly a factor when working toward this kind of task, since Cokie will need to alert to sounds at home, out on walks and in new places when Judy and her husband travel with their dog in the summer.

As a young puppy, she displayed a cautious nature, and we embarked on a socializing program that had us practicing easy commands at the Village Shops, in pet boutiques and at the Farmer's Market, where she could see plenty of people and other dogs.

While not a desirable trait in a service dog, Cokie's shyness may contribute to her dedication to Judy. "When a young child is shy, she might cling to her mom, hiding behind her," says Judy. "Fortunately, Cokie seems to have homed in on me in the same way. I am the one who feeds her, plays with her, walks her and talks to her."

Today we will test Cokie's confidence and sound alert skills at a large pet supply store, where plenty of tantalizing scents and new experiences will compete for her attention. I ask Judy to casually browse an aisle with Cokie while I dial her cell phone number. To our surprise, the dog eagerly paws Judy's leg. She is showing none of the shyness that plagued her first months with Judy. We allow Cokie to greet another shopper, eye the birds and rabbits in their enclosures and sniff the treats in their display bins, all while intermittently ringing the cell phone. Cokie consistently performs with a well-placed paw.

In the search for Cokie, Judy had specified to the breeder that she was looking for a puppy that would have the temperament to be a service dog, but after a long journey from Colorado that included a car ride through the mountains before flying nearly five hours in the baggage compartment, Cokie arrived in Orlando full of trepidation, the opposite of the confident puppy Judy was hoping to see.

Chris Diefenthaler is the executive director of Assistance Dogs International, a worldwide accrediting body for service dog orga-

nizations like Dogs for Life. "Looking for a puppy that will later excel at service is a high-risk proposition," she says. "The puppy may not have or develop the temperament to handle the stress that comes along with working in public. It takes a special dog for that," she adds. "For someone who wants to go that

resting on the desk and sits in front of it. Judy grins and praises her lavishly. I ask how this happened so quickly, since I had anticipated several more weeks before we met this goal.

"When the phone rang, as soon as she touched me, I would say, 'Where is it?' and stand up," she explains. "I waited to treat her until

**"Looking for a puppy that will later excel at service is a high-risk proposition."**

— CHRIS DIEFENTHALER

route, it is critical they check on dogs from previous litters: How many are working service dogs? What tasks do they perform? Were the dogs certified by an accredited group?"

After a two-week break from training, Judy and I get back together. As soon as I arrive, she asks me to ring her cell phone. Cokie immediately alerts Judy and then does something she has not yet been trained to do: The dog trots purposefully toward the phone

she began to move toward the sound." Judy would then put a treat directly onto the cell phone like an hors d'oeuvre on a tray, and slide it right into Cokie's waiting mouth. "She also can distinguish between my cell phone and the land line or my husband's cell phone. She never alerts to those."

At Dogs for Life, trainers have experienced some miracle moments, too, when dogs begin to alert to new sounds without the benefit of prior training.

"One of our dogs alerted to a new baby's cry, which we did not teach," says lead trainer Cassie Ford. "We also had a sheltie who had just learned to alert her owner to a door knock, which is the first sound we teach. At home one day, the dog showed alert behavior, but when the owner investigated, it turned out to be the tea kettle whistling."

Judy is looking forward to nurturing Cokie's progress. "I know a lot of this is training me, how I react to her alerts and staying vigilant myself," she notes. Now that the dog is taking her to the door and the phone, Judy wants to teach a new alert skill. Her neighborhood has no sidewalks, so they walk against traffic, but a car coming from behind them is only 15 feet or so away. "Now, she'll turn her head and look and I always praise her for that, but I'd like her to formally alert me, not just to notice it herself."

While Cokie will have an important new job, her prior rôle as beloved family pet is still intact, a point illustrated when she jumps into Judy's lap and doles out kisses at the mention of her name. While this particular dog was not all Judy had expected, Cokie has embraced her dual rôle with love and loyalty. ☼



**MARCH**

# Veterans & Family Picnic

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY | YOUR NEWSWEEKLY | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020 | 51

## Community News

### Veterans and Family Picnic celebrates community

**Michele Peters**  
Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

SEBASTIAN -- A little rain could not keep more than 250 veterans and their families away from the recent Veterans and Family Picnic at Riverview Park.

A community of volunteers and veterans' organizations came together to plan and host the 2020 picnic. The American Legion Posts 189, 181 and 39, along with members of the Veterans Council, Vero Beach Veterans, VFW, and Next Generation Veterans all pitched in to execute a fun-filled day for the veteran community.

"We are so grateful for the participation and support of the members of our community who rallied together to make this picnic a success" said Marty Zickert, board chair of the Veterans Council of



IRC. "Countless volunteers and businesses stepped up from beginning to end to create this event for the veteran community. Wes's Barbeque donated his smoker and the Salvation Army provided their canteen for food prep. It is so amazing

what can be done when people come together. We are so proud of that."

The Honor Guard presentation of the colors kicked off the event and Father Dave Newhart shared the invocation. Telly Antona sang the National Anthem and

**Martin Zickert,  
Nick DeMarco,  
Michelle Dale,  
Father Dave  
Newhart, Jim  
Romanek and  
Ken Dale.**

CONTRIBUTED BY  
VETERANS  
COUNCIL

Michelle Dale lead attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

More than 65 gift cards were donated by local businesses and were distributed to lucky local veterans who entered a free drawing.

Area veteran organizations such as Military Officers Association of America, the Space Coast Honor Flight, Dogs for Life, American Gold Star Mothers of IRC, Wreaths Across America and more were among the many organizations on site offering group and membership information.

To find out more information on the Veterans Council of Indian River County, the more than 25 veteran membership organizations affiliated with the council or for veterans in need of services, call the Veterans Council at 772-410-5820 or visit [www.HelpIRCvets.org](http://www.HelpIRCvets.org).

# Veterans Council of IRC Annual Gala





**FEBRUARY**

# Treasure Coast Kennel Club Talk



# Bridge Tournament

*Eleanor Bengyak  
and her Service Dog  
Rufus  
Invite You To...*

**SAVE THE  
DATE!**

**Monday, February 24th, 2020 11:00 a.m.**

*Dogs For Life's Bridge Tournament*

**Bid, Play... Veterans Win!**



# Cane Presentation

## Dogs for Life

**From:** Dogs for Life  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 8:15 AM  
**To:** Cheryl & Ted Gorczyca  
**Cc:** Dogs for Life  
**Subject:** RE: Ted and Kona

Dear Ted,  
Thank you so much for the heartwarming account of your relationship with Kona. We are so happy she is continuing to work for you. Sometimes, all we can do is one day at a time.  
Congratulations on your cane presentations.. I'm sure that was a rewarding experience for you.  
All our best,  
Sincerely,  
Shelly

**From:** Cheryl & Ted Gorczyca <ctgorczyca@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 8, 2020 7:51 PM  
**To:** dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** Ted and Kona

Hi Shelly

It has been a while and I sincerely would like to thank you for all you did for Kona and I. Kona has come along and doing very well for what I need on a day to day basis. Dr. Horn suggested that I email you about Kona.

In fact a few months ago she saved my life. I was in a very dark place and seriously planning on taking my life in the car. Kona was in the back seat and picked up on my feeling, mood or mental attitude and started licking my neck, my ear, crying, whimpering and licking me more. She even barked a couple of times and this went on for fifteen minutes or more. I pulled over and she came between the seats and continued licking and started to wag her tail.

She still wakes me up when I have my dreams and stays with me until I calm down. At the dentist or doctors she stays in the corner laying down or sitting until we are done. The other day the dentist commented on how good she is while I am being worked on. If the procedure is long she has come over to check on me.

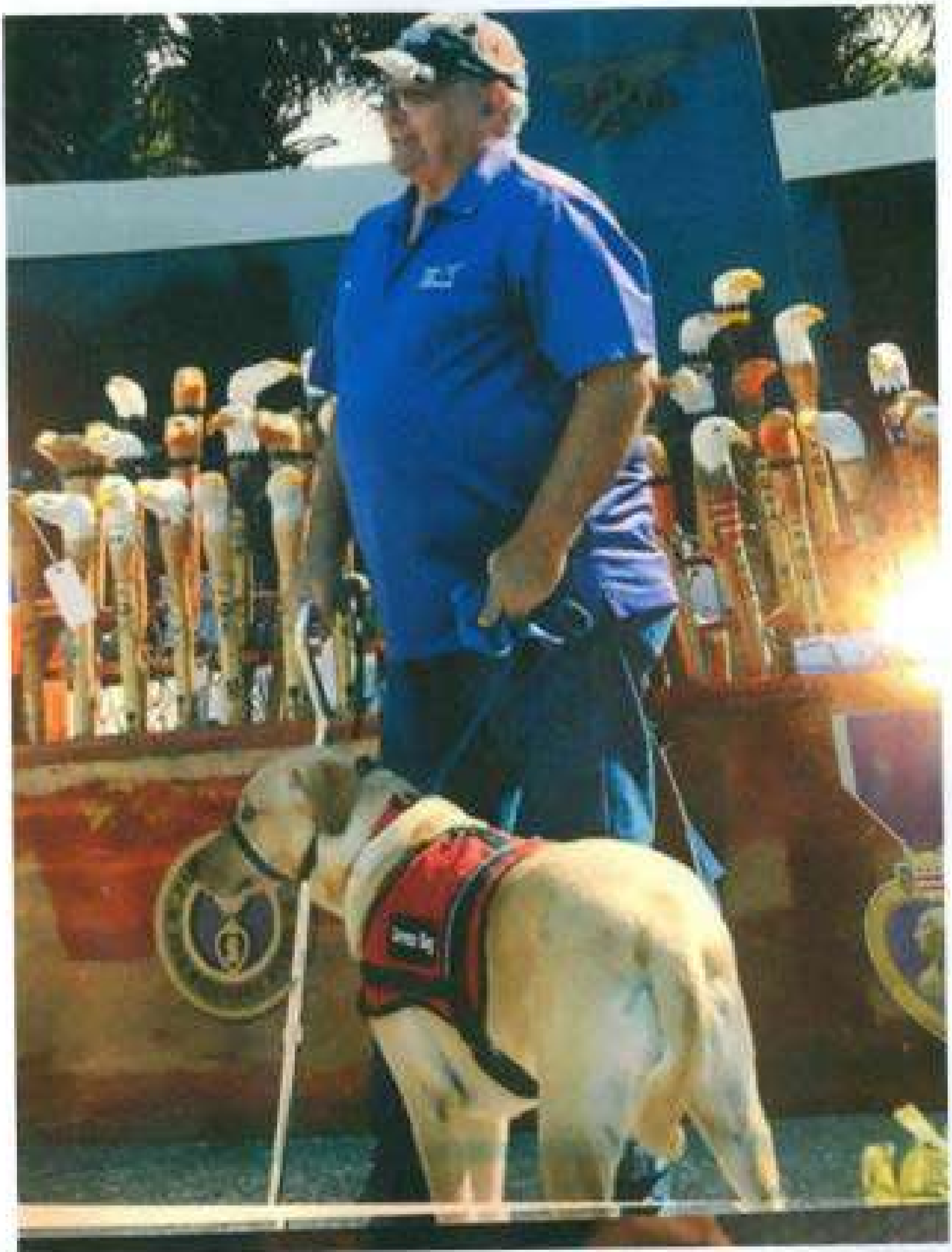
She still has her moments but she is right there for me. I walk with a cane now and when I stumble and fall she helps me get up or learning to go get Cheryl. We are doing this on our own.

Kona and I even handed out four Purple Heart Eagle canes to my fellow Navy squadron brothers at our ceremony this year.

The incident about Kona saving my life is documented in my file at the V. A.

Thank you again Shelly for connecting the two of us together and showing us some of the training.

Ted Gorczyca and Kona



# Thank You Letters

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20500



Dogs For Life  
c/o Mrs. Kathi G. Schuman  
1230 16th Avenue  
Vero Beach, Florida 32960



THE WHITE HOUSE

*Thank you for your kind wishes. During this special time of year,  
our hearts are filled with gratitude as we reflect on the blessings  
of faith, family and freedom that shape our great Nation.  
May the peace and joy of the Christmas season be with you  
and your family now and throughout the New Year.*

*Sincerely,*

A red ink signature of Donald Trump.

A red ink signature of Melania Trump.



Thank  
you!

amanda  
Krieger

# Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County Walk-A-Thon Donations

