



**Dogs
For Life**

*Training Service Dogs
For Veterans*

Scrapbook

2014



DECEMBER

Joy in the New Year

10 » Wednesday, December 31, 2014 » YOUR NEWSWEEKLY » INDIAN RIVER COUNTY » SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Your Community

Dogs For Life wishes veterans much joy in new year

By Shelly Ferger
For Luminaries

Dogs For Life, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, is waiving the orientation fee to the Off-Leash Dog Park for Military Veterans.

Dogs For Life recently received funding for the Off-Leash Dog Park to help reduce the cost and encourage more people to join.

"For the next year, any-

one wishing to use the park will be asked to pay an orientation fee," said Shelly Ferger, founder and CEO.

All dogs will still be required to be neutered, social and inoculated.

Dogs for Life works closely with local veterans, some of whom are in training with their dogs.

"We don't charge them to train their dogs to be hearing or service dogs," said Ferger, adding that one of the trainers is a veteran, too.

"The old adage, 'It takes

one to know one,' couldn't be more true. Many of those who have served our country have been through ordeals most of us will never comprehend, but veterans understand each other and we understand this bond," said Ferger.

The Off-Leash Dog Park provides veterans with a safe place to go with their dogs, a place where they can socialize and relax in a beautiful park setting.

For more information, please call 772-567-8969 or visit www.dogsforlifefvb.org.



U.S. Marine Daniel with his service dog.

COMMUNITY NEWS [Reply](#)

Dogs For Life wishes our veterans a joyous holiday season



U.S. Marine veteran Daniel with service dog Ariel

Dogs For Life, Inc., non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, is waiving the Orientation fee to the Off-Leash Dog Park for Military Veterans.

Dogs For Life recently received funding for the Off-Leash Dog Park to help reduce the cost and encourage more people to join. "For the next year, anyone wishing to use the park will be asked to pay an Orientation Fee. After that, they will be invited to participate during our Giving Campaigns. All dogs will still be required to be neutered, social and inoculated," said Shelly Ferger, Founder and CEO at Dogs For Life.

"We have been working very closely with our local Veterans, some of whom are in training with their dogs. We don't charge them to train their dogs to be Hearing or Service Dogs and one of our trainers is a Veteran himself. The old adage, "It takes one to know one" couldn't be more true. Many of those who have served our Country have been through ordeals most of us will never comprehend, but Veterans understand each other and we understand this bond," said Ferger.

Dogs For Life is one of only four organizations in the State of Florida Accredited by Assistance Dogs International. Once our Teams (owner and dog) are certified, they are allowed access throughout the world, including international travel and military bases. "This is very specialized training and we take it very seriously," stated Trainer, Jay Harris, U.S. Army Veteran. It's important to know that the training our teams go through takes six months to one year. The dogs are trained to perform specific tasks for their owners. As an Internationally Accredited Organization, we are required to recertify the dogs every year. Assistance Dog users trust their lives and safety to their dogs, so everything related to the training of both the dogs and people must meet extraordinary criteria. If we see the owners needs change over the years, then we begin training the dog to perform new tasks."

"One of the greatest things about this field of work is seeing how the person changes," added Jay. "Someone who has been isolated becomes more social. As we work with the owners and their dogs, we see a huge increase in confidence in both the people and the dogs. It's an amazing transformation to watch," stated Jay.

"We want our Veterans to have a safe place to go with their dogs...a place where they can gather to socialize and relax in the beautiful park setting. Whether they are going through Service Dog Training here or not, we thank them and welcome them to the Off-Leash Dog Park," stated Shelly. "On behalf of everyone at Dogs For Life, we send a special thank you to our Veterans."

For more information about DFL's Assistance Dog Training, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dog Training, the Off-Leash Dog Park, or to make a much-needed year-end, tax-deductible donation, please contact Shelly Ferger, Founder and CEO at 772-567-8969 or visit our website at <http://www.dogsforlifefvb.org>.

Christmas Luncheon



Heroes Appreciation Festival

Shelly Ferger

From: American Security Council Foundation <info@ascfusa.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2014 11:16 AM
To: dogsforlifefvb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Step Up America Heroes Appreciation Festival



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 11, 2014

Gary James; 772-388-2490

gjames@ascfusa.org

www.ascfusa.org

**Step Up America
Heroes Appreciation Festival**

Vero Beach, Florida – The American Security Council Foundation (ASCF) Dr. Henry A. Fischer (President/CEO), Brig. Gen. Donald B. Smith (Chairman of the Board) our Board Members and Senior Advisory Board wish to thank everyone connected with the 2014 Step Up America Heroes Appreciation Festival that took place December 6th, 2014 in Holman Stadium at Historic Dodgertown in Vero Beach, Florida.

We especially thank our sponsors George E. Warren Corp., Bedrock Aviation LLC, Vero Beach Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram, Chelsea's on Cardinal, Melody Music, Taddeo Family Foundation, Anthony Donadio, Quality Health Care and Wellness of Florida, Anthony Donini CPA, Historic Dodgertown, Springhill Suites, 94.7 Hot Country, Indian River Firefighters Association, Walmart # 1068, Home Depot # 8545, CVS # 5522, Nino's Pizza & Natalie's Best Florida Juices.

We also wish to thank the City of Vero Beach, the Indian River County Commissioners and County Administrators Offices, Indian River County Sheriff's Office, Vero Beach Police Department, Indian River County Recreation Department, Vero Beach Airport Authority our volunteers and supporters for making this an excellent evening.

We were proud to have as our onsite heroes Medal of Honor Awardee SFC Melvin Morris 5th Special Forces Group Viet Nam, CSM Ed Britt 5th Special Forces Group Viet Nam, MCPO Rick Kaiser Executive Director

National UDT/SEAL Museum, MCPO Ken Corona Asst. Director National UDT/SEAL Museum, Pinnacle Five; 9th MCPON Jim Herdt, 8th MCPOCG Vince Patton, 13th CMSAF Jim Finch, 14th SMMC Al McMichael. Also in attendance but not on stage was local hero Staff Sgt. Justin Burdette from Palm Bay, Florida.

With numerous Christmas Parades and other activities that took place on the same day, the event was well attended by approximately 3000 attendees.

The event featured **The Band Perry, JT Hodges, Newton & Thomas and Kurt Stevens**. The opening ceremonies took place at 4:30 with the National Anthem Girl "Janine Stange" performing the National Anthem as the Centennial High School ROTC Color Guard presented the colors.

The first of what we hope to be an annual event in Vero Beach raised money for the UDT/SEAL Trident House and the ASCF Scholarship fund benefiting the children of Active Duty Military, Veterans, First Responders and Law Enforcement.

The ASCF sends our sincere thanks and appreciation for your generous and dedicated support for our programs, including the Step Up America Program as well as your support of the strategy of "Peace through Strength" which has kept America free and strong. We pledge to you our continued best efforts to ensure that the United States of America will always have the best equipped, trained, and best lead military in the world making America the beacon of freedom hope and justice throughout the entire world.

In closing, on behalf of our Board of Directors, Senior Advisory Board and Staff, we wish you a joyous holiday season, Happy Hanukkah, and a blessed Christmas. May God truly bless you and your family in the new year!

American Security Council Foundation is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization. Promoting the Strategy of Peace Through Strength

This message was sent to dogsdofest@bellsouth.net from:

American Security Council Foundation | info@ascfusa.org | American Security Council Foundation | 1250 24th Street NW, Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20037

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iContact
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Channel 5 News

Shelly Ferger

From: DOGS FOR LIFE, INC. <dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 3:06 PM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: DFL on WPTV Channel 5, Two Service Dog Teams Certified, and Orientation Fee Waived for Veterans



**Congratulations
Vietnam Veteran Tony &
Service Dog "Shadow"
and
Retired Deputy Sheriff Phil &
Service Dog "Duke"**



Tony, Shadow, Phil and Duke

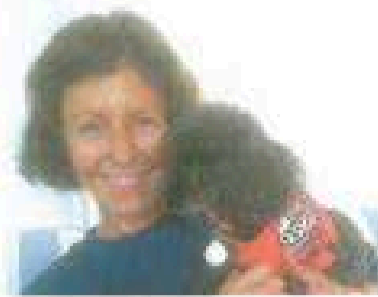
We are proud to announce the Certification of two Service Dogs Teams. Tony & Shadow and Phil & Duke received their certifications this week. This certification allows them full access to public places including international travel, access to military bases, and clinics. Recertification will be done in 6 months and then every year after.



Dogs For Life is one of only four organizations in the State of Florida to hold the ADI Accreditation.


For more information, please contact Shelly at Dogs For Life at 772-567-8969.

**See Beth and Tigger on
WPTV Channel 5!**



Florida State Senator Jimmie Smith is proposing a bill that makes it illegal for someone to "misrepresent a service dog".

[Watch the Newscast Here](#)

Tell us what you think on 

Dogs For Life Wishes Our Veterans a Joyous Holiday Season



Iraq War Veteran U.S. Marine Daniel with Service Dog "Ariel"

Dogs For Life, Inc. (DFL), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, is waiving the Orientation fee to the Off-Leash Dog Park for Military Veterans.

Dogs For Life recently received funding for the Off-Leash Dog Park to help reduce the cost and encourage more people to join. "For the next year, anyone wishing to use the park will be asked to pay an Orientation Fee. After that, they will be invited to participate during our Giving Campaigns. All dogs will still be required to be neutered, social and inoculated," said Shelly Ferger, Founder and CEO at Dogs For Life.

"We want our Veterans to have a safe place to go with their dogs...a place where they can gather to socialize and relax in the beautiful park setting. Whether they are going through Service Dog Training here or not, we thank them and welcome them to the Off-Leash Dog Park," stated Shelly. "On behalf of everyone at Dogs For Life, we send a special thank you to our Veterans."

For more information about DFL's Assistance Dog Training, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dog Training, the Off-Leash Dog Park, or to make a much-needed year-end, tax-deductible donation, please contact Shelly Ferger Founder and CEO at 772.567.8969 or visit our website at www.dogsforlifevb.org.

1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960

772.567.8969

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll free (800) 352-7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State. Registration # CH15531

Ambassadors

Shelly Ferger

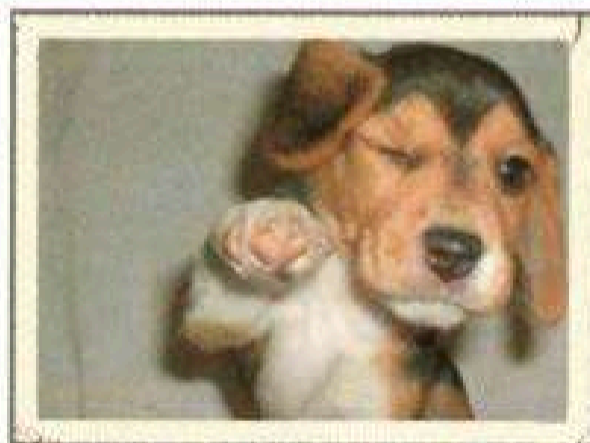
From: DOGS FOR LIFE, INC. <dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Friday, December 12, 2014 2:18 PM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Dog Park Ambassadors and A Special Message from Service Dog, Duke



Calling All Dog Park Ambassadors

Are you a Dog Park Ambassador?
Would you like to be a Dog Park Ambassador?

If you answered "yes," then



We Want You!

Remember when you were new to the Park and coming for your Orientation? Was there another 2 or 4 legged friend here to help you feel welcome and safe?



Being an Ambassador isn't a big job, but it can make a big difference to someone who is new to the Park. Whether you are a big dog or a small dog, **We Want You** to be an **Off-Leash Dog Park Ambassador!**

We need your help with Dog Park Orientations. More friends want to join, but lack of Ambassadors during orientations make it difficult. Let's reach out to our new friends with open paws by being a part of the Off-Leash Dog Park Ambassador Program today! All 2 legged Ambassadors must bring their 4 legged companions :)

For more information, please contact Shelly at
Dogs For Life at 772-567-8969.

And Now...

A Special Message From Duke



On behalf of all of the
Dogs For Life Service Dog Teams,
Duke wishes you all a safe and joyous
holiday season.



NOVEMBER

Thanksgiving



*Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at
Dogs For Life!*

*We want to take a moment to thank you for giving us
the opportunity to serve.*



1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960 772-567-8969



DOGS FOR LIFE, INC. <dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net>
Wednesday, November 26, 2014 9:48 AM
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Happy Thanksgiving

GIVING RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

Yes! I want to help DFL. Enclosed is my donation (please check one):
 \$10,000 Silver Benefactor _____ \$ 250 Patron _____
 \$ 5,000 Bronze Benefactor _____ \$ 100 Supporter _____
 \$ 1,000 Major Benefactor _____ \$ 50 Friend _____
 \$ 500 Benefactor _____ \$ 25 Donor _____
 \$ _____ Other (No amount is too small.)

Donations of \$100 or more can be recognized on the permanent "Bone" displays in the dog park.

Sizes are: \$100 (Small), \$500 (Medium), \$1,000 (Large) and \$5,000+ (Giant)

Yes! I will give \$100 or more and would like the following engraved "Donor Bone." (Please limit to 30 characters.)

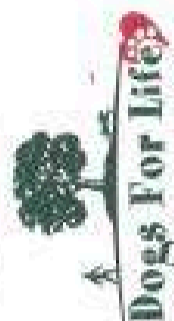
Donor Bones may be "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" a pet or person's name. A business may also be listed.

For your convenience you may now give on-line via PayPal at the DFL website: www.dogsforlifevb.org

NON-PROFIT
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 PERMIT #75
 VERO BEACH

DONATION MAIL-IN FORM

CLIP AND MAIL TO:
 Dogs For Life, Inc.
 P.O. Box 650023
 Vero Beach, FL 32965



Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Email address: _____

(We prefer our gift to remain anonymous)



Dogs For Life, Inc.
 P.O. Box 650023
 Vero Beach, FL 32965
 (772) 567-8969
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
www.dogsforlifevb.org



**IMPROVING THE
 QUALITY OF LIFE FOR
 PEOPLE AND DOGS
 AT NO COST TO OUR CLIENTS**

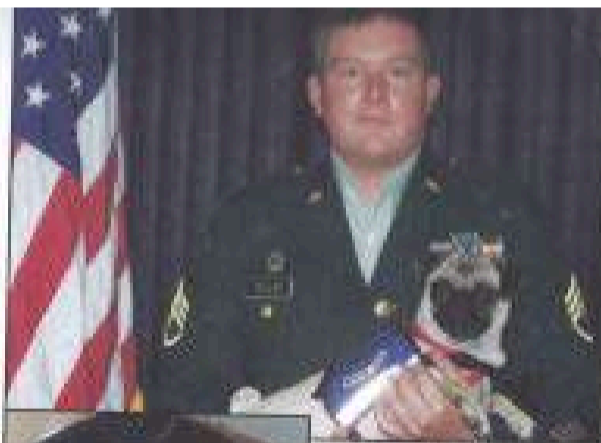
(772) 567-8969

A non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs and owning and operating an off-leash dog park.

Assistance Dogs are specially trained to perform tasks to assist a person with special needs 24 hours a day. This critical help enables their owners to lead a life of self-reliance and independence. During their training they develop a special bond with their human partners. Dogs For Life specializes in training Assistance Dogs, including Hearing Dogs and Service Dogs.

Hearing Dogs can be trained to alert their owners to a knock at the door, a telephone ring, a smoke alarm or an alarm clock. Many other sounds, such as a baby's cry or an oven timer, can be added to training depending on individual needs.

Service Dogs can assist with mobility challenges and psychiatric support. They can be cross-trained, depending on the needs of their companions, to open and close doors, turn lights on and off, tap a specialized K-9 emergency phone to dial 911, carry shopping bags, help with laundry and bring items to their companions. They can be trained to look both ways before entering a room or to watch behind one's back and create a barrier to stop people from approaching if it makes their companion uncomfortable.



*James Taylor, SSG
 U.S. Army (Ret.)
 Iraq War Veteran
 and his Hearing/Service
 Dog Pia Pia*



Pia Pia taps 911 phone.

Service Dogs for Veterans Training Program "task trains" dogs to assist Veterans with hearing and mobility challenges, as well as the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.



Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs provide warmth and comfort to individuals in need of support and unconditional love. Certified volunteer teams provide pet-assisted therapy for children and seniors at assisted-living facilities and at the dog park.

**DFL Assistance Dog
 Training and Administrative Center**

In response to growing needs in our community and beyond, Dogs For Life is constructing a 2,400 sq. ft. air-conditioned Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center at our 4+ acre Off-Leash Dog Park on 12th Street in Vero Beach. This facility will enhance the Dog Park Campus and give DFL much-needed exposure to the public in a central location.

The center will allow DFL to train many more dogs year-round, as well as widen the reach of our Community Outreach Programs. It will also enable us to expand our "Service Dogs For Veterans" Program by enabling us to pre-train Assistance Dogs at the center.

The new building will house administrative offices for our staff and volunteers and the incremental space and central location will allow DFL to better serve the needs of the people who need our services. The on-site location will also enable DFL to offer different categories of dog park memberships and provide long-awaited restrooms for dog park members.



*DFL Off-Leash Dog Park
 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960*





(772) 567-8969
12th Street & 16th Avenue • Vero Beach, FL 32965



Service Dogs For Veterans

A Message From Kathi Schumann

Dogs For Life, Inc. is one of only four Assistance Dog Training organizations in the state of Florida recognized by the Veteran's Administration to certify Service Dogs for Veterans.

As stated in the Federal Register, "Service Dogs Must Be Certified by ADI or International Guide Dog Federation for Veterans with Visual, Hearing, or Substantial Mobility Impairments to Receive Benefits."

DFL's prestigious ADI accreditation enables our Service Dogs to enter VA and military facilities, and our dogs' owners are eligible to receive Benefits. Dogs trained by other organizations do not have these privileges.

Our dogs have been turning lives around since 2001 because they enrich people's lives – providing ears that hear smoke alarms, paws that tap 911 buttons for emergency, and legs that provide access to an unseen world.

The fastest growing need for Service Dogs is

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

The sobering fact is that suicide is rampant¹:

Almost **once an hour** – every 65 minutes – a military Veteran commits suicide

Almost **once a day** an active duty soldier commits suicide; 349 in 2012 – a record high

There are now more suicides among active duty soldiers than combat deaths

Veterans make up 7% of the American population, but they account for 20% of its suicides

Our Veterans deserve our help!



Kathi Schumann gives Veteran Jim Taylor and his Hearing/Service Dog Pia Pia a special treat at the Schumann Racetrack.

in Florida, and it is for the brave military men and women who served our country!

231,000² Veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq already claim Florida as their home of record¹.

80,000³ Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans will retire to Florida in the next two years².

Extrapolating national VA numbers, the news is grim for our new residents:

- 3 in 10 will have a service-related disability
- 30% will suffer from the effects of PTSD
- 50% of those with PTSD will not seek treatment
- 19% will report PTSD symptoms classified as "serious functional impairment"
- 1/3 of Florida's adult homeless are Veterans, and 45% of them will suffer from mental illness⁴
- Florida is home to the highest number of amputees from the Gulf War-Era wars⁵

DFL is committed to capitalizing on our 12 years of experience to train Service Dogs for these Florida Veterans in need.



Our Veterans Are Returning Home ... Without Homes



A brief look at the national numbers also gives us an idea of what awaits us here in Florida:

- 2.6⁶ million Veterans have served our country since September 2001⁷
- 307,000⁸ members of our armed forces are likely to leave the military in each of the next four years⁸

Current homelessness statistics do not bode well for these brave young men and women.

PTSD, Physical Disabilities & Homelessness:

What does PTSD have to do with homelessness? The sad fact is:

- 2/3 of homeless Iraq and Afghanistan veterans have PTSD⁹

PTSD is even far more common than physical wounds among troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan:

- 336,000¹⁰ have been diagnosed with PTSD (some studies indicate that up to 70% of Veterans suffer from PTSD)¹¹
- 50,409 have been wounded¹²

While unemployment, poverty, lack of support networks and substandard housing are major reasons that many Veterans become homeless, a closer look reveals that *disabilities, both mental and physical*, precede and contribute to these conditions¹³:

- 51% of individual homeless Veterans have disabilities
- 50% have serious mental illness
- 70% have substance abuse problems

What's even worse:

- 1,400,000 veterans are considered "at risk" of homelessness¹⁴

Moreover, the VA says the numbers could be higher because they include only the homeless the department is aware of¹⁵.

Compounding the problem is the fact that our Iraq and Afghanistan vets are different from other Veterans. "They're younger, much more savvy and they don't necessarily like to ask for help."¹⁶

No one who has served our country should ever go without a safe, stable place to call home. Those who keep us safe deserve our help now!

Dogs For Life Programs and Services

Assistance Dogs are specially trained to perform tasks to assist a person with a special need 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide a life of self reliance and independence for their companions. Dogs For Life specializes in hearing, mobility and psychiatric support training **at no charge to our Clients**. Dogs can be cross-trained depending on the needs of their companions.

Service Dogs for Veterans Training Program "task trains" dogs to assist our Veterans with hearing and mobility challenges, as well as the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This innovative program is certain to give back to our Veterans who have given so much to assure our freedom.

Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs provide warmth and comfort to individuals in need of support and unconditional love. Certified volunteer dog teams provide pet-assisted therapy for children and seniors. Since 2002, Dogs For Life volunteer teams have visited 33 facilities in Indian River County.

Community Outreach Programs feature a Dog Behavior Hotline, Dog Placement Referral Program, Dog Behavior Workshops and Obedience Training Classes. The Off-Leash Dog Park Campus has served 492 members since opening in February 2002. Memberships help to fund programs and services.

Service Dogs Can Help Veterans with PTSD

The Department of Veteran Affairs has long recognized the effectiveness of Service Dogs for Veterans¹⁷. The Department is currently sponsoring a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Service Dogs as a treatment method for PTSD. While the results of this study will not be available until January 2014:

Other programs indicate¹⁸:

Treatment via medication	50% effective
Talk therapy	50% effective
Service Dogs	84.5% effective

Dogs For Life, Inc. (DFL) Service Dogs already help Veterans with PTSD by task-training hearing, mobility and psychiatric service dogs, as well as dogs that can be cross-trained depending on the Veteran's needs. Specifically, DFL Service Dogs help Veterans with PTSD by:

1. Waking up the owner from nightmare
2. "Creating a Barrier" around the owner to allow distance from people in a crowd
3. "Watching my back" - dog sits/downs with back to owner's back to alert if anyone approaches
4. Making a perimeter search inside of the home before entry
5. "Popping a corner" - looking both ways before person enters a room or long hallway
6. Barking when given a hand signal if the owner feels the need to leave a stressful situation
7. Providing tactile stimulation to disrupt emotional overload of the owner
8. "Breaking the Spell" and/or combat sedative side effects
9. "Finding the Car" - when owner needs to exit building quickly and get to car
10. Calling suicide hotline on a special K-9 emergency phone
11. Carrying backpack with medical supplies and/or water
12. Providing deep pressure for calming effect
13. Reducing hyper-vigilance through teamwork
14. Serving as the owner's "combat buddy" to provide security and mitigate loneliness

Our dogs also help provide the emotional stability that Veterans suffering from PTSD need to restore peace in their everyday lives. They instill the confidence necessary to be able to leave the house, or to enter a confined space like an elevator. This critical help enables their owners to lead a life of self-reliance and independence.



James Taylor, SSG U.S. Army (Ret.), Iraq War Veteran and his Hearing/Service Dog Pia Pia.

Pia Pia attended many outings in 2012 with friends, neighbors and families, which included dinner at the Olive Garden and breakfast at Cracker Barrel. We've been to Texas for 10 days, visited the Spaghetti Factory, Steak & Shake and the Burleson Mall where she performed perfectly. She attended Jim's son's wedding reception and stayed right by Jim's side. When we stayed in hotels, she took to the elevators really well and comforted Jim while he was in the elevator by licking his face and holding onto him. There was a time when Jim was unable to go into an elevator and Pia Pia walked up five flights of stairs with him.



Pia Pia goes with us for normal shopping at Target, Air Force Bases, Wal-Mart and Sam's Club. She goes to Jim's Chiropractor and Counseling appointments and she was right on Jim's lap when he had to give blood at his doctor's appointment. She also attended a DFL fundraising event at the Vero Beach Country Club. When Jim needed to get the windows tinted on his car, Pia Pia was with him. The employees were impressed with her behavior and her attendance to Jim. She also attended the DFL Howl-O-Ween event in October at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park.

Last year, Pia Pia attended a blessing for caregivers at the West Palm Beach Veteran's Hospital Chapel. December was a tough month for Jim. Pia Pia stayed right by his side at all times, in the kitchen, bedroom

and bathroom. When Jim became sick downstairs, Pia Pia came upstairs to get me from my office. She spun in circles until I got up to follow her, then she led me to Jim who was on the floor in the kitchen, too weak to get up by himself.

Many times during our trips, Pia Pia helped Jim to stay calm so that he can be patient enough to hear people talking to him. She will "speak" for him, so that he may excuse himself from a stressful situation and she alerts him when someone is at the door in a hotel, just like she does at home. She is able to pick up on his moods and distracts him with her playful antics.

Jim & Pia Pia attended a fundraising luncheon with DFL to tell his experience of having his dog trained as a service dog through Dogs For Life, Inc. Jim explained that without his dog he would have become a recluse. Pia Pia has given him a quality of life he would not have had without a service dog, and we are grateful for Jim's service to this country and the independence he gave to us all.



Pia Pia taps special K-9 emergency phone.

Spirit Saves The life of Her Owner By Tapping 911 Phone

By Dorothy Davidson

Two eyes are watching me. One is blue and the other is brown but they both belong to my dog, Spirit. She is never far from my side, waiting for something she can do for me and this was never more important than at 2:00 one morning when I found myself flat on a cold, tile bathroom floor tangled up in a walker and a wheelchair, too sick and too weak to get up. That is when I asked Spirit to "go tap help." She went to her 911 phone, activated it and two big, handsome EMS men came and took me to the hospital.

Spirit has been picking things up for me since she was a pup like bringing me my grandson's dirty socks. So when I wanted to get her certified, I turned to my friend, Shelly Ferger, and Dogs for Life in Vero Beach, FL to complete her training, especially the necessary public training that I was physically unable to do myself. They trained Spirit to tap the K-9 911 phone.

I could tell many stories about this dog like how many times she has retrieved my bird feeder or my portable phone that fell off my porch then down the bank into the woods, to how she won the hearts of all the staff and patients at Care Partners in Asheville, NC, the rehab center where we spent two weeks after coming out of the hospital. There are no words to tell you how grateful I am to have Spirit and the many people who have been so good to us along the way.



Dorothy Davidson with "Spirit", trained and certified to tap a 911 Emergency phone by DFL, as featured on ABC, Asheville, TN.



¹ On September 5, 2012, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) amended its regulations concerning veterans in need of service dogs. Under this final rule, VA will provide to veterans with visual, hearing, or mobility impairments benefits to support the use of a service dog as part of the management of such impairments. The benefits include assistance with veterinary care, travel benefits associated with obtaining and training a dog, and the provision, maintenance, and replacement of hardware required for the dog to perform the tasks necessary to assist such Veterans.

¹⁷ Florida Department of Veterans Affairs
¹⁸ According to local Veterans Groups
¹⁹ Walker Road Army Hospital website
²⁰ Current Population Survey (CPS) 2012, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service
²¹ Department of Veterans Affairs
²² January 2012 HUD national "point-in-time count" of the homeless
²³ The Blind Study, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense
²⁴ VA specialized homelessness programs
²⁵ Anna Murphy, LA Salvation Army program director
²⁶ Operation Warmhand

A Cheery Hello!



NOV 2014

SHELLY

+ STAFF

THANKS FOR ALLOWING
ME TO BE A PART OF
DOGS FOR LIFE.

I'VE LEARNED SO MUCH
& HAVE MET SO MANY
WONDERFUL "HUMANS."

AND TO THINK IT ALL
STARTED WITH
MEETING YOUR

"HAPPY AS A BEE" SAY.

Hope every little thought this brings
adds sunshine to your days
And brightens every hour
in the very nicest ways!

PENNY COXE



Local Philanthropists

LUKE COMMUNITIES & SCRIPPS HERCHE PUBLICATIONS W/ Week of November 17, 2014



THE PURPOSE

National Philanthropy Day pays tribute to the contributions that philanthropists, volunteers and companies have made.

THE PARTY

Locally, the Association of Fundraising Professionals Indian River Chapter (AFCIFR) will host an awards presentation at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at Riverside Theatre, 3250 Riverside Park Dr., Vero Beach. Light hors d'oeuvres and cocktails will follow. Tickets are \$35 each. Contact Katie Kowanic at 772-367-8969 or Shannon Bowman at 772-367-3202.

THE PEOPLE

Award recipients are: Outstanding Individual Philanthropist: Robert Bowman; Outstanding Corporate Philanthropist: Gerard Equipment Inc.; Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser: William Gavin; Outstand-

Appreciating the untiring work of local philanthropists



National Philanthropy Day committee members include: Monique Walker, Juliane Ivy, Monica Cheslak, Angela Astrup, Camilla Wainright, Shannon Bowman, Lorne Coyle, Katie Kowanic, Julia Keenan, Jamie Jackson, chapter president Cynthia Faurdeau, Carrie Cotheman, Nancy McCarry, Mary Miner and Alyssa Dribenbas

ing Youth in Philanthropy: Brian Barrett and Ursung Hertz; Riss Cotheman. Also recognized are Pauline Adams of The Newer Tel; Maria Baker, UV; Jo Ann Becker; Dr. Gary and Deb French; David and Barbara Hoffbauer; Sorill Dary Lazo; Dr. Robert Rappell, D.O.; JD; Ken Roberts; Bob Schlie,

Jr.; Bob and Carmen Stark; and Jack and Carolyn Veerman.

NPD co-chairs are Katie Kowanic and Shannon Bowman. Steering committee members include: Angela Astrup, Kerry Barrett, Nate Brochner, Monica Cheslak, Carrie Cotheman, Lorne Coyle, Alyssa

Dribenbas, Cynthia Palandrea, Juliane Ivy, Jamie Jackson, Carol Kazarek, Julia Keenan, Carol Ludwig, Michelle Malyn, Nancy McCarry, Mary Miner, Maroon Nicolasa, Jessica Schmitt, Brenda Spasato, Jennifer Trotter, Camilla Wainright, and Monique Walker.

NPD event sponsors: youth in philanthropy sponsor: Bob Carter Co.; event sponsors: Bank of America, Indian River Community Foundation, Leigh Jewellers, Publix Supermarket Charities, and Wells Fargo; corporate sponsors: CenterState Bank, Gayle Consulting Co., Florida Power & Light, John's Island Foundation, Inc., Krietz, Natall Rhoad, Graham CPAs, Marine Bank & Trust Co., Rehmisen, and Rossway Swan Tierney Barry; in-kind sponsors: Fredel Studio and Martina's Photography; media sponsors: Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, and Treasure & Spice Coast Radio; Venue sponsor is Riverside Theatre.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY



A dog obedience and behavior class will be at 9 a.m. Saturday at the DFL Training & Administrative Center in Vero Beach.

Community Calendar

Dog Obedience & Behavior Classes: Six-week classes, 9 a.m. DFL Training & Administrative Center, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 3291. Register: 772-567-2069; dogsforlifefvb.org; www.dogsforlife.org.

Orientations to Off-Leash Dog Park: For dogs 6 months+, vaccinated, neutered & social. By appointment. Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 3291. Register: 772-567-2069; www.dogsforlifefvb.org.

Looking Forward

Indian River

RECOGNIZING EFFORTS THAT LEAD TO BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

By Sue-Ellen Sanders
For Progress & Innovation

■ The Indian River Chamber of Commerce honored a number of businesses at its recent Industry Appreciation Awards Luncheon. In the architectural recognition category for new construction less than 20,000 square feet was **Dogs for Life Training and Administration Center**. Executive Director **Shelly Fenger**

Lasting Legacy

4 ■ Wednesday, November 12, 2014 ■ YOUR NEWSWEEKLY ■ INDIAN RIVER COUNTY ■ SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Your Community

Dogs for Life benefactor leaves lasting legacy

By Shelly Ferger
Your Newsweekly Contributor

In 1997, Dogs For Life began a relationship with Victor and Eleanor Bengyak and a golden retriever named Taffy.

Had it not been for these generous neighbors, we would not be enjoying the off-leash dog park and Assistance Dog Training Center today.

In 2009, Dogs For Life certified Victor's dog Mitzi, a springer spaniel, as a service dog.

On Oct. 31, Victor Nicholas Bengyak, 89, passed away unexpectedly, at Indian River Medical Center with his family by his side.

He was born in Jackson Heights, N.Y. and lived in Vero Beach for 37 years. Victor was a veteran of the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946, serving during World War II and subsequently honorably discharged.

Victor was a retired New York City Firefighter for 20 years, serving Lower Manhattan with Engine 24 as a First Responder, before his retirement in 1978.

Survivors include his wife of 37 years, Eleanor M. Bengyak, and his beloved service dog, Mitzi.

In lieu of flowers, any memorial contributions may be made to Dogs for Life, Inc. for the "El-



Victor Bengyak and Mitzi

eanor Bengyak Legacy Society", 1230 16th Ave, Vero Beach, FL 32960 in memory of Victor N. Bengyak.

We are saddened by the loss of Victor and will be forever grateful for his service to our country, our community and our organization.

Shelly Ferger

Subject:

FW: Your campaign DFL Mourns The Loss of One of Our Founding Dog Park Members has been sent



In 1997, Dogs For Life began a relationship with Victor and Eleanor Bengyak and a Golden Retriever named Taffy.

Had it not been for these generous neighbors, we would not be enjoying the off-leash dog park and Assistance Dog Training Center today.

In 2009, DFL Certified Victor's Dog Mitzi, a Springer Spaniel, as a Service Dog. We are saddened by the loss of Victor and will be forever grateful for his service to our Country, our Community and our Organization.



Victor Nicholas Bengyak

Mr. Victor Nicholas Bengyak, 89, passed away unexpectedly, October 31, 2014 at Indian River Medical Center in Vero Beach, FL with family by his side.

Victor was born in Jackson Heights, NY and lived in Vero Beach for 37 years. He was a graduate of Newtown High School, Queens, NY.

He was a veteran of the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946. Having served during World War II and subsequently being honorably discharged.

Victor was a retired New York City Firefighter for 20 years, serving Lower Manhattan with Engine 24 as a First Responder, before his retirement in 1978.

Survivors include his wife of 37 years, Eleanor M. Bengyak and his beloved service dog, Mitzi of Vero Beach; stepson, Patrick M. McCalister, Sr. (Elizabeth) of Fort Pierce; grandson, Patrick M. McCalister, Jr. of Vero Beach; granddaughter, Sharon Shelton (Justin) of Fort Pierce; 3 great-granddaughters: Cheyanne Caudill, Alayna McCalister and Ava McCalister; a great-grandson, Neil Caudill, Jr.; one sister, Margaret Quaglietta, of Olbridge, NJ; 2 nieces, Diana Rosenthal (Richard) of Manahawkins, NJ; Margaret Schepperle of Olbridge, NJ; 1 nephew: Christopher Bengyak of Vero Beach; Patricia McCalister (Jill) of Ransomville, NY, Cathleen Donner (Richard) and Cheryl Kratts (Richard) both of North Tonawanda, NY; and a brother-in-law, Charles McCalister of Niagra Falls, NY.

Victor was pre-deceased by his parents Rudolph Bengyak and Theresa Radakowicz; both of Jackson Heights, NY; 3 brothers: Frank Bengyak, William Bengyak and Edward Bengyak.

In lieu of flowers, any memorial contributions may be made to Dogs for Life, Inc. for the "Eleanor Bengyak Legacy Society", 1230 16th Ave, Vero Beach, FL 32960 in memory of Victor N. Bengyak.

Visitation will be held from 5-7 p.m., Tuesday, November 4, 2014 Strunk

OBITUARIES

To place an obituary please call 772-692-8954 or email to TCNobits@scripps.com

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY SCRIPPS-TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS Tuesday, November 4, 2014 9A

Indian River County



VICTOR NICHOLAS BENGYAK



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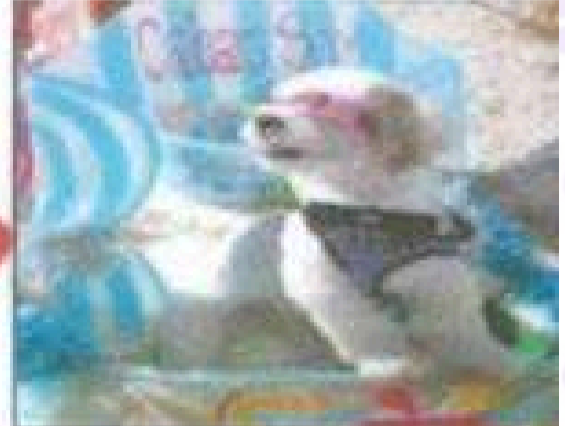
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Visitation will be held from 5-7 p.m., Tuesday, November 4, 2014 Strunk Funeral Home, Vero Beach. A private family graveside service will be at Crestlawn Cemetery, Vero Beach. An online guest book is available at www.strunfuneralhome.com

The background of the image is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints. Each paw print is stylized with four distinct pads. The prints are scattered across the entire white background, creating a dense, decorative texture.

OCTOBER

Howl-O-Ween



Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade & Pet Expo

Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center
Open House

1230 16th Avenue – Vero Beach

FREE ADMISSION

October 18, 2014

2-5 PM – Pawrade 4:00

Over 100 Dogs in Costume!

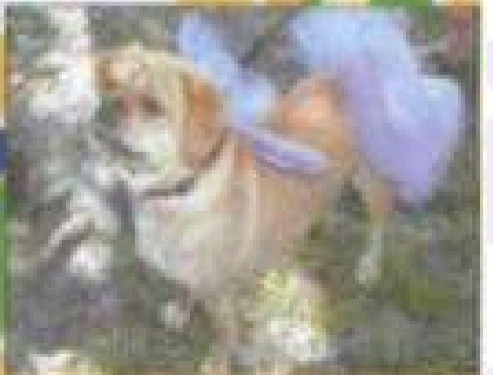
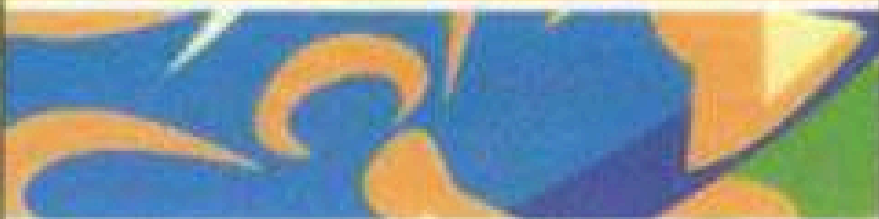
Please do not dress your dog in any way to cause harm.
Bring your lawn chairs and prepare to have fun!!!

Exhibitor and Sponsor
Space Available starting at \$100!
Call 567-8969

Proceeds benefit DFL's

Hearing and Service Dog Training
Pet-Assisted Therapy Dog Training
Companion Dog Training and Off-Leash Dog Park

Don't miss the Secret Dog Park Announcement





1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960

A Special Thank You to this Year's Event Sponsors

Gene, Martha Schumann

and Sir Bentley



It Rained Cats & Dogs!



Baby, It's Wet Outside!



Be on the look-out over the next few days at the dog park while additional drainage construction is taking place. Additional drains will be placed in the Dog Training area to the South of the Training Center and to the North of the Training Center. Fill Dirt will be brought into the N.E. corner of the Large Dog Area, all draining into the existing underground drainage pipes.

A BIG THANK YOU to Daisy & Amber for throwing us a life preserver.

#TCPalmSocial recommends these weekend activities

Journal
Press
INDIAN RIVER
SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Weekend



Dogs can celebrate Halloween Oct. 18 at the 13th annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo in Vero Beach.

TCPalm.com

Quick Read

81°/59°
Breezy
Partly Cloudy

#TCPalmSocial
Weekend Picks

DOG PARADE

Dogs can celebrate Halloween Oct. 18 at the 13th annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo in Vero Beach. This will be a fun event for you, your friends, family and dogs. The parade starts at 4 p.m. at the Vero Beach Community Center. For more information, call 777-567-8969 or visit dogsforlifeflorida.com.

PET PARADE

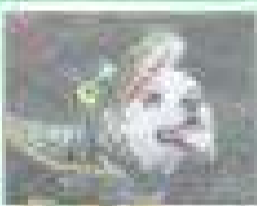
Dogs can celebrate the Halloween weekend with the 13th annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo. The parade goes from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday at Vero Beach, Fla. (777-567-8969). Expect a lot of costumes from the city's departments, local businesses, residents and more than 100 dogs in costume. If you want to march in the parade with your dog, all you have to do is register at the expo. If it's free. The dog costume parade starts at 4 p.m. Bring your own chairs and blankets. Call 777-567-8969 or visit dogsforlifeflorida.com.

VETERAN VOICE • THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE • OCTOBER 16, 2014 • 3

VETERAN VOICE

The Voice of Experience

Veteran Voice is a weekly newspaper for veterans, active military, their families and their friends.



Dogs For Life

13th Annual

Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo

Assistant Dog Training & Administration Center
Open House

1230 18th Avenue - Vero Beach

FREE ADMISSION

October 18, 2014

2-5 PM - Parade 4pm

Over 100 Dogs in Costume!

Please do not dress your dog in any way to cause harm.

Bring your own chairs and blankets to help heat.

Refreshments and Registraion

Space Available starting at 3:00pm

Call 777-567-8969

Registration and Pet Training

Non-Adopted Training Dog Training

Community Dog Training and Off-Leash Dog Park

Don't miss the South Dog Park, Announcements



16A • Sunday, October 12, 2014 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • 1C

Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo: 2-5 p.m. Oct. 18. Pawrading, 4 p.m. Oct. 18. Dogs For Life, 1230 18th Ave., Vero Beach, 777-567-8969; dogsforlifeflorida.com.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Indian River County
Where the Stars Come Out Every Monday - Oct. 13, 2014
Luminaries

HOWL-O-WEEK

Halloween has gone to the dogs! Dogs For Life's 13th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo is from 2-5 p.m. this Saturday, Oct. 18, at 1230 18th Avenue in Vero Beach. It's free, and the Costume Pawrading starts at 4 p.m. Even if you don't have a dog, come see over 100 dogs in costume! Too cute! Call (772) 567-8969.

Week of October 13, 2014 • SCRIPPS NICHE PUBLICATIONS • LUMINARIES • 16A



BRIGHT LIGHTS & RED CARPETS

By Tori Ortega-Cowan

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY



7 - Kyla Kowalc and Shannel Swinnen are this year's co-chairs for National Philanthropy Day to be held on Nov. 18 and hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Week of October 6, 2014
LUMINARIES • SCRIPPS NICHE PUBLICATIONS • Week of October 6, 2014
Oct. 18 - 13th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrading & Pet Expo to benefit Dogs For Life. 2-5 p.m. Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center, Vero Beach. Exhibitor space \$100. 777-567-8969

Your Newsweekly

YOUR LOCAL
NEWSPAPER
SUBMISSIONS

VERO BEACH, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

THINGS TO DO

Plenty of pooches at 'Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade'

By Shelly Fergar
Your Newsweekly Contributor

For the 13th year, Dogs for Life is hosting its signature fundraising event, the Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade & Pet Expo, on Oct. 18, 2 - 5 p.m. The parade starts at 4 p.m.

All the fun, including an

open house, is at the off-leash park and new Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center, 1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach.

The FREE event is open to the public and sponsored by Gene, Martha and Sir Bentley Schumann.

Additional sponsors and exhibitor space is still avail-

able. The Howl-O-Ween Pawrade has drawn over 100 dogs in costume and over 300 spectators for the past three years. Bring your lawn chairs, dogs and children with costumes and be prepared to have a howling



Katie Jordan with Mylo, dressed as a hot dog at a past Dogs for Life Halloween parade.

See **POOCHES, 6**

POOCHES from 1

good time!

Howl-O-Ween Pawrade activities include raffle items and prizes for all dogs in costume, a military color guard presentation by Veterans of Foreign War Post 3918, a multi-law enforcement K-9 demonstration organized by the Indian River Coun-

ty Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit, food will be offered by Jims Dog's On the Run from Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4067, the 4-H Dog Master's Club will be selling water as their first fundraiser of the year, and entertainment is offered by the Rip Tides.

Dogs For Life is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community by training hearing dogs, service dogs, spon-



Gator grrr.

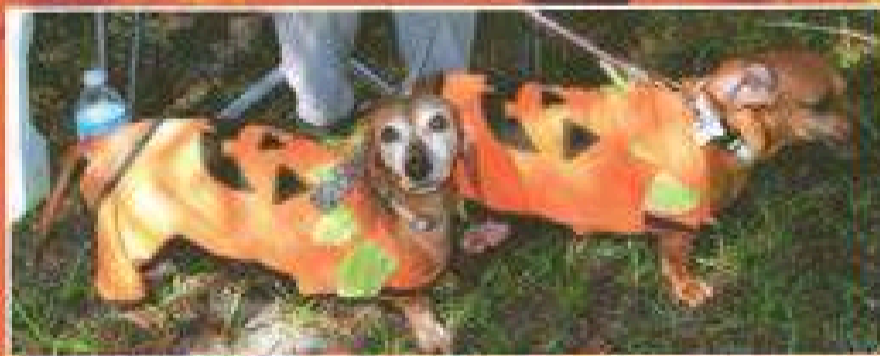
sors a Veteran Dog Training Program and offers Pet-Assisted Therapy, and obedience classes for the public. The organization owns and manages a 4-acre safe and clean off-leash dog park, where dogs are screened for health, temperament and sociality.

For additional information please call 772-567-8969 or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.

Dogs For Life, Inc.

Presents The 13th Annual Howl-o-ween Dog Costume Pawrade & Pet Expo!

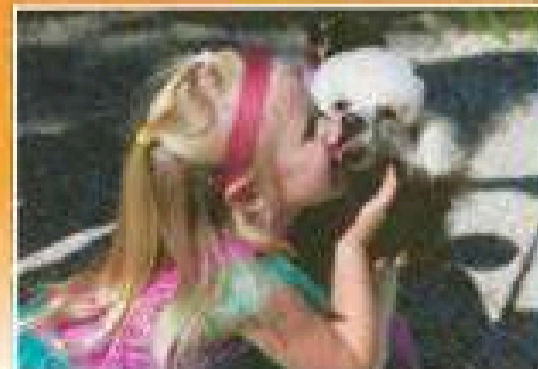
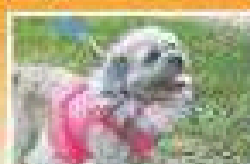
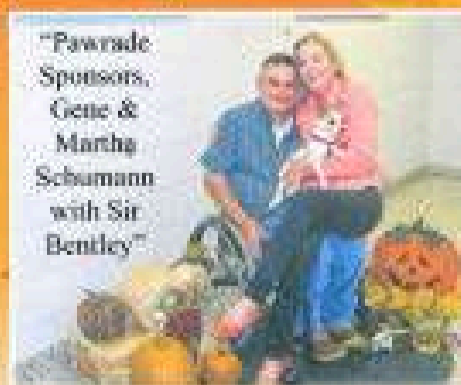
1230 16th Avenue



Sat. Oct. 18th 2014
2-5 pm
Pawrade at 4 pm



"Pawrade Sponsors, Gene & Martha Schumann with Sir Bentley"



FREE ADMISSION

October 18, 2014

2-5 PM – Pawrade 4:00

Over 100 Dogs in Costume!

Please do not dress your dog in any way to cause harm. Bring your lawn chair and prepare to have fun!!!

Exhibitor and Sponsor

Space Available starting at \$100!

Call 567-8969

Activities include: Live entertainment by The Rip Tides Food by Jim's Dogs on the Run from the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4067. Additionally, enjoy the ever-popular multi-law-enforcement K-9 demonstration coordinated by the Indian River County Sheriff's Department. At 4:00 pm, The Pawrade will occur with the VFW Post 3918 Color Guard. This year's raffle items will be better than ever and will be included throughout the day's activities.

Proceeds benefit DFL's
Hearing and Service Dog Training
Pet-Assisted Therapy Dog Program
Companion Dog Training and Off-Leash Dog Park

Don't miss the Assistance Dog Training & Administration Center Open House and Fun Training Tours. Be sure to listen for the Secret Dog Park Announcement

Voted Favorite Dog Park in Indian River County
Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center
1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, Florida
www.dogsforlifevb.org • 567-8969
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net



Dogs get jump on humans
at Howl-O-Ween Pawrade. P10

VERO BEACH

32963

Your Vero Beach Newsweekly™
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PEOPLE



October 23, 2014 Volume 7, Issue 43 Newsstand Price \$1.00

Vero Beach 32963 / October 23, 2014

Your Vero Beach Newsweekly™

PEOPLE

Dogs get the jump on humans

BY MARY SCHENKEL
Staff Writer

Patient pooches, outfitted as everything from butterflies and bees to poodles and pirates, got an early jump on Halloween, strutting their stuff last Saturday at the 13th annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade & Pet Expo to benefit Dogs for Life, Inc.

"It has been non-stop all day long," said Katie Kowanic, DFL Administrative and Fund Development director, watching as dogs of every size and variety wandered around the four-acre DFL Off-Leash Dog Park, accompanied to music by the Rip Tides.

Tails were in constant motion and noses in a state of sensory overload during doggie meet-and-greets. Even with all the distractions, all were on their very best behavior, displaying true puppy love and one inventive costume after another. Some let the dogs take center stage, while others augmented their pets' outfits with their own creative get-ups.

Before the Pawrade, Darel, a retired bomb dog and now Pet Assisted Therapy dog and his trainer/handler L.A. Bykowsky gave a demonstration of his skills. Many of the DFL service dogs have been rescued from local shelters, and some of the most poignant "costumes" were simple "Adopt Me" vests worn by several Humane Society dogs.

The occasion offered an opportunity for visitors to tour the newly constructed Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center, which opened this summer. "We're thrilled to be showing off the Training Center," said Shelly Ferger, DFL founder and CEO.

Dogs for Life trains hearing and service dogs, offers programs for Veteran Dog Training and Pet-Assisted Therapy, and offers basic obedience and behavior classes to the general public. DFL

at Howl-O-Ween Pawrade

Oscar, right, and Sophie came to the parade as bride and groom.



Vero Beach 32963 / October 23, 2014 11

hopes to raise \$100,000 by the end of the year, which an anonymous donor has pledged to match. Donor levels from \$1,000 to \$100,000 or more will be recognized on the Donor Recognition "Tree of Life," painted by Teri Barrett and prominently displayed in the Training Center lobby.

"I grabbed her Halloween costume but I didn't grab her service vest," laughed Dawn Taylor, sitting with hus-

band Jim, as Pia Pia, a sweet little pug wiggled in her arms. When her vest is on, Pia Pia is all business. Despite her diminutive size, Pia Pia, dual-certified in hearing loss and post-traumatic stress syndrome, has made an enormous difference in the life of Jim Taylor, a former Army Staff Sergeant who served in Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Theirs was the first veterans' dog team trained and certified by Dogs for Life. ■

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY



The Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade & Pet Expo will be held 2-5 p.m. Saturday at Dogs For Life, 1730 15th Ave., Vero Beach. For more information, call 772-567-8968 or email dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

Community Calendar

SATURDAY'S SPECIAL EVENTS

Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade & Pet Expo: 2-5 p.m. Parade, 4 p.m. Dogs For Life, 1730 15th Ave., Vero Beach. 772-567-8968; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.
VNA Hospice's Camp: Chrysalis Bereavement

Reader Snapshot



Dress your doggies

Cheryl Campbell, of Vero Beach, enters her dog, Tucker, to walk on two legs after participating Saturday in the annual Dogs for Life Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade & Pet Expo at the Dogs For Life dog park in Vero Beach. This is Campbell's first time walking in the "parade." She says her son recently went away to college, so she's "keeping herself busy."

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY



DOGS GET THE JUMP ON HURRY AT HOWL-O-WEEN PAWRADE

Left: Lily Springer and dog Oliver watch the parade. Right: Lily Springer, dog Oliver, right and Lily.



Scene & Seen

ARTS, DINING, PEOPLE, PETS AND ENTERTAINMENT | VERO NEWS/SEBASTIAN RIVER NEWS

B6 VeroNews/Sebastian River News October 24, 2014

Serving mainland Indian River County

DOGS IN COSTUME
A HOWL IN PAWRADE

B6

Dogs get the jump on humans at Howl-O-Ween Pawrade

PHOTOS: BENJAMIN NAGER

By Mary Schenkel | Staff Writer
social@veronews.com

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Dogs for Life trains hearing and service dogs, offers programs for Veteran Dog Training and Pet-Assisted Therapy, and offers basic obedience and behavior classes to the general public. DFL hopes to raise \$100,000 by the end



Lily Springer and her dog Oliver watch the parade. Superdog Gray, Top: Oscar, right, and his little brother, Sebastian Flores with enthusiastic Chandel.

4 • OCTOBER 23, 2014 •

VETERAN VOICE The Voice of Experience



Who let the dogs out? Pooches on 'pawrade' at Dogs For Life event

Mary Kemper
STAFF WRITER
mkemper@veteranvoiceweekly.com

It was a day for dog owners far and wide to dress up their pets to help benefit Dogs For Life, Vero Beach, Oct. 18.

The event, billed as "Howl-O-Ween," had more than 60 dogs and their owners marching in the "pawrade," in all their costumed finery. In all, more than 300 attended.

"Aww, look at that cute one!"

was a phrase heard throughout the day. Costumes ranged from superheroes, ballerinas, butterflies and bumblebees, and there were even two dressed up as spiders, inspired by a video prank that recently went "viral" on the Internet (type "dog spider prank" in a search engine to view the hilarious stunt).

There were even a bride and groom, who "renewed their vows after two years together," accord-

See DOGS page 5

Staff photo by Mary Kemper

Brooke Rimm-Hewitt, a veterinary technician at Vero Beach Veterinary Hospital, holds Foxy, who, like Rimm-Hewitt, is wearing a bumble-bee costume at the Dogs For Life "Howl-O-Ween" event held Oct. 18 at the Dog Park, Vero Beach.



DOGS IN COSTUME
A HOWL IN PAWRADE B6



VETERAN VOICE • THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE • OCTOBER 23, 2014 • 5

DOGS from page 4

ing to their owners.

Happily, though there were well over 100 dogs at "Howl-O-Ween," no fights broke out.

A demonstration was also given by veteran Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent "L.A." and her retired bomb-detection dog, Daryl.

Vero Beach band Rip Tide played standards from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Vendors were on hand to tout veterinary care, pet cremation and other services, as well as food — the fees they paid helped benefit Dogs For Life as well.

Additionally, raffles were held to win "goody baskets" filled with items donated by various area businesses.

A VFW Color Guard led the "paw-rade," after an invocation given by former Navy chaplain Dick Flick.

Dogs For Life provides a full range of services, from conventional obedience training to its newest, and most cherished, offering, according to CEO and founder Shelly Ferger: providing service dogs to returning veterans, at no cost.

"We could not put into words how much it means to us to be able to help our veterans," Ferger said in her address to the crowd.

"We want to thank our sponsors, and all of you, who have helped us and continue to help us help them."

Whether a veteran suffers from PTSD or a physical disability, Dogs For Life trains dogs to help them in living a more normal life. For instance, someone suffering from PTSD can have his or her dog trained to "secure a perimeter" in times of acute anxiety, or calm the veteran by placing him- or herself at his or her back.

Dogs are also trained to dial 911 on special phones, as well as to alert other members of a household in a medical emergency.

Assistance dogs for the hearing impaired is another service that has proven invaluable.

Dogs For Life also provides pet-assisted therapy, which sends dogs into places like assisted-living facilities to help improve patients' quality of life.

While sponsors continue to be an enormous asset for Dogs For Life to continue its mission, smaller donors continue to be a crucial factor, Ferger said.

"By attending our 'Howl-O-Ween,' you all have stepped up for us, and I hope it's been fun for everyone," she said.

Dogs For Life has several opportunities for volunteers, whether providing dogs as therapy pets or helping keep the Dog Park safe. To learn more about volunteering, or to offer a sponsorship or donation, visit dogsforlifevb.org; call (772) 567-8969; or email dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.



Staff photo by Mary Kemper
"Bride and groom" Oscar and Sophie arrive in wedding finery at the Dogs For Life "Howl-O-Ween" event held Oct. 18 at the Dog Park, Vero Beach. Their owners, who declined to be named, said the two pooches were "renewing their vows after two years of marriage."

By Brenda Sponzo
The Newsweekly

Super friends

The 13th annual Dogs for Life Howl-O-Ween Costume Parade & Pet Expo attracted dogs of all sizes in attire of all kinds.

The parking lot at the off-leash park was full, and the weather was just right to draw a large two- and four-legged crowd.

And what paw-ty would be complete without live music (Rip Tides) and delicious food, appropriately from Jim's Dog On the Run.

But the main event was the paw-rade, which indeed made for great entertainment.

Most of the dogs wore costumes, some of which

featured hats, butterfly wings and bumble-bee antennae.

Whether they had their precious pets dressed as superheroes or evil witches, pirates or cowboys — pet owners looked extremely proud, like parents do.

Bentley, a 3-1/2-year-old whippet who does not like cats, seemed glad there

were none of those in sight. Though he seemed impatient to get the whole thing over with, it was Bentley's fourth year in the pet parade.

Dogs for Life CEO Shelly Fenger emceed the event, announcing the name of each participant. Entrants then walked a circular trail for everyone's enjoyment.

Totley, a scarecrow, and Sassy, a princess, — two avidales who like to go kayaking and fishing — were the first ones in



There's no limit to what a girl can achieve with a cape and her best friend at her side. Here, super-beetles Mackenzie Peavy, 8, and her 1-year-old boxer find a patch of shade at the annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade at the Dogs for Life Off-Leash Park.



Totley, a scarecrow, and Princess Sassy enjoy kayaking and fishing when daddy takes them out on the boat.



A 7-year-old Pirate Yorkie.



Ginger is a shih tzu dressed up as a butterfly. She wakes up her owner, Stephanie, everyday to make her go to school.



A 2-year-old miniature Lady Bug.



A not-so-scary werlock.



Oreo, a 5-year-old pitbull, didn't opt to dress in costume for the annual Howoween Pawrads.

"Ginger is a shih tzu, dressed up as a butterfly. She likes to wake up her

owner Stephanie every day to make her go to school. We need more dogs like Ginger, right parents?" Fenger asked the crowd.

Some dogs appeared embarrassed wearing the funny-looking beaupieces. For that very reason, Oreo, a 5-yr-old pit bull, was not made to dress up for the event. His owner didn't seem to mind.

"I'm glad we had an open house too — many still haven't seen the new facility," said Dawn Taylor, an event volunteer with Dogs for Life whose husband James owns a dog trained by the nonprofit.

Dogs For Life specializes in training hearing, mobility assistance and service dogs for veterans with PTSD and other ailments.

The organization opened an Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center at the Off-Leash Dog Park, located at 1250 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. For information, visit www.dogsforlifeflv.org or call 772-562-4464.

See MORE PHOTOS, p. 11

LOCAL

Canines in costumes

From creepy to comical they strut their 'ruff' at Howl-O-Ween Pawrade



LOCAL

CANINES IN COSTUMES



Casey was dressed as a Bumble Bee.



Cowboy at the Howlween Pawrade.



Buzzing around like a bumble bee.



And Toto too!



Bumble bees were a popular costume this year.

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 1

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

October 2014

Senior Bulletin Board

A newsletter from the City of Vero Beach Recreation Department, covering all of Indian River County

OCTOBER ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL EVENTS

HOWL-O-WEEN



DOG COSTUME PARADE

- Saturday, October 18 2:00-5:00 p.m.
at Dogs for Life park, 1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach
Dog Costumes, parades, celebration.
- Contact: Katie Kowanic, 567-8969
www.dogsforlifevb.org



IC 4 SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS Wednesday, October 1, 2014 9A

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

NEW LISTINGS

Howl-O-Ween Dog
Costume Pawrade & Pet
Expo: 2-5 p.m. Oct. 18.
Pawrade: 4 p.m. Oct. 18.
Dogs For Life, 1230 16th Ave.,
Vero Beach, 771-567-8969;
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

See Inside for
Bulletin Boards on ...

- Community & Social Events 1
- Health Education 2-5
- Exercise and Fitness 5-6
- Life Enrichment Classes
and Group Meetings 6-10
- Computer Classes 11

Happy Halloween
from
Jameison Publishers
VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

Newsletters

Shelly Ferger

From: Constant Contact <support@constantcontact.com>
Sent: Monday, October 06, 2014 2:56 PM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Your campaign Dogs For Life, Inc. Newsletter & Dog Park Maintenance Update has been sent



Dear Shelly Ferger,

Your campaign 'Dogs For Life, Inc. Newsletter & Dog Park Maintenance Update' was sent on 10/06/2014 around 14:55 PM EDT.

Below is a copy of the message your subscribers received. See how your campaign is doing by visiting Reports [in your account](#) to get real-time results and stats.

Subject: Dogs For Life, Inc. Newsletter & Dog Park Maintenance Update



Preview of DFL Newsletter

Off-Leash Dog Park - Drainage Work

October 2014

Below is DFL's Paw Print Newsletter Preview link,

Inside you will be updated on the opening of the DFL Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center opening as well as many other exciting programs and events.

You will also see links for the 13th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Parade & Pet Expo to be held in two weeks, October 18th at the Dog Park. Please share this email or the links with your friends and any potential exhibitors that you think might be interested in booth space.

Thank you for supporting DFL Programs and Your Dog Park by promoting our Fundraising Events!

[DFL Paw Prints Newsletter Fall 2014](#)

[Howl-O-Ween Parade Flyer](#)

[Sponsor and or Exhibitor Form](#)

[Sponsor and or Exhibitor Agreement](#)



DFL Assistance Dog Training

ning
& Administrative Center
Now Open!

1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32960
772-567-8969

Thank you to
DFL 13th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Parade & Pet Expo

SPONSORS

GENE, MARTHA & SIR BENTLEY

Shelly Ferger

From: Indian River County Chamber of Commerce
<director@indianriverchamber.ccsend.com> on behalf of Indian River County Chamber of Commerce <director@indianriverchamber.com>
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2014 9:20 AM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Established Professionals Meets November 4th



A Legacy of Progress.
October 13, 2014
eNews



We welcomed some of our new members last week at a new member reception. Sponsored by EmbroidMe.

Remembering Victor's Legacy

Dogs for Life benefactor leaves lasting legacy

By Shelly Ferger
Your Newsweekly Contributor

In 1997, Dogs For Life began a relationship with Victor and Eleanor Bengyak and a golden retriever named Taffy.

Had it not been for these generous neighbors, we would not be enjoying the off-leash dog park and Assistance Dog Training Center today.

In 2009, Dogs For Life certified Victor's dog Mitzi, a springer spaniel, as a service dog.

On Oct. 31, Victor Nicholas Bengyak, 89, passed away unexpectedly, at Indian River Medical Center with his family by his side.

He was born in Jackson Heights, N.Y. and lived in Vero Beach for 37 years. Victor was a veteran of the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946, serving during World War II and subsequently honorably discharged.

Victor was a retired New York City Firefighter for 20 years, serving Lower Manhattan with Engine 24 as a First Responder, before his retirement in 1978.

Survivors include his wife of 37 years, Eleanor M. Bengyak, and his beloved service dog, Mitzi.

In lieu of flowers, any memorial contributions may be made to Dogs for Life, Inc. for the "El-



Victor Bengyak and Mitzi

eanor Bengyak Legacy Society", 1230 16th Ave, Vero Beach, FL 32960 in memory of Victor N. Bengyak.

We are saddened by the loss of Victor and will be forever grateful for his service to our country, our community and our organization.

In Memoriam



SHARE   

[Send Flowers](#) | [Send Card](#)

DR. DONALD B. EDWARDS

July 14, 1948 - October 27, 2014

Honoring the life of Dr. Donald B. Edwards

Dr. Donald Birchard Edwards of Vero Beach, Florida passed away at the age of 66 on Monday, October 27, 2014.

Don was born in Hartford, Connecticut to the late Earle Eugene and Harriet Browne Edwards. His family moved to Clewiston, Florida where Don attended and graduated from Clewiston High School with his three younger brothers.

Don attended and graduated from Fairmont State College in West Virginia where he played as a lineman on the football team. He proceeded to East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee where he received his masters in biology, then he attended the West Virginia School of Dentistry.

Don performed his general practice residency at Carswell Air Force Base Regional Hospital in Texas, then worked as a general dentist at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. He served his Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Residency at University Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida where he also served as Chief Resident of Oral Maxillofacial Surgery. Don went on to be an oral surgeon with the Air Force at Yakota Air Force Base and Patrick Air Force Base. After being honorably discharged from the United States Air Force in 1991 and joining the Air Force Reserves, Don entered into private practice with Dr. Glen Fritz.


Don was a member of the American Dental Association, American Society of Dental Anesthesia, American Association of Oral Maxillofacial Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, Tri-County Dental Society, Florida Dental Association, Florida Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and Xi Psi Phi Dental Fraternity.

Don had a genuine love for the outdoors, and from this grew a fondness for fishing and caring for his pets. His delight and joy for being outside was immeasurable, and he and his wife spent wonderful days together horseback riding.

Survivors include wife Cynthia "Cindy" Edwards of Vero Beach; daughter and son-in-law Leslie and Scott Stanton of Raleigh, North Carolina; son and daughter-in-law Garrett and Dawn Edwards of Westbrook, Maine; father and mother-in-law George and Shirley Raske of Cocoa Beach; brothers and sisters-in-law Chip and Mary



 [Send Flowers](#)

 [Send a Card](#)

Facts

Born: July 14, 1948

Death: October 27, 2014

Memorial donations can be made to:

Dogs For Life, P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965, American Wild Horse Preservation, PO Box 1048, Hillsborough, NC 27278 or the Mental Health Association of Indian River County, 820 37th Place, Vero Beach, FL 32960

Edwards, Jeff and Cindy Edwards and Webster Edwards of Clewiston; grandchildren Eli and Nathan Edwards of Westbrook, Maine and Aaron, Aimee and Anna Stanton of Raleigh, North Carolina; sister-in-law Kathie McDaniel of Palm Bay, Florida; and a niece Miranda McDaniel also of Palm Bay.

In addition to his parents, Don was preceded in death by his stepson Mason Garrett Noyes.

Memorial contributions may be made to Dogs For Life, P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965; American Wild Horse Preservation, PO Box 1048, Hillsborough, NC 27278; or, the Mental Health Association of Indian River County, 820 37th Place, Vero Beach, FL 32960.

The family will receive friends at Strunk Funeral Home in Vero Beach on Saturday, November 1, 2014 beginning at 12 p.m. and ending at 1 p.m. in the afternoon. Immediately following will be a memorial to celebrate Don's life with military honors by the Patrick Air Force Base Honor Guard Unit.

Visitation

Saturday November 1, 2014, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM

Strunk Funeral Home
[Click for Map and Directions](#)

Celebration of Life

Saturday November 1, 2014, 1:00 PM

Strunk Funeral Home
[Click for Map and Directions](#)

Military Honors Service

Saturday November 1, 2014

[Click for Map and Directions](#)

Sign the Guestbook

Share your thoughts and memories about DR. DONALD B. EDWARDS in the guestbook.

[Sign the guestbook](#)
[Read the guestbook](#)



SEPTEMBER

Awards Luncheon

Economic Leadership Alliance Investors (continued)

Friends of Alliance

Alex MacWilliam, Inc. Realtors
Boyle & Drake, Inc.
Brewer International, Inc.
Carter Associates, Inc.
Coastal Technology Corp.
Coldwell Banker Paradise –
Ed Schlitt Paradise, Inc. Realtors
Creative Floors Carpet One
Croom Construction Company
Hayhurst Land Surveying Inc.
John's Island Real Estate Company
Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.
Lambert Commercial Real Estate
New Vision Eye Center

Nicolace Marketing, Inc.
Northwestern Mutual Life
Parker Hannifin
Rogers Brothers Groves, Inc.
School District of Indian River
County
SLC Commercial-Bird Realty
Group
Strunk Funeral Home
Jeff and Peggy Thompson
Twenty First Century Engineering
Vero Beach Municipal Airport
Vero Millwork, Inc.
W.F. McCain & Associates

Thank you to the members of our Industry Appreciation Awards Committee

Alfonse Alexander, Alexander
Insurance Co.
Lynn Fiske, EGP-The Document
Imaging People
David Hooper, Marine Bank &
Trust
Melody Ipolito, Kmetz, Nuttall,
Elwell, Graham, PLLC

Donna Kingsley, Vero Chemical
Donna Leemon, HR Dynamics
Terry Schlitt, MBV Engineering
Jeremy Schwibner, Merrill Lynch
Mark Seeberg, Norris & Co. Real
Estate
Anna Valencia-Tillery, White
Glove Moving, Storage and
Delivery

Economic Leadership Alliance

In addition to the financial support received from the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners, we thank the following Economic Leadership Alliance investors who support our countywide economic diversification efforts.

Policy Sponsor

AT&T Florida

Chairman's Sponsor

Florida Power & Light Co.
George E. Warren Corporation
Piper Aircraft, Inc.
Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers

Corporate Sponsor

Donadio & Associates Architects
Dyer Automotive
Marine Bank & Trust Company
Seacoast National Bank
Wells Fargo

Leadership Sponsor

Alliance Business Development
CenterState Bank
Corrigan Ranch
INEOS New Planet BioEnergy
Northern Trust Bank
Oculina Bank
Republic Services

Supporter Level

Bill Bryant & Associates, Inc.
Robert Brackett Foundation
CareerSource Research Coast
Dale Sorensen Real Estate, Inc.
Disney's Vero Beach Resort
EGP-The Document Imaging
People
FAU-Harbor Branch
Oceanographic Institute
HBS, Inc.
Huryn Construction
Indian River State College
Laurel Homes, Inc.
MBV Engineering, Inc.
National Bank of Commerce
Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club
Proctor Construction Company
Rossway Swan Tierney Barry
Schlitt Services
Spectrum Interior Design
Dr. David Sullivan
Sun Aviation
TD Bank

Additional investors listed on back cover

17th Annual Industry Appreciation Awards Luncheon

September 18, 2014



Indian River County
Chamber of Commerce

2014 Industry Appreciation Awards Luncheon

Welcome

Lunch Served

Introductions

Special Tribute

Presentation of Architectural
Recognition Awards

Manufacturer of the Year

Entrepreneur of the Year

Latin Business of the Year

Company of the Year

Closing Remarks

Adjournment

Shelly Ferger

From: Indian River County Chamber of Commerce
<director@indianriverchamber.ccsend.com> on behalf of Indian River County Chamber
of Commerce <director@indianriverchamber.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 9:18 AM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Local Businesses Recognized



A Legacy of Progress.
September 22, 2014
eNews

September

23

RIBBON CUTTING!

For the
Leigh Jewelers Remodel
3401 Ocean Drive
Ribbon cutting at
4:30pm sharp
(note time chage)

25

5-7pm

Business After Hours
Sponsor:



Members: \$8
\$10 walk-in
RSVP 772-567-3491 or
[RESERVE HERE](#)

30

9am-10:30

"Industry Appreciation" Recognizes County Businesses

The Chamber celebrated the achievements of local companies at our **17th Annual Industry Appreciation Awards** event last week at the Indian River State College Richardson Center. We show our appreciation to those businesses that have made a positive impact in our community during the past year, either through architectural enhancements or by way of community involvement and economic impact.

The awards luncheon also paid tribute to the late John Dean, a local architect and community supporter who passed away earlier this year. Tony Donadio, principal of Donadio and Associates Architects, spoke presented Dean's accomplishments, many of which had been recognized by the Industry Appreciation Awards program through the years.

COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Small - Brite Future Electric
Medium - White Glove Moving, Storage & Delivery/Pak Mail Beachside

MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Small - Triton Submarines LLC
Medium - Nylacarb Corporation
Large - Novurania of America

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Chive Restaurant

LATIN BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Press Coverage

Wednesday
September 17, 2014

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
Newsweekly
CELEBRATING WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

By Brenda Sposato
The Newsweekly

James Taylor, 42, was a retired U.S. Army staff sergeant when he was diagnosed with a serious illness that would change his life forever: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

He and his wife, Dawn, had just moved to Vero Beach from Seattle, Wash., with plans to start their new life. They even scheduled a trip to Disney World as a welcome-home gift for James.

But during their visit to the park, "while waiting in line, I panicked," recalled Taylor. "I started breathing heavily, began clenching my fists, my ears started ringing, and then I took off running. I went into survival mode. I knew something was wrong. I needed help."

He says the relentless



PHOTO BY BRENDA SPOSATO
Pia Pia, an 11-pound therapy dog, knows how to dial 9-1-1.

wartime attacks, roadside bombings and fire fights caused him to lose sixty percent of his hearing and brought on his PTSD.

"With all the turmoil in our lives, we put our personal goals to the side," he said of the disheartening period after the onset of his illness. "And all hopes of having a child of our own became too much to bear."

Pug-nacious

Enter Pia Pia, a 5-year-old, 11-pound female pug, who became an angel and hero after she was adopted from Sebastian's Halo Animal Rescue.

With the help of Dogs for Life, which specializes in training service and therapy dogs for veterans, Pia Pia provides comfort

See **HEROES**, 10

HEROES from 1

and emotional support to Taylor. Pia Pia received quality training at Dogs for Life and has been certified as a PTSD/hearing assistance dog.

"She literally saved my husband's life at least two times," said Dawn.

"Jimmy was in the shower one day and I was in my office working with my headphones on. Meanwhile Pia Pia was on the couch. She heard a thump and Jimmy yell, but I didn't hear him," said Dawn.

"Out of the corner of my eye I saw Pia Pia hitting the special service dog's 911 phone. I took my headphones off to ask her what she was doing, but she proceeded to jump on my leg and go in circles until I got up and followed her to the bathroom door."

Dawn said on another occasion, she was at the neighbor's house when she saw the ambulance pass by, headed toward

her own house. James had fallen down the stairs and was knocked unconscious.

"I ran home to see Jimmy laying at the bottom of the stairs with Pia Pia right there as the paramedics went in. The paramedics

informed me that they received a 911 call with a dog barking."

Operators at the 911 dispatch centers know when a service dog is in the house, explained Dawn, "so they immediately dispatched the ambulance, fire and

eggs."

All the responders were surprised it was a pug service dog who made the call, said Dawn. Because of their diminutive size, pugs are most often used as therapy dogs to soothe



PHOTO BY BRENDA SPOSATO
Jim Taylor, SSG, U.S. Army (Ret.), an Iraq War veteran, and his hearing/service pug, Pia Pia.

10V Wednesday, September 17, 2014 VERO BEACH - INDIAN RIVER NEWSWEEKLY

SERVICE



PHOTO BY BRENDA SPOSATO
Joan Freeman, Patty Shell, Jason Harris, Shelly Ferger and Katie Kowanic of Dogs for Life.

park, enables the staff and volunteers to train service dogs certified for assisting veterans, and provide them to wounded warriors free of charge.

Funded entirely by donations and membership dues for the off-leash park, the training center also offers dog behavior and obedience classes for the general public and people with disabilities.

According to the volunteers, the new facility is a dream come true. Dogs for Life is one of only four training facilities in Florida sanctioned by the Veterans Administration and accredited by Assistance Dogs International.

"Before our new facility, we could only train dogs in the homes of our clients," explained Ferger. "Now, we can offer services to folks outside the Vero Beach area."

Vet helping vets

Jason Harris, Dogs for Life's first military veteran to become a dog trainer, is passionate about helping



PHOTO BY BRENDA SPOSATO
Service dog Shadow and Tony Santos, a Vietnam veteran.

emotional support. Shadow is learning to call 911 in case of an emergency and perform specialized mobility tasks.

Joan Freeman, a Dogs for Life volunteer, owns a miniature poodle hearing dog named Daisy - and she's Freeman's best friend. "My dog Daisy saved my life twice. I would probably never leave my house without her."

"Our programs can take up to a year and a half," said Shelly Ferger, executive director of Dogs for Life, about the specialized training. "In the end, what we offer people is a second chance."

New digs

Dogs for Life has recently expanded its ability to train hearing and service dogs just like Pia Pia, Shadow and Daisy.

The organization's new indoor and outdoor dog training center, located at 1230 16th Avenue, adjacent to the 4-acre off-leash

volunteers. "What we do here is specialized training - from hearing tasks to mobility tasks and PTSD tasks," said Harris. "The level of experience and talent here is phenomenal."

Dogs for Life is member of the Veterans Council of Indian River County and Veterans Service of America.

"As an auxiliary member of the council, Dogs for Life helps meet the needs of men and women who've served their country. They exemplify the support we want for all veterans of Indian River County," said Veterans Council Vice President Tony Young.

"With over 80,000 veterans returning home, we know that our load is going to double and triple very soon," said Ferger.

"Here at Dogs for Life we're getting ready. We're cross training. A person with a hearing impairment may also be in a wheelchair. So we have to teach our dogs to serve in

other veterans.

Harris has a whatever-it-takes attitude. He not only helps train dogs, but also raises awareness in the community - which facilitates recruitment of other veterans and

multiple capacities."

For more information about training, volunteering and off-leash park membership, please call 772-567-8569 or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.



PHOTO BY ANNIE SHAW

THE VHL&D STAFF ENJOYING THE LAST OF THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

It was a poolch party at the Dogs for Life Dog Park on 12th street one hot afternoon in late August. The VHL&D staff got together for a doggy meet and greet. Despite the excessive heat, tails were wagging and everybody was on their best behavior!

Indian River, St. Lucie & Martin Counties Where the Stars Come Out Every Monday - Sept. 1, 2014

Luminaries



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

2 - Joining Taylor Ortega-Cowan (in back of sofa) for her weekly radio show "Chunky Chat" are L.A. and Doree (the Labrador Retriever), Shelly Fergic and Jay Harris of Dogs for Life.



Vero Beach Exchangite

Exchange Club of Vero Beach

A Semi-Monthly Newsletter

Program Notes : September 1--30, 2014

Officers

- President - Glenn Grevengeod
- President Elect - Rick Hahn
- Treasurer - Herb Whittall
- Secretary - Diana Walker
- Past President - Barbara Heston

Board of Directors

- Betsy Craun
- Judy Landgrave
- Nancy Madsen
- Jack McAfee
- Bob Santoro
- Marilyn Wallach

Index

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- Page 1: A Visit From Elvis
- Page 1: Toastmasters Demo
- Page 2: Students of the Month
- Page 3: Visitors Day
- Page 3: Exchange Minute
- Page 3: Frank's Memorial
- Page 4: Castle Giving Luncheon
- Page 4: Christmas Tree Sales
- Page 4: Newsletter Ads
- Page 4: Thank you Joan



Veteran of the Quarter (Sept 9th): Our honoree, Sergeant James Taylor, retired from the US Army after serving 20 years as Military Police, Military Police Corrections and an Operation Iraqi Freedom War Veteran. After retiring, Jim and his wife, Dawn, returned to Florida to settle in Vero Beach. Not long after, PTSD started to affect Jim's ability to want to go out or to be around groups of people. As he became more homebound, Dawn thought that a dog would be a good way to get Jim out of the house. They adopted Pei Pei and immediately began obedience class. It was during those classes that the instructor noticed Jim's uneasiness and recognized the symptoms. He referred him to Shelly Fergic at Dogs for Life (DFL) who trains dogs to work with PTSD vets. Shelly worked with Pei Pei and for the last four years the dog has been by Jim's side helping him to cope and work through his disorder.

The story doesn't stop there. Jim has been so thankful that he was able to find a way to endure that he has taken on working with Shelley in introducing the idea of service dogs to vets. When they see how it works for Jim, they start to see hope for themselves. We congratulate Jim for his service to our country and for his work helping his fellow vets. (Pictured l to r: Glenn Grevengeod, President, James Taylor, Dawn Taylor and Pei Pei)

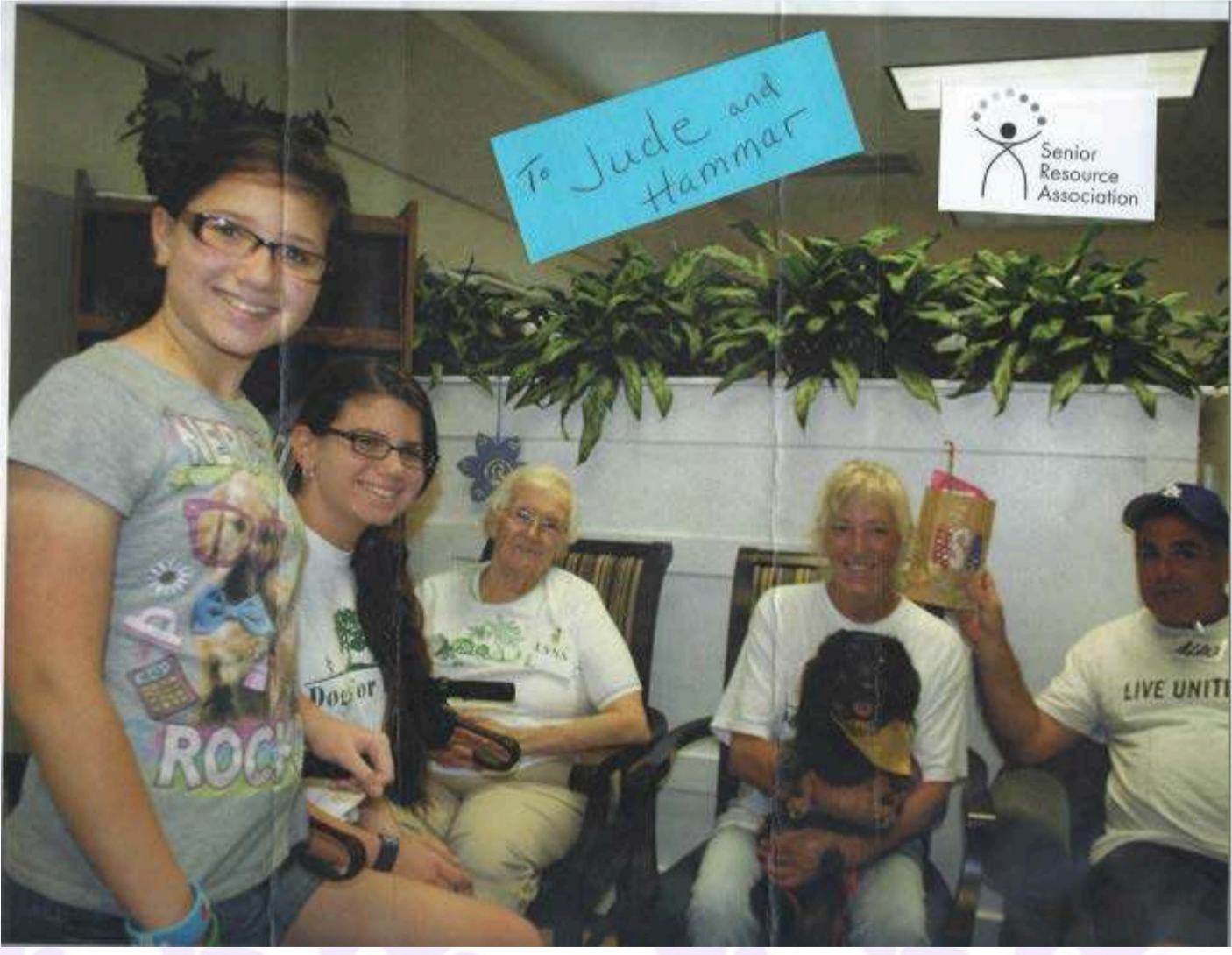


From Graceland to Vero: A Visit From Elvis - Sept 9th: Many in the group were wondering what Roy Howard was up to when he announced, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Elvis has arrived". It's definitely not something you would expect to be hearing these days unless you were in Las Vegas. But, no sooner the announcement was made, Elvis did walk through the doors, white jumpsuit, jet black hair, cape and all and immediately began his performance. While the real Elvis is no longer with us, this Elvis is the creation of Glenn Ordndorff. Glenn is one of those rare individuals who not only sound like Elvis, but has also mastered his mannerisms and bears a strange resemblance to him.

Glenn lives in Vero Beach and sings every Sunday with the First Baptist Church choir. When not singing in the choir he likes to sing country and western, but will slip into his Elvis persona for special occasions.

Toastmasters Meeting Demo - Sept 16th: John Young, President of the local Toastmasters club was our guest speaker today. John, along with several of his Toastmaster colleagues, gave us a chance to experience what a meeting would feel like. During a meeting, members evaluate one another's presentations. That feedback process is based on timekeeping, grammar, and nuances. As we viewed the demonstrations, we learned quickly that the ability to listen effectively is extremely important.

John took it one step further by having some of our members (called at random) participate in impromptu table topic subjects. They would have a minimum of 2 minutes and maximum of 5 minutes to talk. At the end of their discussion, they would be subject to the feedback from the members.





AUGUST

Governor's Veterans Service Award

FDVA
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Honoring those who served U.S.

Governor's Veterans Service Award


You're Invited!

Ceremonies Honoring Florida's Veterans and Military Members

EVENT DETAILS

<p>Veterans & Military Personnel are Strongly Encouraged to RSVP:</p> <p>http://rsvp.myflorida.com</p> <p>RSVP Code: "MELBOURNE"</p> <p>Questions? Call (850)717-9207</p>	<p>MELBOURNE</p> <p>AUGUST 14 Melbourne National Guard Armory 1889 Stewart Road Melbourne, FL 32935 CLICK HERE TO RSVP</p> <p>WHEN 2:15 p.m.</p> <p>REGISTRATION 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Note: Veterans must provide some form of identification that validates their veteran status.</p> <p>Includes: DD214, VA ID Card, Retirement ID, Military ID, etc.</p> <p>ATTIRE Business attire recommended. Veteran Service Organization attire is welcome.</p>
--	---

Governor's Veterans Service Award Medal



To honor Florida's more than 1.5 million Veterans.





MULLIGAN'S

Beach House

12 WEEKS OF SUMMER!

Join the party by dressing along with these fun themes!

June 5th - Fiesta Party

June 19th - Luau Party

July 3rd - Superhero

July 17th - 80's Night

July 31st - Carnival

August 14th - Sports

June 12th - Rockstar Night

June 26th - Pirate & Princess

July 10th - Under the Sea

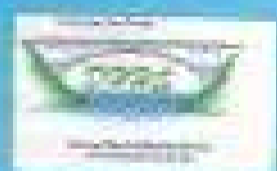
July 24th - Christmas in July

August 7th - Masquerade

August 21st - Puppy Love

Come Support These Great Local Charities

**Anthony M. LaRosa
Memorial Scholarship**



Hibiscus Children's Center
Saving Children Since 1985



Boys & Girls
Club



TEAM IN
TRAINING

Dogs
for Life

VERO BEACH - 772.492.6744

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International Assistance Dog Week

Dogs For Life celebrates 2014 International Assistance Dog Week August 3-9



Retired Deputy Sheriff Phillip Muma works with his Dog Duke, during an assistance dog training session. "Team Duke" in Training, through Dogs For Life, Inc.

In honor of International Assistance Dog Week, Dogs For Life, Inc. Will be holding tours of their new Assistance Dog Training Center. The Training Center is located at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, Florida and is open from 9 AM to 6 PM.

International Assistance Dog Week was created to recognize all the devoted, hardworking assistance dogs helping individuals mitigate their disability related limitations. In addition to honoring assistance dogs during their special week, one of the goals is to raise awareness about these very special and highly trained animals. This year International Assistance Dog Week is August 3-9.

We hope everyone in our area can join us to celebrate the selfless love and devotion these dogs provide. DFL will have information on how service dogs are evaluated, trained, and the laws pertaining to service dogs in public places. DFL will have information on how their program operates in and outside Vero Beach, Florida.

"Finally, our Assistance Dog Training Center is complete and we are training more service dogs than ever this year. Our Veteran Dog Training Program is moving full steam ahead and we currently have three dogs in training for local Veterans," said Shelly Ferger, DFL head dog trainer. Vero Beach has a gem right here in Indian River County and we want our community to learn all about it.

Assistance Dogs transform the lives of their human partners with debilitating physical and mental disabilities by serving as their devoted companion, helper, aide, best friend and close

member of their family. Assistance dogs include Guide Dogs, Service Dogs, Hearing Alert Dogs, Seizure Alert/Response Dogs and Medical Alert/Response Dogs.

For additional information, or to have your dog screened for training as an assistance dog, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

Dogs For Life schedules dog training classes

Dogs For Life, Inc. Has two basic obedience classes, one beginning Saturday, September 2, at 9 AM and the second beginning Friday, September 8, at 6 PM.

With the completion of the new air-conditioned Dogs For Life Training and Administrative Center, Inc. Located at the Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Avenue, DFL will re-start our dog behavior/obedience classes for assistance dogs, pet-assisted therapy dogs and dogs owned by the general public. The classes are one hour, last for six weeks and cost \$120.

Shelly Ferger, Founder and CEO of DFL, will be teaching the first series of classes with trainers Sgt. Jay Harris, CPDT-KA, US Army, and Paula Via, CPDT-KA, ABCDT. "Now that the Training and Administrative Center is complete, we are excited to be teaching again, from the very basics to the advanced levels, all while having fun and using positive reinforcement," said Shelly Ferger.

Class size is limited, and reservations are required, call DFL at (772) 567-8969 for additional information or email at dogsforlifeyb@bellsouth.net. Website address: www.dogsforlifeyb.org.



Chunky Chat Radio Show



"A Veteran's Best Friend"
- Chunky Chat Radio Show #8
With Tania Ortega-Cowan
08/21/2014

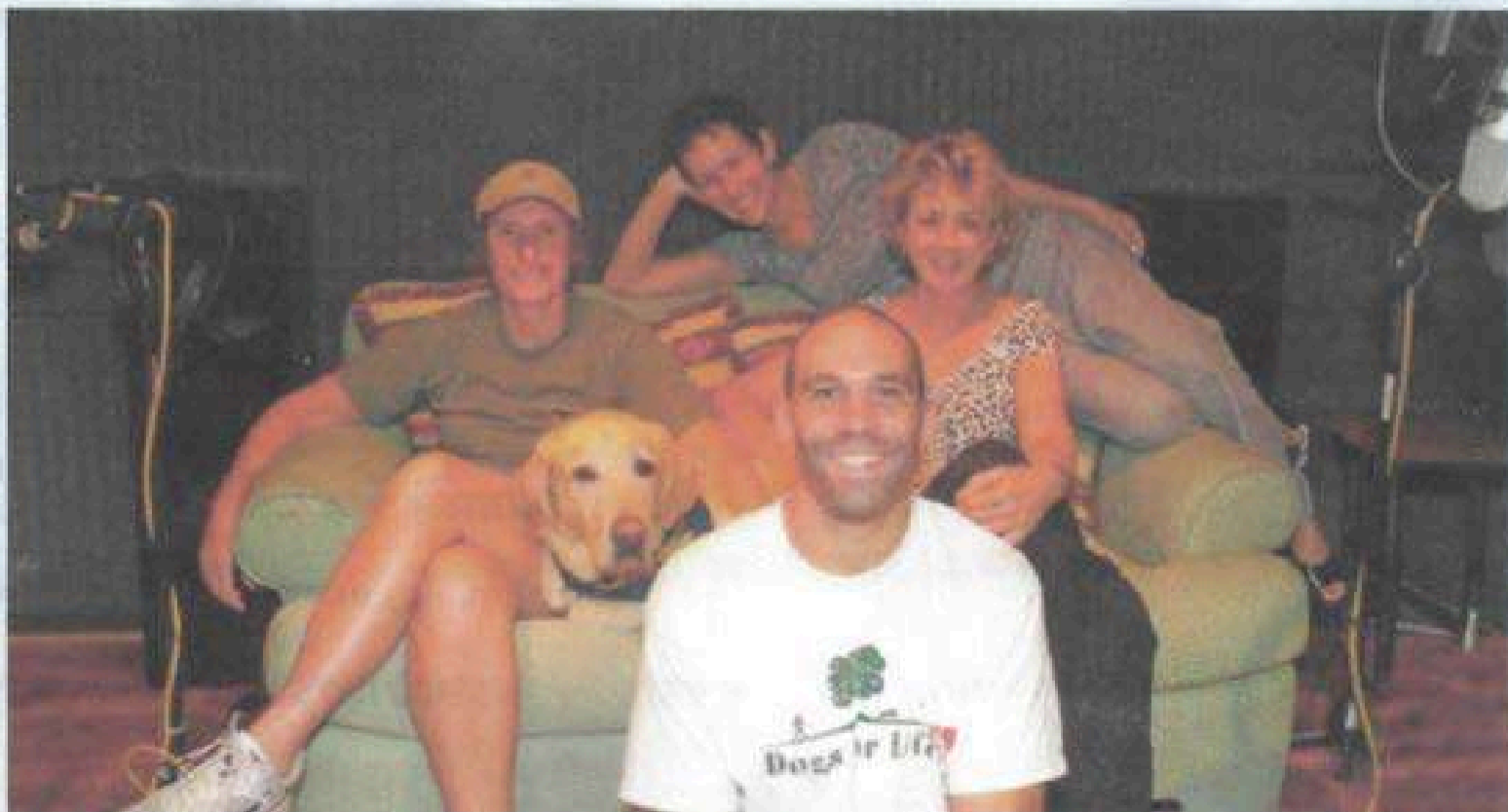
Listen in Friday August 22 from 3:30 - 4 pm and Sunday August 24 from 5 - 5:30 pm as we chat about the benefit of man's best friend to veterans with post traumatic stress and people with other special needs.

In the studio with me are Jay Harris, L.A. and Darel the Labrador Retriever, and Shelly Ferger from Dogs for Life.

Find it at 107.9 FM and 1370 AM in Indian River County, on i-Heart Radio "WAXE".

The show is called Chunky Chat.

Here is where we have 'conversations of substance' with do-gooders and heroes which will air every Friday at 3:30 to 4:00 pm, and Sundays from 5 to 5:30 pm on 107.9 FM and 1370 AM in Indian River County, on i-Heart Radio "WAXE" and online at www.chunkychat.com and on social media. ~ Tania Ortega-Cowan.



Left to Right: LA & Darel (Labrador Retriever) Tania Ortega-Cowan, Shelly Ferger and Jay Harris.

Shelley Ferger

From: Barbara Hoffman <info@cultural-council.org>
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 9:07 AM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Cultural Council Connection

**Arts
MATTER**

Cultural Council
CONNECTION

www.Cultural-Council.org 772.770.4857

Dear Shelley,

Welcome to our *Monday Morning Cultural Council Connection*.

THE CULTURAL CONNECTION WITH WILLI MILLER

**Every Monday on WAXE 1370 AM or 107.9 FM
5 to 5:30 p.m.**

**To hear the show streaming via your computer, visit
www.waxe1370.com at 5 p.m.**

**Jose Daniel Flores
Marcos Flores**

TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR SUMMERFEST 2014

Dogs For Life, Inc. Schedules Dog Training Classes

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FESTIVAL

**Saturday, September 27
10 am to 4 pm
Riverside Park**



Dogs For Life, Inc. MISSION STATEMENT:

A non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs and owning and operating an off-leash dog park.

Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution for Federal income tax purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, Registration # CH15831.

You will receive a written receipt for tax purposes and regular updates through the Dogs For Life, Inc. Paw Prints Newsletter.



dogsforlife.org



News Articles

DFL Celebrates 2014 International Assistance Dog Week August 3-9



August 3-9, 2014

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For additional information, or to have your dog screened for training as an assistance dog, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



204 • Sunday, August 3, 2014 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • IC

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

Dog Obedience Training Classes: 9 a.m. Fri. Aug. 8, Dogs For Life Training and Administrative Center, Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, \$120. Register: 772-567-8969; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net; www.dogsforlifevb.org.

IC • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • Wednesday, August 6, 2014 • 9A

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar



Assistance Dog Screening for hearing and service work is available by appointment at Dogs For Life Inc., 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach. To register, call 772-567-8969 or send an email to dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

Assistance Dog Screening: For hearing and service work: by appointment. Dogs For Life, Inc., 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach. Register: 772-567-8969; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

IC • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • Thursday, August 7, 2014 • 5A

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

Orientations to Off-Leash Dog Park: For dogs 6 months and older inoculated, neutered and social. By appointment. Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, \$45-\$65. Register: 772-567-8969; www.dogsforlifevb.org.

Private Dog Training: by appointment. Dogs For Life Inc., 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, \$50. Register: 772-567-8969; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

'Armageddon' — a soldier's tale of the aftermath of Katrina

Mary Kemper
STAFF WRITER
mkemper@veteranvoiceweekly.com

"The smell ... when we got off the C-130, it hit me like a sledgehammer. It was like sticking your head in a toilet."

Former Army National Guard Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris, of Vero Beach, said the memories — both horrible and gratifying — of his one-month deployment to New Orleans in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina will last his lifetime.

On Aug. 29, 2005, Katrina slammed into the Gulf states, killing 1,833 and causing more than \$100 billion in damages. One week later, Harris arrived in New Orleans to help the devastated residents.

He was a mechanic, attached to the 972nd Military Police Battalion. He was part of a mosaic of units from all services, from all across the country.

The immediate need was some kind of base.

"We had the best first sergeant — I wish I could remember his name," Harris said. "He got us accommodations at the University of New Orleans," which is located near Lake Pontchartrain.

"When we flew in, the Air Force base (Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans) was completely destroyed. The runway was hastily put together. We spent two days there, basically camping, before we moved into the university," Harris said.



Staff photo by Mary Kemper

Former Army National Guard Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris takes a break at his Vero Beach home with his "unit" of pet dogs.

"The scene was Armageddon, like something out of a 'Mad Max' movie. Apocalyptic. People were just in shock."

Jay Harris

"There were people from all over in our unit. They called us the 'misfit battalion,'" he said, laughing.

Harris and the "misfits" got to work right away, disproving their nickname by quickly getting their base set up for operations and commandeering supplies.

"The Louisiana National Guard Armory gave us access to equipment, like a wrecker, extra trucks, Humvees and tools," Harris said.

"Lowe's and Home Depot were basically bust anyway, so they gave us any kind of supplies we

needed, toilet paper, you name it. "We were in a MacGyver situation — find it and get it, and make it happen. I certainly thank that unit (the Louisiana Guard) — they made sure we had fuel, trucks, even a fenced-in area for our 'motor pool.'"

"There were 150 of us living in the gymnasium," he said. "There were cots lined up to sleep on, male and female changing areas, no running water, only one fan, and we had to use MRE boxes as toilets — pretty primitive, but it brought us all together, a real bonding."

Harris and his unit-mates began

See **KATRINA** page 4

"We were in a MacGyver situation — find it and get it, and make it happen."

Former Army National Guard Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris

KATRINA from page 2

ferrying supplies to their base from the airport and from local sources, "right through the pumping areas," he said. "At that time, the water was still very high." And the smell from the water, a swirling mass of raw sewage and toxic chemicals — "a lot of people were throwing up from it."

Death and destruction were everywhere. "You had bodies in the trees, boats, everything," Harris said. "It was chaos — madness."

The MPs got to work right away as well, securing perimeters and establishing cleared areas. "They walked in teams," Harris said. "That's when it hit me that we might get hurt."

"New Orleans always had a lot of crime anyway, but law and order hadn't been re-established yet."

"We had to keep our weapons with us at all times. We didn't lock and load, but we always had to have a magazine in."

Only once did Harris and the MPs encounter potential danger. A "suspicious vehicle" was seen driving around the area, but it took off after its driver presumably saw the MPs, Harris said.

"I didn't like to ask too many questions" when out and about with the MPs — "I was like, 'are we good? Good,'" he said.



Staff photo by Mary Kemper

Souvenirs collected from former Army National Guard Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris' unit deploying to Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina include a street sign and a University of New Orleans T-shirt.

A more immediate danger was the flooding everywhere. Driving, Harris said, was always a hazard. "My buddy Daly (first name Jermaine) and I were sent out to find this truck that had gotten stuck," Harris said. "Daly was driving. The water started getting higher and higher, so we made the decision to get back to the parking lot."

"All of a sudden, the truck began to tilt. 'Uh-oh,' [Daly] said. I said, 'Whaddya mean, uh-oh? Don't say uh-oh!'"

"Then it really began to tilt. Water started coming in. And you did not want to come in contact with that water. I climbed out onto the roof, while he tried to get the truck moving. It was no good, so he climbed out, too. Let's hang out for a while," I said.

"We called the motor pool. We sounded like smarta**es, I guess, because Daly said, 'They think we're joking.' I said, 'No, no, no! We're not!'"

"They planned to send someone out to get us, but a boat came by with reporters and local people (in it). They dropped us on dry land, and we eventually met up with the rescue party."

"We called ourselves 'Skipper and Gilligan,'" Harris said with a laugh.

The next day, the water had drained enough to allow the truck to be driven out. "You should have seen the yellow-green color on the hubcaps," Harris said. "To think that could have gotten on us."

Eventually, once the security

perimeters were established, the MPs began allowing residents back to their home areas by ZIP code, Harris said. "The scene was Armageddon, like something out of a 'Mad Max' movie. Apocalyptic. People were just in shock."

But relief efforts began to take on a kind of rhythm, Harris said.

"The MPs did their mission, we did ours, moving supplies," he said. "It was the first time I'd ever worked with such an eclectic group. Even the cooks were going out (distributing) water and MREs to people."

"We picked up people who were stuck, we helped out everyone we met — it was the whole reason we were there," Harris said.

"People were so happy, thanking us all the time. The best part of the mission was seeing how much of a difference we made. When I went home, I felt good."

Even personal hygiene for the troops began to improve from the MRE-box-toilet primitive conditions. Portable toilets were installed, and the Coast Guard unit allowed Harris and his fellow soldiers to use its shower facilities on an alternative-day basis.

"That was awesome," Harris said. "On the truck, Daly was talking about taking a long, long shower at home, and I was like, 'Dude, shut up!'"

The overpowering stench permeated everything, and no one kept any of his clothes afterward, Harris said. "It just smelled like death, like a punch in the face."

They did give us masks, which helped."

By the end of his deployment, Harris said there was a noticeable improvement in the situation.

"When we first got there, there was 5 feet of water. There was a lot of crime in the first couple of days, but then that was secured. FEMA cleared out the bodies, and the Coast Guard was clearing the dikes."

"The focus was on repair and rebuilding. Electric companies from all 50 states were there working around the clock."

A few days before leaving, Harris and his friends heard there was a Popeye's restaurant nearby.

"We took a ride across Lake Pontchartrain, and there it was," he said. "After a month of MREs, we devoured that food like vultures."

All in all, despite the hardships, Harris said he doesn't regret a minute of his deployment.

"To see the city gradually pick itself up, to help people, to be a part of that — it's just the greatest feeling," he said.

Harris said he'd "love to go back and see New Orleans today. It's a beautiful city. Back then, it was more like downtown Iraq."

No sooner had Harris' National Guard contract expired in April 2006 than he was called back up to service via the Individual Ready Reserve. In November of that year, he was deployed to Kuwait. After 11 months, he flew back to the U.S., "my contract free and clear," he said.

"Back when I was in Kuwait, I used to tell people I wanted to start a revolution. 'You mean overthrow the government or something?' people said. 'No, I just want to do something revolutionary.'"

Jay Harris

"Back when I was in Kuwait, I used to tell people I wanted to start a revolution. 'You mean overthrow the government or something?' people said. 'No, I just want to do something revolutionary.'"

A dog lover, Harris found his current job as coordinator of the veteran service dog program at Dogs For Life, Vero Beach, through his two white Scottish terriers, Fergus and Nessia.

"They needed walking, so I took them to the Dog Park," he said.

(The two terriers were soon joined by Sasha, a poodle, and Barbie, a Chihuahua. Together, they form Harris' own "unit," with Nessia as "brigadier general," Fergus as "lieutenant colonel," Barbie as "lieutenant" and Sasha as "secretary of state.")

"Well, a few months went by, and I was working at PetSmart. My mother's friend knew someone at DFL, and I eventually met Shelly (Ferber, DFL founder and CEO). She's a great mentor, a great friend."

"We talked about training service dogs. About a year ago, Shelly said the (administrative and training) building was going up, and the plan was for 'Jay to get hired.' That kept me going — I've always wanted to work with service dogs."

Editor's note: Please see last week's issue featuring Tony Santos and his dog Shadow, whom Harris is helping to train for Shadow's future as a service dog.

At a recent ceremony for Purple Heart recipients at the Victory Center military store in Indian River Mall, Harris said he was proud of how well Daniel, a veteran suffering from PTSD, did with the help of his dog, Ariel (Daniel's last name is not released because of privacy issues).

In addition to his work with Dogs For Life, Harris said he wants to get a "Florida sled dog" initiative going.

"Basically, it's you on a skateboard with dogs on a harness and leash," he explained, showing a video of himself being pulled along a street by four dogs.

"It's a great, active way to exercise dogs, and the veterans, too," he said.

"A lot of vets get pits (pit bull terriers), Dobermans, shepherds — that's great, but they all need exercise."

Veterans and dogs can learn a lot from each other, Harris said.

"I tell my classes, there is great

See KATRINA page 5

KATRINA from page 4

wisdom from dogs. Anger, frustration issues — dogs know. It's the best therapy to learn from each other.

"Things are beginning to change in terms of dog training. We're helping people learn to relax, instead of using tight leashes, choke collars — I mean, would you like to keep on getting jabbed in the neck?"

"But we're seeing a real change from the old mentality. Now we're helping people see interactions in

new ways, with a focus more on problem-solving, and everything they can do with their dogs — agility, sports, all that stuff. So yeah, that's revolutionary in its own way."

"See?" Harris said with a laugh. "I told 'em I'd start a revolution!"

Veterans interested in learning more about the Dogs For Life service training can contact dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net, and those interested in learning more about Harris' sled dog initiative can contact him at jason.r.harris.2013@gmail.com.

Veterans to get service awards in Melbourne

Patrick McCallister
FOR VETERAN VOICE
patrick.mccallister@yahoo.com

Gov. Rick Scott will be in Melbourne on Thursday, Aug. 14, at 2:15 p.m. to give veterans and military personnel recognition. The governor will be at the Melbourne National Guard Armory, 1889 Stewart Road, giving those who served and are serving the Governor's Veterans Service Award.

The Great Seal of the State of Florida is on the front. The seals of the five branches of the military — Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard — on the back. Below those seals are the words, "Honoring Those Who Served." Scott hopes to get the Governor's Veterans Service Award to all in the state who served in uniform.

"I'll be there," said Garren Cone, president of the American Veterans Empowerment Team (AVET) Project, and co-host of American



Warrior Radio, a veterans-interest show on 1300 AM, WMEL. "I registered to go to the (ceremony) in Orlando, but couldn't get there. A lot of veterans around here got them."

Florida is one of only four states with more than a million veterans. The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs estimates there are 1.6 million veterans in the state. The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs is separate from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. Among its duties are running the state's veterans homes and advocating for veterans interests at the Florida Legislature and Cabinet.

In a press release when the awards were introduced last year, Scott explained their importance.

"The freedoms and opportunities that are afforded by the American Dream were paid for by the service and sacrifice of our brave veterans," he said. "Our heroes have made countless sacrifices for Florida families and it is important that we take the time to frequently honor and thank them for their courage and their service. Although we can never thank our veterans enough, this medal will serve as a testament of our thanks from Floridians everywhere."

Scott was in the Navy from 1971 to 1974. He served as a radar operator aboard the *USS Glouster*.

Gov. Rick Scott, right, greets men and women in uniform at a July 2 ceremony in Jacksonville to give out the Governor's Veterans Service Award. Scott will be in Melbourne Thursday, Aug. 14 to conduct a similar ceremony with veterans from the Space Coast area.

"The freedoms and opportunities that are afforded by the American Dream were paid for by the service and sacrifice of our brave veterans."

Gov. Rick Scott

Registration for the ceremony begins at 1 p.m. For proof of service, veterans can use military ID cards, DD214s, retirement ID cards, VA ID cards, or veteran service organization IDs. Veterans can also register ahead of time by visiting www.floridavets.org/gvsa/new-melbourne-gvsa.

Those who can't attend the Melbourne ceremony will get a second chance to receive the award. On Friday, Aug. 15, at 3:30 p.m., the governor will give awards at the Avon Park National Guard Armory, 2500 U.S. Highway 27. Registration begins at 2:30 p.m. Veterans can also register for that ceremony by visiting www.floridavets.org/gvsa/avon-park-gvsa.

The FDVA said that so far 2,418 veterans have received the award. For more, call (850)717-9207.



The 'Governor's Veterans Service Award' honors Floridians who have served in the U.S. military. On the front of the medal is Great Seal of the state of Florida. The back of the medal displays the five seals representing the five branches of U.S. military with an inscription that reads 'Honoring Those Who Served.'

Photo courtesy of Gov. Rick Scott's office

Ceremony recognizes Purple Heart heroes

By Candace Moore
Your Newsweekly Contributor

Local Purple Heart recipients were honored in a celebration Aug. 7 on National Purple Heart Day at Victory Center in the Indian River Mall.

Thirteen local war veterans, with hearts bigger than their awards, were recognized for their heroism and sacrifice in the preservation of our country in wars ranging from World War II to the Iraq War.

"The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the United States who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.

Specifically, it is a combat decoration as defined by the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

"Thank you all," said County Commissioner Joseph Plescher, wearing a purple tie in their

honor. "You have risked your lives, shed blood, sustained injuries, without compromise and unselfishly for us all. You are all heroes and I'm here because you're here."

One of a kind

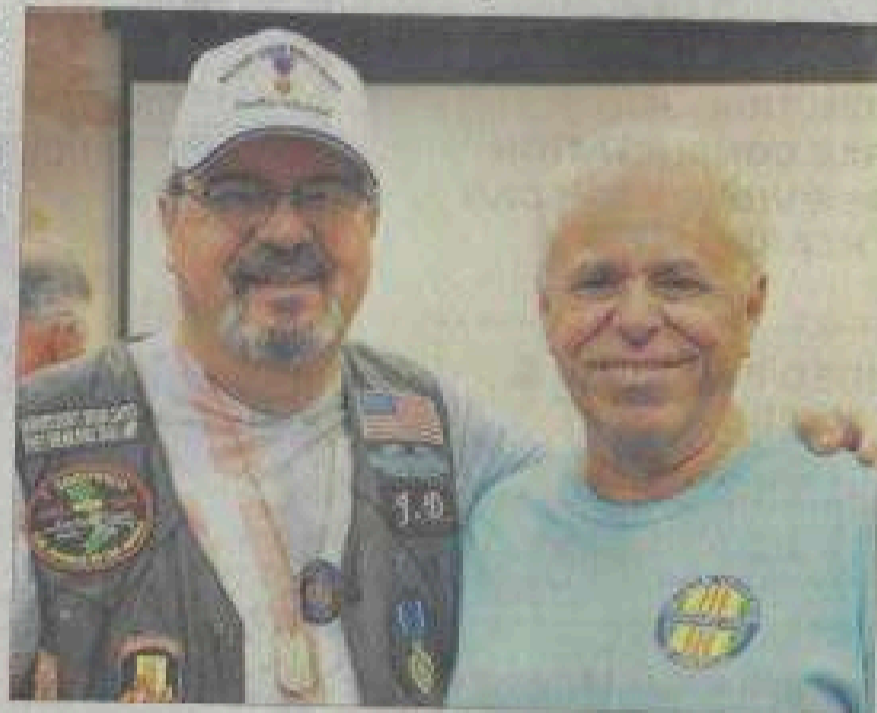
The Victory Center, a vision that became a reality two years ago, is the only center of its kind in the United States and a model for future sites desperately needed throughout the country.

More than just a military store, it is a labor of love and operated solely by volunteers.

First, all proceeds benefit local veterans.

Behind the store is "The Bunker," a gathering place for veterans and their families to relax, have a cup of coffee and talk to other veterans.

The center offers physical therapy and cardiology training, financial planning classes, job information for new veterans returning home from war, and provides permanently disabled veterans



PHOTOGRAPH BY CANDACE MOORE
Purple Heart recipients John Darling, former president of Victory Center and currently a volunteer manager, and Len Zanca at the Purple Heart Day celebration at the Indian River Mall.

with wheelchairs, walkers and canes through donations and store profits.

Pete Sayles, president of Victory Center, said, "All of the money made at the store remains in Indian River County.

Fifty percent of the profits help pay to transport veterans to the West Palm Beach Veterans Medical Center to obtain the health care they require

and deserve."

Purple heart cane:

The Indian River County Woodcarvers supply beautiful hand-crafted canes to distribute to local veterans and Purple Heart recipients in need.

Each cane bears the head of the American bald eagle on the handle and an inscription with

the personal information of the recipient, such as their name, rank, division, service dates and awards.

The back of the cane carries these poignant words:

"A Veteran whether active duty, retired, discharged, national guard or reserve - man or woman - is someone who at one point in their life wrote a

blank check made payable to 'The United States of America' for an amount 'up to and including my life.'"

Ryan Testa, a Purple Heart recipient, received a veteran's cane on Purple Heart Day at the Victory Center. He is the 99th local recipient to date.

Colonel Tony Young, acting president of the Veterans Council said, "Take a look of the character of the people in this room. Everyone here today is a hero and honored for their sacrifice for our freedom."

The award dates back to Aug. 7, 1782, when General George Washington, commander in chief of the Continental Army, created the "Badge for Military Merit," known today as the Purple Heart.

To help our local veterans or make a donation, contact Victory Center Military Store in the Indian River Mall (near Macy's) or call 772-226-5316.

See MORE PHOTOS, 6

LOCAL

PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS (FROM PAGE 1)



PHOTOGRAPH BY CANDACE MOORE
Purple Heart Day at Victory Center, honoring Purple Heart recipients from Indian River and Saint Lucie counties. Standing: Ronald Stevens; D. Ivar Swanson, Jr.; Ed Britt; Yank Yannetti; James D. Wilson, Sr.; Rick Browder; John Darling; Mike Hoefel; Robert M. Lammert; and Steve Kraus. Kneeling: Daniel Votrobek and service dog Ariel. (Not pictured: Roy Sizer and Len Zanca.)



Ryan Testa was presented with a hand-carved cane at the Purple Heart Day celebration. He served in the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division in Somalia, Iraq and was awarded the Purple Heart on Aug. 28, 2007.



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
 Week of August 11, 2014 » SCRIPPS NICHE PUBLICATIONS » LUMINARIES » LU



Retired Deputy Sheriff Phillip Muma works with his dog Duke during an assistance dog training session hosted by Dogs For Life, Inc.

IC » SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS » Thursday, August 14, 2014 » 5A

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

THURSDAY'S SPECIAL EVENTS

★ Governor's Veterans Service Award Ceremony:
 All local veterans to be honored with the Governor's Veterans Service Award medal. 2:15 p.m. Melbourne National Guard Armory, 1839 Stewart Road, Melbourne. Must provide some form of identification that validates veteran status: DD214, VA ID Card, retirement ID, military ID, etc. RSVP: 850-717-9207; <http://rsvp.myflorida.com> RSVP Code: "MELBOURNE"

★ Private Dog Training: By appointment. Dogs For Life, Inc., 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach. \$50. Register: 1-2-567-8969; dogsforlife@bellsouth.net.



08/14/2014

'Man's best friend' brings hope to veterans, others in need

Mary Kemper
Staff Writer
mkemper@veteranvoiceweb.com

Tony Santos of Vero Beach is an Army veteran of the Korean War. Facing losing a leg in the future due to health issues, he knows he's going to be limited in his activities in multiple ways.

Enter Shadow, his 4-year-old black Labrador/Walker hound mix. With the help of Dogs For Life, Shadow is being trained to help Santos get the newspaper, make an emergency phone call and go up and down stairs, among other tasks.

On Aug. 5, Shelly Ferger, founder and CEO of Dogs For Life, and one of her trainers, former Army Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris, visited Santos' home to check on Shadow's progress.

Shadow is an exuberant dog — "He's smart, but he's 100 percent stubborn," Santos said — but he must learn to obey commands.

"Let me see you make him lie down," Ferger said to Santos, who complied.

"We need to get him to lie on his side, because otherwise he'll 'break,'" Ferger said, referring to a dog's habit of jumping back up or walking away without permission.

She took Santos and Shadow through a series of tasks — from "down" to "stay" to helping Santos up from the couch — and pronounced that "I want to see more tug and release, but he's doing well."

After the home visit, Ferger had Santos and Shadow visit the clubhouse, where Santos spends time each week helping out at bingo. The plan was to teach Shadow how to lie down quietly under the table.

After two or three tries, Ferger succeeded — but she made sure this task would be necessary.

"I'm up and down a lot at this bingo," Santos said. He serves refreshments from the kitchen, for example. "But my wife and I go to high-stakes bingo sometimes, where I'd just be sitting."



Staff photo by Mary Kemper
Tony Santos, an Army Vietnam veteran who lives in Vero Beach, gets ready to take off in his golf cart with his buddy, Shadow, who will one day help be Santos' eyes, ears and hands once service-dog training is completed through Dogs For Life.

"It takes a full year to train these kinds of dogs. It's very, very specialized."

Former Army Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris
veterans' program coordinator at Dogs For Life

Ferger's verdict: It's probably best to leave Shadow home on these occasions. Down the road, Shadow will receive training on how to use a special phone — "about the size of a small shoebox," Santos said — equipped with a button Shadow can press, which will call 911 when programmed, if Santos' wife, Debbie, is not home during an emergency. Shadow will then be trained to bark when the dispatcher answers. If Debbie is home, Shadow will be trained to get her attention.

Helping veterans like Santos — and, currently, another veteran suffering from PTSD — is a big part of Dogs For Life's mission.

"Our goal is to expand our service-dog

program, which is absolutely free to all veterans who need them," Ferger said. This is accomplished through generous donations, as the costs can be steep.

"It takes a full year to train these kinds of dogs," said Harris, who is the program's coordinator. "It's very, very specialized."

Dogs For Life also conducts regular obedience classes, open to the public, which help offset costs as well.

At the newly built administrative building, Ferger conducted the first class of a six-week course on Aug. 2. At least 20 people attended, some of whom were disabled.

See DOGS page 3

DOGS from page 1

She pointed out a number of facts about training dogs that even seasoned dog owners might not be aware of.

"How old is your dog? Small dogs aren't fully mature until they're 2 years old, and large dogs aren't mature till 3 years old," she told the class.

"How many families has your dog been with before you? There might be any number of behaviors that got started beforehand."

"Look at the breed. Terriers are bred to kill vermin, while beagles are bred to chase rabbits. But even that may not be a complete picture — a retriever may not like the water, for example."

Ferger explained that many dog owners misuse their leashes, keeping it too tight.

"You want a slack leash most of the time," she said. "Most people seem to think keeping the leash tight is the same thing as control. It's not."

"If you need to correct a behavior, give the leash a tug, and give the dog the proper command," she said. "He will heel if you teach him how."

As a model, Ferger introduced Darel, a former bomb-detection dog with the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Agency.

By law, former law enforcement K9s are not allowed to become service dogs, but Darel was there, with his owner, who identified herself as L.A., to help show Ferger's students how a properly trained dog behaves in regular life.

Treats are key to good training, Ferger said. After Darel correctly heeled, sat and lay down, he received a treat after each command.

There are treats, though, and there are treats, Ferger cautioned.

"Don't give them those junky, fatty commercial ones," she said. "There are a number of good, natural and tasty ones available. Personally, I've found that dogs really love the dried beef lung treats I keep here [at the training center]."

Tone of voice is also key. Ferger demonstrated a cheery tone when praising Darel for a task well done, and a sharp tone to correct him.

"Communication is the most awesome tool you can use," she said. "If I can communicate, I can have a dog eating out of my hand."

Shadow certainly has Santos eating out of his hand, if not the other way around. Clearly, the two are "buddies."

"I watched him being born," Santos said. "He was the runt of



Staff photo by Mary Kemper
Shelly Ferger, CEO and founder of Dogs For Life, Vero Beach, conducts the first of a six-week-long series of dog obedience classes at the brand-new administrative building located at the Dog Park on 16th Avenue. In the foreground, former law-enforcement agent "L.A." wags with former bomb-detection dog Darel until the time Ferger will utilize Darel to demonstrate good training techniques.



Staff photo by Mary Kemper
Members of Dogs For Life who help train service dogs for veterans and others with disabilities include, from left, former Army Sgt. Jason "Jay" Harris, trainer Paula Via, board member Tom Taves and Shelly Ferger, Dogs For Life CEO and founder.

Staff photo by Mary Kemper

the litter, and the only one that was all black.

"He loves people, loves kids," he said. "He plays with a wild rabbit who comes into our yard, who we named 'Thumper.'"

"(Shadow) will go out and chase Thumper around this one bush, five or six times. Then they'll both drop, and be around together for a long time."

One thing Shadow loves most is riding around with Santos in

a golf cart. "It's just about his favorite thing," he said.

Santos said he was told by doctors that he has no circulation in one of his legs, and "very little pulse." As a result, he expects eventually to lose the leg.

"The doctors said to stay with the pain as long as I can stand it, and then they'll conduct the operation," he said.

"And I figure by that time, Shadow will be trained and ready."

Along with other tasks, Shadow is already learning how to brace Santos as he goes up and down stairs, and how to open a sliding door in Santos' house.

These are just a few of the tasks Dogs For Life trains dogs to do. In Santos' case, they're purely physical — for those with PTSD, they are mostly psychological.

Many veterans suffering from

See DOGS page 7

DOGS from page 3

PTSD are fearful in new situations, for example. A service dog for this kind of veteran would be trained to "secure a perimeter," for example, and comfort the veteran, sometimes by pressing against his or her back.

Dogs For Life staff are fully equipped and certified to work with service dogs-to-be and all the complexities of their training, and Ferger said she and her staff keep constantly up-to-date on advances in the field.

In September, Ferger and trainer Paula Via will attend the Assistance Dogs International conference in Colorado, where, in years past, such famous experts as Dr. Patricia McConnell and Dr. Temple Grandin have given talks.

"The wonderful thing is, we're constantly learning," Ferger said. "What we learn, we pass on to dog owners, especially veterans. We help them, and they help us."

For more information on Dogs For Life and its mission to match veterans with service dogs, contact dogsforlifevlg@bellaouth.net

'Man's best friend' aids veterans in need



Staff photo by Mary Kemper

Tony Santos, an Army Vietnam veteran who lives in Vero Beach, gets ready to take off in his golf cart with his buddy, Shadow, who will one day help be Santos' eyes, ears and hands once service-dog training is completed through Dogs For Life.

Mary Kemper
Staff Writer

Tony Santos of Vero Beach is an Army veteran of the Korean War. Facing losing a leg in the future due to health issues, he knows he's going to be limited in his activities in multiple ways. Enter Shadow, his 4-year-old black Labrador/Walker hound mix. With the help of Dogs For Life, Shadow is being trained to help Santos get the newspaper, make an emergency phone call and go up and down stairs, among other tasks.

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Huge donation goes to veterans' council

VERO BEACH | INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Newsweekly

CELEBRATING WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Wednesday
August 6, 2014

Dogs For Life, Inc.

Celebrates



Voted Favorite Dog Park in Indian River County

2014 International Assistance Dog Week August 3-9

In honor of International Assistance Dog Week, Dogs For Life, Inc. will be holding tours of their new Assistance Dog Training Center. The Training Center is located at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, Florida and is open from 9 AM to 6 PM.

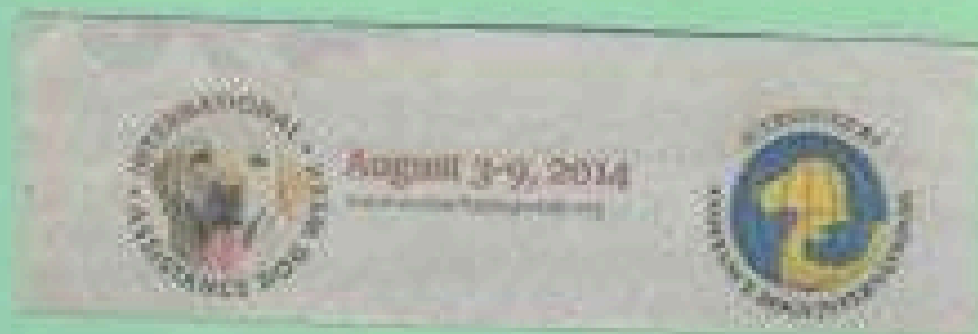
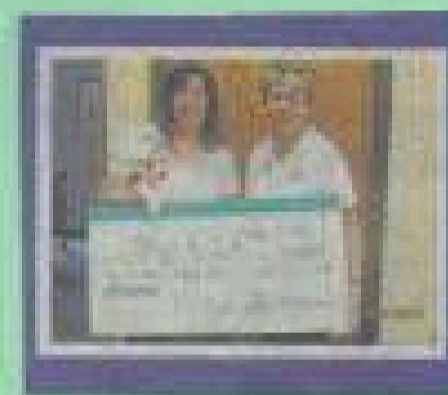
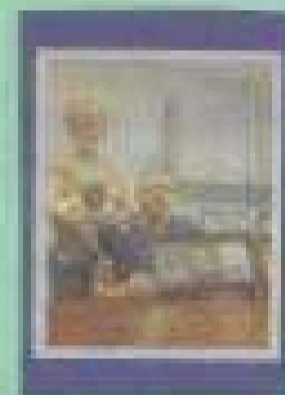
International Assistance Dog Week was created to recognize all the devoted, hardworking assistance dogs helping individuals mitigate their disability related limitations. In addition to honoring assistance dogs during their special week, one of the goals is to raise awareness about these very special and highly trained animals. This year International Assistance Dog Week is August 3-9.

We hope everyone in our area can join us to celebrate the selfless love and devotion these dogs provide. DFL will have information on how service dogs are evaluated, trained, and the laws pertaining to service dogs in public places. DFL will have information on how their program operates in and outside Vero Beach, Florida.

"Finally, our Assistance Dog Training Center is complete and we are training more service dogs than ever this year. Our Veteran Dog Training Program is moving full steam ahead and we currently have dogs in training for local Veterans," said Shelly Ferger, DFL head dog trainer. Vero Beach has a gem right here in Indian River County and we want our community to learn all about it.

Assistance Dogs transform the lives of their human partners with debilitating physical and mental disabilities by serving as their devoted companion, helper, aide, best friend and close member of their family. Assistance dogs include Guide Dogs, Service Dogs, Hearing Alert Dogs, Seizure Alert/Response Dogs and Medical Alert/Response Dogs.

For additional information, or to have your dog screened for training as an assistance dog, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center
1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, Florida
www.dogsforlifevb.org • 567-8969

VETERAN VOICE

The Voice of Experience

Veteran Voice is a weekly newspaper for veterans, active military, their families and their friends.

2 • AUGUST 28, 2014 • VETERAN VOICE • THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Celebrating valor



Photo courtesy of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Britt, U.S. Army
The Victory Center Military Store held an honoring for local Purple Heart honorees earlier this month on Purple Heart Day in the all-volunteer store at the Indian River Mall. From left, Ronald Stevens, O. Ivar Svenson Jr., Ed Britt, Yank Yannetelli, James D. Wilson Sr., Rick Brower, John Darling, Mike Hofstad, Robert M. Latimer, Steve Kraus and Daniel Votrobek with his service dog, Ariel. Not pictured but in attendance were Roy Siler and Len Zanca.

Dog training classes scheduled

For Hometown News
NewsFP@hometownnewsol.com

VERO BEACH — Dogs For Life has two basic obedience classes, one beginning Saturday, Sept. 2, at 9 a.m. and the second beginning Friday, Sept. 8, at 6 p.m.

With the completion of the new air-conditioned Dogs For Life Training and Administrative Center, located at the Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, DFL will re-start dog behavior/obedience classes for assistance dogs, pet-assisted therapy dogs and dogs owned by the general public. The classes are one hour, last for six

weeks and cost \$120.

Shelly Ferger, founder and CEO of DFL, will be teaching the first series of classes with trainers Jay Harris, and Paula Via.

"Now that the Training and Administrative Center is complete, we are excited to be teaching again, from the very basics to the advanced levels, all while having fun and using positive reinforcement," said Ms. Ferger.

Class size is limited, and reservations are required.

For more information, call (772) 567-8969, email dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.



JULY

DFL Updates

Shelly Ferger

From: Constant Contact <support@constantcontact.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 26, 2014 12:56 PM
To: dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net
Subject: Your campaign Dogs For Life Events Schedule and Upcoming Dog Park Maintenance has been sent

DFL Schedules Group Dog Training Classes

DFL has two basic obedience classes, one beginning Saturday August 2, at 9 AM and the second beginning Friday, August 8, at 6 PM.



With the completion of the new air-conditioned DFL training and Administrative Center, located at the off-leash dog park, 1230 16th Avenue, we will re-start our dog behavior/obedience classes for assistance dogs, pet-assisted therapy dogs and dogs owned by the general public. The classes are one hour, last for six weeks and cost \$120 to the public, dog park members receives discounts and there are no charges for assistance dog teams.

Shelly Ferger, Founder and CEO of DFL, will be teaching the series of classes with trainers Sgt. Jay Harris, CPDT-KA, US Army, and Paula Via, CPDT-KA, ABCDT. "Now that the Training and Administrative Center is complete, we are excited to be teaching again, from the very basics to the advanced levels, all while having fun and using positive reinforcement."

Class size is limited, and reservations are required, call DFL at (772) 567-8969 for additional information.

LEMMON
from 1A

■ Thursday's column about Mike Warren, an Army veteran who received a service dog from the K9s for Warriors organization in Ponte Vedra Beach, prompted Michele Falls to give a plug for the Vero Beach-based Dogs for Life.

"I think it's important for local veterans or anyone who suffers from post-traumatic stress, hearing loss, anxiety, or other life-interfering disabilities to know that there is a local organization right in Vero Beach that may be able to help them," she wrote. "Their email is dogsforlife@bellsouth.net and their website is www.dogsforlifevb.org."

Russ Lemmon is a columnist for Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers. This column reflects his opinion. Contact him at 772-378-2205 or russ.lemmon@scripps.com.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

Dog Obedience & Behavior Classes: Six-week classes, 9 a.m. DFL Training &

Administration Center, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 3225. Register: 772-567-8369; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net; www.dogsforlife.org.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

CATERING'S OCCURRING EVENTS

Assistance Dog Training Center Tours: Dogs For Life, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Aug. 2-9. DFL Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 772-567-8369; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net; www.dogsforlifevb.org.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Community Calendar

Private Dog Training: By appointment. Dogs For Life Inc., 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 3225. Register: 772-567-8369; dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

NEW LISTINGS

Purple Heart Day: Honoring Purple Heart recipients, 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Aug. 7, Victory Center at the Vero Mall, 6200 2nd St., Suite 150, Vero Beach.

Scheduled Dog Park Maintenance



Coast to Coast Landscaping has agreed to start mowing

each Friday at 9:30 AM at the north end of the park. Members are asked to shift to the southern off-leash areas through the greenway space to the east of the park (dogs are required to be on-leash in this area,) as the mowing then continues to the south, to then shift back to the north.

The new off-leash area just north of the Training Center is available for use if not being used for DFL Programs.

A second Ant Treatment will take place Tuesday, July 29 at 4 PM, and then will require full irrigation of the park. So the park will close at 4 PM next Tuesday.

Tree Trimming will occur within the next two weeks, to accommodate 7' under the pathways and busiest areas of the park.

The key pad is operational to the Training Area of the Park. A double gate entrance will be installed next week. This area is also available to members when not being used for DFL Programs.

Soon you will notice the words "compact" on the parking stoppers just west of the small dog area, please adhere to this request so that the gravel driveway remains passable. Two parking stoppers will be reserved for "visitors" just north of the handicapped parking stops, and the three stops to the west of the building will be reserved for "staff."

Please refrain from using your foot to activate the bottom water fountains, this is causing the bulbs inside to break.

Recently we have replaced the temperature gage, it's hanging on the shed just as you turn left into the gravel parking area. Please remember this time of year we need to be extra careful our dogs don't over heat.

If you suspect your dog is overheating, all dogs have access to the dog wash area. Immediately, take your dog to the dog wash and soak them to the skin, paying special attention to their stomachs, mouth, rectum and pads of their paws.

The first-aid kit along with the bolt cutters have been moved to the outside restroom as we've had to use the shed for additional storage that will need to be locked in the future.

Thank you for helping DFL to make our Off-Leash Dog Park the Best in Vero Beach, we welcome your suggestions and input on increasing membership and with park improvements.

Dogs For Life will offer tours, classes to public

Dogs for Life administration center complete

Obedience, service training classes coming soon

By Jessica Creagan
 jcreagan@hometownnewsol.com

VERO BEACH — It has been a long time coming, but a local nonprofit with a mission focused on people and their furry best friends finally has a real headquarters.

Dogs for Life Vero Beach is certified to train hearing and mobility assistance dogs, as well as service dogs for military veterans with physical and psychological needs. Dedicated trainers also provide beginning and advanced obedience classes for the public. With the new administration and training center, more pets can be trained year-round, members said.

The new building is located on the site of the nonprofit's off-leash dog park on 16th Avenue and 16th Street in Vero Beach. Previously, any training of animals and their companions would have to be done outdoors and was weather-dependent, or would take place in people's homes, said Shelly Ferger, founder and executive director of Dogs for Life.

"Now that we are here in this building, we hope more people will see that we are still around and will check us out and see what we're about," Ms. Ferger said. Beth Stryker is a member of Dogs for Life and frequently brings her hearing assistance dog, a toy poodle named Tiger, to the group's off-leash dog park for play time with other dogs.

FOR VETERAN VOICE

In honor of International Assistance Dog Week, Dogs For Life, Inc., Vero Beach, will hold tours of its new Assistance Dog Training Center, located at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park at 1230 16th Ave. and is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

International Assistance Dog Week was created to recognize all the devoted, hardworking assistance dogs helping individuals mitigate their disability related limitations.

In addition to honoring assistance dogs during their special week, one of the goals is to raise awareness about these very special and highly trained animals. This year International Assistance Dog Week is Aug. 3-9. DFL hopes everyone in the area can help celebrate the selfless love and devotion these dogs provide.

DFL will have information on how service dogs are evaluated, trained, and the laws pertaining

to service dogs in public places. Additionally, information will be given on how the program operates in and outside of Vero Beach.

"Finally, our Assistance Dog Training Center is complete, and we are training more service dogs than ever this year," said Shelly Ferger, DFL founder, CEO and head trainer.

"Our Veteran Dog Training Program is moving full steam ahead, and we currently have three dogs in training for local veterans," Ferger said. "Vero Beach has a gem right here in Indian River County, and we want our community to learn all about it."

Assistance dogs transform the lives of their human partners with debilitating physical and mental disabilities, such as PTSD, by serving as their devoted companion, helper, aide, best friend and close member of their family. Assistance dogs include guide dogs, service dogs, hearing alert dogs, seizure alert/response dogs and medical alert/response dogs.

Dogs

From page 1

Dogs for Life members are also thrilled about finally having an indoor plumbing restroom at the park, Ms. Stryker said.

"There are a lot of good things about the training center. I think when you train dogs in a group, the dogs will watch what the other dogs are doing, and the likelihood of more of them getting it is higher. But I do know all of us who come here a lot are very excited about the bathroom," Ms. Stryker said with a chuckle.

Generous donations made by individuals in the community made the construction of the building possible, even after a period where it looked like the nonprofit was going to have to fold, Ms. Ferger said.

Membership to Dogs for Life is \$385, partially tax-deductible, and includes open access to the off-leash

dog park during daylight hours with a personal access code and notifications of upcoming events and classes offered by the nonprofit.

Right now there are about 100 dues paying members and 30 qualified members that earned a scholarship, Ms. Ferger said.

"Right now, the membership basically pays for the maintenance of the park, that's all. We see the dog park as our thrift shop, a place where we can get funds to keep our mission of training service dogs going," Ms. Ferger said.

Individuals interested in joining Dogs for Life can purchase a one-month membership for \$65 if they want to dip their paws in water, she said.

Dogs brought to the park must be inoculated, neutered and social, according to the Dogs for Life website.

Some people in Vero Beach enjoy recreational activities such as boating, golfing or going to their children's

sporting events, but others find their joy in recreational activities with their dog, Ms. Ferger said.

"The dogs are their recreation and that's why they are willing to pay for membership to the dog park," she said.

Members know that dog owners are expected to be aware of their animal at all times, cleaning up after them and checking to make sure they play appropriately, Ms. Ferger said.

If a pup's obedience and interaction with others isn't the greatest, perhaps enrolling in a Dogs for Life obedience class could help, she said.

The basic class includes instruction on teaching commands such as: sit, stay, come, heel and down, and further instruction on how to have a dog become a certified American Kennel Club "good citizen," Ms. Ferger said.

"All of the dogs we train, not just the service dogs, all of the dogs we train, we would like to see become good citizens," she said.

The obedience class schedule is not



Source: Wikimedia Commons
 DFL will also offer two basic obedience classes, one beginning Saturday, Aug. 2, at 9 a.m., and the second beginning Friday, Aug. 8, at 6 p.m.

For additional information, or to have your dog screened for training as an assistance dog, contact

Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

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Ferger will teach the first series of classes, along with accredited trainers Sgt. Jay Harris, U.S. Army, and Paula Via.

"Now that the Training and Administrative Center is complete, we are excited to be teaching again, from the very basics to the advanced levels, all while having fun and using positive reinforcement," Ferger said.

Class size is limited, and reservations are required, call DFL at (772) 567-8969 for additional information, or email at dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net.

DFL's website can be viewed at www.dogsforlifevb.org.

yet available, but should be out within days of the Dogs for Life center soft opening on July 7.

With the new building, the Dogs for Life board of directors have also decided to add staff for the office and for the training side.

"It's exciting for me personally because I have been training dogs in Vero Beach for more than 30 years, but it had taken a backseat with Dogs for Life. Recently, it had been all about campaigns, raising money for us to keep going," Ms. Ferger said.

"I am really grateful to the board for hiring some help so I can go back to what I do best, and that's training dogs," Ms. Ferger said.

The new training and administration center of Dogs for Life Vero Beach is at 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, which is the same address as the off-leash dog park. For more information about Dogs for Life Vero Beach, call (772) 567-8969 or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.

In Memoriam

*In Celebration of the Life
and Memory of*



*Glenn Franklin Schubert
November 30th, 1934 - July 27th, 2014*

BA » Tuesday, July 15, 2014 » SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS » TC

OBITUARIES



ROGER CARHART NEACH

Roger Carhart Neach, age 75, passed away unexpectedly July 10, 2014 at his home. He was the only child of Donald "Dobber" Fredrick and Bernice Carhart Neach. His claim to fame was that he was born in Cooperstown, NY, on March 25, 1939. His family moved to Vero Beach in 1956 and opened Dobber's Men's Wear. Roger owned and operated Dobber's for 44-years until its closing in 2000. He attended Suffield Academy and graduated from Vero Beach High School, class of 1958.

He was a much beloved husband, father and friend. Roger easily made friends and will be missed by many. As an avid fan of both the San Fransico Giants and New York Giants he never missed listening to or watching a game.

In his lifetime, he was a member of Vero Beach Planning and Zoning Board, the Riverside Theater, Jaycees, Indian River Exchange Club, Riomar Bay Yacht Club and a 50-year member and past president of Vero Beach Country Club. He loved golf and had a hole-in-one at Bent Pine Country Club on the 13th Hole.

Roger is survived by his wife of 53 years, Patricia LaLime Neach; children, Jeffrey, Bethany Fretwell, Pamela Vocelle and Zander of Vero Beach and Paige Rhodes of Pelehatchie, MS; grandchildren, Quay, Summer and Derrick Neach, Trevor, Jacob and Tucker Fretwell, Hannah, Morgan and Tanner Rhodes; great-grandsons Jayden Ramsey and Brantley Fretwell. He is predeceased by his parents Dobber and Bernice; granddaughters Candice Neach, Paxton Rhodes and an infant grandson.

Services will be held at Calvary Chapel, 941-18th Street, Vero Beach, FL, on Thursday, July 17 at 10:00AM. In lieu of flowers, please consider Dogs for Life of Indian River County, P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32966 and St. Jukes Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place Memphis, TN 38105.

An online guestbook is available at www.strunkfuneralhome.com



JUNE

Certificate of Occupancy

DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

Certificate of Occupancy Issued by Indian River County!

AND

DFL Off-Leash Dog Park Voted Treasure Coast Reader's Choice Award WINNER!!!



Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center Receives Certificate of Occupancy!

Because of the generous support of our Donors, Project Manager Anthony Donadio, Contractors Bill Bryant & Associates and the DFL Board of Directors.

DFL received our Certificate of Occupancy yesterday for our Assistance Dog Training & Administration Center. This amazing organization is located at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach and very soon will be our headquarters.

We have been slowly moving office supplies and training equipment into the Center, and expect to be operational within the next two weeks.

Meanwhile.. The Restrooms accessible from the dog park will be open as of TODAY! This area is accessible from the gate directly east of the Center.

The off-leash area just to the north of the Center will remain closed until we are able to cover the existing drains with custom (dog paw friendly) covers, currently being fabricated.

The gate at the paved parking area will remain closed while contractors finish up the "punch list" and we finish moving in. Once we become open to the public, and ready for business, the gate will be removed completely.

The access from the parking lot to the training area is not quite operational, but should be very soon.

Once the Center is open, members and the public will enter at the paved parking, there will be a one-way drive, parking stops will be repositioned to accommodate additional parking, and the exit will be on the north end of the park.

We hope you are as excited as we are!!

We actually have our first assistance dog training session scheduled with a local Veteran at the Center **THIS FRIDAY!!**

A Grand Opening for Donors and the Public will be held at a later date, once we have the Center fully operational... Stay tuned.

We are currently planning a full range of programs for our supporters and the public. From basic dog behavior and obedience training to full public access training for assistance dogs. We are especially proud to be in a position to expand our relationship with the military community, increasing the number of dogs trained for the men and women who have and are protecting our freedom.

DFL will increase our Pet-Assisted Therapy Program, and the number of people and dogs in the dog park, as well as our community out reach educational programs, such as the 4-H Dog Masters Club and many others.

Thank you for your continued patience as we make this transition, and give yourselves a pat on the back, and your dog a pat on the head!

**Appreciatively,
Shelly Ferger**

News Articles





Dogs for Life's Shelly Ferger and Kathi Schumann with Daniel Wotróbek and his service dog Arta.

PEOPLE

Dogs for Life opens training facility for service dogs

BY MARY SCHENKEL
Dog Writer

by Assistance Dogs International as one of only four in Florida sanctioned by the Veterans Association to certify service dogs for veterans.

All service dogs are trained at no cost to their owners, thanks to private donations, local grants and memberships in the group's Off-Leash Dog Park.

"We are using the dog park as the equivalent of a thrift shop as a source of income for us," explains Ferger.

In addition to the new Training Center, the 4.5-acre site includes spaces for both outdoor and agility training, separate areas for small and large dogs and a

memorial garden. Future plans call for outdoor park lighting in the evening.

The new building will house the DFL administrative offices, restrooms with outdoor access for Dog Park members, and most importantly a place for indoor training. It also offers an opportunity to increase services open to the public, such as dog behavior and obedience training, and outreach programs to the

4-H Dog Masters Club and others.

"Before, we could never stay on a training schedule because everything was outside. In Florida it's never cool enough unless you're getting out here at 7:30 in the morning which people don't want to do," says Ferger. "So now that we've got the indoor training center, we can train year round and stay on a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

It's been a long journey from idea to reality but Dogs for Life supporters never gave up, and this month will open the doors to a whole world of opportunities for veterans and others in need of service dogs with its new Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center.

Shelly Ferger, DFL founder and executive director, and her dedicated team have been training service, pet-assisted therapy and companion dogs since 2002. In 2010 DFL became accredited

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

PEOPLE

schedule. Now we're going to be able to have individual classes and we can have them at night, without the mosquitos."

Designed by architect Tony Donadio and constructed by Bill Bryant & Associates, the new facility affords a variety of indoor training scenarios.

"In the past we could only work in the home of the people who owned the dog to do the task training, because we had to have a bed and alarm clocks, telephones, fire alarms and that sort of thing," explains Ferger. "This building allows us to simulate the in-home environment, so we can do the work here. And it also allows us to train dogs from outside of Vero Beach."

DFL's Assistance Dog Training, which aids owners dealing with hearing and mobility issues, was the perfect foundation for the newer Service Dogs for Veterans Training program.

As any dog lover can attest, tensions can be eased by just the thump of a tail from a furry friend. For veterans returning home from the horrors of war a service dog can bring about an emotional stability that is far more effective than drugs. DFL can train dogs in 14 tasks beneficial to veterans suffering from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

She said one frequently requested task is called "watch my back," where

the dog is placed behind the person.

"It's so they can sit comfortably in an environment of people where they're not so concerned that someone is going to come up behind them and assault them or something of that sort."

Another coping mechanism aid is crowd control, where the dog is trained to go out to the end of the leash and create a circular safety barrier.

"Not in an aggressive way; these dogs are not aggressive," stresses Ferger, noting the goal is increased personal space. "They get overwhelmed with hyper-vigilance, stress, fear; they're on alert all the time."

They also train dogs to wake a person from a nightmare by jumping on the bed and licking their face.

"And from what we hear, if you're woke-up by a dog licking your face you're a lot less combative than when a person is waking you up."

Others include: "popping a corner" to look before a person enters a doorway; searching a home before entry; barking at a hand signal; providing tactile stimulation to disrupt emotional overload; "breaking the spell" of a combat trauma trance; "finding the car" when owners need to exit a building quickly; calling 911 or a suicide hotline on K-9 emergency phones; carrying backpacks

of supplies; providing deep pressure for calming effects; reducing hyper-vigilance; and serving as a security and loneliness "combat buddy."

"All our training is positive reinforcement; they have to want to do it," she says. "When they want to do it that bond is unbreakable."

Although the VA will not yet reimburse veterans for PTSD service dogs, most of the DFL dogs are cross-trained so Ferger says, "If it's a hearing or mobility dog trained for PTSD as a secondary condition then they can get their benefits from the VA."

The group expects an influx of veterans needing service dogs, and wants to obtain grants to hire veterans as trainers.

"Our first hired veteran and dog trainer, Jason Harris, is actively attending regular veterans' group meetings and events to engage and recruit additional veterans to assist as future Dogs for Life trainers. This effort will help the reintegration of veterans into our community and help Dogs for Life pre-train service dogs at the same time."

Unlike most service dog training facilities, which breed, pre-train and sell their dogs, DFL generally either trains a dog people already have, or assists them in finding one at shelters.

"We are looking for foster homes; a lot of people are not physically capable of training their own dogs. Dogs could be dropped off during the daytime for training, and stay in the foster home nights and weekends."

DFL also has a Pet-Assisted Therapy Dog program, which trains and certifies volunteers to take their own dogs to senior centers and children's facilities.

"We currently have 13 facilities we serve at least once a week; some of them are twice a week," says Ferger, noting the therapeutic value of a dog's unconditional love.

"Now that we have this building it's going to be all about veterans and service dogs. Our focus is on what we can do to train more service dogs, and we have to train more trainers."

One of their biggest hurdles has been that the public does not fully realize all that Dogs for Life offers.

"We have a resource in this community that is second to none. I want people to know that this is like a little gem," stresses Ferger. "We're so much more than just a dog park, but we can't make it happen without the money. We need the community to get behind this; to support Dogs for Life so that we can support our veterans and others with disabilities." ■

Wednesday, June 11, 2014 ■ **READER'S CHOICE** ■ CONTENTS PREPARED BY SCRIPTS TREASURE COAST NINE DEPARTMENT

Treasure Coast Reader's Choice Awards

WINNERS EDITION

Treasure Coast Newspapers
TCNEM.COM Read. Plus. Share.

2014

treasure coast
choice
awards

ENTERTAINMENT

Beach

- South Beach
- Jayce's Beach

Car Show

- Wheels Across the Pond
- Classic

Dog Park

- Dogs For Life
- Sebastian Bark Park

Eco Tours

- Stampknocker Tours
- Environmental Learning Center

Fishing Spot

- Sebastian Inlet State Park
- Blue Cypress
- Indian River

Golf Courses

- Sandridge Golf Club
- Bent Pine Golf Club

Gun Range

- Indian River Public Shooting Range
- Indian River Sportsman

Local Event

- Art Under the Oaks
- Downtown Friday

Local Park

- Riverside Park, Vero Beach
- Riverview Park, Sebastian

Local Weekend Getaway

- Vero Beach Hotel & Spa
- Disney's Vero Beach Resort
- The Driftwood Resort

Performing Arts Venue

- Riverside Theatre
- Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center

Place for Child's Birthday

- Skate Factory
- Christ's Fitness

River Cruises

- Sebastian River Queen
- Capt Hiram's River Cruise

Special Events/Festivals

- Art Under the Oaks
- Hirsacus Festival

Tourist Attraction

- McKee Botanical Garden
- Disney Vero Beach Resort
- The Driftwood Resort

Travel Agency

- AAA
- Treasure Coast Travel

Congratulations to all **WINNERS** and **FAVORITES!**

Indiana River County

When the Stars Come Out Every Monday June 16, 2014

Luminaries



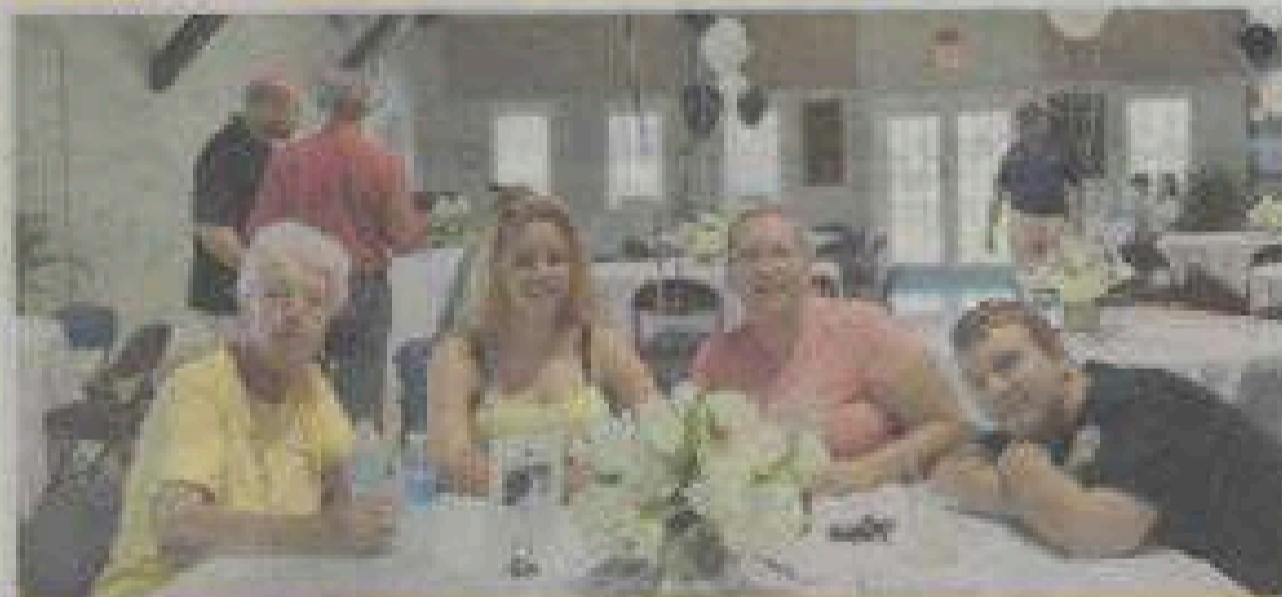
Skeely Fergar with Kelli Schuman



ON-SCENE WITH...

DOGS FOR LIFE

Dogs For Life hosted its inaugural "Treasure Hunt & Car Rally," raising more than \$10,000 to go towards the organization's assistance dog training programs. First place went to Charlie Wilson, second went to Conrad Horn and third went to Sharon Shelton.



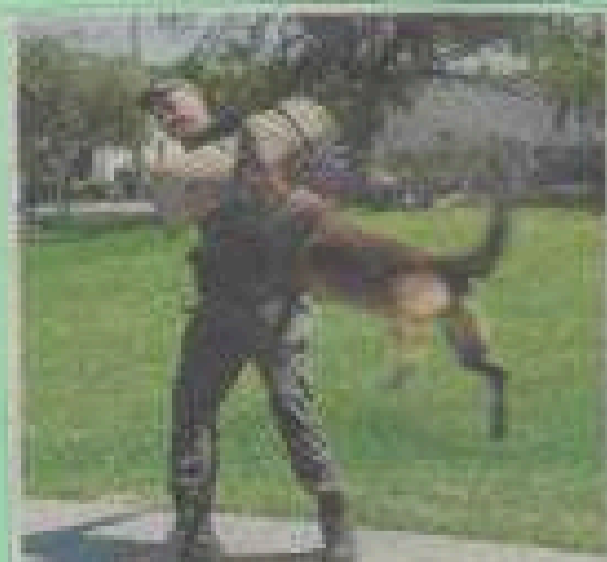
Elaine Bergsolk and family



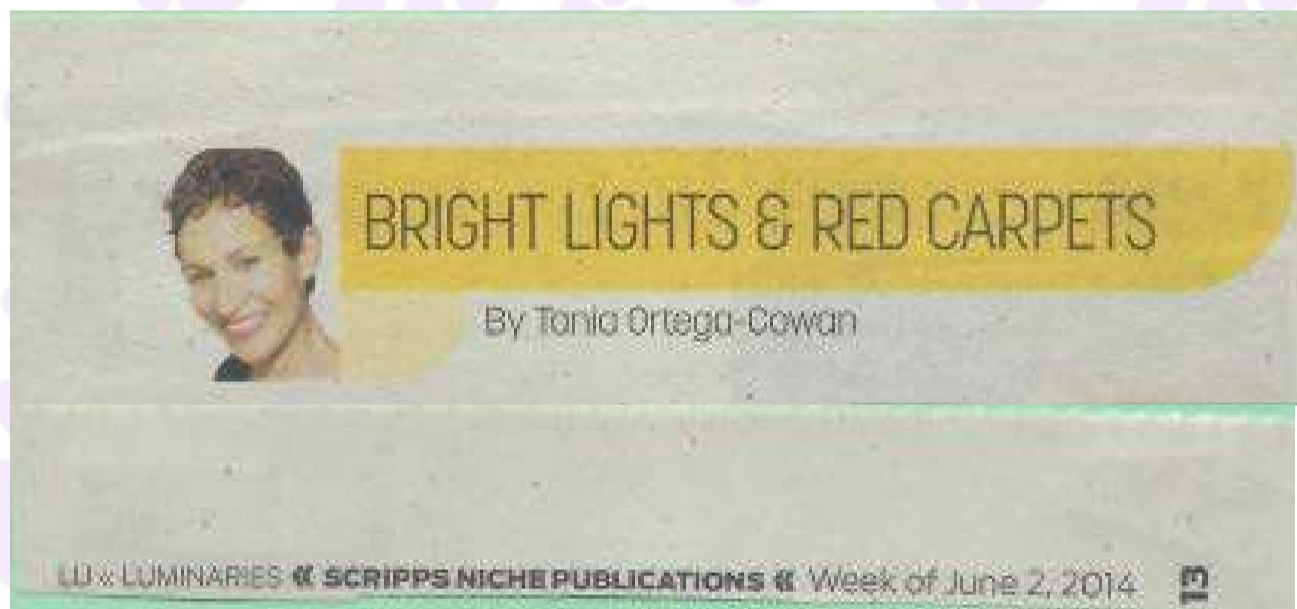
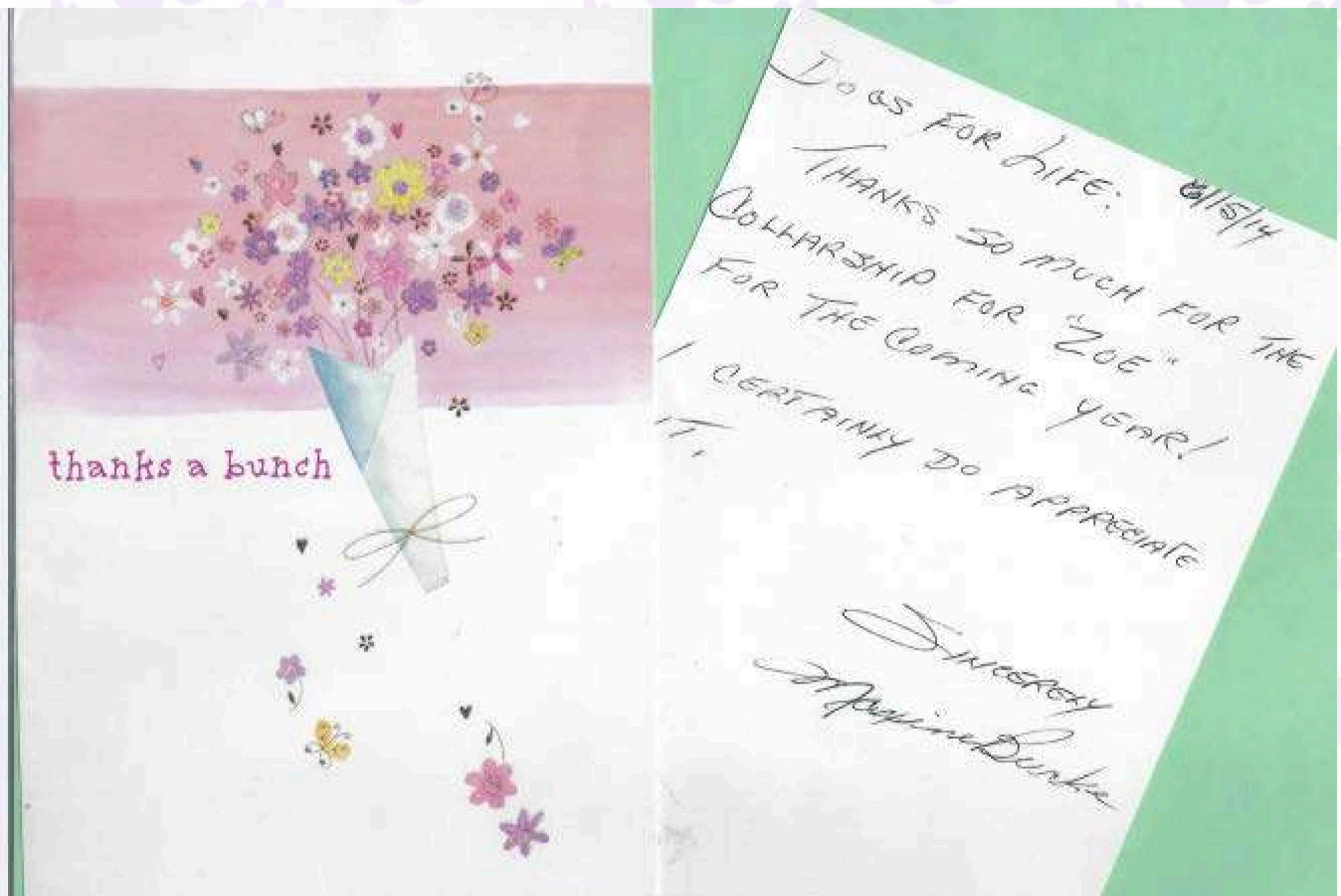
Debbie Burton with Chris Bryant



Susan Horn and Pego Forzel



Sgt. Patrick White with K9 darbo



MORE THAN A DOG PARK

We heard from Shelly Ferger from **Dogs for Life (DFL)** over the Memorial Day weekend. Her group is constantly working to improve the quality of life for our men and women who serve in the military through training hearing and service dogs. In fact, DFL is currently training a service dog for a veteran of the Korean War, a veteran of the Afghanistan War and has just re-certified a service dog for a veteran who returned from the war in Iraq. Visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.

Memorial Day

DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

Remembers our Fallen Heroes this Memorial Day.

We also honor DFL's heroes, our donors, board of directors, volunteers and staff who are improving the quality of life for the United States Military men and women through training hearing and service dogs.



DFL Veteran Dog Program Update

Because of your generosity, DFL is currently training a Service Dog for a Veteran of the Korean war, a Service/Hearing Dog for a Veteran of the Afghanistan War, and have just re-certified Hearing/Service dog for Veteran who returned from the war in Iraq. And, we have service dog in training for a retired Sheriff's Deputy.

There are two local Veterans who are in the application stages who need our help to train dogs, and there are sure to be many more to follow.

And, this is before our Training Center even opens!

These teams join two additional dogs in training with their owners, one as a Hearing Dog and one as a Service Dog.

DFL also supports 16 Dogs currently enrolled in our Program, and over 100 dogs trained since 2002.

Because of YOU, DFL does not charge our teams one cent for training their dogs. And, all service dog teams receive FREE membership to our off-leash dog park.

Each team can take 6 months to 1 year to train, and our relationships can last up to 10 years with each team, and when their dog passes, that person goes to the top of our list for a new placement.

DFL is honored to be a part of the Veteran Dog training movement, We are honored to serve our military and their families, and we hope you are too!

Our first hired Veteran and dog trainer, Jason Harris is actively attending regular Veteran Group meetings and events to engage and recruit additional Veterans to assist as future DFL Trainers.

This effort to help the reintegration of Veterans into our community and help DFL pre-train service dogs at the same time.

So, as we reflect on our fallen heroes this Memorial Day, let's remember our Veterans who although may have come home scared protecting our freedom. Are mending with the use of a dog, who has been trained to serve them, while naturally providing unconditional love.

Now that's something you can help DFL support!

Thank you,
Shelly Ferger

Park Update

DFL

Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center And Dog Park Update

The Dogs For Life Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center is almost complete. Construction has stayed on schedule, the restrooms are operational, and we should have our Certificate of Occupancy next week.

We are working now to furnish the building with what we will need to "open the doors" to the public. The DFL Board of Directors have worked hard to find sponsors to purchase appliances, desks, chairs, telephones and computers to name a few.

Although we are still in campaign mode to help with the costs of these needed items, we are moving forward and hope to open within a month.

Until the Center opens to the public, the gate to the paved parking area will remain locked, but parking will be available for small dog overflow parking in the paved area.

The future plan is that the property will have a one-way entrance & exit. Entering at the main paved parking area to the south and then exiting at the gravel driveway to the north.

We ask our members to consider parking directly in front of the building that will be needed for the public to drop in for information on our programs and to join the park. So we want to make sure there is always a space or two available in front of the building.

There will also be two full time employees who will need to park across from the building. Feel free to use the two handicapped parking spaces if you qualify.

The new fenced area just to the north of the training center, will be made available for use once the drain covers are replaced with something smaller that paws will not fall through.

As soon as the C.O. is issued from IR County the bathroom entrance on the north side of the Center will be accessible to members and will remain open 24/7.

We hope you are as excited as we are, to see this important addition to our community.

DFL is only one of four organizations in the State of Florida that is qualified to certify Assistance Dogs under government and international travel, so our assistance dog training program is on the verge a a BIG BOOM!!

DFL also has a state of the art off leash dog park program that will continue to be modeled throughout this country. And, now that the park is stabilized, we expect memberships to grow as well.

Opening this Center is sure to bring a renewed interest, energy and support for our non-profit organization and we look forward to sharing the news with you.

If you would like additional information on volunteering for DFL, please refer to the newsletter link below, copy the Volunteer Application and forward to us either dogsforlifefvb@belsouth.net, visit www.dogsforlifefvb.org, or contact us directly at the DFL Office (772) 567-8669.





MAY

Volunteers



Proudly Presents the 23rd Annual

PRIME TIME AWARDS

BREAKFAST

~Celebrating Senior Volunteers~
~Celebrating Senior Volunteers~

May 22, 2014
Palm Beach Gardens Marriott

Thank you to *Jude Carole*

Humana.

Hospitality Sponsor



Celebrates

Jude Carole

for your volunteerism and dedication
to those you serve throughout your community.

In witness thereof, this certificate has been issued by the
Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc., at the
Prime Time Awards Breakfast on this 22nd day of May 2014.

Joine Estremora-Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Dear Shelly Ferger,

Your email, named Copy of Volunteers Needed for Mailing Sat & Mon, was sent on 05/05/2014 around 9:56 AM EDT.

Below is a copy of the HTML version your contacts received. Don't forget, you can easily monitor the effectiveness of your email with real-time metrics and stats. Log in to your Constant Contact account and visit the **Reports** area under the Emails tab.

Subject: A few large dogs needed this Thurs for orientation



**Large Dog Volunteers Needed
Thursday 3:00
For Orientation at the
DFL Off-Leash Dog Park**

Please check your Large Dog's social calendar and let me know if they are available to volunteer this Thursday, May 8 at 3 PM to meet a new dog park member.

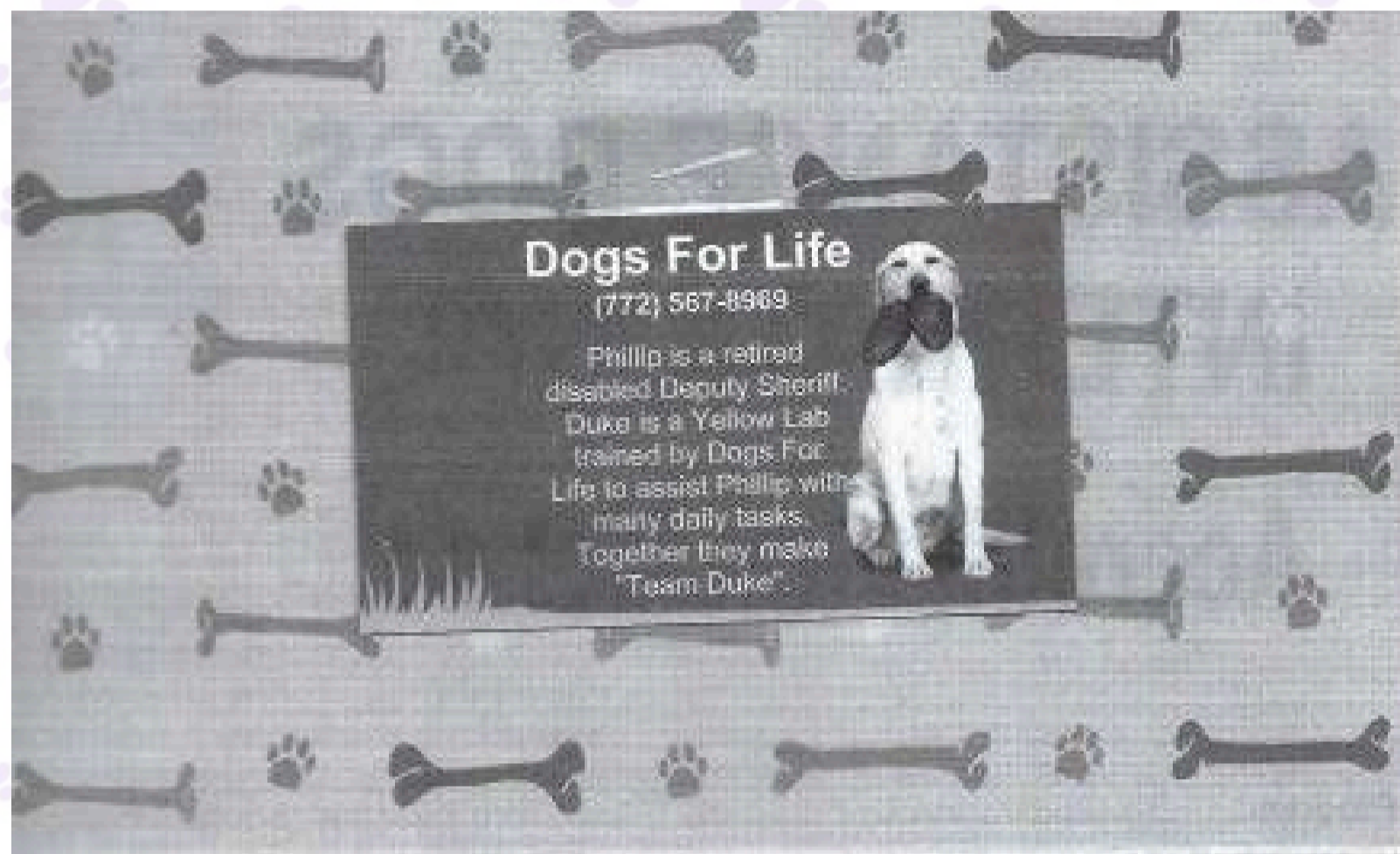
New member, 1 year old Australian Cattle Dog.

Thank you very much.

Shelly



Vietnam Vets Meeting



Shelly —

What a treat!

JUST WANT to thank you and
DFL Team for everything,
looking forward to Tuesday (PACT).
Team Duke proud to represent
Dogs for Life! Phillip & Duke

May 2014

VIETNAM VETERANS CHAPTER #1038
MEETING MINUTES May 14, 2014, 2014

Meeting of May 14, 2014 called to order at 18:00 by President Len Zanca, followed by a prayer by Butch Teske and Pledge to Allegiance recited by all.

All officers were present. 15 members and 2 guests were in attendance.

Minutes of April 9, 2014 were emailed to all members. A motion was made by Pete Sayles and seconded by Rick Brower. Approved.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Andrew Coull read the report and a copy placed on file for audit.

Membership: Pete Sayles reported 96 active members, 6 in arrears and 11 associates. Chapter has 50 life members. Pete Sayles made motion to present Sandra Kane with an associate membership as she donates many hours to the store. Butch Teske seconded, motion passed.

Old Business:

Scholarships – Butch Teske thanked Ed Britt and Mickey Warburton on a fine job presenting scholarships. Craig Waskow will present the last scholarship. A note was received from Mckenna Bachman from Sebastian High School thanking the Chapter. Ed Britt mentioned a scrapbook should be started.

Upward American Veterans – Ed Britt reported things were slow, related how a veteran had rent paid and was sent to the outreach program for food and they hired him, now self supporting. This is a small example of how veterans are helping veterans. Hap Allston also added that the wife of a hospitalized veteran received a donated car.

Color Guard – Len Zanca said volunteers are needed. Mike Bodnar said the color guard was represented at the Republican Ladies Lincoln Day and the Air Show. Upcoming events are Earls - May 24th and Memorial Island – May 26th.

Upcoming events:

Car Show – Craig Waskow said the car show is June 15th, flyers were mailed out, Velde Ford will be sponsoring with other businesses donating prizes. Roy Silor, Hap Allston, Len Zanca and Mike Bodnar volunteered to help. Need to be there by 8AM.

Memorial Day – John Matthews discussed the program at Memorial Island. Will be the 50th anniversary of Memorial Island. Color Guard should be there at 8:15AM,

Pete Sayles spoke regarding Earl's Fest on May 24th

July 4th – Len Zanca discussed the July 4th parade in Sebastian. Would like a good showing from the Chapter. Bring grandkids, they can ride or walk, trying to get Mike's towing for ride.

Ideas - President Len Zanca discussed ideas that are being worked on at the present time. A discussion was held on many ideas including a golf tournament, picnic, Salute to Veterans, etc. A sample of a tee shirt was brought in

Bowling - Sandra Kane asked if the Chapter would like her to set up bowling as she did previously, all agreed.

Volunteers - Pete Sayles said the store needed more volunteers.

Reunion - John Matthews mentioned there is a reunion for the 1st infantry division at Memorial Island and thought it would be a nice gesture for members to welcome them. June 21st at 9AM.

Jay Harris, who works for Dogs for Life, spoke on how they would like to be a resource, the training center to be opened up in the fall.

Butch Teske moved to close the meeting and Ed Britt seconded. Meeting adjourned at 19:10 hours.

Submitted,

Pat Cleary – Acting Secretary



APRIL

Treasure Hunt Car Rally

DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

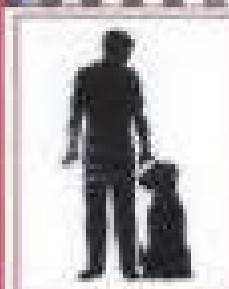
*Invites You to Attend the After Party and Bid on These
FABULOUS Auction Items at the
Treasure Hunt Car Rally this Saturday!*



Private Tours of Schumann Car Collection
Private Race Car Rides with Kathi Schumann
DFL Dog Park Memberships
Ocean Grill Gift Certificates
Bobby's Gift Certificates
Publix Gift Certificates
Fresh Market Gift Certificates
Grander Mountain Gift Certificates
Cotton Mouth Armory Gift Certificates
Airboat Ride & Tour with Florida Cracker Airboats
LEGENDS Autographed Football
Sundial Window Tinting
Caribbean Court Resort 1 night stay
Walmart Gift Certificates
Como Oil Company Gift Certificates
Several Mary Frances Designer Purses



There is Still Time to Register!



Car Number:

Who is Dogs For Life?
DFL is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs and owning an off-leash dog park.

DFL Presents with Kathi Schumann

Start Line:
DFL Off-Leash Dog Park
1230 16th Avenue



Finish Line:
Vero Beach Heritage Center
2130 14th Avenue

Treasure Hunt & Car Rally

April 26, 2014 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Mandatory Driver & Navigator Meeting 9 a.m.
\$250 Entry Fee (Up to 4 people in one vehicle)

- 1st Place:** \$5,000
- 2nd Place:** \$2,500
- 3rd Place:** \$1,500

For Information or to Register Call (772) 567-8969
This is NOT a race, but a Fun Treasure Hunt through Indian River County!

Pre-Registration Form

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____
 Car Make / Model / Color: _____ \$250 Entry Fee (Up to 4 people in one vehicle)

Please clip and mail your \$250 Registration Fee to:
Dogs For Life, Inc. • P.O. Box 800823 • Vero Beach, FL 32962
2008 of your donation is fully tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 Our tax ID number is 52-1997507 and Florida Department of Consumer Regulation number is AC1250071



Who is Dogs For Life?
DFL is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, Pet-Assisted Therapy Dogs and owning an off-leash dog park.

DFL presents with Kathi Schumann



Treasure Hunt & Car Rally

Finish Line Party, Silent Auction, Live Music & Much More

- 1st Place:** \$5,000
- 2nd Place:** \$2,500
- 3rd Place:** \$1,500

April 26, 2014
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Mandatory Driver & Navigator Meeting 9 a.m.



DFL presents with Kathi Schumann



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Treasure Hunt & Car Rally

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April 26, 2014 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Mandatory Driver & Navigator Meeting 9 a.m.

For Information or to Register Call (772) 567-8969

Finish Line Party open to the public for \$65/person

\$250 Entry Fee (Up to 4 people in one vehicle)

Start Line: DFL Off-Leash Dog Park • 1230 16th Avenue

Finish Line Party: Vero Beach Heritage Center • 2130 14th Avenue

This is NOT a race, but a Fun Treasure Hunt through Indian River County!

2008 of your donation is fully tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 Our tax ID number is 52-1997507 and Florida Department of Consumer Regulation number is AC1250071

Arts MATTER Cultural Council CONNECTION
www.Cultural-Council.org 772.770.4857

COMMUNITY EVENTS
 Dogs for Life is sponsoring a Treasure Hunt Car Rally on Saturday, April 26th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. A driver and navigator meeting will be held at 9 a.m. at the DFL Dog Training Campus at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Participants will be given a treasure map to follow throughout Indian River County to compete for cash awards. Drivers will finish at the Heritage Center for a finish line party from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the public is invited to the party that includes a lunch catered by Orcoola Bistro, a 50/50 raffle, a silent auction, entertainment and demonstrations by DFL Assistance Dogs and the I.R.C. Sheriff's K-9 Units. The entrance fee for the public are \$65. For more information or to register, contact Dogs for Life at (772) 567-8969, via email at dogsforlife@bellsouth.net, or register on-line at www.dogsforlifevb.org.



Luminaries



Start Your Engines for Dogs for Life!



By Tania Ortega-Cowan
Lum@coastline.com

CAR ENTHUSIAST, PHILANTHROPIST AND Dogs for Life board member Kathi G. Schumann is sponsoring a Treasure Hunt Car Rally from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on April 26 to benefit Dogs For Life, Inc.

This is not a race and any kind of car is welcome in the Rally. Participants will follow a treasure map, stopping at various checkpoints such as the Environmental Learning Center, Disney Resort on A-1-A, Mel Fisher's Museum in Sebastian, Riverside Theatre and McKee Botanical Garden. Drivers will finish at the Heritage Center on 14th Avenue in downtown Vero Beach

where they will enjoy a finish line party, prizes and lunch catered by the Osceola Bistro.

Dogs For Life, Inc. is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs, and owning and operating an off-leash dog park. DFL specializes in training Hearing Dogs, Mobility Assistance Dogs, and Service Dogs for Veterans to assist with hearing and mobility challenges, as well as the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Veteran James Taylor says of having his beloved service dog Pia Pia, "This has changed my life! I was homebound, and we can go out now because of her. Pia Pia is trained specifically to help me in certain situations, and will even call 911 if that is what I need."

The starting line will be at the DFL Dog Train-

ing Campus which is located at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

First prize is \$5,000, second prize is \$2,500 and third prize is \$1,500. There will also be a 50/50 raffle, a fun silent auction and demonstrations by DFL Assistance Dogs and other organizations. Other participating agencies include the US Navy SEALs and the Veteran's Council of Indian River County.

The entrance fee is \$250 per car for up to five people per car and includes lunch. For those who only want to join the lunch, the charge is \$120 for up to five people in a car.

To register for the Treasure Hunt Car Rally to benefit Dogs for Life, call (772) 567-8969, email dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.com or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.

Cover photos by Tania Ortega-Cowan; Dogs For Life Founder Shelly Jergler and St. James Taylor with Pia Pia, and board members Linda Liss, Paige Franciel and Kathi G. Schumann have seen to every detail of the April 26 Treasure Hunt Car Rally to benefit Dogs For Life.

Cause for Paws

30

Vero Beach 32963 / April 3, 2014

Your Vero Beach Newsweekly™

PEOPLE

Cause for Paws fundraiser aids Vero Humane Society

BY MARY SCHENKEL
Staff Writer

Animal lovers united at the Moorings Clubhouse last Monday evening, eager to take part in the 30th annual Cause for Paws fundraiser to benefit the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County. Arriving guests were greeted by tail-wagging shelter ambassadors, each hoping to sniff out that special someone willing to adopt them into a loving home.

"We both want Rusty," said Julie Summers, cupping the sweet face of a little terrier-mix. "Yes we do!" agreed Page Franzel.

Rusty and the other six dogs and two cats brought to the event represented a minuscule fraction of the 7,000 animals that make their way to the shelter each year – surrendered, abandoned, abused, hoarded – the causes are as endless as the variety and health of the

animals; none of which are ever turned away.

"I got the dog of a lifetime last year," said Leslie Cameron, who with husband Nick adopted one of last year's 4-footed greeters. "We adopted this dog that has now become our best friend; she goes everywhere with us. She's darling; she's the cutest thing in the whole world."

In addition to protection and adoption, the Humane Society shelter, now in its 61st year, offers an on-site Wellness Clinic, training and educational programs, and numerous other services.

"The shelter and the staff are so extraordinary," said Windsor resident Maria Whittle, a Humane Society board member with two adopted dogs.

"The amount of care they give to every animal that comes in is exceptional. It's an extraordinary place and it's a very happy place.

"The animals are very well cared for."

Cause for Paws has been known for years as the best auction in town, and this year was no exception. During the cocktail hour, the sold-out crowd viewed several hundred silent auction items strategically placed around the room.

"There were more than 100 volunteers who helped make the whole thing happen," said Sheila Marshall, event co-chair with Bonnie Spitzmiller. "We have great volunteers; they turn out to do virtually everything. We're so pleased with the whole event. The people and the club have been terrific and the supporters and donors are so generous and thoughtful."

Individual BidPal devices made making and monitoring their favored items a breeze even during dinner, a delicious buffet featuring pasta stations, carving stations with beef filet and salmon en



Right: Shelly Farper, Maria Whittle and Leslie McGuirk.



Left: Janet Balnes, Marsha Sherry and Jean Uelrich.

croûte, and delectable desserts.

A live auction after the dinner featured gorgeous jewelry, fabulous trips, a street-legal golf cart, and a dinner for ten prepared by the Humane Society Management, but also a call for support toward a spay/neuter program for pets in low-income households who could not otherwise afford the procedure.

Commenting on the sheer volume of animals needing to be spayed or neutered, Marshall said, "If we had \$50,000 it would barely make a dent. There are so many stray cats out in the groves; there are so many animals just roaming around."

"We have a new logo – Open Door, Open Heart – that we think more closely identifies with our shelter," said Chalmers Morse, Humane Society executive director.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

VERO BEACH
32963
Your Vero Beach Newsweekly™
www.vb32963online.com



Left: Chairman Morse, Bernice Spitzmiller, Sheila Marshall and Fritz Spitzmiller.



Humane Society ambassadors Rocky, held by Tonya Martinez, and Rocky, held by Sharon Brunel, welcome Julie Summers and Page Frazee to Cause for Paws.



Right: JoAnn Becken, Lou Ann Lindsay and Hal Oberkotter. PHOTO BY WAFS-DIGITAL.

He spoke of two of the greeter dogs, one rescued from a hoarder, and another abandoned because the owner no longer wanted it. He then asked guests to "think about your own ani-

mals, who greet you at the door when you get home; you are their world." Generous guests clearly took the message to heart, making the event the most successful one to date. ■



Warren and Virginia Schwerin with Sally and Roger Smith.

Phil & Duke / Service Dog Team

Sponsored by page a design



Moving to Vero Beach was a blessing after I retired due to a brain injury I sustained while working as a Deputy Sheriff in MI. While looking for a clean well socialized dog park I found DFL and met Shelly & Jay. Duke and I have become part of the program. DFL has improved the quality of my life and Duke's as well. Duke is all dog at the park socializing, exercising and playing. I get to meet members and build friendships. Many call my disabilities "hidden". Duke is assisting me by bracing for me, waking me from nightmare, and watching my back. DFL has given me a new purpose in life and I get to continue my service related career by given back while my dog assists me to lead a life of self-reliance and independence again. Deputy Sheriff Phillip McDade Muma (ret). K9 partner Duke (Lab).

News Articles

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

tcpalm.com

Your Newsweekly

VERO BEACH, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

In every neighborhood there are 'Unsung Heroes' – volunteers professionals who go well beyond their expected duties.

Congratulations to the 2014 Jefferson Award winners and nominees



WINNERS:

Joel Bray <i>Indian River County</i>	Sarah Clein <i>Palm Beach County</i>
Anthony and Alyssa Golino <i>Martin County</i>	Crystal Nickell <i>St. Lucie County</i>
Captain Donald Voss <i>St. Lucie County</i>	

NOMINEES:

Shelby Berger <i>Indian River County</i>	Lynn Priore <i>Martin County</i>	
Martha Taylor <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Nyla Pipes <i>St. Lucie County</i>	
Eric Selbenick <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Michelle Farries <i>Broward County</i>	Sal Neglia <i>Indian River County</i>
Donna Carman <i>Martin County</i>	Victor Rivera <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Christi Mollet <i>Indian River County</i>
Charlie Hays <i>Okeechobee County</i>	Denise Dublin <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Nancy Borges <i>St. Lucie County</i>
Lynn Schiebart <i>Palm Beach County</i>	Leonard Smallacombe <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Marie Horenburger <i>Palm Beach County</i>
Hortense Beachum <i>Indian River County</i>	William Malone <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Keith Begley <i>Martin County</i>
Betty Mulligan <i>Martin County</i>	Barbara Eakins <i>Indian River County</i>	Dani Dreizehnter <i>St. Lucie County</i>
Robert Zaccheo <i>Martin County</i>	Michele Gillen <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Georgia Irish <i>Indian River County</i>
Charlie Pope <i>Indian River County</i>	Elias Viera <i>St. Lucie County</i>	Neil Lagin <i>Indian River County</i>

Look in the **April 9th** edition of **YourNews** for profiles of the winners.

Dear Shelley,
Welcome to our **Monday Morning Cultural Council Connection.**

THE CULTURAL CONNECTION WITH WILLI MILLER

Every Monday on WAXE 1370 AM or 107.9 FM
5 to 5:30 p.m.
To hear the show streaming via your computer, visit
www.waxe1370.com at 5 p.m.

Paul Gay and Artem Belogurov- Chamber concert at
Vero Beach Museum of Art

Cynthia Callander and Jenny Lyons for World Book Night

ART DISTRICT MEETING & PRESENTATION ON WEDNESDAY



All are welcome to an Indian River Neighborhood Association Meeting in Vero's Art District on Wednesday, April 23rd at the Heritage Center, 2140 14th

Avenue. Enjoy light refreshments at 5 p.m. with a presentation at 6 p.m. The Cultural Council will present a concept for a Cultural Arts Center at the historic Diesel Plant. With a passionate interest in the visual, performing and culinary arts, the community of Vero Beach is poised to become one of the State's prized cultural destination points. The Council's vision is to create an exciting community-based cultural arts center where adults and children can experience unique opportunities in a safe, creative environment; where local artists can paint a masterpiece in affordable studio



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THE CULTURAL CONNECTION WITH WILLI MILLER

Thank you to our sponsor:

■ **The Vero Beach Museum of Art** presents jazz group Dave Mundy and Soulfège on Thursday, April 24th from 5 to 7 p.m. The cost is \$10 for museum members and \$12 for non-members.

■ Pianist **Barbara Gomulka** will be performing ambient piano music at Vinz, 4885 Highway A-1-A in Vero Beach on Wednesday, April 23rd from 6 to 9 p.m.

■ At **Sunrise Theatre** this week, a concert tribute to the Music of Paul McCartney: McCartney Mania With Special Guest Artists Page & Plant Tribute will be performed in the Black Box Theatre on Friday, April 25th at 7pm. McCartney Mania showcases some of Paul's greatest hits from his career. For tickets, \$35, visit SunriseTheatre.com.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

■ **Dogs for Life** is sponsoring a Treasure Hunt Car Rally on Saturday, April 26th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. A driver and navigator meeting will be held at 9 a.m. at the DFL Dog Training Campus at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Participants will be given a treasure map to follow throughout Indian River County to compete for cash awards. Drivers will finish at the Heritage Center for a finish line party from 11 a.m to 3 p.m. and the public is invited to the party that includes a lunch catered by Osceola Bistro, a 50/50 raffle, a silent auction, entertainment and demonstrations by DFL Assistance Dogs and the I.R.C. Sheriff's K-9 Units. The entrance fee for cars and drivers is \$250 for up to four people and includes lunch. Tickets for the public are \$65. For more information or to register, contact Dogs for Life at (772) 567-8969, via email at dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net, or register on-line at www.dogsforlifevb.org.



■ World Book Night 2014 is an event to give away half a



Ivo David

Donnelly Galleries



Fern Canyon by Brett Donnelly

Flametree Clay Gallery



Ikebana

Emerson Center Foyer Gallery



Julie Lounibos

Gallery 14

InsideVero

Your Local Online News Magazine

Community News [Reply](#)

Dogs For Life Benefits from Masco Gift

Dogs For Life, Inc. A nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people by training dogs to assist with hearing and mobility challenges as well as the effects of post-traumatic stress disorders for Veterans, is proud to announce that it has been selected to receive a donation from Masco Corporation Foundation.

Through a competitive grant process, Dogs For Life was nominated by Masco Contractor Services, a subsidiary of Masco Corporation and leading installer of residential insulation and other residential building products.

This grant was made possible through Masco's "America's Heroes: A Million Thanks" veteran initiative, which is targeting more than \$1 million in support to over 50 veteran-focused organizations that provide affordable and physically accessible housing; education, job training and employment initiatives; and related military services.

"The mission of Dogs For Life clearly aligns with the objectives of our veteran initiatives, and we are proud to support its efforts," said Timothy Wadhams, President & CEO Masco Corporation. "Masco values the service and sacrifice of our U.S. Veterans, military troops, and their families, and is committed to supporting our nation's heroes."

Dogs For Life, Inc. Will be using this generous grant toward our Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center where we will be training Veterans to Train Hearing and Service Dogs for their comrades.

Indian River St. Lucie & Martin Counties Where the Stars Come Out Every Monday - April 7, 2014

Luminaries



ON SCENE WITH...
DOGS FOR LIFE

DFL's 4th "Budd A. Budge" tournament, sponsored by Haulco Big "Egg", was a success in many ways - thanks to the following "winning cards": 100-plus poker players, 25 individual sponsors, 17 corporate sponsors and grand slam silent auction. Betty Schwartz won the OCSM title and was graciously donated her portion to DFL, which brought total funds raised to a staggering \$12,500!

- 1 - Elaine Bergman and CEO Shelly Finger
- 2 - Dr. Paul Hattar
- 3 - Ann Winkler and Margaret Wey Zelar
- 4 - Jim Galtmore and Chad Spira
- 5 - Gwendolyn and Sandy Schultz
- 6 - Carmen Townsend-Schmitt and Marc Hefley



GLAMOUR & GRIT
 By Sydney Letman

DOGS CONTRIBUTE TO LIFE

Lumin-friend Donna Murray tells us that Meadowood Golf & Tennis Club recently held its first "Dog Show." The afternoon began with a demonstration of service dogs by Vero Beach-based Dogs For Life, one of only four assistance dog training organizations in the state of Florida recognized by the Veteran's Administration to certify service dogs for veterans. Twenty dogs were entered in the Meadowood competition for prizes of treats and blue ribbons. The event, organized by Silence Andrews and Diane Nagel, was a total success. Proceeds of \$820 were presented to Dogs For Life.



Assistance Dog Teams And Trainers Receive Tour of Training Center Construction Site By Construction Managers



Standing: Joey Calmes, Superintendant with Bill Bryant & Associates, Anthony Donadio of Donadio and Associates, Architects, and Christopher Bryant Construction Manager, Bill Bryant & Associates. Kneeling: Norine with Hearing Dog Kelly, DFL Trainer Paula Via and Jay Harris with "Team Duke" Phil and Duke DFL Service Dog Team.

Please Make Us Your Favorite Dog Park



Voting is now open for the 2014 TC Palm Reader's Choice Awards. Please [click here](#) to vote NOW! Voting ends at 11:59 pm April 20, 2014.

DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

*DFL Board Member Kathi Schumann Invites You
To Attend The Treasure Hunt & Car Rally
Finish Line Party at the Heritage Center
Noon, Saturday, April 26, 2014*

Only \$65/per person

*Silent Auction, 50/50, Food, Live Entertainment
K-9 Demonstration / UTD-Navy SEALS / Veterans Council
I.R. County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention*

Treasure Hunt & Car Rally Sponsor Kathi Schumann
And DFL Founder Shelly Ferger
Survey The Treasure Hunt & Car Rally Start Line
At the DFL Training Center Construction Site



Rally Fundraiser on Saturday, April 26th. The Start Line is at the DFL Training Center construction site located at 1230 16th Avenue promptly at 9 am with a mandatory driver and navigator meeting.

After following a treasure map through Indian River County, Treasure Hunt & Car Rally participants will finish at the Heritage Center in downtown Vero Beach and enjoy a finish line party, silent auction, live music, 50/50, prizes and lunch catered by Osceola Bistro.

Treasure Hunt & Car Rally Participants are eligible for: First Prize \$5,000, second prize \$2,500 and third prize \$1,500. The Entrance Fee is \$250, for up to four people per car, and includes a finish line party. Consider splitting the cost with 4 and for \$62.50 each you could split \$5,000!!!

The Finish Line Party starts at Noon at the Vero Beach Heritage Center located at 2130 14th Avenue, and the event ends at 3 pm.

If you plan to attend the Finish Line Party for only \$65/per person. PLEASE RSVP at (772) 567-8969, or email at dogsforsivvb@bellsouth.net.

Finish Line Party also includes a demonstration by IRC Sheriff's K-9 Unit, exciting silent auction items such as tours of John & Kathi Schumann's private race car collection, car rides with Kathi Schumann, off-leash dog park memberships, a "Florida Cracker" airboat ride, gift certificates from Waldo's, Bobby's Restaurant, Publix, Fresh Market, Grandeur Mountain, Cotton Mouth Armory, and much more! Partnering Organizations are the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum, The Indian River County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit, and the Veteran's Council of Indian River County.

To register for Treasure Hunt and Car Rally contact DFL by email at: dogsforsivvb@bellsouth.net, or visit www.dogsforsivvb.org, to pre-register for the Treasure Hunt and be eligible for prizes download and print the registration form [here](#).

Ten Volunteers are needed and will be invited for FREE to the Finish Line Party. Please call Shelly before Wednesday April 23, to register as a volunteer at 567-8969.

The Voice of Experience VETERAN VOICE

4 • APRIL 4, 2014 • VETERAN VOICE • THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Dogs For Life awarded grant

Mary Kemper

STAFF WRITER

mkemper@veteranvoiceweekly.com

Dogs For Life, Inc., Vero Beach, a nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people by training dogs to assist with hearing and mobility challenges as well as the effects of post-traumatic stress disorders for veterans, is proud to announce that it has been selected to receive a donation from Masco Corporation Foundation.

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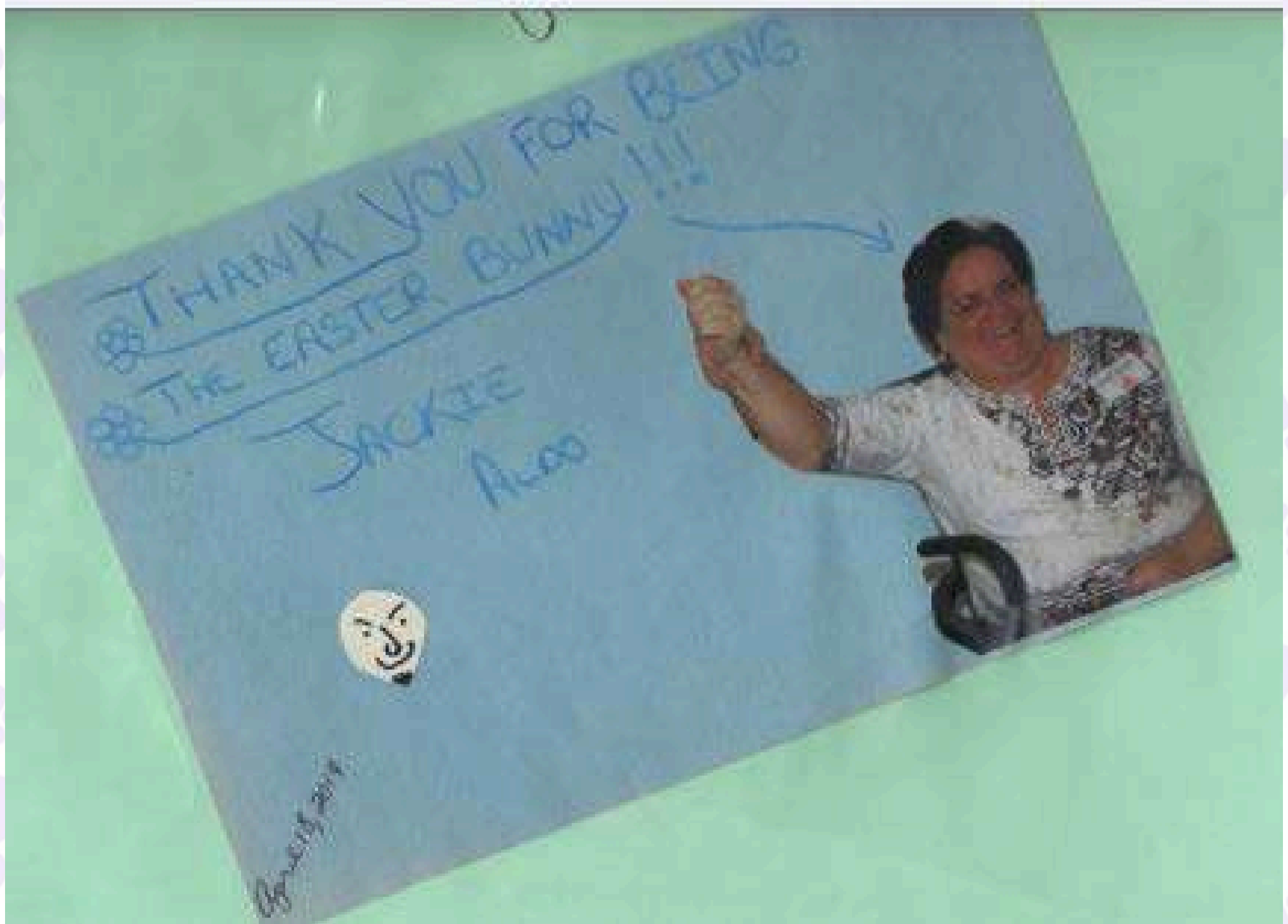
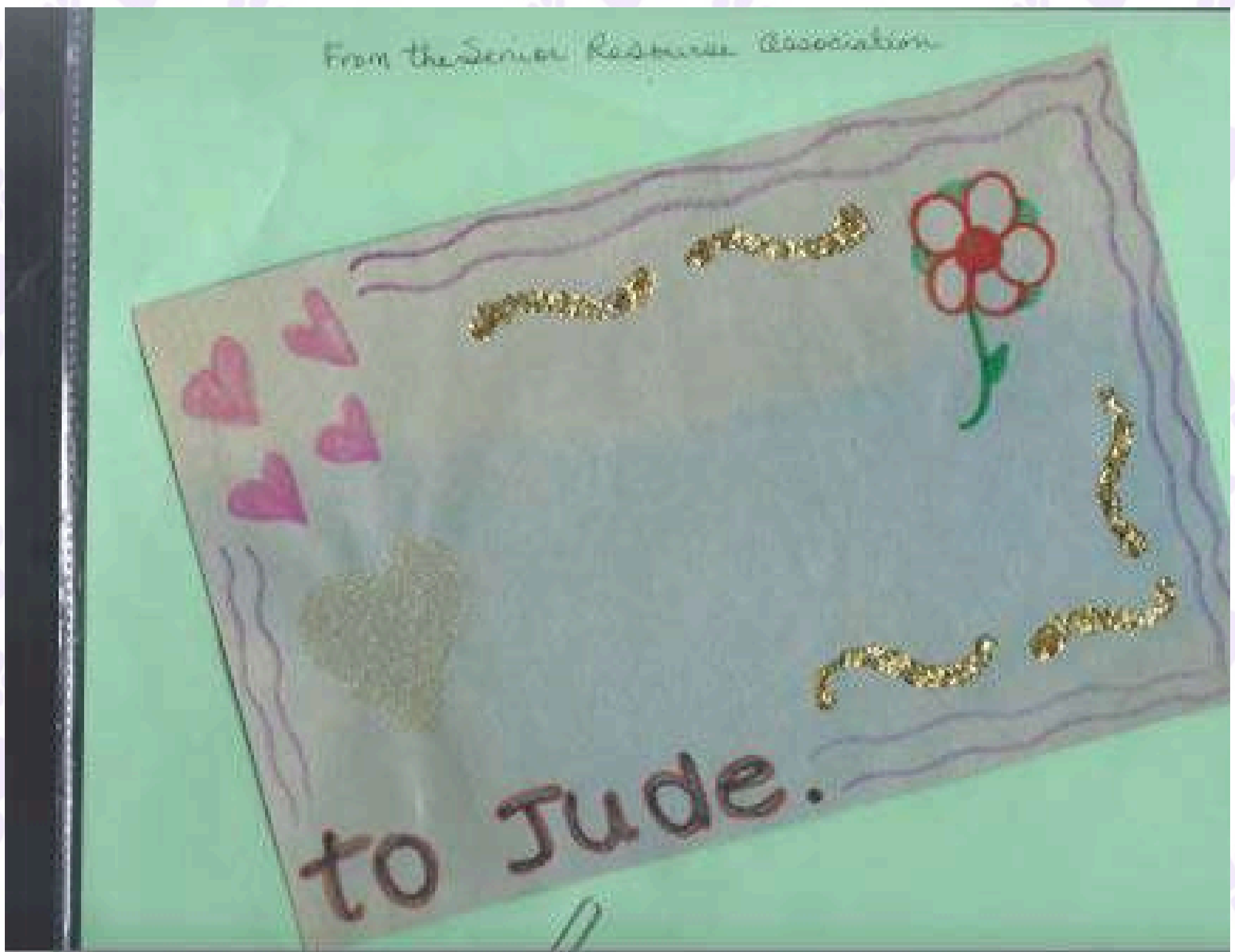
"Masco values the service and sacrifice of our U.S. veterans, military troops, and their families, and is committed to supporting



Photo courtesy of Shelly Ferger
Tigger is a hearing service dog trained at Dogs For Life Inc., Vero Beach.

Dogs For Life, Inc. will use this generous grant toward our Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center, where we will be training veterans to train hearing and service dogs for their comrades.

For more information on Dogs For Life, contact Shelly Ferger, founder and CEO, at (772) 567-8969 or by email at dogsforlife@tiscali.net.





MARCH

Mardi Growl 5K

Certificate of Appreciation

The Blue Ribbon Charitable Foundation Hereby Recognizes

Dogs For life

for participating in the

MARDI GROWL 5K

On the 15 Day of March Year of 2014



Administrative Center Update



DOGS FOR LIFE ASSISTANCE DOG TRAINING & ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

Christopher Bryant of Bill Bryant & Associates takes a look inside the Training Center to inspect the rafters. So far, we are 2 weeks ahead of schedule!



New Assistance Dog Team in Training: Phil & Duke

Dogs For Life would like to introduce you to a new Team in Training, Phil & Duke. Phil is a retired Deputy Sheriff from the great state of Michigan, where he worked as an instructor in educational programs for his department's youth group. We are so happy to be helping such a wonderful person and so far, training is going great!



Phil & Duke pose with the Indian River County Sheriff's Explorer Scouts, at the recent Sheriff's Youth Ranches BBQ on March 5th, while Dogs For Life Trainer, Jay Harris, explains to the Scouts how they can volunteer and help Dogs For Life. It was a great event!



DOGS FOR LIFE ASSISTANCE DOG TRAINING & ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

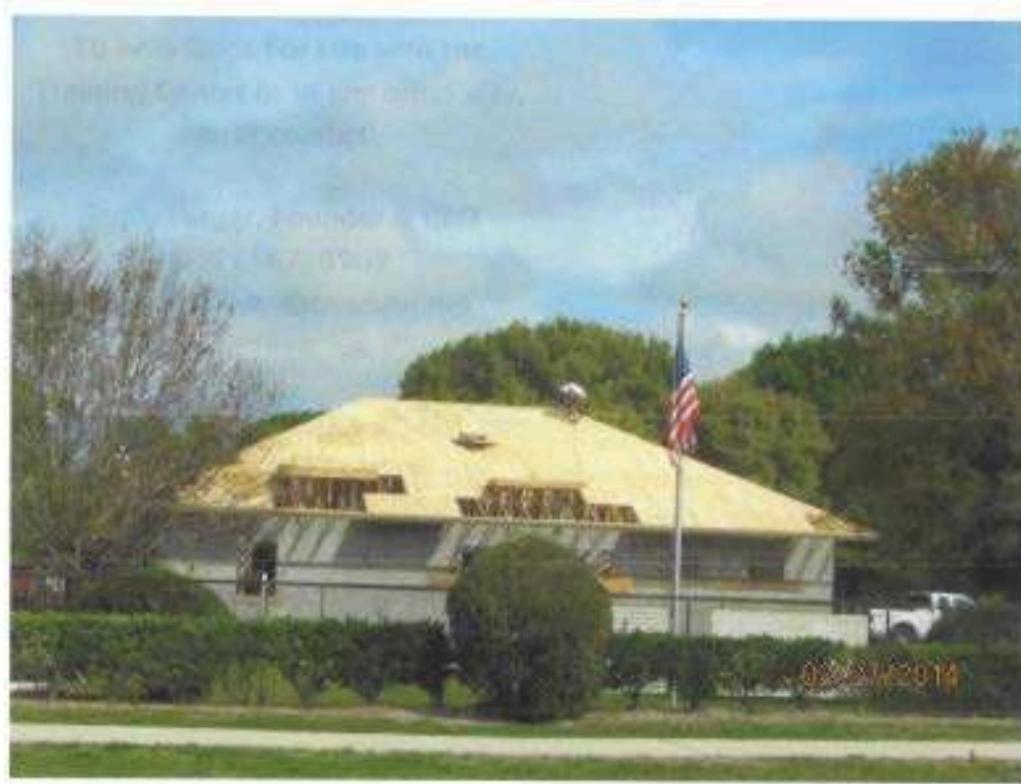
Bob Bowman and Margie Owens, Founding Members of Dogs For Life, visit the Dog Park campus and Training Center to see contractors work on the new roof! We love all of the interest and enthusiasm!



DFL Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center
February 2014



Christopher D. Bryant
Bill Bryant & Associates, Inc., General Contractors



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Dogs For Life will have a booth at the upcoming Indian River County Sheriff's Office 20th Annual Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranches BBQ on Wednesday, March 5th, from 2 to 7 pm. The BBQ will be held at the Sheriff's Office Complex located at 4055 41st Avenue. Pork and Chicken dinner tickets are \$5 for adults and children 5+. There will be displays, SWAT & CERT demonstrations, and Jail/911 Center tours.
- Dogs For Life will also have a booth at the Vero Lake Estates Health Fair on May 15th from 9 am to 12 pm. More details will follow about this event as it nears.

If you are able to volunteer for a 2-hour shift at either event please contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969 or via dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net. Volunteers will also be needed for set-up and clean-up. If you can't volunteer, we hope you can still stop by and visit us at each event.



DOGS FOR LIFE ASSISTANCE DOG TRAINING & ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER



This week the walls of the Training Center have been formed. We are so thrilled to report that construction is proceeding quickly!



Please continue to help Dogs For Life grow and succeed! Once our Training Center is complete we will need your help to furnish and put the finishing touches on our new facility. If you would like to help, please [Click Here](#) to donate.

To help Dogs For Life with the Training Center or in any other way, please contact:

Shelly Ferger, Founder & CEO
(772) 567-8969
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net

For frequent updates about the Training Center LIKE us on:



Articles



What you may not know about service animals

BY THE DOCTORS

Many are golden retrievers and Labradors, but none is considered a pet. Service dogs are actually working animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities.

Here's what else you should know:

Job descriptions vary. What service dogs do depends on the person's specific needs. Tasks can include opening and closing doors,

They're not pets. They are at work.

retrieving medications, assisting people who are blind or deaf, pulling a wheelchair or alerting to an impending seizure, among other duties.

ID vests are not required. Other than a few exceptions, service dogs are allowed in places open to the public, according to the Americans with Disabilities Act. They must have a harness or leash, unless the tether gets in the way of the animal's tasks. (In those cases, the handler must have control through

voice commands, hand signals or other means, the ADA says.) The dog does not, however, have to wear an identifying vest or special badge. If the need for the service animal is not obvious, business owners are only allowed to ask whether the animal is required because of a disability, and what work has it been trained to perform.

Don't pet without asking. Don't offer the dog any food, and most importantly, don't interrupt or distract the animal while it is performing its task.

Service dogs are different from comfort dogs. Emotional-support animals are prescribed by mental health professionals to provide therapeutic support and security for people with psychological limitations; therapy animals offer affection and comfort, typically in facilities such as hospitals and retirement homes. People with emotional-support animals don't have the same public-access rights as those with service dogs. ☐

The Doctors is an award-winning TV show. Check local listings.

Visit us at usaweekend.com

Treasure Coast Advertiser Close-Up

To spotlight Vero Beach and St. Johns County businesses, contact your St. Johns County business reporter at 772-979-3344

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCHEFF; TREASURE COAST NEWS-PAPER'S ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

PRINTING

LEB Printing and Design

Personalized service backed by skill and experience

By **Sharran P. Moore**
Contributor

Laura Bonney makes office calls. Traveling to her customers' places of business to help commercial clients save valuable time is just one of the reasons her Vero Beach company, LEB Printing and Design, is developing a loyal following.

"My No. 1 goal is customer service and one way I can demonstrate that is to show my clients that I will set up meetings at their offices when they have printing needs," said Bonney. "That saves them time in their busy schedules."

Clients certainly appreciate the free pickup and delivery service, which has helped Bonney grow her business in just two years.

However, she is not a newcomer to the printing profession. She has 30 years experience in typesetting and design, having worked for Vero Beach Printing for 24 years.

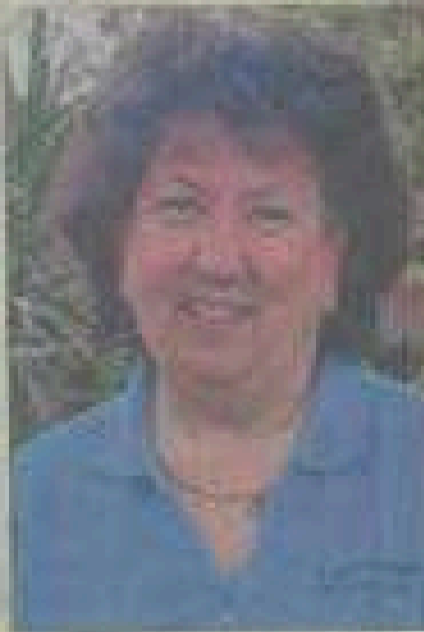


PHOTO COURTESY LEB

Laura Bonney combines her 30-year experience and firmless service to customers to become the area's premier printer.

"When they retired and closed their office, I had people who I had worked with for many years ask me to continue doing their printing work," she said. "That's how I started my own business and it has grown steadily."

Some of the most common print jobs produced at LEB Printing and Design are brochures, business cards, color copies, invitations, door hangers, stationery, en-

“My No. 1 goal is customer service and one way I can demonstrate that is to show my clients that I will set up meetings at their offices when they have printing needs. That saves them time in their busy schedule.”

Laura Bonney

velopes, advertising flyers, menus, newsletters, post cards, programs and general typesetting. She takes care of commercial clients and also people who have personal printing needs.

Bonney built her successful business model with a three-pronged approach: excellent customer service, quality print work and reasonable prices.

By returning all telephone calls and emails promptly, making sure her completed print jobs exceed expectations and helping customers save money with her low pricing system, she is ensuring a bright future in her chosen profession.

"I am always willing to give people free quotes and my goal is to try to save them money," she said. "Most people are pleasantly surprised when I give them cost estimates."

If you desire printing work with a custom look, not the generic style you receive from Internet purchases, give Bonney a call at 772-532-5735. Her vast knowledge of the industry enables her to create the all-important first impressions that will set your company a notch above your competition.

For more information, visit the web site: www.lebprinting.com.

The background of the image is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints of various sizes, scattered across a white background. The paw prints are stylized with four distinct pads.

FEBRUARY

Jefferson Award Nomination

Page 1 of 2

here's what the nomination looked like. maybe pass this on to boardmembers or whomever. :)

also, i will be in town and can make the PAT re-cert on 3/8.

To: gavnightstalker@hotmail.com
Subject: Submit Jefferson Award Nomination
From: no-reply@wufoo.com
Date: Fri, 21 Feb 2014 08:16:41 -0800

Thank you for your nomination.

Submit Jefferson Award Nomination

Nominee's Name *	Shelly Ferger
Nominee's Age *	53
Nominee's Title and/or Role *	President/Founder
Nominee's Email *	dogsforlife@bellsouth.net
Nominee's Address *	 25 5th Avenue Vero Beach, FL 32962 United States
Nominee's Home Phone *	(772) 567-7990
Nominee's Cell Phone *	(772) 696-2306
Your Name *	L. A. Bykowsky
Your Relationship to Nominee *	friend
Your Email *	gavnightstalker@hotmail.com
Your Address *	 7726 99th Ave Vero Beach, FL 32967 United States
Your Home Phone *	(772) 589-9096
Your Cell Phone *	(772) 563-3391

In this section please write a brief sentence on the individual you are nominating. *

Shelly has built a fledgling non-profit organization from the ground up and her impact with Dogs for Life can be seen and felt not only in physical examples such as the dog park in Vero, the recent ground breaking for the training center there, but also in the people she's helped, whose lives she's touched and changed, including everyday citizens, seniors, children and our veterans.

file:///C:/Documents and Settings/Dogs for Life/Local Settings/Application Data/IM/Runtime/Message/139D05A09-88F8-43E9-BA17-AF362... 2/21/2014

Page 2 of 2

In this section explain how your nominee stands out in the community or is unique or heroic. *

I've only known Shelly for about 3 years, having stumbled upon Dogs For Life when I wanted to do pet assisted therapy with my dog in the Sebastian area. Total time I've spent with Shelly is probably less than 10 hours, but even that short exposure has convinced me that she is a force to be reckoned with and completely devoted to her work. Shelly's dedication to providing assistance dogs to those in need has resulted in many people taking back their lives and in some cases, probably saving lives.

Shelly can be a taskmaster, she is an incredibly strong-willed woman and handles all projects with fierce determination. But I mean that with all due respect because how she does what she does, is how the job gets done. Whether it's training an assistance dog, breaking in a therapy dog team or running a fund-raising event, Shelly takes control with a firm hand and does everything she can to ensure the best outcome in every endeavor she faces. Shelly leads by example, striving for perfection and asking of others what she demands of herself. She enriches the lives (both human and canine) of those she meets and I think many would echo my sentiment that we are better people for knowing her.

Shelly Ferger is an incredible asset to the Treasure Coast community and beyond, selflessly dedicating her time, money and efforts to making life better for as many people as possible. I believe she exemplifies what the Jefferson Award stands for and should be counted amongst the winners.

In this section, share with us the positive impact on the community that your nominee has had. *

Not only does Shelly work tirelessly to help people in need, she's rescued shelter dogs, giving them new lives as assistance partners and every year, DFL's pet-assisted therapy program provides hundreds of hours of joy and entertainment to seniors and children in our community.

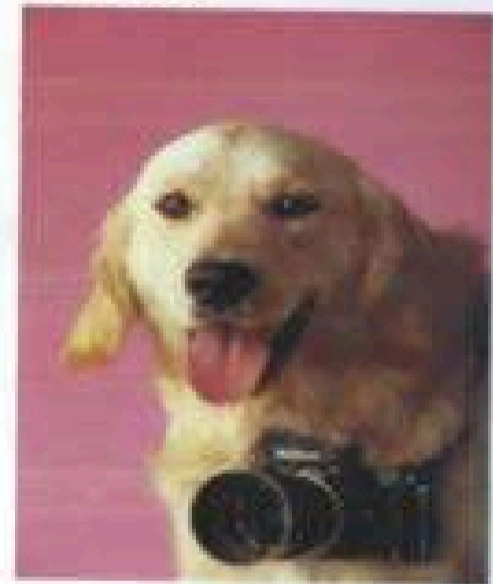
Meadowood Community Dog Show

Meadowood Community Dog Show

Wednesday, February 26, 2014 2- 4:30 p.m.
Near the Parking Lot by the Tennis Center

Dogs for Life Presentation on:
Service Dogs for Vets
Assistance Dogs
Therapy Dogs

\$10.00 per dog Entrance Fee
Help Build a Training Center for Dogs for Life!



Your Dog Can Enter
A Costume Parade
The Dog that Most Resembles Its' Owner
Most Handsome Male
Prettiest Female
Best Trained Puppy (less than a year old)
Dog Tricks

Club Members, please invite other residents to join us.
Contact Diane Nagel 772 234-7473 or Silence Andrews 772 468-6994 to
let us know how many will be coming. Bring a chair to watch!

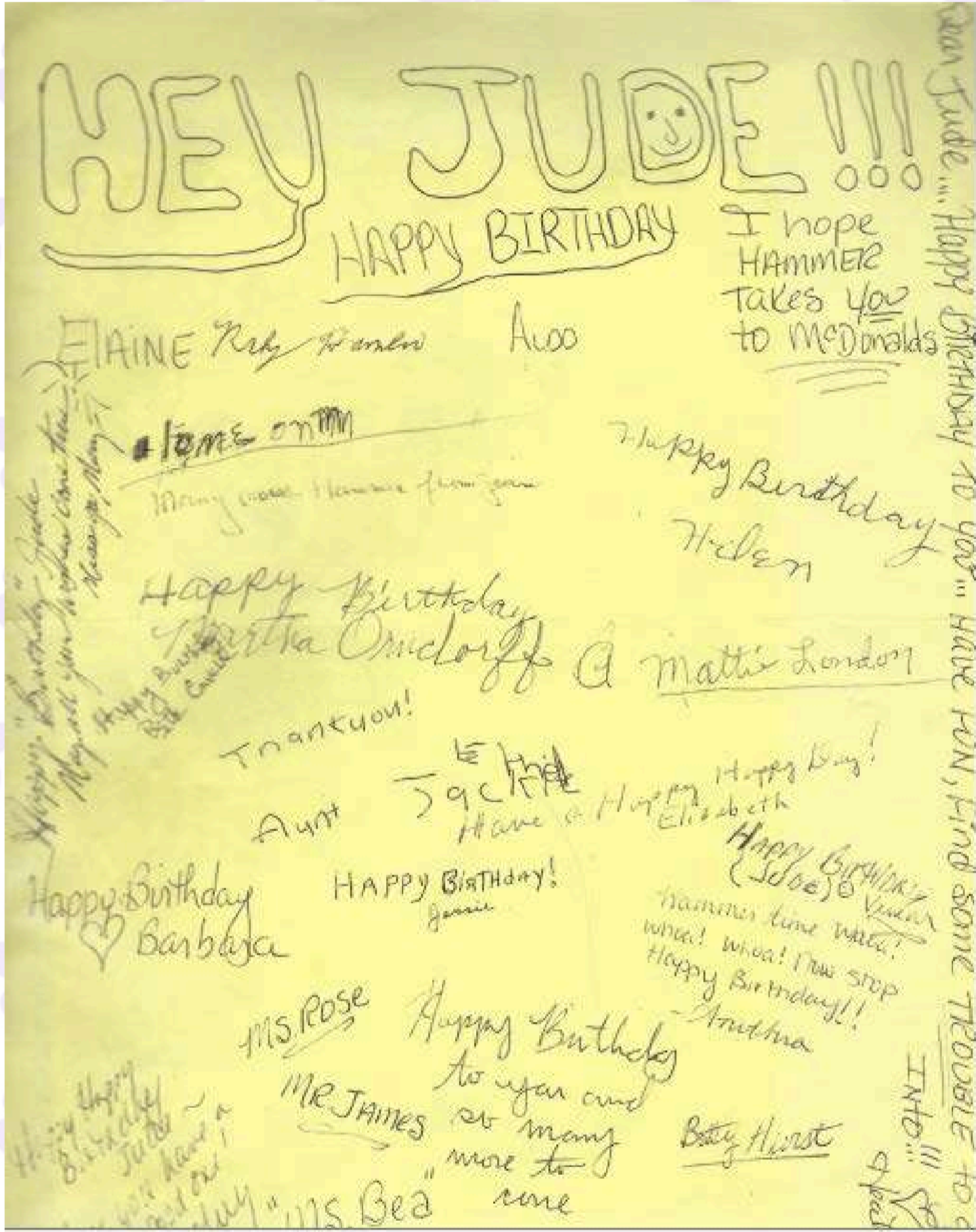
Bridge Tournament



Vero Beach 32963 / February 13, 2014 87

February 18
Build a Bridge Tournament, 11 a.m. at Vero Beach Country Club to benefit Dogs for Life, with luncheon followed by Duplicate and Party Bridge tournaments. \$75. 567-8969

Hey Jude



Cultural Connection



Cultural Council
CONNECTION

www.Cultural-Council.org

772.770.4857

Dear Shelley,
Welcome to our *Monday Morning Cultural Council Connection*.

SHARE THIS EMAIL
WITH A FRIEND!

 Forward to a Friend

THE CULTURAL CONNECTION WITH WILLI MILLER

Every Monday on WAXE 1370 AM or 107.9 FM
5 to 5:30 p.m.

Marte McMurry, Sebastian Art Studio Tour
Robin Dunlap, Environmental Learning Center

THE CULTURAL CONNECTION WITH WILLI MILLER

Tune In to WAXE 1370 AM
or 107.9 FM from 5 to 5:30
p.m. Every Monday

Thank you to our sponsor:

TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE
CULTURAL CONCIERGE

Author Liz Curtis-Higgs
The Girl's Still Got It!

February 15, 2014
9 am to 2:30 pm

at
First United Methodist Church
[Download the Flyer](#)



ONGOING EXHIBITS JANUARY 2014

Art Mundo
Members Exhibit

Laments & landscapes
Mario Mutiz

Drawing on Dreams
Terri Joelle Bennett

Kristin Lee, Violin

News Articles



Dogs For Life definite boon for suffering vets

Mary Kemper

STAFF WRITER

mkemper@veteranvoiceweekly.com

Dogs For Life is a "labor of love" for founder and CEO Shelly Ferger — with almost equal emphasis on the "labor" as on the "love."

"It's definitely been a challenge, that's for sure," Ferger said, sweeping an arm to encompass the sprawling Dog Park grounds in Vero Beach.

Nearby, a construction crew worked on putting up a building that, one day, will be the main administration and training center for dogs and vets to get to know each other.

Many returning vets suffering from PTSD or traumatic brain injury, hearing loss or blindness, can benefit from a relationship with a dog, Ferger said. It's her aim to be able to help connect every veteran with his or her own dog to help them live happier lives.

But it hasn't been easy for Ferger to fulfill her dream.

"It's been one thing after another," she said. "Originally, this was the town Dog Park, and Dogs For Life was a separate organization. Now, they're merged — but it took three years (of effort) to get to that point."

Other problems included purchasing additional land, irriga-



Shelly Ferger, foreground, stands in front of the administrative and training center being built at the Dog Park in Vero Beach by Dogs For Life.

tion issues, construction issues and, of course, funding.

Surprisingly, though, in the case of funding, the necessary money has always seemed to show up at

"That dog came over to him, and you could just see the change in him. His face, his body. It was incredible."

Mary "Mim" Dunn
past president

"When we were really struggling, one anonymous donor sent us \$200,000 — and within a week, another \$100,000 came in," she said.

"We even have a lady who won the \$25 million lotto who donated to us."

There are four main Dogs For Life programs and services: assistance dogs, for those with special needs 24 hours a day; pet-assisted therapy dogs; community outreach programs, including a dog-behavior hotline, dog placement referral program, workshops and obedience classes; and the service dogs for veterans training program.

According to literature published by Dogs For Life, there are 231,000 Florida veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan. Three in 10 will have a service-related disability, and 30 percent will suffer from PTSD. Of that number, 50 percent will not seek treatment.

"It's so important to reach these

veterans," Ferger said.

The range of ways dogs can help vets is astonishing. They include:

- Waking up the vet from a nightmare;
- Creating a barrier around the vet to allow distance from people in a crowd;
- Sitting back-to-back with the vet to alert of approaching people;
- Making a perimeter of the home before entering;
- Calling a suicide hotline on a special K-9 emergency phone;
- Providing a soothing touch when a vet feels emotional overload;
- Serving as a vet's "combat buddy" to provide security and ease loneliness.

One veteran whose life has changed for the better is former Army staff sergeant Jim Taylor, who lives in Vero Beach. His dog, a pug named Pia Pia (pronounced "pay-pay"), goes with him every-

See DOGS page 10

DOGS from page 4

where he goes.

He has agreed to assist Ferger in speaking at Dogs For Life fundraisers, and she said the Taylor-Pia Pia duo is very effective.

"You could literally see the change in him because of the dog," said Mary "Mim" Dunn, of Vero Beach. She is a past president of Dogs For Life, and remains active in the organization.

Dunn attended a fundraiser at her bridge club, and Taylor was the speaker. At one point, he broke down, and had to hand the microphone to his wife, Dawn, to continue where he left off.

Mary "Mim" Dunn, Vero Beach resident and former president of Dogs For Life, on seeing how a service dog helped veteran Jim Taylor, who suffers from PTSD.

"That dog came over to him, and you could just see the change in him," Dunn said. "His face, his body. It was incredible.

"If anyone didn't know just how much those dogs help someone who's suffering, that told you right there. It made my whole day."

Dunn, herself, has hearing loss, and depends on her assistance dog, Chance, a boxer, to help her get out and about.

The Dog Park has separate enclosures for

large and small dogs to run free, as well as one for agility and other training purposes.

There's even a Memorial Garden, where people can either put up a memorial to a beloved pet or scatter a pet's ashes.

There are lots of trees and other plants throughout the grounds, as well as benches. To help keep the grounds clean, owners are required to dispose of their dogs' waste as soon as the dogs have "gone."

While Ferger was talking, several dogs and their owners came in and turned their dogs loose. One, a black standard poodle, kept racing around the entire enclosure, stopping only to sniff the other dogs, while the owners conversed.

"This park brings people together, not just dogs, as you can see," Ferger said.

Each enclosure has a water station. When the administrative and training building is completed, there will be offices and up-to-date equipment.

Along the fences in the training area are "bone boards," which are square poster-sized boards containing dog bone-shaped plaques listing the names of donors. Ferger arranged them chronologically, from the earliest planning stages to the present. "There's always room for more," she said.

Ferger stressed the need not only for dona-

tions, but in helping locate dogs to match with vets, and getting vets to become more involved.

"If a vet becomes a trainer, for example, he's not only helping himself but also his fellow vets," Ferger said.

"We're really trying to get the word out both for them and for dogs."

Not every dog is suitable for training. Dogs For Life is one of only four organizations in Florida accredited by Assistance Dogs International, and Ferger and her associates are familiar with various dog traits. Anyone wishing to have their dog participate should meet with Dogs For Life staff and learn the guidelines ahead of time.

Looking ahead, Ferger isn't quite sure where the funding will come from to keep operating regularly, but, "somehow, it just keeps coming, and I'm so grateful. We really need it," she said.

Donations not only help with the building and grounds, but enable Dogs For Life to offer their services to veterans free of charge.

"Our vets are so important to us," Ferger said. "Let's give them a way to start living a happier life."

For more information, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969, or by e-mail at dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net



Staff photo by Mary Kemper

Above, Shelly Ferger is founder and CEO of Dogs For Life. At right, this boxer assists Vero Beach resident Mary "Mim" Dunn, who has a hearing loss.





ON SCENE WITH DOGS FOR LIFE

Dogs for Life held its ground-breaking ceremony for the new Assistant Dog Training & Administrative Center, where immediately following ceremony, our own Janis Ortega-Cowan was given the Media Award on behalf of Lunenburg.

- 1 - Laura Bentley, Volunteer of the Year
- 2 - Nancy and Bob Kayall
- 3 - Patsy Chandler, Kathi Schumann, Shelly Fiegel, Tony Davolio and Chris
- 4 - James Taylor and Joy Harbo
- 5 - Tony Davolio and Patsy Chandler



Help Build a Bridge Tournament to Benefit Dogs for Life. 11 a.m. Luncheon, duplicate and party bridge tournaments, silent auction, \$70 per person. See Beach Country Club. 772-567-8989



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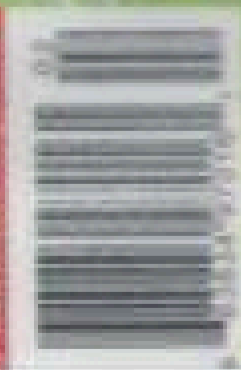
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Vero Beach Magazine

FEBRUARY 2014

An innovative local print publication for the Vero Beach community

CAPTURING THE MOMENT WITH DEREK GORES





ON THE COVER:
Derek Gores' artwork for the Windsor Charity Polo Cup includes elements representing both the event and the community. See story on page 76.

CAPTURING THE MOMENT WITH DEREK GORES

An innovative artist produces a complex collage for the Windsor Charity Polo Cup.

By Ann Taylor

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HELPING OUT WHERE HELP IS NEEDED MOST

The John's Island Foundation is making a difference in the lives of many who are less fortunate.

By Ann Taylor

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WHEN THE PAST MEETS THE FUTURE

A couple from Naples buys a home in Vero Beach, then transforms it with the help of its original owner.

By Ann Taylor

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IT TAKES A VILLAGE...

The Hibiscus Children's Village is providing safety and supervision to teenagers who have had little experience of either.

By Ann Taylor

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HOW TO SUCCEED BY REALLY TRYING

Ever since they bought out their boss a quarter-century ago, Gena Grove and Jan Schwiertz have shown that hard work does pay off.

By Mary Beth Vallar

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SCRIBBLING ON SANDFLY LANE

A group of writers gathers each week to critique each other's work. Surprisingly, they're still friends.

By Tania Ortega-Cowan

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WINNERS IN FOCUS

Here are the results of the Indian River Photo Club's annual 2013 Juried Print Exhibition, which were recently on display at the Vero Beach Museum of Art.

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SERVICE DOGS TO THE RESCUE

With more than 80,000 veterans expected to retire to Florida in the next two years, Vero Beach's new \$350,000 assistance-dog training center will be completed just in time.

By Carole Crowe

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TRUE TAILS



BY AMY ROBINSON

Take two leash walks and call me in the morning.

WANT A PERSONAL TRAINER? TRY A DOG!

All my pants are tight. Every last pair. This is, of course, the result of denying myself precisely nothing during the holiday season. Instead of hauling out the free weights or rescuing the dusty Zumba DVD from its permanent resting place in the bottom drawer, I just look down at the eager, furry face at my knee, grab a leash and hit the sidewalk.

The health benefits of dog ownership are still being studied, but so far, the results are compelling. Dog owners walk an average of 300 minutes per week, compared to 160 minutes for non-dog owners. A brisk walking pace burns up to 200 calories an hour. Just getting up from the computer to take your dog on a brief break in the yard shakes out the cobwebs and fills your lungs with fresh air.

Michelle Fournier, owner of Dirty Harry's Doggie Boutique & Dog Wash in Boston, lost weight and found a companion and a career, all by acquiring a lab mixed puppy. "Harry got me up off the couch and out walking. We put in four to five miles a day," she says. Her habit of sleeping in and skipping early exercise class was officially over. "Do you know how much energy a long-legged, teenaged dog has? I am in full stride with him by 6 a.m., giving me plenty of time to make the 7:30 a.m. yoga class I had always wanted to attend." She lost 12 pounds in less than a year, easily fit into her skinny jeans, got married, and started a new career. "I own two doggie boutiques and pen the 'Harry's Picks' blog, and I'm feeling great. This dog changed my life!"

Dog ownership has been shown to benefit the inside of our bodies, too. Mounting evidence of better circulatory functioning and lower amounts of the stress hormone cortisol is being recorded. Noted author and expert Dr. Carole Lieberman of Beverly Hills notes the effect pets can have on reducing stress: "Stress causes everything from headaches to heart attacks. It wreaks havoc on the body because the distressed brain sends signals to the body's most sensitive areas." Lieberman contends that any condition a person has is exacerbated by stress. "It may cause flare-ups of diabetes in one person or arthritis



Lively breeds like this Vizsla can act as four-legged fat-busters.

in another and decreases the immune system's efficiency. By increasing exercise and decreasing stress, pets contribute to overall human health."

A group of stockbrokers in New York, arguably among a highly stressed subgroup of type-A persons, engaged in a study at the State University of New York at Buffalo: Twenty-four hypertensive individuals due to begin drug therapy for high blood pressure were separated into two groups. The first were assigned to adopt a dog or cat from local shelters, and the second remained without pets. While the medication lowered resting blood pressure readings for all the stockbrokers, those who had adopted a pet showed only half the increase in blood pressure when subjected to stressful situations.

Research results are in line with non-scientific

Ask Amy

My dog Stella wants to chase passing cars, bikes or skateboards. She gets excited as they approach and lunges as they go by, and once I tripped and fell trying to hold her back. Make her stop!

— Linda, Aiken, S.C.

Rotating wheels are right at your dog's eye level and seem to beckon her to follow, so give her an alternative activity. Try saying "This way!" and make a smooth u-turn. Lure her with a meaty treat or favorite toy at her eye level as you turn. I hope your knees are in good shape because Stella's eye level is just inches off the ground. Practice first when no cars are passing until she responds happily to the verbal cue and turns with you. Try to find a neighbor or friend with a bike to act as your helper, and have them go by several times while you put the new skill into practice. Your timing has to be good: give your cue and lead her at nose level with the treat *before* the bike goes by, not as it passes. You are counter-conditioning, which means you are changing her old learned behavior — that of being stimulated by turning wheels — and giving her a new learned behavior. Now when a bike or car goes by, consistently give your verbal cue, use your treat, and praise her for leaving that bad habit in the dust.



Stella is blissfully unaware of the dangers of lunging towards moving wheels.



Miller's best begging technique includes a doleful expression.

My two-and-a-half-year-old dog, Miller, gets fed every night at the same time we eat. He quickly devours his food and then goes from person to person whining for some of ours. We have never fed him from the table so I am not sure where this persistent begging is coming from. What can we do to stop this behavior so we can enjoy dinnertime again?

— Jean, Vero Beach

Dogs are ever the optimists. Any reaction from you is likely interpreted as a possible weakening of your resolve. First, feed him only when you are through with dinner. In the natural world, the pack leaders would get to eat the choicest bits first. Consider leashing him while you eat and teach him to lie down at your feet. If you have a tile or wood floor, place a bathmat or similar small rug down where you want Miller to relax. Wait until you sit down with your plate in front of you, then ask him to sit, and place a chew bone down between his feet, stepping on his leash to keep him from maneuvering around the table. The bone should only be available to him at this particular time so he values it. This keeps him from getting his nose up to your knee level to goad you into action and gives him something to do. Dogs love a good routine, so establish a pattern that Miller can really sink his teeth into.

To ask Amy Robinson about your dog's behavior, visit www.verobeachmagazine.com and click on *True Tails*, or mail your question to "Ask Amy," *Vero Beach Magazine*, 956 20th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960.

BEHIND THE SCENES

February 2014



Carole Crowe

I've always been a dog lover. A joyful greeting when I arrive home, a soulful look and sweet nuzzle – so much unconditional love can be hard to resist. Even now I feel a bit of longing for a canine companion, though I chose a pet-free condominium complex when I moved to Vero Beach in 2000, for I knew that irresponsible dog owners, not the dogs, would drive me crazy.

So what a delight it was to meet Shelly Ferger and to learn about the numerous programs that Dogs For Life provides. Shelly, along with her dedicated staff, volunteers and donors, not only loves dogs, but is committed to teaching responsible pet-ownership, running a safe, off-leash dog park, providing training for pets and assistance dogs, and building a training center that will further aid the community, including returning war veterans. I was especially touched by the story of Iraq veteran Jim Taylor and his wife Dawn, and to hear how a little pug had transformed their lives. Writing this article about Dogs

With more than 80,000 veterans expected to retire to Florida in the next two years, Vero Beach's new \$350,000 assistance-dog training center will be completed just in time.

SERVICE DOGS TO THE RESCUE

BY CAROLE CROWE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DENISE RITCHIE

Although Vero Beach certainly has its share of wonderful parks, some residents may not be aware of one of its finest. With lush oaks for cool shade, numerous benches for rest, grassy areas for playing and trails for walking, the park is very similar to others. It does have a few special characteristics, however. A long fence separates visitors by size, water fountains are very close to the ground and squirrel-chasing is quite popular – not at all surprising for a dog park.

The Off-Leash Dog Park, over four acres on 12th Street and 16th Avenue, is run and maintained by Dogs For Life (DFL), a nonprofit organization "devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs." The park has separate large and small dog areas, with their own benches and wicker chairs and numerous water stations for both species. It even has a Memorial Garden, with a sign that reads, "In memory of our beloved pets who have gone over the rainbow bridge." A statue of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals, graces this area.

Jacque MacWilliam has been bringing her beagle to the park for more than eight years, since Molly was just a puppy. She doesn't mind paying the "reasonable" fee for dog-park usage. After all, "grass has to get mowed and trees have to get trimmed," she points out. In addition to the off-leash security provided by a fence, a strict screening process also ensures safety. Dogs



This pug is more than just a pretty face. Pia Pia is a well-trained service dog whose devotion transformed the life of an Iraq war veteran suffering from hearing loss and PTSD.



Many dogs and their member-owners regularly visit the Off-Leash Dog Park run by Dogs For Life (DFL) on 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. While dogs romp, drink water from metal dishes by the fountain, or curl up for a quick nap, owners can relax on shaded benches and in wicker chairs. A separate section of the park is reserved for training. Here, Kelly receives a treat as positive reinforcement for a job well done.

must be inoculated and neutered, for instance, and evaluated for temperament around other dogs and people. New members must attend a Canine Behavior Workshop, "where dog behavior, body postures, communication and canine park structures

are explained," according to the membership brochure. There may be other dog parks in the county, but Jacquie wouldn't even bother checking them out. For her, the location is perfect, the park is beautiful, and the other dog owners are friendly. "This

is where I want to be," she says.

It might seem that owning and operating a dawn-to-dusk dog park is a sufficient commitment for a nonprofit organization's mission of improving "the quality of life for people and dogs," but not when the

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founder and executive director is Shelly Ferger. And not when Dogs For Life actually runs this dog park to help fund other significant programs - Canine Companions for Comfort, for one.

Volunteer owner-dog teams visit many institutions so that patients and residents can enjoy the benefits of animal companionship. The program provides this unconditional pet-therapy through weekly visits to hundreds of people in area nursing homes, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers and other nonprofit organizations.

Dogs must go through rigorous training and extensive certification, along with their volunteer owners. Of course, each dog must be assessed for temperament, as conditions in a nursing home, say, can be very stressful for an animal. Will a dog remain gentle with so many strangers showing physical affection? How will the dog react if someone accidentally steps on its tail? Obviously, a canine won't be much comfort if it growls or bites an ankle.

Even when a dog has a great temperament, conditions can still cause stress, what with wheelchairs, walkers, clattering stainless steel, raised voices and bustling staff. According to Shelly, "One of the biggest things is teaching the owners how to recognize stress in their dogs." In addition, volunteers are taught various methods to help people engage with their canine visitors. "It's a wonderful thing the volunteers do," Shelly says, "bringing comfort to people with their dogs. It's truly a labor of love."

Dogs For Life also trains "assistance dogs" as part of its mission, an umbrella category that includes assistance for different types of



Shelly Ferger is the founder and executive director of Dogs For Life. In addition to running the dog park and training assistance dogs, DFL has an agreement with many local nonprofit facilities to provide visits from Canine Companions for Comfort teams. There is no charge for these weekly visits. With the help of dedicated volunteers, staff, directors and donors, DFL raised \$350,000 to build a much-needed Assistance Dog Training Center to further aid the community and Florida's combat veterans. Ground-breaking took place last month, and tax-deductible contributions are still needed, according to Shelly, to support DFL's many programs and furnish the new center.

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disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is very clear that a "service dog" is never just a pet – no matter how much the owner might love the animal or feel physically or emotionally better for having it. "By law, a person has to have a diagnosed disability," says Shelly. The dog must be "task-trained" to mitigate the effects of the specific disability and to enjoy public-access rights for the animal. Dogs For Life never charges for training a service dog. The nonprofit organization relies on tax-deductible donations.

Shelly also helps many individuals understand their rights under ADA guidelines – especially those who might otherwise fall through society's cracks – and often guides them through the legal process of attaining these rights. If the phone rings at DFL, Shelly answers. If someone asks for information or help, she gives it, whether the caller is a client or not.

Dogs For Life does not train guide dogs for the blind or visually impaired. However, assistance dogs can be trained for a surprising number of tasks to help with many other disabilities, physically apparent or not. Mobility assistance might include tapping 911 on a special K-9 phone, opening and closing doors or helping brace a human partner who falls down. A service dog might be trained to circle and create a barrier around the human partner when a crowd is causing a panic attack. A dog can even wake the human partner from a bad nightmare. Hearing dogs are trained to help the deaf or hearing impaired by alerting for smoke alarms, visitors at the door, ringing telephones, even intruders; once trained for specific sounds, hearing dogs sometimes alert for other sounds they were never trained to notice, such as a dripping faucet under a sink.

The extensive training takes time and commitment, for the dog-human team as well as for DFL. Two trainers go into the home once a week and show the owner what to do; the owner must then spend at least 15 minutes a day or longer teaching the dog each task. The trainers return each week for more guided instruction, with regular assessments determining the team's progress. The training also includes visits to public places, including restaurants, grocery stores and doctors' offices. Depending on the type and number of disabilities, task-training could take eight months to a year, and DFL has even worked with a team for up to two years.

Federal guidelines permit individuals to task-train their own animals for public-access rights, with no certification required. Unfortunately, this sometimes leads to a dog's poor behavior in public. Shelly believes a dog's obedience and manners should be "impeccable" in public



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Some service dogs are trained to push a large button with their paws on a specially designed phone that dials 911. Pia Pia has even dialed for help without being told when she believed her owner needed emergency assistance.

places, and DFL's training and certification strive for nothing less. Among its other affiliations, Dogs For Life is one of only three organizations in Florida that is accredited by Assistance Dogs International.

Having a well-trained assistance dog can be life-altering, as Iraq war veteran Jim Taylor discovered. Jim suffered from severe hearing loss when he retired from the U.S. Army after 20 years, but he thought this was his only military-related condition. He believes many soldiers who

serve for any number of years suffer hearing loss. "Even during training," he says, "they're around guns going off. You're always practicing for war."

It wasn't the hearing loss that almost made him a recluse, however. It was the panic attacks that began without warning two years after he left the military. He had the first attack in a crowd at Disney World while he and his wife, Dawn, were waiting in line for a ride. The attacks soon became so frequent and intense he was afraid to leave the house. Dawn says his condition, eventually diagnosed as Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder (PTSD), became so severe "he couldn't be around people anymore. He couldn't even handle large family gatherings."

Dawn and Jim decided to adopt a dog from Halo Animal Rescue in Sebastian. The dog – Pia Pia (pronounced Pay Pay) – was intended to be only a "comfort dog," not a service dog, a sweet-tempered pet that might make Jim feel a little better, and perhaps help him leave the house to walk her around the neighborhood. They found an obedience trainer for the dog, also a veteran, who knew about yet another significant DFL

one individual – Jim – rather than a whole family or audience. Although the dog did pass a temperament test, Shelly still had strong reservations. She agreed to give Pia Pia a try but insisted Jim would have to spend a lot of time working with the dog on his own. Jim was willing to do whatever it took. As it turned out, so was Pia Pia.

The pug has mastered multiple tasks to help Jim overcome his hearing disability and PTSD symptoms, in public and at home. And the moment Jim takes out the dog's little blue vest to leave the house, Pia Pia is all work and no play. Jim can usually go into busy stores now, knowing Pia Pia will protect him and help him leave if he has an attack. He still feels like he's "battling the war, every single night." But now his pug brings him safely home. "She just gently comes over, pats me on the face, and calmly wakes me up," he says. She's trained to alert him to a smoke alarm or doorbell. If the alarm clock goes off, the dog licks Jim's face until he wakes up. Jim laughs recalling how he once fell and, too weak to get up, yelled for Pia Pia to get help. He meant for the dog to get Dawn, who was in the house at the time. But Pia Pia raced to the emergency phone and tapped 911 instead. The pug wasn't taking any chances. This unlikely bundle of devotion gave Jim back his life and the Taylors their home life. "She's one in a million," he says.

With so many important programs and other outreach endeavors, DFL might reasonably accept that it can do no more to achieve its mission. But Shelly Ferger has a dream – one she won't give up until it's realized. Dogs For Life is raising funds to complete its new Assistance Dog



Patricia Scott attended the Christmas luncheon with her hearing dog, Holly, who appears to be watching and listening attentively to provide immediate assistance if required.

Training Center on the Off-Leash Dog Park campus. The new facility will offer numerous benefits to local residents: a doggie day-care, year-round obedience training classes, a canine assessment center, restroom facilities for park members, additional options for park membership, more space for training assistance dogs and a hurricane shelter

for assistance-dog owners and their dogs.

But the facility will serve another purpose, the one closest to Shelly's heart: It will make it possible to help more disabled war veterans. According to one veteran fact sheet, "Florida is home to the highest number of amputees from the Iraq war and has the third largest overall veteran

program: Service Dogs for Veterans. Although the Veterans Administration does not yet recognize the benefits of a service dog for PTSD, Jim's severe hearing disability certainly qualified him for a hearing dog. The trainer introduced the Taylors to Shelly Ferger.

Clients generally bring their own dogs to DFL for assistance training, but certain breeds can have the wrong temperament for task-work. Take a pug, like Pia Pia, for instance. The Taylors still laugh about Shelly's shocked reaction to first meeting their dog. "This is a pug!" Yes, so, what's the problem? Well, the problem was the typical pug-personality: always the clown, living for getting and giving love, all play and no work. Shelly didn't know if a pug could ever learn tasks, especially tasks that focused on only



Dawn and Jim Taylor are deeply grateful that Pia Pia joined their family. When the pug isn't wearing her service vest and helping Jim cope with his disabilities, she can browse a closet filled with stylish doggie-outfits to show off her good looks.

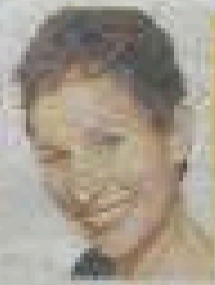


DFL staff and assistance dog teams enjoy a Christmas luncheon in Elizabeth's Garden Café, at McKee Botanical Garden, while waitress Joyce Sullivan takes several orders. Among those in attendance (left to right) were Fred Jones and his assistance dog, Sissy Girl; Jay Harris, a war veteran and staff dog trainer, and Kati Schumann, a DFL director who hosted the luncheon.

population." A 2012 statistic states: "Local Veteran Groups estimate over 80,000 veterans [from Iraq and Afghanistan wars] will retire to the state of Florida in the next two years." Thousands will return with physical and emotional disabilities, and a task-trained dog could give many of them self-reliance and a more fulfilling life.

Right now Dogs For Life must train dogs in an owner's home, which means only local veterans can take advantage of this opportunity. With the new center, however, DFL will finally have the room to pre-train assistance dogs for wounded veterans, no matter where they live. When disabled veterans reach out for help, says Shelly, "We can tell them, 'Come to Vero Beach. We'll have a dog for you.'" 🐾

■ **Dogs for Life** will hold its 4th Have a Heart & Help build a Bridge bridge tournament and lunch on Tuesday, February 18th at the Vero Beach Country Club. There will be prizes, a 50/50 drawing and auction items to raise funds for training service dogs. The price is \$75. Visit DogsForLifeVB.org for a reply card (RSVP by February 10) or call (772) 567-8969.



BRIGHT LIGHTS & RED CARPETS

By Tonka Ortega-Cowan

BUILD A BRIDGE

Tigger the hearing dog tells Bright Lights that he is sponsoring the 4th Dogs For Life's "Build a Bridge" Bridge Tournament on Feb. 18 at Vero Beach Country Club. Register at 11 a.m., then enjoy lunch and Duplicate and Parry Bridge tournaments. Orchids from The Fresh Market are this year's prizes, and guests will receive gifts from Match at the Pointe. Exciting silent auction items include a Save the Calypso sanctuary tour, a unique hand-painted chair by Vero Beach artist Teri Barnett and more. The entry fee is \$75 per person. For information, call (772) 567-8969.

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • Monday, February 3, 2014 • 5A



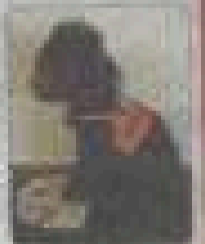
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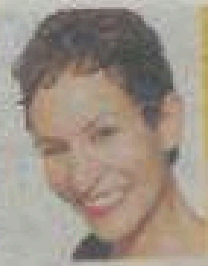
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COMMUNITY EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

- The Hibiscus Children's Center *3rd Annual Passport to Wine and Dine* will be held on Monday, February 10th at the Vero Beach Yacht Club from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Sample culinary delights from Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Argentina, Australia and the United States with expertly paired wines from each region having your eye of passport stamped in each country you visit. For tickets (\$75) can be purchased online at HibiscusChildrensCenter.org.
- The Italian American Civic Association, 1600 25th Street in Vero Beach is holding a Luncheon and Fashion Show with a silent auction featuring models wearing fashions by Stem Mart on Saturday, February 8th beginning at 11:30 a.m. For tickets (\$20) call IACA 778-1522 by February 5th.
- Dogs for Life will hold its 4th *Have a Heart & Help build a Bridge* bridge tournament and lunch on Tuesday, February 18th at the Vero Beach Country Club. There will be prizes, a 50/50 drawing and auction items to raise funds for training service dogs. The price is \$75. Visit DogsForLifeVB.org for a reply card (RSVP by February 10) or call (772) 567-8969.
- The Vero Beach Elks Club, 1350 26th Street, presents an *Evening with Derek Warfield and The Young Wife Thross* on Saturday, February 8th to benefit the 2014 Indian River County St. Patrick's Day Parade. Enjoy cocktails at 5 p.m. with a light menu until 6:45. The show starts at 7 p.m. Purchase advance tickets (\$20) by calling 772-562-8450. Tickets will not be sold at the door.





BRIGHT LIGHTS & RED CARPETS

By Tania Ortega-Cowan

A SOLID FOUNDATION

Bill Bryant & Associates gave Dogs for Life (DFL) an early valentine! Christopher Bryant, general contractor, was on hand Feb. 13 as the foundation for DFL's new Training Center was poured. I drive on 12th Street often and have enjoyed watching the progress. Seems like we were just there breaking ground on Jan. 11, when I was honored with the **DFL Media Award** on behalf of Luminaries! Visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.





JANUARY

Newsletters

Volume 20, Issue 6

ADI NORTH AMERICA



NEWSLETTER

Setting Standards for the Assistance Dog Industry Since 1987

Mission Statement for Assistance Dogs International (ADI):

- Promote standards of excellence in all areas of Assistance Dog Programs
- Facilitate communication and learning among organizations
- Educate the public to the benefits of these programs



More Than a Friend

Increasingly, dogs are being used as valued therapeutic companions for autistic children. By CJ Pantison

Kids and dogs. Everyone agrees they go together, but for children with autism, dogs can be far more than best friends. They can be therapists, comforters,

social stabilizers, and conversation starters. They can help wandering children stay home, help distracted children stay focused, improve a child's communication and social skills, and help everyone in the family relax.

Wisconsin residents, Rachel and Terry, knew their daughter, Prudence, was different. Two years ago, at age four, she was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Prudence didn't interact with other children, had a short attention span, struggled to express herself, was easily distracted by sounds, tastes, smells, and movement, often felt anxious, and found comfort in repetitive behaviors and language. "The autism diagnosis scared us but it made sense," says Rachel. "We searched for anything that could help her."

Rachel discovered Blessings Unleashed, a nonprofit organization that pairs autism service dogs (also called autism assistance dogs) with children. In early 2011, a yellow Labrador Retriever named Kaiya officially became Prudence's service dog. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, service dogs have been trained to do work or perform tasks that benefit individuals with disabilities and must be allowed access to businesses and organizations that serve the public. As soon as the two met, Prudence lay next to Kaiya and didn't want to leave her side. At the family's initial orientation at Blessings Unleashed, Prudence said without prompting, "Kaiya makes me feel better."

Now, six months later, Rachel and Terry are amazed at how in tune Kaiya is to Prudence's needs. "If Prudence cries or screams," says Rachel, "Kaiya is immediately at her side to provide comfort. Kaiya sleeps on Prudence's bed every night and we often wake to hear Prudence talking to Kaiya, which is wonderful for her speech development and pragmatic language skills. One day we went to a party

LETTER FROM A VETERAN

Dogs For Life, Inc., Paw Prints Newsletter

To the outsider, the Veteran looks like any normal person. Sometimes they are stand offish but as they get to know you, their persona changes. Some of them may tend to react to unexpected loud sounds, walk close to buildings, and sit in the back of the restaurant with the wall to their back, always aware of their surroundings constantly scanning the surroundings. What the combat Veteran doesn't share about is the hell they may live in. They tend to be homebodies because they have made their homes secure, commonly referred to as a bunker. They usually have an escape room that is their safe haven. Nightmares and flashbacks are the norm, they let us know we are alive today.

When the Veteran goes out into the public, they are hyper vigilant and on edge. They want to know their back is covered and long for life without fear of unknown. I have the symptoms mentioned and have been in PTSD therapy for over 20yrs. It has helped me to be better equipped to cope with life on life's terms. It is easier to face life today but I am a work in progress. I still have the flashbacks, nightmares, survivor guilt, fear of the unknown and other medical problems, some related to the war or because I am just getting old.

Muffie, came into my life 13 years ago when I got married for the second time. At first all I saw was a fur ball which I knew would be maintenance and extra cost. Needless to say she trained me and secured her spot on our bed. One night while I was having a nightmare, I remember a wet nose and something licking me which woke me from my firefight I was in the midst of. At first I was on guard for this intrusion into my space but quickly felt the comfort that only a pet can give. She continues to awake me either by touch or barking, she has found it is best not to get near me when I am thrashing about in my imaginary battle. She is a God send. She also alerts me when someone is in yard or at the door. She gets me out of my isolation so I can walk her while she gives love offerings to the neighbors.

DFL Veteran's Program presents an opportunity for Veterans to get a Service Dog who can assist them with balance, picking things up they can't reach, be an extra ear, tap a specially designed phone to call 911 when an emergency arises, give comfort and support only a pet can give and make the Veteran aware of medical symptoms that not obvious. This is one reward a Veteran will be appreciative of. I know for me, Muffie has given me a better appreciation of life around me.

I am proud to be a member of DFL Board of Directors. With your support, DFL can expand the outreach to Veterans and seek other ways dogs can be of assistance to our Disabled Warriors.

Ben L. Humphries, SSGT, US Army, Ret.

President, Vietnam Veterans America, Chapter 1038
Indian River County



To learn more about ADI Accreditation visit the Members Only section to review the Accreditation documents: www.assistancedogsinternational.org

Please send all inquiries about Accreditation to
info@assistancedogsinternational.org

MEMBER NEWS

Dogs For Life, Inc. Breaks Ground on Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center

Dogs For Life, Inc. (DFL), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training Assistance Dogs, kicked off its new year by hosting a Ground Breaking Ceremony on Saturday, January 11, 2014 at its off-leash dog park located at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Construction of the Dogs For Life Training Center will begin this month and will be used primarily for the pre-training of hearing and service dogs for disabled individuals in our community and veterans struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorders. Additionally, the Center will allow DFL to offer more basic obedience and behavior classes and daily and short-term use of the dog park.

Attending were Members of the DFL Board of Directors and several DFL certified assistance dog teams. Speakers included Penny Chandler, President, Chamber of Commerce of Vero Beach and Indian River County; Colonel, USAF (ret.) Martin J. Zickert, President of the Veterans Council of Indian River County; Christopher Taylor, Pastor of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church; Anthony Donadio, Donadio and Associates Architect; Chris Bryant of Bill Bryant & Associates Inc.; Shelly Ferger, Dogs For Life, Inc. Founder, President & CEO; James Taylor, US Army (Ret.), with his service dog Pia Pia, and Beth Sexton-Stryker, a DFL Board Member, with her hearing dog, Tigger. James Taylor and Beth Sexton-Stryker provided remarks about their experiences with Dogs For Life and how their specially trained dogs have changed their lives.
micheleholl@hotmail.com



Press Release

Dogs For Life, Inc.

Contact: Shelly Ferger, Founder/President & CEO

Date: January 17, 2014

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It was a joyous event attended by many donors, friends, and dog park members. Immediately following the ground breaking ceremony was the Annual DFL Donor and Volunteer Appreciation Event.

Photo Caption: Left to Right Guest Speaker and Chamber of Commerce President, Penny Chandler; DFL Board Member and philanthropist, Kathi G. Schumann; Founder and CEO; Shelly Ferger; Project Manager and Architect, Anthony Donadio; and Contractor, Chris Bryant of Bill Bryant & Associates, Inc.

Photo by Kailey Faith

Dog park versus City Marina

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

a 20-year deal to protect the group's investment.

"I've been a dog lover my whole life and I cannot tell you what this means to me and our other seniors," Welles said.

Rob Slezak, who oversees the city's parks and recreation department, thinks a compromise could be reached. He acknowledged that the long-standing plans to expand the city's marina would mean more money for the city's operating budget. But those plans have gathered dust instead of speed.

Ray Neville, who grew up in Vero Beach, is one of those pleading for not only a water-related recreational use of the property, but also for a compromise.

Neville, who does not own a dog, said the space is not only too valuable to give away, but much larger than what dog enthusiasts need. He believes the city and all vested parties can find a spot of nearby land that'll make everyone happy.

"This is the only piece of property left that can be used at some time for

aquatic river purposes," said Neville. "To put a park in that place is essentially pretending the river isn't there. And once it's done, it's done and I can assure you it'll never get undone.

"The notion that Vero Beach is not dog-friendly is just silly in my opinion," said Neville.

Neville adds that he does not want the city to compete with another dog park, Dogs For Life, Inc., which charges an annual fee of \$365 to utilize its park just outside city limits.

Shelly Ferger, founder and president of Dogs For Life, which trains service dogs for people with physical challenges, said she has no objection another dog park within city limits.

Ferger said the main reason people tell her they don't like the island's present informal park is because it's not fenced in. "Not having a fence," she said, "is irresponsible."

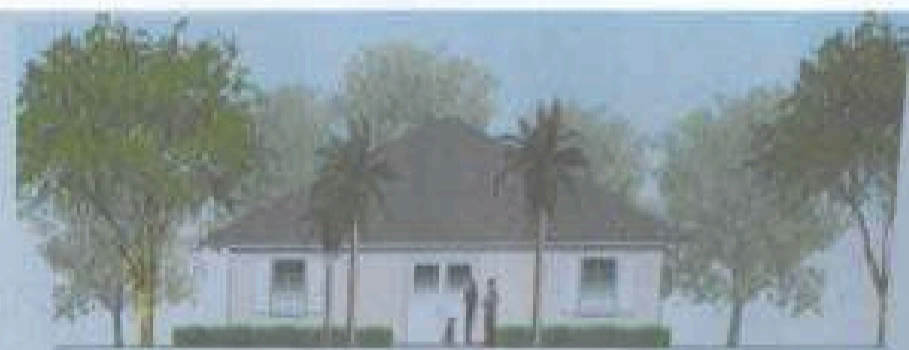
Dell Ross, who is over 80 years old and walks her dog, Riser, to the park each day, said she'd be happy with a smaller official dog park on the island.

"If they take this away from us, my life will not be the same," she said. "My dog's life will not be the same. We want it nearby because there are so many elderly adults that use it. We pay so much money in taxes and utilities that we should be entitled to something." ■



**Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center
Ground Breaking Ceremony
January 11, 2014**

Opening Remarks & Introductions	Shelly Ferger DFL Founder & President
Guest Speaker	Penny Chandler President, Chamber of Commerce Vero Beach & Indian River County
Pledge of Allegiance	Colonel, USAF (Ret.) Martin J. Zickert President, Veterans Council of I.R. Co.
Benediction	Pastor Christopher Taylor Antioch Primitive Baptist Church
Ground Breaking Ceremony	Shelly Ferger Penny Chandler Kathi G. Schumann, DFL Director Anthony Donadio, Donadio & Associates Bill Bryant, Bill Bryant & Associates, Inc.
Comments of Ceremony Participants	Anthony Donadio Bill Bryant Colonel Martin Zickert
Comments from DFL Service and Hearing Dog Recipients	James Taylor, US Army (Ret.) Beth Sexton-Stryker, DFL Director
Gift Distribution	Linda Liss, DFL Director
Dogs For Life, Inc. Annual Volunteer & Donor Awards Ceremony	Immediately Following DFL Memorial Pavilion <i>All Welcome To Attend!</i>



Proposed Training Facility
for
DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.



Dogs For Life breaks ground on \$350,000 training facility Reply

by Mark Schumann • Vero Beach



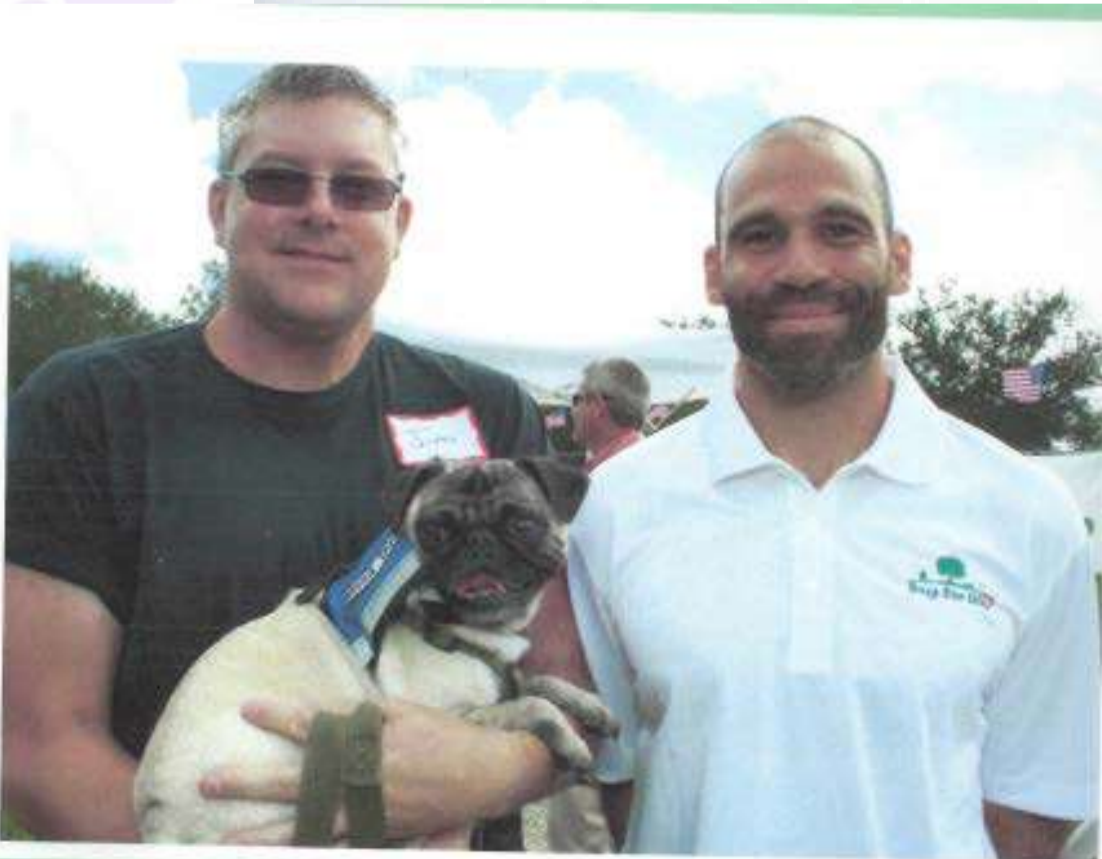
<http://indianrivertoday.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/jan-16-dogs-for-life-1b.jpg>

<http://indianrivertoday.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/jan-16-dogs-for-life-2b.jpg>

<http://indianrivertoday.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/dogs-for-life-logo.jpg> Shelly Ferger (pictured above), CEO and founder of Dogs For Life, Inc., spoke at the January 11 groundbreaking for a new Assistance Dog Training & Administrative Center to be built next to the organization's off-leash dog park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue. The new facility will be used to train service, pet therapy and hearing assistance dogs for armed forces veterans and local residents.

Funds for the \$350,000 center were raised entirely from private donors, including a \$100,000 anonymous challenge grant that helped stimulate sufficient donations to move forward with the Center. Bill Bryant & Associates is contractor for the project and architect Tony Donadio, a long-time supporter of the organization, designed it and will also act as project manager.

Construction is expected to begin within the next 30 days. The organization's off-leash park is a fenced-in, member and user-supported facility run for years by Ferger. For more information about Dogs For Life, visit the website, www.dogsforlifevb.org (<http://www.dogsforlifevb.org>) or call Ferger at 772-567-8969.





I was delighted when Shelly Ferger asked me to be here today to speak at the ground breaking for this new Dogs For Life facility. I was introduced to Shelly when I moved to Vero Beach in 1995 with Curry - my Golden Retriever. Curry was a young, untrained and spirited 1-year old that I had recently adopted. With Shelly's professional guidance, I was able to train my pup who went on to live a very happy life with me and my husband Cliff Norris.

Through the years I have kept up to date and somewhat involved in Shelly's programs and was excited when Dogs For Life was started twelve years ago. How can anyone not enjoy a success story like rescuing dogs and training them to assist veterans and other individuals? That part of your program has and will continue to be a huge success.

All the Dogs For Life programs and services have great outcomes, including this dog park. The new training and education center will be another feather in the cap of your Dogs For Life Organization.

Your new facility will provide Dogs For Life a place for classes and a facility for your members. It will provide your staff a great space from which they can manage the park and all the great programs you have to offer. And, give you the space for a doggie day care and shelter for local service dog owners not able to evacuate in the event of a hurricane.

My staff at the Chamber and I know how important adequate working space can be and the difference it can make in how you feel about going to work each day.

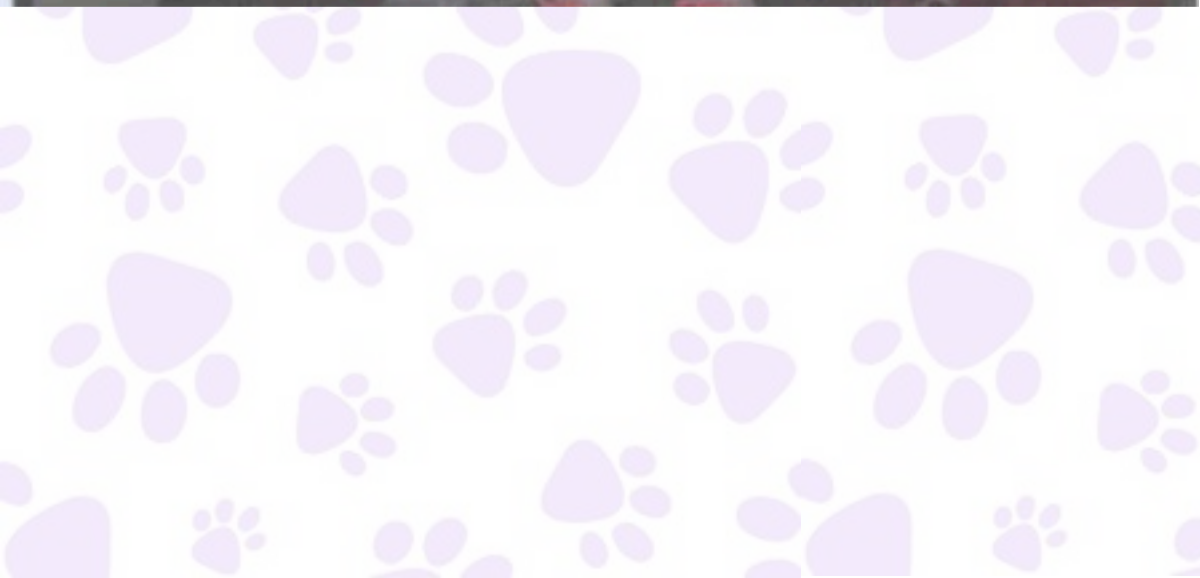
You have a great plan and have selected a great builder. From my own experience and that of our own Chamber volunteers and members, I assure you the coming months will be exciting as you watch your dream of this facility becoming a reality.

Congratulations to every volunteer, each person on your Board and to Shelly Ferger on this wonderful accomplishment.



*Penny Chandler
Chamber of Commerce*







Dear Shelly Ferger,

Your email, named Dog Park is reopened!, was sent on 01/17/2014 around 4:12 PM EST.

Below is a copy of the HTML version your contacts received. Don't forget, you can easily monitor the effectiveness of your email with real-time metrics and stats. Log in to your Constant Contact account and visit the **Reports** area under the Emails tab.

Subject: Dog Park Open - Read for Important News!



January 2014

Dogs For Life Off-Leash Dog Park is Open - Fence Relocation and Important News!



New Park Outline:

- The main (paved) parking lot is closed until construction is completed.
- The new (gravel driveway to the north) will be the temporary driveway for members. PLEASE be careful. Only one vehicle will fit through the driveway at a time. This gate is to be kept open at all times.
- Do not attempt to park beyond the chain that separates the gravel driveway from

the paved parking lot. The paved parking lot is for construction use ONLY.

- The new SMALL DOG entryway is just south of the shed. This entryway is for small dogs ONLY.
- The LARGE DOG entryway is the same as before.
- THERE IS A DOG WALKWAY (ON LEASH ONLY) that runs along the whole east side of the park. This walkway allows for access from the Training Area to the Memorial Pavilion. (Do not attempt to use the area behind the large dog area if there has been a recent rain, as this area does hold water and there is a man-made ditch in that area, which will be addressed in the future.)
- The Memorial Pavilion is a new off-leash area and is to be used the same as the Training Area (for those who agree with large dogs and/or small dogs). The flowers under the Cypress Trees will be removed next week. So if your dog has medium or long hair, we suggest not using this area until these plants are removed to prevent your dog's hair from getting tangled with burs.
- The Training Area is available for use, but you must go through the main entryway and then through the eastern gate(s) to access this area.
- PLEASE do not allow your dogs off-leash in the eastern walkway.

Thank you for your patience during this week while the park was closed. We are looking forward to having construction completed and the driveway becoming a one way drive from the south to the north. Please be careful entering and exiting and while parking. I expect this area to be busy, so let's all look out for each other and our dogs.

Reminder:

Dogs For Life will have a booth at the Humane Society of Vero Beach's Bark in the Park tomorrow, Saturday, January 18th from 10am - 2pm. Please come visit Riverside Park and support Dogs For Life and your favorite dog park. We will see you there!



VERO BEACH

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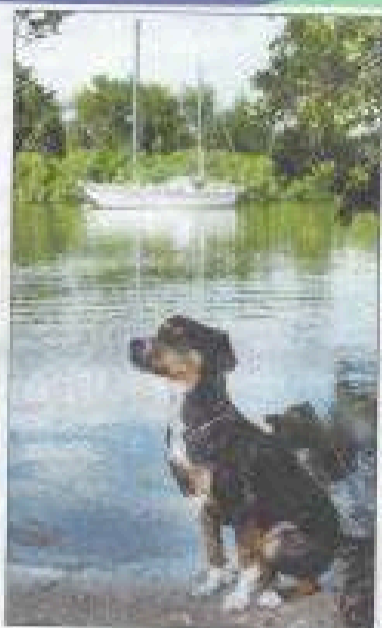
Dogs battle boaters over riverfront park

BY EILEEN KELLEY
Staff Writer

For about 10 years, people have been letting their dogs run free on a riverfront tract of land that had been earmarked for a possible future expansion of the Vero Beach City Marina.

Now, with marina expansion plans still stalled, and before anything else happens to the land, a group of dog lovers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



January 9, 2014 Volume 7, Issue 2

Dog park versus City Marina

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

has formally asked the city to lease it to them for 20 years at \$1 a year for a dedicated dog park.

Their bid has raised growls from boating interests who don't want to let the site, with 1,200 feet of frontage on the lagoon, "go to the dogs" permanently.

The tiff has pitched dog lovers and boaters against each other in a land use battle that has spilled over from the chambers of city hall into the press and the airwaves.

The topic has even invaded the cocktail party circuit, with erstwhile friends now in opposite camps on the issue glaring at each other over drinks and canapes.

The land in dispute, surrounding the Bob Summers ballfield just north of the Barber Bridge, doesn't have structures for dogs to leap over or drink from, or even benches for people to sit. It's just a place to unleash the dogs, ranging from well-coiffed poodles to bedraggled mutts, and let them run.

It's one of two informal dog exercise areas in the city. The other, a hard-scrabble piece of land on the mainland in western Vero by the Elks Club, is sparsely used, but several hundred people a week use the one on the island next to the marina.

Dog lovers have mounted a well-organized and vocal campaign on behalf turning the site into an enhanced, fenced-in version of what they now unofficially have.

But boat lovers want to see the 6.85 acres of land, estimated to be worth between \$1 to \$2 million, put to some marine use: perhaps an expanded marina, or a launching area for kayaks and crewing vessels.

recently, the boating crowd has mounted their own counter-offensive. "I'm afraid (city council members) do not understand the ramifications to our city if they vote in favor of letting this property 'go to the dogs,'" wrote St. Christopher Lane boating enthusiast Bill Walker in a letter sent to the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce as well as to Vero Beach 32963.

On top of that, as some arch-tax-hawks contend, the city may need to realize revenue from the land once it loses the millions currently contributed to the general fund by Vero Electric.

"I don't know if the marina needs expanding or not, but to have that land only used for dogs, well, that is not something I am in favor of. I would like to see the dog park moved across from the cemetery on Old Dixie," said

Mark Mucher, a member of the Indian River County Taxpayers Association.

Dog lovers say officially securing the park near the ballfields is about protecting green space. Their vision of a dog park would be for all to enjoy, not just animals.

"We're concerned they're going to try and develop that. Before we know it, someone is going to come in and we're going to lose out on that green space. This is about preserving green space for future generations and there's very little time left," said 75-year-old Jim Welles, a South Beach resident who's

leading the charge to have the city lease the park to his recently created group for the nominal \$1 fee.

His group of 2,000 people who signed a petition promises to create and maintain a true fenced-in dog park. With about \$25,000 in donations, the group wants to erect a fence on three sides of the unofficial dog park; the lagoon would be on the fourth side.

The park would be created in phases with the group promising to pay for routine maintenance such as mowing the grass. Welles is asking for

14
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Indian River County

Dogs For Life

Dogs For Life (DFL), Inc., a non-profit dedicated to improving quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, met an anonymous \$100,000 Challenge Grant to build an Assistance Dog Training and Administrative Center on its Off-Leash Dog Park at 12 St. and 16 Ave. Founder Shelly Ferger says, "Thanks to dog park members and DFL supporters who worked diligently to raise the remaining \$120,000 this past spring, and prior donations from supporters, the estimated \$350,000 goal to build the Center has been achieved! DFL chose Bill Bryant & Associates as its contractor. Supporter Tony Donadio, who designed the Training and Administrative Center, will act as project manager." The ground-breaking ceremony is at 11 a.m. on Jan. 11. Call (772) 567-8969 or visit www.dogsforlifevb.org.

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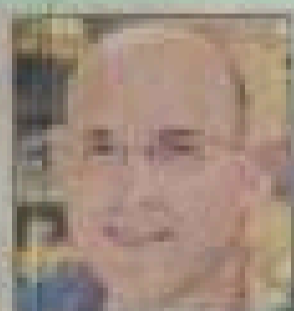


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We're Here For Your Pets In Times of Sickness & Good Health!

Happy New Year!

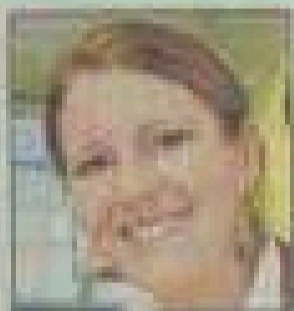


The Florida Veterinary League Team of Veterinary Professionals provide a Full Service Compassionate and Affordable Animal Hospital that offers Medical, Surgical, Orthopedic, Dental, Integrative, Wellness & Emergency Veterinary Care.



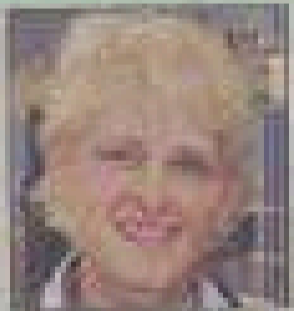
Darrell Horn, DVM
Full Practitioner

Dr. Darrell Horn is a board certified veterinarian with over 20 years of experience. He is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA). He has a passion for providing the best care for his patients and is always available to answer any questions you may have. He is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA). He has a passion for providing the best care for his patients and is always available to answer any questions you may have.



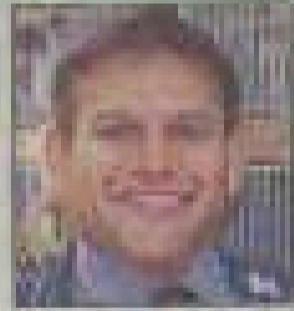
Renee Mansfield, DVM
Full Practitioner

Dr. Renee Mansfield is a board certified veterinarian with over 15 years of experience. She is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA). She has a passion for providing the best care for her patients and is always available to answer any questions you may have. She is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA). She has a passion for providing the best care for her patients and is always available to answer any questions you may have.



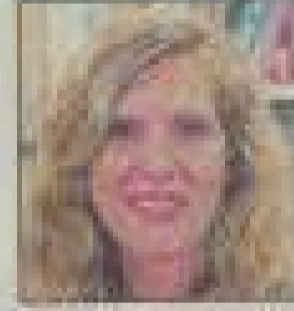
Cindy Eschby, DVM
Full Practitioner

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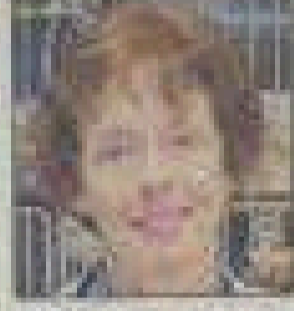
Darrell Nazareth, BVSc
Full Practitioner

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S. Blain Kennedy, DVM
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Kim Wilson, DVM
Full Practitioner

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PET PHARMACY CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN HOUSE

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Good For You

Donadio is architect for new dog facility

Anthony "Tony" Donadio, one of 10 star dancers in this season's sixth annual Dancing with Vero's Stars benefiting the Indian River County Healthy Start Coalition and Riverside Theatre, is playing an integral part for the new dog training facility on the corner of 12th Street and 14th Avenue.

Donadio is going to be the architect and volunteer construction supervisor for facility.

Dogs for Life is ready to break ground on a facility to be ready this spring that will enable the group to train many more hearing and service dogs for local residents, as well as pre-train service dogs for the influx of veterans expected to retire to Florida during the next two years.

Donadio serves as the owner's representative for the 2,400-square-foot indoor facility, where he has donated the architectural services for this community project.

For more information on the training facility contact Shelly Ferper at 772-567-8001.

Indian River County



3 - Hearing dog team shows Shelly Ferper, founder of Dogs For Life, where to sign the construction contract for DFLC's new Service Dog Training & Administration Center, as board member Eileen Benglak looks on.



PEOPLE

'Tigger, a 5-pound toy poodle, gave me back my life'

BY PIETER VANBENNEKOM
Staff Writer

Seeing-eye dogs for blind people have become a common sight in public places, but service dogs for deaf people? What can they do? Even if they bark to warn of impending dangers, how would their owners hear it?

The general public in the U.S. isn't yet used to service dogs for the deaf or people with other ailments, and outside of the U.S., even less so.

When Beth Sexton-Stryker, granddaughter of Vero Beach patriarch Waldo Sexton, tried to board an Iberia flight in Miami for Madrid with her first hearing dog, Bandit, a miniature Dachshund, the station chief first told her, "No dog!" She quoted FAA regulations and showed the dog's certifications, but the airline wouldn't budge.

"Yes, dog!" Sexton insisted, and finally, Iberia gave her two boarding passes, an extra one for the dog. Once in Madrid, Sexton, who's fluent in Spanish, spoke at a seminar to educate the Spanish public about hearing

dogs, but even so, the Prado Museum at first wouldn't let her in with her dog.

"I asked them, would you let a blind person in with a seeing-eye dog?" Sexton said. "When they said yes, then I told them, 'Well, at least I can look at the paintings,'" and they relented.

Sexton, daughter of Waldo's youngest son Randy, became deaf and developed balance problems when stricken with meningitis, randomly, in 1994 while she was running a high-powered marketing agency in Connecticut.

"I grew up across the street from my grandfather's house and across from the dairy in what we called the country then," Sexton recalls, "and when I left for Spain and for the big city in New York, I swore I'd never come back to this Podunk town. But like so many others, I have returned and I'm happy I did. When I got ill, I lost everything: my job, my company, my husband.

"I came home and I stayed in my father's rental house because I had nowhere else to go. Even though I knew I was lucky to be alive – my doctor told me I would have died if I hadn't made

it to the hospital as quickly as I did – I'll never forget how hard it was that first year before I got my first hearing dog. I did not even know what a hearing dog was! A friend told me to contact Shelly Feger (of the Dogs For Life organization) and it changed my life. It was a miracle."

Sexton is on her second service dog now and her present faithful companion, Tigger, is a very smart 6-year-old toy poodle who weighs barely 5.6 pounds, but "size doesn't matter."



Beth Sexton-Stryker and Tigger. PHOTO BY BENJAMIN HAGER

Tigger has been trained to tap her leg when there's a knock at her door, when the telephone rings (she has a keypad phone), or when smoke or burglar alarms go off. He will also gently tap her arm in bed when the alarm clock goes off in the morning.

Depending on people's needs, service dogs could also be trained to warn their owners if the oven timer goes off or when they hear a baby crying, but Sexton didn't need that latter type of training.

"When I got Tigger, Dogs For Life sent two trainers to my house to train," Sexton recalls. "At least two trainers are always necessary, and often a third volunteer is needed. When training for the door knock, one trainer was stationed at my side and a second trainer was next to the door. But then we also needed a third individual to be our door knocker.

"It was challenging to train Tigger and required a real commitment and discipline on my part because I was required to practice every single day and keep a diary, which I had to turn in each week," Sexton recalls. "Before I could even start training Tigger, he had to pass a temperament test and I had to complete a lengthy application. Then, we were required to attend basic and intermediate obedience classes.

"Tigger needed additional training to pass the international access test – no eating off the floor or begging for food," Sexton recalls. "An entire pizza

was put under the table during one test – believe me, I was praying!"

Tigger learned the "stay" command in basic obedience and "crate" to obediently crawl into his carrying case during the intermediate class. All service dogs are required to be "invisible" when in a public place, and that allows Sexton to engage in one of her passions, playing bridge at the Vero Beach Bridge Center where fellow-players don't even notice him during a three-hour duplicate event.

"I learned to play duplicate because of my hearing loss," Sexton recalls. "My mom tried to teach me, but I had too much trouble following the bidding when I couldn't hear what people were saying in a friendly game. But once we took a cruise, and I used the bidding bases – in duplicate you can't say your bids anyway – I was hooked. As soon as I arrived home, I went to the center and started playing in the Friday student game! And I've graduated to the Open game since."

Your Vero Beach Newsweekly™

PEOPLE

working dogs. They understand we need them and they have a job to do. They take pride in the work. When the jacket goes on, I can almost see Tigger's chest puff up; he becomes more alert, and the way he carries himself changes. Service dogs are tuned into our every mood. If I'm having a bad day, my negative energy goes right down the leash to Tigger. If I'm happy, his tail wags throughout the day.

Is it all work and no play?

"Service dogs are dogs!" Sexton explains. "It's healthy to take a break and play, and they do! They like to socialize with other dogs. Tigger's favorite activity is to go to the off-leash dog park on 12th Street. He has many canine friends in the small dog area and gets the exercise I can't give him because of my balance issues. But, even in the dog park, Tigger checks in with me. I watch him run to the far corner with the pack, but now and then his head turns to make sure I'm still OK.

"If there is any miscommunication, it's usually because the human member of the team is not being consistent," Sexton explains. "Once, at my Mom's house she wanted her friend Marilyn to come down. I didn't feel like going up, so I sent Tigger. Ever since that day, whenever Tigger enters the house, he immediately takes it upon himself to look for Marilyn. Once, she wasn't there and Tigger stayed upstairs a long time. Finally, he trotted down with her sock in his mouth! He may not have found her, but he found something!"

Sexton is so grateful to Dogs For Life for having hooked her up with Bandit and now Tigger that she became a volunteer and then a director. "If I can help just one other person not to have to go through what I had to go through, it's worth it," she said.

Tigger hosts his own duplicate bridge tournament Tuesday, Feb. 18, at 11 a.m. at the Vero Beach Country Club to raise funds for Dogs For Life.

The worst thing people can do around a service dog is to approach the owner-dog team from behind and start to pet the dog. It invariably startles the dogs and takes their minds off their job while they investigate.

"The relationship (between dog and owner) is symbiotic," Sexton explains. First and foremost, service dogs are

"After I lost my hearing, I became a recluse and was afraid. My hearing dog gave me the confidence to go out and greet the world. I knew I had to give back and help others receive the same gift I had been given.

"This is a very exciting time," Sexton says. "Until now, we've been an in-home training program. This limits the number of dogs we're able to train. We recently raised funds to build a Service Dog Training & Administrative Center at the dog park. We'll be able to train many more dogs by pre-training them at the center. We'll break ground in just a few weeks."

Among other people whose lives were changed by a service dog is Jim, a veteran who came back from the Middle East wars with a severe case of post-traumatic battle stress. His service dogs pokes his head around corners to tell his master it's safe, creates a circle around him when he's crowded in a supermarket checkout line, and even wakes him from nightmares. ■

In Memoriam

Subject: With Sadness from DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.



DOGS FOR LIFE, INC. DOG PARK MEMBERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS



IN MEMORY of AL KANTNER

It is with a very heavy heart that we share the sad news that Al Kantner, a devoted dog park member, passed away on Friday, January 24th.

Al, a well-known visitor to the small dog area, and Gloria were mom and dad to Sassy and Lucky. Al will be remembered for his love of antique cars and dogs. He rescued many dogs from the Humane Society throughout his lifetime.

A Memorial Service will be held this Saturday, February 1st, at 11 AM at Cox Gifford Seawinds Funeral Home located at 1950 20th Street, Vero Beach.

Dog Park members are invited to return to the Dog Park training area after the Service, where a donor bone will be displayed in Al's honor.

**PRAYERS AND WELL WISHES FOR
CAROL HARTWIG & BAXTER!**



To the DFL Board,

Thank You



My my
Christmas
this year.
the DFL
being
a
Thank you
again,
Debbie



so proud of you

January 2014

congratulations

for sticking through
the "thick & thin" for
DFL

Amiee thank you
for approving all our
Christmas Bonuses & Shells



As many of you may already know Carol Hartwig, small dog park member and her beloved pet-assisted therapy dog, Baxter, have been very ill. If any members would like to forward a card or note to Carol and Baxter please forward them to Dogs For Life at PO Box 650023, Vero Beach FL 32965, and we will be happy to make sure Carol receives them.

Please keep Carol and Baxter in your prayers and thoughts during this difficult time.

DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.
P.O. Box 650023
Vero Beach, Florida 32965
772-567-8969

Annual Meeting



