



**Dogs  
For Life**

*Training Service Dogs  
For Veterans*

**Scrapbook**

**2009-1998**



**DECEMBER**

# Paw Prints



## PAW PRINTS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

### Barking Up the Right Tree

By Sheila Lowenstein, Clouseau and X

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

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

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

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

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



Photo Credit: Carl Miller

### Aerial View of Off-Leash Dog Park

12th St. & 16th Ave.  
Vero Beach



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### From the Founder & Executive Director

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



DFL Executive Director Shelly Ferger and "Sunny"

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

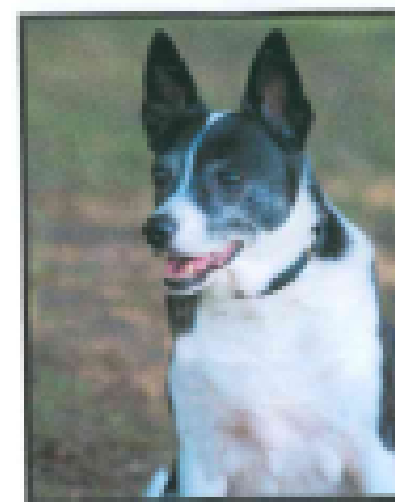
I especially appreciate the DFL Board of Directors for their continued enthusiasm in moving this organization forward with their professionalism and commitment to our long-range planning efforts.

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

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

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

### PAW PRINTS



Sabrina Ferger (1996-2009)

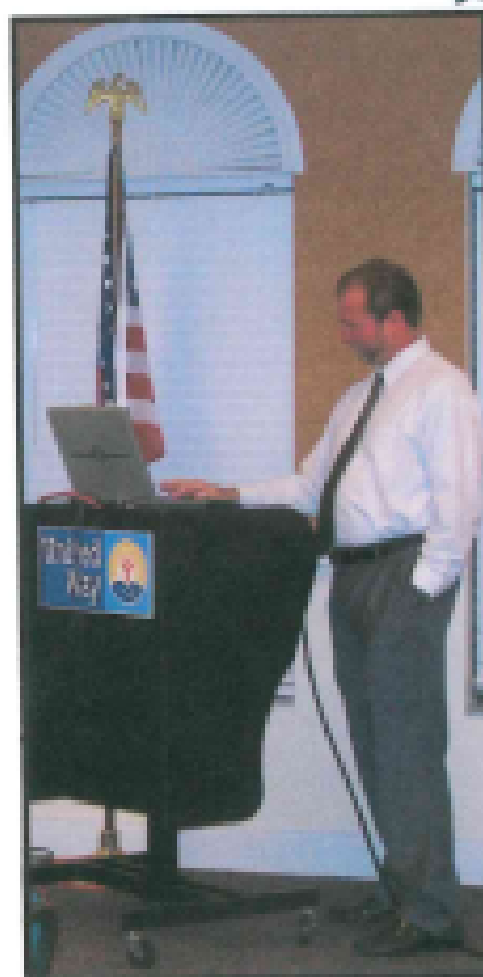
### Dog Park Scholarship "Collarship" Fund & Memorial Garden

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

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

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

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



Smooth Coated Collies are becoming very popular as service dogs.

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



### DFL Trainers Attend Workshop

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

### Classes Back In Session

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



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



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

### DFL 2009 Volunteer Appreciation Award Recipients

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

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



An annual Family Affair with Fido.



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



A darling parade participant with her pooch.

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

By: Linda Liss, Committee Member

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



Volunteer, Mary Liss, visits with Raelyn Hall of Artistic Canine Creations, one of our many vendors.



### Our Biggest Challenge

By: Kelli Beal, Director and Fund Development Chair

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

### Pet Assisted Therapy Preparing to Expand

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



2009 DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Teams



### Year End Holiday Appeal

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

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



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



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

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

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



"Ted" has found a new home for Christmas.

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

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



### Dog Park Pet Memorial Stones Available

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

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

# Mitzi loves to see her friends at the dog park

**BY SHELLY FERGER**  
YourNews contributor

When our golden retriever Taffy passed away, we both decided that we did not want any more dogs. Then came the headlines "Humane Society rescues Springer Spanners and Dachsunds from Noah's Ark. Good homes are needed for more than 100 dogs." We filled out papers to adopt a springer spaniel puppy. Two weeks before Christmas we brought Mitzi home to be our beloved pet.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Come join the party and enjoy the fun and camaraderie.

# 4-H Clubs

## Club Report

### Horsemasters

By: Ahana Suranofsky

Horsemasters enter the Holiday Season in full gallop!!!

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

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

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

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



### Dogmasters

By: Zakary Martinez

The Dog Master's Club participated in the Dogs for Life annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Parade on Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009. We had a booth and sold cold bottled water to more than 89 people. Max Molter, Kelsey Murphy and their parents helped out Miss Violet at the booth. There were a lot of dogs and people in funny and cool costumes and they had prizes at the end which Kelsey got to announce the winners.

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







WILL GREENLEE • Staff

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

# Dog helps save 1-year-old PSL boy

BY WILL GREENLEE  
will.greenlee@scripps.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Reyna Zurita, Hunter's owner**

she ran for help.

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

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

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

Police Sgt. Richard Schichtel praised Zurita

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

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

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

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

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

Pascual said she thought no one would help her.

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

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

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

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SCRIPPS  
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**NOVEMBER**

# Wedding

## WEDDINGS

### Rustay – Matthews

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

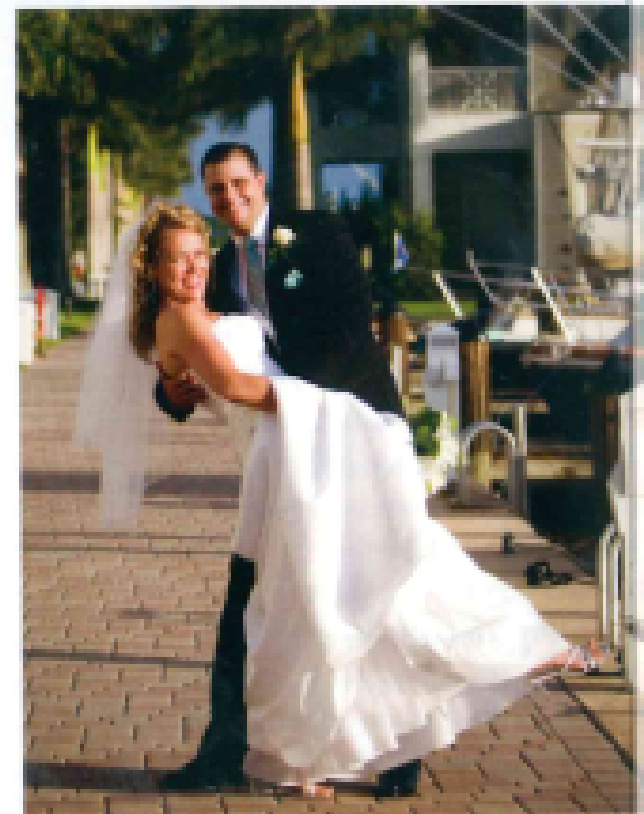
The bride is the daughter of Craig and Sherrol Rustay of Vero Beach. She received a B.A. in Elementary Education from Southeastern University and will be entering the university's Master's degree program for Educational Leadership. She is an elementary teacher at Master's Academy and works at Christi's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

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

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



The bride and groom



Mr. and Mrs. John Daniel Matthews



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



The groom and bride with "Mango"



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



The bridal party



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

# Good Cause

## IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS



BY ANN TAYLOR

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

## ALL IN A GOOD CAUSE



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

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

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

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

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

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

—PHILANTHROPIST FRANK M. HUBBARD



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

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

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



**OCTOBER**

# Howl-O-Ween

## Indian River County

SECTION B • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2009 • TCPALM.COM • IR

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



SAM WOLFE • Correspondent

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

## DINING &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

www.HometownNewsOL.com

Friday, October 23, 2009

## Dog park's signature event this weekend

Howl-O-Ween  
scheduled for  
Oct. 24By Barbara Yoresh  
Entertainment writer

VERO BEACH — It's a campy take-off on that annual kid's celebration Halloween, but heck, dogs like to have fun too, don't they?

The eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade & Pet Expo is set for Saturday, Oct. 24 from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Dogs for Life off-leash dog park, located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will feature prizes to every dog attending that comes in costume; a owner/dog look-alike costume contest; professional photos of dogs in costume by Bob Hemstreet; a dog park member NASCAR-style "NASDOG" fun dog race; entertaining and educational demonstrations and "tricks for treats."

One featured favorite of each year's Howl-O-Ween event is a "pawrade" (parade) and this year's edition is no exception. Previous events featured 75 dogs in costume to the delight of more than 300 spectators.

A new feature this year is

the addition of a pet expo, where businesses exhibit their services and products.

A raffle for a free dog park membership will also be held. All proceeds will benefit the dog park.

While the event is fun, its purpose is more than just entertainment.

Only two years ago, the 4.5-acre off-leash park was facing imminent closing because the property was being sold.

Dogs for Life, an organization founded by Shelly Ferger, leased the park facility from the owners. The organization needed to raise \$275,000 to buy the property at below market value, as well as cover a

\$30,000 annual operating budget.

The "Best Friends" off-leash park had been developed and funded by donors in 1999 and since 2002, has been run by Dogs for Life, a nonprofit organization that trains assistance and therapy dogs and promotes the park, which enables owners and their dogs to exercise and socialize.

Since 2002, Dogs for Life has trained more than 40 hearing and service dogs in Indian River County. Its mission is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training-assistance

See DOG, B5

## Dog

From page B1

dogs, pet-assisted therapy dogs and owning and operating the off-leash dog park.

Dog park users have paid memberships or pay-as-you-go fees to offset operating costs.

Last year, an anonymous donor contributed \$200,000 to the park, which is now owned by Dogs for Life.

The organization was also the beneficiary of a \$25,000 matching grant given by the John's Island Community Foundation to be used for expansion and improvement plans.

Short and long-term plans for the park have been formulated by organization officials.

This year's Howl-O-Ween event is the first time the organization is using it, not only as a fun-filled festivity but also as a fundraiser.

"Howl-O-Ween draws the most people of anything we do. It's our signature event and that's why we're having vendors this year to help turn it into a fundraiser for the dog park," Ms. Ferger said.

The park is a tax-deductible, nonprofit organization. Membership is open to dogs that are inoculated, neutered and social at \$250 per year. Second dogs from the same household have reduced membership rates.

The dog park features separate areas for large and small dogs and operates from dawn to dusk.

Those participating with their dogs in the Howl-O-Ween festivities are reminded to please not costume their pet in any way that could cause harm to the animal.

For more information about Dogs for Life or the Howl-O-Ween event, call (772) 567-8969.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## NEW LISTINGS

• SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

## SATURDAY

## Animals/Pets

**Canine Costume Parade: Pet Expo, membership drive, Dogs for Life dog park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 3-6 p.m., Oct. 24. Free. Vendors for expo: (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.**

**Dog Park Orientations and Dog Obedience Training: Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, by appointment. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com**

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY HALLOWEEN/FALL EVENTS**  
Annual Canine Costume Parade and Pet Expo: Dog park, 1230 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 3-6 p.m., Saturday. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

## Out &amp; about

**A Dogs for Life "Back Street" at the Off-Leash Dog Park**

located at the intersection of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach will be held from 3-6 p.m. during the "Howl-O-Ween" event. Free. Info: dogsforlifevb.com

**Recycled items for humans or dogs are needed. No clothes, shoes, bags, or toys. Dog leashes, collars, and dog tags are also needed. Items should be clean, dry, and in good condition. Drop off items at the park between 9-11 a.m. The Howl-O-Ween festival begins at 3 p.m. with a parade at 4 p.m.**

## Indian River County

SECTION B • TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2009 • TCPALM.COM • 1R

## Parade caps good decade for dog park

By BARBARA YORESH  
Correspondent

VERO BEACH — A property that's been "going to the dogs" is not usually a sign that something positive is happening. But in Vero Beach, it perfectly describes a popular off-leash dog park that is capping 10 years of growth and improvement, as well as almost being closed at one point, with its annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume "Pawrade" this month.

The 4½-acre site at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach allows dogs to safely romp in a place that also provides training for dogs and owners. It has been operated since 2002 by Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization founded by Shelly Ferger

that trains assistance and pet therapy dogs.

The dog park opened in 1999 as a 2¼-acre off-leash facility that almost closed two years ago when the property was being sold. An anonymous benefactor contributed \$200,000 to purchase the property and help finance the park's operation.

Additional donations including a grant from the John's Island Foundation and grounds keeping maintenance provided by Coast to Coast Landscaping enabled the park to obtain two additional acres and add other improvements.

Dog park members pay \$250 annually to use the park. Membership is free for owners of

service dogs as well as for some qualified low-income dog owners through a scholarship program that currently costs the organization \$5,000 annually to provide. The scholarship program funds are depleted, Ferger said.

On Saturday from 3 to 6 p.m. at the park, Dogs for Life will present its eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume "Pawrade" & Pet Expo which is free and open to the public and will feature a host of activities.

More than 300 area residents and 75 costumed dogs attended last year's event.

"It's our signature dog park fund raising event," said Ferger.

Ferger noted that thanks to 20 event sponsors, the organization

## HOWL-O-WEEN AT DOG PARK

**What:** Dogs for Life Eighth annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume "Pawrade" & Pet Expo

**When:** Saturday, from 3 to 6 p.m.

**Where:** Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach

**How to donate:** a tax-deductible nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization; call (772) 567-8969 or visit online at [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).

has already raised \$10,000 for Dogs for Life programs. Current dog park membership is 202 including 20 scholarship members. The park can accommodate 300 members. Future expansion plans include a 2,000 square-foot building to house rest rooms, indoor dog training facilities, dog day care and office space.

"It's so exciting that so many have come forward and want to be a part of the dog park and support us. If our membership increases, then our income increases for our programs for service dogs and pet assisted therapy. That's why the dog park is so important beyond just recreational interest," Ferger said.

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

November 10, 2009

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

Dear Shelly,

I thought you might like this for the DFL scrapbook.

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

Sincerely,



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

/sjm

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



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

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

# Mick and first-time dog owners learn and enjoy

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

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

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

He is always eager to

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

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

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

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

For more information, call Shelly Ferger, executive director, at (772) 567-8989 or visit [www.dogsforlifefl.com](http://www.dogsforlifefl.com).

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



# Articles

## DOGS FOR LIFE MEMBER OF THE WEEK

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

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

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

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

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



ROBIN TAPOOL

Posted on YourHub.com

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

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

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

## PETS

### Canine companionship good for your health

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

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

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

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

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

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

Julie Wack  
Vero Beach

Opinion

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

## Jasper loves to socialize

BY SHELLY FERGER  
YourNews contributor

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

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

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

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

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

### DOGS FOR LIFE MEMBER OF THE WEEK

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

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

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

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

SCHEPPS MOVIE PUBLICATIONS • LA • UMBREAGES • WEEK OF NOVEMBER 23, 2009

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

# VERO BEACH Hometown News

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

GARDEN  
NOOK

Tips for attracting  
hummingbirds to  
your yard

Page A12



INSIDE

## IN BRIEF

### Skydiving trip ends in fatality

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

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

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

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

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

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

By Jessica Tuggle  
jtuggle@hometownnewsol.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shelly Ferger  
Founder, Dogs for Life

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

time, said Ms. Ferger.

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

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

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

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

"He needed a place that was

See PARK, A2

Win a 3/2 stay  
at The Shores Resort  
& Spa, 2 tickets  
to the Rolex 400  
& 2 VIP tickets to see  
Wynon Marsalis  
in concert.

Complete the registration  
in the Dining &  
Entertainment section

A2 • Vero Beach

Hometown News

Friday, January 9, 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cliff Partlow  
staff photographer



## Park

From page A1

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

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

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

**VERO BEACH**

**Dog scholarships are available at dog park**

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

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

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

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

From staff reports



**Dogs For Life**  
A non profit tax deductible organization  
Ask about our Scholarship "Colarship" Program qualifications

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



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

**772-567-8969**



**Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skins**

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




**Dogs For Life**  
A non profit tax deductible organization  
Ask about our Scholarship "Colarship" Program qualifications



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12th Street & 16th Avenue  
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Orientations scheduled by appointment.

**772-567-8969**

# Dog park helps Georgie Girl overcome fears

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

This is Georgie Girl's story:

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

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

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

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

and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



MARGARET TALT - Posted on YourHub.com

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

Expo from 3 to 6 p.m. Saturday at the off-leash dog park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Besides the parade, there will be an owner/dog look-alike contest and lots of vendors. The event is sponsored by Dogs For Life, a nonprofit that works with dog training, therapy dogs and operates the off-leash park. Admission is free. For information, call (772) 667-8969 or go to [dogsforlifefvb.com](http://dogsforlifefvb.com).

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009

## Garage Sales

Sell your stuff today!

VERO BEACH - Sat. 10-4 - 1230 16th Ave. of Gently used items at the Dog's For Life off Leash Dog Park "Bark Mart" 772-667-8969



**TYLER TREADWAY**  
WHAT A WEEKEND

### POUCHES ON PARADE

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



# INDIAN RIVER Press Journal

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Thursday, October 22, 2009

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

Contributed by: Shelly Ferger on 10/8/2009

### Halloween and Georgie Girl's Story

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

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

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

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

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

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

Georgie Girl 100% Pure Lovable Mutt

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

Contributed by: Shelly Ferger on 10/14/2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Indian River County

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

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**SEPTEMBER**

# Dogs for Life announces park member of the week

BY SHELLY FERGER

Posted on YourHub.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There are separate large dog and small dog areas

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

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

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

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

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



NANCY AND TRUFFLE SEABOL - Posted on YourHub.com  
Nancy Seabol sits with Truffle.

VERO BEACH  
MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER  
2009

146

CALENDAR

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

## Classes, Workshops & Excursions

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

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





**AUGUST**

# Expansion

## Dog park expands with help of sizable donation

By Michelle Gentile  
For Hometown News

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What is unique about this training facility, said

See DONATION, A2



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

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

A2 • VERO BEACH

HOMETOWN NEWS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2009

## Donation

From page A1

ning.

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

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

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

With the additional acreage and memberships available, the cost of a yearly membership went down

from \$300 to \$250.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

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

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# New Board

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

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### SATURDAY

#### Animals

**Dog Obedience Class:** DFL Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 10 a.m. Free. (772) 567-8969.

**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 annual fee. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

## LOOKING AHEAD

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### SATURDAY

**Dog Obedience:** Classes. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, 9:15 a.m. Reservation: (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 year. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

B2 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 2009 • IR

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### NEW LISTINGS

#### 4-H Dog Masters Club:

Orientation meeting for youth and their parents. Indian River County Extension, 1028 20th Place, Vero Beach, 7 p.m., Aug. 16. Ages 8-18. Free. (772) 567-8969; DogsforLifeVB@bellsouth.net.

#### Animals/Pets

**Dog Training:** Six-week class. Humane Society, 6330 77th St., Vero Beach, 1-2 p.m. Register: (772) 388-3331, ext. 19.

**Dog Obedience:** Classes. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, 9:15 a.m. Reservation: (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

**Dog Park Orientations:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. \$250 year. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlifevb.com.

# Good For You

PAGE A11 • SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2009 • TCPALM

## Dogs for Life, Inc. names new board

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

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

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

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

Newly elected members are Kelli Beal and Tom Lowther.

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

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

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

## AUGUST EVENTS

**4-H Dog Masters Club:** Orientation meeting for youth and their parents. Indian River County Extension, 1028 20th Place, Vero Beach, 7 p.m., Aug. 16. Ages 8-18. Free. (772) 567-8969; DogsforLifeVB@bellsouth.net.

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

# The record

# 4-H Dogmasters Club





**JULY**

# Paw Prints



## PAW PRINTS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2009

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

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

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

*Continued on page 6*



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



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

### Speaking of the Park

*DFL President Al Turner*

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

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

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

*Continued on page 7*

### PAW PRINTS

#### From the Founder & Executive Director

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



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

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

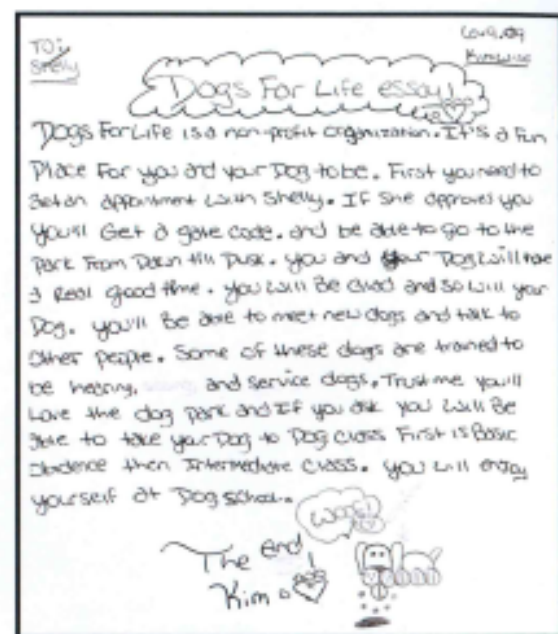
I am grateful to have been awarded a scholarship to the Association of Fundraising Professionals conference in March. It has given me the confidence to move full steam ahead with fund raising plans for our organization in spite of the current economic climate. As in the past, DFL continues to operate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

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

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

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

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



### 4-H Dog Master's Club

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

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

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

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



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

#### Inside This Issue

All Aboard.....	Page 1	Pet Assisted Therapy.....	Page 4
Speaking of the Park.....	Page 1	Community Outreach.....	Page 5
From the Founder.....	Page 2	Partnership with HSVB.....	Page 5
4-H Dogs Masters.....	Page 2	In Memory and In Honor.....	Page 6
Assistance Dogs.....	Page 3	LoPresti Aviation.....	Page 8





P.O. Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

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

**(772) 567-8969**

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

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

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

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

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



Captain Cheyenne LoPresti "Dives In" to help DFL.



# Expansion Grant



# Charity Breakfast

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

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

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

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

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

Hope to see you there.. **Happy Independence Day!**  - Shelly, Founder/Executive Director Dogs for Life.

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

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



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

**Dear Shelly,  
Come to First Saturday in Vero Beach!**

---

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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



[click to play Video](#)

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

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

***Win a Free Jump!***

**No more excuses!**



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

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

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

[Link here for directions.](#)

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

### The Charity

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



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

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

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



[Download Poster](#)

**PLEASE RSVP  
USING THE LINK BELOW.**

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

[Link for Vero Beach Avionics](#)  
Hangar opens at 9:am  
Coffee and Pancakes start at  
9:00am

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

[RSVP Now!](#)



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

Contributed by: LoPresti Aviation on 6/16/2009

### What:

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

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

**Where:** 2620 Airport North Drive, Vero Beach

**When:** 9 am breakfast & 10 am presentation

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

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

6/17/2009

10  
SCRIPPS NICHE PUBLICATIONS • LUMINARIES • WEEK OF JUNE 29, 2009

# BRIGHTLIGHTS

& RED CARPETS

Tania Ortega-Cowan • [luminaries@scripps.com](mailto:luminaries@scripps.com)

Indian River County

### LoPresti digs Dogs for Life

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

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## The Panorama

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

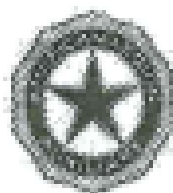
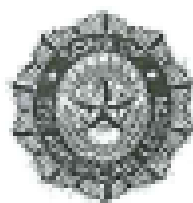
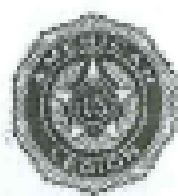
#### NEW LISTINGS

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



**JUNE**

# Shelly



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May 2009 Newsletter

### Commander's Message

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

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

Not much to say this month.

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

### Letter From 2nd Vice Commander

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

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

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

Please attend the meeting. It will be very interesting.

For God and Country,  
Harald Brill  
2nd Vice Commander

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

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

### ON THE MOVE

#### FERGER PROMOTED AT DOGS FOR LIFE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Compliments of "Your Good Neighbor Agent"

CHUCK BATEMAN

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Phone: (772) 567-1106 Fax: (772) 568-4649

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Jordan... are thing, I never... their was really looking forward... playing with him, but that's the... way things change in this... catchers business." Jordan was among several... training position players already in... hectic off-camp. The first full squad work... were months out isn't until Wednesday... ng Rodriguez Two-time All-Star... the American League... s named Rodriguez... d finally... s. Buck Showalter... defer questions about... guez trade, which was... pleted this week. He... was focused instead on... pitchers they would go... gh their first workouts... y. This is a game of adjust... ents," Showalter said. "That's... he way you have to approach... As for the pitchers, Showalter... said the only locks in the start... ing rotation are left-hander... Kenny Rogers and right-hander... Chan Ho Park. He expects to... carry 12 pitchers into the regu... elder Brian Jordan, free agent... and the Rangers re... ending I

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

CONGRATULATIONS

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

Cordially yours,  
Kathy Savage  
Kathy Savage

### Shelly Ferger is AFP-IR Chamberlain Scholar

BY CYNTHIA FALARDEAU Posted on YourHub.com

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

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

The \$500 scholarship enabled Ferger to attend the AFP International Conference March 29-April 1 in New Orleans. The purpose of the AFP Scholarship is to promote and enhance the professional development of fund devel-

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

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

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

Go to [www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org) or [Kathy.Savage@ksavages@stedis.org](mailto:Kathy.Savage@ksavages@stedis.org)



**FERGER NAMED AFP-IR CHAMBERLAIN SCHOLAR**

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

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

**SUBMIT A LISTING**

Submit your announcement: Go to: [TCPalm.com/submit](http://TCPalm.com/submit) and select the Good For You form.  
**Online:** View your announcement at: [TCPalm.com/your\\_stuff](http://TCPalm.com/your_stuff)

ment and membership in the AFP-IR chapter.

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

4-3-09

205 5558.

Shelly,

Congratulations to you!

We at Riverside are proud of you!

Best Wishes,  
Alice

**Shelly Ferger, Chamberlain Scholar**

Thank you, Cynthia Falardean for letting us know that Shelly Ferger, founder of Dogs for Life, has been chosen by the Association of Fundraising Professionals - Indian River Chapter (AFP-IR) as the 2009 Chamberlain Scholar. She will also be going to the AFP International Conference later this month in New Orleans. AFP-IR is made up of professional fundraisers who represent more than 85 non-profit organizations in Indian River County. To learn more, visit [www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org) or contact Kathy Savage at [WEEK OF MARCH 23, 2009 21](mailto:kssm-</a></p></div>
<div data-bbox=)

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



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

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of various sizes, scattered across a white background. The paw prints are stylized with four distinct pads.

**MARCH**

# Pet Cause



SAMI WOLFE • Correspondent

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

## Dogs For Life pet cause for deaf woman

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

BY BARBARA YORESH  
Correspondent

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

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

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

### LEARN MORE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Since then, some Spanish provinces have made provisions to accommodate

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

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

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

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

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

The background of the entire page 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**

# Giving Fair

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

## Giving Fair coming to mall

BY JAN LINDSEY  
Correspondent

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

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

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

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

The United Way of Indi-

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

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

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

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

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

### GIVING FAIR

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

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

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

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

#### Here is a sampling:

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

payments and food.

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

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

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

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.

**JANUARY**

# Paw Prints



## Paw Prints Newsletter

January  
2009



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

### Inside This Issue

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

## Kudos for Fido and Friends

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

### 2008 Awards

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Canine Companions for Independence







# 'Collar' ships

## VERO BEACH Hometown News

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

GARDEN  
NOOK

Tips for attracting  
hummingbirds to  
your yard

Page A2



INSIDE

Win a 3/2 stay  
at The Shores Resort  
& Spa, 2 tickets  
to the Rolex 400  
& 2 VIP tickets to see  
Wynon Marsalis  
in concert.

Experience  
Daytona

Complete the registration  
in the Dining &  
Entertainment section

### IN BRIEF

#### Skydiving trip ends in fatality

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

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

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

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

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

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

By Jessica Tuggle  
jtuggle@hometownnewsdl.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shelly Ferger  
Founder, Dogs for Life

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

time,

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

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

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

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

"He needed a place that was

See PARK, A2

A2 • Vero Beach

Hometown News

Friday, January 9, 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information about the dog park scholarship application process or about services and training offered by Dogs for Life, call (772) 567-8969 or visit www.dogsforlifevb.com.

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

Cliff Partlow  
staff photographer



### Park

From page A1

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

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

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

**VERO BEACH**

**Dog scholarships are available at dog park**

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

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

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

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

From staff reports



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

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



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

**772-567-8969**



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

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

**772-567-8969**

Beth and Tigger carry in record time at DFL's newest Hearing Guide Dog Team

# Seizures

## Opinion

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

### MAN & NATURE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Miro Posavec

Penny and Amadeus ... sleeping peacefully.

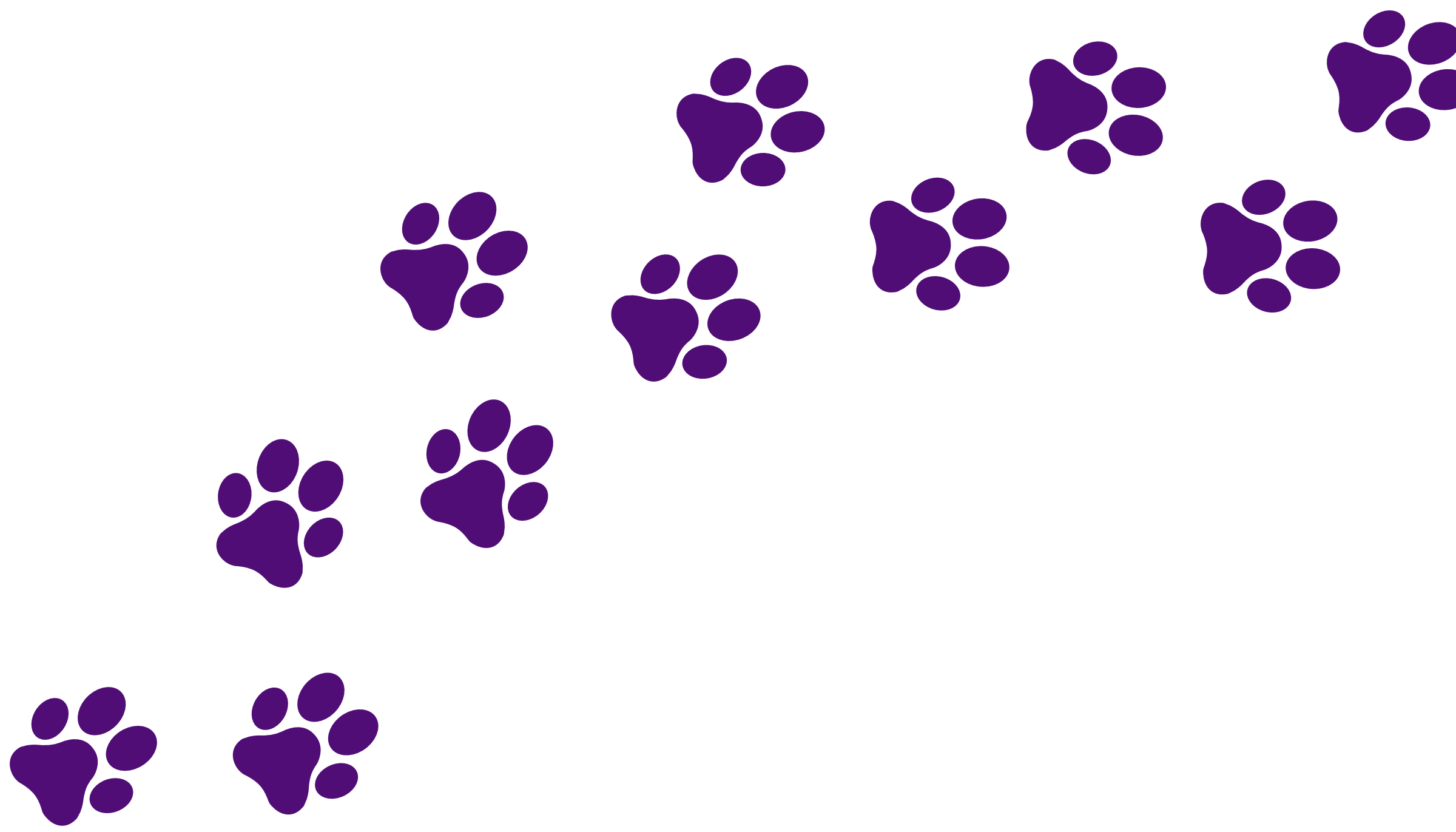
careful. If he is having a seizure she will lick his face and watch over him.

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

Miro Posavec  
Vero Beach

# Scrapbook

## 2008



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.

**NOVEMBER**

# Annual Meeting



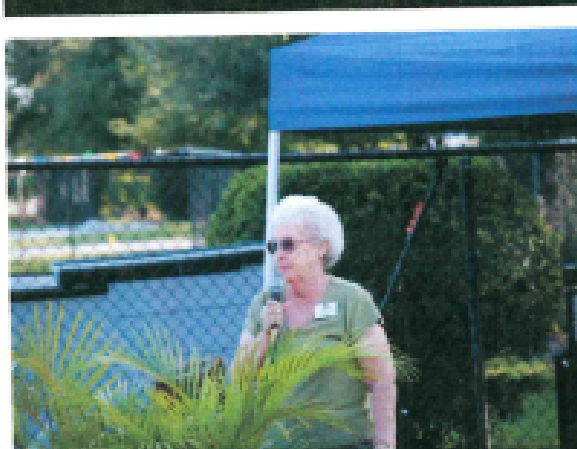
**Annual Meeting  
November 8, 2008**

**Member and Volunteer Appreciation  
Off-Leash Dog Park  
1230 16th Avenue  
Vero Beach, Florida**

**Dogs for Life, Inc.  
PO Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965  
(772) 567-8969  
[www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com)  
[dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)**

## **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 & operating an off-leash dog park"**





# Howl-O-Ween

Friday, October 24, 2008

www.HometownNewsOL.com

## A howling good time

Nearly 100 dogs and their owners gathered at the dog park last Saturday for the seventh annual Dogs For Life Howl-o-ween Parade. Patti Schell, left, and Elanor Bengyak pet Mitzi, a pet assisted therapy dog rescued from Noah's Arch last year.



Cliff Partlow  
staff photographer



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer  
Nicco Galanto of Vero Beach does his part to help keep the dogs cool and hydrated during the Dogs For Life Howl-o-ween Dog Parade last Saturday at the Off Leash Park on 12th Street.

## These cowboy dogs are 'ruff' riders



FRANK KIMMEL • Correspondent

Ed Boatwright of Vero Beach and Tetley and Rusty, his Airedale Terriers dressed as a sheriff and deputy, wait their turn Saturday at the Dogs for Life Off the Leash Dog Park seventh annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade in Vero Beach. More than 70 dogs were dressed in their Halloween costumes for the parade.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

TCPALM.COM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2008

SATURDAY

**Animals**  
**AKC Canine Good Citizen**  
 Classes: Good members, obedience, agility. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 9 a.m. Register: (772) 567-8969.  
**Dog Park Orientation:** Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. By appointment. Vero Dog Training: Basic Dog Obedience, AKC Canine Good Citizen, Agility Dog and Pet Therapy Dog Training. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 1230 15th Ave., Vero Beach, 9 and 9 a.m., Saturdays. Four weeks, \$50. (772) 567-8969; dogsforlife@bellsouth.net.  
**Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade:** Dog Park, 12th St. and 16th Ave., Vero Beach, 4 p.m. Free. (772) 567-8969.  
**The Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Clubs Member Recruitment at the 7th Annual Canine Costume Parade:** Dogs for Life, Inc. Off-Leash Dog Park, Vero Beach, 4 p.m. (772) 567-8969.

SCRIPPS NICHE PUBLICATIONS + LUMINARIES + WEEK OF OCTOBER 13, 2008

# BRIGHTLIGHTS

& RED CARPETS  
Tania Ortega-Cowan • luminaries@scripps.com



Indian River County

## OCT 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

18

**7th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade**  
 to benefit Dogs for Life. Off-Leash Dog Park, Vero Beach. 772 567-8969.

B4 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2008

### Howl-O-Ween

Get your doggies dressed and head to the 7th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade presented by Dogs for Life, Inc. The parade will be held at 4 p.m. Oct. 18 at the Off-Leash Dog Park in Vero Beach. The event is free and open to all dogs in costume. For more, call (772) 567-8969.

**Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade:** Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 4 p.m., Oct. 18. Free. (772) 567-8969.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2008 • TCPALM.COM

**The Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Clubs Member Recruitment at the 7th Annual Canine Costume Parade:** Dogs for Life, Inc. Off-Leash Dog Park, Vero Beach, 4 p.m. Oct. 18. (772) 567-8969.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2008

# BRIGHTLIGHTS

& RED CARPETS

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Indian River County

## Howl-o-ween

Too cute! Bring your pooch dressed in costume for the 7th Annual Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade to be held at the Off-Leash Dog Park at 4 p.m. on Oct. 18. You can also join the Dog Park and help support Hearing-Service Dog & Pet-Assisted Therapy Programs. The Off-Leash Dog Park opened as a result of fundraising efforts by The Dogs for Life, Inc., and costs \$250 for annual and \$200 for semi-annual memberships. Dogs must be inoculated, neutered and social and owners must attend an orientation. Call Shelly at (772) 567-8969.



## Dogs for Life

Live, Love, Learn

A non-profit tax deductible organization

## DOG PARK

12th Street & 16th Ave

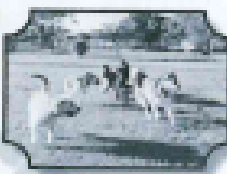
### Howl-O-Ween 7th Annual Canine Costume Parade

Free to the Public & Dogs in Costume

**Saturday, October 18, 2008 - 4 PM**

Join the Dog Park

And help support Hearing - Service Dog  
& Pet Assisted Therapy Programs



The Dogs for Life, Inc. Off Leash Dog Park is open for annual (\$250) and semi-annual (\$200) memberships. Second dogs from the same household are 1/2 price. Dogs must be inoculated, neutered and social.

Owners must attend an orientation by appointment.

PO Box 650023 • Vero Beach • FL - 32965

**(772) 567-8969**

D4 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2008 • V

## HALLOWEEN EVENTS

### INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

**Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade:** Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 4 p.m., Oct. 18. Free. (772) 567-8969.

**YourHub.com** | CALENDAR

Tell everybody about your event by posting it online at [YourHub.com](http://YourHub.com)



V • THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2008 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • A3

## WHAT A WEEKEND! INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

**Canine costume parade:** 4 p.m. Saturday, Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th St. and 16th Ave., Vero Beach; (772) 567-8969.

**TOM SMOYER** • Posted on [YourHub.com](http://YourHub.com)  
This "little devil" participated in a past Canine Costume parade.

Dogs for Life will host its 7th Annual Canine Costume Parade at the "Best Friends" off-leash dog park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach at 4 p.m. Oct. 18. The event is open and free to the public. All dogs participating in the canine costume parade will be awarded a prize. For more information, call (772) 567-8969 or e-mail [dogsforlife@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlife@bellsouth.net).

YOURHUB.COM • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008



**SEPTEMBER**

# Golf Tournament



## PREVIEWS

4 Karen Mann, Chuck Bateman and Sharon Marshall, all of Chuck Bateman State Farm Insurance Agency, attend the Dogs for Life, Inc. 1st Golf Tournament at Sandridge Golf Club in Vero Beach.

## Dogs for Life Golf

The first annual **Golf Tournament** to benefit Dogs for Life will be held September 27 at Sandridge Golf Club. The scramble format tournament will begin with registration and a continental breakfast at 7 a.m., shotgun start at 8 a.m. and lunch, prizes and awards presentation following golf. Entry fee of \$75 per golfer includes golf, cart, breakfast and lunch.

**GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
TO BENEFIT DOGS FOR LIFE  
SEPTEMBER 27, 7:00 AM  
SANDRIDGE GOLF CLUB  
GOLF ATTIRE  
567-8969

Committee Chairmen are Karen and Russell Mann and Sharon and Duane Marshall.

For golf information, reservations or sponsorship opportunities, call 567-8969.

Dogs for Life will also be holding its annual **Canine Costume Parade** October 18 at 5 p.m. at the Off-Leash Dog Park on 12th Street and 16th Avenue. The parade, beginning at 6 p.m., will feature dogs dressed in Howl-o-ween costumes. Event Chairmen are Eleanor Bengyak and Sharon Marshall.

There is no cost for the event. For information, call 567-8969.



C2 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008 • V

### DOGS FOR LIFE TOURNEY

Don't forget the Dogs for Life golf tournament on Sept. 27 at Sandridge in Vero Beach. The four-person scramble on the Dunes Course will have an 8:30 a.m. shotgun start. The entry fee is \$75 per person, which includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

Dogs for Life is a Vero Beach organization that trains dogs to assist the hearing impaired and physically challenged. Plus, they train therapy dogs.

For information, call Karen Mann at (772) 567-1107 or log onto [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com).

Bill Hilbig can be reached at [bill.hilbig@scripps.com](mailto:bill.hilbig@scripps.com) or (772) 221-4913.

## Golf



# Dogs for Life

Live, Love, Learn

A non-profit tax deductible organization

## DOG PARK

12th Street & 16th Ave

### Howl-O-Ween

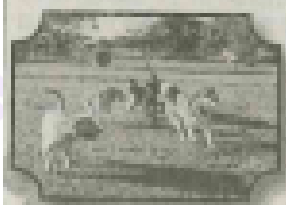
### 7th Annual Canine Costume Parade

Free to the Public & Dogs in Costume

**Saturday, October 18, 2008 - 4 PM**

Join the Dog Park

And help support Hearing - Service Dog & Pet Assisted Therapy Programs



The Dogs for Life, Inc. Off Leash Dog Park is open for annual (\$250) and semi-annual (\$200) memberships. Second dogs from the same household are 1/2 price. Dogs must be inoculated, neutered and social.

Owners must attend an orientation by appointment.

PO Box 650023 • Vero Beach • FL • 32965

**(772) 567-8969**

## Hurry! Only 8 team spots left!

**DOGS FOR LIFE 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2008**

Shotgun Start at: 8:30 a.m.

**SANDRIDGE GOLF CLUB  
DUNES COURSE**

**INCLUDES: Continental Breakfast & Lunch**

### WIN

\$10,000 hole-in-one  
1st, 2nd and 3rd places in two flights  
longest drive and closest to pin  
plus other great raffle prizes

**Dogs for Life**

Live, Love, Learn

**KAREN MANN (772) 299-6505 • (772) 567-1107**

JOIN US FOR A FUN DAY OF GOLF TO SUPPORT DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

**ENTRY FEE:  
FOUR PERSON SCRAMBLE  
\$75.00  
PER PERSON**

**Golf Tournament: Prizes, raffle, Sandridge Golf Club, Vero Beach, 8 a.m., Sept. 27. \$75. Benefits Dogs for Life assistance dog and pet therapy dog programs. (772) 567-8969.**

## Golf

### DOGS FOR LIFE EVENT

Dogs for Life, a Vero Beach organization that trains dogs to assist the hearing impaired and physically challenged, plus therapy dogs, is having a golf tournament on Sept. 27 at Sandridge in Vero Beach.

The four-person scramble on the Dunes Course will have an 8:30 a.m. shotgun start. The entry fee is \$75 per person, which includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

Call Karen Mann at (772) 567-1107 or visit [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com) for info.



**AUGUST**

# Guide to Giving



## 2008-2009 CHARITABLE REGISTRY *Guide to Giving*

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO VERO BEACH MAGAZINE

*We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference,  
ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time,  
add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.*

*—Marian Wright Edelman*



Executive Director  
Shelly Ferger

### Dogs For Life

Devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs, owning and operating an off-leash park.

BOARD OFFICERS: President Richard Leffew, Vice President Sharon Marshall, Treasurer Kelly Colmey, Secretary Eleanor Bengyak  
MAIN EVENT: Annual Canine Costume Parade, in October

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
(772) 567-8969  
dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net • www.dogsforlifevb.com





# AFP members gather in the spirit of philanthropy



YOURHUB.COM • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2008

**BY CYNTHIA FALARDEAU**  
Posted on YourHub.com

The members of Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indian River Chapter proved that they had something special to offer when a group of members gathered to support Indian River Habitat for Humanity, one of its member organizations, during a "summer social work day."

Eleven members and their spouses from various nonprofit organizations joined together in the spirit of philanthropy to help build a home in Indian River Habitat for Humanity's Grace Woods.

Together, the group flexed their carpentry muscles as they worked for four hours to build walls, raise trusses and install a new roof alongside the Habitat for Humanity homeowner.

"The mission of the AFP-IR is to advance philanthropy through the Fund Development Profession," explained President Lenora Ritchie. "Today is a great example of what we can accomplish when we all work together to serve our community."

Participants enjoyed the sense of satisfaction they received from working together in the spirit of philanthropy. A fellowship lunch followed the outing during which the group enjoyed the chance to reflect on their day's accomplishment. Despite a few sore fingers and joints, members agreed it was a rewarding experience.

The group is discussing making this AFP member-to-member work day an annual event.

The AFP-IRC membership is made up of pro-

**CYNTHIA FALARDEAU** • Posted on YourHub.com

AFP-IR Members enjoyed a Summer Social Work Day at Indian River Habitat for Humanity.

fessional fund development leaders in Indian River County. The Association of Fundraising Professionals is a national organization that exists to foster the development and growth of fundraising professionals and the profession, to promote high ethical behavior in the fundraising profession and to preserve and enhance philanthropy and volunteerism.

Members of AFP are motivated by an inner drive to improve the quality of life through the causes they serve. To learn more about AFP-IR contact Pam King, (772) 557-3202, or [membership@afpindianriver.com](mailto:membership@afpindianriver.com).

YOURHUB.COM • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2008

## Canine Country Club owner becomes certified

**BY LISA CORSON**  
Posted on YourHub.com

Vero Beach Canine Country Club, Inc. has announced Lisa J. Corson, president and owner, along with Marcia Adache and Patty Schell, pet care assistants at Vero Beach Canine Country Club, have been awarded Certified Pet Care Technicians

by the Pet Care Services Association.

PCSA is formerly known as the American Boarding Kennels Association.

In addition, they were recognized as completing the Pet First-Aid And CPR Training conducted on-site by the American Red Cross.

"This demonstrates to our clients of our continuing commitment to their pets and ensuring the best care possible. Every year the company attends educational classes, seminars and trade-shows as part of their on-going education," Corson said.

### TLC LETTERS

#### VERO BEACH

#### Dog park appreciated by four-legged friends

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the anonymous person that gave Dogs for Life a most generous donation! That gift along with other faithful donors has enabled Dogs for Life to purchase the Off-Leash Dog Park property at the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue. It means our companion dogs, pet assisted therapy dogs, hearing guide dogs and mobility-assistance dogs have a safe, fenced, happy place to run and play or just have a good belly rub. Four and a half acres of precious green space and the beautiful mature oak trees have been saved. I cherish this wonderful gift to all Vero Beach residents not just us "dog-huggers."

Patricia Schell  
Vero Beach

## INTHELIMELIGHT

luminaries@scripps.com

### Indian River Habitat for Humanity True grit

Members of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indian River Chapter endured the summer heat when they gathered to support Indian River Habitat for Humanity during its Summer Social Work Day.

Members and their spouses, representing various nonprofit organizations, joined together in the spirit of philanthropy to help build a home for the Wheeler family.



(Kneeling) Cynthia Falardeau, (first row standing) Shelly Feger, Jennifer Jones, Ginny Blossom, Lenora Ritchie, Habitat homeowner Beverlynn Wheeler, Leslie Spurlock, Kerry Bartlett, Kelly Brown, (back) Ralph Ostero, Bob Lawton and Dennis Bartholomew enjoy the Summer Social Work Day at Indian River Habitat.

MAY 28, 2008

Vero Beachside News

14 Party, Party, Party

"A TROPICAL NIGHT" BENEFITS YOUTH GUIDANCE  
SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS ON SATURDAY, MAY 17



20 • WEEK OF MAY 12, 2008 • LUMINARIES

# SAY LUMINARIES

[luminaries@scripps.com](mailto:luminaries@scripps.com)



CONTENTS PREPARED BY THE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

## Indian River County

4

Read to Dogs volunteer Chris Spillinger and dog Abby work with Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County members Kaleb Roddenberry and Darcia Bronson.





**APRIL**

# Animal Therapy

## Indian River County

SECTION B • WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2008 • TCPALM.COM



SAM WOLFE • sam.wolfe@scripps.com

"She's beautiful. Just beautiful," said Christine Phillips, right, while being visited by Emmy, a 3-year-old golden retriever, at Sebastian River Medical Center recently. Emmy's owner Barbara DePutron, left, the wife of Dr. David Putron at SRMC, has started bringing the certified therapy dog to the hospital every other Wednesday to visit with patients that wish to see her. Registered nurse Denise Kaszkowsky stands at back center.

### Therapy animals bring more than smiles to patients

## *"Indian River Medical Center is a success story. I like supporting success..."*

When I was asked to be interviewed for this ad, I declined. I felt my contributions were small. Others had given more than I...more of their time, talents and financial support to Indian River Medical Center. But when I thought again, it occurred to me that it is not the amount that we give but the reasons why we give that are so important. So I agreed to participate.

Indian River Medical Center is a success story. I like supporting success. Recently voted "Company of the Year" in Indian River County, our hospital is the second largest employer in the county. I feel any support I give promotes not only the health and well being of everyone living here, but also the economic life of Indian River County. It's what makes our city special.

The hospital directors aim for the best. They had the foresight to affiliate with Duke University, one of the top 10 cardiac programs in the country, when they opened The Heart Center, bringing in the best doctors and latest equipment right here to Vero Beach. As an 80 year old, it comforts me to know that I have a top health facility at my front door.

In the grand scheme of things, I give because it feels good to do so. If I am able to contribute a little, the Foundation will combine those funds with others to sustain and build a magnificent

hospital for us now and in the years to come. Personally, it is a pleasure to see my donations put to good use in my lifetime. Fortunately, our government still agrees and acknowledges my donations on my tax returns, both now and in the future with estate planning.

There is a prayer, "The Final Analysis" by Mother Theresa, that sums up my feelings on charitable giving and part of it reads:

What you spend years building,  
someone could destroy it overnight:  
*Build anyway.*

If you are honest and frank,  
people may cheat you:  
*Be honest and frank anyway.*

If you find serenity and happiness,  
they may be jealous:  
*Be happy anyway.*

The good you do today,  
people will often forget tomorrow:  
*Do good anyway.*

Give the world the best you have,  
and it may never be enough:  
*Give the world the best you've got anyway.*

You see in the FINAL analysis,  
it is between you and God:  
*It was never between you and them anyway.*

For more information about *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Campaign for Indian River Medical Center*, please call us at 772.226.4960 or visit us online at [www.irmcfoundation.org](http://www.irmcfoundation.org).



This message funded in part by STANFORD [www.stanfordfinancial.com](http://www.stanfordfinancial.com)

BY JAMES KIRLEY  
[jim.kirley@scripps.com](mailto:jim.kirley@scripps.com)

People saw patients smile when Barbara DePutron and her 3-year-old golden retriever, Emmy, visited Sebastian River Medical Center.

Registered Nurse Denise Keszowski noticed more than grins. She saw heartbeats and blood pressure drop in patients recovering from heart attacks in the hospital's critical care unit. She saw people literally reach toward healing.

"Stroke patients who haven't moved will move to pet this dog," Keszowski said. "I saw this today. It was amazing and it was a beautiful thing."

The hospital began a program of animal-assisted therapy Feb. 13, making it the latest of three Treasure Coast hospitals to offer dog visits to patients. Martin Memorial Medical Center offers such visits to patients being treated for cancer and dogs sometimes visit the children's ward of the Stuart hospital.

The Behavioral Health Center, the psychiatric hospital at Indian

### **"Animals have that effect on humans, releasing all the healing hormones."**

Dr. John Graham-Pole, professor emeritus of pediatrics at the University of Florida

River Medical Center, has been getting regular visits by pet therapy teams from Dogs for Life in Vero Beach for nearly one year. Nurses report that patients who are withdrawn and distrusting of medical staff become more open after the visits.

"They see the staff is not that bad if the dog likes them, too," said a nurse at the center, where clinicians ask their names not be published for safety reasons. "It opens up lines of communication, and they will tell us about their needs and what they are afraid of."

While no statistics are available, offering visits by dogs to hospital patients is becoming more accepted.

"There seems to be an increase in the use of animal-assisted therapy in hospitals," said Michelle Cobey, resource specialist with

the Delta Society. The Washington-based organization publishes guidelines used to certify therapy animals and their handlers.

"We register dogs and cats and llamas and pigs and birds," Cobey said. "Once people are registered with us, they're covered by our insurance. Every two years, teams have to be re-evaluated. Animals change and people change."

Karen Frick of Stuart coordinates Sunshine on a Leash, which uses Delta's guidelines for its teams that visit patients at Martin Memorial.

Frick said dogs need a special temperament to visit hospitals.

"Think about what these animals encounter — all the different smells and sights and all the different ways they are being petted," Frick said. "To have this many variables and still enjoy it takes an extraordinary dog."

Dr. John Graham-Pole, professor emeritus of pediatrics at the University of Florida, helped introduce therapy animals at Shands Hospital in Gainesville about 15 years ago.

"We benefit by the presence of animals close to us," he said. "Philosophically, God made it that way."

The benefits can also be measured. Graham-Pole said studies show human bodies produce more endorphins — a feel-good chemical made by the pituitary gland — when they're around animals. Interacting with animals also lessens production of corticosteroids, hormones that jack up heart rate and blood pressure for the so-called fight-or-flight response to fear and stress.

"Animals have that effect on humans, releasing all the healing hormones," he said.

"Pet therapy dogs are trained to be compliant and placid and accepting towards all humans," Graham-pole added. "There are animals that go to every part of (Shands) hospital."



*... In the grand scheme of things,  
I give because it feels good to do so."*

**Winks Kremer** with her dog, Bun  
Donor to The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Campaign  
for Indian River Medical Center

This ad is graciously underwritten by Vero Beach Magazine

*Supporting*  
The Right Care Right Here

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints of various sizes and orientations, scattered across a white background.

**MARCH**



# Imprisoned Marines Train Dogs

From Page One

THE NEWS & OBSERVER +  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2008

## Imprisoned Marines train dogs to help wounded comrades



A Marine doing time in the Camp Lejeune brig hugs Eve, the service dog that he is training. The dogs in the program will perform tasks to help Marines badly wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan regain some independence.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS SENARD

*Animals are expected to benefit inmates as well as Marines hurt in the war*

BY JAY PRICE  
STAFF WRITER

**CAMP LEJEUNE** — One day, the six dogs will do amazing things.

They will load laundry in washing machines, and they will pull it out of dryers. They will perform simple banking transactions.

They will even be able to open the refrigerator on command, select a cold beer — yes, just like that dream-come-true TV commercial — and take it to their grateful owner.

For now, though, the dogs are locked in the Camp Lejeune brig. And so are the young Marines who are training the dogs, which will eventually be donated to Marines badly wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan to

help them regain some independence.

Civilian prisoners have been used for the labor-intensive task of training service dogs to help disabled owners since 1981. The new program at Lejeune is thought to be the first in a military prison. Base officials said they were willing to do it because the dogs will help disabled Marines, and because studies have shown that working with dogs helps rehabilitate prisoners, calming them and improving their attitudes.

Prisoners in the program said in interviews that the dogs had turned days of tedium into lives with focus, allowed them to contribute at least a little to the country they let down, and even given them back self-

respect they left outside.

"I'd still be doing laundry and anything I could to keep my mind from dwelling on the past," said Mark, a compact 23-year-old who is halfway through a sentence of about two years. (Under the rules for interviews in the brig, prisoners could give only their first names and ages and weren't allowed to name their offenses).

As Mark talked, Dixon, a stocky, mellow English Labrador retriever that he and another Marine are helping train, lay calmly at his feet.

"People don't give them the respect they deserve," Mark said. "They think they're stu-

SEE DOGS, PAGE 4A



Joshua and other dogs in training stay with the prisoners who train them around the clock at Camp Lejeune.

STAFF PHOTOS BY CHRIS SWANEN

## DOGS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

pid, but dogs can really do some great things."

When he gets out, Mark said, he has decided he wants to try for a job training dogs.

A couple of bunks down, Chris, 28, and Gene, 23, sat with dark-haired Roxy, the star pup. She is the youngest of the six dogs, just 10 months old, but ahead of all the others in learning the early lessons.

Roxy will leave the brig before Gene, who has three years to go, but after Chris, who is down to just seven months.

**INSIDE IMPROVEMENT:** Donna Shalala reports progress in veterans' health care. ▶

Gene said parting with her would probably be harder on him than Chris, as he gets attached to animals easily.

Chris agreed. "The good thing is that Roxy will go on to help someone," he said. "Someone I know, most likely, because the Marines are a pretty tight community."

He bent as Roxy watched and pulled up the left pant leg of his orange jail suit, revealing a round white scar on each side of his calf where a sniper's bullet had entered and exited.

"There was a time I could have used a dog like this myself," he said.

Mark's convoys in Iraq were hit four times with improvised bombs, he said. Gene, like Chris, had done combat deployments, too, so they all knew men who could use service dogs.

Even the dogs — by chance, most were Labrador retrievers or Lab mixes — won something by being selected for the program: Most came from shelters, and Bailey, a yellow lab, was adopted the day he was scheduled to be killed. The civilian trainers who have been teaching the Marines how to work with the dogs were told Bailey was taken to the shelter by a young Marine who was going off to war.

Even those who weren't shelter dogs came out ahead. Dixon was donated by owners who used to show him. He had spent most of his life locked in a kennel. Now he has more spring in his step, more a feeling of purpose, Mark said.

Rick Hairston, who owns a Wilmington company called Carolina Canines for Service

that trains service dogs for civilians, proposed the training program to Lejeune leaders. He said that he hopes it will become a model for military prisons around the country and that it will help meet at least part of the huge need for service dogs among the thousands of troops wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The idea started when a local Veterans of Foreign Wars women's auxiliary group approached him to ask for help in getting a dog for an injured National Guard soldier, Hairston said.

Training a service dog is labor-intensive — it can take two years or more of daily work — and there was no other way his small company could increase its production, he said. It already had a two- to three-year wait for its dogs.

### Paying costs, hoping for help

For now, he's paying the costs of sending two civilian trainers to the base several times a week, the vet bills and other expenses, but he's hoping that veterans' groups, businesses and others will eventually help and that perhaps one day the military and the Department of Veterans Affairs also will chip in.

The prisoners were enthusiastic about the idea, said Warrant Officer John Nolan, second in command at the brig, with more than 100 asking to be included.

The dogs bunk with their trainers in an austere, concrete-floored room, their cages

placed between the steel cots of their two trainers. Every four hours, one of the men has to take the dog outside to do its business, and the dog goes with them to meals and anywhere else they have to go.

Some of the training is done inside, some outdoors.

### Prisoners behave better

The 11 prisoners picked for the program have only been in it a few weeks and weren't problem inmates before, but they clearly are better behaved, Nolan said.

More than 100 prisoners wanted to sign up for the program, Nolan said. A social worker helped screen the best choices.

Those with discipline problems or major offenses were kept out. Those picked typically didn't have minor offenses, either, because the trainers wanted them to have at least seven months left on their sentences so the dogs wouldn't have to switch trainers too often. The men in the training program had been charged with things such as theft or drug offenses, he said.

When the dogs are ready, they will have learned more than 70 tasks, from "handling" laundry to pulling their owners' wheelchairs around and switching lights on and off. In some cases, the owners will literally lean on the dogs, relying on them to help with their balance as they do things such as getting in or out of a wheelchair, or climbing steps.

At the bank, they can do things such as take a withdrawal slip and identification card from an owner who can't reach up from a wheelchair, carry it to the counter, place their front paws on the counter and lean forward to hand it to the teller. Then, they can accept the cash and bring it to their owner.

Hairston said some of the things the dogs can do seem startling. But they aren't tricks.

"If it's something you can't do for yourself all of a sudden, it's not a funny trick any more," he said. "Some of them are fancy skills, and some are mundane, but if you can't do them, and you get a dog that can, it makes a huge difference. It gives you a measure of independence back."



Bailey is a lucky service dog; he was selected on the day he was to be killed.

### WANT TO HELP?

You can call Carolina Canines for Service toll free at (866) 910-3647.

jay.price@newsobserver.com or (919) 829-4526

# Anonymous Donation

## Luminaries

Where The Stars Come Out Every Monday

Indian River County

March 31, 2008



4 Gary Wheeler with Chewy, Shelly Fergat, founder of Dogs for Life, Sharon Marshall and Rhett Palmer with Beni celebrate as they accept an anonymous donation of \$275,000 for the Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog park in Vero Beach.



The background of the entire page 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**

# PORT ST. LUCIE POLICE DEPARTMENT




CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION  
PRESENTED TO

*DOGS FOR LIFE OF VERO BEACH, FLORIDA*

FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE PORT ST. LUCIE POLICE K-9 UNIT  
"BULLETPROOF VESTS FOR K-9 DOGS" ON THIS DAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2008



  
John M. Skinner, Chief of Police

  
Officer James Weinert

The background of the entire page 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.

**JANUARY**

# Humane Society

HUMANE SOCIETY HOOKUPS



Joan Bourrell has gained happiness and better health through her relationship with Monty, a 2-year-old Jack Russell terrier provided to her by the Humane Society as part of a new program that pairs seniors with animal companions and provides \$400 per year to assist in the care of their new friends.

## FURRY HOME COMPANION

### Pets matched with seniors provide friendship, vitality

By CAROL MORRAN  
THE GAZETTE

**M**onty, a more-than-cute Jack Russell terrier, didn't exactly save Joan Bourrell's life, but he sure made it better. Since getting the dog last spring, the 77-year-old Colorado Springs woman has lost 32 pounds and her diabetes has stabilized, thanks to the six daily walks she takes around her apartment complex with Monty.

And, she says, "I'm not lonely anymore."

The arrangement is made even sweeter by the fact that Bourrell — a retired drapery seamstress who lives on Social Security — doesn't have to pay for most of Monty's upkeep. She got Monty compliments of the new Senior Citizens Pet Companionship Program, which is administered by the Humane Society of the Pike Peak Region.

The program not only gives free pets to qualifying low-income seniors 60 and older, it provides a subsidy of \$400 per dog or \$300 per cat each year of the pet's life. The money comes from a special donation fund and covers health care and food for the pets.

The subsidies aren't usually enough to cover the entire cost of pet ownership, but for many low-income seniors, it can make the difference between having a pet or not.

"I could not have afforded to get him and keep him if it wasn't for the program," Bourrell says.

The program was started with funding from Baz and Sue Rieger. Baz Rieger, a retired banker and college economics teacher, says he knows how pets can keep a person going. His wife's sister was lonely after her pet died, and when they

got her another, she perked up. And at 77, he still mixes with his Labrador retrievers, even though he's had two hip replacements and back surgery.

The Riegers' donation will cover the care of 18 animals over three years, but the Humane Society hopes to get more donations to cover 60 animals for their lifetimes.

"With help, this program could even grow to provide 100 pets a month to seniors," Baz Rieger says. "That would be 1,200 animals a year. That's a lot of loving homes and happy seniors."

The seniors are shown mostly older, well-trained and sometimes more-sedentary dogs or cats that fit in better with their lifestyles. Once the seniors get their pet, they have to demonstrate that it's getting its vaccinations and twice-a-year health exams. If their pet dies, they can get another one under the program. If the owner dies, the subsidy is transferred to a family member. If the survivors don't want the pet, it's returned to the shelter.

"It's not only great for senior owners but also for older pets that deserve a good home," says program director Jeanette Pohl.

The benefits to the owner accrue physically, mentally and emotionally.

"The program is a great idea," says Lorrain Stallone, a professor of epidemiology at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

Stallone is an expert on the effect of companion animals on human health. She says pets can help lower their owners' blood pressure and create a comforting routine for people whose lives have been disrupted by aging or the death of a spouse.

Those who have pets also end up having more social interaction with others, primarily because when they take the pet for a walk, people talk to them, Stallone says.

That's what Bourrell discovered after she got Monty, shortly after her 13-year-old miniature poodle, Buffy, died in the spring. She and daughter Lertiel Bourrell learned about the program when they took Buffy to the Humane Society to handle burial arrangements.

Joan Bourrell wandered up and down the aisles looking at dogs and cats, not really intending to get one. But then, she saw Monty.

"It was love at first sight," says Bourrell, who has been a widow for seven years. She completed the qualifying paperwork and took Monty home.

"I don't worry so much about mom now," says her daughter, who works and can't visit her mother during the day.

Bourrell says the little dog has become a hit with her neighbors, some of whom bring him toys.

"I get up earlier now to walk him. And he knows everybody and everybody knows him," she says. "And I talk to a lot of other people walking with their dogs."

Bourrell got her first dog when she was 11 years old. But Monty is extra-special, she says, because he came along at a time when she is not as active as she used to be. She also feels safer because Monty lets out soft little barks when he hears something unusual.

She, in turn, is teaching him that people can be kind. She believes he might have been abused because he trembles when he sees a newspaper. "I tell him not to worry about it."

#### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

• The Humane Society is accepting 18 seniors in the Senior Citizens Pet Companionship Program, and most of the openings are still available. For more information about the program, call Pohl at 473-046, ext. 125 or email her at [jpohl@hspg.org](mailto:jpohl@hspg.org).

# Park Saved

## Indian River County

SECTION B • SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008 • TCPALM.COM

### Vero dog park will stay open

Large, last-minute donation, from anonymous benefactor gives the space a new leash — er, lease — on life

BY BARBARA YORESH  
Correspondent

**VERO BEACH** — A local dog park that was set to close by the end of February may have gotten a new lease on life thanks to an anonymous donor.

Dogs for Life Inc. has leased the 4½-acre park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue from owners who wish to sell the property.

Running the park has strained the financial resources of the nonprofit organization, which trains assistance dogs for the hearing impaired and others, said founder Shelly Ferger.

Benefactors developed and funded

the off-leash park in 1999, and Dogs for Life has run it since 2002, allowing dogs to mingle and exercise under the watchful eyes of their owners. Users have paid membership fees or \$10 pay-as-you-go fees to offset costs.

When the group tried to raise the \$275,000 necessary to buy the property at a bargain price, they fell short, and the park was slated to close in February. However, following several newspaper articles about the park and its shaky future, Ferger received a call from a donor who wished to help save the park.

"I got a phone call one day from a woman who read the articles and felt

sorry for us. She said she had some stocks that she wanted to give us and she did. And now we only need an additional \$50,000 to buy the park," Ferger said.

According to Ferger, the donor wishes to remain anonymous.

"We will not close the park at the end of February. We're moving ahead with a membership drive and raise the additional \$50,000 needed to buy the property.

"We've now formed a dog park foundation board to continue helping us raise money, and we're planning an event in February at the dog park to launch a membership drive," Ferger said.

The goal is to "get memberships up to 200 members," Ferger said. In the future, the group plans to add a building to the property with an on-site park manager.

#### WANT TO JOIN?

- Annual dog park membership fees are \$300, or about \$25 per month
- Pet owners must make sure the dogs are up to date on their vaccines and have been spayed or neutered.
- Pet owners must also make sure their dogs and get along with other dogs.

For now, the donor's philanthropy will allow the park to "operate status quo," Ferger said.

"This lady is someone who recognized the good of the Dogs for Life organization, as well as the dog park, and who appreciated our assistance dog program," Ferger said.

For information, call Ferger at (772) 567-6969.



INDIAN RIVER  
**Press Journal**

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

Saturday, January 12, 2008

## Sebastian sniffing around for new site for dog park

Location at south side of Sebastian Stormwater Park probably best alternative to Schumann Drive

BY ED BIERSCHENK  
ed.bierschenk@scripps.com

**SEBASTIAN** — Reacting to the howls of protest from dog owners about the small size of a proposed dog park along Schumann Drive, Sebastian officials will begin revisiting other potential sites for the pooch playground.

City Manager Al Minner said a location at the south side of the Sebastian Stormwater Park is probably the No. 1 alternative. He said officials will look at trying to get a site of perhaps one to two acres.

"I don't know if we'll get to two, but we'll definitely try to get more than half (an acre)," said Minner.

He declined to give a date as to when a park could be open, but said the issue was "on the front burner" and city staff would be working hard to get one opened.

Some people, including City Councilman Eugene Wolff, were critical of the Schumann Drive site from the beginning because of its relatively small size. Wolff voted against the site when it was selected by the City Council in August.

After hearing from residents again Thursday,

See DOG PARK, page A14

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See DOG PARK, page A14

## DOG PARK

FROM PAGE A1

the city's Planning and Zoning Commission voted to table taking action on a site plan for the proposed park along Schumann Drive near the railroad tracks.

At the August council meeting, some residents already were pushing for a 1-acre site within the 166-acre stormwater park, saying it would be preferable to the Schumann location. Councilmember Dale Simchick, however, cited safety concerns with what she said was a fairly desolate area. She also said there could be conflict because scrub jays are in the park.

Minner said there are also cost factors to consider. While the council budgeted \$30,000 for the dog park, Minner said the one at the stormwater park could cost about \$30,000. A major expense will be the additional fencing needed.

After the August meeting, Minner said a survey re-

vealed a portion of the Schumann site where a parking lot was to be located did not belong to the city. Consideration was given to filling in a 15- to 20-foot wide strip along the edge of a pond to provide access to another area that could be used for parking, but Minner said that was deemed to be too expensive.

Instead, the number of parking spaces at the park was reduced from 20 to eight. While the park itself would still have remained at about a half-acre, Minner believes the reduction in parking was "the straw that broke the camel's back" when it came to people's feelings about the park.

While he said creation of a dog park may seem like a simple thing, it has proved to be more difficult than he imagined. In addition to cost, size and accessibility, factors such proximity of nearby residences, number of shade trees and availability of water have to be considered, Minner said.

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CALENDAR

Tell everybody about your event by posting it online at YourHub.com



**DOG PARK SAVED!**

PLEASE JOIN OUR CELEBRATION!

and Membership Drive Open To The Public & Dogs On-Leash

Saturday, FEBRUARY 23 • 1-3PM  
at The Dog Park  
12th St & 16 Ave Vero Beach

AD SPONSORED BY:  
**Shelly's Canine**  
Shelly Feger,  
Canine Behavior / Obedience Trainer

Contact Dogs for Life, Inc.  
for additional information  
**567-8969**

FEATURING  
"The River Rats Band"  
Doggie Fashion Show  
& Stupid Dog Tricks!  
Raffle For One Free  
Dog Park Annual Membership  
Meet & Greet Dog Members  
Bring Your Lawn Chairs  
& Get Ready For Lots Of Fun!

Bring your pooch!

Oh my goodness! How cute is this! Shelly Feger tells Bright Lights that Dogs for Life, Inc. will hold its "Dog Park Saved Celebration & Membership Drive" at the "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. The event is from 1-3 p.m. Feb. 23 and will feature the River Rats Band, a doggie fashion show and Stupid Dog Tricks. There will also be a raffle for one free dog park annual membership. This free event is open to the public with dogs on-leash. Bring your lawn chairs, and be prepared to have fun. For additional information, call (772) 667-8969.

**BRIGHTLIGHTS**

& RED CARPETS

Tania Ortega-Cowan • luminaries@scripps.com

Indian River County



SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008 •

The record

**DOG PARK SAVED!**

PLEASE JOIN OUR CELEBRATION!

Open To The Public & Dogs On-Leash

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Meet & Greet Dog Members  
Bring Your Lawn Chairs  
& Get Ready For Lots Of Fun!

AD SPONSORED BY:  
**Dogs for Life**  
Life, Love, Leash

Contact for additional information:  
**567-8969**

**VERO BEACH**  
Join the Dog Park Saved Celebration

Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance and pet therapy dogs, will conduct a "Dog Park Saved Celebration and Membership Drive" from 1 to 3 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

The event will feature the River Rats Band, a doggie fashion show and stupid dog tricks. Dogs for Life will give a program presentation and hold a raffle for one, free dog park annual membership. Qualifying dogs must be inoculated, neutered and social.

The annual membership fee is \$250. Membership applications will be available at this free event that is open to the public with dogs "on-leash."

Bring your lawn chairs, and be prepared to have fun. For information, contact Dogs for Life at (772) 667-8969.

CONTENTS PREPARED BY THE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Indian River County

1 Dogs for Life president Sharon Marshall and volunteer Patti Schell prepare for the "Dog Park Saved Celebration" to benefit Dogs for Life.

**SAY LUMINARIES**

luminaries@scripps.com



# Guide to Giving



2008-2009 CHARITABLE REGISTRY

## Guide to Giving

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO VERO BEACH MAGAZINE

*One must not, in trying to think about how one can make a big difference,  
ignore the small daily differences one can make which, over time,  
add up to big differences that are often unseen forces.*

*—Marcus Wright Johnson*



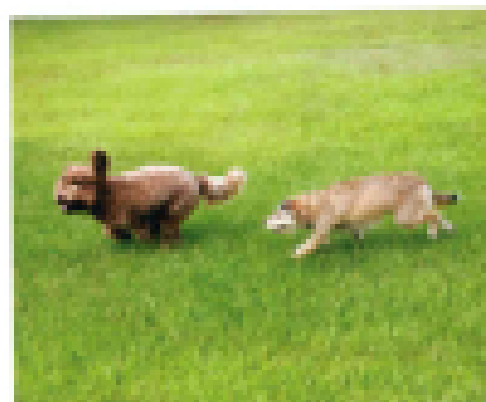
Executive Director  
Shelly Frager

### Dogs For Life

Dedicated to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs, mentoring and operating an off-leash park.

BOARD OFFICERS: President Richard Laffin, Vice President Sharon Marshall, Treasurer Billy Calvey, Secretary Eleanor Bengali  
MAIN EVENT: Annual Costume Parade, in October

P.O. Box 650823, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
(771) 567-8969  
dogslife@verobell.com • www.dogsforlife.com



October 2008

2008-2009 CHARITABLE REGISTRY

### Seasonal Calendar of Events

GET INVOLVED, BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND HAVE FUN

#### NOVEMBER COSTUME PARADE

Dogs For Life annual parade at 5 p.m. at the off-leash dog park, 12th Street and 14th Avenue. 987-8968.

# Guide to Giving

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO VERO BEACH MAGAZINE



THE FIRST, THE ONLY  
**Vero Beach**  
Magazine



Executive Director  
Verna Wright

## Dasie Bridgewater Hope Center

Offer a safe and nurturing environment where children can learn, dream and aspire to achieve by developing self-esteem and acquiring life survival skills.

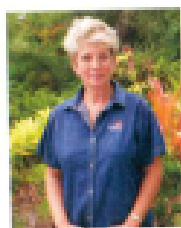
BOARD MEMBERS: Sharron Barrett, John Conroy, Maj. Gen. Eugene Cormier, Cassandra Hendley, Richard Hunter, Sen. Frank Kelly, Deryl Lane, Diane Mahan, Dr. Rebecca Bastin, Warren Schwerin, Sue Tompkins  
MAIN EVENT: Legacy Celebration, in February

P.O. Box 701483, Wabasso, FL 32970  
(772) 589-3535  
vwright772@aol.com • www.dasiehope.com



### Wish List

- BOYS & GIRLS BUSINESS ATTIRE
- DISPOSABLE CAMERAS
- JOURNALS
- SCRAPBOOKS
- BOOKS & MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS



Executive Director  
Shelly Fenger

## Dogs For Life

Devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance dogs, pet therapy dogs, owning and operating an off-leash park.

BOARD OFFICERS: President Richard Laffey, Vice President Sharon Marshall, Treasurer Kelly Colmey, Secretary Eleanor Bergyak  
MAIN EVENT: Annual Canine Costume Parade, in October

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
(772) 567-8969  
dogsforlifefb@bellsouth.net • www.dogsforlifefb.com



Executive Director  
Lisa Zolner

## Dollars for Scholars

Scholarship opportunities for Indian River County students who demonstrate the desire, academic ability and financial need to pursue a post-secondary education.

BOARD OFFICERS: President Sandra Pennick, Vice President/Secretary Karen Van De Voorde, Treasurer E. Michael Stutzke  
BOARD MEMBERS: Mark Ashdown, Merrill Barber-Dick, Kathryn Block, J. Vincent Boyle, Carol Fischman, Gwyneth Fournie, Darby Gibbons, Traci Halber, Jane Hudson, Mary Johnston, Harvey Karricks, David Koubish, Ruden Lane, Gaye Ludwig, Nancy Luther, Rene Perez, Jonathan Sternberg, Mary Ellen Stovess, E. Michael Stutzke  
MAIN EVENT: Dollars for Scholars Kickoff Classic, in August

P.O. Box 1820, Vero Beach, FL 32961  
(772) 569-9869  
info@DFSIndianRiver.org • www.DFSIndianRiver.com



### Wish List

- OFFICE EQUIPMENT & SOFTWARE
- WEB DESIGN

# Happy New Year



**Dogs For Life**

PO BOX 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

Website: [www.dogsforlifevb.com](http://www.dogsforlifevb.com)

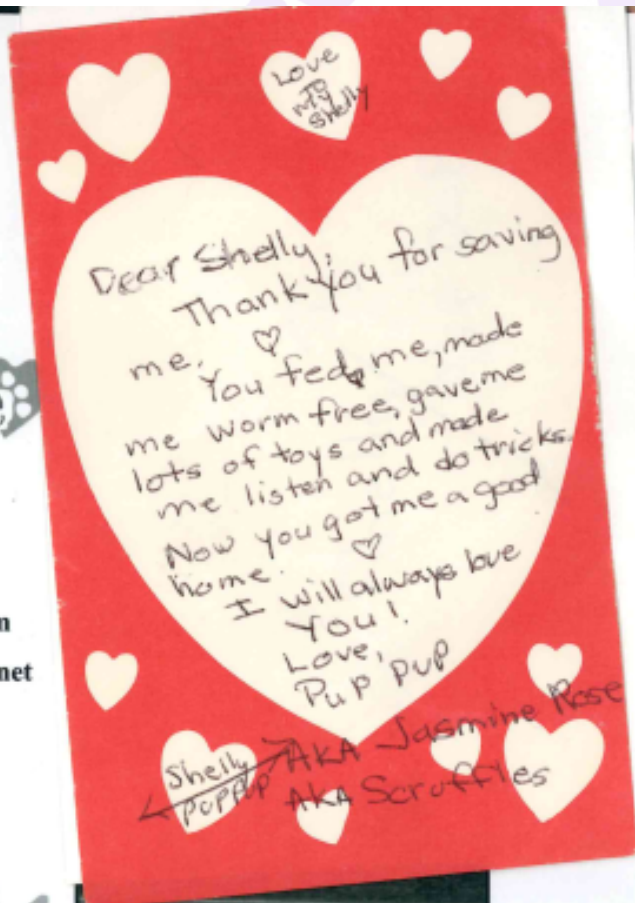
E-Mail: [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)

(772) 567-8969

A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR  
A NEW BEGINNING

### 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 & operating an off-leash dog park"



Dear DFL,  
Thank you for saving me. You fed me, made me worm free, gave me lots of toys and made me listen and do tricks.  
Now you found me a good home. I will always love you!  
Love Pup Pup  
aka Jasmine Rose & Scruffles

## Where We've Been & Where We're Going



Karen Mann, DFL Treasurer and Co-Chair of the DFL 1st Annual Golf Tournament with tournament sponsor Chuck Bateman of State Farm Insurance Company with DFL Vice President and Co-Chair Sharon Marshall at Sandridge Golf Club on Sept. 27, 2008. Proceeds benefited the Assistance Dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Program.



Shelly Ferger, DFL Founder and Sue Sternberg with Patti Schell DFL Assistance Dog Trainer at the Sue Sternberg Lecture on Canine Behavior Evaluation: How to tell a dog is going to bite before it does, Temperament Testing for the Ideal Dog, Dog-Dog Aggression & Compatibility Lecture and "Bite-O-Meter" Hands on Workshop held in Orlando, FL in June 2008.

Shelly, Patti Schell, and DFL Volunteer dog trainers Patty Ruble, Delphine Anderson and Paula Via will all attend the Assistance Dogs International Conference in Orlando, FL in January 2009.



Thanks to the awarding of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Chamberlain Scholarship, Shelly will attend the AFP International Conference on Fundraising in New Orleans, LA in 2009.

Eleanor Bengyak, DFL Secretary and Chair of the 1st Annual Bridge Tournament with "Tigger".

## More DFL 2008 Annual Award Recipients



Jeff Gomez, Coast to Coast Landscaping, 2008 In-Kind Services Award



Barbara Yoresh, Scripps Howard, accepts the 2008 Media Award from DFL President Richard Leffew

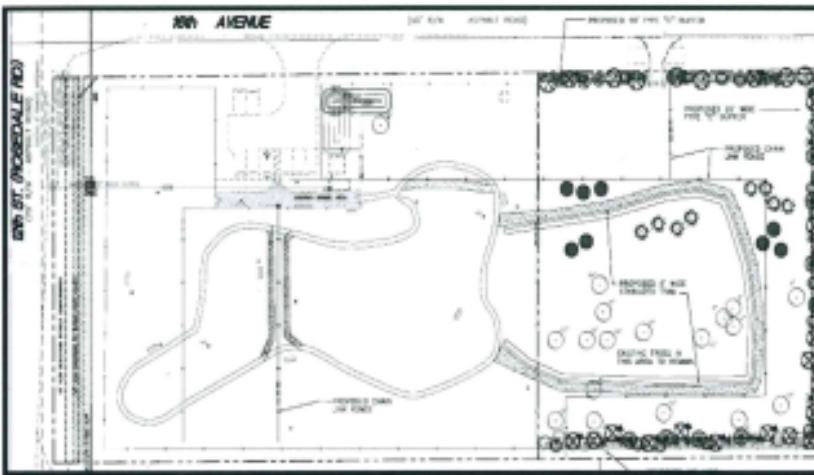


Duane & Sharon Marshall  
DFL 2008  
Volunteers of the Year!

## More Room to Run Dog Park Expansion Project

The permits have been applied for, bids are out and funds are coming in. The dog park expansion project has been in planning stages since the purchase of the dog park property in February 2008. We hope to "break ground" as early as March 2009.

There have been some delays in the Indian River County permitting process because of IR County's plan to install a sidewalk along 12<sup>th</sup> Street and their need to purchase right-of-way.



A special thank you to MBV Engineering, Inc.; Masteller, Moler, Reed & Taylor, Inc. Surveyors; Armfield-Wagner Appraisers, Inc.; and Barbara Bogosian-Power, Attorney; for their assistance and services during the expansion stage.

Bids are being solicited for additional landscaping, irrigation, fence relocations and pathway maintenance and installation. Preliminary estimates toward the cost of the project are in the \$60,000 range. Currently \$46,000 has been raised by donors and members toward the project.

As soon as possible, the irrigation and landscaping part of the project will begin on the north end of the property. Fence re-location and walking path expansion will follow. We are making every effort to keep the park open as much as possible during the expansion process.

The added space will allow us to increase memberships which will generate additional funds that are needed to sustain the dog park and contribute toward other DFL programs.

You may have noticed the Doodycalls (dog waste pick-up station) at the dog park. This station is on loan in an effort to raise funds to purchase or lease this equipment as well as other items that will be needed such as benches and possibly gazebos to serve as additional shade in the newly established small dog area, training area and memorial garden.



Abbie Stillinger, DFL  
Pet Therapy Dog

In an effort to memorialize two champions of Dogs for Life, Honorary Board Member Jane B. King (1931-2008) and Pet Assisted Therapy Dog Abbie Stillinger (1993 - 2008), DFL plans to create a memorial garden on the north end of the dog park property. This area will also provide a barrier to our residential neighbors and space to provide pet assisted therapy at the dog park. If you need a DFL Dog Park Expansion Fundraising Package or to schedule a dog park tour for a potential member or donor, contact Shelly right away at 567-8969.



Jane B. King, Champion  
for Dogs for Life, Inc.

### Money Matters

Treasurer Karen Mann itemized the budget for 2007- 08 and projected an operating budget of \$115,000 for 08-09. DFL First Annual Appeal, Golf and Bridge tournaments as well as the Howl-O-Ween Costume parade, which, next year will include a pet fair with vendor booths and dog shows, supplement DFL funds.

DFL is applying for foundation grants to help with sponsorship and scholarship funding as well as operating costs. A Celebrity Dog Tales of Vero Beach 2nd edition is a goal as a fundraiser for 2009.

Al Turner, Dog Park Foundation Committee chairman, estimates the dog park expansion project will begin in the summer of 2009 at an approximate cost of \$60,000, of which \$46,000 has been raised or pledged. The 2009 goal is to raise an additional \$13,000 and create a \$50,000 endowment fund.

### For Scholars In Collars

Canine obedience is a key focus for 4-H Master's Club and DFL. For the performance prone dogs who like to act instead of just act up, agility and rally obedience is part of the winter programs.

In addition to program founder Shelly Ferger, trainers Lynn Crawford, Marcia Adache, Delphine Anderson and Paul Via will join forces at the dog park on Saturday mornings.



The first Saturday of the month is free to all for basic obedience. Subsequent Saturday classes are offered on a drop-in, pay-as-you-go basis for \$10.

AKC Canine Good Citizen tests are held regularly to prepare for participation in Pet Assisted Therapy Programs. The beasts go on.

### "Thank You" From The Founder

Whew, Wow, Fantastic, Inspired and Blessed. These are just a few words that express some of the emotions felt since DFL's new beginning in February 2008 with the purchase of the dog park property. This new beginning is the theme that is driving DFL's vision, long-range and fund development plans.

Since February your Board and I have been in a "re-grouping phase". In the next few weeks you will receive a survey and DFL's first annual appeal material. I urge each of you to participate in this exciting process. DFL is your organization and it is necessary that you be part of the planning process.

The future of DFL depends on our continuing to offer services to our community through the philanthropy of our donors and the support of dog park members.

Every one of our donors, volunteers and members is an important part of this organization. I want to personally and sincerely thank you for your past and future involvement in its planning and success. It can not and will not happen without you.

Shelly



Shelly Ferger with Wally & Sabrina

## What Now? What's Next?

2008 has been a heck of a year. President Richard Leffew reported on the purchase of the dog park property, the establishment of a dedicated board of directors with committee program chairmen and urged all members to help secure the park's future with their own personal involvement.

Fundraising and membership recruitment are aspects we can all undertake. He also thanked all the donors and volunteers for the success of DFL programs over the past six years. He envisions more involvement of donors in DFL's upcoming feasibility study and strategy planning phase.

Vice President Sharon Marshall, chairman of the Pet Assisted Therapy Program, noted that the programs have expanded to include the Mental Health Association, Abilities Resource Council and Sun Up. The current programs with Boys and Girls Club in Sebastian the Senior Resource Association and Consulate Health Care of Vero Beach as well as the VNA Hospice continue with success and appreciation.

Membership in the Dog Park has more than doubled according to Secretary Eleanor Bengyak's report. Eleanor chaired the DFL 1st Annual Bridge Tournament and those proceeds were added to Dog Park Scholarship Fund. Eleanor challenged each dog park member to recruit an additional member in 2009.

The Assistance Dog Program Chaired by Kelly Colmey now boasts 12 certified or in-training dogs. New certifications were awarded in 2008 to Hearing Guide Dog Team Pat and Holly and Service Dog team Carol and Baxter. For 2009, the trainers will attend the Assistance Dogs International Conference and will work toward getting our organizations' accreditation.

Guest Speaker at the DFL 6th Annual Meeting was Kerry Bartlett, executive director of the Indian River Community Foundation, who applied her 18 years of fund development experience to advise DFL members of the many ways to invest in the park we all love. From government involvement to networking, to special events and donor and member recruitment, her advice is to get involved in some way and believe the sky is the limit—with hard work and dedication, resources can be found.

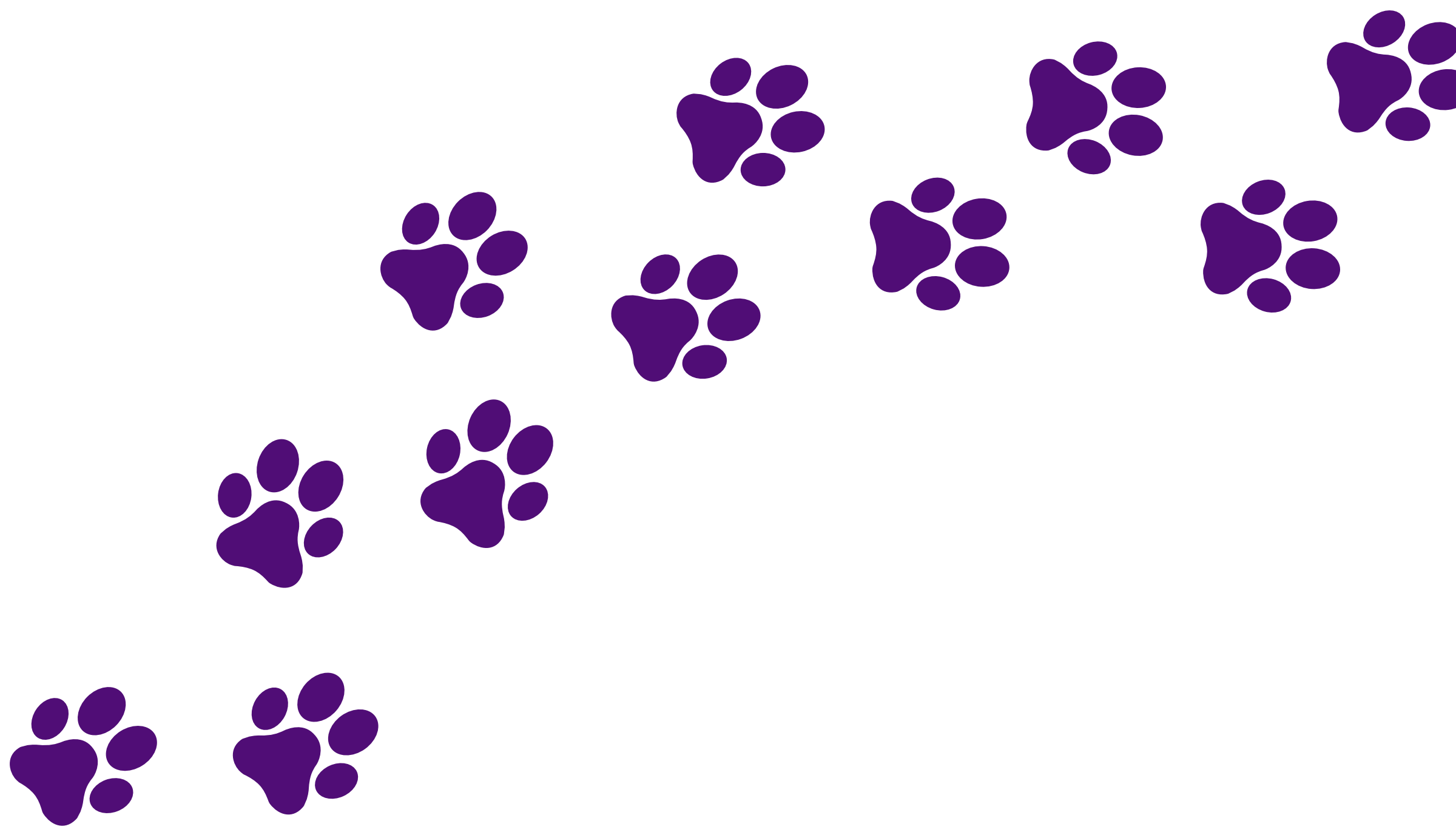


DFL Board of Directors L-R. Richard Leffew, Sharon Marshall, Al Turner, Karen Mann, Eleanor Bengyak, Kelly Colmey and Max

Check Out DFL's Revamped Website Compliments Of  
"WebDesign With Flair" [www/dogsforlifevb.com](http://www/dogsforlifevb.com)

# Scrapbook

2007







**DECEMBER**

# Paw Prints



## Paw Prints Newsletter

December  
2007

### Hearing Guide Dog Team Certified

By Hildegard

My husband Lawrence and I were in the mall during a senior health show when we saw a booth with a dog; it was about Dogs For Life and the hearing dog program. As I am deaf in one ear and hard of hearing in the other, and my husband is also hard of hearing, we became very interested in the program. One reason was because we recently had an incident where we had some smoke damage. The smoke alarms were sounding, but neither of us heard them until we saw the dog acting funny. My husband got up, saw the problem, and everything turned out OK.

After interviewing us and evaluating the dog (named Daisy Mae) Shelly Ferger decided to try training, even though the dog was not the breed normally used for an assistance dog.

The training was going well, but then we had a family disaster and had to go out of town for months. We finally got back home, settled down, and got back to training. With the expert training by Shelly and Patty Schell we went to work with Daisy.

The training was hard work and it took a while, but it was worth it. Now Daisy will get us up when the alarm clock goes off, alert us when the smoke alarm sounds, go get my husband when I need him, go get me when he needs me. They supplied us with a 911 phone which the dog can tap if one of us gets hurt and/or needs emergency care. Another good benefit has been that she has gone from an almost uncontrollable dog to a well-behaved dog.

This has been a wonderful experience and was handled very professionally. We would like to thank Shelly and Patty from the bottom of our hearts. This may save our life someday, and it certainly makes everyday living better. We also would like to thank all the people who have donated to Dogs For Life, without whom none of this would have been possible.



Hildegard & Daisy Mae  
Certified Hearing Guide Dog Team



#### Inside This Issue

DFL Certifies Hearing Guide Dog Team Hildegard & Daisy	1
Pet Assisted Therapy Read to Dogs	2
6th Annual Howl-O-Ween Doggie Pawrade at the Off-Leash Dog Park	3
Consider DFL in your year-end Giving	4



**OCTOBER**

# Howl-O-Ween

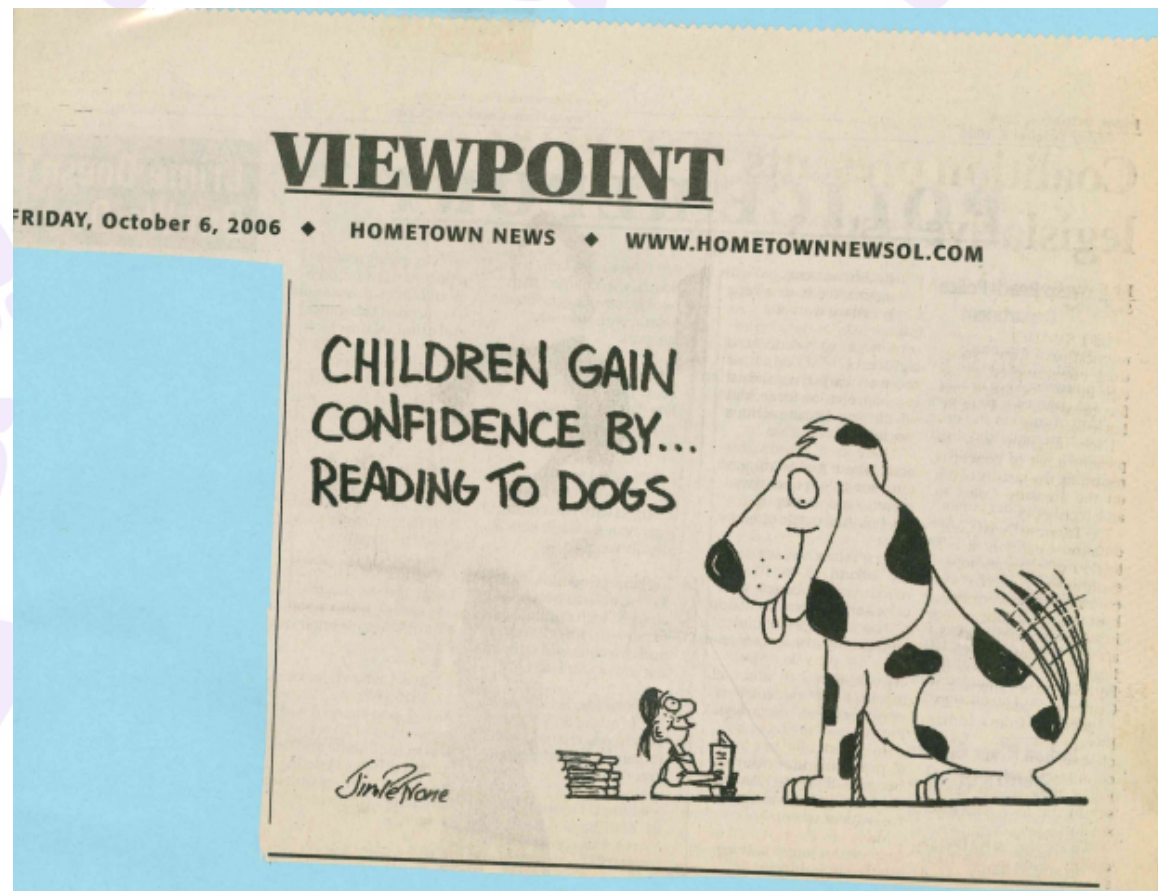
**6th Annual Doggie Howl-O-Ween Costume Pawrade  
at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park 12 St & 16 Ave  
A Howling Success – with 60 dogs in costume**



Photos by Tam Smoyer



# Pet Therapy



## “I Read to Eddie!”



School children love early dismissal days, but the students in Mrs. Norling's fourth grade class at Lakewood Park Elementary have an extra-special reason to look forward to "early out" days: That's when their friend Eddie comes to school. Eddie, a black and tan dachshund mix, loves to listen to children read. Students from all grades and reading levels sign up in advance to read to Eddie.

"If I mess up, I don't think he really cares at all," says Sonide, who is still learning to speak English, as well as to read, write, and to do math. More than half of Sonide's classmates are ESOL students, who speak Spanish or Haitian Creole at home. It's not easy to encourage a struggling ten year old reader to read aloud, but Eddie does exactly that, with his calm eyes and gently wagging tail.



Lakewood Park's Reading Coach, Judith Cimino, has watched the magic of *Read to Dogs* with much interest. "The expression on the faces of the child and the dog clearly shows the pleasure felt by both in the activity," she explains. "The trust and affection the children have for Eddie is transferred to the once hated activity of reading."

So reluctant readers eagerly sign up to read to Eddie, and can't wait for him to return. "I can't even sleep at night when Eddie is coming to school," exclaims Fredline. "I can't wait to read to Eddie and look in his sparkly brown eyes."



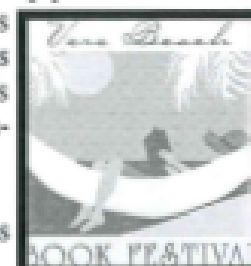
*Read to Dogs* was a favorite activity at the school's Family Reading Night, when Eddie listened to over 27 students from preschool age to middle schoolers read books about dogs while lounging on bean bag chairs in the library.

When a very sad kindergartner said, "I can't read to the doggie because I don't know how to read yet," she was encouraged to share the pictures in her book with Eddie. She carefully described every picture to the patient pup, who really appeared to be listening.



Darrae Norling and Eddie at the Vero Beach Book Festival

Mrs. Norling has another dog, Gus, who recently passed his AKC Canine Good Citizen test with Dogs for Life and is "in training" to become a *Read to Dogs* dog. Who is training him for this important job? Mrs. Norling's students, of course. After all, they consider themselves experts on the subject.



"The future is bright for these lucky children - as avid readers and dog lovers!"



**SEPTEMBER**

# Park on Short Leash

## Dog park may be on short leash



Elinor Clinton of Vero Beach hugs Lucy, a bloodhound, while hanging out Saturday with her dog, Schnizel, not pictured, at the Best Friends off-leash dog park in Vero Beach. The park is in danger of closing Dec. 1 if Dogs For Life, the organization that runs the park, is not able to raise

SARAH GRILE • sarah.grile@scripps

SECTION B • SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2007 • TCPALM.COM

# Indian River County

### Facility may close if pet group can't raise funds

BY BARBARA ISENBERG  
Correspondent

**VERO BEACH** — A popular off-leash dog park just beyond the municipal boundaries of Vero Beach will close Dec. 1 unless park supporters can raise \$275,000 to buy the 4½-acre park site and cover its \$30,000 annual operating budget.

According to Dogs for Life, Inc. founder Shelly Ferger, the organization is leasing the park from owners who wish to sell the land. However, the owners are willing to sell it to the group for well below its current market assessment of \$450,000.

"The property owner offered the park site to us for a bargain sale price good until Dec. 1," Ferger

said. "We don't know what will happen after that time."

"Best Friends" off-leash dog park, at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, was originally developed and funded by donors in 1999 and since 2002 run by DFL, a nonprofit that trains assistance and therapy dogs, and also promotes the needs of dog owners seeking exercise and socialization for their pets.

During the eight years the dog park has existed, pet owners wishing to use the facility have paid memberships or \$10 "pay-as-you-go" fees to offset park operating costs.

However, DFL says fees have been insufficient to cover the operating budget, and the pending sale of the park property further jeopardizes the off-leash program.

To save the park, the nonprofit sent a letter and brochure to dog park supporters outlining a plan to keep the park going.

Efforts to save the park include a request that DFL and dog park members "make an immediate and substantial tax-deductible pledge" toward the property's purchase price. An additional two-year pledge commitment to secure operating funds is also being sought.

Additional options include forming a co-op group to purchase the property, as well as seeking private investors to purchase the property as an investment opportunity.

Dog park supporters may also form a citizens' group to lobby Vero Beach and Indian River County elected officials to buy the park property and operate it as a free, open-to-the-public dog park.

Last month, Sebastian city officials pleased dog-owning residents by approving a half-acre municipal dog park. They are the only dog parks in the county.

TCPALM.COM  
FLORIDA'S TREASURE COAST AND PALM BEACHES

**POOCHES ON PARADE**  
Is there a need for a dog park in Vero Beach?

#### BEST FRIENDS DOG PARK

- 12th Street and 16th Avenue
- Run by Dogs For Life, Inc., a nonprofit organization that trains assistance and therapy dogs
- Paid memberships or \$10 "pay-as-you-go" fees to offset park operating costs
- There's a three-month "Free-for-Threes" program in which qualified, pre-screened dogs are given free access to the park from Sept. 1 through Nov. 30.
- Dog screenings and dog park orientation for owners are required and may be made by calling Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



## Vero Beach dog park may be on short leash

### Facility may close if pet group can't raise funds

By BARBARA ISENBERG Correspondent

Sunday, September 9, 2007

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River County elected officials to buy the park property and operate it as a free, open-to-the-public dog park.

Last month, Sebastian city officials pleased dog-owning residents by approving a half-acre municipal dog park. They are the only dog parks in the county.

### BEST FRIENDS DOG PARK

- 12th Street and 16th Avenue
- Run by Dogs For Life, Inc., a nonprofit organization that trains assistance and therapy dogs
- Paid memberships or \$10 "pay-as-you-go" fees to offset park operating costs
- There's a three-month "Free-for-Three" program in which qualified, pre-screened dogs are given free access to the park from Sept. 1 through Nov. 30.
- Dog screenings and dog park orientation for owners are required and may be made by calling Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



© 2007 S

## Winks and Bun Certify as Hearing Guide Dog Team with Dogs for Life, Inc.



Winks and Bun

Your dog may  
qualify as an  
assistance dog,  
contact  
Dogs for Life, Inc.

Bun Alerts Winks to

- Someone knocking at the door
- A phone ringing
- The smoke alarm
- The alarm clock



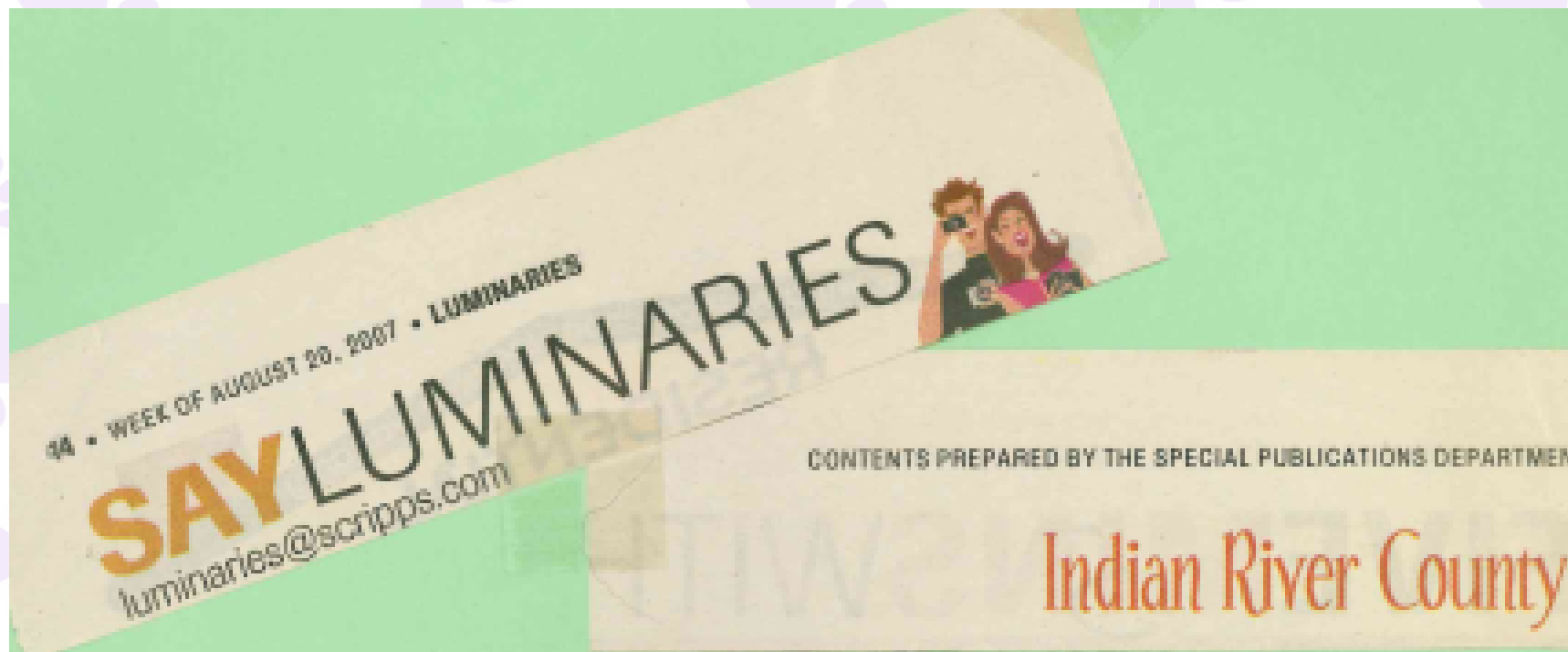
**Dogs  
for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

www.tcpalm.com

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
772.567.8969 • www.dogsforlifefvb.org  
Off-Leash Dog Park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue

enter=1/

# Pet Assistance Therapy



4 Assistance-dog trainer Patti Schell, Winks Kremer with "Bun" and Shelly Feger as they celebrate Winks and Bun named as the hearing guide dog team in July 2007 for Dogs for Life, Inc. a local organization that trains assistance dogs for the hearing impaired and physically challenged.

## YOUR DOG MAY QUALIFY TO TELL YOU:

- The phone is ringing
- Someone is knocking at the door
- The smoke alarm has sounded
- The alarm clock is ringing
- Something is making noise outside



Precious taps an emergency phone for Dan.



Max picks up items Kelly dropped.

## YOUR DOG MAY QUALIFY TO BE TRAINED TO:

- Tap an emergency phone
- Pick up items you drop
- Help pull you up from a chair



Bun alerts Winks to a knock at the door.

DFL, the only agency on the Treasure Coast that trains assistance dogs, your dog in your home.

**Dogs for Life**

Live, Love, Learn

Contact Dogs for Life for additional information.

567-8969 • Vero Beach

18 • WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2007 • LUMINARIES

## BRIGHTLIGHTS

Tania Ortega-Cowan • luminaries@scripps.com

Indian River County



### PET CALENDAR

#### INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

##### MONDAY

Canine Dog Obedience/Behavior Classes. Village Pet Shop, 964 17th St., Vero Beach, 6:30 p.m. Registration: (772) 567-8960.

### The importance of reading

Under the direction of volunteer board members Barbara Levere, Bob Bond, Matt McCain, Marty Zickert, Barbara Mohler, Christina Tascon, Judy Avril, Chris Bieber, Kerry Pirth and Joh Bannitt, the Literacy Services of Indian River County, Inc. has joined forces with the Vero Beach Book Center to create a Fun Family Literacy Festival from 2-4 p.m. on Oct. 13. The event is free and promises to have lots of fun activities at the Vero Beach Children's Book Center. Included will be a talk by popular children's author Leslie McGuirk about her latest Halloween book, a scavenger hunt, cooking with local chef and author Ann Devaney, plus various games, face painting and reading to the Dogs for Life Pet Therapy. Local Hibiscus Pageant winner Jessica Gable will kick off the scavenger hunt at 2 p.m. Call (772) 778-2223 for more information or visit [www.literacyservicesinc.org](http://www.literacyservicesinc.org).

## Program helps returning veterans

BY JOE CRANKSHAW  
joe.crankshaw@scripps.com

**PORT ST. LUCIE** — When Frank Howard came home from the Vietnam War, people spit on him in the street. "They didn't like the war and they didn't like me," he said. Howard did three tours of duty in Vietnam, his last at age 21 as a captain and military adviser to a South Vietnamese Army division.

Now he and his comrades in the American Legion Post 318 of Port St. Lucie, are working to ensure a different reception for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, especially se-

verely wounded men and women.

The post will join others across the country in a program called Heroes to Hometowns, to help communities and the severely wounded embrace one another and to provide a support network for the soldiers and their families. The help, Howard said, could be financial, legal, social services or just someone to talk to during the readjustment from the military to civilian life.

The Department of Defense notifies the post when a local veteran is wounded. It is kept informed of the hospitals to which the wounded war-

rior is sent, and when he may be sent home. The post members then find out the special needs of the service person and their family, then they prepare a welcome-home ceremony and try to meet as many of the family's needs as possible.

The AMVETS also are helping, Howard said.

One of their first efforts will be a fundraiser called Vets Fest, scheduled from 4 to 10 p.m. Saturday at Tradition Field in St. Lucie West.

"We hope to raise about \$15,000 for the fund, and then hold frequent fundraisers in the years ahead. These

### VETS FEST

**Where:** Tradition Field, 527 N.W. Peacock Blvd., St. Lucie West  
**When:** 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday  
**What:** Live entertainment, classic car show, arts, crafts, food, soda  
**Admission:** \$10 per car, \$5 per motorcycle and \$2 per passenger for buses

men and women are going to need help for a very long time," said Howard.

**Treasure**  
SECTION B • MONDAY, S

# The guide TO YOUR WEEKEND

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### SATURDAY

#### Animals

**Dogs for Life:** Off-leash dog park; dogs play for free September-November, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Owners must attend dog park orientation by appointment. (772) 567-8969.

**4-H Dog Masters Club:** For youth ages 8-18, organizational meeting, Dogs for Life Inc. off-leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, 10 a.m., Saturday. (772) 567-8969.  
**Agility/AKC Canine Good Citizen:** Classes. Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 9 a.m. Registration: (772) 567-8969.

**Dogs for Life:** Off-leash dog park; dogs play for free September-November, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Owners must attend dog park orientation by appointment. (772) 567-8969.

## Little Buns gets certified for public access as hearing assistance dog

Dogs for Life trained the 2-year-old Yorkiepoo to perform many tasks for its owner.

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

Dogs for Life Inc., a local nonprofit organization that provides assistance dog training, has certified another hearing guide dog team.

In July, after eight months of training, Claire Kremer and Bun received full public access certification.

From temperament evaluation to basic dog obedience class to alerting to

four different sounds and tapping a 911 emergency phone, Kremer and her almost 2-year-old Yorkiepoo named Bun now hold certification for Bun to accompany her in public places.

After Bun passed her initial temperament screening, and received her AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificate, DFL assistance dog trainers Patti Schell and Shelly Ferger met with Kremer and Bun each week in their home and about town for training sessions.

The first sound Bun was trained to respond to was someone knocking at the door. Bun makes contact with Kremer and takes her to the source of the sound.

The second command was teaching Bun to tap a (made for dogs) 911 phone

in the event of an emergency. Bun then moved on to the sound that is the most fun, jumping up and down on her, waking her when the alarm clock rings.

And, of course recognizing the life-saving sound of the smoke alarm was also perfected during the training process.

DFL trains volunteers and their dogs for pet-assisted therapy and manages the "Best Friends" off-leash dog park on 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

DFL also trains mobility assistance dogs for the physically challenged. Contact our office in Vero Beach at (772) 567-8969, dogsforlifevb@belsouth.net or visit our Web site [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org) for additional information on our programs.



CAROL PENA • Posted on YourHub.com  
Bun, with Claire Kremer, is a Certified Hearing Dog.

## Pet Assisted Therapy Pet Partner Team



Wallace Ferger



## Pet Assisted Therapy Pet Partner Team



Sabrina Ferger

Service Dog  
“Certified” In-Home



Duke

Service Dog  
“Certified”



Max

**Pet Assisted Therapy  
Pet Partner Team**



Sandy Plagens  
& Shiloh



**AUGUST**

# Service Dogs

12 • WEEK OF AUGUST 20, 2007 • LUMINARIES

## BRIGHTLIGHTS

& RED CARPETS

Tania Ortega-Cowan • luminaries@scripps.com



Indian River County

### Best friends for life

Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) is a local non-profit organization that trains assistance dogs for the hearing impaired and physically challenged. President Susan Myers, vice-president Barbara Patten, treasurer Richard Leffew, past president Mim Dunn, Michael Clyne, Sharon Marshall, Lee Munsick, Darrae Norling and Dawn Redstone are the new officers and members for the 2007-2008 Season. They also train volunteers with their dogs for pet-assisted therapy for local schools and senior and children's centers. The group is currently operating the "Best Friends" off leash dog park in Vero Beach. Membership to DFL is open to all who wish to join, and membership to the off leash dog park is open to dogs that are inoculated, neutered and social. Contact them at [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net), or visit [dogsforlifevb.org](http://dogsforlifevb.org).



# Service or balance dogs extend

## disabled person's five senses

The role of service dogs has become much more than as a guide for the visually impaired.

Some dogs are trained to assist people with hearing impairments, alerting them to door bells, telephones, baby cries and other signals.

Many people with disabilities other than vision or hearing are discovering the benefits of a balance or service dog.

Multiple sclerosis typically affects everyday activities such as getting out of bed or



**dis-ABILITIES**  
ALLAN APPEL

using a chair. Fatigue is a common symptom of MS. These dogs can be trained to sense when a person is tired and gently nudge the handler to a chair or sofa.

Service dogs can perform other common tasks, including picking up dropped items, such as a pen or keys, or turn-

ing on or off lights in the house. They can be trained to push buttons in an elevator or guide someone from room to room.

The dogs can even be trained to discreetly hide under a table in a restaurant. Yes, these service dogs have every right to be anywhere a person can be.

Some of the more common breeds trained as balance dogs are golden retrievers and Labrador retrievers, but many other breeds have been found

to be suitable.

A number of important factors need to be considered when deciding about a balance dog. Most important is determining the handler's ability to care for the dog. Think seriously about whether the person's level of disability warrants the use of such an animal.

A thorough health screening of the dog must also be done, as well as considering the dog's temperament.

Balance dogs can be ob-

tained from several sources, including dog breeders, breed clubs or referrals from local veterinarians.

The cost to obtain such a dog can vary dramatically as well, depending on the source. Contact a local chapter of an organization serving people with disabilities (e.g., MS Society, Easter Seals, etc.) for information about financial assistance that may be available.

Assistance dog organizations are incredible sources of information about every as-

pect of owning this kind of special animal. Check out the Web sites of The International Association of Assistance Dog Partners ([www.iaadp.org](http://www.iaadp.org)), Assistance Dogs International ([www.assistedogsinternational.com](http://www.assistedogsinternational.com)) and The Assistance Dog Trainer's Network ([www.thedogsite.org/new](http://www.thedogsite.org/new)).

Write Allan Appel c/o Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, 1939 S. Federal Highway, P.O. Box 9009, Stuart, FL 34994, or e-mail at [aappel223@yahoo.com](mailto:aappel223@yahoo.com).

## Service animals alert humans

### to impending medical emergency



MATTHEW RATAJCZAK • matthew.ratajczak@scripps.com

Don Pichie and his dog Sam are greeted by waitress Betty Wasson at J.J. Plum's Cafe II in Fort Pierce on Friday morning during breakfast. Pichie, who has diabetes, takes Sam with him everywhere he goes after learning he can tell when his blood sugar is low.

#### ABOUT SERVICE ANIMALS

**What is a service animal?** Florida Law F.S. 413.08 defines service animals as those trained to assist humans covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act in seeing, hearing, detecting seizures and other medical conditions. A service animal may be a dog, but it could also be other species including monkeys. In one case, a miniature pony is classified as a service animal.

**What do service animals do?** They act as guide dogs (seeing eyes), pull wheelchairs, alert deaf people to sounds and detect medical conditions.

**Who certifies service animals?** There is no national certification, and disabled persons with service dogs may not be asked to show proof of a dog's training. The animals are covered by state law, which specifies guidelines for their behavior. Nonprofit organizations such as Service Animals Registry of America in Midlothian, Texas, will register animals in a national database.

#### LOCAL TRAINING

There is one agency on the Treasure Coast, Dogs For Life in Vero Beach, that provides in-home training for service dogs, after they have been screened for temperament. The nonprofit agency operates mainly in Indian River County. Call Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

BY JOE CRANKSHAW  
joe.crankshaw@scripps.com

**WHITE CITY** — Sam is a smart dog, maybe smarter than most. At least that is what Don and Dawne Pichle of Dunn Road think.

Sam warns Don, 63, whenever his blood sugar level drops dangerously. For a diabetic, that can be an important warning.

"Before we had Sam," said Dawne, 55, "Don would have as many incidents as 20 times a year."

As an insulin-dependent diabetic, Don Pichle needs to keep a close watch on his blood sugar level, which can fluctuate on an hourly basis. If the level drops too low, he could go into a coma. If he happened to be driving, the results could be catastrophic. Diabetics normally test their blood sugar levels at least one to three times a day, but they can be distracted like anyone else, and forget to check.

Now Sam does the checking almost automatically. "And we haven't had one emergency since we got him," said Dawne.

Sam is a fluffy white bichon frise given to the Pichles by a Stuart friend who rescues dogs.

"We didn't do anything to

train him," said Don. "He showed us his talent. He started sniffing, licking and whining around me but it took a while to catch on that he was trying to warn me."

The couple took him to obedience school and had him certified as a service dog. Now Sam goes everywhere with Don. He rides along in the truck, goes into restaurants, bars and other places while Don works on chairs and bar stools.

Sometimes there are problems because store and restaurant owners don't want Sam inside. "They think only 'seeing eye' or guide dogs are covered by Florida's laws," said

Don, "but Sam and a lot of other dogs are included."

No one seems sure how Sam or other service dogs do what they do. Scientists at Auburn University's School of Veterinary Medicine in Alabama,

Florida State University's Sensory Research Institute and University of Florida's School of Veterinary Medicine are studying service dogs. But no one is certain whether they read body language or detect scents associated with medical problems.

Shelly Ferger, who operates

Dogs for Life in Vero Beach, said she thinks service dogs, such as Sam, use odors exuded by the patient as their cue.

In England, physicians say they are using dogs in the early detection of cancer but

they cannot explain how dogs accomplish their tasks.

Don Pichle isn't certain how Sam does his job, nor about the scientific debate over what dogs are doing.

## Winks and Bun Certify as Hearing Guide Dog Team with Dogs for Life, Inc.



Winks and Bun

Your dog may qualify as an assistance dog, contact Dogs for Life, Inc.

Bun Alerts Winks to:

- Someone knocking at the door
- A phone ringing
- The smoke alarm
- The alarm clock



**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

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772.567.8969 • www.dogsforlifefvb.org  
Off-Leash Dog Park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue

# Dog Park

BB • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2007



SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS  
Newspapers in Education



Especially

for

kids

and their

families



## The Mini Page

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Created by BETTY DEBNAM

### Hound Heaven

## Dog Parks! Bow WOW!

Does your family own a dog? About one in every three households owns at least one dog, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Where does your dog get to play? Lucky dogs get to run in a backyard. But for big dogs, a backyard may not be enough space. Dogs that live in big cities may not even have a backyard.

Dog lovers have found a way to let their pets play. They are building special dog parks across the country.

### What is a dog park?

A dog park is a public place set aside for dogs to run and play while off their leashes. It is also a place where humans can enjoy a parklike setting with other people and dogs.

Most communities today have leash laws, and dogs are not allowed to run free in the neighborhood. Dog parks offer a safe, open place for dogs to be off-leash.

Dog parks are often fenced-in parts of people parks where dogs can explore bugs, wild animals, grasses, trees and water, and where they can play with other dogs.



Many dog parks offer a stream or lake for dogs to play in. Some even border the ocean.



These dogs are meeting at a dog park. Dogs learn to play nicely with other dogs, while their human companions get a chance to visit with other pet owners.

### Benefits for all

Experts say dog parks are great for dogs and people, too. Some of the benefits include:

- Dogs can exercise safely. Dogs need room to run. In cities, traffic can be a danger to dogs. Dog parks give them enough space to run without having to dodge cars.

- Dogs can play with other dogs. Experts say dogs are not usually aggressive in dog parks. This may surprise people who see their dogs barking and growling at other dogs at home.

But in the dog park, dogs usually realize they don't own that space. Whenever they are in it, there are other dogs. They don't have to defend their territory there.

- Dogs can run free without bothering people who are using the rest of the park for other things, such as jogging or biking.

- Dogs are healthier. Exercise is good for dogs as well as people. If a dog is allowed to run freely, it will stay fit.

- Dog owners can socialize. It can be easier to start talking with strangers in a dog park, because everyone there shares some interests. Experts say talking about dogs can break the ice.

- Dogs who go to dog parks are often better behaved. Healthy, happy dogs don't bark as much at home. They aren't as bored, so they aren't as likely to destroy property back home.

# THE MIGHTY FUNNY'S Mini Jokes

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

**Percy:** What are dogs afraid of when they go to the animal hospital?  
**Parker:** A cat scan!

**Pippin:** How are a dog and a marine biologist alike?  
**Paul:** One wags his tail and the other tags a whale!

**Peggy:** What did the greyhound say when he came in last in the race?  
**Perry:** "Last, but not leashed!"

## Dog Parks

Words that remind us of dog parks are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: RUN, LEASH, PLAY, YARD, PEOPLE, FREE, PUBLIC, SAFE, OPEN, FENCE, OUTDOORS, EXERCISE, TERRITORY, HEALTHY, TALKING, CITIZENS, BARK, STREAM, WATER, PLAYGROUND, CALM.

MY DOG LOVES TO PLAY!



P Y F B M L C S N E Z I T I C  
 E N A R A D N U O R G Y A L P  
 O W V R E R S R O O D T U O W  
 P A O R D E K K C I L B U P S  
 L T P Y A L P Y H T L A E H A  
 E E E M L A C K M A E R T S F  
 M R N N U R G N I K L A T M E  
 E C N E F E S I C R E X E X C  
 M H S A E L Y R O T I R R E T

## Mini Spy ...

Mini Spy loves to meet up with her dog's friends at the dog park. See if you can find:

- exclamation point
- question mark
- horse's head
- tooth
- owl
- mug
- umbrella
- wizard
- football
- letter J
- frog
- cat
- mushroom
- letter E
- number 3
- word MINI

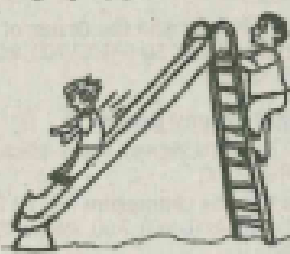


# More About Dog Parks

## Doggie do's and don'ts

It is important that dogs and humans be good citizens when using a dog park. Here are some things to be aware of:

• Remember, a dog park is the dog's playground. It is not a



playground for children. Children probably have their own playground in a

different part of the park.

Kids need to learn how to act in a dog park. Many dogs are not used to being around people who are loud and energetic. If kids are running around and making lots of noise, dogs could be scared.

Dogs may not know they have to play differently with small children than with dogs. They may chase a running child or jump up on a child, just as they would with another dog. This could scare the child, even though the dog is just playing.

• If you see a dog coming toward you, stand still with your hands at your sides. Be calm.



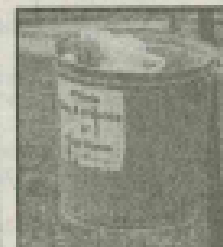
This boy is playing with his dog in a dog park outside Seattle. It is important for children to be calm and quiet in a dog park, or dogs may get too excited.

Many dog parks do not allow children at all. When children are allowed, they should always be with an adult.

• Never touch a strange dog without the owner's permission.  
 • Do not feed someone else's dog. Even dog treats might be bad for some dogs. Also, the dog could accidentally nip at kids' fingers when getting the treat.

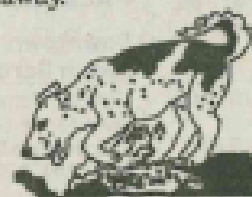


These dogs are having fun chasing each other around an adult's legs, but a small child could get knocked over or scared by running dogs.



• Pick up after your dog. Most people who use dog parks police the park. They pick up their dog's waste and remind others to do so too. They know if they don't take care of the park, they might lose the privilege. Many dog parks provide plastic bags for dog waste.

• Owners are responsible for dogs that are too aggressive. If your dog does not play well with others, it should be put on a leash and taken away.



• Don't let your dog dig holes in the park.



Most parks have rules to protect dogs and people.

The Mini Page thanks Judy Trockel, Serve Our Dog Areas, King County, Wash.; Ruth Schaefer, senior ecologist with King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Seattle, Wash.; and Daisy Okas, American Kennel Club, for help with this issue.

Sites to see: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)  
[www.soda.org](http://www.soda.org)

Look through your newspaper for stories and pictures of pets.



Put your dog's leash back on as soon as you leave the dog park.

Next week, The Mini Page is about our presidents' education.



**JULY**

# Assisted Therapy Program



Living, Loving, Learning

Pet Assisted Therapy Program

Date  
Name  
Title CEO  
Organization  
Address  
City/State/Zip  
Phone

Dear ,

We are delighted at the prospect of providing a Pet Assisted Therapy program for your facility.

Using animals as comfort items for children, senior and medical facilities in therapy and education is a relatively new concept. We find that having a clear understanding between our organization and volunteers, and you and your staff, helps things go smoothly and avoids potential difficulties. Our teams receive extensive training and must go through detailed reparation for each visit, and they do their best to conduct themselves with sensitivity and professionalism.

With those things in mind, here is what your organization can expect from us and what we expect from you in return:

Dogs for Life, Inc. and our volunteer teams will:

1. Assure that all our visiting teams will be registered and certified with Dogs for Life, Inc.
2. Assure that all animals will be clean and well-groomed, up-to-date on all vaccinations and health related needs, including coat, ears, and teeth.
3. Comply with all your organizations policies and procedures and undergo orientation for volunteers as required or desired.
4. Assure that our volunteers are competent dog handlers.
5. Assure that our volunteers understand the importance of confidentiality and agree to sign a confidentiality form if desired.
6. Provide teams to work with your organization on the days/times agreed upon.
7. Provide all appropriate equipment for handling, including but not limited to collar, leads and clean up supplies.
8. Let you know if we must cancel or postpone a session due to illness or emergency.
9. Not visit if an animal is showing signs of illness, skin lesions or undue stress.
10. Always seek permission before taking photographs; request permission to use photos elsewhere and obtain written releases if permission is granted.
11. Never be alone with any student, or leave the organizations premises with student(s) unless:
12. 1) accompanied by staff and 2) release has been obtained by the organization.
13. Provide or participate in documentation and client progress as requested by your organization.
14. Report any incident to you and your staff follow reporting and documentation protocol as required by your organization.
15. Conduct an evaluation of our program with your organization at least once per year.

The \_\_\_\_\_ and staff will:

1. Provide Pet Therapy teams with appropriate orientation, not only for general policies and procedure but also 1) what if an incident occurs, 2) where animals may appropriately relieve themselves, etc.
2. Always provide a staff person to accompany our teams.
3. Provide briefing to the team before each session.
4. Participate in periodic de-briefing with our teams.
5. Agree to provide us with information regarding DFL participation in this program at the beginning of the program and at the end, to help us add to our research results about the value of the Trauma Dog program.
6. Let our Volunteer Coordinator know in advance if you need to cancel or reschedule any visits.
7. Notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any illnesses among your clients that may threaten the health of the handler and animal (e.g., lice, chicken pox, measles, etc.)
8. Let our Volunteer Coordinator know if any problem occurs with any of our volunteer teams (person or animal).

Our programs are most successful when there is a strong and healthy coloration between our teams and your staff, with lots of feedback going both ways. We are looking forward to the opportunity to bring the therapeutic benefits of therapy animals to your organization.

Agree:

For \_\_\_\_\_ Organization

Dogs for Life, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
signed  
(print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
signed  
(print name)

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



Living, Loving, Learning

**Pet Assisted Therapy Program  
Certification Guidelines  
July 2007**

The Dogs for Life, Inc. Pet Assisted Therapy Program consists of the "READ to Dogs" program and the "Trauma Therapy Dog" Program.

This is a Volunteer based program where members of the public participate with their own dogs.

The Certification Guidelines for each program are as follows:

1. Each volunteer is to complete a DFL Application.
2. Each volunteer is to complete a DFL Protocol and Rules of Etiquette form.
3. Each volunteer and their dog (if no previous obedience training) will attend a public basic obedience/behavior class.
4. Each volunteer and their dog will attend an AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) preparation Class. (This is a ten step test that evaluates the dog's obedience training, sociability and reliability). These classes are open to the general public.
5. Each volunteer and their dog are required to pass the AKC CGC test. (exception Pocket Pets)
6. Each volunteer and their dog are required to pass a DFL Public Access test.
7. Each volunteer will attend a DFL Therapy Preparation Class that will cover the following:
  - a) The Therapy Handlers Responsibility
    - i. Human/Animal Interactions - The dog and handler's role in the therapy program,
    - ii. How to handle and get out of problem situations,
    - ii. How to recognize stress in dogs and volunteers,
    - iii. How to prepare for your therapy visit.
8. If training for Health Care Facilities, each volunteer and their dog will attend an orientation with the medical facility coordinator.
9. Each volunteer and their dog will accompany a Certified Pet Assisted Therapy team on at least one visit to a DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Program.





Pet Assisted Therapy  
Programs Outline  
May 2004

"READ to Dogs"

- Increases literacy skills
- Results in fewer absences
- Raises excitement about reading
- Children have a greater desire to read
- Improves reading scores
- Increases confidence in reading out loud
- Increases self-esteem
- Teaches empathy for animals

"Trauma Therapy Dogs"

- Informal positive animal contact with no specific goals
- Documented with client with patient progress measured
- Teaches how to set appropriate limits and boundaries
- Teaches responsibility, social skills and compassion
- Builds trust, nurturing, play, communication and mental stimulation
- Improves willingness to participate in group interactions with peers and staff
- Less anxious behavior
- Less withdrawn behaviors
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Fosters, affection, empathy, courage, self acceptance and hope

Potential activities to promote emotional healing:

- Counseling sessions that involve dogs can roll play with homeless dogs and "their story"
- Specifics to homeless people vs. homeless dogs and a shelter environment. i.e. what dogs may feel when homeless, how surviving homelessness can help others.

Statistics show therapy with animals yields better behavior, increased calmness, decreased aggression, increased social interaction and increased cooperation.

**Dogs for Life, Inc.**  
**Volunteer Application**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list qualifications that may benefit Dogs for Life Programs:

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you own a Dog? Y N Would you be interested in your dog participating in DFL Programs? Y N

Dog's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Male Female Neutered: Y N Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your dog have any medical problems?: Y N

If yes explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you obtain your pet?: \_\_\_\_\_

How does your dog react when approached by a stranger?: \_\_\_\_\_

How does your dog react when approached by another dog?: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you describe your dog as: (circle as many as may apply)

SWEET HAPPY SHY BOLD FEARFUL AGGRESSIVE

I understand that participation in any Dogs for Life, Inc program is not without risk to myself, members of my family or guests. I understand that some of the dogs to which I (we) may be exposed to may be the cause of injury even when handled with the greatest amount of care.

I hereby waive and release, Dogs for Life, Inc. Shelly Ferger, Canine Behavior trainer, her employees, or agents from any and all liability of any nature, for injury or damage which I or my dog may suffer, including specifically, but not without limitations, any injury or damage resulting from the action of any dog, and I expressly assume the risk of any such damage or injury while attending Dogs for Life, programs, or any other function of the Dog Park, or the 4-H Dog Master's Club, or while on the training grounds or the surrounding area thereto.

Signature of Applicant

Date



Living, Loving, Learning

### Protocol for Pet Assisted Therapy Programs

Volunteers are required to: Complete and sign a Volunteer Application and Rules of Etiquette agreement and attend a DFL Therapy Preparation Class which includes the following: Dogs for Life, Inc. Point of Entry Presentation, How Animals are used in therapy and Health Benefits of Animals. Assistance Animals vs. Therapy Animals. DFL Policies and Procedures when visiting a facility – Helpful hints for visits - Handling difficult situations – Techniques for preventing and handling injuries – Situations that require reporting – When not to take your animal on a visit – How to handle your animal when visiting and when leaving – How to recognize and reduce stress in people – how to prevent, recognize and relieve stress in dogs. The Soothing Touch. R.E.A.D. Articles: The Essential Prerequisites - Basic Training & Tools – While with your readers – R.E.A.D. in Alternative Settings - Supporting young readers "General Tools for the Handler".

Dogs required to: Pass an AKC Canine Good Citizen Test and a Public Access Test.

### Rules of Etiquette

I understand that Pet Assisted Therapy Animals **do not** have the same legal access rights as Assistance Animals.

Pet Therapy dogs may have public access only if arrangements are made by a DFL Representative with management of a facility or business prior to taking therapy dogs to public places.

Dogs for Life, Inc. trains and certifies Assistance Dogs as well as providing Pet Therapy opportunities to the community. **DFL will not jeopardize Assistance Dog Access rights by having our therapy dog handlers not abide by the law.**

When attending a pre-arranged facility I will sign-in and out. I will also agree to complete a Program Report after each visit.

### DFL Therapy dog handlers must agree to the following Rules of Etiquette:

**You must treat people with kindness and respect confidentiality at all times.** You must be prepared to clean up after your dog at all times. Do not take your dog to programs if they are not feeling well, re: vomiting, diarrhea, sudden behavior changes. Your dog must be clean at all times during therapy visits. Your dog must be up to date on all inoculations. You must handle your dog humanely at all times and protect them from unknown or unstable environments. Dogs will not be handled roughly or corrected while in public places. Dogs must be on a sit stay or a down stay command prior to anyone petting the dog. You will wear your DFL Volunteer shirt and your dog will wear its DFL scarf or vest at all times when representing DFL programs.

If I cannot attend my pre-scheduled program I will notify The DFL Volunteer Coordinator or Facility to which I am scheduled.

I agree to the terms listed above: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. Box 650023 • Vero Beach, Florida 32965 • 772.567.8969

Logo designed and donated by DHI Visual Communication



**MAY**

# Be Kind to Animals Week

## PROCLAMATION

HONORING BE KIND TO ANIMALS WEEK  
MAY 6-12, 2007

WHEREAS, May 6-12, the first full week of May, has been established by the American Humane Association as the annual celebration of the philosophy of kindness to animals for the 93rd year in 2007; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that we have been endowed not only with the blessings and benefits of our animal friends, who give us companionship and great pleasure in our daily lives, but also with a firm responsibility to protect these fellow creatures from pain and suffering by educating citizens on the importance of responsible ownership; and

WHEREAS, Dogs for Life, Inc. a non-profit organization is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance and pet therapy dogs; and

WHEREAS, Dogs for Life, Inc. as part of the "Unleashed" Community Campaign is inviting citizens with dogs that are inoculated, neutered and social, to a free day at Dogs for Life's Off-Leash Dog Park, at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vero Beach on May 12, 2007.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA that may 6-12, 2007 is designated as "BE KIND TO ANIMALS WEEK" in Indian River County.

Adopted this 8<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2007.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,  
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA



*Gary C. Wheeler*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary C. Wheeler, Chairman

*Sandra L. Bowden*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra L. Bowden, Vice Chairman

*Wesley S. Davis*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wesley S. Davis

*Joseph E. Flescher*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph E. Flescher

*Peter D. O'Bryan*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter D. O'Bryan

# Park Donors



## Indian River County

SECTION B • TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2007 • TCPALM.COM

### Without donors, dog park is in the doghouse

BY ELLIOTT JONES  
elljones@scripps.com

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY** — Mimi, the young springer spaniel, comes to her owner, retiree Eleanor Bengyak, daily at 5 p.m. and makes some low noises, indicating it is time to go home.

"She's the belle of the park," said Bengyak of the private, off-leash dog park they go to across the street on 18th Avenue.

"The other dogs like to play with her," as Bengyak, 69, and her husband, Victor, 62, sit on the benches.

These good times could end.

Despite being in a leash-on county with about 40,000 dogs, the only private off-leash dogs-run-free park could close. The Dogs for Life group faces closing its park in July, unless it can come up with \$225,000 to buy the 4½-acre lot located at the corner of 12th Street and 18th Avenue in Vero Beach, said the group's executive director Shelly Forger.

So far, her 100-family organization has raised \$20,000 of the property's \$275,000 asking price.

"We are at a last-ditch effort," she said, adding up to 18 dogs run in the park daily.

The lease ends July 14.

Originally, the park was planned to close in February, but an anonymous donor offered the full purchase price. That offer, however, was recently withdrawn because of limitations on the trust from which the money would have come, Forger said.

"That put us right back where we were in February, facing closing the park," she said.

If her park closes, the only remaining off-leash park is on city-owned land at Vero Beach's MacWilliam Park near the east end of the Merrill Barber Bridge.

Otherwise, most dog owners apparently prefer to just take their pets for walks in neighborhoods where they are supposed to be on leashes, said Indian River Animal Control Manager Jason Ogilvie.

MacWilliam Park is open to all dogs for free, sunny to sundown, a city official said.

Dogs for Life members pay \$80 a year for a facility where dogs are screened for being sociable and neutered or spayed. Or people may pay \$200 for six months. But the fees ap-

pear to be too high for most people.

To boost membership, the group has started allowing people to pay a \$18 a day pay-as-you-go plan on either Wednesday or Saturday, when an attendant is available. To use that option, people need to pay a \$25 registration fee. Dogs used as guides are admitted for free.

Forger says fees could be kept lower if her group owned the land and didn't have a \$3,000-a-year lease.

What paying members get is a private, fenced park where their dogs can run free, helping maintain the dogs' health, she said. The eight-year-old park has \$100,000 in improvements including landscaping, she said.

"There is no other place like it," she said.

For more information or to make a donation, contact Forger at (772) 567-8268.

If the park closes, "My dog would be lost without it," Bengyak said.

The other alternative would be buying another dog to keep Mimi company at home. She and her ailing husband would be afraid to take her dog for a walk elsewhere.

#### INDIAN RIVER COUNTY'S DOG LEASH RULES:

- Under the county's leash law, dogs are supposed to be on a leash except when on the owner's land or on property the owner has permission to use. The county also enforces those rules in the cities of Sebastian and Fellsmere. Vero Beach and Indian River Shores have similar rules.
- Ornduff recently passed an ordinance allowing dogs either on leash or under voice control of the owner on the beaches.
- About half of the county's 500 general dog-law citations are for dogs being off-leash. The remainder are for not having a county dog tag.
- First-time violators are warned. Repeat violators can face a \$75 fine or be ordered to appear before a county judge.
- "The reason we require leashes is to keep people from being bit, dogs fighting and yards being messed up," says Jason Ogilvie, manager of Indian River Animal Control.

Indian River Animal Control

## Judy Saucerman

**From:** Dogs For Life [DogsForLifeVB@bellsouth.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 22, 2007 4:05 PM  
**To:** 4-H Cletzer, David A; 4-H Violet; 4-H Kelly-Begazo, Christine A; Adache, Marcia; Amstutz, Holly; Anderson, Delphine; Andrews, Jean; barkavenuepetspecialties@yahoo.com; Bartkus, Ellen; Bartlett, Kerry; Bell, Dan & Maryanne; Bengyak, Elinor; Berg, Tracy; Bodnar, Barbara; Bogin, Wenda; Brown, Lisa; Brown, Pat; Burnett, Ed; Campbell, Sally; Carlson, Gay; Chandler, Penny; Chapman, Shirley; Clyne, Mike; Collins, Clay; Colmey, Kelly; Constantino, Brenda; Cornell, Deborah; Cousin, Laura; Cousins, Bobbie; Cunningham, Hugh; DeBlase, Toni; Dill, Holly; DiSarro, Shara; Driver, Laura; Dunn, Mim; Dupree, Dr & Phyl; Emerson, Betsy; English, Sharon; Feger, Helen; Ford, Anne; Fretwell, Bethany; Greenbaum, Barbara; Hale, Steve; Hatch, Mary Margaret; Hinzman-Mills, Terri; Hometown News; House, Debbie; Husted, Jane; Jacobson, Judy; Jaffee, Liz; Kelly, Audrey; Kenyon, France; King, Pam; Knight, Marilyn; Kremer, Clare; LaPine, Fran; Lee, Kathy; Leflew, Richard; LoPresti, Etta; Lowenstein, Sheila; Marshall, Duane; Marshall, Sharon; McDonald, Ellen; Mclugh, Jean; Miller, Carl; Mitchell, Mary; Montgomery, Gayle; Munsick, Lee; Myers, Susan; Nelson, Maria; Norling, Darrae; Patten, Barbara; Pena, Carol; Petersen, Charlotte; Plagens, Sandy; Redstone, Dawn; Richards, Mark; Riley, Janet; Ritchie, Lenora; Ruma, Kay; Saucerman, Judy; Saucerman, Stormie; Schell, Patti; Schlitt, Craig; Schober, Alberta; Severt, Janet; Sheppard, Faye; Smith, L&H; Smith, Merlene; Smith, Michelle; Snell, Dr. Molly; Spirakus, Doris; Stevens, Connie; Stryker, Beth; Sullivan, Nikki; Swift, Macy; Thompson, Barbara; Tripson, Melissa; VanHooser, Paula; VB Printing; Westphalen, Sally; Whitney, Ann; Whittle, Maria; Wilson, Rich & Laura; Woodruff, Jocelyn; Yount, Susan  
**Cc:** Dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** DFL Dog Park Update

As most of you are probably aware, after a month long dialogue with Elliott Jones at the Press Journal, DFL's effort to print an article to help save the off-leash dog park was finally printed today on the front of the Indian River County section.

What the article did not say (even though it was reported by DFL to Mr. Jones) is that DFL is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible non-profit organization that manages the off-leash dog park in an effort to help subsidize their assistance dog and pet therapy dog training programs that provide services to hearing and mobility impaired residents as well as non profit children and senior centers in Vero Beach.

Mr. Jones also quoted a "city official" as saying the city operated dog park was open from sunup to sundown. I have just been informed by VB City Recreation Dept that the hours of the city dog park operation are 5:30 AM to 8 AM. And, he failed to mention that the city dog park is not fenced and located next to a busy marina and public street. He did mention three times however that the DFL dog park is "private". The DFL Dog Park is open to the public that have qualifying dogs (inoculated, neutered and social), are willing to follow the rules and pay a membership fee. (all parks have to be managed and maintained).

Over the past eight years, DFL has come to realize that membership fees will not continue to pay expenses at the dog park. In an effort to keep the dog park open we are looking for the community to donate the needed funds (\$275,000) to purchase the property so that we may offer a more affordable membership fee thereby increasing the number of dogs and people in the community that may access an established, safe and well managed dog park.

Elliott did report on the positive effects a dog park has for the senior population in a

5/22/2007

community, affording them a safe place to exercise their dogs that otherwise would not allow them the benefit of owning a dog.

DFL also realizes that a community that supports a dog park makes a statement that it is a better place to live.

The Good News is that just today TV 10 filmed a segment at the park that will air tonight between 9 PM - 11 PM.

WTTB has asked for a phone interview to air on their station Thursday at 8:15 AM

And, just today DFL has received a \$10,000 and a \$25,000 pledge toward the dog park purchase.

Thank you to each of you to help spread the word on DFL's community programs and WHY we want to save the DFL Off-leash dog park.

Sincerely,  
Shelly



Shelly Feger  
Executive Director  
Dogs for Life, Inc.  
PO Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965  
(772) 567-8969

# VERO BEACH Hometown

## Drive started to keep dog park open

By WARREN KAGARISE  
Staff writer

VERO BEACH — Throw them a bone.

In February, members of Dogs for Life had been promised a hefty donation to keep their off-leash dog park open.

But late last month, the anonymous donor said the promised \$275,000 would not be delivered, due to unspecified limitations with the trust that would have funded the donation.

"Due to trust limitations," said Shelly Ferger, the executive director of Dogs for Life. "Those words will go down in infamy."

The park, located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, near Vero Beach High School, is the city's only off-leash park. Its members founded the park a

# News

Friday, May 11, 2007



Dogs romp at the Dogs For Life off-leash dog park in Vero Beach earlier this spring. The park, which features a canine-level water fountain, could be sold if its members do not raise \$275,000 to buy the site. The park is located near the intersection of 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

Photo courtesy of Michael Clyne of Dogs For Life

## Park

From page A1

decade ago.

Ms. Ferger, though grateful that the money was promised initially, said her members are ready to raise the necessary cash to purchase the park.

"This organization knows how to rally and we've been through an awful lot in the past year," she said.

The park's owner has offered the land to Dogs for Life for \$275,000 — a bargain, Ms. Ferger said. Dogs for Life has until July 15 to purchase the land at that price, she added.

The organization can stay at the park rent-free until Dec. 1.

Though the property is not yet on the market, Ms. Ferger said the owner "wanted to get out of the dog park business."

The decision between the owner and Dogs for Life was amiable, Ms. Ferger said.

To raise money to buy the

park; Dogs for Life launched a fundraising and membership drive in late April.

The organization is offering "collarships," a way for "good dogs with meager means" to enroll at the dog park, Ms. Ferger said.

Additionally, members have hosted fundraisers at their homes.

On Saturday, the park will open its gates for free, part of the effort to lure new members.

Ms. Ferger describes the park's benefits as twofold: The open space allows members' dogs space to play, but Dogs for Life also trains its assistance dogs at the site.

"We'll train our dogs in the parking lot if we have to," Ms. Ferger said.

Assistance dogs are trained to help their owners with everyday tasks that age or illness have made difficult.

For instance, the dogs can pick up dropped keys or dial 911 on a modified phone.

Rufus, a 3-year-old golden retriever, is trained to revive Michael Clyne after a seizure by licking his face and hands until Mr. Clyne gives him a series of verbal commands.

When Mr. Clyne moved to Vero Beach with his wife last June, they looked for a house with a large, fenced yard where Rufus could play. But when their efforts turned out to be fruitless, they relied on the off-leash park.

And as his dog romped with other pooches, Mr. Clyne found friends among fellow owners.

"I've met more people there than anywhere else in Vero Beach by a long shot," said Mr. Clyne, a member of the Dogs for Life board of directors.

If the park closed, "I'd be hit pretty hard," he said.

For more information about Dogs for Life, or to make a donation, contact the organization at (772) 567-8969 or visit [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org).

# VERO BEACH Hometown News

Your Local News & Information Source • [www.HometownNewsOL.com](http://www.HometownNewsOL.com)

FRIDAY, April 13, 2007

## Dog lovers hope to fetch funds for off-leash park

By WARREN KAGARISE  
Staff Writer

VERO BEACH — It was Valentine's Day, and Shelly Ferger was heartbroken.

The dog park she had helped open a decade ago was being forced to close, its members no longer able to afford the 2.5-acre stretch of grass.

Ms. Ferger, the executive director of Dogs for Life, was about to receive a sweet surprise: A \$275,000 donation from an anonymous donor that would allow Ms. Ferger and park members to keep the facility open.

"I felt like it was something that was meant to be," Ms. Ferger said.

The donor, who wants to be identified only as the

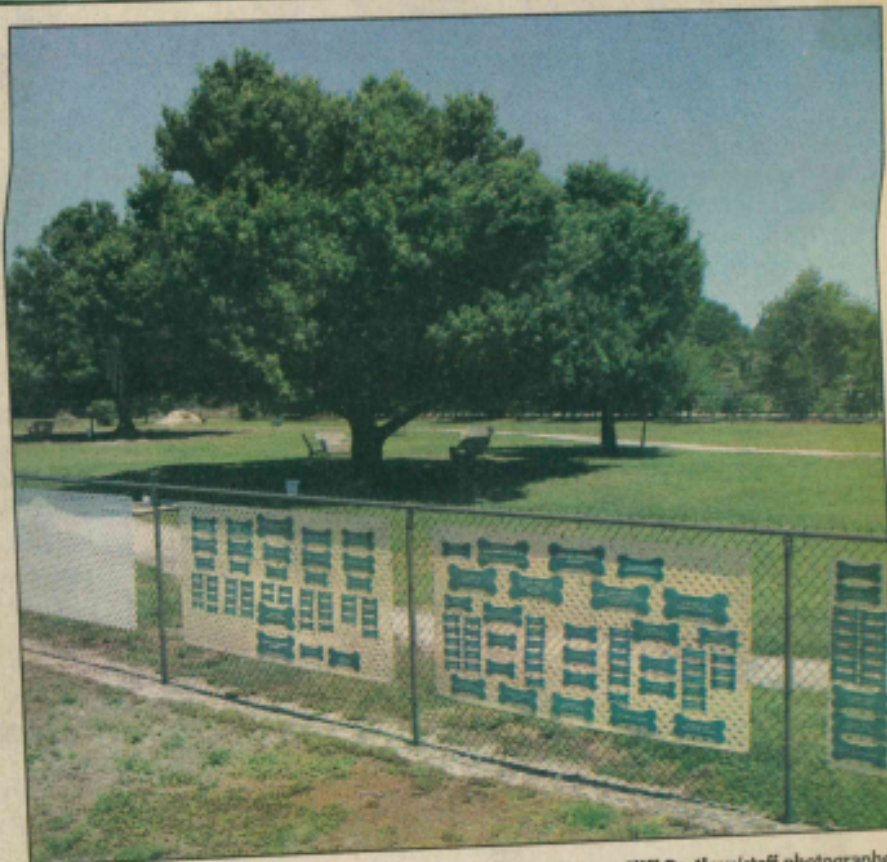
owner of dogs named Pucini and Ty, was inspired by the members' efforts to keep the park running.

Now, Dogs for Life has launched a fundraising push to improve the park and increase its membership.

The park has between 150 and 180 members, Ms. Ferger said.

The first fundraising event, held on April 5, drew about 30 people to Laura and David Driver's Vero Beach home.

The Drivers' 3-year-old black Lab, Brent, greeted guests. As a pianist played, humans and canines mingled in the living room and on the patio, checking out items for sale in the



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

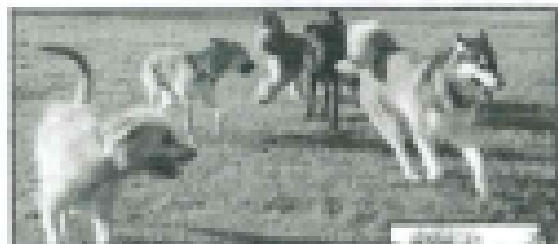
The Dogs For Life off-leash dog park at the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue offers a wide-open area for dogs and their owners to enjoy some free time together.

▶ See OFF-LEASH, A2

## Your Dog could qualify for Dog Park Memberships

NEW COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM pay-as-you-go

qualifying dogs must be inoculated, neutered & social



Join the off-leash Dog Park and enjoy watching your dog run & play



Dog Park Member of the Month  
Rufus Clyne

### DOGS FOR LIFE, INC. OFF-LEASH DOG PARK

12th St. & 16th Ave., Vero Beach

Pay-as-you-go Memberships:

\$25/Orientation, \$10/Wed 10am & Sat 2pm

Unlimited usage (during daylight hours)

\$200/ 6-Month Membership

\$300/ Annual Membership (2nd dog 1/2 price)

**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

Call (772) 567-8969  
to schedule orientation

Next Dog Obedience,  
Agility Training Class begins May 5.

## Off-leash

From page A1

evening's silent auction.

"This is to let people know that Vero Beach's only off-leash park needs support," Mrs. Driver said.

The park, located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, near Vero Beach High School, is a grassy expanse dotted with trees.

In addition to the fundraising effort, Dogs for Life is trying to lure new members with a new membership option: \$25 to register and \$10 per visit.

An annual membership to the park costs \$300. Six-month memberships are \$200.

Ms. Ferger and other members hope to construct a building on the grounds where they can hold obedience classes and train the service and assistance dogs that are key to their mission.

Two assistance dogs attended the Thursday night event at the Driver home, wearing green vests that cautioned, "Please Don't Pet Me, I'm Working."

Assistance dogs are trained to help their owners with everyday tasks that have become difficult due to age or illness. They can, for instance, pick up dropped keys or dial 911 on a modified phone.

Service dogs aid people with disabilities, acting as guide dogs for the blind or signal dogs for the deaf.

Under the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, anyone is allowed to train a dog to help someone with a disability, Ms. Ferger.

Demand for these specialized pooches is high.

"We have taken dogs off the street and trained them as assistance dogs," Ms. Ferger said.

At the fundraiser, Anne Whitney, who teaches art at Saint Edward's School, exhibited renderings of dogs that her students had created.

"They had a blast with it," she said.

For a \$10 donation, guests could leave with a thoughtful charcoal Chihuahua or a pen-and-ink terrier.

Ms. Whitney takes Beemer, her spitz-spaniel mix, to the off-leash park. While Beemer romps with his fellow dogs, his owner gets to unwind with friends.

"It's just as much fun for us to socialize as it is for the dogs to socialize," Ms. Whitney said.

For more information about Dogs for Life or to become a member of the off-leash dog park, visit [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org).



## Off-Leash Dog Park Saved

Dogs are simply good creatures. They love us with no strings attached, are patient with us when we are not with them, and almost magically lift our spirits. It is little wonder that even angels want to spend time among these pure souls.

That must be why angels arrived at "those DFL gates"!

As they will tell you, the role of Guardian Angel is not to be taken lightly, especially when it involves saving a certain off-leash dog park from having to close forever. For two such angels however, it was as easy as just being themselves... a three pound Yorkie and a feisty little Maltese. The angel team with names Puccini and Ty put their winning ways into high gear, and with cold noses gave just a little nudge... proving once again how strong and valued the bond between man and dog can be.

In response to the announcement DFL's Off-Leash Park would soon have to close, Puccini's and Ty's human companions, in an act of generosity so great it is still hard to absorb, stepped forward as benefactors and committed funding that now enables Dogs for Life to purchase the dog park property.

*(Continued on page 7)*



**Puccini & Ty Inspire Benefactor**

***Community Campaign Launches  
Pay-As-You-Go at the  
DFL Off-Leash Dog Park***



**DFL  
"Unleashed"  
Community Campaign**

**Kick-Off**

**Heritage Center  
May 5, 2007  
One-Of-A-Kind  
Doggie Quilt Raffle**

### Inside This Issue

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## PET CALENDAR

### TUESDAY

**Puppy Kindergarten:** 9 a.m. Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Thursdays, 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. Teach your dog basic commands using positive training methods. \$14 per class or eight classes for \$100. (772) 567-2121.

**Basic Obedience:** 10 a.m. Tuesday, 7 p.m. Thursday, 1 p.m. Saturday, 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. Prepare for the AKC Canine Good Citizen Test and introduce your dog to agility obstacles. \$14 per class or eight classes for \$100. (772) 567-2121.

**Puppy Preschool:** 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays, 3 p.m. Saturdays, 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. For puppies 8-16 weeks. \$14 per class. (772) 978-7863.

**Agility Training for Dogs:** 4 p.m., 2335 81st Court, Vero Beach. Teach your dog to negotiate an obstacle course. Four weeks; \$60. Pre-registration required. (772) 978-7863.

**Introduction to Agility:** 5:30 p.m., 2335 81st Court, Vero Beach. Familiarize dogs and owners with agility equipment and training concepts. Open to dogs 6 months or older. Dogs should have basic obedience skills. Four weeks; \$60. (772) 978-7863.

### WEDNESDAY

**Dogs for Life Off-leash dog park;** pay as you go. 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesdays and Saturdays. \$10. Owners must attend dog park orientation by appointment. Pre-register: (772) 567-8969, [dogsforlifevb@belisouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@belisouth.net).

### FRIDAY

**Bareback Horse Class:** 5:30 p.m., Vero Equine Training Center, 8130 8th St., Vero Beach. \$20 class. (772) 564-2703, [www.veroequine.com](http://www.veroequine.com).

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Greyhound Adoptions:** Foster homes are needed for over more than 300 Greyhounds as the Melbourne racetrack is closing until December. A fenced yard is preferred but not necessary as greyhounds are leashed-trained. Contact Carol Becker of Gold Coast Greyhound Adoptions, [vocalinc@mac.com](mailto:vocalinc@mac.com); or Beverly McCartt, [bwmccartt@oflrr.com](mailto:bwmccartt@oflrr.com), (407) 760-1484.

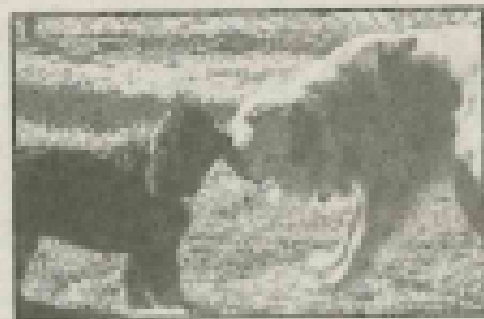
## Dogs for Life, Inc. Dog Park Pay as you Go Opportunity Expanded!

**\$10 Saturdays  
and Wednesdays  
9:30 AM  
and 5:30 PM**

**Pre-Registration  
Required, call  
(772) 567-8969**



**Dogs must be  
inoculated,  
neutered & social.**



**Dogs  
for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
772.567.8969 • [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)  
Off-Leash Dog Park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue



**APRIL**

# 4-H Dog Masters Club

## 4 H N E W S

April 2007  
Vol. 1 Ed. 7

Dates | County Events

### Livestock Outfitters

By: Mrs. West

Well the year is finally over and our club worked very hard this year. We restructured it and got ourselves organized. We worked as a team and that helped us do so great at the fair!

We would like to give a big shout out to Taylor Lewis for winning Grand Champion Steer and Danielle West for Grand Champion Swine. Let's also not forget Kaleigh Nesbit & Amanda Rose for placing first in their classes. Then we must give kudos to Kaleigh Nesbit for all Around Youth Exhibitor, Herdsman, Showmanship & Grooming, and also to Danielle West & Jordan Rose for Highest Daily Weight Gain.

This being our first year as a new club we would also like to thank our leaders, Tammie Lewis & Jennifer Durst for all their wonderful knowledge and help to get us where we are today. Without their help, we might not have done so well.

### Dog Masters

By: Angie LoPresti, Secretary

For their 2007-08 Community Service Project, Marissa LoPresti, President of the Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters, presented a check in the amount of \$400 to the Dogs for Life. The check was earmarked to assist with the medical expenses of a chronically ill assistance dog named Buster.

Marissa said that she and other 4-H Members got to know Holly and Buster at Saturday morning dog obedience classes held at the Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park. Holly has come to depend on Buster to assist her in her daily living. Buster is a hard working, smart and loving Boxer who works hard to please his owner. Marissa said, "When we heard that Buster had to undergo an expensive surgical procedure to help correct a chronic illness, we did not think twice about offering to assist Holly financially with this effort."



## Livestock Outfitters

By: Mrs. West

Well the year is finally over and our club worked very hard this year. We restructured it and got ourselves organized. We worked as a team and that helped us do so great at the fair!

We would like to give a big shout out to Taylor Lewis for winning Grand Champion Steer and Danielle West for Grand Champion Swine. Let's also not forget Kaleigh Nesbit & Amanda Rose for placing first in their classes. Then we must give kudos to Kaleigh Nesbit for all Around Youth Exhibitor, Herdsman, Showmanship & Grooming, and also to Danielle West & Jordan Rose for Highest Daily Weight Gain.

This being our first year as a new club we would also like to thank our leaders, Tammie Lewis & Jennifer Durst for all their wonderful knowledge and help to get us where we are today. Without their help, we might not have done so well.

## Dog Masters

By: Angie LoPresti, Secretary

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We wish them both all the best for a happy, healthy future together!"

### Training Is Key to Assistance Dogs--

#### Crucial to Their Access to Public Places

That concept was the bottom line at the recent conference and workshop held by Assistance Dogs International and the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners in January. The meeting took place in Baltimore, Maryland. Shelly Ferger and Patti Schell, assistance trainers for Dogs for Life, represented their organization.

Shelly says, "We were honored to be in the company of over 60 assistance dogs and 200 assistance dog trainers from all over the world." She added that Dogs for Life will apply for accreditation with ADI later this year.

The trainers attended a remarkable number of workshops and seminars, which included plans from U.S. Airways about transporting puppies, legal and fund-raising issues, the need for assistance dogs for autistic children and diabetics, and the challenges of training client-owned dogs. Whew!

One important issue they discussed was the need for assistance dogs as psychological helpers. While guide dogs for the visually impaired and hearing assistance dogs as well as assistants for the physically handicapped are recognized and protected by law, the benefit of psychological and emotional support by dogs is questioned in many areas. One problem is the unregulated training of some dogs and the need for standardization of training has become important as various traumas continue to affect people of all ages and needy veterans return from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Few question the positive psychological affect of dog companions on human emotions, the only dilemma is that many dog owners in need have "self-trained" their companions and the canine behaviors may not be as socially acceptable as the owner believes and he often tries to bring his dog into inappropriate public places. Public Access training is important to enable these individuals to be accompanied everywhere by their comforting companions. The ADI plans to work towards the standardization of training needed.

We all know and applaud the benefits provided by dogs: This proposed action will integrate them more thoroughly into many additional levels of society.



The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of various sizes and orientations, scattered across a white background.

**MARCH**

# In Remembrance

**BUBBA DUNN**  
2/10/98 - 3/27/07



Bubba Dunn, a Brindle Boxer, died suddenly of heart failure on March 27, 2007. He was the faithful companion and Hearing Guide Dog of Mim Dunn, Board President of Dogs For Life, Inc. Bubba was trained and certified as a Hearing Guide Dog by Assistance Dog Trainer, Shelly Ferger.

In addition to working as a Hearing Guide Dog, Bubba made public appearances representing Dogs For Life, Inc. and The Deaf and Hard of Hearing of the Treasure Coast. He helped promote awareness of assistance dogs for the deaf and hearing impaired.

Bubba was a proud dog, always a gentleman. His love, loyalty and devotion to Mim allowed him to perform his duties without hesitation. He may be gone, but his spirit remains in Mim's heart and the hearts of all who knew him.

Donations may be made in Bubba's memory to the Assistance Dog Medical Fund in care of Dogs For Life, Inc., PO Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965.

*Molly*  
*May 2, 1997 - February 24, 2007*



*A precious little Cavalier,  
Our guardian angel,  
With eyes that would melt a bar of chocolate,  
And a heart that beat loyal and true  
Briefly on earth,  
Forever in our hearts,  
Our Molly girl.*

*Carol and Hank Pena*



# Certification



## DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Teams Re-Certify for 2007

**L to R Back Row:** Eleanor Bengyak & Mitzi, Gayle Montgomery & Chance, Marilyn Knight & Dakota, Barbara Greenbaum & Emmy, Merlene Smith & Liberty, Lee Munsick & Blizzard, Darrae Norling & Gus, Doris Spirakus & Cutter. **L to R Front Row:** Barbara Bodnar & Maddux, Michele Smith, Stripe & Buddy, Kris Stillinger & Abbie, Audrey Kelly & Storm, Nikki Sullivan & Maisy, Toni DeBiase & Drake, Deborah Cornell & Stella and Matthew Clevenger & Casper. **Not Pictured:** Shara DiSarro, Laura Driver & Brent, Steve Hale & Molly, Erin Lunsford & Ghost, Charlotte Munsick, Charlotte Petersen & Miss B, Sandy Plagens & Shiloh, Barbara Thompson & Edna, and Paula VanHooser & Vero.

## Pet Assisted Therapy Team Spotlight



Hi, my name is Michele Smith. My pet assisted therapy dogs are Buddy, a 6-year-old Bichon Frise, and Stripe, a 5 ½-year-old Shih Tzu. Buddy and Stripe have been going to obedience classes every week since they were puppies. Once they passed their Canine Good Citizen tests, I decided to get them jobs and checked into opportunities in the community. My granddaughter taught the dogs to sit while she read to them and we all enjoyed this. So, with the help of Dogs for Life, we started volunteering in DFL's reading-to-dogs program at the Boys & Girls' Club in Vero. We've been helping kids learn to read for 3 years and the dogs and I love being with the children and the other dog volunteers. Buddy and Stripe also volunteer for the Humane Society. Every week we visit several elementary schools and nursing homes. The dogs are as eager to make these visits as the children and seniors are to having them there.



### DFL Issues

### AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificates

DFL has expended its dog obedience classes on Saturday mornings to include the Novice level of training. The Agility course is growing and Rally Obedience has added to the fun. On March 10, 2007, DFL Sponsored an AKC Canine Good Citizen test. Participants that passed the test are from L to R: Kara Suthard & Ruben Jeremiah, Eleanor Bengyak & Mitzi, Darrae Norling & Eddie, Laura Driver & Brent, Marcia Adache & Chinook, Merlene Smith & Liberty and Robert Smith & Mugsy.

## Dog Park Member Spotlight



Hey! My name is Daisy Owens and here I am with my Dad, George Owens. We've been going to the dog park for 5 years. Boy, do I love it! Whenever we drive up 12<sup>th</sup> Street and get near US 1 and the railroad tracks, I start wagging my tail and jumping around like mad. Yippee, I think, we're going to the dog

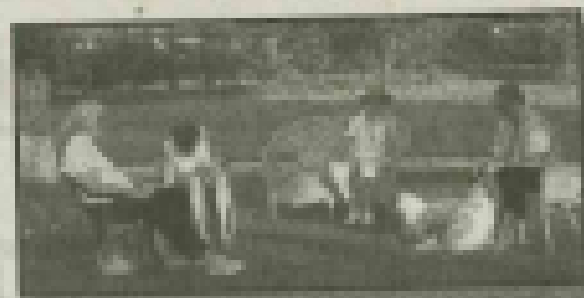
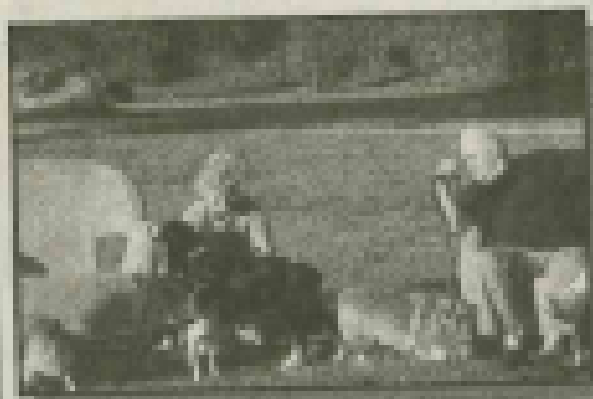


Dog Park Friends Photos by Michael Clyne

## Your Dog could qualify for Dog Park Memberships

New Community Outreach Program Pay-As-You-Go

Qualifying dogs must be inoculated, neutered & Social



Dogs For Life, Inc. Off Leash Dog Park  
12th Street & 16th Avenue, Vero Beach  
New Pay-As-You-Go  
\$25/Registration, \$10/ Wed 10am Sat 2pm

Unlimited Usage - (during daylight hours)  
\$200/ 6 month Membership  
\$300/ Annual Membership  
(2nd dog 1/2 price)



Call to (772) 567-8969  
to schedule orientation

25,000 Assistance Dogs in the US

Your Dog may qualify for our programs!

**Hearing Guide Dog**  
trained to alert to a door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm & an alarm clock.



**Service Dog**  
trained to assist a person rising from a chair, taping a 911 phone & retrieving a fallen object.



**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning  
567-8969

**Your Dog** may qualify for our programs!

**Assistance Dogs**

**Hearing Guide Dogs**

are trained to alert to a door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm & an alarm clock.

**Mobility Assistance Dogs**

are trained to assist a person rising from a chair, taping a 911 phone & retrieving a fallen object.



Prescious taps a 911 emergency phone

**Pet Assisted Therapy**

provides an uninhibited setting for children to read to dogs and provides warmth, love & comfort to seniors.



Chance Montgomery in pet therapy session

**Off-Leash Dog Park**

serves as a focal point for canine recreation & training and is located at 12th St. & 16th Ave.



Pudgy Bodnar Points the way to the off-leash dog park

**Dogs for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

567-8969

Memberships are available to pre-screened dogs & Dog Obedience Training is available to the public.

**Bubba Dunn**  
2/10/98 - 3/27/07

Bubba Dunn, a Brindle Boxer, died suddenly of heart failure on March 27, 2007. He was the faithful companion and Hearing Guide Dog of Mim Dunn, Board President of Dogs For Life, Inc. Bubba was trained and certified as a Hearing Guide Dog by Assistance Dog Trainer, Shelly Ferger.

In addition to working as a Hearing Guide Dog, Bubba made public appearances representing Dogs For Life, Inc. and The Deaf and Hard of Hearing of the Treasure Coast.

He helped promote awareness of assistance dogs for the deaf and hearing impaired. Bubba was a proud dog, always a gentleman.

His love, loyalty and devotion to Mim allowed him to perform his duties without hesitation. He may be gone, but his spirit remains in Mim's heart and the hearts of all who knew him.

Donations may be made in Bubba's memory to the Assistance Dog Medical Fund in care of Dogs For Life, Inc., PO Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965.



### Caring Vets Cure Assistance Dog Buster

Buster, a DFL trained mobility assistance dog is surely living testament to the Nietzsche quote, "what doesn't kill us, makes us stronger."

Found wandering on US 1, Buster was a heartbreaking sight when rescued by Holly Amstutz. Although malnourished and frightened, he bonded quickly with his disabled new owner perhaps sensing his purpose, he trained into a trusted and beloved mobility assistance dog.



Patti Schell Assistance Dog Trainer with Holly and Buster Service Dog Team

(Continued from page 1)

#### DFL Unleashed Community Campaign

Financial support of this magnitude is based on the understanding that DFL secure on-going funding to maintain the property, and expand assistance dog training. This extraordinary blessing comes with the responsibility of both operating our park and nurturing the mission on which the organization was founded: training assistance and therapy dogs.

In support of both, long range plans include construction of a facility on park property that will house an education and training center with offices and restrooms.

Our first priority is to launch a Community Campaign that will raise \$100,000. As we are just getting underway, now is a great time to get involved with Dogs for Life. We need you!



4-H Dog Masters President Marissa LoPresti presents a check in the amount of \$400 to DFL Treasurer Barbara Patten and DFL Vice President Susan Myers

Assistance dogs sometimes need special help, too. Such is the case with Buster, a hard-working, smart, loving and chronically ill Boxer, whose owner, Holly, has come to depend on him for assistance in her daily activities. So, when Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters learned of Buster's medical problems, the group decided to help him through its 2007-08 Community Service program. Marissa LoPresti, president of the group, recently presented a \$400 check to Dogs for Life, earmarking the funds for Buster's medical expenses. Marissa said she and other 4-H Members got to know Holly and Buster at dog obedience classes held Saturday mornings at the Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park. "When we heard that Buster had to undergo an expensive surgical procedure to help correct a chronic illness, we did not think twice about offering to assist Holly financially with this effort. We wish them both all the best for a happy, healthy future together," she said.

Submitted by Angie LoPresti, secretary/reporter, Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters

Dogs for Life has been a huge part of Buster's and Holly's lives since that fateful rescue. When Buster was found to have a chronic intestinal problem that would not respond to normal treatment protocol and threatened his service dog status, DFL turned to Todd Vinoski, DVM at Village Pet Clinic for help. Dr. Vinoski diagnosed the problem as a polyp that when surgically removed could cure what had been months of bloody diarrhea.

(Continued on page 7)

#### Assistance Dog Buster

Shelly Ferger, DFL's Executive Director took Buster and Holly to veterinary surgeon, Jeffrey Christiansen of the Animal Emergency Center of Brevard County. Corrective surgery did cure the problem, and today Buster is back to work full speed.

Expert veterinary care is understandably costly. When DFL knew they were facing \$4,000, surgery for Buster, President Mim Dunn launched a campaign to start an assistance dog medical fund for situations like Buster's where owners are not able to pay for necessary treatment themselves. To date \$2,010 has been raised toward Buster's surgery we are halfway there!

With the loss of Mim's beloved hearing dog Bubba, we are all reminded that our dogs are with us for just a short time. It is amazing how well dogs use their time on this earth, and how much joy and love they manage to squeeze into their years with us.

To honor the memory of Bubba, Dogs for Life's assistance dog medical fund from this day forward shall be named...

THE BUBBA DUNN ASSISTANCE DOG  
MEDICAL FUND.  
DFL's tribute to Bubba... for a life well lived.

#### 4-H Dog Masters Choose Bubba Dunn Assistance Dog Medical Fund As Their 2007 Community Service Project



**JANUARY**

# Sunbonnet Sue Quilters' Guild

CONTENTS PREPARED BY THE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

LUMINARIES • WEEK OF JANUARY 8, 2007 • 7

# Ygo?

*The Sunbonnet Sue Quilters' Guild presents*

## Fantasy in Fabric



Jane Miles and Pat Lester, members of the Sunbonnet Sue Quilters' Guild, stand with the quilt that will be donated to the Pelican Island Audubon Society.

### The Purpose

The Sunbonnet Sue Quilters' Guild blends ingenious minds with nimble fingers to create original quilts that are works of art — deserving of a museum showing. The guild donates quilts and handmade teddy bears to other nonprofit agencies, such as the Children's Home Society, Dogs for Life, the Environmental Learning Center and the Indian River County Sheriff's Office Victim's Assistance Unit.

### The People

Quilt show co-chairs are Marjorie Brower, Dora Churchill and Barbara Schiefelbein. The designer of the quilt that will be donated to the Pelican Island Audubon Society is Pat Lester and Margie Allen hand-painted the pelican. The chair of the Opportunity Quilt is Ida Bonelli and the charity mini-quilt auction has been arranged by Jane Stiastry.

### The Party

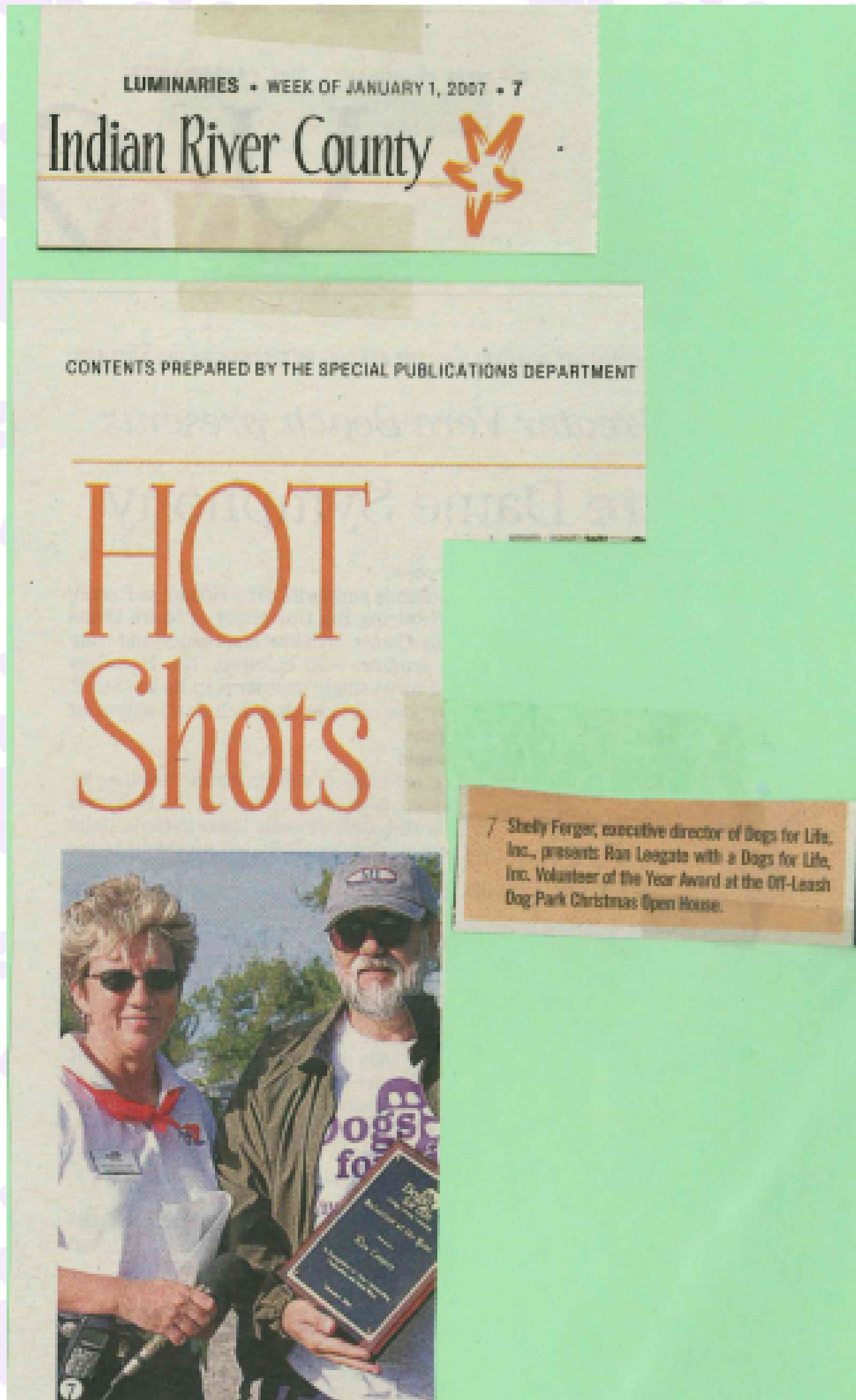
The 2007 quilt show, "Fantasy in Fabric" is Feb. 2-3, at Indian River Community College's Richardson Building on the Mueller Campus in Vero Beach.

Quilt-makers and quilt-lovers will be dazzled by the more than 200 quilts, quilted garments and wall hangings on display. Some quilts will be available for purchase; small quilted items will be on sale in the boutique; and a dozen vendors will provide the opportunity to purchase quilting fabrics, books, patterns, and the latest notions. The guild's "Trash and Treasure" section of gently used quilting items is always sought out and this year includes a display of artistic dolls by Dolores Cox and Andrea Luliak.

There will also be charity auctions of small quilts and wall hangings — this year to benefit Our Father's Table, The VNA Hospice and Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County.

The auctions will be at 2 p.m. on both Friday and Saturday. Admission is \$5 per person. No strollers, please.

# DFL Events



## ■ upcoming events

By Mary E. Schenkel

### WABASSO 5K BRIDGE RUN

16th annual Wabasso 5k Bridge Run is scheduled for **Dec. 2**, beginning at 8 a.m. from the Environmental Learning Center's Wabasso Island campus. The route heads east over the Wabasso bridge, almost to A-1-A and then back to ELC's campus. Proceeds benefit ELC's education programs. [www.elcweb.org](http://www.elcweb.org)

### BASS AND BIRDIES GOLF TOURNAMENT

Adding a new twist to the standard golf tournament, the Education Foundation of Indian River County will hold a Bass and Birdies Golf Tournament beginning at 1 p.m. on **Dec. 4** at the Indian River Club. Participants will have the opportunity to show off both their golfing and fishing skills as they navigate the Indian River Club Golf Course. Registration is \$250 per person. 772.564.0034

### MARDY'S TENNIS & JAKE'S MUSIC FEST

The tennis world ranked number 5 player James Blake and world ranked number 1 doubles duo, Bob and Mike Bryan, will bring their talent to Vero Beach when they participate in Mardy's Tennis & Jake's Music Fest at The Boulevard Village & Tennis Club, **Dec. 8-10**. Blake and the Bryans join event co-hosts, Vero Beach native and champion tennis player Mardy Fish and rising country music star, Josh (Jake) Owen, at a benefit for the Mardy Fish Foundation. Fish began the foundation to provide funding to youth organizations located within Indian River County and to continue his support of Adopt-A-Family Project, which provides aid to low-income families. The event kicks off on Friday afternoon, **Dec. 8**, with a sponsor clinic/pro-am and a dinner reception during the evening. On Saturday, **Dec. 9**, three of Fish's friends from the ATP tour will participate in a tennis exhibition. Saturday morning, prior to the exhibition, there will be a kid's clinic and family fest. The special concert by hometown favorite Jake Owen, will begin at 7:30 p.m. **Dec. 10** at the Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center. This will be Owen's first full-scale concert in Vero Beach. Tickets for the tennis exhibition range from \$25-\$60 and concert tickets are \$25 to \$100 each. 581.394.9190

### LARNELLE HARRIS CONCERT

A benefit concert by the powerful, Grammy and Dove Award winner Larnelle Harris will be held on **Dec. 8** at 7 p.m. at the Kings Baptist Church. Tickets are \$25 and are available at The Women's Refuge, King's Baptist Church, Wings of Joy Christian Marketplace and The Women's Refuge Resale Store. Proceeds benefit the Women's Refuge; a Christian based organization which gives women the chance to start over with their lives through their residential and non-residential programs. 772.770.4424

### DOGS FOR LIFE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Dogs for Life, Inc. will host a Christmas Open House featuring a dog walk-a-thon, a dog agility show and law enforcement K-9 demonstration beginning at 2 p.m., **Dec. 9** at the Off-Leash Dog Park, 12 Street and 16th Avenue. There will be a \$5 entry fee with children under 12 free. Call Shelly Ferger at 772.567.8969

### AN ENCHANTING EVENING

The Sixth Annual Indian River County Hibiscus Children's Center Gala, themed An Enchanting Evening, will be held **Dec. 9** at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. Tickets are \$225 per person and funds raised support operating expenses of the Hibiscus Children's Center and focuses on abuse prevention and intervention services. 772.978.9313, ext. 313

### 17TH ANNUAL SWING FOR HEALTH GOLF CLASSIC

The Swing for Health Golf Classic in support of the capital needs of the Indian River Medical Center through the Indian River Medical Center Foundation will take place on **Dec. 11** at the Hawks Nest Golf Club. Registration and practice tees open at 11 a.m. with a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. There will be a cocktail reception and awards ceremony following the tournament at 5:30 p.m. \$275 per player registration fee; limited to a field of 132. [www.swingforhealth.com](http://www.swingforhealth.com)

### ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE

The Friends of the Vero Beach Museum of Art invite you Museum's 15th Annual Antiques Show and Sale. The Preview

Party, 6 - 9 p.m. **Jan. 11** kicks off the weekend long event and your \$100 ticket includes reentry for the duration of the show. Guests will have ample opportunity to shop and socialize before the show opens to the public. The show, managed by Charles Miller of North Carolina, is considered one of the best in Florida and opens to the public 10 a.m. 5 p.m. **Jan. 12** and **13** and from 10 a.m. 4 p.m. on **Jan. 14**. Tickets, available at the door, are \$10 per person, and include show reentry. Thirty-six quality vendors will present collections of furniture, jewelry, art, glassware, porcelains and more. Programs and professional appraisals will add to the experience. 772.231.0707 [www.vbmuseum.org](http://www.vbmuseum.org)

### A TASTE OF THE TREASURE COAST

Indian River National Bank is the presenting sponsor for the 8th Annual A Taste of the Treasure Coast culinary and wine tasting extravaganza **Jan. 17** to benefit the Indian River County Healthy Start Coalition. Your taste buds are in for a treat as you sample dishes prepared by premier chefs on the Treasure Coast. Restaurants include the Fresh Mozzarella Company, Joanie's Hometown Restaurant, The Tides, Riverside Café, Beef O'Brady's, the Culinary Institute of the Treasure Coast at IRCC and many more. Grazing begins at 6 p.m. at the Holy Cross Catholic Church Parish Hall and continues until 9 p.m. Tickets are \$40 per person and benefit the Coalition's TLC Newborn Program. 772.563.9118

### ACS 125

Your \$125 per person contribution welcomes you into a special group of people who have joined together in the fight against cancer. The annual ACS 125 fundraiser, 6 - 8 p.m. **Jan. 25** at the Riomar Country Club, raises funds to benefit programs and services of the Indian River Unit of the American Cancer Society. Call Nancy Madsen, 772.562.2272, ext. 115

### TREASURE COAST WOMEN

The Treasure Coast Women's annual Savor the Flavor to Help a Neighbor, Buffet Luncheon and Card Party will be held from noon until 3 p.m., **Jan. 28** at the Vero Beach Community Center. Tickets



## HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!! FROM DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.

It is that wonderful time of year and Dogs for Life, Inc. is happy to report that we are once again able to offer a ONE year membership at the Best Friends Off-leash Dog Park. Why? Because we got one of the best presents we could have received before the end of the year! It was the good news that our lease would be extended to July, 2008, through the kindness of our generous benefactor.

This means we can **SAVE OUR DOG PARK**—but *only* with your continued effort and support. Look for more exciting news and phone calls at the first of the year for forming committees and launching the drive.

Here are a few bits of information for you about the Dog Park this last year:

Over 164 of you and our other Dog Park members and their dogs came to the park.

Over 70 puppies and dogs were obedience trained, several of which received AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificates, and some received DFL Assistance Dog Public Access Certification.

Over 400 visitors came to our Easter, Halloween, and Christmas Open Houses.

Many of you have become volunteers to help us with the **SAVE OUR DOG PARK CAMPAIGN**.

And to date, the campaign has raised \$28,250 in donations and pledges.

Now here is the scoop on our Dog Park membership rates:

**One year membership fee:** \$300.00 for your first dog and ½ price for a second dog in the same residence. (This stays the same.)

**Six month membership fee:** \$200.00 for your first dog and ½ price for a second dog in the same residence. (We raised this rate slightly.)

The way you can help us when you are notified that your dog's membership is due is to renew your membership at the yearly rate. As a courtesy, members that are due in January, 2007, will still be offered the old 6 month membership rate of \$150.

Now we need to "hit the ground running" to **SAVE OUR DOG PARK**.

Thank you for your continued support for our Dog Park. You are what make this park great!

Best wishes for you and your family in 2007.

Sincerely,

  
Susan Myers, Vice President

1775 Golden Ponds  
Jr.  
Fr. Pierre 3494  
January 22-07

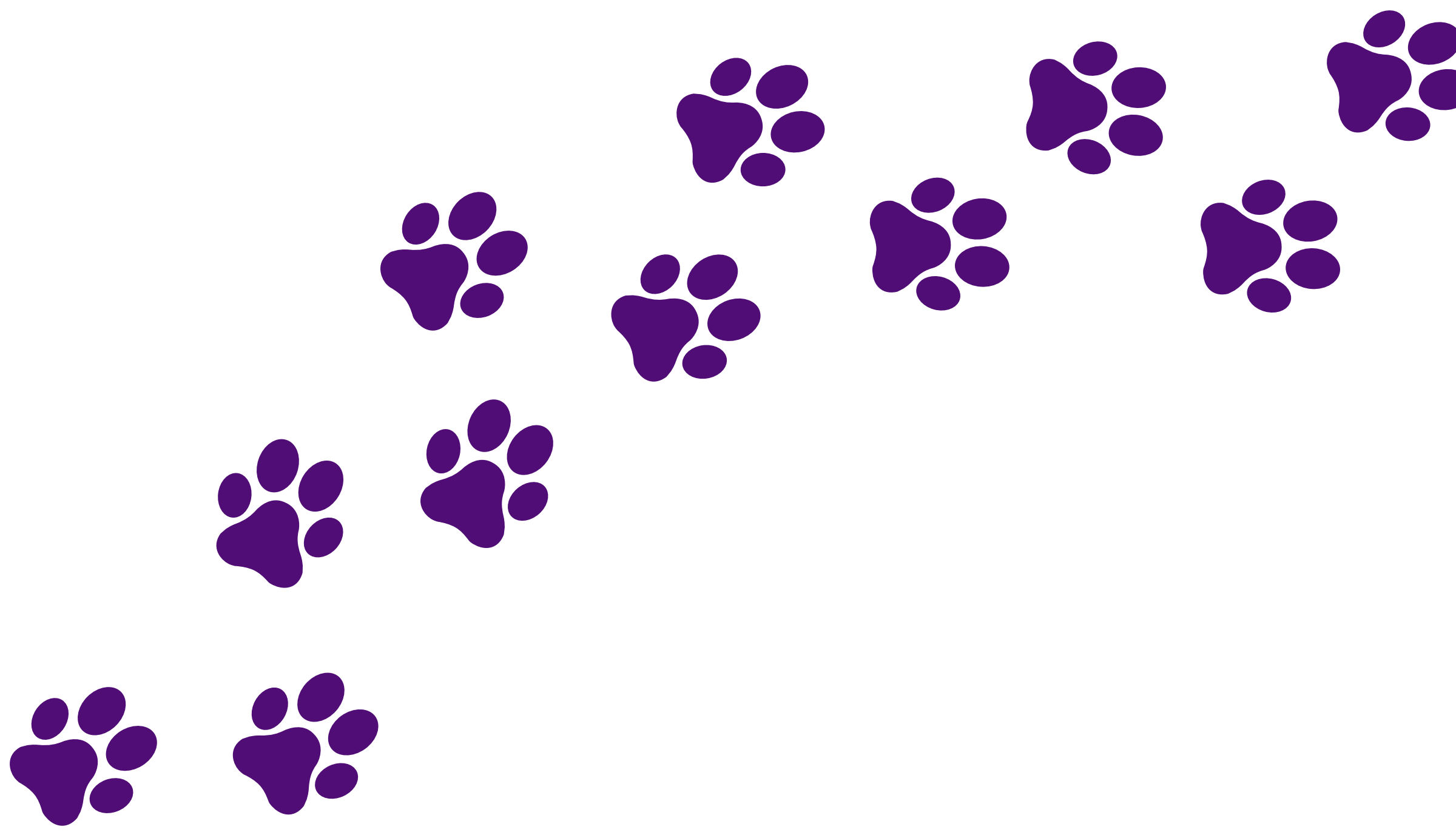
Dear Shelly:  
I would like to  
thank you & the Board  
of Directors for the offer  
of a complimentary bone.  
Maisy & I would be  
happy to do anything  
we can to support  
Dogs for Life, Inc.

Sincerely,  
Nikki Sullivan.



# Scrapbook

## 2006



# Open House



# Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skin Wishes Our Readers Happy Holidays

## MEET DAISY MAE AND HONEY OUR PETS OF THE MONTH



This is Daisy Mae. She is in training to be a hearing assist dog. It will be wonderful to have someone to alert me to sounds like a smoke alarm. She is smart, friendly and lovable. She will do most anything for a treat. She is my faithful companion.

Hildegard

# Happy Holidays!

- Assistance Dog Training**
  - Hearing Guide Dog
  - Mobility Assistance Dog
- Pet Assisted Therapy**
  - Read to Dogs
  - Therapy Dogs
- Off-Leash Dog Park**
  - Off-leash Play
  - Dog Obedience Training

**Dogs for Life**  
567-8969



**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

**Christmas Open House**

## Off-Leash Dog Park

Saturday December 9  
2pm - Dog Park  
12th Street & 16th Avenue

**Sponsors:**  
Blue Ribbon Pet Grooming & Boarding  
A Day at the Cape (Doggie Day Care)  
Four Paws Boutique.net  
Tropical Art and Frame



Tunes from the "River Rats" Band • Local Law Enforcement K-9 Demonstration • 4-H Dog Masters Club - **Dog Cookie Sale** • Local Pet Related Businesses • **Raffles** • Dog Obedience Agility Show • **Dog Walk-A-Thon Fundraiser**  
\$5 admission, children under 12 free

567-8969



Living, Loving, Learning

December 11, 2006

**Board of Directors**

Mary "Mim" Dunn  
President

Susan P. Myers  
Vice President

Barbara J. Patten  
Treasurer

Penny Chandler

Clay Collins

Sharon Marshall

**Attorney**

Bruce D. Barkett

**Certified Public Accountant**

Richard B. Leffew

**Executive Director**

Shelly Ferger

**Website**

[www.dogsforlifefvb.org](http://www.dogsforlifefvb.org)

**e-mail**

[dogsforlifefvb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifefvb@bellsouth.net)

Miss Beth  
Youth Volunteer Corps.  
1846 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Dear Beth,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers of Dogs for Life, Inc. we would like to thank you for the Youth Volunteer Corps volunteering your time to help at our Off-Leash Dog Park Christmas Open House fundraising event.

The event included an area law enforcement K-9 demonstration, dog obedience and agility show. Dogs for Life, Inc. was able to give a program presentation and the raffle ticket drawings topped off the fundraising event.

Distinguished as the only certified provider on the treasure Coast for training hearing and mobility assistance dogs, Dogs for Life continues its fine training program and looks forward to the day this unique program can be expanded to better meet the needs of a fast - growing wait-list

We couldn't do it without the Youth Volunteer Corps. supporting our cause through your generous donation of time!

We would like to wish you and your family a continued Happy Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Shelly Ferger



P.O. Box 650023 • Vero Beach, Florida 32965 • 772.567.8969

Logo designed and donated by DHI Visual Communications

# City Neglects Canines

## Opinion

PAGE A8 • TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2006 •

### COMMUNITY

#### Government keeps dog owners on a much-too-short leash

It is my understanding that members of the City Council and County Commission are unwilling to spend taxpayer dollars on dogs and their owners. Yet they willingly spend taxpayer dollars on golf and tennis, fitness trails and ball parks, playgrounds and picnic sites, beaches and turtles.

All of these facilities serve citizens with a variety of needs and interest, and those citizens who do not use all the facilities still pay taxes to support them.

Apparently, our elected representa-



Sara Rainone walks with her dogs near her Vero Beach home.

tives choose to discriminate against dog owners. They must know we own property and pay taxes and vote.

Vero Beach is more hostile toward dog owners than any place I ever have lived or visited. You cannot even walk your dog through a public park on a leash.

It is time to address this failing. Let's see some public support for the Dogs for Life program. This program, with its dog park, serves as a model facility of its type. Certainly it deserves the support of taxpayer dollars and dog owners deserve a place to take their pets.

Sally Campbell

## Opinion

PAGE A6 • TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2006 • TCPALM.COM

### RECREATION

#### City neglects canines with dearth of park space

I say, "Shame on you, Vero Beach!"

We're one of the wealthier towns in Florida and our one dog park is only open from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Of course, it is really open all the time since it is not fenced and there is no water for the thirsty animals. There is a warning sign that anyone with a dog there after 8:30 a.m. will be fined.

I, along with a large group, pay \$300 each a year to bring man's best friend to the Dogs for Life park off 12th Street, but even that is in jeopardy of closing if funds cannot be raised to buy the property that is now leased.

How about Vero buying the park for man's best friend? The gal who runs it now does a great job and I would guess with the right compensation she might consider working for the great city of Vero Beach.

Lord knows there are plenty of dogs in Vero. Look at the pet stores opening. Come on, let's remember our faithful companions and give God a chance. Oh, that's backwards — I meant *dog*.

Lorraine "Lorri" Lewis  
Vero Beach

### QUOTABLE

Letters must be  
and street ad-  
just be original  
may be printed.

"A Canadian psychologist is selling a video that teaches you how to test your dog's IQ. Here's how it works: If you spend \$12.99 for the video, your dog is smarter than you."

— Jay Leno

Vero Beach,  
@scripps.com



## **DOGS**

### **Kudos to Sebastian for letting canines exercise in city parks**

Congratulations to the Sebastian City Council and Mayor Nate McCollum for opening all of its city parks to dogs on leashes.

The family dog is an integral part of our lives and need recreational outlets, just as children and adults do. Many behavior problems in dogs are avoided when they receive proper mental and physical stimulation.

During the establishment of the off-leash dog park in Vero Beach in 1997-2001, we, too, encountered anti-dog sentiment from our officials because of irresponsible dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs.

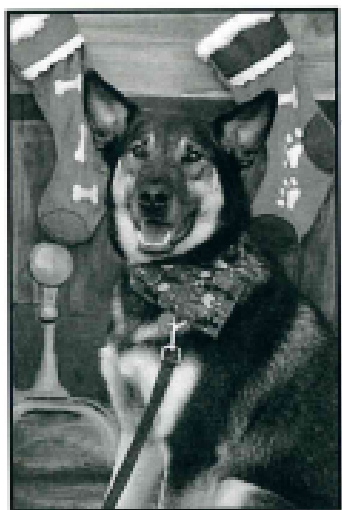
The non-profit Dogs for Life Inc. dog park on 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach is now in its fifth year of successfully offering recreation to people and their dogs in a clean, safe environment. Sebastian has recognized this as a valuable opportunity for people and dogs in their "friendly" community.

**Shelly Ferger**  
executive director  
Dogs for Life Inc.  
Vero Beach



# Happy How-O-Days

Happy Howl-O-Days from Dogs for Life



## Off- Leash Dog Park

### Christmas Open House

Saturday December 9

2 PM - Dog Park

12th Street & 16th Avenue

**Dogs**  
for Life

Living, Loving, Learning



Tunes from the "River Rats" Band • Local Law Enforcement  
K-9 Demonstration • 4-H Dog Masters Club – Dog Cookie Sale  
Local Pet Related Businesses – Raffles • Dog Obedience /  
Agility Show • Dog Walk-A-Thon Fundraiser  
\$5 admission, children under 12 free

567-8969

Friday, December 1, 2006

Hometown News

## Community Notes

### Dogs for Life holds a Christmas open house

Dogs for Life, (DFL) a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is having a Christmas open house at the Off-Leash Dog Park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, on Dec. 9, 2 p.m.

The River Rats Band will provide entertainment during the event, which will include a dog obedience and agility show, area law enforcement K-9 demonstration, and area pet related business raffles.

The Indian River county 4-H dogmasters club will hold a dog cookie sale toward their community service. Dog walk-a-thon

fundraisers will turn in collected donations, with participants receiving a free DFL t-shirt.

There is a \$5 entry fee to the event, with children under 12 free.

DFL will give a presentation on their assistance dog training program "pet assisted therapy programs.

Information will be available on how to join

the off-leash dog park. Bring lawn chairs!

For additional information, contact Shelly Ferger, executive director, at (772) 567-8969.

Friday, December 1, 2006

Friday, December 1, 2006

[www.HometownNewsOL.com](http://www.HometownNewsOL.com)

◆Dogs for Life offers training classes:

◆Assistance Dog Training:

◆Hearing Ear Dogs assist with alerting their

owners to the telephone ringing, someone knocking at the door, the alarm clock ringing and the smoke alarm.

◆Mobility Assistance Training

Dogs are trained to bring the phone, pick up dropped items and balance stabilization.

◆Pet Assisted Therapy

Volunteers and dogs are trained to sit quietly while children read or offer comfort and companionship.

◆Outreach Programs

Leash Dog Park

Qualifying dogs must be

▶ See CLUBS, C6

## The Hounds of Help

Assistance dogs help in many ways and testimonials to that effect were part of the presentation on November 2.

Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor explained to more than 50 people attending the lecture that there are laws pertaining to what qualifies as a disability, what qualifies as an assistance animal, and what laws regulate the public access of assistance dogs.

DFL Executive Director Shelly Ferger followed Taylor, outlining the organization's program services, which include "in-home" training of hearing guides and mobility dogs, pet therapy programs, and the off-leash dog park.

But it was the owners of several of the specially trained assistance dogs who brought home how helpful and needed these animals are.



Guest Speaker Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor



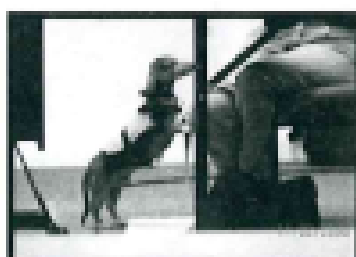
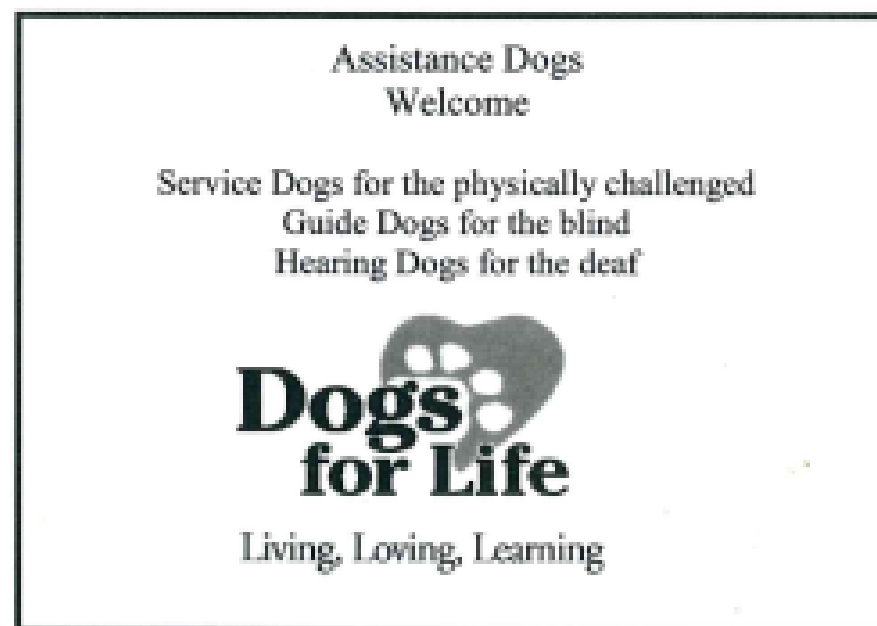
Jonie poses for photographer Duane Marshall

Kelly said: "Max "not only helps me pick up things I drop, but he also has been trained to go get (John) my husband, if I am unable to get up. He has a calming effect on me when I try to rest, too." Beth said: "With Bandit accompanying me in public places, people are aware that I do not hear them if they try to talk to me while my head is turned. Bandit also alerted me to a fire alarm once while I was staying in a hotel near Boston, this could have saved my life."

Mim explained: "Bubba has changed my life he gives me the confidence to be more independent. I can't imagine my life without him." Ruth told the attendees: "Duke loves to tap the 911 phone; he gallops to the phone than races back to me for his treat." Holly said: "I am grateful to have a mobility dog that will "brace" on command to help stabilize me and help me get up if I fall." And Ellie said that her seeing guide dog saved her life when she almost walked into traffic at a busy intersection.

The program was held at the United Way offices in Vero Beach. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services of the Treasure Coast donated the services of sign language interpreter Marsha Richardson, and Bob and Ellen McDonald of Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. provided information on the puppy raising program.

If your business would like to display an Assistance Dogs



"Bandit" alerts Beth to a smoke alarm

Welcome sign and a receive a DFL brochure outlining the Legal Access Rights of Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs and Service Dogs, please, contact the DFL office at 567-8969.



"Duke" taps the 911 Rescue Phone

# SocialScene

PAGE E3 • SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2006 • TCPALM.COM

## CHRISTMAS EVENTS IN INDIAN RIVER COUNTY



Photo provided  
Jan Vincent and 'Arnla.'

### **DOGS FOR LIFE INC. CHRISTMAS**

Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is having a Christmas Open House at the Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, on Dec. 9 at 2 p.m.

There is a \$5 entry fee with children under 12 free. Agility champion Jean Andrews will conduct a dog agility show, area law enforcement officers will provide a K-9 demonstration and DFL will present wildlife officer Tim Miller a memorial bone for his dog "Jake." The River Rats Band will provide entertainment. DFL will give a presentation on their Dog Obedience Training Program, Assistance Dog Training Program, Pet Assisted Therapy Programs and Companion Dog Placement Program. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will provide free information on solving common dog training problems. Information will also be available on membership to the off-leash dog park. Bring your lawn chairs, and be prepared to have fun. Call Shelly Ferger, executive director, at (772) 567-8969.

# In Memoriam

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2006 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • B3



**Mary Frances  
Dahlen Pierson**

Mary Frances died peacefully at her home in Vero Beach on November 29, 2006. She was 84 years old.

She was born in New Canaan, CT, July 2, 1922, to the late Dr. Ralph L. White and Mrs. Olive Frances McCready White. In 1940 she married William Kay Lawrence of New Canaan. The Lawrences had one child, Kay Townley Lawrence. In 1948 she married Peter C. Dahlen. The Dahlen's had one child, Cynthia Caroline Dahlen.

Mrs. Dahlen Pierson graduated from Drew Seminary in Carmel, NY and did a post graduate year at Miss Scovilles Finishing School for Young Women in New York City. She was an accomplished pianist and equestrian in her youth. A tireless volunteer she worked at the Elliot Hospital in Manchester, NH for 20 years. She was a member of the Episcopal Church Bethesda by the Sea in Palm Beach, FL and volunteered many hours at the Church Mouse Thrift Shoppe affiliated with Bethesda. Mary Fran had a life long fondness for dogs. She raised Scottish Terriers and showed her dogs on the AKC circuit. Mr. Dahlen preceded his wife in death in 1986. While traveling from New Hampshire to Florida in the late 80s she met and married John Alan Pierson of Tamaqua, PA. They were married at Saint Andrews by the Sea Episcopal Church in Rye, NH in 1990 near their summer home in the same town.

Family was everything to Mary Frances. She is survived by her two children: Kay T. Ruma of Vero Beach, FL and Cynthia W. May of Jupiter, FL; two stepdaughters, Mrs. Carole Barber and Mrs. Judy Titus of Tamaqua and New Ringold, PA.; three grandchildren, Peter Solomon Ruma and Alexandra Kay Ruma of Vero Beach, FL; Mary Caroline Williams of Jupiter, FL; and one son-in-law, Garnett Williams and his wife Elizabeth of Jupiter, FL.

A visitation will be held at 3pm on Sunday, December 3, 2006 at Strunk Funeral Home, 916 17th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960. The funeral will follow Monday morning, December 4, 2006 at 11:00a.m. at Saint Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church, 4th Street and 43rd Avenue, Vero Beach, FL. Final interment will be at Saint Andrews Episcopal Church, Rye, NH at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to either The Florida Academy of Family Physicians Foundation, 6720 Atlantic Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32211 or Dogs for Life, 25 Fifth Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32962.

Funeral Arrangements by Strunk Funeral Homes, P.A., Vero Beach, FL.

*Paid Obituary*

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 on each foot.

**NOVEMBER**

# Assistance Dog Presentation



Assistance Dog Presentation  
November 2, 2006



Hearing Dog



Medical Alert Dog



Mobility Dog



Mobility Dog

P.O. Box 650023 • Vero Beach, Florida 32965 • 772.567.8969

## Dogs For Life Assistance Dog Presentation

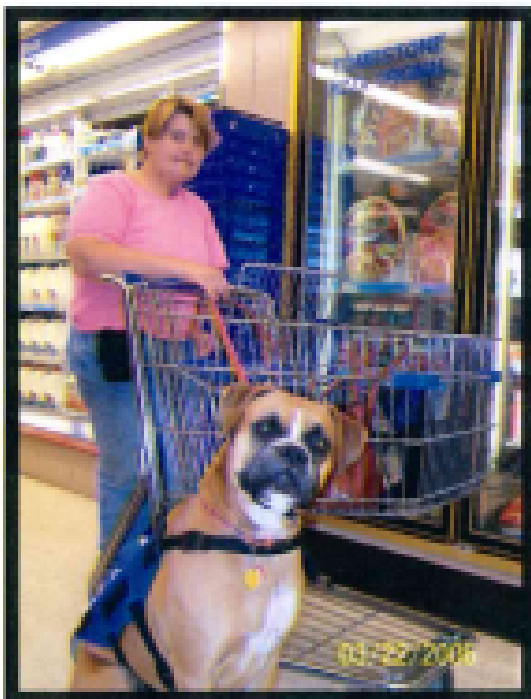
*Guide Dogs for the Blind  
Hearing Guide Dogs  
Service Dogs*

November 2, 2006 Time: 7 PM

United Way - 1836 14th Avenue Vero Beach, FL  
FREE EVENT FREE EVENT

Dogs for Life, Inc. 772-567-8969

***What! Dogs In  
Public Places?***



## Who is Dogs for Life?

Can You and Your  
Dog Qualify as an  
Assistance Dog  
Team?



How are Assistance Dogs Trained?

What are the local, state and federal laws governing Assistance Animals?

What are the penalties for interfering with a Assistance Animal?

### Speakers

- Mary "Mim" Dunn, President Dogs for Life, Inc. and Hearing Guide Dog Recipient
- Chris Taylor, State Attorney's Office
- Shelly Ferger, Executive Director Dogs For Life, Inc.
- Guide Dog Demonstrations and Refreshments

*How Assistance Dogs may  
affect your Business*

*How you and your dog can be  
trained as an  
Assistance Dog Team*

**Dogs  
for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

**Dogs For Life  
Assistance Dog  
Presentation**

Dogs For Life, Inc.  
PO Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

772-567-8969

### Pre-Registration Form

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Total attendees:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

Please mail to: Dogs for Life, Inc.

**FREE EVENT**



**Assistance Dog Presentation Information for Businesses**

This insert should accompany the Dogs for Life, Inc. Legal Rights of Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs and Service Dogs.

The only way to verify a Service Animal from a Pet is to ask the person any or all of the following three questions:

1. **Are you disabled?** Do not ask, "What is your disability?" (That's getting too personal)
2. **Has the animal been trained for your disability, or is that a pet?** (pets are not service animals) Do not ask someone to "prove" the animal has been trained.
3. **What does the animal do for you?** Do not ask someone to "show" what the animal does.

**Size, shape, make and model doesn't matter!**

Remember, it's not the clothes or id cards that make us legal, it's the fact that we have been trained to do tasks.

**Besides it's good publicity and it's the law.**



# Galas & Giving



Indian River County  
Mary Schenkel

## Going to the dogs

If you've ever wondered about assistance and service dogs, you won't want to miss the free **Assistance Dog Presentation** at 7 p.m. Nov. 7, at the United Way building, hosted by **Dogs for Life, Inc.** Guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, mobility assistance dogs and seizure alert dogs will show you how it's done. A segment on laws pertaining to service dogs will be presented by **Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor.** Call Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8069.

## COMMUNITY

FROM PAGE E2

**Wellness Workshop:** Awaken Your Joy with Cary Bayer, 1-3 p.m. Nov. 18, \$25, registration required. Living Yoga, 333 10th St., Vero Beach. If you are disconnected from your deepest joy, this workshop is for you. You'll leave the class with a plan to incorporate more joy into your friendships, relationships, family, career and spiritual life. You'll also be shown techniques that can daily transform your own internal limits to experiencing more joy. For more information, call (772) 978-1099.

**Fundraiser:** Harvest Rock, a fundraiser sponsored by Charles L. Futch Unit 169, American Legion Auxiliary, will be presented Nov. 17 at the American Legion Hall, 607 Louisiana Avenue, Sebastian. The event begins with a social hour at 5 p.m., followed by a roast pork dinner at 6 p.m., with music presented by the Happy Hoofers. Tickets (\$10 per person) are on sale. Due to limited seating and to facilitate planning, early ticket purchase is encouraged. For tickets, call (772) 599-0814. For more information, call (772) 599-8445, or (772) 591-0228.

**Auditions:** Auditions will be held at 4 p.m. Nov. 10 and a 10 a.m. Nov. 11 for "Heidi." Parts are available for students in grades 3 and up. No advance preparation is required. Performance dates are Dec. 27-30. Casting for "More Mortals" is open to those in grades 8 through 12. Auditions will take place at 5 p.m. Nov. 10. If callbacks are needed, they will be at 10 a.m. Nov. 11. This production is an RCT Teen Second Stage presentation and performance dates are Jan. 4-5. Those auditioning must be prepared to do cold readings from the script as well as improvisation and theatre games. All auditions will take place at the Agnes Wahlstrom Youth Playhouse, 3280 Riverside Park Drive, Vero Beach. For more information, call (772) 234-8062.

345-7604, go to [www.holidayhouseticket.com](http://www.holidayhouseticket.com), any Boys & Girls Clubs, or Indian River Mall Service Desk for ticket information. Indian River Mall is located on State Road 60 and 66th Ave. in Vero Beach.

**Scrapbooking:** Free Creative Memories "Holiday Open House" 6-9 p.m. Nov. 6 at 1072 West 13th Square, Vero Beach. See the new products and make your wish list for the Holiday season. Share ideas with other scrapbookers, meet new friends and receive the new catalog. For more information, visit <http://www.myomniste.com/sites/annishockenberry>, email [anniesg02@comcast.net](mailto:anniesg02@comcast.net) or call (772) 567-9151.

**Dance:** Four-hour Latin workshop, rumba and bolero, 10 a.m.-noon and 1:30-3:30 p.m. Nov. 5, Heritage Center, 2940 14th Ave. Instructor: Karren Walker. Attendance limited to minimum of 20, maximum of 35. \$32/members, \$40/nonmembers, payable by check to USA Dance. Registration and fee required prior to workshop. For more information, for more information, email [Cheryllois@men.com](mailto:Cheryllois@men.com) or call (772) 569-5336.

**Dogs for Life Inc.** will host an assistance dog presentation 7 p.m. Nov. 2 at the United Way, 1836 14th Ave., Vero Beach. This event is free and open to anyone interested in learning more about assistance/service animals. Guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, mobility assistance dogs and seizure alert dogs will all be present. Learn what these dogs can do, how they are trained and when someone qualifies for an assistance dog. Federal, State and local laws pertaining to service dogs and interfering with a service dog will be presented by Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor. Business owners will want to attend this educational presentation to find out how assistance/service dogs affect their business. Learn how assistance animals should be presented in public places and what questions are legal and reasonable to ask of an assistance dog's owner. For more information, call (772) 567-8959.

## Dogs for Life offers Assistance Dog presentation

FOR HOMETOWN NEWS

Dogs for Life is hosting an Assistance Dog Presentation at the United Way located at 1836 14th Ave. Vero Beach on Thursday Nov. 2, at 7 p.m.

The event is free and open to anyone interested in learning more about Assistance/Service Animals. Guide dogs for the Blind, Hearing Dogs, Mobility Assistance Dogs and Seizure Alert Dogs will all be present.

Learn what these dogs can do, how the dogs are

trained and when someone qualifies for an assistance dog.

Federal, State and local laws pertaining to service dogs and interfering with a service dog will be presented by Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor.

Business owners will want to attend this educational presentation to find out how assistance/service dogs affect their business. Learn how assistance animals should be presented in public places and what questions are legal and reasonable to ask of an assistance dog's owner.

86 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2006 • V

### Assistance dog presentation Thursday

Dogs for Life Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting an assistance dog presentation at the United Way at 1836 14th Ave. at 7 p.m. Thursday.

This event is free and open to anyone interested in learning more about assistance/service animals. Guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, mobility assistance dogs and seizure alert dogs will all be present.

Learn what these dogs can do, how they are trained and when someone qualifies for an assistance dog. Federal, state

and local laws pertaining to service dogs and interfering with a service dog will be presented by Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor.

Learn how assistance animals should be presented in public places and what questions are legal and reasonable to ask of an assistance dog's owner.

For additional information contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 587-8969.



**OCTOBER**

# Howl-O-Ween

## 5th Annual Costume Parade Marks Howl-A-Ween

They swooped in like witches, snarled like Dracula and meandered like camels. Some wore jaunty top hats, others clown suits. Taking after their human counterparts on Halloween, more than 40 dogs masqueraded as anything but dogs during the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Canine Costume parade Oct. 21 at the Dogs for Life off-leash dog park.

However, many had to shed their costumes early as their furry coats sweltered in the warm October weather. Undaunted, though, 20 went on to participate with their handlers in a Doggie Relay Race.

The day's event wrapped up with "Stupid Pet Tricks," when about 10 dogs shook paws, danced, played dead or woofed – either on command or just because they felt like it.

The 4-H Dog Masters Club sold cookies to raise money for the group's community service project, which aims to buy a bullet proof canine vest for the Indian River County Sheriff Department's K-9 unit.



# Hub Pets

Want to see your pet's picture on this page? Post it on YourHub.com. Be sure to include your name, hometown, and the pet's name, age and breed.



CRYSTAL CORRIGAN • Posted on YourHub.com

## Play time

As a chocolate Labrador, Fitz is larger than average, but he definitely loves playing with all the dogs at the Dog Park. He had a great time Oct. 21 watching all the costumed canines parade around. Socializing is a great way to keep a happy pet!

# Hub Pets



SHELLY FERGER • Posted on YourHub.com

Tucker Jaffee parades as a Halloween cornucopia during the Dogs for Life's fifth annual Canine Costume Parade. Below, having a howling good time at the parade was Diggy Keane, dressed as Dracula.

## 40 dogs strut their stuff at Howl-O-Ween Costume Parade

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

The fifth annual Canine Costume Parade on Oct. 21 at the off-leash dog park was attended by 40 dogs in costume with 150 spectators.

The costumed canines entertained the crowd during the parade portion of the program as well as the relay race and

stupid pet tricks.

Prizes were awarded to all participants and a brief explanation of Dogs for Life, Inc. programs, assistance dog-training program; pet-assisted therapy program; dog obedience training and membership to the off-leash dog park was given to those in attendance.



# SocialScene

PAGE E3 • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2006 • TCPALM

## DOGS FOR LIFE INC. PRESENTS HOWL-O-WEEN COSTUME PARADE



Photo provided

Dogs for Life Inc. hosts the Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade Oct. 21 at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park.

Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach at 4 p.m. Oct. 21.

Cost is \$5 per entry, spectators are free. The event includes a doggie Olympic "relay race" and stupid dog tricks, dog obedience training program, assistance dog training program, pet assisted therapy programs and companion dog placement program. For additional information, contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



# Pet Therapy in Sebastian

## Pet Therapy Grows to Sebastian



Sally Del-Donna, Sebastian Senior Center Day Care Manager, and Day Care Resident Madalynne Kass enjoy time with "Cutter".

The Senior Center in Sebastian now welcomes Doris Spirakus and Cutter as part of the DFL Pet Therapy team. Support and unconditional love freely given are key elements of therapy for people in need in Indian River County. DFL is proud to provide 13 volunteers and their dogs for sessions to help the lonely, depressed, or otherwise anxious in various locations in Vero Beach and Sebastian: Boys & Girls Clubs, Homeless Family Center, Hibiscus Children's Center, Beachland Elementary School, St. Edward's School, the Senior Center in Vero Beach and now also in Sebastian.

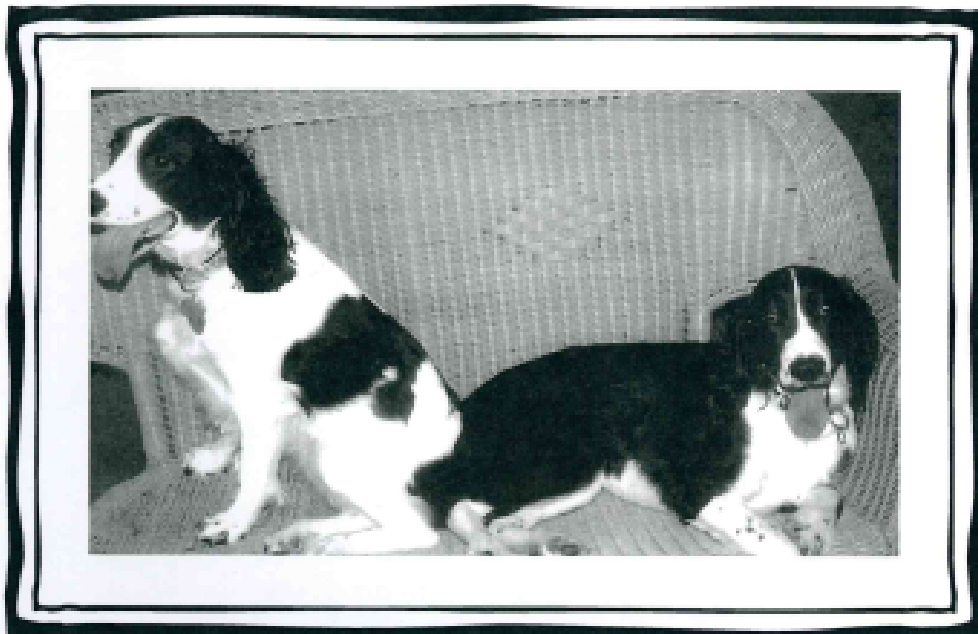


The first READ to DOGS program in the county was set up by DFL, and dogs and volunteers continue to provide willing ears and warm hearts to area children. If you and your dog would like to volunteer for DFL Pet Therapy Programs, please, contact Shelly Ferger 567-8969. Training schedules are being set up now.

Chance Montgomery (Left) and Lucy Gawler (Right) Provide Pet Therapy at the I.R. Mall



## *Just Look At Her Now!*



*Mitzi (Left) and Ellie (Right) lounge around at the Dog Park*

Mission "almost impossible" could describe the rescue of Mitzi, a very special Springer Spaniel. Victor and Eleanor Bengyak were so moved by the horror story of the abused dogs at Noah's Ark in Sebastian that they decided to adopt a puppy despite swearing to have no more dogs after the tragic loss of Taffy, a Golden Retriever, to cancer last year. Actually they wanted to take two Ark refugees, but were told there were so many potential foster parents only one was available.

Black and white and sweet and lively, Mitzi became part of the Bengyak household instantly. Unfortunately, veterinarian Dr. Elizabeth Bybee soon diagnosed a limp as hip dysplasia and recommended surgery. The operation was successful but revealed another condition requiring additional surgery, this time by a cardiology specialist at the Ft. Pierce clinic.

Mitzi's recovery period was brief but hectic, since the Bengyaks live right across the street from the dog park and Mitzi clearly wanted to rejoin her friends before she was ready. "She nearly drove us crazy," Victor and Eleanor say.

She now goes to the park almost every day, greeting dogs and their owners with enthusiasm and affection. She can run and race with the best of them and does.

One day at the park she met Ellie, an old friend from Noah's Ark. They had a very touching greeting and although Ellie is still shy, she too is adapting to the world beyond the bad old days.

The Bengyaks are so happy to have Mitzi in their lives and that they could provide the medical care she needed. They look forward to many years with Mitzi, the "Million Dollar Wonder Dog"

**Dogs  
for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

PO BOX 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
VERO BEACH, FL  
PERMIT NO. 79

[www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)  
[dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)  
(772) 567-8969



There is lots of fun at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park, 12 St & 16 Ave in Vero Beach, from Community Events to Dog Obedience and Agility Training or just "hanging out".



Your dog may qualify for our programs!

### Assistance Dogs

**Hearing Guide Dogs** are trained to alert to a door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm & an alarm clock.

**Mobility Assistance Dogs** are trained to assist a person rising from a chair, taping a 911 phone & retrieving a fallen object.



Hildegard and "Daisy" train for Public Access Certification



"Maddux" Bodnar is always happy to provide Pet Therapy

### Pet Assisted Therapy

provides an uninhibited setting for children to read to dogs and provides warmth, love & comfort to seniors.

**Off-Leash Dog Park** serves as a focal point for canine recreation & training and is located at 12th St & 16th Ave.



The 4-H Dog Masters Club is organizing for the 2006 - 2007 year

**Dogs for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

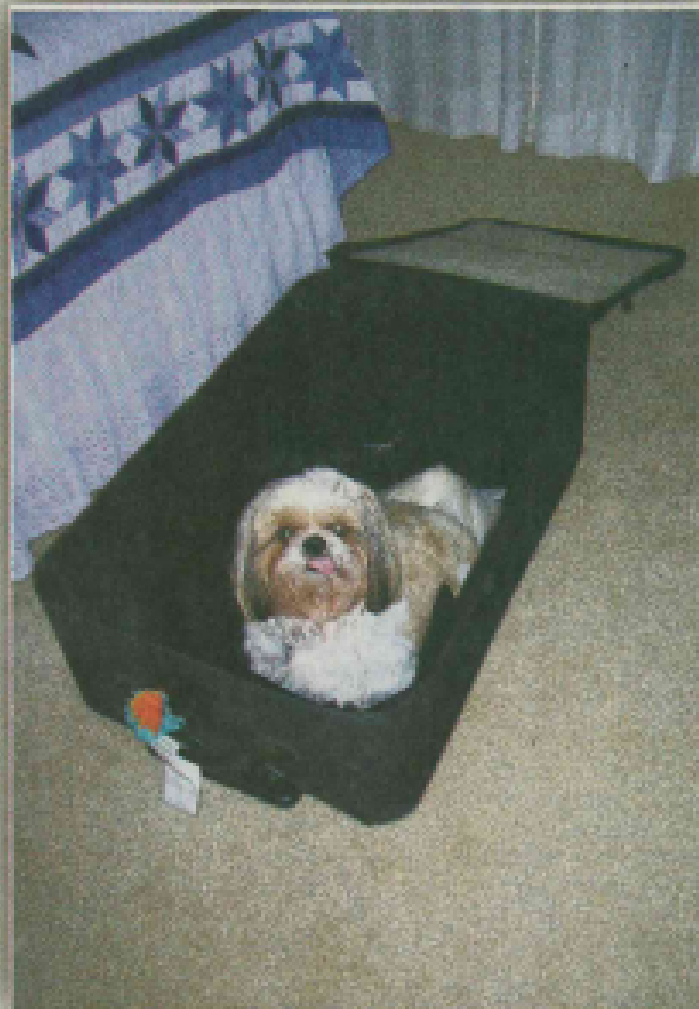
567-8969

Memberships are available to pre-screened dogs & Dog Obedience Training is available to the public.

B2 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2006 • V

# The record

## READER SNAPSHOT



Sonja Jeffrey, of Vero Beach, took this photo of Shih tzu, Mattie, using a Nikon Coolpix 4600. Jeffrey said she was getting ready for a cruise when Mattie jumped in the suitcase and looked at her as if to say, "When do we leave, Mom?"

### Learn about Dogs for Life service animals

Dogs for Life Inc. a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community is hosting an Assistance Dog presentation at 7 p.m. Nov. 2 at the United Way, 1836 14th Ave.

This event is free and open to anyone interested in learning more about assistance/service animals. Guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, mobility assistance dogs and seizure alert dogs will all be present. Learn what these dogs can do, how they are trained and when someone qualifies for an assistance dog.

Federal, state and local laws pertaining to service dogs and interfering with a service dog will be presented by Assistant State Attorney Chris Taylor.

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

From staff reports



**AUGUST**

# Dog Days of Summer

## In the Limelight

*Dogs for Life*

### Dog days of summer

Dogs for Life, (DFL) Inc. hosted Dog Days at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park for four-legged and two-legged friends alike.

Vero Beach city manager and Dogs for Life executive director Shelly

Ferger presented DFL appreciation awards, and K-9 units gave demonstrations. The park was filled with well-behaved dogs that brought their owners to enjoy a day out with their furry friends.



Indian River County 4-H Dogmaster Club members Marissa and Angie LoPresti with Club co-leader Etta LoPresti and "Zoey," a 1-year-old Australian Shepherd.



Vero Beach Police animal control officer Bruce Dangerfield accepts a Dogs for Life appreciation award from Shelly Ferger and Jim Gabbard.

LUMINARIES • WEEK OF AUGUST 28, 2008 • 5

# The record

## READER SNAPSHOT



Carol Pena, of Vero Beach, took this photo with a Nikon D70 at the Dogs for Life Off Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue on Aug. 12 during a Law Enforcement K-9 Demonstration. Vero Beach K-9 Officer Alan Hall and his K-9 Bok capture a suspect played by Sebastian K-9 Officer Richie Revis.

### What Have We Done lately? Plenty!!

By Shelly Ferger, Executive Director

**New Mobility Assistance Team Is Certified:** Holly and her boxer, Buster were certified in June, having completed 60 hours of training with 20 hours of public access training within the 6-month requirement period. Buster had to learn three tasks to qualify for certification. He will **Brace and Step** to help stabilize Holly when needed. He will **tap the 911 emergency phone on command**, and **Go Get** someone in the household when asked. You may see Holly and Buster working in public places where he will be identified by a DFL Dog Working jacket. He also may be wearing a back pack that carries things for Holly.

**Hearing Guide Progresses:** Hildegard and Daisy a beagle mix are in Stage 2 of their hearing dog training. Daisy is alerting to a door knock, an alarm clock and a Go Get command. Then they will move on to the telephone and the smoke alarm. Public access training is also underway.

**Pet Assisted Therapy:** Programs continue over the summer at the Boys & Girls Clubs in Vero Beach and Sebastian, and the Homeless Family and Senior Centers in Vero Beach.

We are looking forward to the fall when we will resume programs at Beachland Elementary School, St. Edwards Lower School and the Hibiscus Children's Center.

**Companion Dog Report:** Gus was adopted into a perfect home by Gretchen, Al and Phyl DuPree. Look for Gus and Gretchen at the off-leash dog park. Gus is one of 13 dogs fostered and then adopted into homes by DFL.

**Dog Obedience Classes:** Basic, Novice, Agility, Rally Obedience, AKC Canine Good Citizen, Assistance Dog and Pet Therapy Dog Training all continue at the dog park on Saturday mornings, despite the heat. "We can't wait for an indoor training center" is becoming our mantra! (Dog Park members receive a \$10 discount for training classes.)



Parti Schell assist with the Training and Certification of Holly and Buster Mobility Assistance Team



Hildegard & Daisy "In-Training"



Dog Training Classes Are Open To The Public



The DuPree Family Al, "Gus", "Gretchen" and Phyl

# Hub Pets



CAROL PENA • Posted on YourHub.com

Buddy Smith navigates an agility course during the Dog Days Event.

## Dogs for Life Dog Days of Summer Event a Success

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

The Dogs for Life, Dog Days of Summer event held at the off-leash dog park (located at the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue) was a huge success.

City Manager Jim Gabberd

presented DFL Appreciation Awards to Vero Beach and Indian River County Animal Control officers.

K-9 deputy Sgt. Pat White organized a multi-law enforcement agency K-9 demonstration that was enjoyed by spectators attending the free

event.

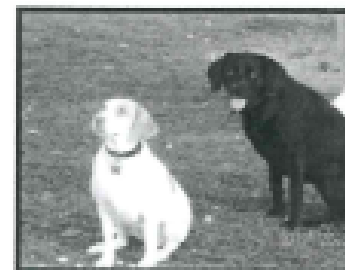
Agility champion Joan Andrews organized a dog agility show. Many of those attending participated in the doggie pool party and "stupid" dog trick portion of the show.



DFL 4 1/2 Acre Safe Off-Leash Dog Park



Dogs and people enjoy the park



Dixie & Nina visit regularly

### DFL Board Explores/Expands - You Can Help Make Our Park Our Own

The DFL Board of Directors is looking into ways to raise funds to purchase the 4 1/2 acre off-leash dog park at the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue and is launching a campaign to establish an endowment fund for its operation.

In order to help realize our new ambitions, the board has recently enlisted six new members. DFL has expanded its board of directors to nine. New members are: Penny Chandler, Clay Collins, Jane B. King, Donna Miller, Treasurer Barbara J. Patten and Macy Swift.

The new members join President Mim Dunn, Vice President Susan Myers, and Sharon Marshall. DFL hopes to strengthen its fundraising and grant writing capabilities to help further expand its services and programs.

Recently, the following groups and individuals have donated their time and expertise to DFL in board development and capital campaign planning: Kerry Bartlett of the Visiting Nurse Association, The Indian River County chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and Lenora Ritchie of the Robert and Eleanor McCabe Foundation.

When the purchase is complete, long-range plans include building a Dogs for Life Training center with an office and restroom.

DFL leased the land for 10 years in 1997, when the Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Club, as a community service project, began raising funds to support a dog park.

Subsequently, the non-profit Dog Park Club of Indian River, formed in December 1999 to develop and manage the park, and raised more than \$100,000 in cash and in-kind donations. The park opened for membership in February 2002.

Dogs for Life, Inc. a tax-deductible non-profit organization, adopted the Dog Park in July 2003. Memberships currently average between 150 & 175 dogs.

To qualify for membership, dogs must be inoculated, neutered and social. Current fees are \$300 a year per dog. Additional dogs from the same household are half price. DFL also is establishing a scholarship program toward park memberships. DFL holds dog temperament and owner orientations by appointment. Owners must agree to abide by all dog park membership rules. They receive an individual code to access the security gate.

Watch your mail for our capital campaign appeal outlining the plans and cost for this project. We are depending on you to help us secure our valuable programs for members of this community and their dogs! Join now or re-enlist.

## Every Dog Has His Day In The Sun Celebrate the Dog Days of Summer Aug 12

DFL will host a party Saturday, Aug. 12, from 6-8 p.m. at the Dog Park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Festivities are open to the public and to all well-behaved dogs on leashes.



Local Law Enforcement K-9 Demo



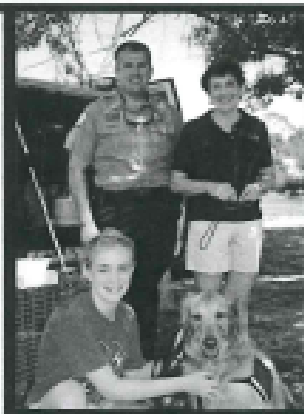
Sarah Lee cools off during a Doggie Pool Party at the Off-Leash Dog Park

### Activities include

- \* Presentation of an Appreciation Award to Indian River County and Vero Beach Animal Control Officers
- \* A local law enforcement K-9 Demonstration
- \* A Doggie Pool Party and Wet T-shirt Contest
- \* A Dog Agility Demonstration
- \* Stupid Pet Tricks

### Inside This Issue

<b>Save The Date Dog Days Aug. 12</b>	
DFL To Purchase Dog Park	2
Six Join Board Of Directors	3
Program Report	3
Donate to DFL	4



Animal Control Officer Jeff West, DFL President Mimi Dunn, 4-H member Katherine DeSandro and "Casey"

Doggie T-Shirts will be available for \$3. Everyone is a Winner! Information will be available on Dog Bite Prevention, Dogs for Life, Dog Park Memberships, the Dog Park Capital Campaign, and information on how to help end cruelty to animals.

Friday, August 4, 2006

[www.HometownNewsOL.com](http://www.HometownNewsOL.com)

## 'Dog Days' Of Summer free dog park event

### FOR HOMETOWN NEWS

VERO BEACH—Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) a non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through training assistance and pet therapy dogs is hosting a Free On-Leash Day at the "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park.

The park is located on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach on Saturday, Aug. 12 from 6 to 8 p.m.

The event will include DFL appreciation awards being presented by Vero Beach City Manager Jim Gabbard to Indian River County's and Vero Beach Police Animal Control officers; a multi Law Enforcement agency K-9 demonstration; a Doggie Wet-T-Shirt Contest and Pool Party; a Dog Agility demonstration and Stupid

### Pet Tricks.

Dogs For Life will have information available on how to join the Off-Leash Dog Park, their Assistance Dog and Pet Assisted Therapy Training programs, how to fight to end cruelty to animals and anti-dog bite information.

Doggie T-Shirts are available for \$3. Everyone is a winner! Bring your lawn chair. Well-behaved dogs are welcomed.

For more information regarding the event, dog training classes, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park, contact Executive Director Shelly Fergar at (772) 567-8969.

**PRIZES**

**PEPSI**



**6:10 DFL Program Outline**

Assistance Dog Program – Susan Myers, Vice President  
Pet Assisted Therapy Program – Barbara Patten, Treasurer  
Dog Park – Shelly Ferger, Executive Director

Explanation of:

**DFL Table Information / Anti-Dog Bite Information**  
How to help end cruelty to animals

**On-going Pool Party & Wet T-Shirt Sales and Contest**

**Raffle Ticket Sales**  
Dog Obedience classes  
6 month membership to dog park

**6:30 Appreciation Plaque Presentation to Animal Control**  
- City Manger Jim Gabbard or VB Police Chief Don Dappen



**6:45 Law Enforcement K-9 Demo – Sgt. Pat White**



**7:15 Dog Agility Demo – Jean Andrews**



**7:45 Stupid Pet Tricks**



**8:00 PM Clean up**

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## Hub Pets



SHELLY FERGER • Posted on YourHub.com

New friends are found while playing off-leash at the DFL Best Friend's dog park.

## Join the DFL 'Off-Leash' Dog Park

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

Dogs for Life, Inc. — a non-profit organization — is now accepting six-month memberships to the Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park, located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

DFL does not receive any city or county funding to op-

erate this dog park, so there is a membership process.

Qualification for dogs is that they be inoculated, neutered and social.

Six-month membership fees are \$150, and a second dog from the same household is half price.

Prior to membership, a Dog Park orientation is held,

where the dog's temperament is evaluated, rules are explained, fees are collected and members are given their code number to access the security gate any time during the day light hours.

For additional information or to schedule an orientation, contact DFL Executive Director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8989.

# The record

## Dogs on leashes invited to off-leash park

Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs through train-

ing assistance and pet therapy dogs, is hosting a free On-Leash Day from 6 to 8 p.m. Aug. 12 at the "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

The event will include appreciation awards be presented by Vero Beach City Manager Jim Gabbard to the Indian River County and Vero Beach Police Department Animal Control officers; a multi-law enforcement agency K-9 demonstration; a doggie wet T-shirt contest and pool party; a dog agility demonstration and stupid pet tricks.

Dogs For Life will have information available on how to join the Off-Leash Dog Park, its assistance dog and pet-assisted therapy training programs, as well as how to fight to end cruelty to animals and anti-dog bite information. Doggie T-shirts are available for \$3.

Bring your lawn chair. All well-behaved dogs are welcome, on leash.

For information about this event, dog training classes or membership to the park contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



# Appreciation Award



12 • YOURHUB.COM • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2006

## Hub Pets

com

### Your dog can become a Canine Good Citizen

BY SHELLY FERGER  
Posted on YourHub.com

Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL), a non-profit organization, can certify your dog as an AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC).

Each Saturday, dog-training classes are held at the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue. Classes are structured to train all dogs to pass the CGC test.

Skills include accepting a friendly stranger, walking through a crowd, sitting, staying, coming when called, reaction to another dog, reaction to distraction, and supervised separation.

AKC and DFL encourage all dog owners to participate in this program, thereby assuring that our beloved dogs will always be a welcome and respected members of the community.

For information or registration on dog training classes contact Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

*Editor's Note: This story has been edited for space. For the full story, log on to YourHub.com.*



SHELLY FERGER • Posted on YourHub.com

Steve Hale III and Molly the golden retriever participate in Canine Good Citizen classes at the off-leash dog park.

**What:** Dogs for Life, Inc. Dog Training Class.

**When:** 8 a.m. Saturdays, pre-registration is necessary.

**Where:** DFL Off-Leash Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach.

**Cost:** \$50 registration fee, \$10 per class.

**Contact:** (772) 567-8969.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

TODAY

**Dodger Dash:** The Dodger Dash, a 5K (3.1 miles) race along the grounds of Dodgertown and ending inside Holman Stadium will take place at 5 p.m. Aug. 12, before the 7 p.m. Vero Beach Dodgers/St. Lucie Mets game. Nine age groups will comprise separate men's and women's divisions. Registration is \$20; no entries accepted after 4:45 p.m. on the day of the race. Runners can also register at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). For more information, call (772) 569-4900 Ext. 5053.

**Dogs for Life:** Dogs for Life, Inc. Dog Park, 12 Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Dog basic obedience classes 8 a.m. \$50 registration. Agility, novice and rally obedience with AKC Canine Good Citizen, Assistance Dog and Pet Therapy Dog Training classes 9 a.m. \$10, drop-in, pay-as-you-go. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call (772) 567-8969.

**Dogs for Life Inc.** is hosting a Free On-Leash Day at the "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach Aug. 6-8 p.m. The event will include DFL appreciation awards being presented by Vero Beach City Manager Jim Gabbard to Indian River County's and Vero Beach Police Animal Control officers; a multi Law Enforcement agency K-9 demonstration; a Doggie Wet-T-Shirt Contest and Pool Party; a Dog Agility demonstration and Stupid Pet Tricks. Well behaved dogs welcomed On-Leash! For information about this event, dog training classes, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park contact Executive Director Shelly Fenger (772) 567-8969.

Entertainment 4374 entertainment



**JUNE**

# Family Fun Day



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

## Join "Dogs for Life" at **FAMILY FUN DAY**

Saturday, June 24, 11 AM - 4 PM

Indian River Mall



Arts and Crafts Projects

**HULA-HOOP  
CONTEST**

FABULOUS CANINES FROM

**Dogs  
for Life**

MAKE SOMETHING AT



KIDS WORKSHOP

PICK UP FREE GOODIES FROM

**RIVERSIDE BANK**

**Play Math-Ball**

LIVE RADIO BROADCAST



The Best of the  
80's, 90's and More!

PLAY WITH HERMIT  
CRABS FROM



THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
LEARNING CENTER

**Surprise Guests**

Free Balloons

PICTURES WITH SCOOBY-DOO

**CONNECT FOUR CONTEST**

**Play Triple-Play**

MEET YOUR FRIENDS FROM THE

**Hometown News**

**Comcast**

CHECK OUT  
HIGH SPEED INTERNET  
and DIGITAL TV

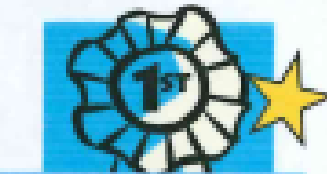


Face Painting

Learn about...  
**THE CLUB**

**KIDS FINGER PRINTING**

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE



AWARDS and PRIZES

PLUS

FIND OUT HOW TO WIN A  
**LUXURY TOWNHOUSE**  
IN VERO BEACH PROVIDED BY

**REGATTA**

CONSTRUCTION, LLC



Rules, regulations and information at Family Fun Day.

**Fun and Games for  
FOR ALL AGES**

### PUPPY TUMMY RUB



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer  
 Two-year-old Grace Kotnik of Vero Beach and her mom Jill, pet one of the Dogs For Life working dogs at the Indian River Mall Saturday. The dogs were on hand to help kick off the Boys and Girls Club of Indian River County's Win a Luxury Townhome campaign. Tu

P.g. 6/23/06

Connect-4 and Hula-Hoop contests.

Family Fun Day provides a platform for the Boys and Girls Clubs to start selling tickets on a chance to win a townhome. Cost is \$20 per ticket or seven tickets for \$100. Proceeds will help support the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Why is it called the Holiday House? Because the drawing will be Dec. 15, and because tickets make a great gift for all "holiday" occasions!

Regatta Construction is providing the Alyson townhome a residence that blends a spacious contemporary design with traditional detail. The Alyson, valued at \$395,000, offers a two-bedroom, 2.5 bath floor plan with ground floor master suite, grand room and secluded oasis-style den in more than 2,400-square-foot of living space. The specific home to be given away is not available to tour, but models are available in Bridgepointe, a community being built by Regatta Construction in Vero Beach.

Other major sponsors of the Holiday House project are Riverside Bank, Hometown News, Comcast and Treasure & Space Coast Radio. WGTX, 98.7FM will have a live remote from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

You can get more information and order tickets online at [www.HolidayHouseTicket.com](http://www.HolidayHouseTicket.com) or by calling toll-free (800) 345-7694. For more information on the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County visit [www.BGCIRC.org](http://www.BGCIRC.org).

From staff reports

### Boys & Girls Clubs to conduct fundraiser

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County will kick off its new fundraising project — the Holiday House Giveaway — on Saturday at the Indian River Mall during Family Fun Day.

With the focus on children and families, Family Fun Day begins at 11 a.m. and runs to 4 p.m. in the Dillard's concourse area. Activities will include arts and crafts and games for children of all ages, balloons and face painting. Home Depot will have child-friendly projects, the Environmental Learning Center will provide hands-on displays, and Dogs For Life with their incredible canines will be on hand.

The Indian River County Sheriff's Office will fingerprint children for safety, and Comcast will be there with the latest in high-speed Internet and digital TV. Children can get their photographs taken with Scooby-Doo and enter the

# Fundraising Professionals

CONTENTS PREPARED BY THE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Indian River County

Shelly Fergat, Dogs for Life; Mary Smith, Habitat for Humanity; and Jo Benton, Humane Society; represent local non-profits at the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indian River Chapter reception.



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HOT Shots



1 Tricia Jenkins, Children's Home Society; Jennifer Jones, United Way; Liz Briggs, Children's Home Society; and Michelle Herbold, United Way, at a reception for the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indian River Chapter.

2 Jane Romeys, Sheila Mackenzie and Joan Schoffres are each honored for 20 years of service with the Indian River Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.

3 Shelly Feger, Dogs for Life; Mary Smith, Habitat for Humanity; and Jo Benton, Humane Society; represent local non-profits at the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indian River Chapter reception.

4 MDA member Lorinda Gonzalez with Bill Willis at the Vero Beach Karate Association's Kick-A-Thon, to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

5 Indian River Community College public safety training student Curtis Webb, with honorary public safety commissioners Stephanie Banack, Rusty Banack, Cheryl Banack Roseland, Donna Sue and Sid Banack, and IRCC students Jeff



# Hot Shots



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4 MDA member Lorinda Gonzalez with Bill Willis at the Vero Beach Karate Association's Kick-A-Thon,



# Hearing Guide

## HEARING

### Man's best friend lends you its ears

**MIM DUNN**  
Dogs for Life

Most people are familiar with service dogs, better known as seeing-eye dogs, that help the blind navigate through life. But how many know about service dogs that help deaf and hard-of-hearing folks cope with their silent world? Probably not many do, unless they, like me, are profoundly hard of hearing.

For many years, my service dog, Bubba, has been helping me hear the telephone, the alarm clock, people knocking at the door, the stove timer, the smoke alarm and all kinds of other ordinary but necessary sounds of daily life. He's literally been a life-saver.

The time and work involved in training Bubba was very rewarding. Before he learned to be my ears, I felt cut off from others, both in my own home and out in public. I found myself avoiding

people and making excuses to stay home.

Now, with my dog at my side, people know that I cannot hear much and they make a special effort to speak so that I can understand. My dog gives me the self-confidence to go among the hearing and enjoy myself.

On the Treasure Coast, the nonprofit organization Dogs for Life can help you train a service "hearing-guide" dog. All it takes is commitment to a training process that takes about 10 months.

And if you don't already have a favorite dog, the organization searches for one at animal shelters or dog rescue organizations. Although the dogs are screened for good health, alertness, suitable temperament and aptitude for learning, the most important factor is

See HEARING, page Z10



Mim Dunn poses with Bubba, which she trained to be a hearing-guide dog.

## HEARING

FROM PAGE Z8

an ideal match between owner and dog.

Once you and your dog have had time to bond, basic obedience training begins. After basic training come the specialty classes, where a professional trainer and volunteers come to your house once a week to work with you and your dog on specific skills and to teach you how to practice with your dog between training sessions.

To succeed, you must be willing to work every day with your dog on the specific skills plus the basic commands of come, sit, down and stay. You can have fun playing "Hide and Go Seek," which helps the dog learn how to look for and find its owner — an essential task for a hearing-guide dog.

Additional training is available if you want to be able to take your dog to stores and other public buildings. During this course, the dog is taught to focus all its attention on you and to not be distracted by people, other animals, loud noises, shopping carts, food servers in restaurants and other noisy distractions.

Your dog must master at least three

sound skills to be certified as a hearing-guide dog. Then you and your dog's public access rights are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Certified hearing-guide dogs are not required to wear, but should wear, a "Hearing Guide Dog" identification vest when in public places. This reassures the public that your dog is a working dog and not just a pet. You also should carry an ID certification card with a picture of the dog, signed by a certified trainer.

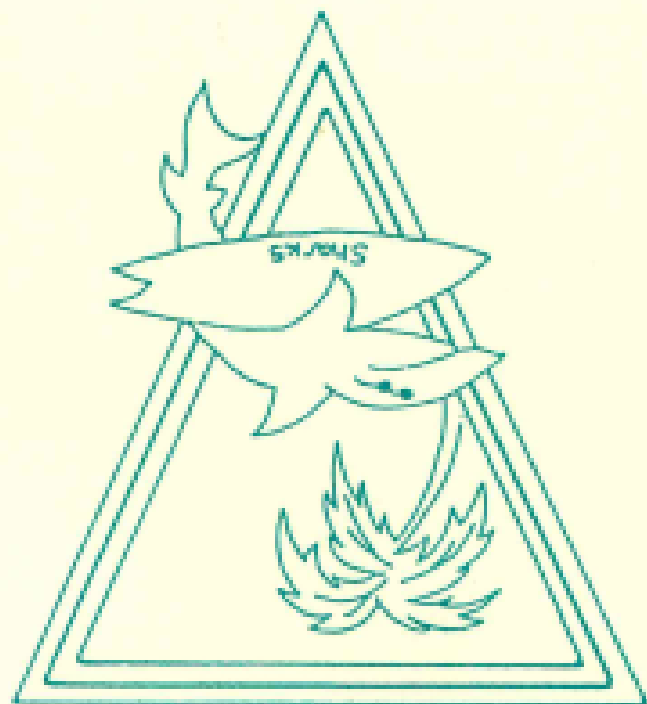
If you are interested in learning more about hearing-guide dogs, contact Dogs for Life Executive Director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969 or e-mail her at [dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net).

The organization's address is P.O. Box 65023, Vero Beach, FL 32965. It is on the Web at [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)

Mim Dunn is the president of Dogs for Life and a member of the Indian River County Advisory Committee to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services of the Treasure Coast.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services of the Treasure Coast Inc. is a 501-c-3 nonprofit corporation serving Martin, Indian River, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties. DHHS is supported in part by the United Way. If you wish more information or would like to participate, please call (772) 335-5546.





## Beachland Elementary

If you have seen the newspaper recently, you know that Beachland earned its eighth "A". That distinction comes from a dedicated faculty, wonderful parents, hard-working students, ~~the~~ volunteers from the community... all being a TEAM for education. We appreciate your generous labors of love!

2425 20TH STREET, VERO BEACH, FL 32960  
TEL: 772-770-2401 FAX: 772-770-0513 WEB: www.merrillgardens.com  
Equal Housing Opportunity  
Assisted Living Facility License #10057

June 21, 2006

Dear Dog for Life Board,

On behalf of our 3rd grade students ~~and~~ teachers, please accept my sincere thanks for your gift of time & talent to Beachland Elementary. Your visits each week were so appreciated. The children really looked forward to reading with their favorite "canine friend" and would always want to be the chosen reader!

Dear Shelly,

We can't thank you enough for bringing your dogs to Merrill Gardens. Our residents really enjoyed the presentation. It was not only enjoyable but also very informative. Thank you again.

Sincerely,  
Karen McHenry  
Community Relations  
Director



MERRILL GARDENS  
AT VERO BEACH



**APRIL**

# Doggie East Bonnet Parade

**Dogs for Life, Inc. Off-Leash Dog Park  
12 St & 16 Ave Vero Beach**



**Saturday April 15 – 2 PM**

**Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade  
Fashion Show & Dog Tricks  
Easter Egg Hunt**

**\$5/donation for all entries - Everyone is a winner!**

**\$5/photo opportunity**

**\$1/donation homemade dog cookies – 4-H Dog Master's Club**

**Spectators Free - Bring your lawn chair  
Well Behaved Dogs Welcome On-Leash!**

**Dogs for Life Program Presentation and  
Dog Obedience Training Demonstration**



**For Additional Information call 567-8969**

# Hub Pets

Post your pet photos on [www.yourhub.com](http://www.yourhub.com)



CAROL PENA • Posted on YourHub.com

## Easter parade

Maddie, Tess and Miss B show off their Easter bonnets at the Dog for Life's annual Easter Doggy Parade on April 15 at the 4-H Best Friends Dog Park in Vero Beach. The three belong to Charlotte Peterson.

6 • WEEK OF MAY 29, 2006 • LUMINARIES CONTENTS PREPARED BY THE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Indian River County 

# HOT Shots



7 Norma Springer and "Maxwell" a one-year-old Labradoodle participate in the Dogs for Life, Inc. Easter Bonnet Parade at the off-leash dog park.



**2038 VOLUNTEERS**

**DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.**  
 A non-profit organization is in need of social dogs and people needed for Pet Assisted Therapy Program. Retired executives needed for long-range planning and fund-raising strategies in Indian River County.  
 772-567-8989



### PLAN YOUR WEEKEND Doggie Easter bonnet parade will be a howl

#### INDIAN RIVER

**Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade, Fashion Show, Dog Tricks, Easter Egg Hunt:** 2 p.m. Saturday; Off Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Entries \$5 donation, spectators no charge. (772) 567-8969.

# The guide

#### SATURDAY

**Bingo:** 10:30 a.m., Council on Aging Senior Center, 686 14th St., Vero Beach, (772) 569-0760.

**Bridge:** 1 p.m., open and 0-99 games, Vero Beach Duplicate Bridge Club, 1520 14th Ave., [www.verobridge.com](http://www.verobridge.com), (772) 562-3008.

**Computers:** Vero Beach Computer Group's Macintosh SIG, 10 a.m.-noon, History Room, Main Library; Eleanor Ryan (772) 562-2868, and Joe Piazza (772) 567-9004.

**Dances:** Dinner dance, 6:30 p.m., Eagles Aerie 4067, 6606 Trade Center Drive, Sebastian, (772) 589-6573.

**Dances:** Keynotes, ballroom dancing, 7-10 p.m., Vero Beach Community Center. For dates, call (772) 770-6517, (772) 770-0768; \$5.

**Dinner:** VFW Post 10210, 4 p.m. dinner and entertainment, 215 Louisiana Ave., Sebastian, (772) 388-5784; \$8.

**Dogs for Life:** Dogs for Life Inc., Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Dog basic obedience classes, 8 a.m., \$50, pre-registration is required; 8:30 a.m., agility, novice obedience and rally obedience classes, registration not required, walk-ins welcome, \$10 pay-as-you-go. For more information, call (772) 567-8969.

**Easter Bonnet Parade:** 2 p.m. Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) a non-profit organization dedicated to providing

services to the community is hosting a Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show with Tricks and an Easter Egg Hunt, at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park located on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. All entries \$5 donation; everyone is a winner. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will have homemade dog cookies for a \$1 donation and Dogs for Life, Inc. volunteers will offer a \$5 donation photo opportunity. Spectators free. Bring your lawn chair. Well behaved dogs welcome on-leash. For information on all programs, call executive director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

### Easter parade for dogs on Saturday

Dogs for Life Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show with Tricks and an Easter Egg Hunt, at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park, at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach at 2 p.m. Saturday.

There is a \$5 donation for all entries. There is no charge to attend the show.

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

# SocialScene

### DOGS FOR LIFE INC

Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a "Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show." The event will be at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park located on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach on April 15 at 2 p.m., and will feature tricks and an Easter Egg Hunt.

All entries are a \$5/donation. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will have homemade dog cookies for a \$1/donation and Dogs for Life Inc. Volunteers will offer a \$5/donation photo opportunity. Spectators are free. Bring your lawn chair. Well-behaved dogs welcome on a leash.



Photo provided

**Bring your dogs in their favorite Easter bonnets.**

For information on this event, dog training classes, the 4-H Dog Master's Club, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park contact Executive Director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

### In their Easter bonnets

# Galas & C

A "Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show with Tricks" and an Easter Egg Hunt for our four-legged friends will be held at 2 p.m. April 15, at the Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park to benefit Dogs for Life, Inc. Enter your pet for \$5 or just bring a lawn chair to sit and enjoy the furry parade. Call Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

[maryelz@comcast.net](mailto:maryelz@comcast.net)



Indian River County

Mary Schenkel

# Assistance Dog Training

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2006 • INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

YourHub.com

CALENDAR

• Tell everybody about your event by posting it online at YourHub.com



SHELLY FERGER • Posted on YourHub.com

Dog training made fun at the off-leash-dog park in Vero Beach.

Dog obedience training takes place at 8 a.m. Saturdays at the Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Street, Vero Beach. Classes are pay as you go. For more information call (772) 567-8969.

E4 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2006

## GOOD FOR YOU

### DOG MASTERS PRESENT CHECKS

The Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Club has completed its 2006 Dog Training Project and Community Service Project. During the year, the club held a series of fundraisers at the off-leash dog park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. The club members baked homemade dog cookies and made dog scarves.

On April 15, Dog Masters' president, Katherine DiSandro, 13, presented a check for \$250 to Dogs for Life president, Mimi Dunn. The donation is earmarked for the dog training program at the park and specifically toward dog training equipment.

Club president for the past two years, DiSandro has seen the dog walk deteriorate to the point it was no longer safe and was removed from the course.

The 4-H Dog Masters Club has also donated \$250 to Hurricane Katrina Relief.

Your dog may qualify for our programs!

### Assistance Dogs

#### Hearing Guide Dogs

are trained to alert to a door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm & an alarm clock.

#### Mobility Assistance Dogs

are trained to assist a person rising from a chair, taping a 911 phone & retrieving a fallen object.



"Max" picks up dropped keys



"Abbie" gives unconditional love

### Pet Assisted Therapy

#### Read to Dogs

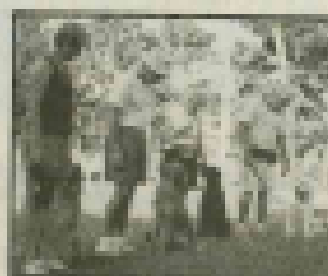
provide an uninhibited setting for children to read to dogs.

#### Trauma Therapy Dogs

provide warmth, love & comfort to adults & children experiencing post-traumatic stress & depression.

#### Off-Leash Dog Park

serves as a focal point for canine recreation and training & is located at 12th Street & 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.



Learn how to "get your dog's attention"

Memberships are available to pre-screened dogs & Dog Obedience Training is available to the public.

**Dogs  
for Life**

(772) 567-8969

Living, Loving, Learning





FREE  
Your  
APRIL 14, 2008  
FRIDAY



Photos by SAM WOLFE • sam.wolfescripps.com  
Sara Kerekhazi, 8, right, reads to Abbie, a 12-year-old golden retriever, at the Sebastian Boys and Girls Club on the afternoon of April 3, as Meghann Gomez, left, 10, Corin Arsensault, 8, Kylie McCarty, 10, and Maagan Jones, 9, wait their turn with books in hand.

# Children read tales to furry friends with tails

**SEBASTIAN** — Young readers got a chance to read aloud on April 3 to a very attentive, four-legged audience at the Sebastian Boys and Girls Club.

Abbie, a 12-year-old, 75-pound golden retriever, listened as seven children read their favorite story to her as part of the "READ to Dogs" program. READ to Dogs is a nationwide initiative that was born about seven years ago in Utah, where a non-profit organization paired health-care therapy dogs with children who were struggling to read. The READ (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) program developed training standards for animals and their handlers and the idea spread across the country. Locally, the program is sponsored by Dogs for Life, a Vero Beach-based pet-assisted therapy program.

In addition to both locations of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County, the READ to Dogs program also takes place at Beachland Elementary School and St. Edward's Lower School in Vero Beach. While some of the children who participate have difficulty reading, others just enjoy books and are looking for opportunities to read aloud.

The premise of the READ to Dogs program

was announced, according to Nancy Ferger, executive director of Dogs for Life. "It takes the pressure off," said Ferger. "Dogs love unconditionally and they respond in a very positive way."

Ferger said that since Abbie visits the Sebastian Boys and Girls Club each Monday, the children have really gotten to know her. "They think of Abbie as their best friend," said Ferger. "I think they have really bonded with her and they just think of her as one of their friends who stops by each week."

The program aims to provide children with a comfortable environment in which to read aloud, and gives them time to spend with animals, said Kris Stillinger, Abbie's owner and a Dogs for Life volunteer. She said that each Monday from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., the children select their favorite book from the reading room and take turns reading to Abbie.

"She basically sleeps right through it," said Stillinger, who lives on Lakeport Drive in Sebastian. "She lays right down and some kids even use her as a pillow."

Stillinger said that she has seen the chemistry develop between the children and her dog. "They get very relaxed reading to her," she said. "She doesn't make fun of them. If they mispronounce a word, it's no big deal to Abbie."

Canine reading companions, accompanied by their owners, must attend a basic obedience class, pass the AKC Canine Good Citizen Test, the Dogs for Life Public Access Test

they can use past, past volunteers also attend a therapy preparation class that explains the dog and handler's responsibilities and helps volunteers prepare for their visits.

"The main goal is to respond willingly and reliably to verbal commands," said Ferger. "And on top of that, they should be well-socialized and enjoy participating."

Stillinger said that while Abbie enjoys being with the children at the Boys and Girls Club, she pays particular attention when the children read books by Dr. Seuss.

"She seems to really like hearing books by Dr. Seuss," said Stillinger. "There must be something with the rhyming that makes her pay closer attention."

See CHILDREN, page A10



Brittany Blakeslee, 11, reads to Abbie at the Sebastian Boys and Girls Club. The canine, who with her owner Kris Stillinger has volunteered with Dogs For Life for 2 years, visits the club to let kids practice their oral reading skills.

Other programs offered through Dogs for Life include a pet-assisted victim advocate program through the State Attorney's office, an assistance dog training program for hearing impaired clients, a foster care program for displaced dogs and the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park that is located in Vero Beach. For additional information, log onto [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org).



hood newspaper, serving the Sebastian Blue...

Students seeking to improve their reading skills learn that dogs are a most uncritical audience.

## THE CANINE CONNECTION



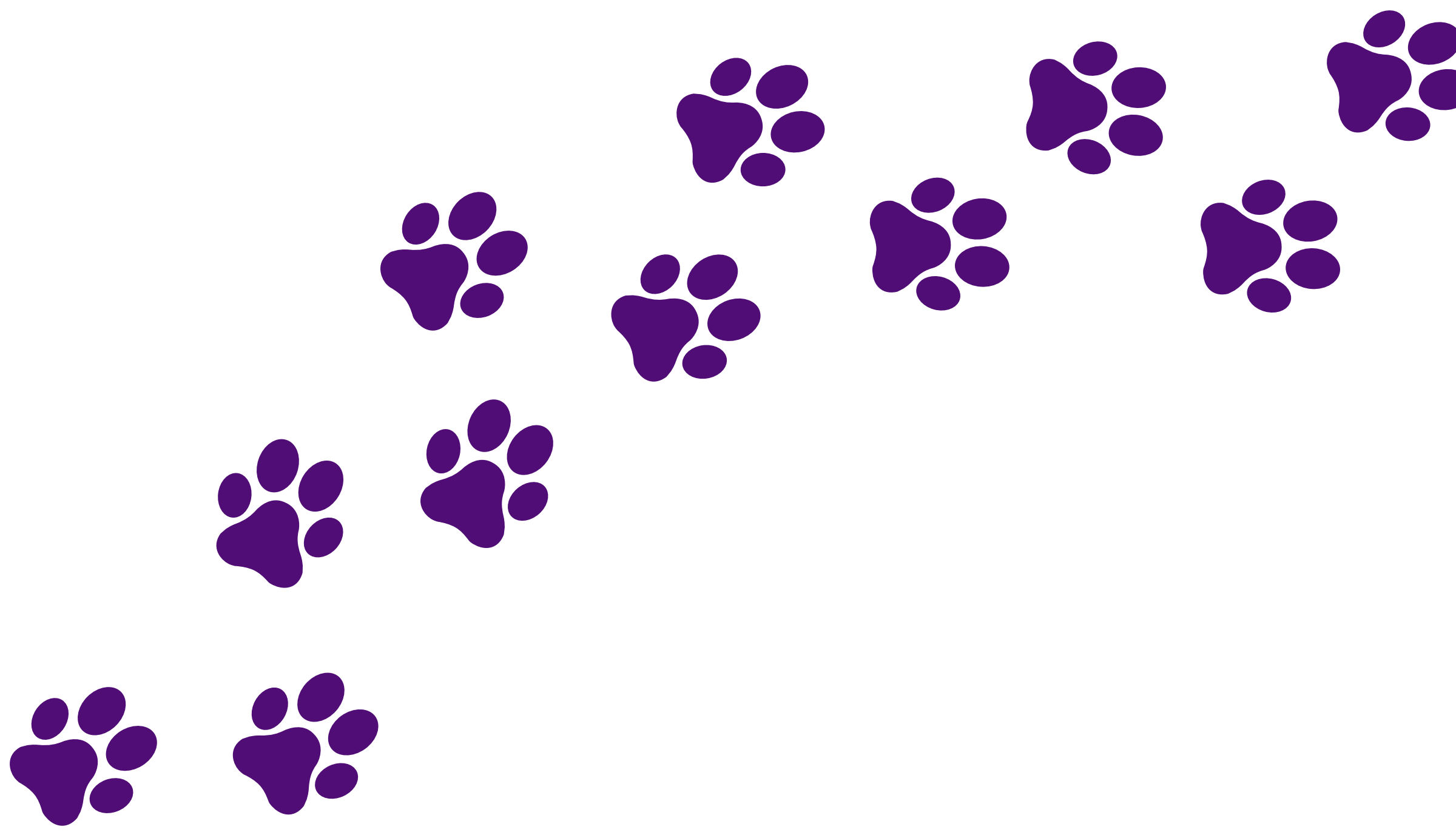
St. Edward's fourth-grader Christy Smith shares her book with "Miss B," a dachshund in the Read to Dogs program.

What could be better than reading to a buddy who crawls into your lap and gazes adoringly into your eyes? Read to Dogs, a program offered by Dogs for Life in area elementary schools, sends dogs and their owners into school libraries, where young students practice their reading skills by reading aloud to a dog. When it comes to an audience, there is none more appreciative than dogs. Without saying a word they provide encouragement to doubtful readers and support for fearful performers. The dogs don't care if they've heard the story before. They don't care if the reader stutters or mispronounces a word. All they need in return for their undivided attention is a pat now and again.

The Read to Dogs program brings canines into the Boys & Girls Club in South Vero, Beachland Elementary School, the Homeless Family Center and St. Edward's Lower School, and has recently expanded its territories to the Hibiscus Children's Center and the Boys & Girls Club in Sebastian. ☼

# Scrapbook

## 2005





**DECEMBER**

# Open House





# Legal Rights

## *State Laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities who have trained service animals.*

State and local laws which protect the rights of individuals who have disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals are:

**Florida: FSS Title 30, 413.08 SS 1-8.**

**Locations allowed:** Full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges on all common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles, railroad trains, motorbus, streetcars, boats, and other public conveyances or modes of transportation and at hotels, lodging places, places of public accommodation, amusement, or resort, and other places to which the general public is invited, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons.

### **Statute Regarding Interference:**

**413.08(2) Interference includes:** Any person, firm, or corporation, or the agent of any person, firm or corporation, who denies or interferes with admittance to, or enjoyment of, the public facilities enumerated in subsection (1) or otherwise interferes with the rights of a deaf person, a totally or partially blind person, or an otherwise physically disabled person under this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree.

*This brochure is distributed by Dogs for Life, Inc. to answer the most often questions asked of Assistance Dog Partners.*

## **WHAT IS AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

Assistance dogs are highly trained professional dogs.

### **1 . Guide Dogs**

Assist their blind or visually impaired partners to independently and safely negotiate the environment by **GUIDING** them around obstacles and safely across streets and stopping at curbs and steps.

### **2 . Hearing Dogs**

Assist their deaf or hard of hearing partners by **ALERTING** them to sounds such as the smoke alarm; alarm clock; telephone; intruders; sirens and stove or dryer timers.

### **3 . Service Dogs**

Assist their physically-disabled partners in a number of ways. They can be custom trained for the particular needs of the individual. Examples are: Retrieving keys, the telephone, a cane, crutches or anything the person drops.

Helping people up if they fall. Pulling a wheelchair. Helping maintain balance; opening doors, carrying objects such as groceries.

**Statute Regarding Housing: 413.08(4).**

**Housing includes:** All housing accommodations except room in a single family residence.

**Trainers allowed with dogs: 413.08(7).**

Any trainer of a guide, hearing or service dog while engaged in the training of such dog, has the same rights and privileges with respect to access to public facilities and the same liability for damage as is provided for deaf, blind or mobility impaired person.

**Summary of Law:** Florida law guarantees a blind, deaf or physically disabled person has the legal right to be accompanied by a specially trained dog in housing, all public accommodations and on all common carriers. No extra charge can be levied because of the dog's presence, but the dog user is liable for any damage the dog might cause to the premises.

*This is a brief summary of the law. For complete information be sure to review the complete statute or code listed above.*

### **Acknowledgements:**

- \* Assistance Dogs International
- \* Delta Society
- \* Intl Assoc of Assistance Dog Partners
- \* State Attorney General's Office
- \* U.S. Department of Justice

## **HOW DO I RECOGNIZE AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

Most assistance dogs wear a tag; vest; harness; or backpack. However, these forms of identification are not required.

## **MAY I PET AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

NO. Not when the dog is working. Petting will distract the dog that needs to focus on the instruction of its human partner.

## **CAN I TALK TO THE PERSON?**

YES. If they are not busy and are able to hear you. Most enjoy talking to members of the public about their assistance dogs.

## **HOW DOES A DISABLED PERSON ACQUIRE AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

Most apply to non profit training centers which raise funds and grant the dog free of charge. Some buy a dog and pay for all training; a few people even adopt from a shelter and train the dog themselves.

## **SOME PEOPLE DO NOT "LOOK DISABLED". WHY DO THEY NEED AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

When you see an Assistance Dog "on duty", be assured there is a good reason for it, even if the human partner does not use obvious equipment such as a wheelchair, crutches, or a hearing aid. The human partner undoubtedly has something known as a "hidden disability". For example: chronic back pain, a neuro-seizure disorder, or a serious hearing impairment to name a few.



P.O. Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

(772) 567-8969

## **Legal Rights of Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs And Service Dogs**

## *Federal Laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities who have trained service animals.*

The federal civil rights law, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title III, 28CFR Sec 36.104 defines a service animal as any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability (the disability might not be visible). By law, a service animal is not considered a pet. Most service animals are dogs; they can be any breed or size, and are not legally required to wear special equipment or tags. The ADA does not require proof or "certification" of the service dog's training. Service animals are trained to do specific tasks for the benefit of people with physical or mental impairments.

Federal (e.g., 28CFR Sec 36.302) and state laws protect the rights of individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by their trained service animals in taxis, buses, trains, stores, restaurants, doctors' offices, schools, parks, hotels and other public places. Federal laws which protect individuals with disabilities include the ADA; the Fair Housing Amendments Act (1988); Sect. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973); The Air Carrier Access Act (1986), and other regulations.

# Holiday Stroll


B14 • SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS • WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2005 • V

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## Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skins

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**DOG TALES**  
*of Vero Beach*




**Great Gift Idea For Dog Lovers**

Purchase a copy of the Dog Tales book at one of the following locations:

Bernadette's Dog Grooming	Chase's On Cardinal
Clad's Pet Center	Corey's Pharmacy
Grooming/Grooming	His and Her Hair Styling
Live Oak Animal Hospital	Ocean Grill
Paw Paw's Pet Grooming	Shady Oak Animal Clinic
The Laughing Dog Gallery	Vero Beach Printing
Village Pet Shop	

Memberships available to the 4-H Best Friends' Off-Leash Dog Park, 12 Street & 16 Avenue. Obedience training offered to the public.  
**CALL 567-8969**




*"One of our greatest pleasures being in the world of animals, while others are taking the world."*

**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

## Fur, Feathers, Fins

---

### ANOTHER PET OF THE MONTH



#### MEET CLYDE

Clyde is a funny, happy, loving doggie, & has the cutest habit (at times). He must take a toy wherever we go, and if we are at a friend's who has an animal, he will find a toy (even if only one in the house) and try to leave with it.

Sara Rainone



**Pinewoods Animal Hospital & Bird Clinic**

Heartworm prevention is a matter of life and death for both Dogs and Cats! Call us about heartworm prevention for your pet.

Featuring Revolution!

**\*10% OFF all Services & Products with this ad**

\*Limit one coupon per client & excludes food items & other specials

1905 43rd Avenue, Vero Beach • 772-562-0200  
Monday - Saturday & Emergencies



**Private and Group Dog Obedience Training**

25 Years Specializing in Family Dog Training & Behavior Counseling

- Housebreaking
- Jumping
- Dog Aggressiveness

Shelly Ferger & Student

Assistance/Guide Dog Training  
4-H Dog Master's Club  
Off-Leash Dog Park

**567-7990**

**DOG TALES**  
*of Vero Beach*



**Great Gift Idea For Dog Lovers**

Purchase a copy of the Dog Tales book at the Off-Leash Dog Park

**Annual Christmas Open House**

December 10  
2PM "Paw Printing"  
3PM Dog Agility  
"Fun Run" must preregister

4-H Dog Masters' Club will sell **Homemade Dog Cookies** to benefit LA Humane Society- Katrina Dogs  
All dogs welcome "on-leash" - bring your lawn chair  
12th St. & 16th Ave • 567-8969



*"One of our greatest pleasures being in the world of animals, while others are taking the world."*

**Dogs for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning



# Indian River County

SECTION B • SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2005 • TCPALM.COM

## Dog owners pour out their love in print

BY ELLIOTT JONES  
elliott.jones@scripps.com

**VERO BEACH** — It's a book by and for local dog lovers.

Volunteers with a non-profit dog training group, Dogs for Life, have published a small book of people's memories about their pets. The 100-page book includes write-ups and photos by 55 dog owners from around

Indian River County.

And the publication is for sale to help raise money for the group that trains dogs for physically impaired people.

The stories are homespun and low-key. Yet, readers can see the stories "come right from the heart," said group volunteer Carol Pena. She produced the book in collaboration with

another volunteer, Mary Mitchell.

The stories show the owners' admiration and love of their pets, which range from police dogs to guide dogs such as Bandit. Bandit the dachshund is the ears for his owner, Beth Sexton-Stryker, who lost her hearing to meningitis. In a motel in Boston, he helped alert her to a fire alarm.

Sexton-Stryker "knows how blessed

she is" with her Bandit, the write-up says.

And there are just the pets such as Molly who was up for adoption at the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County. Molly "was a traumatized and abused little bundle of white fur with black spots, a pink

See DOGS, page B9

## Half-second counts to increase road capacity for devel

BY HENRY A. STEPHENS  
henry.stephens@scripps.com

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY** — Half a second isn't a long time.

But shaving that from the time a car stopped at a red light needs to get

up to speed was all it took this week for some developers to get county planning advisers' approval for their projects.

"They were using the system," Donna Keys, chairwoman of the

county Planning and Zoning Commission, said Friday. "They used the tools available to them."

To get a new development approved, developers or their engineers are required to show the county that lo-

cal roads can handle the traffic from the new residents. That may include widening or paving the roads.

But Thursday, the Vero Beach engineering firm Knight, McGuire and Associates Inc. found more road ca-

capacity for their 2 1/2 seconds, in for stopped ca limit.

See TIMING, page B9

### INDEX

Obituaries ..... B4  
Sebastian River Area ..... B5  
Community columns ..... B6, B7, B8

### INSIDE

Group called Youth Granting Wishes plans to help the less fortunate; it started by taking requests from hundreds of people in Fellsmere. B3

### INSIDE

The Florida Legislature ends its special session early. B8

# VERO BEACH Hometown News

Your Local News & Information Source

FRIDAY, December 16, 2005

## NOT JUST MAN'S BEST FRIEND



Dogs For Life volunteer Cindy Brown of Vero Beach holds 'Miss Peepers' after the 8-year-old Pomeranian had her paw print stenciled onto a card for the holidays during the Dogs For Life Dog Park open house last Saturday in Vero Beach.

Cliff Parlow/staff photographer



Vero Beach resident Megan Simon, left, and her dog 'Maggie', purchased a bag of treats from 4-H Dog Masters secretary Kristen Gabbard at the Dogs For Life dog park open house last Saturday. The Dog Masters are raising money to help the Humane Society of Louisiana care for animals displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Cliff Parlow  
staff photographer

**COME AND VISIT**

Dogs for Life runs a park where members can take their dogs for walks off a leash. The general public is invited to view the park during an open house:

**TIME:** 2 p.m. today.

**LOCATION:** The 2 1/2-acre park is at the intersection of 12th Street and 16th Avenue on the south side of Vero Beach.

**INFORMATION:** Call Dogs for Life Executive Director Shelly Farger at (772) 567-8969. Currently, 150 people pay \$200 annually to use the park.

**DOGS**

FROM PAGE B1

little belly and tongue. Oh, I loved her the moment I saw her," wrote the authors, who only identified themselves as T.B. and C.B.

Now, Molly "is my best friend, my confidant" and comforter, the authors said.

Lucky the dog was lucky. He was a puppy in a pack of dogs running along Interstate 95. He

ended up with retiree Gene Pena, who saw "a sadness in his face that almost made me cry." They've been together ever since.

As the book's coordinator, Pena has seen other specialty dog books. One showed dogs dressed in outfits. Another matched dogs with famous quotations.

So Pena thought it was time for just a book that gave owners an opportunity to talk about what their dogs mean to

them. So far, about half of the 400 copies, each retailing for \$21 each, have been sold, many to friends of members of Dogs for Life. A grandmother bought one for her granddaughter who likes animals. Another buyer is involved in dog rescues.

Copies are available at the Village Pet Shop, Corey's Pharmacy, Vero Beach Printing, the Laughing Dog Gallery and at the Live Oak Animal Hospital. Also, copies are available by calling (772) 567-8969.

# Holiday Stroll

at the shops of

*South Vero Square*

CORNER OF U.S. 1 AND OSLO ROAD

**December 3, 2005 8am-3pm**

**Breakfast with Santa 8-11am sunset cafe**

**sidewalk sale 10 am - 3 pm**

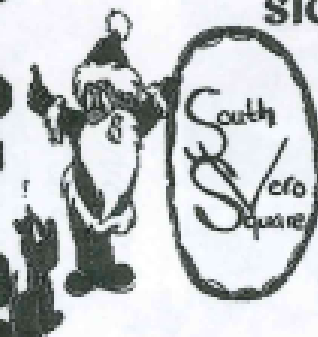
**holiday melodies**

thompson elementary 11 am

oslo middle school 12 noon

highlands elementary 1 pm

citrus elementary 2pm



we reserve  
the right to  
and  
mis-behaved  
pets home

**pet photos with santa 12-3pm**

to benefit **"DOGS FOR LIFE"**

free training tips by shelly farger

—south vero square merchants—



Chinese Take Out  
Adkins Jewelry  
Allstate Insurance  
America's Health Choices  
Beef O' Brady's  
Cookies by Design  
Costco Shopper

Dr. Melanie Wilshire  
Dr. Raymond Benson, DVM  
Dr. Sara Shamata, DVM  
Dr. Shannon Griffin  
Fairwinds Travel  
First National Bank  
Forever Young

Great Spirits  
H&R Block  
Hair Cutting  
Movie Gallery  
Pet Mart  
Pizza Hut  
Publix

Star Nail  
Sunset Cafe  
Touch of Class  
Tropic Tan  
Vero Beach Arcade  
Water Plus



**Holiday Stroll**

SOUTH VERO SQUARE • CORNER OF US 1 & OSLO RD.  
**Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

8-11am **Breakfast w/ Santa** at Sunset Café  
10-3pm **Sidewalk Sale**  
12-3pm **Pet\* and/or Children Photos w/ Santa**  
*\*well behaved pets only please*  
\$8 per photo (Proceeds benefit "Dogs for Life")

**Holiday Melodies** by the children of  
11am Thompson Elementary • NOON Oslo Middle School Chorus • 1pm Highlands Elementary  
2pm Citrus Elementary



**PRESS RELEASE**

CONTACT: Shelly Ferger, Director  
772-567-8969

**Dogs for Life, Inc. Hosting Christmas Open House at the Off-Leash Dog Park**

Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community is hosting a Christmas Open House at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park located on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vero Beach on Saturday December 11<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM.

DFL is asking dog park members and members of the public to bring an unopened bag or can of dog or cat food for donation to United Humanitarians (UH) a local non-profit low-cost spay/neuter organization. Since hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, UH has been providing food for approximately 20 low income families that own dogs and cats. UH representatives will also be available for information on their low-cost programs.

DFL will give a presentation on their Assistance Dog Training Program, Pet Assisted Therapy Programs, Volunteer Programs, Companion Dog Placement Program, as well as providing free information on common dog training problems and information on membership to the off-leash dog park. All dogs are welcome "On-Leash". Bring your lawn chairs, and be prepared to have fun.

For information on this event, dog training classes, the 4-H Dog Master's Club, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park contact Director Shelly Ferger (772) 567-8969.

The background of the image is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints. The prints are scattered across the entire page, creating a soft, textured effect. The word "OCTOBER" is centered in the middle of the page.

**OCTOBER**

# Howl-O-Ween



## Beyond the Birds & Bees



Sandy Smith, Jeanette Husted, Toni Hamner, Jane Fleming and Abby Holtz

Laila Fairbairn, Jane Fleming, Gloria Wood and Henry & Clare Fairbairn

Sue Bergacker, Solly Marrack and Kathy Sullivan

James Wagoner, President of Advocates for Youth, spoke about the 'real facts of life' at a luncheon at Quail Valley to benefit the Planned Parenthood Indian River Center. Indian River Advisory Chair Mary Nation introduced Lillian Tamayo, President/CEO of Planned Parenthood of Greater Miami, Palm Beach and the Treasure Coast, Inc., Gloria Wood was recognized as the luncheon's honorary chair, and Penny O'Connor was honored with the Volunteer Appreciation Award. Mr. Wagoner spoke of the importance of sex education and about what he called the 3-R's – rights, respect and responsibility.

## Dogs for Life



Dogs for Life Board President Mim Dunn and Founder Shelly Ferger

Jackie the Clown (aka Faye Sheppard) with Angel

Debbie Campa with Precious

Dogs for Life hosted a Howl-O-Ween parade at the 4-H Dog Master's Club "Best Friends" off-leash dog park which the organization manages. "Dog Tales of Vero Beach," a new book featuring many of the pet-therapy and assistance dogs trained by Dogs for Life and some dog park members, was also introduced.

## VNA and Hospice Foundation



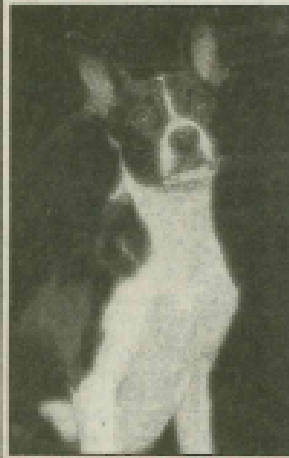
Speaker Pamela Jones Davidson and VNA & Hospice Foundation Board Chairman Ann Marie McCrystal

Andrew Davis, Sean Winner, Mike Magee, Montie Labadie and Chip Webster

Nationally renowned planned giving speaker Pamela Jones Davidson, president of the consulting firm Davidson Gift Design, educated donors and local professionals on estate planning opportunities as part of a series of events hosted by the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice Foundation. Sponsors included Northern Trust, the VNA & Hospice Foundation and Wachovia Wealth Management.

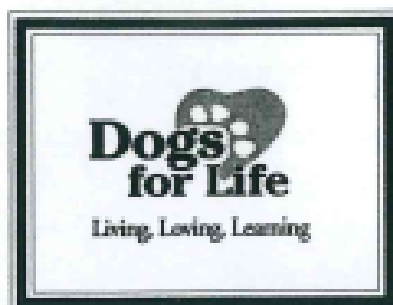
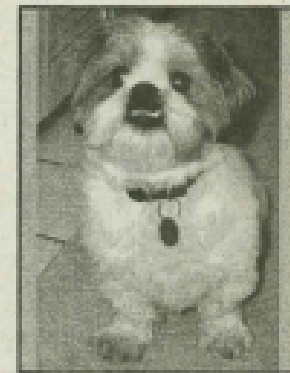
# Fur, Feathers, Fins & Skins

## MEET SABRINA & ZOLI OUR PETS OF THE MONTH



Sabrina volunteer's for Dogs for Life; she teaches appropriate behavior at the dog park; does pet therapy for Hibiscus Children's Center, Boys & Girls' Clubs, Beachland & St. Edward's schools; comforts people at the Family Homeless Center & performed tricks for the Coalition for the Homeless fundraiser at Riverside Theater.

Zoli is a mixed breed from the Animal Shelter who was a Father's Day gift to "Dad" who was in declining health. Zoli loyally guarded and protected "Dad" until "Dad" died in May. Now Zoli is the reason "Mom" gets up and can face each day with a smile!



## Paw Prints Newsletter

September 2005

### Inside this issue:

### Wal-Mart Hosts Therapy Dogs Again

For the third year in a row, Wal-Mart has granted DFL permission to use their Vero Beach store for therapy dogs public access certification. The test assures that therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers show good manners and behavior in stressful situations with heavy pedestrian traffic. DFL Director Shelly Ferger leads volunteers and their pet therapy dogs for the regime required by the Assistance Dogs International Public Access Certification.

The public access test follows the AKC Canine Good Citizen certificate and Basic Dog Obedience classes, which are held at the Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

Wal-Mart continues its support with help in restoring dog park training equipment through its employee volunteer grant program. Thanks Wal-Mart.



DFL Volunteers Faye & "Angel" Sheppard and Steve & "Molly" Hale pose with Wal-Mart Greeters while acquiring their Public Access Certification

DFL Programs Featured on Channel 10 2

"Dog Tales of Vero Beach" For Christmas 2

First Annual Membership Drive Great Grants! 2

Farewell to Fran Applause for Paula 2

Mark The Date: Howl-A-Ween Canine Costumes 3

Volunteers "Get It Together" 3

Dog Training at the Off-Leash Dog Park 3

Success With Housebreaking 4

### Dodgertown Hosts Volunteer Appreciation

The first annual DFL volunteer appreciation event took place at the Dodgertown Community Booth where DFL provided free tickets, hotdogs and drinks for the volunteers who attended the game.

DFL volunteer Jake Dunn threw out the first ball and a dog park membership was raffled off to a lucky fan. We distributed educational bookmarks to the youngsters at the game and we appreciated the chance to spread the word among Dodger fans.



DFL Treasurer Paula Van Hooser and Assistance Dog Casey (left)

DFL Volunteer and Jefferson Award Winner Patti Schell and DFL President Mim Dunn (right)



### Special points of interest:

- DFL Annual Meeting
- Dog Park Christmas Open House
- Pet Therapy Volunteer & Dog Park Committee Meetings
- Dog Obedience Classes to include Rally O and Agility Dog Training
- 4-H Dog Master's Club Organizes

## HALLOWEEN EVENTS ON THE TREASURE COAST

## St. Lucie County

► **Fort Pierce's Fall Family Fun Fest**, with children's Halloween games, contests, pumpkin carving and more, will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday on Second Street. The event is free. And the annual Ghosts of Fort Pierce Walking Tour (admission is \$5) is from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Call (772) 466-3880.

► From noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, the Oxbow Eco-Center in south Fort Pierce is conducting its Spook Fest. It's a family event for all ages and admission is \$2 per person. The center is 1.5 miles south of Midway Road, on St. James Drive, across from Publix. For more information call (772) 785-5833.

## Indian River County

► The Sebastian River Junior Woman's Club will conduct its 26th annual Haunted House at 1619 U.S. 1 in Sebastian, across from the Key West Inn. Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday and Oct. 31, the house will be open between 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., and on Friday and Saturday from 7:30 p.m. until 11 p.m. Admission is \$5. Contact (772) 588-2929 for more information.

► The 47th annual Vero Beach Halloween Parade begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Freshman Learning Center. It's a costume parade, with prizes awarded for best costume up to age 17. Call (772) 770-6517.

► Osceola Magnet School PTA is conducting a free fall festival Satur-

day from noon until 4 p.m. at 650 20th St. in Vero Beach. Proceeds benefit the PTA. Food, face painting, haunted house, games and a dunk tank. Call (772) 559-3412 for more information.

► Dogs for Life is sponsoring a Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade Saturday at 4 p.m., at the 4-H Off-Leash Dog Park, at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. There will be demonstrations, advice and a Doggie Olympic Relay Race following the parade. The event is free. Call (772) 567-8969 for more information.

► Trick or Treat from 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 31 at South Vero Square at the corner of U.S. 1 and Ocho Road. There will be prizes, a drawing for a bike and live radio broadcast.

## Saturday

**Bingo:** 10:30 a.m., Council on Aging Senior Center, 686 14th St., Vero Beach, (772) 569-0760.

**Bingo:** 11 a.m., Eagles Aerie 4067, 9606 Trade Center Drive, Sebastian, (772) 589-6573.

**Bridge:** 1 p.m., open and 0-99 games, Vero Beach Duplicate Bridge Club, 1520 14th Ave., [www.verobridge.com](http://www.verobridge.com), (772) 562-3006.

**Dance:** Dinner dance, 6:30 p.m., Eagles Aerie 4067, 9606 Trade Center Drive, Sebastian, (772) 589-6573.

**Dance:** Keynotes, ballroom dancing, 7-10 p.m., Vero Beach Community Center. For dates, call (772) 770-6517, (772) 770-0788. \$6.

**Dogs for Life:** "Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade," 4 p.m., at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. The public is invited at no charge to bring their dogs "on-leash" and "in-costume." For more information, call (772) 567-8969.

**Exotic Animals:** Tigers for Tomorrow, exotic animal preserve, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., walk along the jungle path, encounter several species of big cats and exotic animals, 18905 Orange Ave., Fort Pierce, (772) 465-1852, [www.tigersfortomorrow.org](http://www.tigersfortomorrow.org), \$10 adults, \$5 ages 3-12, free for children under 3.

**Heritage Day:** Vero Heritage Inc., "Heritage Day," 10 a.m.-2 p.m., the event celebrates the rich history of Vero Beach and Indian River County. Heritage Center and Pocahontas Park, 2140 14th Ave, Vero Beach. For more information, call (772) 770-2263.

**Family Story Time:** Children 2-8 years old, 10:30 a.m., free, Gifford

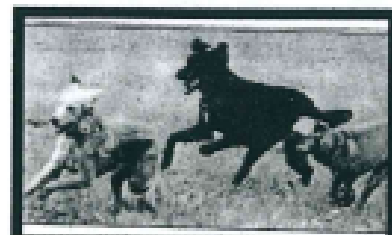
## Channel 10 Goes to the Dogs



Sabrina and Archie prepare for debut on Channel 10

Kathy Hurt, on-air host at Channel 10, chose Dogs for Life, Inc., as her featured not-for-profit organization.

The program aired on August 16th and provided overall information on DFL programs with Director Shelly Ferger and volunteer Carol Penna.



Fun at the 4-H Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park

One segment covered the Dog Park with members and dogs at play as well as Connie and Coco Stevens providing Pet Assisted Therapy at the Boys & Girls Club in south Vero Beach.

We love it when the message and mission of Dogs for Life reaches such a wide audience.

### The Perfect Gift for Dog Lovers

DFL's first edition of "Dog Tales of Vero Beach", a memory book, will be ready before Christmas and provides the perfect gift for dog-lovers on your list.

With words and pictures, more than 50 local pet lovers recorded fond memories and funny anecdotes of their touching and comic critters in a professionally printed volume.

Available for \$21.95, the book will be sold at the Howl-A-Ween Canine Costume Parade at the dog park on October 29 at the Downtown Vero Beach Book Festival on Friday and Saturday, November 11 and 12, and at the dog park Christmas Open House scheduled for December 10.

You may also order your books in advance by calling DFL 772-567-8969.

### First Membership Drive Successful

More than \$8000 has been raised so far from the active member participation in the first annual Dogs for Life Membership Renewal Drive. The membership drive allows our Board of Directors to make specific plans for the 2005 - 2006 fiscal year.

If you have not done so please renew today by sending your annual membership fee to DFL at PO Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965.

### We're Grateful for Grants

The Exchange Club has once again presented DFL with a grant to support the Boys & Girls Clubs' Pet Assisted Therapy Programs. The Treasure Coast Pilot Club also has given us a Pet Assisted Therapy Grant. Thanks again, clubs.



### Farewell to Fran / Applause for Paula

Fran LaPine, Dogs for Life's treasurer for the past two years, said farewell to Vero Beach in August as she and her husband Bernie, canines King and Maggie, and feline Midnight moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to the grandkids. Fran shared 35 years of experience in nonprofit accounting and business administration with our Board of Directors and handled the many complex aspects of Dogs for Life's financial issues with efficiency and effectiveness.

In addition to her fiduciary wizardry, Fran also volunteered with King and Maggie in our Pet Assisted Therapy Program and was a member of our off-leash dog park.

While we will miss Fran's expertise and friendship, we are glad to welcome Paula Van Hooser as our new treasurer. Paula retired after 30 years as Education Specialist at Beachland Elementary School, and was instrumental in implementing the DFL Pet Therapy program there. Paula is also a puppy raiser for Southeastern Guide Dogs.

Paula and her husband Dan Thweatt have provided a foster home for DFL Assistance Dog-In-Training, Casey. Paula has jumped in with both feet and is serving as Chairman of our Fundraising Committee. She will be facilitating at our Fundraising Committee Meeting in January 2006.

Thanks for your friendship and help, Paula.



Happy Howl-A-Ween



4-H Dog Master's Club



Pet Assisted Therapy "Read To Dogs"



Family Fun at the Dog Park!



## Mark your Calendars For Upcoming Events

🐾 DFL will host a Howl-A-Ween Canine Costume Parade again this year on Saturday, October 29, at 4 p.m. at the off-leash dog park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue. Attendees may participate in a dog board game "My Dog Can Do That" and a Special Doggie Olympic Relay Race. DFL members as well as members of the public are invited.

🐾 DFL will hold their Annual Meeting at 6:30 p.m. on November 3 at Our Savior Lutheran Church located at 1850 6th Avenue. The DFL Nominating Committee is currently recommending members to the board and various committees. All DFL members and volunteers are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served. A Fundraising Committee Meeting will be held in January 2006.

🐾 DFL will hold it's Annual Christmas Open House on December 10 at 2 p.m. at the off-leash dog park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue. Free dog temperament evaluations will be held for potential dog park members and potential pet assisted therapy dogs.

### Volunteers Get Their Acts Together

DFL Secretary Sharon Marshall is coordinating our vital dog park and pet assisted therapy volunteers.

🐾 The pet assisted therapy volunteers will meet on Tuesday, October 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sunshine Physical Therapy Clinic located at 1705 17th Avenue.

**Contact DFL Secretary  
Sharon Marshall for  
Volunteer Schedules  
770-9484  
verosharon@bellsouth.net**

🐾 The dog park committee will meet at the dog park on Thursday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m.

### Dog Training Opportunities at the Dog Park

DFL has finally succeeded in combining all levels of dog obedience training in one session in the dog park training area at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

Anyone interested in basic dog obedience training may come to the dog park on Saturdays (weather permitting) at 8:00 a.m. Anyone with prior obedience training may arrive at 8:30 a.m. and join with other class participants in a novice level of obedience training. At 9:00 a.m. the class moves to a rally obedience and agility obstacle course.

Pet assisted therapy training and AKC Canine Good Citizen training are ongoing. Special training events are held on a regular basis.

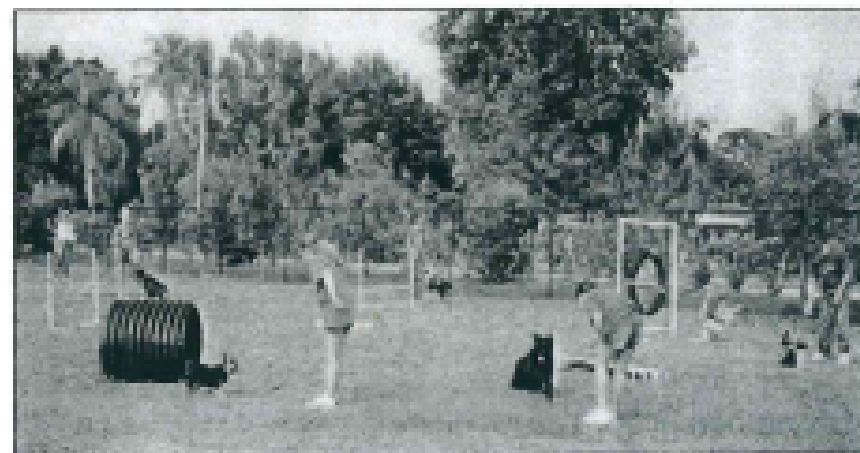
Call Canine Behavior Trainer Shelly Ferger, 567-8969 for information or to volunteer for dog training classes.



Join Us For A Howl-A-Ween Canine Costume Parade  
October 29 at 4 p.m. at the Dog Park 12 St. & 16 Ave.

### Assisting Assistance Dogs

Because the regulations regarding access for assistance dogs are constantly under review and are often challenged, DFL has joined forces with Assistance Dogs International, the Delta society, and the American Humane Association to learn about present and future laws on training and certifying assistance and service dogs. Together we can promote education and acceptance of these sorely needed companion helpers.



The 4-H Dog Master's Club has begun their 2005-2006 season, at the 4-H "Best Friend's" Off-Leash Dog Park

### Dog costume parade coming to dog park

VERO BEACH — Dogs for Life Inc. is hosting a Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park

### IN BRIEF

at 4 p.m. Oct. 29 at 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

The public is invited at no charge to bring their dogs on-leash and in-costume for a parade. After the parade, the dog board game "My Dog Can Do That" will be played with prizes awarded to all who participate. The event will wrap up with a Special Doggie Olympic Relay Race.

Dogs for Life will give a presentation on its Dog Obedience Training Program, Assistance Dog Training Program, Pet Assisted Therapy Programs and Companion Dog Placement Program. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will provide free information on solving common dog training problems. Information also will be available on membership to the off-leash dog park.

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



**Howl-O-Ween Canine Costume Parade**

## Dog Park

**Saturday  
October 29**

• 4 pm Canine Costume Parade

• 4:30 pm Dog Game "My Dog Can Do That"

• 5 pm Special Doggie Olympic "Relay Race"

*Join  
the  
FUN!*



**Dogs  
for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

Memberships available to the Off-Leash Dog Park. Accepting registration to Dog Obedience, Agility and Rally Obedience Classes.

**772-567-8969**

**12th St & 16th Ave • Vero Beach**

[www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)

[dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net](mailto:dogsforlifevb@bellsouth.net)

# LOCAL

## IN BRIEF

### Dog Master's Club to organize

VERO BEACH — The Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club is holding its

2005-2006 organizational meeting at 6 p.m. Sept. 6 at the Indian River County Extension office, 1028 20th Place.

Families interested in joining the club should attend. Membership is open to youth between ages 8 and 18 and does not require dog ownership. During the year, each member will be required to attend two meetings per month, complete a 4-H project book, take part in a dog show at the Indian River County Firefighters Fair and participate in a club-selected community service project.

Dogs should not be brought to this organiza-

tional meeting. For additional information, contact leaders Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969 or Alicia DiSandro, DMV at (772) 567-6219.

# Fins & Skins

### Dogs for Life

Living, Loving, Learning



### 4-H "Best Friend's" Off-Leash Dog Park

12th Street and 16th Avenue • Vero Beach

- 🐾 memberships available to 2 1/2 acre fenced park
- 🐾 separate big dog/small dog areas
- 🐾 clean, safe, and fun

### Training Classes Open to the Public

#### Dog Obedience Classes

With Shelly Ferger, Canine Behavior Trainer  
Motivational & Positive Reinforcement Training

#### "Pay As You Go"

**Basic Training** - Sit/Down/Stay/Come/Heel  
Learn to communicate with your canines and understand their behavior

**Novice Dog Training** - This class is open to any dog and handler with prior obedience training

**Rally Obedience** - Right Turn, Left Turn, Jump  
Navigate an obedience course while having fun with your dog

**Agility Training** - Confidence building on a Dog Walk, A-Frame, Teeter-totter and more for the Dog Athlete

**AKC** - Canine Good Citizen Certificate  
Earn an AKC certificate for your dog's good behavior

**(772) 567-8969**

Friday, August 19, 2005

Hometown



Pat Ross and Gunner go for 'Rally O' at the off-leash dog park in Vero Beach. Dogs for Life has added rally obedience to the drop-in obedience classes on Saturday mornings at the off-leash dog park.

### Dogs for Life introduces rally obedience at the off-leash dog park

There is a new sport in the dog-training arena. Due to the recent popularity of "rally obedience," Dogs for Life has added this dog-training sport to the drop-in obedience classes on Saturday mornings at the off-leash dog park located on 12<sup>th</sup> Street at 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vero Beach.

Dog training enthusiasts

higher score.

Any dog and handler with prior basic obedience training may attend this class.

For more information on "Rally O" or basic obedience training, call Shelly Ferger, dog park director, at (772) 567-8969.

— For Hometown News

Photo courtesy of Dogs For Life



**AUGUST**

# Paw Prints

Summer, 2005

**Dogs  
for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning



## PAW PRINTS Newsletter

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## Miss B Gives Three RRRs a Boost And Nobody's Shy with Shiloh!

When it comes to audiences, there is none more appreciative than a couple of dogs. Without saying a word they can provide encouragement to doubtful readers, support for fearful performers, love and kisses all around. They don't even care if they've heard the story before, they don't care if you stutter or mispronounce. As long as you pat them now and then, they'll sit and listen to you for ages. That's what happens at St. Edward's School and at a number of other locations in Vero Beach when the *READ to Dogs*' dogs are on the job.



Avid St. Ed's Reader with All Ears Miss B

Nancy Klein, librarian at St. Edward's school, is thrilled to be a part of a regular *READ to Dogs* program. She says, "The kids line up at the library door every Wednesday to read to their favorite friends, Shiloh and Miss B. All week long children ask me, How many days until they get here? Several students used to be afraid of dogs; now they read to Miss B or Shiloh all the time." Nancy's favorite success story, "Last year, a student who stuttered badly in class when he had to read aloud, came and read to Miss B without one stutter. This year he won the poetry reciting contest. At home the kids read to their cats, hamsters, fish, and stuffed animals, and every time it builds confidence and improves reading

ability." Everyone agrees that the *READ to Dogs* program has changed his or her outlook on reading aloud forever.

Charlotte Peterson, a *READ to Dogs*' volunteer, recalls a student who was deathly afraid of dogs ever since having watched his sister get knocked down by a dog several years ago. She stated, "Now he loves reading to Miss B and he is so proud of himself for not being afraid anymore. One day I asked him if he wanted to read to Shiloh who is bigger. He said, 'Ok.' and plopped right down with her. The look of sheer delight in himself was just priceless. I think the biggest thing our dogs do for kids is to make them feel good about themselves so that they will try something that under other circumstances they might lack the courage to try. Isn't it amazing how encouraging dogs can be without saying a word?"

The Dogs for Life *READ* program has expanded its territories, too. Dogs are now welcome audiences at The Boys and Girls Club in Sebastian and the Hibiscus Children's Center. These programs have joined the ongoing ones at the Boys & Girls Club in South Vero, Beachland Elementary School, and the Homeless Family Center. Grrrreat rrrreading!



Miss B and Shiloh Ready for Students





# Volunteer Oppotunities

OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN VERO BEACH

## VOLUNTEERING

By KATHRYN COLLINS

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### OPERATION HOPE

12285 CR 512, Fellsmere, FL 32948

Contact: Jann Zermeno

Phone: 571-0003

E-mail: info@migranthope.org

Website: www.migranthope.org

Operation Hope recently moved to its new community center in Fellsmere. The seven-year-old non-profit organization provides support, assistance and education to migrant farmworkers and their families.

Tutors and mentors are needed in elementary level reading and math, also for computers, arts and crafts and other areas. Volunteers are needed to teach adults English, to assist with fundraising and to help in the warehouse. They also are looking for a volunteer youth activity director.

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### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY (EOC)

P.O. Box 2766, Vero Beach, FL 32961

Contact: Sue Morales

Phone: 589-8008

E-mail: eocbjp@bellsouth.net

EOC, the federally designated Community Action Agency for Indian River County, provides services and programs to children and families living in poverty within our community. Head Start is the largest program under the EOC umbrella, serving 245 children in Indian River County.

Volunteers are needed in Head Start classrooms serving three- and four-year-old children from very low income homes. They support the teachers through reading stories, stimulating conversation and assisting individual children.

Assistance is also needed with vision and hearing screenings (completed within the first 45 days of school).

Dentists and/or dental technicians are needed to help serve those children whose dental needs compromise healthy growth and development. Volunteers can also help with filing and general clerical work.

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### GIFFORD YOUTH ACTIVITY CENTER

4875 43rd Ave., Vero Beach, FL 32967

Contact: Freddie L. Woolfork

Phone: 794-1005

E-mail: fwoolfork@gyac.cc

Website: www.gyac.cc

The Gifford Youth Activity Center, "the place where things are happening," offers educational and recreational services and programs for youth and educational and vocational enhancement programs for adults.

Volunteers are needed to assist as monitors (gym, hall, library, computer room and pool), for clerical and receptionist work, as greeters and chaperones, homework tutors and to help with fundraising, custodial work and many other opportunities.

---

### DOGS FOR LIFE INC.

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965

Contact: Shelly Ferger

Phone: 567-8969

Dogs for Life is a non-profit organization that offers specialized programs preparing dogs to become service companions for people with disabilities (guide dog, signal dog, etc.), and pet-assisted therapy dogs to assist in the well being of those in need of support and love. Responsible dog ownership education is stressed in its education programs. To help with its growing programs

and responsibilities, Dogs for Life is looking for assistance with general administration, and for a volunteer coordinator.

And, if you have a friendly dog, consider volunteering to be trained to work together in the community programs, including Read to Dogs and Trauma Therapy.

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### COMMUNITY CHILD CARE RESOURCES INC.

1801 24th St., Vero Beach, FL 32960

Contact: Abby Walters

Phone: 567-3202

E-mail: abbycccr@gate.net

CCCR helps fund quality childcare for lower-income working families in Indian River County with children aged 5 and under. It is a United Way Success by 6 Initiative.

Volunteers are needed to assist with office work, including answering phones, helping with computers, and office organization. Assistance is also needed with spreading the word about the program.

Mentors are needed to visit a day-care center each week and read and talk to a child.

---

### HUMANE SOCIETY OF VERO BEACH AND INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

6230 77th St., Vero Beach, FL 32967

Contact: Florence Howe

Phone: 388-3892

The Humane Society is the only non-profit organization providing safe refuge for homeless, abandoned, injured or lost companion animals. The volunteer program is seeking assistance in the organization's many programs, which include greeter/pet boutique, adoption placements, foster care for pets of



## VOLUNTEERING

teach basic financial skills, act as reading buddies and share their expertise with the children.

Background checks and references are required and on-the-job training is provided. The hours are flexible, and both seasonal and part-time positions are available.

A volunteer appreciation dinner, t-shirts and a loving environment in which to share your special skills are offered.

### **DOGS FOR LIFE, INC.**

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965

Contact: Shelly Ferger

Phone: 567-8969

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Responsible dog ownership education is stressed in its education programs. The organization manages the Dog Park on 12th Street and 16th Avenue, a safe, clean environment for dogs and their owners to socialize, and offers obedience classes at the park.

To help with its growing programs and responsibilities, Dogs for Life is looking for assistance with general administration.

And, if you have a friendly dog, consider volunteering to be trained to work together in the community programs, including *Read to Dogs* and *Trauma Therapy*.

Applicants (human and canine) should have some obedience training. Volunteers and their dogs must pass the American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen Class. Dogs already holding the AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificate will qualify for the program with minor additional training.

### **EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY**

4350 43rd Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32967

Contact: Susan Schumacher

Phone: 564-4095

The Early Learning Coalition of Indian River County is a non-profit organization serving low-income and at-risk preschool children by providing them with quality educational opportunities. It is part of a three-county coalition, serving Indian River, Martin and Okeechobee counties.

The organization seeks volunteers to represent Indian River County as Private Sector Members on its board. Applicants should be affiliated with private industry,

such as business owners, CEOs or executives with policy/decision-making authority. Retirees who serve on a private business board may also apply.

Applications are available at the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, the Sebastian Area Chamber of Commerce and the Early Learning Coalition of Indian River County at Dodgertown Elementary School.

### **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY (EOC)**

P.O. Box 2766, Vero Beach, Florida 32961

Contact: Sue Morales

Phone: 589-8008

E-mail: [eochnp@bellsouth.net](mailto:eochnp@bellsouth.net)

EOC, the federally designated Community Action Agency for Indian River County, provides services and programs to children and families living in poverty within our community. Head Start is the largest program under the EOC umbrella, serving 245 children in Indian River County.

Volunteers are needed in Head Start classrooms serving 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income homes. They support the teachers through reading stories, stimulating conversation and assisting individual children.

Assistance is also needed with vision and hearing screenings (completed within the first 45 days of school). Dentists and/or dental technicians are needed to help serve those children whose dental needs compromise healthy growth and development. Volunteers can also help with filing and general clerical work.

A background in education is helpful but not necessary, but the desire to nurture young children is most important. A criminal background check is done on persons volunteering 20 or more hours per month. Seasonal and full-year positions are available.

Head Start centers are located in Wabasso, Gifford, central and south Vero Beach and in Fellsmere and are open during the school year, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Volunteers are honored at a spring appreciation luncheon.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**

255 Live Oak Drive, Vero Beach, FL 32963

Contact: Janet Barkett

Phone: 589-5050

E-mail: [info@elc.web.org](mailto:info@elc.web.org)

Website: [www.elc.org](http://www.elc.org)

The ELC is a not-for-profit education center located on Wabasso Island between A1A and US1.

Volunteers are needed to work in the Entry Pavilion,

# Wellness Fair

Friday, August 19, 2005

Hometown News



Photo courtesy of Strategic Communications

Residents and visitors check out the displays at Indian River Estates East recent Wellness Fair.

## Wellness fair draws crowds

### FOR HOMETOWN NEWS

A recent Wellness Fair at Indian River Estates East in Vero Beach featured more than 30 exhibitors and drew a great crowd of residents and prospective residents. Indian River Estates East is an ACTS Retirement-Life Community with more than 600 residents.

Speakers included Dr. Paul Hatten Jr., who addressed radiology screenings for wellness; Dr. Thomas A. Baudo, who spoke about Macugen, a new treatment for wet macular degeneration; Dr. James Shafer, who gave a talk on memory disorders; and Dr. Christopher Stepanek, who made a presentation on chiroprac-

tic uses of cold laser therapy.

Exhibitors included Dogs For Life; Goodtime Getaways; the Council on Aging; Alzheimer/ Parkinson Association; the Arthritis Foundation; Fifty Plus Lifestyles; VNA Hospice; Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service of the Treasure Coast; Perkins Pharmacy; Greens Plus; Select Medical Rehab Services; Indian River Memorial Hospital Emergency Room/Wound Care; United Way 211 Help Line; Dr. Larry Landsman, dermatologist; Grall, Fanaro and Glenn, attorneys at law; and the Atlantic Vein Center.

A variety of screenings also were offered. Perkins Medical Supply provided oximetry screening; Flori-

da Eye Institute tested for glaucoma; Beltone Hearing did hearing tests; Vestibular Balance provided balance screening; IRMH Stroke Team/Diabetes provided blood sugar screening; and Dr. Michael R. Hansen provided foot screenings. Longevity Fitness Club & Spa and Massage Works provided massages to attendees.

A nonprofit corporation, ACTS Retirement-Life Communities is the nation's largest owner/operator/builder of continuing care retirement communities with 17 senior resort communities in four states, including six in Florida.

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



**JUNE**

# 4-H Obedience and Behavior Classes



**4-H “Best Friend’s” Off-Leash Dog Park**  
12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Vero Beach



- ⊕ Memberships Available to 2 ½ acre fenced park
- ⊕ Separate Big Dog/Small Dog Areas
- ⊕ Clean, Safe, and Fun

## **Dog Obedience & Behavior Classes** **Training Classes Open to the Public**

*With Shelly Ferger, Canine Behavior Trainer  
Motivational and Positive Reinforcement Training*

**Basic Training - Sit/Down/Stay/Come/Heel**  
*Learn to communicate with your canines and understand their behavior*

**On-Going Dog Training - “Pay As You Go”**  
*This Drop-In Class is open to any dog and handler with prior obedience training*

**Rally Obedience - Right Turn, Left Turn, Jump**  
*Navigate an obedience course while having fun with your dog*

**AKC - Canine Good Citizen Certificate**  
*Earn a certificate for your dog’s good behavior*

**For Information and Registration Call (772) 567-8969**

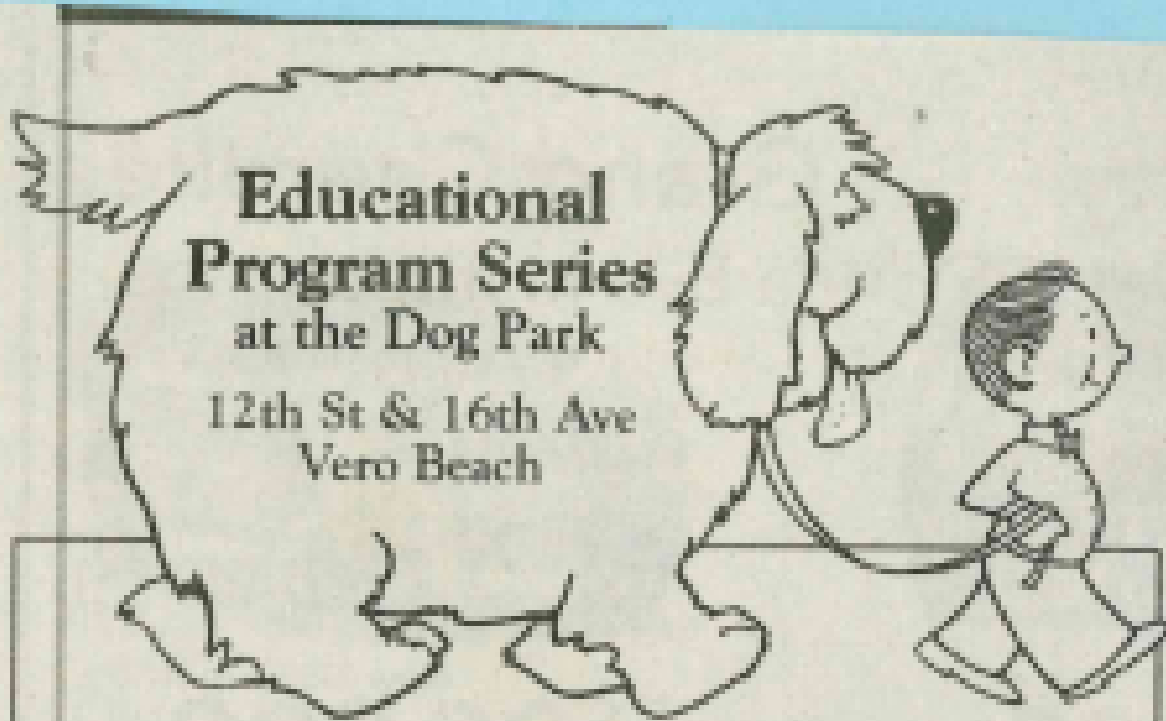
# Fur, Feathers,

# Fins & Skins

**SWILLY'S CANINE**  
  
**Private and Group Obedience Training**  
 25 Years Specializing in Family Canine Behavior Counseling  
  
 Dog Aggressiveness  
 Jumping  
 Housebreaking  
 Shelly Ferger  
 Canine Behavior Trainer  
 Assistance Dog Training  
 Leader 4-H Dog Master's Club  
 Dog Park Director  
**567-7990**

**Dogs for Life**  
  
 Living, Loving, Learning  
  
**4-H "Best Friend's" Off-Leash DOG \* PARK \* K**  
 12th Street and 16th Avenue • Vero Beach  
 \* memberships available to 2 1/2 acre fenced park  
 \* separate big dog/small dog areas  
 \* clean, safe, and fun  
**Training Classes Open to the Public**  
**Dog Obedience & Behavior C \* L \* A \* S \* S \* E \* S**  
 With Shelly Ferger, Canine Behavior Trainer  
 Motivational & Positive Reinforcement Training  
**Basic Training** - Sit/Down/Stay/Come/Heel  
 Learn to communicate with your canines and understand their behavior  
**On-Going Dog Training** - "Pay As You Go"  
 This Drop-In Class is open to any dog and handler with prior obedience training  
**Rally Obedience** - Right Turn, Left Turn, Jump  
 Navigate an obedience course while having fun with your dog  
**AKC** - Canine Good Citizen Certificate  
 Earn a certificate for your dog's good behavior  
**For Information and Registration Call (772) 567-8969**

## LOCAL



### Educational Program Series at the Dog Park

12th St & 16th Ave Vero Beach

**Saturday April 23 at 2PM** - A multi Law Enforcement Agency K-9 Demonstration & K-9 Hero Memorial Bone Presentation (No Dogs Please at this Program)

**Saturday April 30 at 2PM** - Dog Park Open House in honor of Be-Kind-to-Animals week May 1-7. Dogs welcome "On-Leash". There will be raffles from local dog related businesses. Activities for kids & A "Square Dancing with Dogs" Show

**Saturday May 7 at 2PM** - "How to Train Your Dog with Motivational Training Techniques". Dogs welcome "On-Leash".

**Saturday May 14 at 2PM** - "Understanding Canine Behavior Workshop". Dogs welcome "On-Leash".

Each program is being offered at a cost of \$5 per family, bring your lawn chairs & be prepared to have fun!

For More Info call Dog Park Director: Shelly Ferger 567-8969



# Galas & Giving



**GOING TO THE DOGS.** Dogs for Life, Inc. Director Shelly Ferger presents a series of programs at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park. K-9 dogs are more than just man's best friends - they're partners and on Saturday, DFL will present St. Lucie County Deputy Michael Colton and Indian River County Deputy Brian Reimsnyder with K-9 Memorial Bones in honor of K-9 heroes lost last year. Where can you go to watch a dog square-dancing show? On April 30, at the dog park - of course. While you're there, get

your pet-care questions answered by the 4-H Dog Master's Club and others. Learn motivational training techniques on May 7, and understand why your pet behaves like that on May 14. Programs begin at 2 p.m. and each is \$5 per family. Except for the K-9 event, "on leash" dogs are welcome. (772) 567-8969.

E2 Treasure Coast Newspapers Friday, April 29, 2005

**Dog park open house:** Dogs for Life, 2 p.m., "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Open to on-leash dogs and their owners. Local veterinarians, groomers, pet shops, 4-H Dog Master's Club and dog trainers will be available to answer questions. Raffles, children's activities, more. \$5 per family. (772) 567-8969.

## Dogs for Life to conduct classes

**VERO BEACH** — Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community has added a drop-in "pay-as-you-go" continuing obedience class at the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

Any dogs and handlers who have basic obedience training experience may attend this drop-in class. The cost is \$10, with all dog park members charged half price.

For information, call dog park director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

EB Treasure Coast Newspapers Saturday, May 14, 2005

## RSVP

**Volunteers for pet-assisted-therapy program needed:** Dogs for Life is looking for volunteers with friendly dog companions. DFL volunteers and their certified therapy dogs attend preassigned regular sessions at various schools, libraries, clubs and other locations participating in the "Read to Dogs" program and the "Trauma Therapy" program. Applicants must have basic obedience training with their dog and hold an AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificate. DFL offers training to obtain needed training and certifications. (772) 567-8969.

**Workshop:** Dogs for Life, Inc., "Understanding Canine Behavior," 2 p.m., Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Open to on-leash dogs and their owners. \$5 per family. (772) 567-8969.

E2 Treasure Coast Newspapers Friday, May 6, 2005

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

20th, Vero Beach; (772) 581-0536.

**May Dance:** 7-10 p.m., Senior Center, IRC Council on Aging, 686 14th St., Vero Beach. Music by Rhythmairs. \$6 per person. (772) 489-2062.

**Motivational dog training techniques:** Dogs for Life Inc., 2 p.m., "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. \$5 per family. (772) 567-8969.

Friday, June 24, 2005

## Dogs for Life group seeks help from residents

### FOR HOMETOWN NEWS

Dogs for Life is asking for pictures and stories of dogs and the lives they touch for a book they plan to publish in time for the December holiday season. A selection committee will decide which pictures will

appear in the book which will be sold to raise funds for Dogs for Life.

Material and photos should be submitted no later than Aug. 1. Mail to Carol Pena, 935 Marigold Lane, Vero Beach, FL 32963.

For more information,

call (772) 492-0559 or e-mail Mary Mitchell at [MaryM34116@aol.com](mailto:MaryM34116@aol.com), Carol Pena at [cavaliers@ix.netcom.com](mailto:cavaliers@ix.netcom.com), Patti Snell at [zenitoday123@hotmail.com](mailto:zenitoday123@hotmail.com), Ann Ford at [bford@gtlakes.com](mailto:bford@gtlakes.com) or Shelly Fenger at [Shellysc@bellsouth.net](mailto:Shellysc@bellsouth.net).



**APRIL**



# Pet Events

B4 Treasure Coast Newspapers Friday, April 29, 2005 V

## LOCAL

### PET EVENTS

#### UPCOMING

**CFA Cat Show:** April 14, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., April 15, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus, Melbourne. \$4-\$6. (321) 727-7285.

#### MARTIN COUNTY

##### FRIDAY

**Adoption League:** Adopting Racing Greyhounds introduces ex-racing dogs to the public noon-2 p.m. Fridays at Pets Mart, 2435 N.W. Federal Highway, Jensen Beach. (772) 229-1025.

##### SUNDAY

**Adoption League:** Adopting Racing Greyhounds introduces ex-racing dogs to the public 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sundays at Pets Mart, 2435 N.W. Federal Highway, Jensen Beach. (772) 229-1025.

#### UPCOMING

**Second Annual Equine Rescue & Adoption Foundation Inc. Hoedown:** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. April 28, Caring Fields Animal Sanctuary, Palm City. Horse demonstrations, games, crafts for children, pony rides, equine seminars and music. Donations help the foundation. (772) 283-2434 or (772) 284-8754.

#### HOW TO SUBMIT A LISTING

**The deadline:** We recommend you submit materials at least two weeks in advance of your event.

**Where do I send it:** Send by e-mail to [yesdesk@scripps.com](mailto:yesdesk@scripps.com).

**What do I include:** As much information as possible, including the name, date, location and time of the event, plus a phone number so we can contact you if necessary.

**Questions:** Call (866) 894-9861.

**View our events calendar online:** [TCPalm.com](http://TCPalm.com)

#### ST. LUCIE COUNTY

##### UPCOMING

**Equine Rescue & Adoption Foundation:** April 28, 12 - 4 p.m., Adults \$20, Children \$10; Caring Fields Sanctuary, Palm City. Second Annual Benefit. Pony Rides/Busch Wildlife/Petting Zoo/Face Painting/Live Country Band/Equine Demonstrations/Children's Activities. All proceeds will benefit the horses. (772) 220-0150 or [www.equinerescuefl.org](http://www.equinerescuefl.org).

##### CLASSES

**Dog Obedience:** St. Lucie County's Parks and Recreation Department is offering dog obedience classes at the Fort Pierce Community Center; 600 N. Indian River Drive. Each course is six weeks long with basic and advanced training available. \$80; training includes help with nutrition and discipline problems. (772) 342-5275.

#### INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

##### TUESDAY

**Dog Training:** 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. Tuesdays at 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. \$14 per class. Puppy Kindergarten is the introductory level for dogs older than 16 weeks. Dogs learn several basic skills using reward based training methods. (772) 978-7863.

##### THURSDAY

**Dog Training:** 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursdays 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. \$14 per class. (772) 978-7863.

##### SATURDAY

**Dog Training:** 8 a.m. Saturdays at Dogs for Life, Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Basic obedience training, \$50. (772) 567-8969.

**Dog Training:** 9 a.m. Saturdays at Dogs for Life, Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Agility, Novice, AKC Canine Good Citizen, Assistance Dog and Pet Therapy Dog Training. \$10 per class; drop-in, pay as you go. (772) 567-8969.

**Dog Training:** 2 p.m. Saturdays at 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. \$14 per class. Puppy Kindergarten is the introductory level for dogs older than 16 weeks. Dogs learn several basic skills using reward based training methods. (772) 978-7863.

**Dog Training:** 1 p.m. Saturdays at 7900 12th St., Vero Beach. \$14 per class. Basic Obedience class is the next step in training your dog. Enhance your relationship and learn how to train your dog to be a great companion. (772) 978-7863.

## Dogs for Life, Inc. Dog Park Pay as you Go Opportunity Expanded!

\$10 Saturdays  
and Wednesdays  
9:30 AM  
and 5:30 PM

Pre-Registration  
Required, call  
(772) 567-8969



Dogs must be  
inoculated,  
neutered & social.

**Dogs  
for Life**  
Living, Loving, Learning

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965  
772.567.8969 • [www.dogsforlifevb.org](http://www.dogsforlifevb.org)  
Off-Leash Dog Park located on 12th Street and 16th Avenue

# Fallen K-9 Honored

## Vero Beach Hometown News

### Fallen K-9 honored

By Heather Leigh Carroll  
staff writer

VERO BEACH - Dogs honored two local K-9 unit dogs at an open house at the Dog Park on 12th Street for Life as "Hometown Heroes."

One of Indian River County Sheriff's Office seven K-9 units was honored at the event. Deputy Brian Reimsnyder lost his partner, Quattro, Nov. 17 in a traffic accident. The two were on their way home after their patrol shift was over.

◆ See Fallen K-9 A3



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer  
K-9 officers from Vero Beach, Sebastian and St. Lucie County gave a demonstration at the Dogs For Life Dog Park April 23.

#1  
Voted Outstanding  
Newspaper in the  
Country

Friday, May 20, 2005

#### FALLEN K-9

Continued from page A1

The two had been partners for two and one half years.

Quattro assisted in the arrest of 48 suspects while in the line of duty. He was honored at the event for his heroic work performed in the K-9 unit.

Before becoming a member of the K-9 unit, Quattro had been trained in both narcotics searching and patrol duty. All of the K-9 units in Indian River County are trained in both areas.

The K-9 units are not only used for patrol purposes, said Deputy Reimsnyder.

The units go to community events and schools conducting demonstrations, he said.

"They spend a lot of time in the lime light in the community," he said.

His new partner, Jando, joined him the first week of December, and has been an excellent partner and family member.

His children play all over the dog and Jando is as gentle as can be, Deputy Reimsnyder said.

It is amazing how the dogs can switch the switch from work to play immediately.

The other dog honored was St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office Deputy Mike Colton's K-9 partner Vasko, which was killed in the line of duty.

Vasko was fatally shot June 25 while apprehending a suspect in a carjacking and kidnapping in Fort Pierce.

Vasko was honored for his fearless efforts in the pursuit of the suspect.

Deputy Colton had his new partner, Pino, with him at the Dog Park. The two have been partners since September.

"He has turned into quite an addition to our family," Deputy Colton said.

Typically, the canine partners go home with the deputies and become part of the family.

Pino gets along with Deputy Colton's three children and his retired German shepherd partner Cello, he said. Cello had to retire due to a medical condition preventing him from serving on the force.

Both of the dogs received an engraved bone on the "Memorial Wall of Bones" at the dog park.



### FAREWELL TO K9 QUATTRO



CHRIS WEATHERLY staff photographer

Indian River County Sheriff's Office Victims' Assistance Coordinator Judy Deeson, left, comforts Deputy Brian Reimsnyder, his wife, Cathleen, and daughter, Taylor, 8, after a 21-gun salute is made in honor of Deputy Reimsnyder's K-9 partner, Quattro, on Wednesday at the First Church of God in Vero Beach. Reimsnyder and Quattro were partners for two years until the dog was killed in a Nov. 17 traffic accident. "He was over and beyond a pet," said Reimsnyder. "He was my partner. He stayed at home with me and was like one of my children."

## Police dog mourned at service

By Alexi Howk  
staff writer

VERO BEACH — Dressed in black fur, Spike, Bach, Justice and Nitro were fit for a funeral — that is, a man's best friend's funeral.

The four-legged canines, along with 10 other police dogs, came out to pay tribute to one of their fellow K-9 officers, Quattro. The dogs, which consisted of mostly black German shepherds from varying law-enforcement agencies, barked and howled in chorus as several gun shots blasted through the air in honor of a dog that served his county well.

"He was more than the government's property. He was a friend and a trusted partner," said Roy. Most of the other dogs

"(Quattro) was no less an officer than anyone standing here today and should be honored as such. He truly served this community well and asked for nothing in return."

Sheriff Roy Raymond  
Indian River County Sheriff

Service participated in the service. They gathered in front of a lake outside the church after leading about a four-mile



**B**WEDNESDAY  
DECEMBER 15, 2004

# Local

➤ Obituaries, B4  
➤ State, B5**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY**

## QUATTRO

FROM B1

ing in return."

Quattro's handler, Deputy Brian Reimsnyder and his wife, Cathleen, consoled their 8-year-old daughter, Taylor, during the service as she shed tears in front of the memorial table that bore Quattro's pictures and a poem titled, "Don't Cry for Me."

"It's been a struggle to say the least," Reimsnyder said of his partner's death. "It's a bond that goes beyond a pet. He's like one of my children."

Quattro lived with Reimsnyder and his family for two years and was Reimsnyder's first canine partner. He was one of six canines purchased by the Sheriff's Office. Just one hour after being on duty for his first assignment, Quattro apprehended a robbery suspect.

Reimsnyder's sister-in-law, Charlene Lawrence, said Reimsnyder took Quattro to every family function.

"The first thing I thought when I saw that dog was, 'Where can I get a dog like that?' He had these perfect big ears that stood straight up, and he was so sweet," she said.

Lawrence, a Vero Beach resident, attended the funeral with her mother, Marianne Cooney, who drove down from Ocala to pay her

respects.

Patty Schell, a volunteer with the canine group Dogs for Life, attended the service with eight other volunteers from the group and two dogs.

"We know what it's like to lose a pet and how difficult it is," Schell said.

Quattro was just one week shy of his fifth birthday before he died. Reimsnyder said he had just gotten off duty from a drug investigation when he left the door and the gate to the dog's cage open in the back of his vehicle with Quattro inside. "I said while he was talking to his neighbor, the canine jumped out and ran across the road into the path of motorcycle."

Reimsnyder rushed his partner to a nearby veterinarian hospital where he died from his injuries. Reimsnyder had Quattro's cremated and said he will keep him at his home in special curio cabinet next to some of the dog's memorabilia.

However, Reimsnyder part of the healing process moving on, which means he will soon be partnered with a new canine, Jando (pronounced Yondo). Jando is a 2½-year-old German shepherd who comes from Germany, unlike Quattro who came from Hungary.

"There's only one Quattro," Reimsnyder said.

- alex.hawk@scripps.com

## County K-9 dies in accident

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — Sheriff's Office deputies are mourning the loss of a K-9 German shepherd that was struck by a motorcycle and killed Wednesday evening.

Quattro, who had been partnered with Deputy Brian Reimsnyder for two years at the Sheriff's Office, had just gotten off duty after he finished a successful drug investigation.

"Quattro and I shared a bond and a partnership that only others like us can fully understand," said Reimsnyder. "The loss of my partner is devastating to me personally, to my family and to the agency. He will be sorely missed by all."

Vero Beach resident Charles Edward Briley, 58, was driving his motorcycle north on the 8000 block of 91st Avenue when Quattro ran in front of him, Flescher said. Briley refused medical treatment on scene.

# Programs at Dog Park

LOCAL Thursday, April 21, 2005 Treasure Coast Newspapers B3

## IN BRIEF

River County Deputy Brian Reimsnyder. A multi-agency K-9 demonstration will be held. No dogs, please, at this program.

In honor of Be-Kind-To-Animals Week May 1-7, the group will open the dog park to on-leash dogs and their owners at 2 p.m. April 30. Local veterinarians, groomers, pet shops, 4-H Dog Master's Club and dog trainers will be available to answer questions about how to care for your dog.

Dog-related items will be raffled off and there will be children's and other activities. Dogs for Life will give a presentation on its assistance dog training, pet-assisted therapy, volunteer and dog park programs. Dogs on leashes are welcome.

A presentation on how to train your dog with motivational training techniques will be conducted at 2 p.m. May 7 at the park. Dogs are welcome on-leash.

A final workshop on understanding canine behavior will be conducted at 2 p.m. May 14 at the park. Dogs on leashes are welcome.

This series is being offered at a cost of \$5 per family. Participants should bring lawn chairs.

For more information, call dog park director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

## Programs planned at dog park

VERO BEACH — Dogs for Life Inc. will conduct a series of four educational programs open to the public starting Saturday at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

At 2 p.m. Saturday, the nonprofit group will kick off the series with a Law Enforcement K-9 Hero Memorial Bone presentation. In honor of two K-9 heroes lost last year, representatives will present printed K-9 memorial bones to the families of St. Lucie County Deputy Michael Colton and Indian

EB Treasure Coast Newspapers Thursday, April 21, 2005 V

## TODAY

### COMMUNITY CONNECTION

**Law Enforcement K-9 Hero Memorial Bone:** Dogs for Life, Inc., 2 p.m., 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Demonstration. Open to the public; no dogs please. \$5 per family. (772) 567-8969.

## JEFFERSON AWARDS 2005

# Volunteer blends dogs, helping children



MOLLY BARTELS staff photographer  
Patti Schell, center, listens intently as Tana Aley, 7, right, reads a book to Schell and her dog, Chloe, at the Boys and Girls Club in Vero Beach on March 16.

By Jennifer Brannock  
staff writer

Patti Schell's affection for volunteer work extends well beyond puppy love.

In fact, the 53-year-old Sebastian volunteer with the Dogs for Life Inc. organization in Vero Beach has managed continuously to mesh her love of dogs with her aspirations to help struggling children, the sick and the elderly in the community for the past 2½ years.

That is why Schell was named one of five local winners of the Jefferson Awards for service to the community. The local awards are sponsored by Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers — which include The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie

### ON WPTV

See a profile of Patti Schell on News Channel 5 at 5:30 tonight.

### COMING FRIDAY

Kenneth Bowers, founder of Operation Hope, an agency helping the homeless in Palm Beach County work their way off the streets.

News, the Fort Pierce Tribune, The Jupiter Courier, the Press Journal of Vero Beach and the Sebastian Sun — and the TV station WPTV 1 West Palm Beach.

Schell works part-time doing odd jobs in her neighborhood, such as mowing lawns, cleaning and de-

See VOLUNTEER, B2

## VOLUNTEER

FROM B1

sitting. She spends the majority of her time training her Labrador retriever, 2-year-old Chloe, and participating in programs offered by Dogs for Life, including "READ to Dogs," "Square Dancing with Dogs" and "Trauma Therapy Dogs."

"To me, dogs have the ability to show what God's love and forgiveness is like," she said. "Sure, I always go goo-goo over puppies, but for the actual training and the give-and-take that happens

chance to hone their skills by reading books to an eager, non-judgmental audience of furry friends.

"The more I thought about it, the more I realized that the most terrifying thing for children is to have to get up and read in front of a class," Schell said. "The dog is intently listening to their story, and is very understanding. The dog just wants to love on them."

Schell and Chloe also visit homeless shelters regularly, as well as those who have experienced some sort of trauma in their lives, to play

headfirst into her work with others as a means of relieving her own stress.

"The dogs sense everything we are going through, and if I was a nervous wreck, (Chloe) would be, too," she said. "It was my therapy, really, because I got to do that during the numbness of it all."

Dogs for Life Founder Shelly Ferger, who nominated Schell for her Jefferson Award, said Schell was instrumental in helping the nonprofit agency expand north from Vero Beach into Sebastian.

"Some people, no matter

## TODAY'S AGENDA

**Early Learning Coalition of Indian River County,** 8:15 a.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

**Indian River County School Board Superintendent's NAACP Monthly Meeting,** 11 a.m., 1990 25th St., large instructional conference room.

**Indian River County Veterans Town Hall Meeting,** 11:15 a.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

**Indian River County Cultural Council Board of Directors,** 4 p.m., West Wing of Riverside Theatre.

**Sebastian Staff Workshop Collier Creek Canal Project,** 6 p.m., City Hall, council chambers.

**Indian River County Planning and Zoning Commission,** 7 p.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

# Easter Bonnet Parade



The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of various sizes, scattered across a white background. The paw prints are stylized with four distinct pads.

**MARCH**

# Pooch Parade

Join the *First Annual* Indian River Shores  
**Pooch Parade!**



Where: Indian River Shores  
Community Center

When: Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>  
2 to 4 PM



2:00 - Dog Tail Hour

2:30 - Easter Parade  
& Judging

3:30 - Do-Si-Do for Dogs

3:45 - Doggie Egg Hunt

**Many Categories, Many Winners!**



Best Easter Bonnet



Best Trick/Talent



Best Tail Wagger

- Refreshments!
- Square Dance Show! Do-Si-Do for Dogs directed by 4-H Members and DFL Volunteers.
- Prizes!
- Outdoor Show Ring!



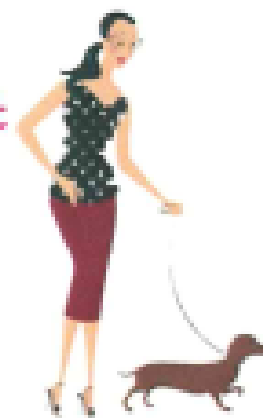
Owner/Dog Look Alike



Most Amusing



Strut your *Chic Shitzu*, your  
*Sharp Shepherd* or *March Out*  
your *Marvelous Mutt!*



**RSVP! REGISTER NOW!**

Entries Open to Indian River Shores Residents Only

\$10.00 Entry Fee    \$5.00 Spectator Fee

Only One Dog per Handler Please

A Canine Easter Parade to Benefit Dogs for Life

Dogs for Life is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization that trains adoption and assistance dogs.

Please feel free to make a tax deductible donation to Dogs for Life Inc.

P.O. Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965



# VIEWPOINT

FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2005 ♦ HOMETOWN NEWS ♦ WWW.HOMETOWNNEWSOL.COM

## DOGGIE FASHION SHOW COMING TO VERO!

Hometown News

Friday, March 24, 2006

### Community Notes

#### Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show for dogs

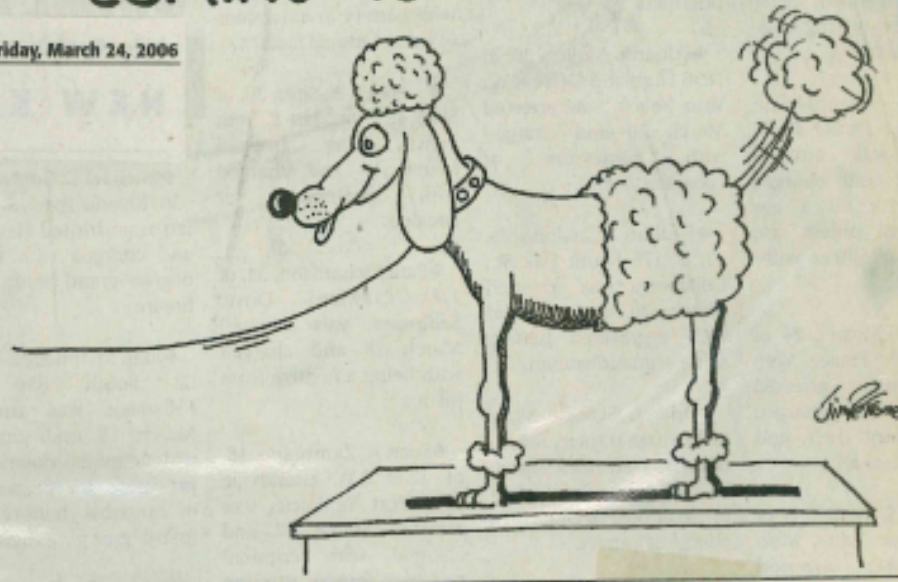
Dogs for Life, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a "Doggie Easter Bonnet Parade and Fashion Show with Tricks" and an Easter egg hunt at the "Best Friends" off-leash dog park, located on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach April 15 at 2 p.m.

All entries are a \$5 donation, and everyone is a winner. The 4-H Dog Mas-

ter's Club will have home-made dog cookies for a \$1 donation and Dogs for Life volunteers will offer a \$5 donation photo opportunity.

Spectators can enjoy for free. Bring your lawn chair. Well-behaved dogs with leashes are welcome.

For information on this event, dog training classes, the 4-H Dog Master's Club, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park contact executive director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.



#### PEOPLE & PARTIES



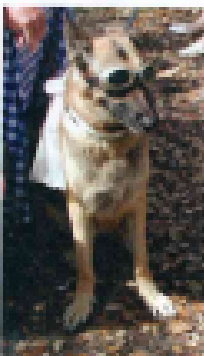
"Coco" Hoffman, Lucy Samperton, Eve Hoffman, Martha Lincoln, "Katie" Lincoln, Joan and "Tiger" Sullivan



Judges included Indian River Shores Council Member Fran Archison, Sheila Lewenstein, Indian River Shores Vice-Mayor Dr. David Becker and Indian River Shores Council Members Bill Ahrens and Bill Kenyon



Woody Bradshaw, Indian River Shores Town Manager Robert Bradshaw, their daughter Alex and "Lucy"



"Cutter" Crowell

#### INDIAN RIVER SHORES POOCH PARADE BENEFITS DOGS FOR LIFE

The first annual *Indian River Shores Pooch Parade* to benefit Dogs for Life was held at the Indian River Shores Community Center on March 20.

The event featured a parade of talented and well-dressed canines and their proud owners, vying for prizes in categories including Best Easter Bonnet, Owner/Dog Look-alike, Best Trick/Talent, Most Amusing and Best Tail Wagger.

The committee included Shelly Ferger, Eve Hoffman, France Kenyon, Ann Kusch, Martha Lincoln, Barbara Readdy, GiGi Smithers and Patsy Woronoff.



Shelly Ferger of Dogs for Life and France Kenyon



Joan Messer and "Mouse"



Anna Blatherwick with "MacDougall" and "MacKenzie"



Pam Hill, her grandson Hadley Nelson and "Berkie" Hill



GiGi Smithers and "Henry"



Sherry Alvarez with "Kerrie" Stutt and Jennifer Carter with "Molly" Lynch

MORE THAN SIXTY DOGS (AND THEIR OWNERS) PARADE IN FESTIVE EVENT HOSTED BY INDIAN RIVER SHORES



MY ANSWER:

By Billy Graham

Dear Dr. Graham: I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven.



MOON OVER BUFFALO, p.9  
SLEEPING BEAUTY BALLET, p.3  
GOLFING FOR HABITAT, p.4  
HAWAIIAN LUAU, p.5



VOLUME VIII, ISSUE XVI

APRIL 11, 2005

40 CENTS



Pampered pooches turned out with their owners for the Easter Bonnet Parade held at the Indian River Shores Town Hall on Sunday, March 20. Prizes were awarded for the most beautiful and creative chapeaux, the best tricks, the best tail wagger, etc. More than sixty pooches entered the grueling two-hour event (of which only one charming entry admitted to being a mongrel). Judges included commissioners of Indian River Shores. The lavish parade benefitted Dogs for Life, Inc. of Vero Beach which trains previously-owned dogs as assistance, service and therapy dogs.

MORE THAN SIXTY DOGS (AND THEIR OWNERS) PARADE IN FESTIVE EVENT HOSTED BY INDIAN RIVER SHORES



MY ANSWER:

By Billy Graham

Dear Dr. Graham: I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven. I have never felt worthy of being loved and forgiven.



Kowchen Breed



Carrie & Winston stutt



Carrie stutt



↑ Carrie stutt



+ Winston stutt

# Jefferson Award

## JEFFERSON AWARDS 2005

### Volunteer blends dogs, helping children



MOLLY BARTELS staff photographer

Patti Schell, center, listens intently as Tana Aley, 7, right, reads a book to Schell and her dog, Chloe, at the Boys and Girls Club in Vero Beach on March 16.

By Jennifer Brannock  
staff writer

Patti Schell's affection for volunteer work extends well beyond puppy love.

In fact, the 53-year-old Sebastian volunteer with the Dogs for Life Inc. organization in Vero Beach has managed continuously to mesh her love of dogs with her aspirations to help struggling children, the sick and the elderly in the community for the past 2½ years.

That is why Schell was named one of five local winners of the Jefferson Awards for service to the community. The local awards are sponsored by Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers — which include The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie

#### ON WPTV

See a profile of Patti Schell on News Channel 5 at 5:30 tonight.

#### COMING FRIDAY

Kenneth Bowers, founder of Operation Hope, and agency helping the homeless in Palm Beach County work their way off the streets.

News, the Fort Pierce Tribune, The Jupiter Courier, the Press Journal of Vero Beach and the Sebastian Sun — and the TV station WPTV in West Palm Beach.

Schell works part-time doing odd jobs in her neighborhood, such as mowing lawns, cleaning and dog

See VOLUNTEER, B2

#### VOLUNTEER

FROM B1

sitting. She spends the majority of her time training her Labrador retriever, 2-year-old Chloe, and participating in programs offered by Dogs for Life, including "READ to Dogs," "Square Dancing with Dogs" and "Trauma Therapy Dogs."

"To me, dogs have the ability to show what God's love and forgiveness is like," she said. "Sure, I always go goo-goo over puppies, but for the actual training and the give-and-take that happens

chance to hone their skills by reading books to an eager, non-judgmental audience of furry friends.

"The more I thought about it, the more I realized that the most terrifying thing for children is to have to get up and read in front of a class," Schell said. "The dog is intently listening to their story, and is very understanding. The dog just wants to love on them."

Schell and Chloe also visit homeless shelters regularly, as well as those who have experienced some sort of trauma in their lives, to play

headfirst into her work with others as a means of relieving her own stress.

"The dogs sense everything we are going through, and if I was a nervous wreck, (Chloe) would be, too," she said. "It was my therapy, really, because I got to do that during the numbness of it all."

Dogs for Life Founder Shelly Ferger, who nominated Schell for her Jefferson Award, said Schell was instrumental in helping the nonprofit agency expand north from Vero Beach into Sebastian.

"Some people, no matter

#### TODAY'S AGENDA

**Early Learning Coalition of Indian River County**, 8:15 a.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

**Indian River County School Board Superintendent's NAACP Monthly Meeting**, 11 a.m., 1990 25th St., large instructional conference room.

**Indian River County Veterans Town Hall Meeting**, 11:15 a.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

**Indian River County Cultural Council Board of Directors**, 4 p.m., West Wing of Riverside Theatre.

**Sebastian Staff Workshop Collier Creek Canal Project**, 6 p.m., City Hall, council chambers.

**Indian River County Planning and Zoning Commission**, 7 p.m., County Administration Building, commission chambers.

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints of various sizes and orientations, scattered across a white background.

**FEBRUARY**

# Glenn Dunn's 5th Annual Fundraise Hoedown

**WANTED**

**YOU!!!**

**To Come Kick Up Your Heels  
At a Country Hoedown!!**

**Who:** Glenn Dunn's  
*Fifth Annual Fundraiser*

**When:** Friday, February 18, 2005  
7:00-11:00 P.M.

**Where:** Heritage Center  
2140 14th Avenue

**Why:** To Benefit Dogs for Life, Inc., Improving the Quality  
of Life for Trauma, Troubled, or At Risk Children

Come join us for food, drink (free beer and wine—cash bar available),  
dancing, silent auction, and an all round good time!


**Ticket Price:** \$35.00 per person—Bring a Guest or Two or ....

**Word on the Prairie—Casual Dress (Western attire welcome—Neckties will be cut off!)**

**Music Provided by:**  
Jonathon Panks  
(formerly of Savannah)  
Releasing His New CD  
"50,000 Buffalo"

Cut along line and return in envelope provided

# Read to Dogs

From: "Charlotte Petersen" <charlotte@magnetron.com>   
Date: 2005/02/16 Wed PM 12:25:21 EST  
To: "Shelly Ferger" <shellysc@bellsouth.net>  
Subject: Emailing: DSCN0447, DSCN0448

This is the bulletin board that I did at St. Ed's. We will keep adding pictures to it...

Love,  
Charlotte

The message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

DSCN0447  
DSCN0448

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.



# Smooch-a-Pooch



## PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Shelly Ferger, Director  
772-567-8969

### "Smooch-a-Pooch" Valentines Celebration at the Off-Leash Dog Park

Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to the community is celebrating Valentines Day with a "Smooch-a-Pooch" theme at 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park located on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vero Beach on Sunday February 13<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM.

DFL is inviting members of the public to bring their dogs for an On-Leash trail walk at the Park. During the trail walk attendees will be invited to stop at various booths. A photo opportunity will be available while "Smooching a pooch", (yours or ours); a custom paw print of your dog may be stamped and a free dog park membership as well as a free basic obedience class will be raffled.

The Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club will have homemade dog biscuits available and DFL Representatives will give presentations on their Assistance Dog Training Program, Pet Assisted Therapy Programs, Volunteer Programs and Off-Leash Dog Park Membership as well as providing free information on common dog training problems. Bring your lawn chairs, and be prepared to have fun.

For information on this event, dog training classes, or membership to the Off-Leash Dog Park contact Director Shelly Ferger (772) 567-8969.

# Volunteer Opportunities

## Volunteer Opportunities at Dogs for Life, Inc.

### Pet Assisted Therapy



**Read to Dogs** - This Program is designed to encourage children to read. Volunteers and their specially trained dogs become the children's reading "buddies". Dogs must pass an AKC-Career Good Citizen Test as well as a DFL administered Public Access Test. Volunteers must attend DFL training workshops on a regular basis. Most of all students derive from the companionship of a dog feel more comfortable with dogs because they are non-judgmental and do not make fun of them if they make a mistake.

### Trauma Therapy Dogs -

This Program provides warmth, love, and comfort those who experience post-traumatic stress, depression, and other disorders. Trained Volunteer and Dog Teams work with both children and adults.

### Assistance Dogs

**Hearing Dog** - A door knock, a ringing telephone, a smoke alarm, and an alarm clock are sounds a person with a hearing impairment may be missing.

**Mobility Assistance Dog** - Rising from a chair, picking up a phone, and retrieving a fallen object are simple tasks that can be daunting to a person with a physical challenge.

Our experienced assistance dog training volunteers work with people in their own home environments and help train the dog to respond to and serve people with special needs.



### Companion Dogs

- **Dog Behavior Hotline** - Provides free counseling for dog behavior problems.
- **Dog Placement Referral Program** - Provides services for dogs needing homes and people looking for dogs.
- **Foster Dog Program** - Houses dogs that have been displaced until they can be placed in a permanent home.

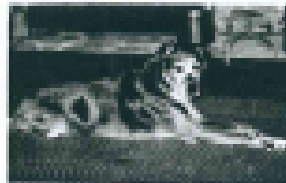


### Dog Park

A Dog Park is a place where our loyal dogs can run leash-free, socialize with one another and have a good romp.

DFL volunteers assist with fan-rotors of the park, and hand out educational materials at many local community events.

Dog Obedience Classes are conducted at the park. Volunteers assist the 4-H Dog Master's Club members in addition to the general public training their dogs with motivational techniques.



**Dogs for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

Dogs for Life, Inc.  
P.O. Box 499023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965

(772) 567-8969

**Dogs for Life**

Living, Loving, Learning

*Volunteer Program*

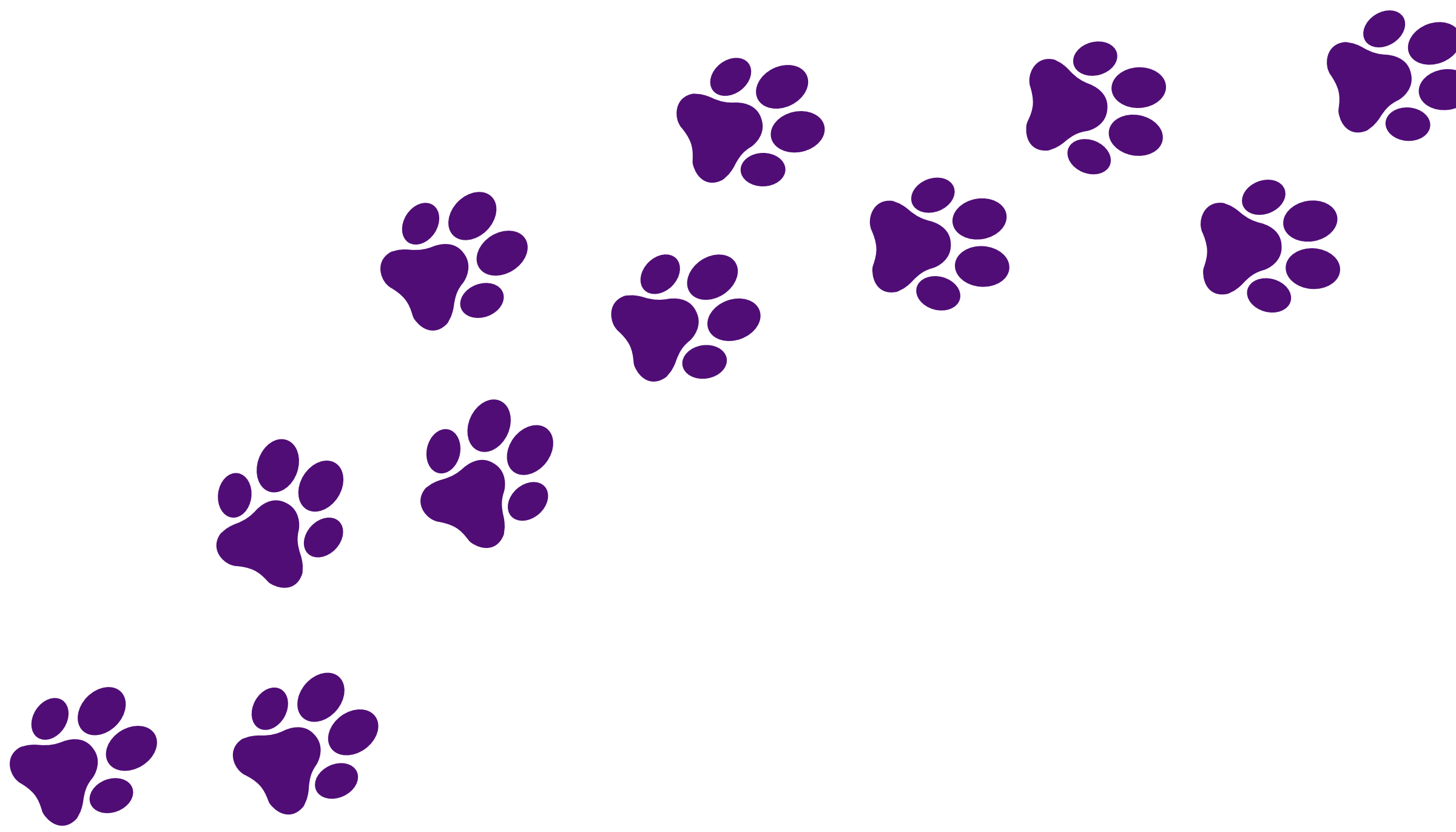


(772) 567-8969



# Scrapbook

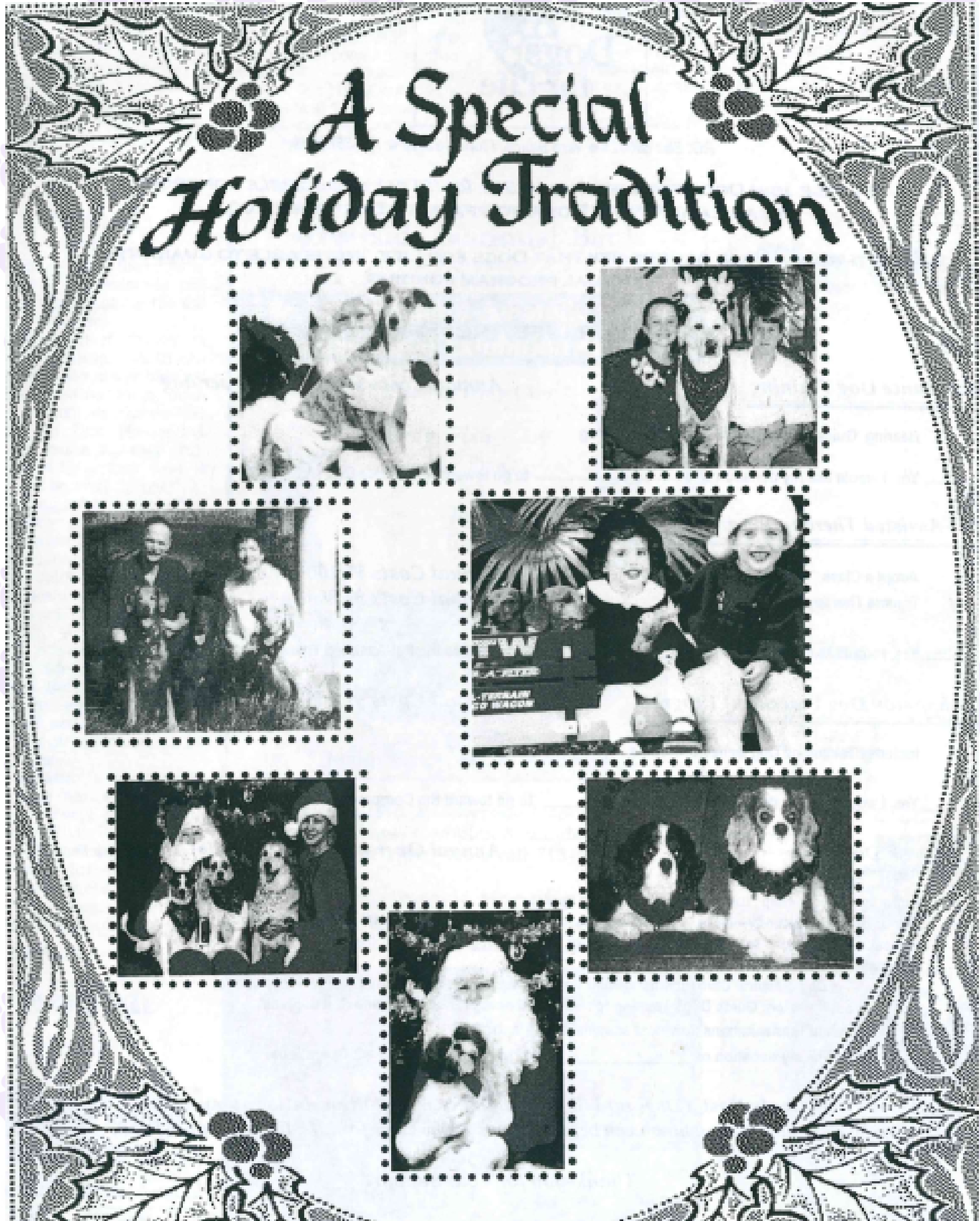
## 2004





**DECEMBER**

# Christmas Open House





SARAH GRILE staff photographer

Hayden Walsh, 10, from far left, Matthew Becker, 9, and Taylor Alber, 10, who are all in the fourth grade at St. Edward's Middle School, wait on their school's float before the Christmas Parade begins on Saturday. The parade, which was put on by the Oceanside Business Association, goes north on Ocean Drive from Flameview Lane to Grey Twig Road.

## Spirits rise as parade passes by

### Parade winners

Oceanside Business Association Christmas parade 2004 float winners are:

#### SCHOOLS

- First place: St. Edward's School
- Second place: Sebastian Elementary School
- Third place: Sebastian River Middle School

#### BUSINESSES

- First place: Muligan's Bar & Grill
- Second place: Dodgetown/George Trusty
- Third place: DuBose & Sons Jewelers

#### ORGANIZATIONS

- First place: Indian River County Sheriff's Office
- Second place: Vero Beach Rotary West
- Third place: Environmental Learning Center

The Oceanside Business Association's annual Christmas parade brings dose of Christmas cheer.

By Alexi Howk  
staff writer

VERO BEACH — Max pulled anxiously on his leash Saturday night while watching a fleet of dogs with their lit-up leashes prance by during the Oceanside Business Association's annual Christmas parade.

"He came out to see his buddies," said Max's owner, K.C. Barkley, while watching

the canine group from Dogs For Life. The Vero Beach resident, along with her family and friends, camped out on a blanket in the grass to watch the parade.

"Today, I was like dying to be a child again," Barkley said.

Two-year-old Bennet Northern, enamored by the bright lights beaming from the more than 50 floats passing by, said he couldn't wait to see Santa Claus.

"Merry Christmas!" he shouted out, while watching the parade.

Several hundred people up

and down the sidewalks cheered and clapped as impressive floats decked out with lights and children on board moseyed by.

Todd DuBose, part owner of DuBose & Sons Jewelers in Vero Beach, said he spent several hours each night for a week putting together his float that showcased his grandfather's 1943 Willy's Jeep atop a trailer hooked to the back of a pickup truck.

The candy apple red Jeep carried a Christmas tree strung with colorful lights on its roof while the Grinch sat behind the wheel.

See PARADE, B2

A18 • Vero Beach

Hometown News

## Dogs for Life to host Christmas open house

For Hometown News

Dogs for Life, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a Christmas open house at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 11 at the 4-H off-leash dog park located on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

All dogs are welcome "on leash." Guests should bring their lawn chairs and be prepared to have fun.

DFL is asking guests to bring an unopened bag or can of dog or cat food for donation to United Humanitarians, a local nonprofit, low-cost spay/neuter organization.

Since hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, UH has been providing food

for approximately 20 low-income families that own dogs and cats. UH representatives will be available to provide information on their low-cost programs.

Dogs for Life will give a presentation on its assistance dog-training program, pet-assisted therapy programs, volunteer programs and companion dog placement program. DFL will also provide free information on common dog training problems and information on membership to the off-leash dog park.

For more information on the open house, dog-training classes, the 4-H Dog Master's Club and membership to the off-leash dog park, contact Dogs for Life director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

December 1, 2004 V

## VERO BEACH/COUNTY

### IN BRIEF

#### Dogs for Life to hold open house

VERO BEACH — Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services to the community, is hosting a Christmas open house at 1 p.m. Dec. 11 at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

The organization is asking everyone to bring an unopened bag or can of dog or cat food for donation to United Humanitarians, a local nonprofit, low-cost spay/neuter organization.

Since hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, United Humanitarians has been providing food for about 20 low-income families that own dogs and cats. Group representatives also will be available for in-

formation on the low-cost programs.

Dogs for Life will give a presentation on its assistance dog training program, pet assisted therapy programs, volunteer programs, companion dog placement program, as well as providing free information on common dog training problems and information on membership to the off-leash dog park.

All dogs are welcome on a leash. For more information, contact Director Shelly Ferger (772) 567-8969.

#### R.S.V.P.

**Christmas open house:** Dogs for Life, 1 p.m. Saturday, 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. DFL asks its members and the public to bring an unopened bag or can of dog or cat food for donation to United Humanitarians. Presentations on DFL programs, free information on common dog training problems and membership. All dogs welcome on-leash. Bring lawn chairs. Information: (772) 567-8969.

**Holiday bazaar:** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, parish hall, St. Elizabeth's Church, 901 Clearmont St., Sebastian. Crafts, craft supplies, baked goods, plants and items from the boutique room. Coffee and lunch available. Clearmont Street is just off Barber Street, south of Country Road 512. Information: (772) 589-2770.

It's helped my business tremendously!

# Paw Prints



Year-End Issue  
December, 2004



## PAW PRINTS Newsletter

### Assistance Dogs Learn Their Jobs!

Our Cover Girl, Precious, a West Highland White terrier, is learning to use her ears for her owner whose hearing is impaired. She will alert Dan to sounds such as a door knock, smoke alarm, and alarm clock. Precious will also tap a 911 rescue phone when Dan or his wife Mary Ann ask for "Help", and will provide loving companionship—all for free.



found that shepherds and shelties, "Learn vary quickly. Mine were so easy to train, so willing to learn and respond to all the sounds they were trained for."

Max, a standard poodle, is a mobility assistance dog who will help Kelly with such tasks as picking up fallen objects, carrying a bag and will provide some stability and balance when Kelly stands up or moves.



Sweetie is aptly named. This multi-colored mix will help Mim hear what she is missing now that Bubba her elderly hearing guide dog boxer is retiring. Bubba still helps, but Sweetie is taking over the tasks of alerting him to sounds.



Tinka's alert look indicates that she's paying close attention to Evelyn's needs. She is also a hearing guide dog. (Cont. on Page 4.)



A German Shepherd named Leisl is learning to be a hearing assistance dog. She'll help Mari who has had a number of GSD/HDs (German Shepherd Dog/ Hearing Dog). She says having a hearing dog is "Wonderful," and is "Great for hearing impaired people. It gives them increased security and independence as well as alerting them to the everyday sounds everyone takes for granted. Especially for those who live alone." Mari has had a hearing assistance dog since 1959. She found Leisl through GSD Rescue. Mari started the first HD training program in Brevard County in 1981. "I was very blessed with my three GSDs Sheltie and Pomeranian all of whom assisted me over the years." She was devastated when they died of old age. She has



### SEASONS GREETINGS



#### Inside This Issue:

- 'Rithmatic, (W)riting, and Reading Are the 3 Arfs? 2
- Trauma Training Helps in Times of Stress 2
- Master's Meeting Delayed by Storms 2
- What We've Been Up To 3
- Volume of Volunteers 3
- Anything But Bored Board 3
- Park Barks 3
- Charming Chica Gets a Chance 4

Page 2

Year-End Issue

### 'Rithmatic, (W)riting, and Reading Are the 3 Arfs? (Reading Buddies Help Provide a Receptive Audience for Learning Readers)

Youngsters at The Boys & Girl's Club, Beachland Elementary School, St. Edward's Elementary School and the Family Homeless Center are among the lucky readers who enjoy a "READ to Dogs" program. The kids read aloud to the gentle and obedient dogs that never laugh at mistakes and love the attention.

Year-end tax-deductible donations to Dogs for Life can be specifically dedicated to "Adopt-A-Class" that directs funding toward this program. (See Donation Insert.)



The Exchange Club of Indian River awarded DFL a grant to expand this program to the Boys & Girl's Club in Sebastian. As bad luck would have it, the Boys and Girls Club there was damaged by the storms and is under repair. Many other schools have expressed interest in this program, but we need additional sponsors.

### Trauma Training Helps in Times of Stress

We've all been more than a bit on edge this fall but luckily our dogs have been able to help us cope with depression, anxiety, and other tensions of the times.

They have been very helpful in stressful situations and in encouraging people to communicate their traumatic events.

The unconditional affection offered by these dogs has been beneficial to many people and to rescue workers as well.

DFL Trauma dogs visited the First Church of God auditorium during a Indian River County Sheriff Department's Victim Assistance program to offer comfort to recent sufferers of hurricane damage. We all remember how the trauma dogs helped the rescue workers after 9/11 and they helped here, too, after Frances and Jeanne. Our dogs, also, took part in a special Hurricane Relief Street Party during Downtown Friday on November 19. The American Red Cross was the charity of the day and received donations for its disaster relief fund to aid in hurricane recovery.



The Michigan Disaster Relief Workers Received Some Post-Hurricane "Counseling" by One of Our Canine Trauma Therapy Teams—  
Patricia Lyons, "Casey," and "Sabrina."

Trauma Therapy Dogs offer comfort and a sense of soothing calm to victims and are especially effective with children who have suffered abuse or trauma of any kind.

### Masters' Meeting Delayed by Storms

The 4-H Dogmasters September organizational meeting was postponed (like so many other things) by the double whammy storms, but it finally took place in early November. The club participated in the Halloween parade and the Vero Beach High School Band Christmas Parade.

Dance Instructor Jocelyn Woodruff, and plan to show off in dog shows throughout the year.

Monthly meetings for dog training practice take place at the Off-Leash Dog Park on 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

Members and their "best friends" are rehearsing their famous square dance routine, choreographed by



### What We've Been Up To

October was Adopt-A Shelter Dog month and we celebrated at the Dog Park. We held an on-leash open house with help from the ASPCA, Iams Dog Foods, Dog Trainers Shelly Ferger and Cissy Sumner, CPDT, gave free dog training advice to many recently adopted shelter dogs and their new owners.

One of our "best friends," Evelyn Mayerson hosted a tea at her beautiful home in Windsor. Shelly Ferger made a presentation about DFL to inform the guests of the aims and needs of our organization. Thanks, Evelyn, for the opportunity to make some new best friends!!

### Volume of Volunteers

"How can I help?" There are dozens of answers and an increasing number of willing helpers. DFL now lists about 40 dedicated volunteers and their dogs enabling us to continue and even expand our programs. Gayle Montgomery has recently become the DFL volunteer coordinator for Pet Assisted Therapy and Outreach Programs. She joined Sharon and Duane Marshall who are the Dog Park Volunteer Coordinators. Also, an experienced and creative writer (check out our new newsletter title), Sheila Lowenstein has volunteered to write our newsletter.

Twenty-four DFL Pet Assisted Therapy Volunteers attended a meeting in August at the doggie-theme-decorated home of Ellen Bartkus. The volunteers heard DFL Director Shelly Ferger give an introductory talk and then evaluated the program and asked questions. Each attendee received DFL t-shirts and a scarf for certified dogs that have been trained in obedience and have passed the AKC Canine Good Citizen Test. Each trained team visit a pre-arranged school or other organization every month.

You'll find many other ways to help out, too. Join our Planning and Marketing Committee, our Pet Assisted Therapy Committee, Assistance Dog Committee, or our Dog Park Committee. Call Shelly to enlist 567-8969.

### Park Bark

The Dog Park (12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue) is up and running as usual. Despite some hurricane damage—at least \$2,000 at this printing, to the inner fence and gate hinges, a totally lost pump house and some fences that needed reinforcing—not to mention a mess of debris—we're back ready to welcome runners, jumpers and good ole' hanger-outers of all breeds. After being cooped up and stressed out, we all need some fresh air and exercise.

We got out our Santa suits! DFL Volunteers and Indian River County 4-H Dogmasters Club participated in the Vero Beach High School Christmas Parade on December 4 along Ocean Drive in Vero Beach.



Shelly Ferger Makes A DFL presentation at Evelyn Mayerson's Tea

### Anything But Bored Board

Busy is a better adjective. The Board of Trustees of DFL attended the Pet Savers Foundation's conference on homeless animal management and policy in Orlando in August. Members attended workshops on many subjects ranging from "15 Things Every Organization Should Do" to "Developing Successful Outreach Programs" and "Direct Mail and Internet Appeals." The conference was sponsored by the Humane Society of the United States and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

For the future, our Board is planning a Retreat for the winter of 2005 and hopes all members and volunteers will get involved with planning for the future. Please call Shelly for more information 567-8969.



Many dog lovers and supporters deserve our eternal gratitude for their help in getting our park back in playing order. Thanks to the Able Fence Company, Coast-to-Coast Landscaping and a host of dog park volunteers, the park reopened within days after the last storm.

We were so lucky that the "Purdy" reinforced shed held together and the flooding was quick to drain. (Cont. on Page 4.)

Dogs for Life  
P.O. Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965  
Phone: 772 567-8969

In home training for adoption and assistant dogs.



### Assistance Dogs Learn Their Jobs (cont.)

These dogs were all just loving pets until DFL taught them how to help and matched their skills to their owners' needs. Mobility Assistance dogs can even be trained to load the washing machine and dryer (something it took years for my kids to pick up.)

Assistance dogs can help with a variety of disabilities, including arthritis and multiple sclerosis, two debilitating and amazingly common ailments.

### Charming Chica Gets Another Chance

Perhaps six times is a charm because this Chihuahua has been looking for a home for several years and has at last found the perfect match complete with other welcoming Chihuahua step-siblings. Through no fault of her own, Chica has been a floundering foundling, switching homes six times in almost as many years. The litany of mismatches include one adoptive owner who got a full time job, one who became disabled, and one who actually died the day after he adopted Chica. This time though, her adoptive home has already been Chihuahua checked out by her two siblings.

At long last love.



### Park Bark (cont.)

The Dog Park Committee met the first week in November and is scheduling maintenance projects for our members. Check the bulletin board at the park for notices.

The December 11 open house provided donations of over 300 pounds of dog food to United Humanitarians "food for pets" program for those in need. We made some new friends, too.

Merry Christmas and don't forget the "Donor Bone" display opportunity at the tax-deductible Dog Park when you're making your year-end gifts. (See Donation insert.)



Chica and Her New Siblings Going for a Ride

# Dog Training Classes

V Sunday, December 12, 2004 Treasure Coast Newspapers B5

## TODAY

### CLASSES

**Dog Training:**  
➤ Dog agility training, 9 a.m. Saturday, Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Preregistration required; (772) 567-8969.  
➤ Basic dog obedience, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Preregistration required; (772) 567-8969.

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B10 Treasure Coast Newspapers Thursday, December 30, 2004 V

## VERO BEACH/COUNTY

### IN BRIEF

**Group offers dog training**

VERO BEACH — Dogs for Life Inc. will have a January series of dog training classes at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

Basic dog obedience/behavior classes will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 8, with canine behavior trainer Shelly Ferger. Dog agility training classes will begin at 4 p.m. on Jan. 11 with instructor Cissy Sumner.

All applicants must pre-register. Contact Dogs for Life Inc. Director Shelly Ferger at (772) 567-8969.

*PD 11/5/05*

a lawn chair; no coolers. Information: [www.verobeach.com/OBA](http://www.verobeach.com/OBA), (772) 231-0008.

**Dog training:** Dogs for Life, January series of classes, 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Basic obedience/behavior class with Shelly Ferger, 10:30 a.m. Saturday; agility training with Cissy Sumner, CPDT, 4 p.m. Tuesday. Information, pre-registration (required); (772) 567-8969.



**NOVEMBER**



# United Humanitarians Spay/Neuter Program

JAN. 2005

CATS \$35.  
DOGS \$45 (over 55 pounds:  
add \$1.00 each pound)



## UNITED HUMANITARIANS SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM

P.O. Box 650607 Vero Beach, FL 32965  
Vero Beach/Ft. Pierce Branch • Irene Baker, Branch Chairman  
772-335-3784

NOVEMBER 2004

### PROCEDURES CAUSE SUFFERING: (LETTER TO EDITOR OCT. 22, 2004 VERO BEACH PRESS JOURNAL)

Are you a trusted friend to your pet? You are all he or she has to prevent cruel declawing, tail or ear docking, extreme measures outlawed in many countries, but not yet outlawed in the United States. - Declawing is not just removal of claws, but amputation of the first joints of the paw. Cat guardians are urged to call United Humanitarians at 335-3784 for free information by mail or fax that will allow you to become informed about the immediate and long-term suffering caused to cats by declawing. - For the sake of your pet, get the facts about declawing. Information by the Association of Veterinarians For Animal Rights is available. The AVAR veterinarians know, and want you to know about a cat's suffering during and after the declawing surgery. - No innocent animal should be subjected to this kind of suffering. Please call for a free copy of the AVAR pamphlets if you think declawing your cat or tail/ear docking your dog is an option. It should never be considered! - For this vital information, send request to United Humanitarians, P.O. Box 650607, Vero Beach, FL 32965 or call (Irene Baker, Chairman, United Humanitarians, Indian River/St. Lucie Counties) 772/335-3784.

### How you can help

We are in need of a used and reliable van, SUV or station wagon for animal transport for spay and neuter. Volunteers are needed for phone/mailing, to help drive an occasional pet to the vet and to deliver pet food to the disabled and needy. We also seek a Ft. Pierce/Pt St Lucie Veterinarian for lower cost spay/neuter and finally, a store front in Vero Beach at a nominal rent. United Humanitarians is a 501c3 Charitable Organization. Donations are tax deductible.

### Say NO to Iams Pet Foods

If you are feeding your animal Iams pet food, you may want to reconsider. Without going into the sickening details, Iams is abusing their research dogs and cats. Pet owners are sending a message to Proctor & Gamble by boycotting their foods. Check [www.uncaged.co.uk/iams.htm](http://www.uncaged.co.uk/iams.htm) for more info on P & G's cruelty. While we are at it, if you are able to buy a better quality food product for your pet you can be assured that there will be no pets in your pet's food. Yes, you did read that right. Pets are rendered and included as by-products in some lesser grade products. ([www.earthisland.org](http://www.earthisland.org)).

### MEMBERSHIP SPAY/NEUTER APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Pet's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Dog \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Cat \_\_\_\_\_

Detach and send to United Humanitarians at P.O. BOX 650607 along with check for \$35 for a cat or \$45 for a dog. **Declawing of cats or ear/tail docking of dogs NOT ALLOWED.** Please enclose 2 postage stamps. Rabies shot and pregnancy not included. Wait for your Certificate before making an appointment with veterinarian. Check one.  
 Florida Veterinary League (Vero Beach)  Highlands Animal Hospital (Sebastian). For additional information call. 772-335-3784 \$5 yearly membership or a donation may be included in your check. Would you like information on volunteer opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have saleable items to donate? \_\_\_\_\_

United Humanitarians  
Spay/Neuter  
P.O. Box 650607  
Vero Beach Fl 32965

1-19-05

Dear Shelly,

I want to thank you again  
for the chance to attend the great  
Jan. event at the Dog Park!

The members were so  
generous and kind to donate  
all that wonderful food  
for the needy pets.

The money collected there  
at the Dog Park helped with  
the fence repair too!

Excuse my delay in writing  
my thanks to you and the  
members. - ~~The~~ <sup>My</sup> search for a home  
to rent has finally stopped, and  
I hope to return to normal soon!

new address:

112 W. Caribbean  
Port St Lucie Fl 34952  
772/335-3786

Sincerely,

Brene Baker  
Branch Chairman



**SEPTEMBER**

# Tea Party

VERO BEACH  
MAGAZINE

SEP/OCT  
2004

149

## PEOPLE & PARTIES

### TEA PARTY FOCUSES ON DOGS FOR LIFE

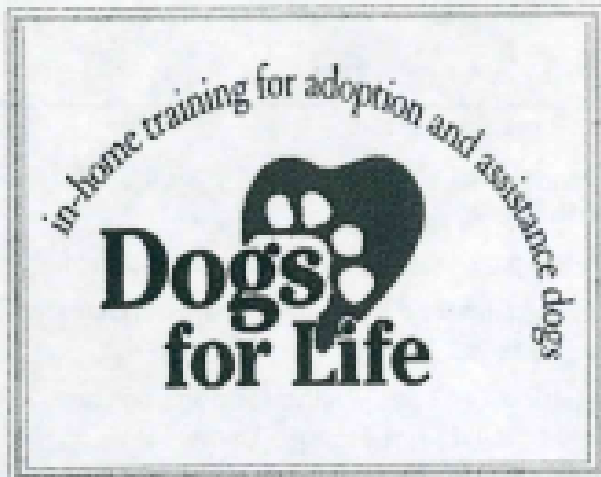
An *Afternoon Tea* was held at the home of Evelyn Mayerson to introduce fellow dog-lovers to Shelly Ferger, Director of Dogs for Life.

The Dogs for Life program offers dogs a new beginning as trained assistance dogs or companions. The organization is devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs in Indian River County through programs that include *Read to Dogs* and *Trauma Therapy*. See *Volunteering* for opportunities in which you and your canine can help.



Dogs for Life Director Shelly Ferger explains how the program works to a gathering of dog lovers

# Newsletter



Special Issue  
September, 2004

## Newsletter

### Dog Park News, News, and More News!

#### Inside This Issue:

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#### CONGRATULATIONS MEMBERS!

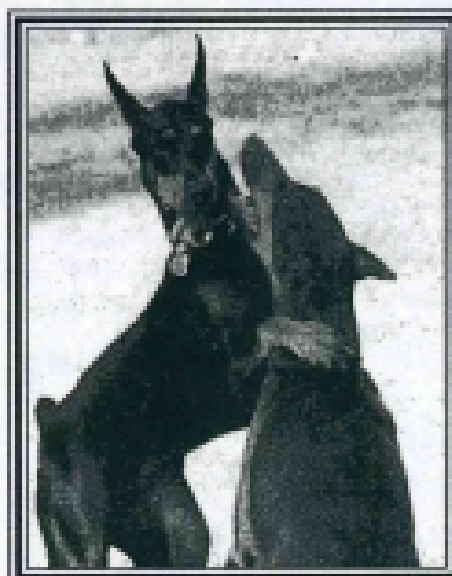
After two years of operation, the Dog Park is just under full annual membership capacity; at 200 dogs!!!

**DOG PARK CHAIRPERSONS**  
Dogs for Life wishes to extend their appreciation to Duane and Sharon Marshall (Gracie & Sara Lee) for their willingness to serve as Dog Park Chairpersons. They have been extremely generous in helping in all phases of the park, including the Doggy Pool Party!

All creative ideas may be directed to Duane and Sharon, but any concerns or complaints about the Dog Park still need to be directed to Dog Park Director Shelly Ferger.

**DOGGIE FLEA MARKET**  
The Marshalls were instrumental in helping the Dog Park raise over \$800 thru the "Doggie Flea Market" in February. A special thank you also to the dog park members who donated items, you know who you are!

**PAY-AS-YOU-GO**  
Scheduled "Pay-As-You-Go" opportunities have recently been added so that more owners and dogs have access to the park five times per week. The Pay-As-You-Go members must abide by all of the dog park rules, and pay \$10 per playgroup.



Dobies Catch Some Playtime!



Sara Lee Marshall Takes a Dip!

#### MEMORIAL DONOR BONES

The Bulletin Board and Donor Bone display was just reorganized with the addition of the "Memorial Bone" section for on-going tax deductible donations to the park. Memorial Donor Bones start at \$100, with a maximum of 30 spaces. Duane Marshall devoted his time and expertise for building our bulletin board. Thank you, Duane!

#### DOG PARK COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

The Dog Park Committee meets regularly to plan future growth, maintenance, volunteer opportunities, and fund raising events. If you would like to volunteer please, contact Park Director Shelly Ferger at 772-567-8969.

(Dog Park Update is continued on Page 2 with important changes to the the Dog Park Rules.)

## Dog Park Rules Revised

We are very fortunate to have such a beautiful dog park for dogs and their owners to enjoy. In an on-going effort to maintain proper etiquette we wanted to remind ALL members of the Dog Park Rules. Rules are established to ensure the park will continue to be accessible and enjoyed by all. Please review the changes and additions to the Dogs for Life, Inc. Dog Park Rules.

1. Only pre-approved dogs may enter park. Guest dogs are not allowed. Dogs must wear a buckle collar when in the park. (No choker, spike or electronic collars.)
2. Members assume liability for any non-member person invited into the park.
3. Dogs must be leashed while in the parking lot of the park.
4. Owners in the park must call their dog away from the entrance gate when each member arrives.
5. Dogs are not allowed to chase people, and people are not allowed to run while in the park.
6. Members assume liability for any non-member person invited to the park.
7. Dogs are not allowed to dig. If dogs do dig owners must immediately fill holes.
8. Owners must clean up after their dogs and must deposit waste in receptacles.
9. All dogs over six months of age must be spayed or neutered.
10. No puppies under 4 months of age.
11. If your dog acts aggressive, you must leash your dog and immediately leave the park.
12. No dog can be in the park without an adult in attendance.
13. No more than two dogs may be brought into the park by any individual at the same time.
14. Do not leave the park gates open, watch for dogs on the opposite side so that they do not escape. Owners are responsible for ensuring that their dogs do not escape from fenced area.
15. No bicycles, skateboards, roller skaters, scooters or motorized devices - except wheelchairs.
16. No food, dog treats, alcohol, smoking, or glass containers and no sticks allowed in park.
17. Children under 8 years of age are not to be brought into the park.
18. Park hours must be observed.
19. Members must treat each other and dogs with respect at all times. Any member reported for threatening, rude or abusive behavior membership will be revoked.
20. No toys are allowed in the park, unless you are alone with your dog in the park. If another dog arrives, remove the toy, immediately.

## 4-H Dog Master's Club Presents K-9 Bullet-Proof Vests

On Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup>, the Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club presented two K-9 bullet-proof vests to area law enforcement units as part of their 2003-2004 Community Service Project. The presentation was held at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park. Certificates of appreciation were presented to donors and refreshments were provided by the Club.

Vero Beach Police Department's Deputy Chief Don Dappen accepted the vest for his unit. Sebastian Police Department's Lt. Greg Witt, K-9 Officer Ritchie Revis, and K-9 Officer Rob Keiser accepted the vest for their unit.

K-9 Officer Rob Keiser said it best when he expressed his appreciation to the Club for helping to protect his K-9 "Partner." Officer Keiser said, "Not only do we consider our dogs as our "Partner in fighting crime," but also as a "Member of our Family."

Over the past 12 years the 4-H Dog Master's Club has donated a total seven bullet-proof vests and two coolant vests offering protection to all of Indian River County's finest K-9 Partners. Vests have been presented over the years to the Vero Beach Police Department, Indian River County Sheriff's Department, Sebastian Police Department, Indian River County Fire Department, and Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission.



4-H Presents K-9 Bullet-Proof Vests

DFL, Inc. is proud to sponsor the Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club.

## Vasko, a K-9 Hero

Dogs for Life and 4-H Dog Master's Club representatives attended the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department K-9 Memorial service in Ft. Pierce on June 30<sup>th</sup>. There were over 70 K-9's and their handlers in attendance, representing over 60 Florida Law Enforcement Agencies. (Cont. on Page 4.)

## In-Home Training Advantages

One of the major differences between Dogs for Life and other organizations is training an individual's personal dog in his or her own home setting. The dog is trained to perform everyday and life-saving tasks. The clear advantage to this type of training is the handler and dog learn in a familiar setting, not an off-site location.



Cissy Sumner, CPDT and Mark with "Romeo"

Mark and Romeo, a high-spirited, strong-mind, enthusiastic, three-year old boxer, are an example of this type of training by Cissy Sumner, CPDT. Mark, a former tool and die welder suffers from spina bifida and arthritic spinosis, so it was no small task for Cissy and Mark to train Romeo. The encouraging news is Romeo is rising to Mark's needs.

Romeo's most serious accomplishment is his ability to use the 911 emergency phone. If Mark needs assistance, he sends Romeo to the phone and Romeo presses the button that connects with emergency services. Romeo is right on target with his training. Another way Romeo helps Mark is by being able to pull Mark up from a sitting position. Romeo wears a special harness for this activity. This eases the strain on Mark. Romeo, also, performs the everyday tasks of retrieving the newspaper, picking up laundry and putting it in the laundry room, and bringing things to Mark.

Mark sums up this training best in his own words, "This training makes a real difference in many peoples lives, it sure has for me. In my situation it is very reassuring to have a companion/assistance dog that wants to work for me. He is controlled and obedient by and large and a real joy to have around. It is rewarding to see him get the paper and trigger the 911 phone if I needed it."

## DFL Trainers Continuing Education

Dogs for Life, Director Shelly Feger and DFL Volunteer Coordinator and Dog Trainer Cecelia "Cissy" Sumner, CPDT, attended an Assistance Dog Training Seminar in Orlando Florida in February of this year. The four day seminar included workshops and lectures related to Service Dogs in Transition, Clicker Training and Targeting, Dog Temperament Testing, and Retrieving & Tugging Skills.

In November of last year Cissy Sumner received a certification in pet dog training from the Certification Council for Pet Dog Trainers. The Council was created in 2001 and Cissy joins 500 pet dog trainers with the Association of Pet Dog Trainers Certification.

## Upcoming Events



Archie Pena and Roy Sumner Work the DFL Booth at the Sebastian Lions Club 4th of July Festivities

- ♦ September 6<sup>th</sup> Labor Day Booth at Jaycee Park 8 A.M. to 1 P.M.
- ♦ September 18<sup>th</sup> Indian River Estates DFL Point of Entry Presentation, Dog Obedience Demonstration, and Square Dancing with Dogs Show.
- ♦ October 22<sup>nd</sup> Downtown Friday Halloween "Monster Bash" Booth 5:30 P.M.

Shelly Feger accompanied Dr. Narda Riese in January of this year to an Animal-Assisted Therapy workshop held in Orlando, Florida. The seminar entitled "The Healing Power of the Four-Footed Co-Therapist" shared research and instruction on the benefits of human-animal interaction with specific applications and methods for successfully incorporating Animal Assisted Therapy into clinical and school settings.

Dogs for Life, Inc. is dedicated to implementing and offering Assistance Dog Training and various Pet Assisted Therapy programs to people in need.

Dogs for Life  
P.O. Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965  
Phone: 772 567-8969

In home training for adoption and  
assistant dogs.



## DFL Updates

WOW! Front Page, Press Journal in Vero Beach. DFL is very grateful to the Press Journal and Reporter Jane Houston for giving us exceptional coverage in their March 24, 2001 edition.

The Pet Assisted Therapy Program implemented recently with the State Attorney's Victim's Assistance Department was the main reason for the article, but the "READ to Dogs" program was also covered, as well as the Assistance Dog Training program and the Dog Park.

In the two years since DFL, a non-profit organization, was formed the Pet Assisted Therapy Program has been expanded from the "READ to Dogs" program to the "Trauma Dog" Program. "READ to Dogs" is currently sponsored at the Boys & Girls Club, Beachland Elementary school, the Homeless Family Center, and St. Edward's School. With the certification of our "Trauma Therapy" dogs and handlers, we will begin our program with the State Attorney's office and then into private therapy settings.

The Assistance Dog Training Program has certified one mobility assistance dog team, and currently has three hearing dogs and one additional mobility assistance and emotional support dog team in training.

With the help of the Community Outreach Program, DFL has been able to adopt nine companion dogs into loving homes, and the behavior hotline offers counseling in an effort to help keep dogs in their current homes. Through the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, DFL continues to sponsor the 4-H Dog Master's Club, Southeastern Guide Dogs, and dog training activities.

As with any non-profit organization, funding for these programs comes from tax deductible donations. The DFL Fundraising Committee recently implemented a "Point of Entry" Program. A DFL Program Outline Presentation is available for public and private gatherings. Speakers and demonstrations are available for small or large groups. Please contact Shelly Ferger at 772-567-8969 if you would like to arrange for a "Point of Entry" Presentation.

P.O. Box 650023

Vero Beach, Florida 32965

772.567.8969

Logo Designed and Donated by DHI Communication

## DFL Dog Storybook

Would you like to see your dog's picture in publication??

Just send in your dog stories with a picture and volunteers Mary Mitchell & "Jasper" and Susan Myers with "Biscuit & Muffin" will compile the collection into a book and use it as a fundraiser for Dogs for Life, Inc.

We're sure that you all have a favorite story of the pet you have now, or perhaps one that you've had in the past. You can tell your favorite dog story or you can also write it from what you think a dog's perspective of the world would be.

Send your story with a photo and donation of \$25 "to cover the cost of publishing," to Dogs for Life, Inc. PO Box 650023, Vero Beach, FL 32965.

## DFL Board Members Elected

On December 13, 2003 Dogs for Life, Inc. Members elected their Board of Directors as following: Mary "Mim" Dunn was elected as President for a (4) year term; Fran LaPine was elected as Treasurer for a (3) year term, and Susan Myers was elected as Secretary for a (2) year term.

Indian River County is fortunate to have such a dedicated team of people who believe in volunteering for a good cause. Last year the Board was able to see the benefits of consolidating with the Dog Park Club of Indian River and has done an excellent job in managing the park. A BIG thank you from the membership both two and four footed.

## Vasko, a K-9 Hero (cont. from Page 3)

Vasko's handler, Master Deputy Colton received "In Vasko's honor" the Medal of Honor and the Life Saving Award, in recognition of Vasko saving his life. After Deputy Colton read his memorial poem, everyone applauded and ALL the dogs barked and barked.

Vasko was wearing his vest but unfortunately he was shot in the head. Even after he was shot, he never lost his grip on the criminal that shot him. Deputy Colton said his wife wanted him to take a desk job after the incident but when he saw the outpour of affection and gratitude for his dog, he would never give up his job. Give your dog an extra hug tonight in honor of Vasko.



**AUGUST**



# On The Town

Friday, October 29, 2004

Hometown News

## ON THE TOWN

*Dining & Entertainment*

### CALENDAR

Continued from page B10

the VFW at 815 Louisiana Ave. Stop by or call (772) 589-3405 for tickets or more information.

◆ **Adopt-a-Shelter-Dog Celebration:** Residents and their "on-leash" dogs are invited to visit with other residents who have adopted shelter or second hand dogs. At the 4-H "Best Friends" off-leash dog park, located at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vero Beach, at 2 p.m. Many breeds, sizes and ages of dogs are sure to be present. Free discussion on positive reinforcement training techniques with dog trainers Shelly Ferger and Cissy Sumner of Dogs for Life, Inc.

B4 Treasure Coast Newspapers Sunday, October 24, 2004 V

## VERO BEACH

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### Dog adopters invited to park

VERO BEACH — Dogs for Life Inc. and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are inviting local owners of adopted dogs to attend a gathering Oct. 30 as part of Adopt-a-Shelter-Dog Month.

The event begins at 2 p.m. in the 4-H "Best Friends" off-leash dog park, at 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

It's a chance for people who have adopted shelter or secondhand dogs to meet each other and learn how to train a dog that may have difficulty learning commands.

Organizers ask that the dogs be on a leash during the gathering.

Visitors can attend a free

discussion on positive-reinforcement training techniques with dog trainers Shelly Ferger and Cissy Sumner. Iams Dog Foods is also sponsoring the event.

E2 Treasure Coast Newspapers Wednesday, October 20, 2004

**Adopted dogs at park:** Dogs for Life Inc., Adopt-a-Shelter Dog Month, public invited with their on leash dogs to visit residents with adopted shelter or second hand dogs at the 4-H "Best Friends" off-leash dog park, 16th Avenue and 12th Street, Vero Beach, 2 p.m. Oct. 30. Hear free discussion on positive reinforced training techniques with dog trainers, Shelly Ferger and Cissy Sumner.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### RSVP

**IRC Habitat for Humanity:** Indian River Habitat for Humanity, an ecumenical Christian ministry, endeavoring to eliminate poverty housing in Indian River County, has scheduled a well raising at 8 a.m. Saturday for Israel Avelar and family. This house is sponsored by an anonymous donor.

**Self defense program:** Kevin Anderson, second-degree black belt in aikido, is starting a self defense program stressing personal self defense 6-7:30 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday at Leisure Square, 16th Street. For prices, information call (772) 770-6500.

**Dog training classes:** Dogs for Life Inc., a non-profit organization, dog training classes at 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach. Classes include: Canine Good Citizen class, 9 a.m. Aug. 21 with AKC CGC evaluator Shelly Fenger. Participants will prepare their dogs to pass 10 tests; Basic Dog Obedience training class 6:30 p.m. beginning Aug. 26; Dog agility training class, 6:30 p.m. Aug. 24. Both classes are with Cecelia "Cissy" Sumner, CPDT. All applicants must pre-register; (772) 567-8969.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### RSVP

**Dog Agility Fun Match:** Dogs for Life Inc., a non-profit organization, is hosting a Dog Agility Fun Match at the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday. The show is limited to DFL past agility class participants. Dogs will compete against the clock in maneuvers including dog jumps, a tunnel, a see saw, a tire jump and a dog walk apparatus. Judging the event will be instructors Cecelia "Cissy" Sumner and Jean Andrews from St. Lucie County. Free to the public and on-leash dogs are welcome. Bring lawn chairs, bug spray. Information, (772) 567-8969.

## CLASSES

**Dog Training:**  
➤ Basic dog obedience,

6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, (772) 567-8969.

➤ Dog agility training, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, (772) 567-8969.

➤ AKC Canine Good Citizen test preparation class, 9 a.m. Saturday, Dogs for Life Off-Leash Dog Park, 12th Street and 16th Avenue, Vero Beach, (772) 567-8969.

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of various sizes, scattered across a white background. The paw prints are stylized with four distinct pads.

**MAY**

# Open House



EGGON RASMUSSEUM photographer

## Dog park open house attracts dog lovers

Dogs for Life Inc. joined with the American Humane Association to celebrate "Be Kind To Animals Week" on Saturday at the 4-H Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach. Animal-related businesses and organizations will present the event free to the public and their on-leash dogs. Free items for pets and free raffles of pet-related items will be part of the event. Sgt. Kent Campbell of the Indian River County Sheriff's Department coordinated a multi-law enforcement agency K-9 demonstration. Emergency preparedness for hurricanes and pets; rational use of vaccines and pet grooming were discussed Saturday as part of "Be Kind to Animals Week." **TOP RIGHT:** Dr. David Moon, veterinarian, from left; Mim Dunn, president of Dogs For Life Inc.; Sharon Marshall, open house chairman and park volunteer; and Shelley Ferger, director of Dogs for Life Inc. and the 4-H Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park, discuss Moon's workshop topic, vaccinations, at the open house on Saturday. **TOP LEFT:** Phyl and Greg Sopkin and their dog Pinot Noir visited the open house. **ABOVE:** Dotty Harlow and her dog Bailey, a Jack Russell terrier mix, attended the event.



## COMMUNITY



The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of light purple paw prints of various sizes and orientations, scattered across a white background.

**MARCH**

# Let's hear it for the dogs

Canines do more than chase down criminals; they help victims through the justice system and children to read.

By Jayne Husted  
staff writer

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — Indian River County is going to the dogs.

Leash laws may rule and "No animals" warnings may dot the landscape, but dogs are nonetheless taking the lead here as new techniques emerge to help humans cope with everything from traumatic sex crimes to the third-grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests.

"We all know petting something warm and fuzzy brings blood pressure down," says local marriage and family therapist Narda Riese,

who two months ago began using dogs in therapy with autistic children and depressed adults.

And soon, state attorney's offices throughout the 19th Judicial Circuit of Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin and Okeechobee counties will launch The 4-Paws Volunteer Program.

Under the program, victims advocates will offer victims of rape and other violent crimes the company of dogs as they struggle to retell their nightmarish stories to prosecutors and defense attorneys, says Harriette Rowe Hill, the Circuit's director of victim services and a co-founder of the program. A dog can be with these victims, often children, the entire time they are dealing with the criminal justice system, if the victim wants it, she says.

See DOGS, A2



At the State Attorney's Office in Fort Pierce on Monday, Tricia Lyons, a handler for Tara, center, watches as Mango Maddle shows affection for Harriette Rowe Hill, director of Victims Services for the State Attorney's Office in the 19th Circuit, during the final training session of the 4-Paws Volunteer Program.

## DOGS FOR LIFE

The 4-Paws Volunteer Program:

- Ten dogs currently are in training to be therapists for the 19th Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Victims Services.
- Sixteen dogs currently participate at reading programs for children at Beachland Elementary School, the South County Boys and Girls Club and The Homeless Family Center.
- Dog owners interested in enrolling their dogs in classes to become either therapists or reading mates should call Shelly Ferger of Dogs for Life Inc. at (772) 567-8969 or Harriette Rowe Hill, director, Victims Services for the 19th Judicial Circuit, at (772) 462-1306.

## DOGS

FROM A1

Sheriff's Detective Steve Nelson and his wife, Maria, of Vero Beach, are volunteering themselves and their dog, Hank, for the program.

"I often get to see the crime, but never before have I gotten to be part of the healing process," says the 17-year Sheriff's Office veteran.

Hill and Shelly Ferger, founder of the nonprofit Dogs for Life Inc. in Vero Beach, have been working with Jupiter's Safe Harbor Animal Sanctuary and Hospital to develop the program for more than six months.

They are grateful State Attorney Bruce Colton "saw the value of having a dog in with a traumatized person," Ferger says. "When a person is traumatized, he or she can't communicate. One side of our brain overtakes the other. Dogs help calm (that) down."

The "therapets" can be big or small, long- or short-haired, young or old.

But all must be well-behaved and certified by the Delta Society under its Pet Partners Program, which provides in-depth training for assistance dogs and their handlers. The 27-year-old society is a Renton, Wash.-based nonprofit organization that studies and promotes the human-animal bond. Ferger and Riese recently qualified to train and

certify dogs locally.

"Shelly and I really feel (the dogs) are something we can use to get people out of their shells," says Riese.

Dogs have a way of helping humans do that.

Every Friday at Beachland Elementary, several dogs stretch out on turtle-shaped bean bags in the school library. Two or three third-graders join them on each bag and, when the youngsters begin to read, their fears of slipping up slip away, says Elementary Specialist Paula Vanhooser, who implemented the Read-to-Dogs program this year.

"The kids love to be with the dogs," she says. "Their stress levels go down ... and they open up so much more readily, actually initiating conversation."

These canine buddies also must be well-mannered, but they need only a Canine Good Citizen Award, not a Pet Partners Program designation.

The citizenship award is bestowed by Ferger, a dog behaviorist who is director of Dogs for Life, founded in February 2002. A large part of the group's mission is to rescue homeless dogs with the appropriate temperament and train them as assistance dogs, Ferger says.

The group is now 300 human members strong, thanks in part to the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park at the corner of 12th Street

and 16th Avenue. Dogs for Life recently took over managing the park from the Dog Park Club of Indian River County and absorbed the latter into its organization, says Ferger, who directed both groups.

Mim Dunn, president of Dogs for Life and handler of yellow Labrador Tara in the Read-to-Dog program (her son, who owns Tara, handles the dog in the trauma program), says reading aloud to dogs also helps children get ready for the FCATs, especially if a child needs a little extra work.

But 9-year-old student reader, Tyler Heckman, says it's just plain "fun."

Training has ended for the first 10 trauma dogs and their handlers, usually their owners. Now the dogs and their humans must pass a test.

Tests are the next two Mondays.

Hank and the Nelsons take their test March 29. They know their 11-year-old Chesapeake Bay Retriever will pass with flying colors. "It's me I'm worried about," says Steve Nelson.

Once the trauma program is up and running, dogs will be showing up on the courthouse steps sporting a Sheriff's Office ID card and a Dogs for Life jacket, Ferger says.

-jayne.husted@scripps.com

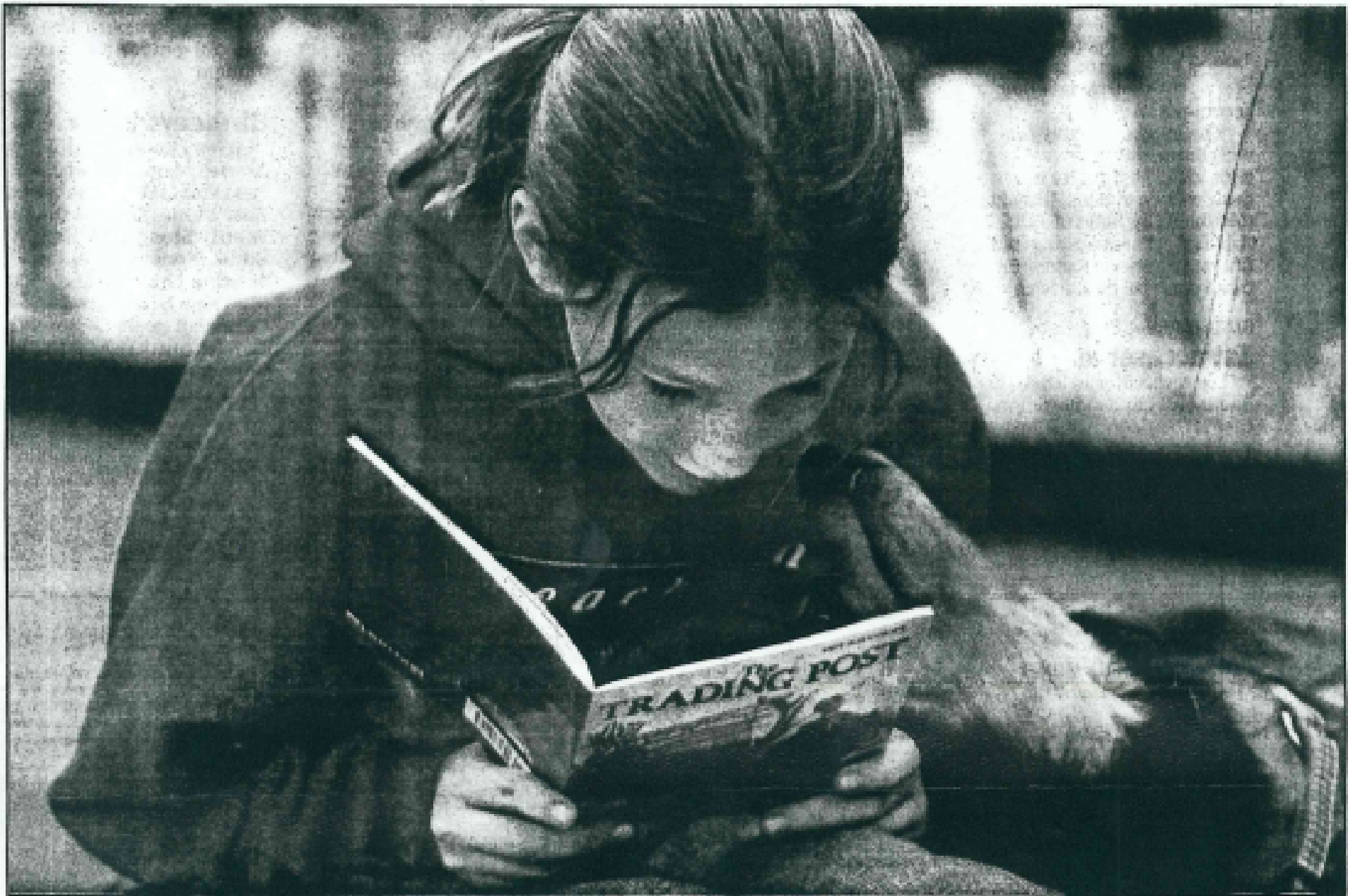
# Press Journal

WEDNESDAY

WWW.PRESSJOURNAL.COM

GOOD MORNING

## BEST FRIENDS



Photos by **HOLLY BARTELS** staff photographer

Miss B., a miniature long-haired dachshund, gives her full attention to MacKenna Jones, 9, who reads a book to Miss B. in the library at Beachland Elementary School in Vero Beach. Miss B. is a certified companion dog, and as soon as she obtains further training, will work to comfort victims of





**JANUARY**

# Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park

## PETS

### Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park is a howl



Ann Taylor For 50 Plus Lifestyles

Sue Myers gathers a group of canine admirers at the 4-H Off Leash Dog Park in Vero Beach.

Ann Taylor  
For 50 Plus Lifestyles

The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog...when all other friends desert, he remains. — George Graham Vest.

VERO BEACH — Muffin and Biscuit, ears up, eyes bright with excitement, start wagging their tails the minute they realize where the car is heading. The two back-seat passengers know when fun is just around the corner.

"They're overjoyed," laughed Sue Myers, owner of the two lively Cairn terriers who can't wait to run free. "You can hear them barking a block away."

Myers makes it a point to see that her two favorite four-legged friends spend as much time as possible at the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue. There, on two and a half acres they can run as fast and as far as they want.

"The girls love it here. It's really their time," she enthused, watching her two charges romp and tussle with their buddies.

"You know you can take your dog for a walk on a leash, but here they can get plenty of exercise and socialize. And for me after working all day it's won-

derful getting out, enjoying the fresh air and meeting up with friends I've made here."

Myers isn't the only one who appreciates what the Dog Park has to offer. Since it opened two years ago more than 150 members have signed up. There's an annual fee of \$200 for the first dog, \$100 for the second, and everyone has an individual security code to punch in at the gate to gain entrance.

Along with membership comes certain responsibilities, one of which is to make sure that anything their dog leaves behind is scooped up. Plastic bag stations are handy and well stocked, and there are plenty of waste receptacles — members take great care and pride in keeping the park clean.

Rules are rules, and that includes no eating, drinking or smoking. Toys are allowed and each dog knows which one is theirs. Sharing and then tussling over a prized possession when enough is enough is part of the game these canines play.

"They talk to each other," Myers laughed as Muffin went nose to nose with a poodle. "When we call another dog's name, they know who we mean."

For a place that exudes such obvious joy, it's amazing to learn that the Dog Park almost didn't become a reality. The Indian

## DOGS

FROM 14

River County 4-H Dog Master's Club took on the project in 1997, raising money to establish the county's first off-leash dog park.

Two years later the Dog Park Club of Indian River was formed to continue with the fund-raising, development and management. Club members searched high and low for a centrally located site where their concept could become a reality. They came up empty — until an individual who owns the property on 12th Street offered to lease it to them.

With a fanfare accompanied by paws applause, the park opened for membership in February 2002. Last July Dogs for Life Inc., a nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs in Indian River County, officially adopted the park.

For Shelley Ferger, the park's director, it's a dream come true.

"This is a wonderful place.

We have a big dog area, a small dog area, there's a dog wash," she cheerfully pointed out.

"A lot of the dogs here know each other, like Sabrina, the terrier mix. She's 7 years old, always thought she had to tell others what to do. She's mellowed out a bit."

Ferger, who you could swear speaks "dog-ese," is the pied piper of the park. She does all of the testing, which includes a dog temperament evaluation to determine sociability with other dogs and people.

She also holds the new-member orientation and training sessions as well as a canine behavior workshop all members must attend, where behavior, body postures, communication and canine pack structure are discussed.

If there are any infractions of park rules or if a dog exhibits negative behavior, members report them to Ferger. This is one busy woman. Make that one busy and dedicated woman. The park has been her baby since the get-go.

"We're open from dawn to dusk and the hours must be observed," she explained. "Right now we're fund-raising for lights."

Ferger has every reason to be proud of the Dog Park and all the activities and programs that go on there. As word has gotten out, it's become a model for governmental organizations to emulate in other cities and counties throughout the country.

Especially when they hear about the innovations Ferger and the Board of Directors have come up with. There are playgroups, a Doggie Flea Market and parades at Christmas and Easter, with dogs decked out in grand style. Myers and her two terriers wouldn't miss a moment of the fun.

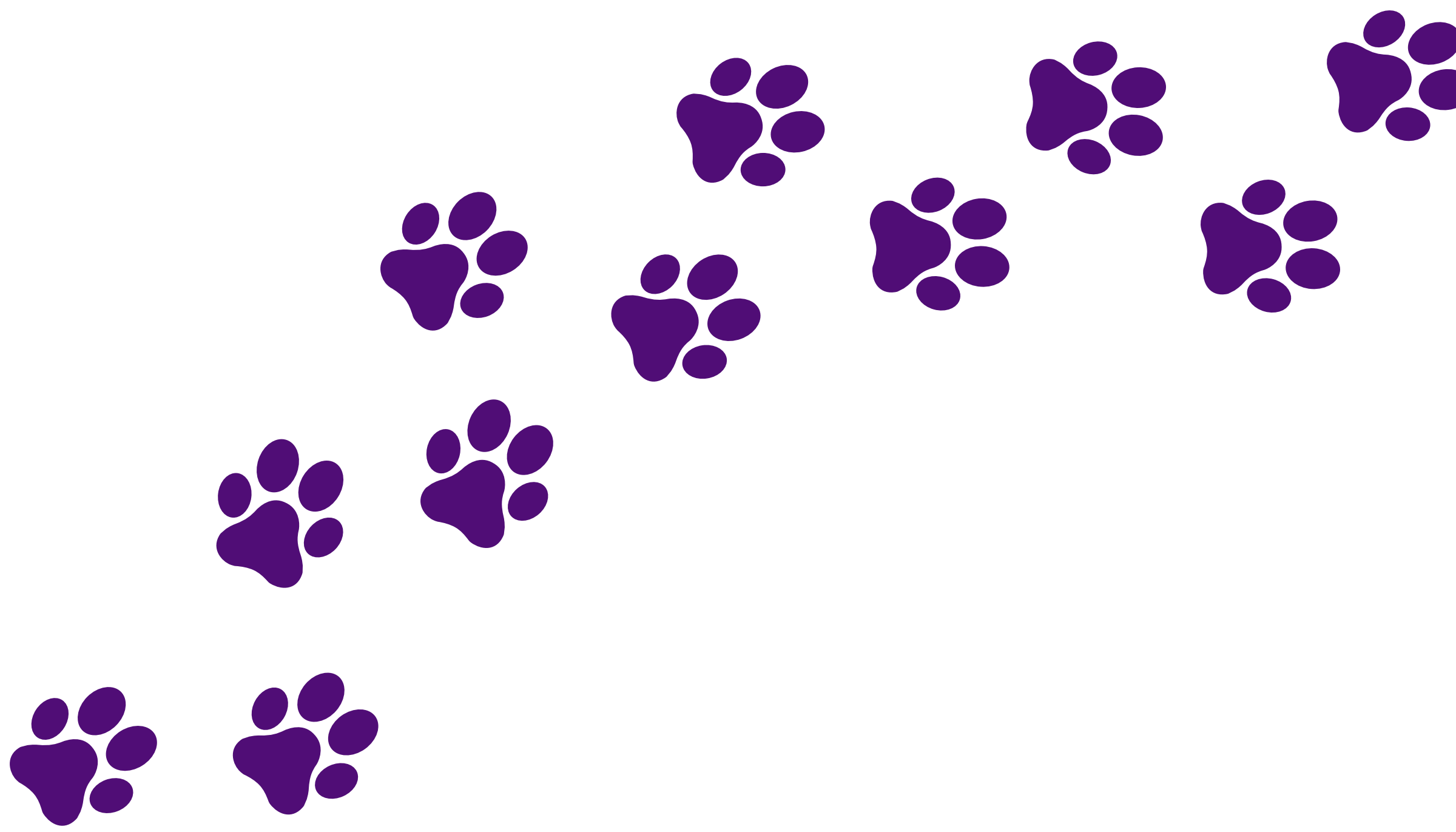
"Here I'm known as Biscuit's Mom," she laughed, watching the energetic 3-year-old dash around the park. "She runs with the big dogs. As far as I'm concerned, we humans have as much fun here as the dogs."

For further information or to inquire about membership, call (772) 567-8969.



# Scrapbook

## 2003





**DECEMBER**

# Newsletter

December, 2003  
Volume 1, Issue 4



## Newsletter



### Casey In Training and Looking for Work!

Hi, I'm Casey. I am a nine month old, female Golden Retriever. Dogs for Life recently gave me a "new leash" on life. I'm being trained as an assistance animal.

I'm not really sure what that means, except that Shelly is always asking me to carry things. She makes sure I sit and wait at the front door and I am not allowed to jump out of her car until she tells me to. It's something called obedience training.

As my obedience training improves, I am visiting the post office and am starting to get "out of the house" more often. I must be kinda special 'cuz I don't see many dogs in public places.

I am told that I will not always live with Shelly and Sabrina. DFL is looking for a

new home for me where I can put my "skills" to use. I understand I will be placed with a special person who needs me. Do you know of anyone that could use me?

I won't cost them anything because my costs are covered. A nice lady named Terry Skinner asked that her memorial donations be made to DFL, and her friends and family have donated generously! DFL donors will pay the rest.

So, when your "out and about" look for me. I'll be wearing my blue dog training vest with the DFL logo. I might be in Publix or Wal-Mart. You might even see me in a restaurant once I learn to stay under a table without looking for a snack.

Please call Shelly *right away* if you know someone who needs me. I would like to find my new home and start assisting my "special" person as soon as possible.



#### Inside This Issue:

Precious Makes a Great Student 2

DFL Annual Meeting 2

Dog Obedience and Agility Show 2

Dog Ears for Listening 3

Speakers Available 3

Doggie Updates 4

*Season's Greetings*



Come Join Us on December 13, 2003 at the Dog Park for the DFL Annual Meeting and Dog Obedience and Agility Show (See Page 2 for complete information!!)



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.

**NOVEMBER**



# Assisted Therapy Program

## Dogs for Life Pet Assisted Therapy Program



### What is Pet Therapy

The Pet Assisted Therapy Read-To-Dogs Program was designed to encourage children to read. The dogs become the children's reading "buddy". The dogs help readers of all ages and reading levels. Students, who are below their school reading level, thrive from the companionship of a dog and improve their reading and language skills. Children with special needs feel more comfortable with dogs because they are non-judgmental and do not make fun of them or laugh if they make a mistake.

### Benefit of the Program

Research with therapy animals indicates that children with low self-esteem are often more willing to interact with an animal than with another person. They focus better on activity or discussion when an animal is present and refer back to the sessions many times later in conversation. Future, during interaction they are inclined to forget about their limitations. There are also physiological benefits interacting with animals, including increased relaxation and lower blood pressure.

The premises of the Read-to-Dogs program is that children will find reading to an animal less intimidating, a special time for them that is helpful and fun and will become a positive environment in which learning is facilitated.



Reader & Therapy Dog

### How to become a Pet Therapy Volunteer

Dogs for Life, Inc. offers Pet Assisted Therapy Training for Volunteers and their dogs. Through dog obedience classes offered at the 4-H Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park, volunteers and their dogs are trained to pass the AKC Canine Good Citizen Test as well as the Dogs for Life Public Access Test. Certified volunteers and their dogs are then scheduled at pre-arranged locations for pet therapy sessions.



Dogs for Life Pet Therapy Volunteers

### What is Dogs for Life, Inc.

Dogs for Life, Inc. (DFL) was incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) non profit organization in February of 2002.

DFL trains Assistance Dogs for the hearing impaired and for mobility assistance.

DFL manages the 4-H Dog Master's "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park located at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

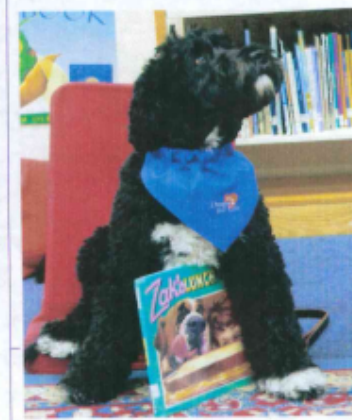
DFL attempts to "re-home" as many companion dogs as possible.



Assistance Dog Precious  
Taps A 911 Rescue Phone



### Pet Assisted Therapy Program



Tel: (772) 567-8969



PO Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965



# Vero Beach Hometown News

Treasure Coast's  
best dining and  
entertainment  
guide inside

YOUR LOCAL NEWS & INFORMATION SOURCE

Friday, November 21, 2003

## The dog days of reading class

IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS, SOME THIRD-GRADERS ARE FINDING UNLIKELY LISTENERS: DOGS

By Alex Burkett  
staff writer

As third-grader Marisa Samilo read a book about a pianist Friday, her only audience member drooled on her leg, then fell asleep.

But the book wasn't boring. And Marisa's performance was compelling enough.

It's just that the listener was Tara, a yellow lab who

may have become a bit too relaxed during Marisa's rendition of "Piano Piece."

Tara curled up next to Marisa, 8, and third-grader MacKenna Jones, 9, at Beachland Elementary School Friday for a reading session that educators say promotes better reading among elementary students who always could use some extra practice.

It can be intimidating for students to read in front of

classes of 20 or more of their peers, particularly when they're still learning new vocabulary words and rules of grammar, teachers say.

Unlike the third-graders in Marisa's class, Tara doesn't judge or interrupt — and she's a great listener.

"It's much easier to read to a dog than to kids,"

♦ See Dogs A9



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

Along with the Trauma Therapy Dog and Assistance Dog in Training, Dogs For Life offers other programs like Read to Dogs. Beachland Elementary School third-graders MacKenna Jones, left, and Aubrey Knight, right, read the 'Piano Piece' to DFL volunteers Tricia Lyons and Tara, a yellow Labrador, Friday at the school.

### DOGS

Continued from page A1

Marisa said. "She's nice. And she likes to listen."

Educators like the reading sessions, too, because they give students a chance to experiment without fear of criticism, and without the harsh eyes and ears of a handful of their peers.

"It's non-intimidating," said elementary specialist Paula Van Hooser. "I think that's what's so great about this program. Students seem to be opening up more, talking more."

Eventually, Ms. Van Hooser said, most third-graders at Beachland will have the opportunity to read to the dogs.

Most of the readers' canine audience members are affiliated with Dogs for Life, a countywide program that helps place dogs where they're needed most, in service as mobility-assistance animals to the disabled, hearing-impaired or blind.

They're brought to Beachland every Friday by volunteers, including Tricia Lyons of Vero Beach, a retired first-grade teacher who says the dogs create an open environment

that's difficult to emulate in a classroom, where kids can be harsh critics.

"The kids feel so much at ease reading to the dogs," she said. "This truly is a wonderful idea."

Tara, like Vero and Bubba, two other dogs in Friday's reading sessions, is ultimately bound for a stint with the State Attorney's Office.

Having recently completed basic obedience training, she'll soon be called in to help soothe and calm the younger victims of violent crime or serious trauma.

To those in charge of Dogs for Life, there's no question about it. Dogs may be man's best friend, but they're also therapeutic, they say.

And for largely the same reasons that Tara listened to Marisa and MacKenna read, well-trained dogs are finding themselves increasingly in roles of service to human animals.

"I think that not only do these dogs serve as ears and eyes and strength, as mobility dogs, but the dogs are such wonderful companions, also," said Shelly Ferger, director of Dogs for Life. "A lot of people who have disabilities suffer from isolation. The

dogs help them get out into public, be independent, and have a companion."

The idea to bring dogs into Beachland Elementary as reading companions was new this school year, Ms. Van Hooser said, although MacKenna said the concept isn't totally foreign to her.

"I like to read with my dog," she said. "I read a book and pet him sometimes."



**JUNE**

# Officers Installed





**APRIL**

# Listen and Learn

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



BY AMY ROBINSON



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

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

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

in Vero Beach to become Judy's hearing dog.

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

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

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

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

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

shrill ring. At first, Cokie looks around the room and out the window, but when Judy offers a little help by pointing to the tape on her leg, the dog paws the spot, nearly tearing the tape. Extra treats follow to mark the behavior we like. Next time the phone rings, the dog should recall the happy fuss we made when she alerted to the sound.

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

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

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

# Easter Bonnet Parade

WEEKEND  
Friday, April 18, 2003 The Press Journal

THINGS TO DO/PLACES TO GO



Pat Ross

### Canines to step out in Easter bonnets

Pat Ross and her dog companion, Marta, are decked out in their Easter bonnets for the Saturday Dog Park Club of Indian River Inc.'s first Dog Easter Bonnet Parade. The club is at the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue, just east of Vero Beach Elementary School. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will have bonnets for sale for \$5 each. The parade will begin at 4:30 p.m. and photographer Liz Prewitt will be available to take photos of each contestant and human companion for a \$5 donation to the Dog Park Club. At 5 p.m., there will be a dog agility show. The event is open to the public. Bring lawn chairs for seating. For more information, call 567-8969.

C14 The Press Journal Friday, April 25, 2003



EDSON RASMUSSEN photographer

### Canines don Easter bonnets

Ed Sparks with Princess Mia, the Great Dane, participated Saturday in the Dog Park Club of Indian River Inc.'s first Dog "Easter Bonnet" Parade. The Dog Park Club of Indian River is on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

C6 The Press Journal Friday, April 11, 2003

### DOG PARK CLUB Dog 'Easter Bonnet' parade

On April 19, dress up in your Sunday best and join us the Dog Park Club of Indian River Inc. for its first Dog "Easter Bonnet" Parade. The Dog Park Club of Indian River is on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue just east of Vero Beach Elementary School. The 4-H Dog Master's Club will have bonnets for sale for \$5.

The parade will begin at 4:30 p.m. Photographer Liz Prewitt will be available to take photos for a \$5 donation to the Dog Park Club.

At 5 p.m. there will be a dog agility show.

In addition to the Dog Park Club of Indian River and the 4-H Dog Master's Club, other non-profits participating at the event are Dogs for Life Inc., Southeastern Guide Dogs and United Humanitarians.

For more information, call 567-8969.

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**MARCH**



# AKC Canine Good Citizen Class

Saturday, March 29, 2003 The Press-Journal C5

DOG PARK CLUB

## AKC canine good citizen class set

On April 9, the Dog Park Club of Indian River Inc. will sponsor a preparation for Canine Good Citizen Test class at the 4-H Best Friend's Off-Leash Dog Park, on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue (just east of Vero Beach Elementary School). The class will be instructed by Shelly Ferger, canine behavior trainer, and will be held at 6 p.m. for four weeks. The cost is \$60 with Dog Park members receiving a \$10 discount.

The AKC Canine Good Citizen Test requires each participant pass 10 tests: Accepting a friendly stranger, sitting politely for petting, appearance and grooming, out for a walk, walking through a crowd, sit, down on command and staying in place, coming when called, reaction to another dog, reaction to distractions and supervised separation.

Each passing participant receives a CGC certificate issued by the AKC. The club suggests as many dogs as possible hold this certificate. Dog classes are open to the public. Call for reservations 567-8969.



**PRESS RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Shelly Ferger, Director  
772 567 8060**

**AKC CANINE GOOD CITIZEN TEST**

On Saturday March 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10 AM, Dogs for Life, Inc. will host an American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen Test at the 4-H "Best Friend's" Off-Leash Dog Park located on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. (Just east of Vero Beach Elementary School). The test fee is \$10 and is open to the public.

The AKC Canine Good Citizen Test requires each participant pass ten tests; Accepting a friendly stranger, sitting politely for petting, appearance and grooming, out for a walk, walking through a crowd, sit, down on command and staying in place, coming when called, reaction to another dog, reaction to distractions and supervised separation.

Participants are not required to perform with precision and each team passing test requirements receives a Canine Good Citizen certificate issued by the AKC. In an effort to promote responsible dog ownership, Dogs for Life, Inc. suggests all dog owners hold this certificate.

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**FEBRUARY**

# Doggie "Flea" Market



## Doggie "Flea" Market

Dog Park at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> from 8 AM to 1 PM



Law Enforcement K-9 Demonstration at Noon



Proceeds to benefit non-profit organizations:

- Dog Park Lighting Project
- Dogs for Life Spay / Neuter Program

*Low-Cost spay/neuter certificates available from United Humanitarians*

- 4-H Dog Master's Club Community Service Project
- Bullet proof vest for 3 area law enforcement K-9 Units*

Dog Items - Crates, Leashes, Toys

Household Items - Kitchen, Jewelry, Yard, Entertainment

**Please call 567-8969 for information or donations**

P.O. Box 650023 • Vero Beach, Florida 32965 • 772.567.8969

Logo designed and donated by DHI Visual Communication

# 4-H Dog Masters Club

Sunday, February 9, 2003 The Press Journal C7



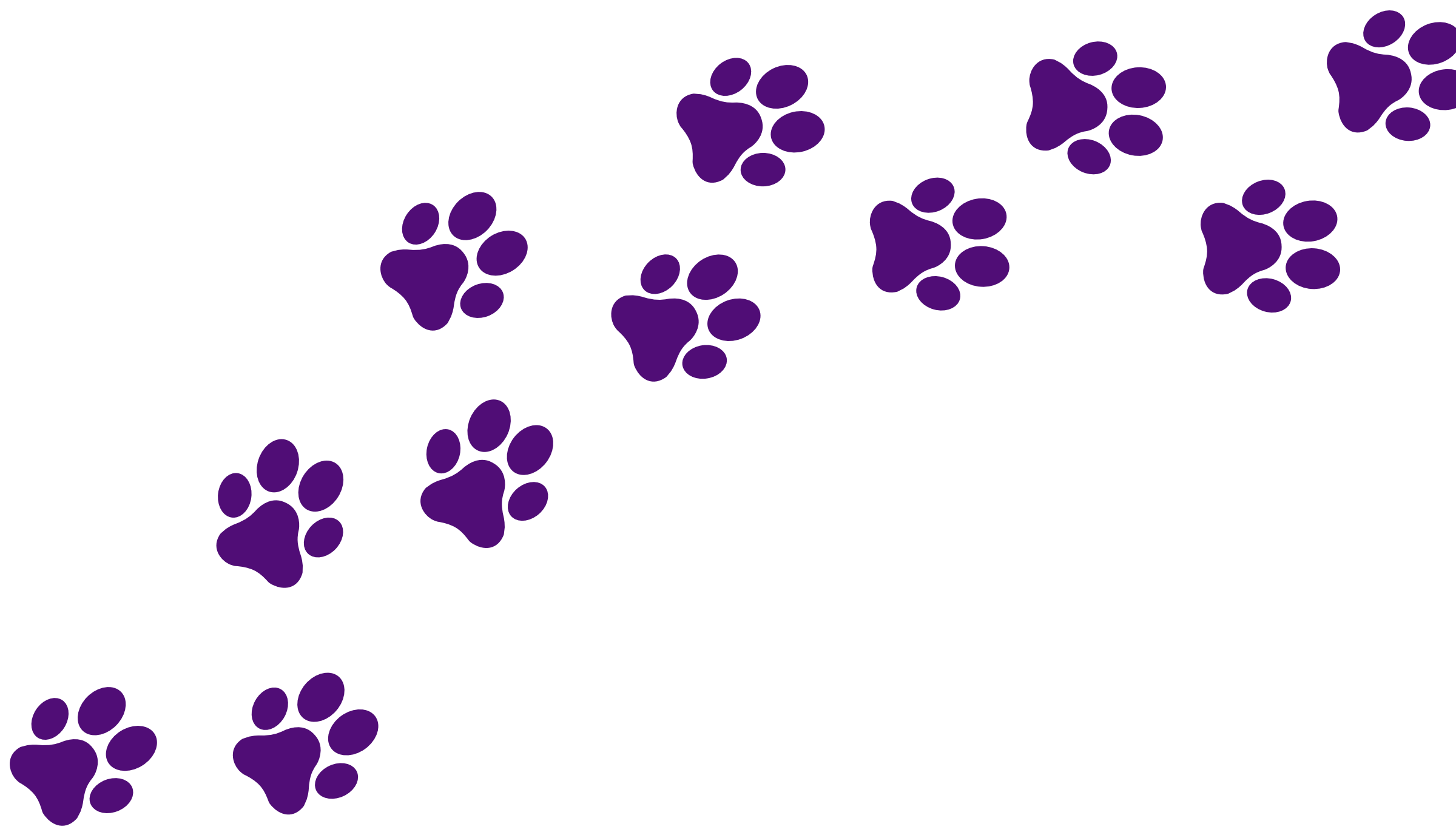
4-H Dogmasters Club

## Dogmasters protect canine with vest

The 4-H Dogmasters Club completed the 2002-2003 community service project recently when club vice president April Petrun (left) presented a K-9 bulletproof vest to Sebastian Police Department Officer Ritchie Revis, the department's dog handler; Chief Jim Davis and Officer Rocky, an 80-pound, 2-year-old German shepherd. The ceremony was held at the 4-H "Best Friends" OffLeash Dog Park on 12th Street in Vero Beach. The club has provided six K-9 vests to various local public safety agencies that use service dogs. The funds for the vests, which cost more than \$500 each, are raised by club members through a variety of activities. The club meets twice monthly. The first monthly meeting is for conducting business, while the second meeting is devoted to training the members' dogs in basic obedience, agility courses and sometimes a canine square dance. Revis said Rocky is his constant companion, both on duty and off.

# Scrapbook

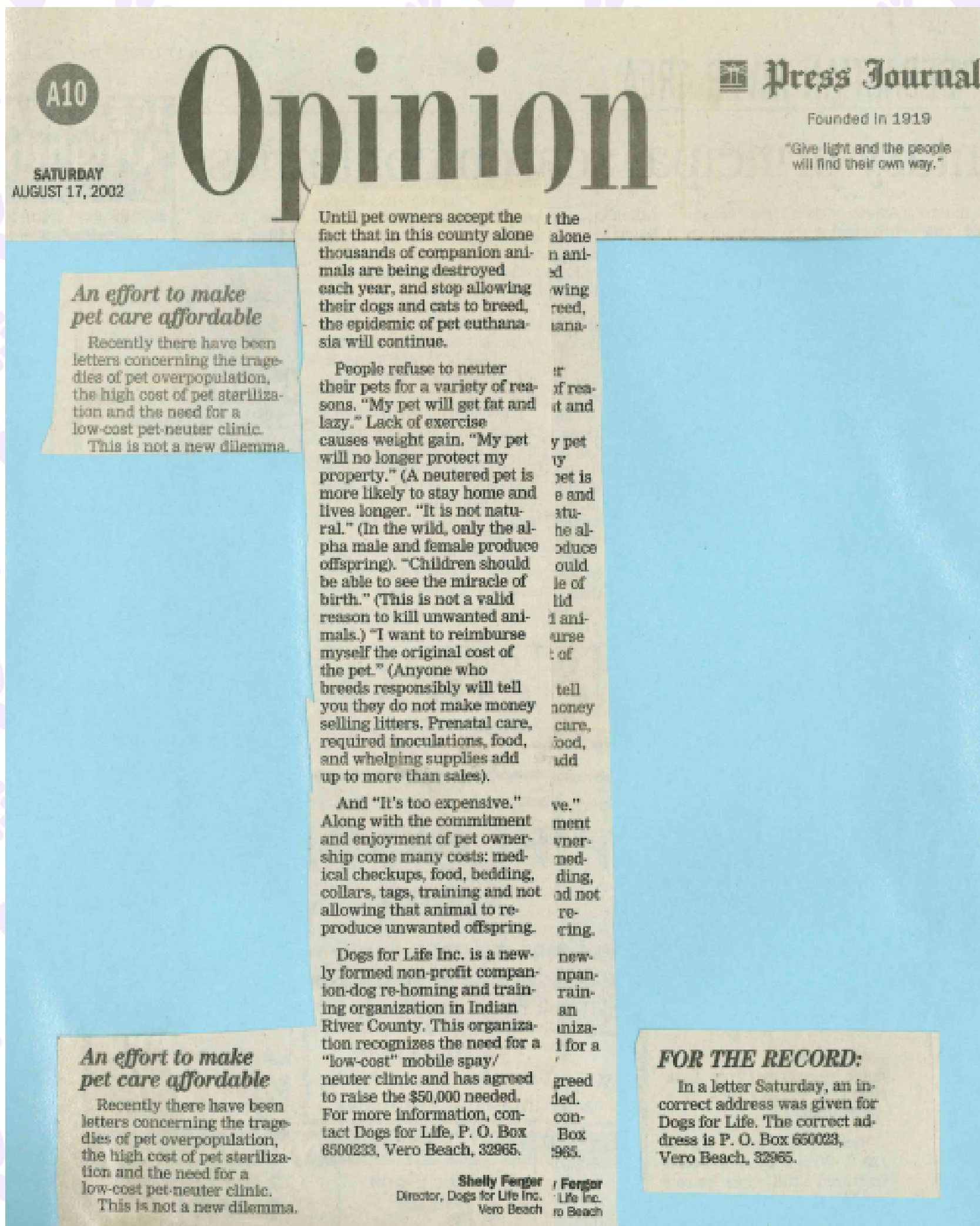
## 2002





**AUGUST**

# Making Pet Care Affordable







**JUNE**

# Summer Reading

VERO BEACH/COUNTY

Monday, June 17, 2002 The Press Journal A3

## Smart move: Summer reading helps students in fall

The libraries in Vero Beach and Sebastian try to encourage children to read and fill the summer with various activities to get them to come into the library and leave with a book in hand.

By Colleen Wixon  
staff writer

It's nothing unusual for 12-year-old Joshua Jones to pick up a book, even in the summer when he doesn't have classes at Oslo Middle School.

"I'll just sit in my room and read," he said.

Joshua said he likes to read in the summer to help him at school in the fall.

"I have more vocabulary," he said.

Studies show students who

read in the summer are more prepared to start school in the fall, said Patti Fuchs, children's librarian at the Indian River County Main Public Library.

Studies say those children who continue to read during the summer will be able to pick up where they left off, she said. Those who haven't will be a month or two behind, she said.

Fuchs said she notices a difference in children who come often to the library to get books and those who come occasionally.

"There's a difference in their conversations," she said.

The main library and the Indian River North County Library in Sebastian try to encourage children to read and fill the summer with various activities to get them to come into the library and leave with a book in hand, she said.

Parents are good about bringing children to the library, she said.

"I think the parents understand the importance of (reading in the summer)," she said.

The Boys and Girls Club in Vero Beach and Sebastian also plan activities that promote reading, said Esther Churchey, branch director of the South County club.

One such program, set to start in July and August, encourages children to read to dogs. The dogs, from Shelley's Canines in Vero Beach, are trained therapy dogs for the hearing impaired and are brought to the club, Churchey said.

Dogs sometimes are better than adults to listen to a child read a story, Churchey said.

"Humans want to always correct a child," she said. The dogs will just sit there and listen.

"The dog doesn't care," she said.

Children said they like reading to the dogs.

"You get to know the dogs and there's different kinds of dogs," Joshua said.

"You can read to them over and over and they listen," said Liana Medeiros, 10. "It's really fun."

After the children read to the dogs, they give them a snack, said Skye Taylor, 7.

The club also is planning to start a reading group with older children working with younger children, Churchey said. Those who read a certain number of books will get to participate in a pizza party, she said.

While most children probably haven't read the latest studies, some say that they see how they learn when they read.

"I read because I like to read," said Cara DeCosa, 9. At Thompson Elementary,

where Cara attends, students who read in the summer and show improvement in their reading get to go to Leisure Square, she said.

Joshua Rivera, 9, said he's reading a Harry Potter book and comparing it to the movie about the same character.

"It's an interesting book," he said.

Liana said she sometimes reads to her mother, and sometimes her mother reads to her. She said she's enjoying "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" now.

"It has a lot of imagination," she said.

Ariana DeCosa, 7, said she likes books about dogs or cats.

"I read all kinds of books," she said.

Reading Is Fundamental

Inc., a children's and family literacy organization based in Washington, D.C., recently announced a Web site ([www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org)) to help parents and children get more involved in reading during the summer.

The Web site includes a "Summertime Reading Adventures" feature that provides 10 weeks of indoor and outdoor projects that families can do to help develop reading skills, according to information provided by the organization. Children can make a joke book, plan a camping trip in the backyard or make a wildflower bookmark. They also can make up their own stories or download stories on the Web site and make their own illustrations.



Wednesday, June 12, 2002

## COUNTY



ALEX BOERNER staff photographer

### **Their own special time**

Biscuit, a Cairn terrier, plays in the grass as Paddington, a miniature Schnauzer, checks out a stray tuft of hair during an outing at the Dog Park in Vero Beach Tuesday. The dogs were oblivious to their owners, Sue Myers and Judy Jacobson (background). "When the dogs are here, they don't pay attention to anyone or anything besides the other dogs. It's their time," said Myers.

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**MAY**

# 4-H Dog Masters Club



## 4 the love of dogs

Children improve relationships with their dogs, learning to train them, through the 4-H Dog Master's Club

By Janella A. Weber  
 staff writer

April Petrun, 8, of Vero Beach, loved her Yorkshire terrier, Gunther, since the minute she got him.

But Gunther hasn't always been a model pooch, April admits. When she adopted the black and tan dog from a family acquaintance two years ago, he was wild and disobedient.

All of that began to change when April joined the Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club 1 1/2 years ago.

"I wanted to join so I could have a better relationship with my dog, so I could tell him to sit and stay," said April, a fourth grader at Osceola Magnet School.

"Now he knows his boundaries," said April's mother, Karen. "He's come a long way in learning to listen."

In the Dog Master's Club, April and the other members learn how to train and take care of their canines. They also complete dog-related community service and research projects.

Jodi Smith, 18, Kara Grogan, 12, Hannah Barnett, 10, and Nicole Jennings, 7, all of Vero Beach, make up the rest of the group.

Dog-obedience trainer Shelly Fergor, of Vero Beach, is the volunteer group leader. Parents, including Karen Petrun, Dawn Grogan, Ed Barnett and Dawn Jennings, assist as volunteer resource leaders.

The club was founded five years ago and has had about 25 members, Fergor said. It does not charge dues.

The members said their favorite activity is training their dogs and teaching them tricks.

Nicole, a second-grader at Osceola Magnet School, owns a Shetland sheepdog named Ginger.

Although she is only in her first year in the club, Nicole has trained Ginger to jump over hoops, roll over, crawl, catch a treat, sit and stay. She has even begun to train her neighbor's puppy, said her mother, Dawn.

"The kids love the tricks," Fergor said. "The dogs love the tricks."

Fergor said the children excel at dog training even though they are small and soft spoken. Their enthusiastic attitude goes a long way, she said.

See 44B, C2

ABOVE: April Petrun, 8, trains Gunther, her Yorkshire terrier, before giving a demonstration with other members of the 4-H Dogmasters Club at the Firefighters Fair at the Fairgrounds.



RIGHT: Raxy, a black-mouthed cur, is given the command to lay down.



# Free On-Leash Day

 Press Journal



**FRIDAY**  
MAY 17, 2002

► **FREE ON-LEASH DAY** —

The Dog Park Club of Indian River staff invites the public to attend a "Free On-Leash Day at the Off-Leash Dog Park" at 4 p.m. Saturday. The park is on the corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

Dog agility instructor Jean Andrews will present a special dog agility show and the 4-H Dog

Master's Club will sponsor a square dancing with dogs performance under the direction of Choreographer Jocelyn Woodruff. The public is invited to bring their dogs "on-leash" to experience the park. For additional information, contact park Director Shelly Ferger at 567-8969.

► **COAST GUARD OPEN HOUSE** — The U.S. Coast Guard will hold an open house and demonstration for the public 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Coast Guard station at the Fort Pierce Inlet, Fort Pierce. On hand

# Picture of the Week

**SCHOOL ZONE**



School Zone, 1S, Wednesday, May 23, 2001

**PICTURE OF THE WEEK**



The Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club elected to purchase a Red Cross CPR demonstration dog this year. We will hold workshops on how to save your dog. Past years' community service projects have been gathering dog food and blankets for the Humane Society; the establishment of the 4-H "Best Friends" Off-Leash Dog Park and fundraising for bulletproof vests for seven area law-enforcement dogs. Last year, our club sponsored a Southeastern Guide Dog puppy. The puppy's name is Clover and we feel fortunate that he is being raised in Vero Beach by Steve and Judy MacNamee.

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**MARCH**



# New Dog Park

## Press Journal

50 cents  
\$200/year,  
number 152  
56 pages,  
4 sections  
March 21,  
2002

WWW.PRESSJOURNAL.COM

GOOD MORNING!

Kathy Morton gets her dog, Tipper, 6, during opening day of the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park. The terrier mix is Sabrina, owned by Shelly Fergat, the dog park director.



### A doggone slice of HEAVEN



Emily 4, watches her master, Juli Niebuhr, while Sabrina, 6, catches a nap and Tilly 2, (back left) and Brie, 6, hang out while their owners listen to the rules of the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park.

## New dog park caters to four-legged crowd

By Ray McHally  
staff writer

Not every dog had his day, but seven of them spent a breezy, sun-splashed Wednesday afternoon running free in the grass and playing together under shade trees.

They were the first to shed their rears at the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park.

"I wish we would've had a park like this when Tipper was a puppy," Vero Beach resident Kathy Morton said as she watched her 6-year-old, Labrador retriever-husky mix roam the 3-acre park. "There's a tremendous need here for parks for exercising and socializing dogs." That's why the Indian

River County 4-H Dog Masters Club raised \$80,000 for the project.

That's why contractors who designed, developed and landscaped the park, located on the northeast corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue, donated more than \$15,000 in services.

That's why 180 dog owners have paid a \$80 annual fee to the Dog Park Club of Indian River Inc. — a non-profit organization that operates and maintains the facility — to use the members-only park.

And four years after the first dollar was donated, the park finally opened its security-coded gate.

"We've waited a long time

for this day," said dog park Director Shelly Fergat, who spearheaded the effort to create the off-leash dog park. "We're thrilled to finally have a park. Unfortunately, we still don't have enough of them."

Currently, there are no public, off-leash dog parks in the county, and county ordinances prohibit dog walking on beaches.

Vero Beach city ordinances bar pets at city parks unless they are aides to disabled people. However, the Vero Beach Recreation Commission is studying the possibility of creating an off-leash dog area in a city park.

### DOG PARK RULES

1. Members accept responsibility for guests.
2. Guests' dogs are not allowed.
3. Dogs must be leashed at all times outside the park.
4. Dogs are not allowed to dig; if a dog digs, the owner must fill the holes.
5. Owners must clean up after their dogs; put dog waste in receptacles.
6. If a dog behaves aggressively, the dog must be removed immediately.
7. Do not leave the park gate open.
8. No food, alcohol, glass containers or sticks allowed.
9. Children under age 5 are not allowed.
10. At no time should anyone run or chase dogs.
11. Enter the park at your own risk.
12. Park hours must be observed.

See 2002-2003, A-12

# City Debate

Press Journal Tuesday, March 19, 2002 A3

## Panel debates walking dogs in city parks

Recreation commissioners to explore action following an outpouring of requests by canine owners.

By Beth Green  
staff writer

The Vero Beach Recreation Commission will walk their staff around the idea of a designated dog-walking park at a special meeting at the Riverhouse at 4 p.m. April 2.

The commission decided to hold the meeting to address the issue of a dog park on city park land after a March 12 workshop that drew about 20 dog owners.

Many of the owners wanted to carve out a piece of Riverside Park near the current dog walking area at Summers Park, which dog owners complain is unsuitable because it is muddy and close to a road.

"We have to get a little more animal-friendly in this town," said Renate Cropper, who has lived in Vero Beach for almost 30 years.

She said she walks Prince, her 12-year-old Dalmatian, at Summers Park every day, and feels the city should provide for residents like her who like to go to the city park to socialize with other dog owners.

"This is our park, this is our neighborhood," said Vero Beach resident Steve Martin.

Martin has written a few letters to Vice Mayor Sandra Bowden about the need for a dog park. One of his letters

caused the City Council to bring up the dog park debate at its Feb. 5 meeting at which it agreed to forward the issue to the Recreation Commission.

While dog owner concerns at the March 12 workshop centered around creating a dog walking area in Summers or Riverside parks, Recreation Commission Chairman Daniel Stanley said he'd like to make a recommendation to the City Council that detailed dog park possibilities for all 15 parks in the city.

"Obviously this is an issue that should be discussed and back to the council as quickly as possible," said Commission Vice Chairman Richard Yemm.

Shellie Ferger, a Vero Beach resident who is helping to open a private membership dog-walking park, also spoke for the need of a public dog walking area.

She said that since the county and city provide many places for residents to boat and play tennis, they should likewise provide for dog enthusiasts.

Dog parks aren't a dog issue, "they're a people issue," she said.

But Stanley said there are many possibilities for a dog park, and the April 2 meeting will make those possibilities more clear.

At the meeting recreation staff will discuss location and logistics such as having a off-leash or on-leash park, fencing and dog park monitoring.

"We're not ready to make a decision," Stanley said.

# Mothers Against Drunk Driving

## LETTERS

### *Many made MADD success in county*

Thank you, Indian River County. I am catching my breath after all the wonderful tributes made to me for my involvement with MADD of Indian River County over the last 17 years. I truly appreciate all the wonderful certificates, plaques, proclamation, key to the city, and especially the kind words spoken by so people I admire and love.

While I surely would love to take all the credit for all the good things said about me, I cannot, but I would like to give credit to Russ Ramey and Shelly Ferger, who were instrumental in collecting the "seed" money from many concerned citizens in 1984.

Russ and Shelly (State Attorney's Office) brought the MADD film to our county. The first board members came from that meeting. They were Linda Samples (Woodard), Elaine Wood, Marsha Pearsaul, Susan Vocale, Jackie Tillman and myself.

The support of our law enforcement, State Attorney's Office, judges and community kept us strong and motivated.

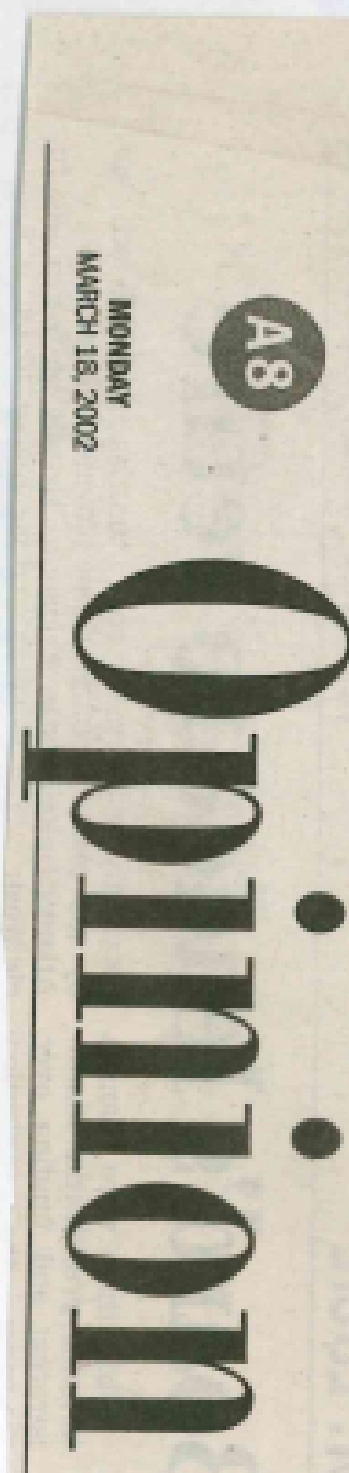
MADD fought hard for stricter laws and sanctions to keep impaired drivers off the road.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving in Indian River County certainly was for the open-container law, but it was Ken Macht, the founder of the Substance Abuse Council in Indian River County, who spearheaded and got that law passed.

So as my family, friends and community thank me so kindly, please allow me to thank all the hard workers and supporters of so worthy an organization.

Good luck to Jackie Tillman, our new coordinator, and may she have all the support that I was so fortunate to have. She certainly has mine.

Dee's Tropf  
Vero Beach



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**FEBRUARY**

# Dog Park Opens

D4

SUNDAY  
FEBRUARY 3, 2002

## Opinion

### EDITORIALS

Viewpoints of the Press Journal

## To the dogs

A four-year effort pays off soon when an off-leash dog park opens.

A dog often is called man's best friend, but in the case of the Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Club, it might just be the other way around.

A four-year club effort to raise \$80,000 to pay for a park where dogs can frolic without the encumbrance of a leash, should come to fruition in the next few weeks when the 4-H Best Friends Off-Leash Dog Park opens on 2.5 acres at 12th Street and 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

One of the criteria on which a community is judged is how well it provides for its animal friends. Thanks to the efforts of the Dog Masters Club, Vero Beach has taken a step in the right direction.

Taxpayers were not put upon to purchase the property, fence it in, build benches and provide water supplies for the dogs and owners. Dog owners will pay \$200 annual membership dues to enjoy the freedom the park will provide.

Leash laws and regulations on animal behavior are necessary for the good of any community. Pets cannot be allowed to roam free, for the good of both humans and animals. But anyone who has cared for a dog as a pet knows well the freewheeling nature inherent in the animal.

A safe place for dogs to romp and play and interact with other dogs can only be a good thing. Dogs are by nature social animals, and the park could help nip bad habits in the bud. It also might provide motivation for owners to adhere to leash laws, knowing there is an option available.

Prudently, the Dog Masters Club will require potential dog members of the park to undergo a temperament assessment to ensure the safety of other dogs and their owners.

The major downside to the park is its size. There is room for only 200 members, with another 200 already on a waiting list.

That does not detract from the good work of the Dog Masters Club. If this first park is successful, perhaps other groups will step forward to raise money for similar sites. Perhaps they will see that you can teach old dogs new tricks.

## Off-the-leash dog park to offer space for dogs to run, play

By Debbie Robinson  
staff writer

Eight-year-old Taffy exercised by swimming in the family pool Sunday morning.

But the golden retriever's love of running and playing ball is stifled by Indian River County and Vero Beach ordinances that bar dogs from city parks and county beaches.

Soon she will join other dogs for socialization and exercise on 2 1/2-acres of tree-lined land where they will be free to roam and run at the 4-H Best Friends Off Leash Dog Park.

The Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Club raised about \$80,000 in the past four years to finance the dog park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, said Shelly Ferger, club leader. The dog park is expected to open within the next few weeks, once the not-for-profit group receives the certificate of occupancy.

Taffy's owner, Elinor Bengyak, of Vero Beach, said she already has applied for membership.

"When I learned the dog park was being started, I was utterly delighted," she said.

More dog parks are needed, she said, because walking on a leash is about the only available exercise option for dogs.

The dog park is fenced, a walking trail was constructed and water is available for the dogs and their owners, Ferger said. Benches also will be provided.

Separate sections will be designated for small and large dogs, she said.

Potential dog members of the park will be given a temperament assessment to ensure the safety of other dogs and their owners, Ferger said.

Human members will be given a security code to gain access to the enclosed park.

The only downside is the limit to the number of memberships that can be sold to ensure that the dog park doesn't experience overcrowding, Ferger said.

Membership at \$200 a year will be limited to about 200 — too few to provide access for all of the dogs in the county, Ferger said she has about 200 more people on a waiting list.

There are about 15,000 licensed dogs and cats in Indian River County, but animal control officers estimate the number of dogs and cats probably is closer to 40,000.

"I feel really bad when someone calls me with a puppy, and I can't say to bring them to a play group because we're all filled up," Ferger said. "I'm really sad for all of the people who can't use it (dog park)."

The benefits from the interaction that dogs get at dog parks often can prevent the development of bad habits, such as biting, she said.

Dogs can learn from each other just how hard is too hard to bite, Ferger said.

"They (dogs) can learn so much from another dog that we can't teach them," she said.

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**JANUARY**

# Working K-9 to 5

LIFE SAVER, MODEL, DRUG-FREE MOOD ENHANCER, CRIMINAL CATCHER, BOUNCER, HOSTESS, RETIRED RACER AND IRRESISTIBLE SALES REP, THESE WORKING DOGS GO BEYOND BEING BEST FRIENDS TO BEING VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

## WORKING K-9 TO 5

BY SHEILA LOWENSTEIN  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB DOWNEY

**H**ailed as heroes for their silent yet effective grief therapy following the disasters of September 11, trained dogs have recently been recognized as valuable additions to the counseling process. We found some Vero Beach dogs who not only soothe and console, but help out in many, many other ways.

Joanie is a young yellow labrador retriever. She's friendly and pretty and beautifully behaved. She's a guide dog for Elinor O'Malley, a volunteer massage therapist at the VNA Hospice here in Vero Beach. Elinor comes to the hospice once a week and will give as many massages as there are patients who want them. Terry Vanna is also a hospice volunteer and a retired R.N. who helps Elinor with transportation and paper work.

Elinor has been "doing massage for 52 years. It's the one thing I can still do that makes people feel better." She attended



Yoda (lower) shows Maddie (above) the ins and outs of professional modeling with Donna Miller at DHI Visual Communications in Vero Beach. The West Highland white terriers have appeared in numerous ads.



"War" and Alton Hall, Vero Beach's first K-9 officer, with their specially trained pup.

the Kellberg Institute of Swedish Massage and Physical Therapy in Chicago in 1949 and worked in luxury spas in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and at oceanfront Miami resorts like the Eden Roc for 30 years. She moved to Vero Beach in 1983 to teach massage here and continued her work with private clients. Elinor lost her sight about five years ago due to macular degeneration and has depended on Joanie for over a year.

She waited for over a year to be matched with her canine helper from the Southeast Guide Dog Association in Palmetto, Florida. Elinor explains that the organization breeds and trains as many dogs as possible while maintaining

very careful quality control, which assesses temperament and teachability in the puppy candidates.

As soon as they are weaned, the pups are sent to foster homes for socialization and basic obedience. After a year or so with the foster family, they go back to school for five to six months of intensive training. Paula Best, puppy coordinator at the Southeast Guide Dog School in Palmetto, says the most important things they look for in the puppy foster homes are commitment and a safe environment. "We visit each home to assess these things and to assure that the individuals are physically as well as emotionally able to care for a puppy. We don't have a lot of turn downs. People know what they're getting into and love dogs and realize they are potentially helping someone. That's what gets them through the ordeal of returning the pup to the school after a year or more."

They've known all along that the puppy isn't theirs and it will be trained to help someone else. "They're so proud of the pups when they graduate from training and they're all invited to a ceremony when the dogs are matched with their new owner. It's like when your kid goes away to college and then gets a job and moves out. It's sad, but thrilling, too."

Paula says the school is very careful at matching the right dog with the right student according to each of their needs — strength, activity level and so forth. "We matched about 150 teams last year. Long range, we hope to double that." They have their own breeding facility and use, "the cream of the crop as breeders." The breeds they use most often are labrador and golden retrievers and a mix of the two known as goldadors. They also find that Australian and German shepherds, collies and Hungarian vislas work out well.

Puppy trainers are expected to take their pup almost everywhere and have a special bib to identify the dog as a potential guide dog so that they can have



Elinor O'Malley is a volunteer massage therapist at the Visiting Nurse Association Hospice. Her guide dog, Joanie, has helped her get around for about a year and probably saved her life at least once in traffic.



access to ordinarily "dog prohibited" zones. They get the pups at nine weeks and keep them 14 to 16 months. During that time they are housebroken, given basic obedience training, taken to monthly puppy meetings and socialized. The last is the most important. (Personally, I'd emphasize the house-breaking.)

The puppy raiser program is essential to the success of the guide dogs, according to Paula. "We have professional trainers who can teach a dog almost anything — specific tasks if needed. But if the puppy isn't 'socialized,' acclimated to meeting people and other dogs and walking on a lead in traffic with noises and bustling around, he can't be taught that. If they're nervous or shy, they won't work. They have to be sound, solid dogs. They learn more than 40 commands during their formal training, which includes kennel acclimation and harness training. Escalators, elevators, stairs, they all have to be learned and the puppy program gets them off to the right start."

Elinor says the dog owners have to be trained, too. She attended her training school in Palmetto for 26 days. "It was like boot camp. Up at 6 a.m. for breakfast, work with the dog, eat lunch, work some more. And then all over again and again. They started us off in a big field and then took us to Tampa and St. Pete, to Sarasota, to places we didn't know. You learn to trust the dogs very quickly. For instance, Joanie knew how to negotiate a revolving door and I didn't. She definitely saved me once that I know of. We were crossing U.S. 1 and I heard the traffic stop and was ready to cross, but Joanie wouldn't let me. She knew there was a turning lane and wouldn't let me go until all the cars had stopped from all directions."

Together they go for walks of between two and six miles a day and take the Community Coach to Publix and on other shopping outings. Elinor says, "Publix has customer service personal

shoppers and getting groceries with their help takes me less time than it did when I could see. They know where everything is and will read the labels." Elinor and Joanie go to church every week. According to Elinor, Joanie makes sure they stand for the singing. And Elinor and Joanie play ball. After all, bringing the ball back is second nature for a retriever. No training required.

**W**orf, a German shepherd named after the Star Trek character, earns his living with the Vero Beach Police Department. Chief James M. Gabbard feels the K-9 unit gives great value for the dollar. "The training is expensive but the dogs are invaluable. If there is a suspect in a building, for instance, they minimize the risk to the officers. Their bulletproof kevlar vests are an essential item that is included in our annual budget. Looking for lost children, Alzheimer's patients, there is no substitute for these dogs."

Vero Beach has two canine teams and the two trainers are seldom separated from their "partners." Worf's trainer, Allen Hall, has been working with dogs for the VBPd for 13 years. He was the town's first K-9 officer and Worf is his third canine partner who started working as a "green dog" (not fully trained) when he was two years old.

The State of Florida requires yearly certification of all police canines. (Yes, they do wear badges, but their only weapons are their strength and speed and, of course, their teeth.) According to Officer Hall, the standards set by the U.S. Police Canine Association are far more difficult to meet than those of the state, and the department's dogs have always exceeded even those criteria.

Although Worf hasn't saved Hall's life "yet," Hall adds that another of his dogs probably did. Hall and another patrol officer were responding to an "incident" that, in police parlance, turned into a "disturbance." "When Axel saw me



Guide dog puppies in training attend a monthly meeting, this one at Downtown Friday. The puppy program is very important in the dogs' training according to Paula Best, puppy coordinator at the Southeast Guide Dog School in Palmetto.



Grant Getty at Indian River Estates sits with his frequent visitor, Penny, a chihuahua, in the therapy dog program of the Humane Society.



Sgt. Kent Campbell, of the Indian River Sheriff's Department, conducted a demonstration at Beachland Elementary School with the department's officers and canines.

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Missie and Max peruse the catalog at Classic Awards with owner Nancy Petts. The Bichon frisé breed was developed in southern France as street performers.

boat, he can distinguish between the scent of fish and that of poached lobster — not the cooking method, the unlicensed catch. His enthusiasm is boundless and his nose remarkable. At the demonstration he zeroed in on a revolver hidden in a large grassy field in no time.

The shepherds have great noses, too, and can be trained to discern drugs in such difficult areas as a car's gas cap, where the smell of gasoline might be expected to throw them off the scent. They have to have their training updated to keep pace with the changing drugs of the moment. For the last few months they have been exposed to crystal meth and Ecstasy, some of the illegal substances whose use is increasing. Their cross training includes helicopter transport, too. They were recently called in to assist the DEA when a crashed bike and some blood were found near Route 60. The dogs tracked the missing man as far as the Turnpike where he was apprehended.

Loki, a veteran shepherd, handled by

Joe Karman, has had titanium caps put on his worn down teeth. The glint of metal adds even more menace to an animal's jaws, which can exert pressure up to 2000 pounds per square inch. Fortunately, the dogs are all good natured with people and live at home with the officers' families. Occasionally the dogs get a bit competitive with each other but they all clearly enjoyed the interaction with the Beachland students following the K-9 demonstration.

Sgt. Campbell tells us that the department's dogs are all imported from Europe because it appears that the standards of breeding are more reliable there. The deputies' commands are given in German because that's what the dogs first learned and also because it is less likely that someone other than the handler could get the dog's attention. The K-9s do intermittent (needless to say unannounced) drug sweeps of the high schools and search suspicious vehicles regularly, each dog searching about 6 or 7 vehicles a week. In these times of heightened alert, the dogs regularly patrol the power and water stations and perform joint training in and around the Mall. Wednesdays are their common training night when they work on maintenance training and practice "bite work."

When there is imminent danger to the dogs, their handlers outfit them with the bullet-proof vests that were funded by the 4-H Dog Masters Club. Sgt. Campbell says, "If we have an armed suspect or a SWAT call out, the vests go on." Recently, an escaped prisoner was apprehended in Vero Beach with help from Dakota and his handler Pat White. It took one well-placed bite to subdue the fugitive.

The dogs are trained to charge full speed, which in Simon's case has been clocked by his handler, Doug MacKenzie, at 27 miles per hour. That speed, backed by 80 pounds or so of muscle, will bring most felons — and occasionally an officer with padded training sleeves on his

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Shelly Ferger with (from left) canine guest Goldie, hostess Sabrina, greeter Chica and bouncer Poco.

wrestling with this guy, he jumped over the grill and out of the car. I yelled to my partner, 'Get away, here comes my dog.' One bite. Game over. All the fight went out of that bad guy in no time."

Woof and Britt, the other K-9, handled by Officer Dave Puscher, have to help make an arrest or search for narcotics at least once a week.

Officer Hall showed us his specially equipped patrol car. A rubberized rear deck has replaced the slippery back seat and special climate controls keep the car canine comfortable even when it's not running. If the car gets too hot, the blue lights come on automatically to notify the officer that the system isn't working. Hall has a remote rear door opener for "when I'm out of the car and I need him to help me." He keeps a bulletproof vest in the car for dangerous situations, but Woof doesn't wear it all the time since it is heavy and hot.

The Vero Beach dogs train together with the County Sheriff's dogs and one from the Fish and Game department, as well as a dog from the Florida Highway

Patrol, for about eight hours a week, usually at the Vero Beach Firearms Training Facility. Vero Beach Lt. Keith Touchberry is in charge of the on-going training. All the law enforcement departments work well together and share the training facility. Chief Gabbard also mentions that he is in touch with the FBI daily, passing information back and forth from departments throughout the county.

Officer Hall and Woof usually work a flexible seven-hour shift. The chief explains, "They need at least an hour to take care of the dogs, so that's only fair." Since September 11, however, they've been working from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. on special security patrols of the airport, and the water and power plants. "The dogs are fearless and if need be a ferocious adversary," says the chief, although they are friendly and approachable when the teams make presentations at schools and other public places. Woof loves children, especially Hall's own, Kara, 11, and Clayton, 9. The officers and their dogs are seldom apart. "He's my partner," Hall says.

Sergeant Kent Campbell, of the Indian River County Sheriff's Department, not only controls his dog Justice and trains him to obey any number of complex commands, he also can keep the attention of 450 elementary school children for more than an hour, as he proved when he and the other members of the Sheriff's K-9 teams gave a demonstration at Beachland Elementary School in October. Campbell has been a canine handler for 10 years and has worked with Justice, a German-born German shepherd, about one year.

Additional canine members of the team include four other shepherds and a German short-hair pointer, the tracker for the Fish and Wildlife Division, who is handled by Tim Miller. Jake, as the pointer is called, is trained to detect drugs and firearms and to track wildlife and people if need be. When he's on a



Once a winning racer, Sparty has retired to keep Mary Rott company at her office — or vice-versa. "He just doesn't like to be alone."

arm — to the ground quickly. (I imagine they take turns being the "attacked.") It also worked on the good-sport-of-the-year teacher who volunteered to be the guinea pig at the demonstration. She got up smiling and dusted herself off.

The newcomer to the pack, in training for only three months, had been called "Hey Dog" by his handler, Ron Adamson, until that recent day at Beachland school, but at the request of Sgt. Campbell, the students voted with uproarious cheers and applause on his new name. Given the choice of Dagger, Judge and Rebel, the boys and girls overwhelming opted for Dagger, and so Dagger the deputy dog it will be, even if he doesn't have titanium teeth.

Yoda, named for the sage of Star Wars, is considerably better looking than her namesake. A good thing, too, since she's a model West Highland white terrier, appearing in the Brooks Brothers Catalog and the John's Island Annual Report, as well as winning an award for her part in a moving

notice that read, "2 blocks north and 1 block Westie." Get it? She's also been in a Piper Aircraft brochure and has appeared with dog trainer Shelly Ferger and at Chamber of Commerce functions. Of course, it helps that Yoda's owners also own DHI Visual Communications, an advertising and public relations agency in town. Owner Carl Miller admits that he and his wife Donna kept the cute and sprightly pup hidden from customers at first until one day a prominent banker and potential customer was seated at their conference table and Yoda jumped into his lap. Now Carl confesses it was the best thing that could have happened, and Yoda and her younger cousin, Maddie, are unfailingly successful at breaking the ice with new customers. They have posed for many ads and even for a wrapping paper pattern. You might think she's just another pretty face, but Yoda earns her keep. She's showing the youngster the show biz ropes. So far her celebrity hasn't gone to her head. She still gets paid in Milk Bones.

Poco means little in Spanish, but he's far from it. A massive mastiff at 146 pounds, Poco is the bouncer at Shelly's Canine Community Center, a play place for dogs. Mellow and slow moving, Poco simply strolls between two dogs if he thinks they are getting too rambunctious. Breaking up a snarling match isn't often necessary, but this peaceful enforcer does a fine job when the need arises. Shelly tells us the mastiff was bred to apprehend poachers in medieval England. The huge dog would simply take down the perpetrator and stand on him until he was apprehended. No bite, no fight, no more poaching.

Chica also means small in Spanish and is she ever. Three pounds of chihuahua, she was so abused before Shelly adopted her that she hid under the furniture for three days. No more. Her confidence has grown to the point that she'll let dogs 10

times her size know she won't be pushed around. She also has big backup in Poco. Shelly admits that even she, as a professional trainer, can't seem to teach Chica to stay. The solution is a natural. She ties her to Poco, who stays put on command.

Poco's other co-worker is Sabrina. She's the hostess, cruise director and teacher who oversees the behavior of the center's visitors. A small but vivacious terrier mix — in the bad old, politically incorrect days known as a mutt — she lets dogs of all sizes know with sharp barks when she feels their behavior is inappropriate. Most of the time, the dogs work it out among themselves and have a great time doing it. We visited one day when the canine participants included a Cairn terrier, the companion of one of Shelly's helpers, a year-old golden retriever, a six-month-old boxer, and a full-grown mixture that looked to be a combination of collie and basset hound — a biggish dog with silky hair and very short legs. His name was Duke and although he stole everybody's toys, nobody cared much. He's in training as an assistant dog for his owner who has limited mobility. Duke is being taught how to retrieve objects and to help gently pull his owner to a standing position when she has been sitting down. But only when she asks him to.

Shelly, who runs the play school, also conducts obedience and agility courses for dogs and their owners. "The owners are harder to train, usually," she says. Her outdoor playground, Dog Park, is set to open soon at its fenced location on 16th Avenue at 12th Street. Shelly says she screens dogs for health and temperament at both the indoor and outdoor facilities and admits that owners of aggressive dogs will be asked to leave after two "incidents." Socializing a dog is very important in building trust and confidence, she thinks. Shelly also trains dogs to assist individuals with hearing disabilities and other handicaps.

**D**ogs are naturally sympathetic and that's why they are so good with ill or anxious people. The Humane Society of Vero Beach has a roster of volunteers who make cheering visits with their dogs to nursing homes, to the hospice and to individual shut-ins. There is documentation that blood pressure can be lowered, stress relieved and general mood improved with the simple application of a slurpy kiss or a thumped tail. As one of the world's most famous therapists, Snoopy, once said, "A kiss on the nose does much toward turning aside anger."

Sue Kelly, who is the volunteer coordinator and heads the adoption program for the Vero Beach Humane Society, says she brings her dog Rusty to work with her,

and volunteers frequently bring him on visits to the nursing facilities. Rusty's friendly and loves riding in the car. "We screen the volunteer dogs for health and temperament," Sue says. "We make sure they are clean and parasite-free and that they're not skittish or afraid when people reach for them. They have to like the handling and they should be quite calm. We use both cats and dogs for therapy. We even have a rabbit who is very popular. Such a small animal is easier for some of the patients to handle and we can put him right up next to them if they want."

Sue says the society makes no hard medical claims, but she feels the patients are generally cheered up. The visits give them a chance to reminisce about their old pets and provide an additional visitor. "Animals have ways of communicating without words that are very helpful." Sometimes the patients talk to the pets, sometimes they just sit and pat. Pets and people both feel good.

**M**ax and Missie have an easy job. They have "worked" at Classic Awards on 10th Avenue for about three years with owners Bill and Nancy Petts. Their foremost function is window dressing at the shop for plaques and promotional items, flags (a two-month wait at last count) and trophies. The Petts (as opposed to the pets) have been in Vero Beach for 10 years because they fell in love with the town when they left Toronto in search of a business in a better climate. Their bichon frisés, originally bred as street performers in the Mediterranean, will dance on their toes to cajole customers whenever a little more sales persuasion is needed.

**S**party is a dog who is enjoying his retirement. This 12-year-old greyhound raced for several years at the Ft. Lauderdale track until he was adopted the day after his last race by Chris Rott, son of Mary and Jim Rott of Vero Beach, and moved to Annapolis, Maryland. Sparty's long career included a number of wins and so much time in the kennel, his adoptive owner virtually had to teach him how to be a dog instead of a racing machine. He was retired when he developed a spinal hernia.

When Chris's baby developed allergies, Sparty came to live with Jim and Mary, much to the delight of another granddaughter, 8-year old Emily, who lives in Vero Beach and visits her grandparents frequently. Sparty now lives a leisurely life, snoozing in the Rott's home-improvement office next to Mary's feet. She says, "He just doesn't like to be alone." Emily adds, "Sometimes he dreams and his feet lope along. I don't know if he's dreaming of racing, but I know he's happy here." He virtual epitomizes the phrase "Lucky Dog." ❄

*"Recollect that the Almighty, who gave the dog to be companion of our pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a nature noble and incapable of deceit."*  
- Sir Walter Scott

#### COMPANION DOGS

Statistics show that the average companion dog's behavior can begin to deteriorate after only five days in a traditional shelter environment. Our home-like surroundings not only reduce the stress level of the displaced dogs, but also allow for "house manners" to be maintained. The warm, comforting, reassuring atmosphere is the perfect setting for obedience training.

#### ASSISTANCE DOGS

Rising from a chair, picking up a phone, retrieving a fallen object - to the physically challenged the simplest tasks can be daunting. Our assistance training program readies dogs to respond to and serve individuals with special needs, and provide warm companionship.

#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

**TELEPHONE HOTLINE** - will provide counseling for canine behavior problems.

**PET ASSISTED THERAPY** - dogs provide TLC at medical and assisted living facilities; trauma dogs calm and comfort crime victims.

**MOBILE SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC** - will be used to educate the public and provide free or low cost neuter/spay.

**CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS** - will educate and encourage leadership, responsibility and self-confidence.



#### Mission Statement

*A non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare of dogs in Indian River County. To house and, as necessary, train previously owned dogs as assistance dogs or companion dogs. To educate the public about assistance dogs, bite prevention and responsible dog ownership.*

**Dogs for Life, Inc.**  
PO Box 650023  
Vero Beach, FL 32965  
Phone (772) 567-8969  
Fax (772) 567-5751

Dogs for Life, Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt organization as described under the Internal Revenue Code 501(c) 3.  
Federal ID# 31-1880397



#### Making a difference in your community



*Ruth and Drake (Photo by Jessica Smith)*

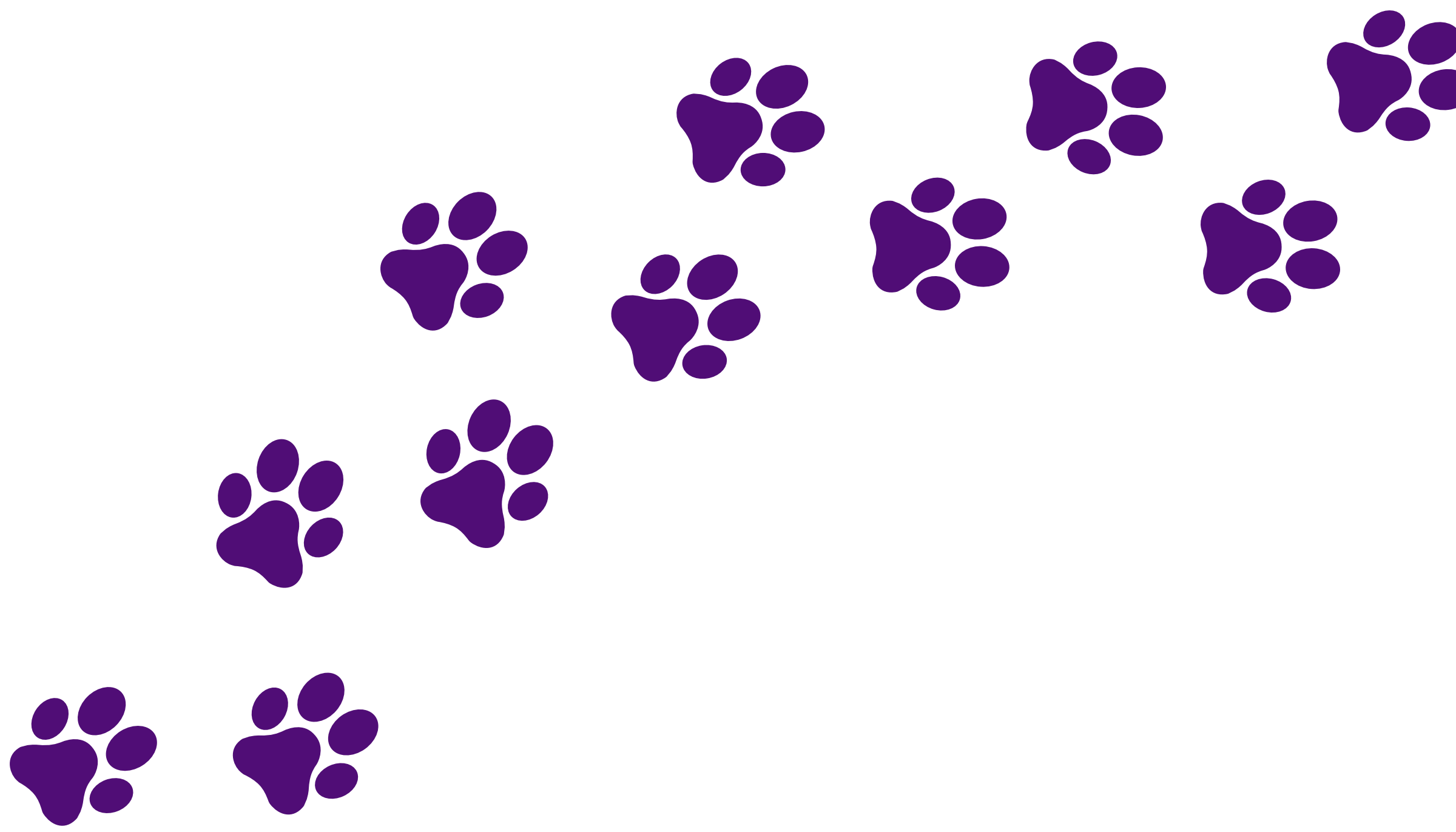
Dogs for Life is a unique non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for people and dogs in Indian River County.

Our purpose is to give healthy, adoptable animals a new beginning as trained assistance or companion dogs.

Our specialized program prepares these dogs to take their place in the lives and hearts of the people who adopt them... Dogs for Life

# Scrapbook

## 2001





**OCTOBER**

# 4-H Club's Sponsor Goal

S2 Press Journal Wednesday, October 24, 2001



4-H Dog Masters Club members and officers are from left, top: Hanna Burnett, Jodi Smith, Liz Raasch and (bottom) Kara Grogan, Abby Smith and Lindsey McAlaren. Also pictured are members of the Indian River County Sheriff's Office and Canine Unit.

## Club's goal: Sponsor guide dog

By **LINDSEY McALARNEN**

The 4-H Dog Masters Club has been very busy. We have almost raised enough money to sponsor a Guide Dog puppy as our project for the year. We have been selling tickets to win a doggie goodie basket to raise funds.

We participated in April's Downtown Friday Fest. We presented our Dancing with Dogs Square Dance Routine. It was a big hit! Thank you for everyone that was there to support us.

We are still having our meetings twice a month at Shelly's Canine Community Center. Welcome to new members, Dawn and Nicole.

In the next few weeks our club will be presenting our projects and project books to our club. Each 4-Her has prepared a presentation to give. Last but not least, we presented the seventh and final bullet-proof vest to the Sheriffs' Canine Unit.

We raised enough money to fit every K-9 unit in Indian River County with a vest. Good job 4-Hers. We are still looking for donations for our Guide Dog program as well as our Find a Lost Dog program. If you can help, call Shelly Ferger, group leader at 567-8969. Also if you have a dog and are interested in becoming a member of 4-H call Shelly at the above number or call the Indian River County Extension Office at 770-5031.



**August**

# Bubba D Helping Hearing-Impaired

## Bubba D is on the job to help hearing-impaired

Ann Taylor  
For 50 Plus Lifestyles

Bubba D\* is one dedicated worker. Smart, attentive, with a positive attitude, he's been known to put in a long day.

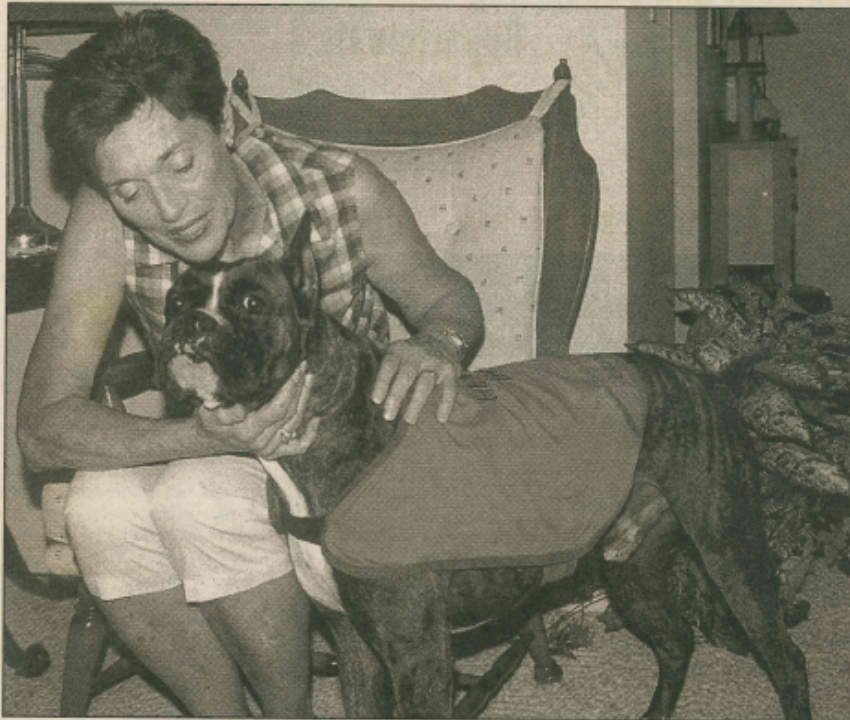
When he's on the job, "mom" Mim D\* can be sure no ring of the phone, ding-ding of the microwave or buzz from the dryer is ignored. And if there's someone suspicious snooping outside their Vero Beach home, they'd better watch out — Bubba knows and Bubba tells.

As a certified Hearing and Service Dog, the specially trained 3-year-old boxer has definite responsibilities. He also has the credentials to prove he's a can-do type of guy.

Bubba has an official Assistance Dog International photo ID card verifying he's been professionally trained in auditory awareness for the hearing impaired person; when he's out in public he proudly wears his special orange jacket with the lettering "Service Dog" emblazoned in blue. The handsome 66-pound seal brindie also stars in a homemade video that's a visual statement as to his skills.

Bubba is a member of a growing corps of service dogs whose owners depend on their abilities to make up for ones they lack.

"He goes everywhere with me," Mim, who is hearing



In Mim's book, Bubba's top dog. He's on the job 365/7/24, hearing what his master can't.

50 Plus Lifestyles : Indian River, August 2001 9

when I was 8 and in the hospital for a ruptured appendicitis. I wasn't expected to live," Mim recalled. "From then on I always kept up with hearing tests, fearing losing what I had in my other ear."

The years passed, she married Ted, and both became teachers, raising their five children in a small Illinois town.

During a 1969 rainy spring break day in Florida, they were driving around and ended up in Vero Beach, where Mim and Ted happened to meet up with some school board members who offered them jobs on the spot.

"We had no contract, no written agreement, just a handshake; that was all we needed," she grinned, thinking back to the small town atmosphere that existed then.

Mim, with a tall, slim figure any 30-year-old would envy, taught physical education until she retired six years ago. It was during that last year of teaching she noticed her hearing was getting worse.

See BUBBA, 10

### Bubba FROM 10

and dog and commitment are what make the program work.

When Mim and Bubba were fully trained and ready for the certification process, the video was made, showing the two of them going through their paces. It was mailed off, with fingers crossed.

"There was scads of paperwork to fill out. Every detail had to be documented. And we continue to be regularly tested.

"See that stool by the front door? That was Shelley's idea. Instead of Bubba's nails scratching up the finish on the front door, he puts his front paws on the stool to let me know there's someone there. If there was a fire and I followed him to the door and said the word 'hot,' he'd take me to another one.

"Now that he and I have been through the training, we'll help others; it's a way of passing it along, a way of helping somebody else, and it's fun.

"Bubba's also a volunteer in the reading program at the Boys and Girls Club. We go

there twice a month, where the children who are poor readers read to him. They'll read to a dog because they know they won't criticize. Bubba's so attentive."

A real test of Bubba's expertise came a few weeks ago when Mim and Ted were staying at the Mayo Inn in Jacksonville. Ted had left the room for a few minutes to get something from the car.

"I was on the phone with Georgia, another daughter, and I thought I heard something buzzing on her end of the phone, but I wasn't sure.

"Bubba came and got me, then he went to the door. There was no stool, so he just shimmied, letting me know I was to open it and follow him out. He took me into the hall, where everyone else was. What I thought I'd heard turned out to be the smoke alarm. Fortunately, it was nothing serious, but if it had been, he would have seen to it that I was all right."

Mim reached down to stroke the fur under her dog's chin, looked into his eyes, and whispered, "Yes, you're a good dog, Bubba. You do a good job."

\*For privacy reasons, the last name is not used.

at her constant shadow. "Almost any dog can be trained to do what he does. I think there's a minimum weight of 12 pounds, and the first test is that they have to have the right temperament, which means they're not aggressive and they show a willingness to work."

Bubba fits the bill. He's definitely not aggressive. In fact, he can be so laid back at times he looks like he could melt right into the carpeting; one might even think he's asleep at the switch.

Far from it. Just the slightest sound and he's up, ears erect, stare sharpened, scanning the scene. And if the phone rings or he hears something he thinks Mim should check out, he gently touches her knee with his paw.

Dependable and adoring, he hears what she can't.

"It was discovered that I was totally deaf in my left ear





**APRIL**

# 4-H Club Donates Armored Vest

C10 Press Journal Tuesday, April 24, 2001

## **TOP** of the morning

### **North County AARP to meet today**

AARP 3234, North Indian River County, will meet at 1 p.m. today at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Louisiana Avenue, Sebastian. A speaker will inform members about competitive drug prices. Plans will be made regarding May's picnic. Call 589-0647 for information.

### **Dog Master's to present K-9 armored vest**

The Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club will present an armored vest to K-9 Simon at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the sheriff's auditorium. Simon's handler, deputy Doug McKenzie, and his fellow K-9 handlers, will be present, along with Sheriff Roy Raymond and the youths who are members of the club.

With this presentation, the club will have donated vests for all five of the K-9's in the Indian River County Sheriff's Office.

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of purple paw prints of various sizes, scattered across a white background. The paw prints are stylized with four distinct pads.

**MARCH**

# City Bars Pets From City Parks

Press Journal Sunday, March 25, 2001 A3

## VERO BEACH

### Parks aren't going to dogs now

■ Ordinances bar pets at city parks unless they are guide dogs.

By HENRY A. STEPHENS  
Press Journal Staff Writer

Some Vero Beach dog owners, who say they clean up after their pooches on walks, are complaining about being barred from city parks because of those who aren't so clean.

"The only open running field is being taken away from us by the city," Renate Cropper, who has walked her Dalmatian at Bob Summers Park, said last week in a letter to Mayor Tom White.

"And the only reason I can see is the selfish negligence of newcomers and some boat people who never pick up after their dogs. This angers us, because we feel that this is the main reason that police are forbidding us to use this ground."

White said Friday he has asked City Manager Rex Taylor to look into the problem. Meanwhile, White said, dog owners can walk their dogs near the city boat ramps north of the Barber Bridge.

"I think we need to do something definite so it's comfortable for them and comfortable for other people who use the parks," he said.

Residents already can walk their dogs down neighborhood streets, as long as the dogs are on leashes and the owners carry pooper scoopers, city Animal Control Officer Bruce Dangerfield said Friday.

But ordinances bar pets at city parks unless they are guide dogs or other aides to the disabled, he added. And county ordinances prevent dog walking on the beach.

Deputy Police Chief Don Dappen said some residents have complained after stepping in dog droppings in a posted park, while others have complained after driving by and seeing people walk dogs.

Simpson pointed to the 4-H Best Friends Dog Park at 12th Street and 16th Avenue, but said it won't be open to the public.

Shelly Ferger, a dog trainer and organizer of the Dog Park, said she's had to establish the Dog Park Club of Indian River and sell memberships to manage the park.

"We've had to cap it at 200 members," Ferger said. "But we have a waiting list of another 100 people."

She said she expects to charge up to \$150 per year to be a member.

Currently the parking lot is being prepared at the 2.5-acre park, but Ferger said she's not sure yet when she can open. She said she still needs about \$20,000 toward the \$75,000 cost of the park.

County officials in recent years promised help in establishing the park, but Ferger said organizers decided to go it alone because they were making no progress toward

finding a publicly owned site.

A local dog lover leased the current site for the project at a bargain price, and organizers established the Dog Park Club to manage the facility and work with the 4-H Club on fund raising.

Ferger said she supports Simpson, Cropper and others in their efforts to get the city to allow more off-leash dog exercise.

"I'm thrilled this is happening," she said. "Unfortunately, it takes people getting fired up."

"This (enforcement) upsets some people, but what's the alternative? Not enforce it?" he asked.

Instead of an overall pet ban, Cropper proposed a fine of up to \$100 for not cleaning up after a dog, with the proceeds split between the city and the Humane Society.

Fellow dog owner Pam Simpson recalled a "dog-fouling law" of her native Scotland. That law cleaned up not only the parks but her whole town, she said.

There's a dog-exercise area near Bob Summers Park, west of the Indian River County Volunteer Ambulance Squad building. City officials say it's equipped with bags for dog droppings.

"The dog park ... while it's a great idea, is not a good area to use," Simpson wrote in a letter to White.

Most of it is damp and boggy, infested with mosquitoes and too close to the road, she said.

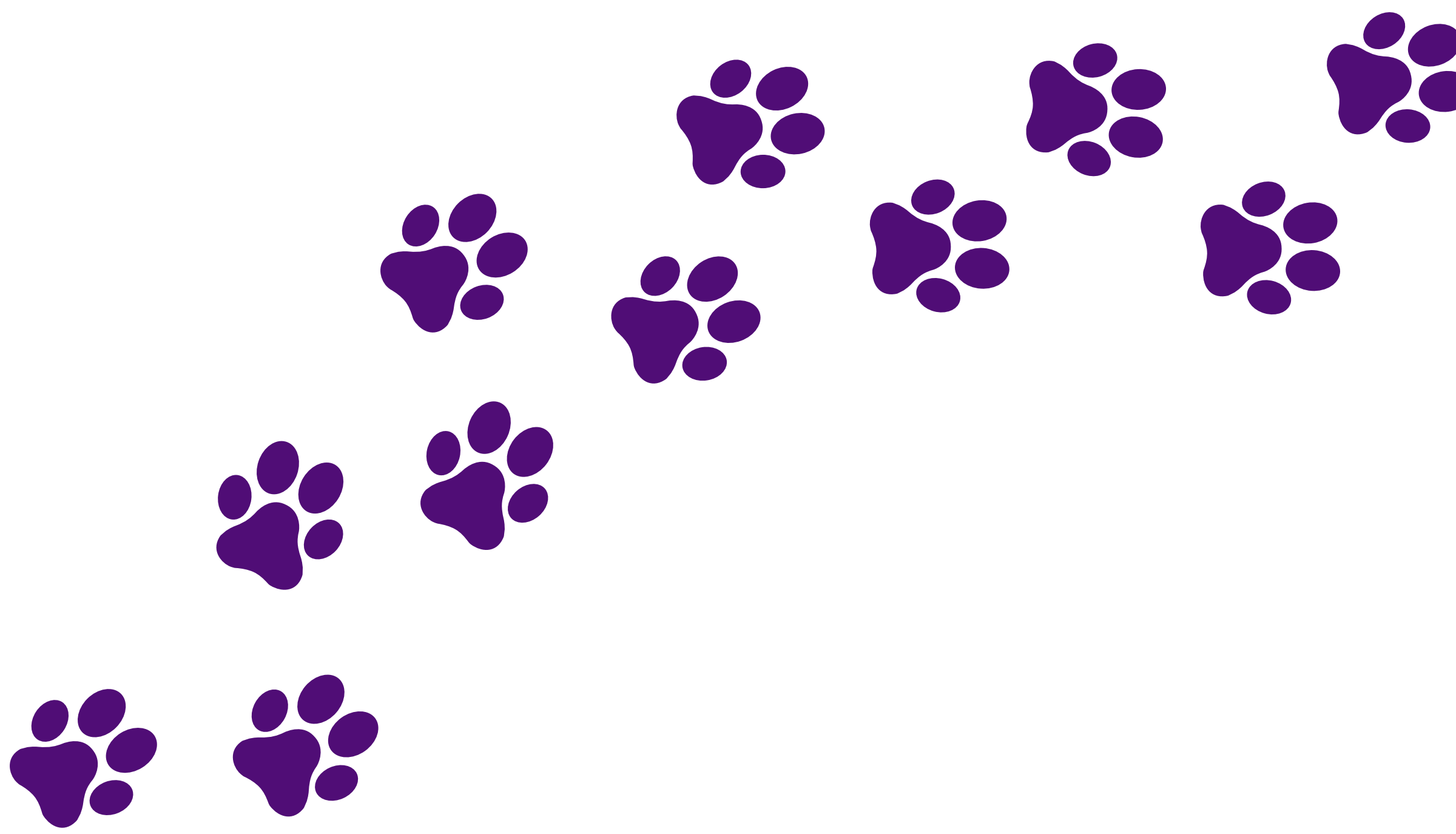
The signs barring pets have been posted at Bob Summers Park for about a year, Simpson said Friday. But she and others are complaining now, she said, because police have started to enforce it more vigorously.

And now she and fellow "responsible dog owners" are left without a safe place to let the dogs out, she said.

"There's nowhere to take them, nowhere in the whole of Vero," she said.

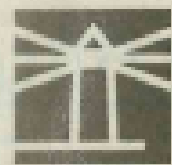
# Scrapbook

## 2000





**October**



© SCRIPPS HOWLAND

## Press Journal

Founded in 1919

"Give light, and the people  
will find their own way."

### Dog park article highlights a need

Four paws up for the "grr-eat" article Michael Kaiser wrote about the 4-H "Best Friends" Dog Park in the Sept. 27 the *Press Journal*. We appreciate his support for this much-needed recreational area.

Our 2.5-acre dog park will not meet the needs of the estimated 60,000 dogs in Indian River County, since so many membership applications were received as a result of his excellent article.

Thus, we hope that the success of our park will encourage the Indian River County Park and Recreation Department to establish exercise areas for dogs within the existing park system.

The 4-H "Best Friends" Dog Park will offer many benefits to our community:

- Keeping dogs in their homes. The No. 1 reason dogs are surrendered to animal shelters is behavioral problems that could have been avoided if the animals had been given an opportunity to exercise and socialize properly. More than 50 percent of county homes have dogs, but there is not even one public park in our county where canine residents and their human owners can exercise legally.

- Promoting responsible pet ownership and public education: The park will serve as the focal point for all Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters Club activities, such as Canine Good Citizen Testing. It also will sponsor educational events and fund-raisers for nonprofit, canine-related groups.

The newspaper's continued support will help our community to soon have a vital recreational area where it is safe, fun and legal for residents to socialize and exer-

cise with their dogs. Thank you.

Jocelyn Woodruff  
President  
Dog Club of Indian River  
Vero Beach



**SEPTEMBER**



# Dog Park Starts Land Clearing

Press Journal Wednesday, September 27, 2000 A5

## Dog park gets a running start with land clearing, fund raising

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

After three years of barking up the wrong tree, dog lovers panting for a park for their furry friends got some tail-wagging news Tuesday, as heavy equipment began clearing the site of a proposed off-leash dog park.

The 4-H "Best Friends" Dog Park is planned for 2.5 acres on the north side of 12th Street at 16th Avenue in Vero Beach.

The campaign for the park began with a petition drive in October 1997, and the 4-H Dog Masters' Club later adopted the project as its own, organizer Shelly Ferger said.

Although county officials had promised help in establishing the park, organizers decided to go it alone because they were making no progress toward finding a publicly owned site.

A local dog lover leased the current site for the project at a bargain price, and organizers established the Dog Park Club of Indian River to manage the facility and work with the 4-H Club on fund raising.

The club is halfway to its goal of raising about \$60,000 to build the park, Ferger said.

"We're in a position to clear the property, hook up to county water, buy fencing and put in the parking lot," she said.

More money is needed to pay for the \$20,000-\$30,000 worth of



Press Journal Staff Photo by DEBBY EDWARDS

Wayne Crawford, of Wayne Crawford Trucking and Landclearing, uses a bulldozer to remove vegetation Tuesday at the location of the new 4-H "Best Friend" off-leash dog park off 12th Street in Vero Beach.

landscaping and walking trails.

Organizers are currently petitioning the county to waive a requirement for a privacy fence to screen the park from neighbors across 16th Avenue. Ferger said deleting the privacy fence could save \$5,000, and residents have supported the move.

Eleanor Bengyak, who lives across the street, said she circu-

lated a petition to the other five property owners and received unanimous support for the dog park.

"I have a dog that I can't take anywhere for a walk," she said. "Everyone on the block owns a dog, so we're all in favor of this."

Janet Warner, a Vero Beach resident eager to visit the park, said having a place where dogs can

romp with each other untethered has benefits for both dogs and their masters.

She said her standard poodle, Lizzie, has shown vast behavioral improvement since she began taking her to canine socials at Ferger's Canine Community Center. Lizzie now listens better and now longer tugs at the leash when out for walks, Warner said.

"I've been taking Lizzie to her doggie socials for about four years, and it's certainly made a big difference. It was more meaningful than even taking the obedience classes," Warner said. "It's remarkable how they learn from one another. What one knows, they pass on to the next dog."

Anyone who scoffs at spending money on a park for dogs doesn't understand the value of socialization to both people and pets, she said.

"It's a great joy to everybody, not only for the pets but for their owners," she said. "We have a lot of fun and laughs, which is good for the soul."

Joanna Salina, of Vero Beach, said the park has been a long time coming.

"It's one thing to have a dog on a leash and another thing to see them frolicking and running freely," she said. "We can't wait for it to open."

Salina said her border collies, Meghan and Bally, are calm and well-behaved because they've had the chance to meet other dogs regularly.

"They have never met another dog they didn't like," she said.

Salina said dog parks should be a regular part of the county's recreation department.

"It's a hobby and an interest, just like golf. We have public golf courses, don't we," she said. "I want to enjoy my dogs and other dog people."

The dog park club plans a 2.5-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station and bathing area where dogs can be allowed to exercise and socialize without leashes.

In order to exercise tight control, the park will be open to members only, Ferger said.

Membership will require attendance at a canine behavior workshop, a canine temperament evaluation, county licensing, proof of vaccinations and a membership fee to help maintain the park.

The number of memberships available and their cost have not yet been determined. The club has received about 75 membership applications, Ferger said.

Ferger said the club is surveying interested dog owners to find out when and how they would use the park to determine how many animals the park can serve without becoming overloaded.

"Most dog parks fail because of their success," she said. "There's not going to be enough space for all the people that are going to want to use the park. We're hoping the county is going to start setting up exercise areas within the park system once they realize how much need there is. They just don't know how much demand there is."

Those interested in membership or in making a donation toward the park can call Ferger at 567-8969 or write to 4-H Dog Masters' Club, P.O. Box 1792, Vero Beach, Fla. 32961.



**JUNE**

# Dog Park Update



Volume 3 Number 2

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- THE BENEFITS ARE MANY **Page 4**
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **Page 5**
- HOW CAN I HELP **Page 5**

## SPECIAL EDITION UPDATE ON A DOG PARK FOR I.R. COUNTY How did the campaign begin.

In October of 1997, research began on establishing a dog park for Indian River County. In February of 1998 the I.R. Co. 4-H Dog Master's Club adopted the effort as a community service project and began holding fund raisers, many sponsored by Shelly's Canine Community Center.

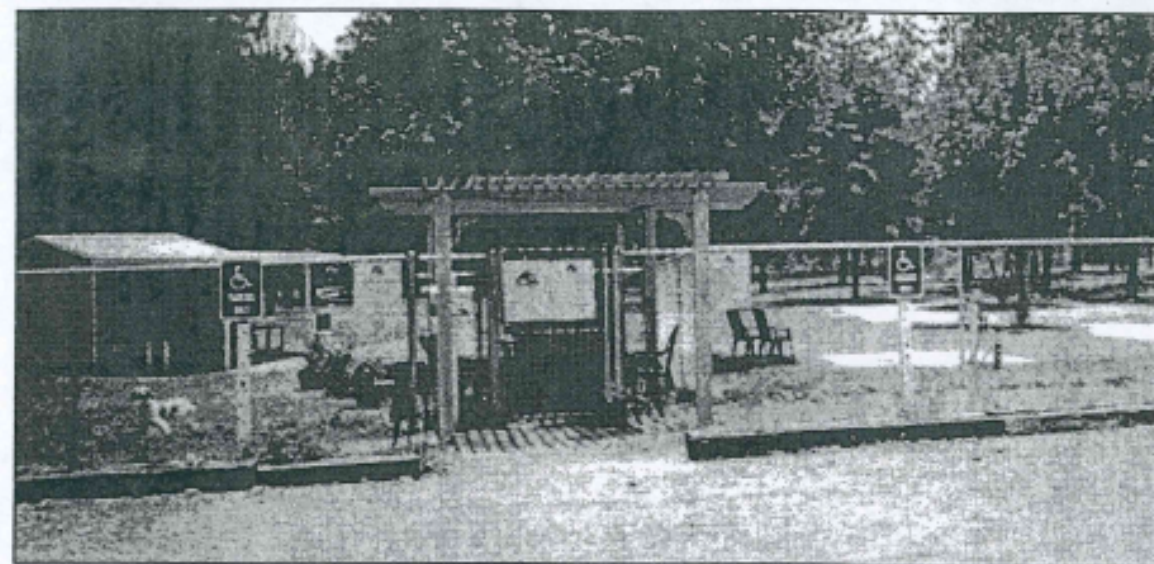
A group of concerned citizens formed a Dog Park Committee. This group conducted a massive research project on dog parks. We found that there were more than 400 dog parks across the country. Major cities that sponsor successful dog parks include San Francisco, CA; Greenbelt, MD; Benica, CA; Monmouth County, NJ; New York, NY; Bowie MD; and Palo Alto, CA. In Florida, Coral Springs has a dog park; Sarasota has two Paws parks; Ft. Lauderdale has a dog beach; and Boca Raton is in the process of opening a dog park.

Over the next two years, the Dog Park Committee had several meetings with the Indian River Park & Recreation department. Although Park & Recreation thought a dog park was a good idea, they were not willing to develop or manage a dog park. They were willing, however, to lease property to the club. Unfortunately all properties offered were deemed inappropriate by park committee members.

Then in October of 1999, property in a very central location was offered for lease by a private individual. The NE corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue, is not only convenient but zoned appropriately to accommodate the park. The I.R. County Planning Department has been very helpful in establishing guidelines for the development of the park.

Continued on page 2.

## A Dog Park Now Within "Site"



There is something very exciting happening for dogs and their owners in Vero Beach. The 4-H Dog Master's Club has joined with the Dog Park Club of Indian River, Inc. to raise funds, develop and manage a 2.5 acre park for dogs. Along with our dogs, we will soon have the pleasure of exercising, playing and socializing outdoors with other Indian River County resident dog owners.

The property, located on the NE corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue, will be fenced with a double-gated, security entrance. Dogs can exercise off leash while their owners walk the gravel path-

ways or sit on a bench in one of the shaded areas. We are all looking forward to the first opportunity for dogs in I.R. County to actually play off leash in a safe outdoor area.

Realizing the need for such a place for dogs to exercise and socialize, Shelly's has supported and sponsored many fund raising events over the past three years. Many of our clients have already expressed interest in not only membership, but how to help fund and manage the park. Thanks to many of you \$20,000 has been raised toward the expected \$50,000 development budget.

Following the lead of over 400 dog parks nationwide, organizers have set up guidelines for a model dog park. Most dog parks across the nation are managed through respective Park and Recreation authorities. In many cases dog parks become so popular that soon there are several dog parks needed within one city. The hope is that the 4-H "Best Friends" Dog Park will set a standard so that the Indian River County Park & Recreation Department will soon establish dog exercise areas within our city and county park systems.

## Continued from the cover

The Dog Park Committee has now formed a non-profit organization named the Dog Park Club of Indian River to develop and manage the park. Last year, Shelly Fergar and Dog Park President Jocelyn Woodruff attended the Association of Pet Dog Trainers conference in San Diego, CA where they gathered additional information on dog parks around the country.

The Dog Park Club of I.R., Inc. has contracted with Randy Mosby, Engineers to devel-

op a site plan. The Club has set up membership guidelines and the 4-H Dog Master's Club continues to raise funds. Site development is slated to begin in June of 2000.

Matt McAlarnan is Treasurer for the Dog Park Club of Indian River, as well as oversees the 4-H Dog Master's Club accounts. Beth Stryker serves as Secretary and developed our dog park proposal for Indian River County. Wendy Ballard and Jean Andrew's help was invaluable in researching other dog parks.



**THE BARKER BULLETIN**  
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SHELLY'S CANINE COMMUNITY CENTER

**Editor/Publisher: Shelly Fergar**  
**Layout: Eric Holler**

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## The Needs Are Many

There are approximately 20,000 currently licensed dogs in Indian River County. It is estimated that this number could account for only 1/3 of the dogs currently residing in this county. This translates to roughly 60,000 canine residents in our community; there are approximately 112,000 human residents.

The most fundamental need for dogs is that they be taken out with their owners as much as possible. This enables them to experience the full range of benefits from the public realm. Dogs need interaction with their owners and other dogs for a diversity of experience.

■ Research also shows that dogs that exercise and are allowed to run freely are not as aggressive towards people as dogs that are under-exercised. They also enjoy better health, are happier, better-adjusted and live longer.

■ However, walking a dog on a leash does "not" provide sufficient exercise. Moreover, the majority of single family homes yards are not large enough to pro-

vide adequate exercise for most dogs. Multi-family housing often offers even less green space for dog owners. "Off-Leash" Dog Parks provide dogs with this necessary space and freedom.

■ Dog Parks also socialize dogs, bring them in contact with other dogs and cause them to be less aggressive in each future encounter with other canines.

■ "Off-Leash" dog Parks improve the mental state of dogs because regular outings reduce boredom and pent-up energy at home. Many dog owners report that after a visit to an off-leash recreational area, their dog is less agitated, more relaxed, and in general nicer to be around.

Dog owners enjoy watching their dogs play, they are motivated to exercise when they can take their dogs with them, and they like to socialize with other dog owners, too. Dogs often help people break the ice, allowing people who share interests to socialize while exercising their dogs.

Dog owners are very bit as deserving of a recreational space as are citizens who

enjoy other exclusionary recreational activities funded by our taxpayer dollars. Local residents enjoy golf on 28 golf courses, tennis on 10 public tennis areas, boating at 9 boat launches, as well as other recreation opportunities in 19 county parks and 16 city parks.

Irresponsible dog owners cost I.R. taxpayers approximately \$475,000 each year. The number one reason dogs are surrendered to animal shelters is due to behavioral problems which could have been avoided if the animal had an opportunity exercise and socialize. Dog Parks promote responsible pet ownership. Common sense dictates it is far preferable to allocate funds for community education and promotion of responsible pet ownership rather than corrective measures alone.

By allowing our dogs to socialize off leash, Indian River County residents will have a better sense of appreciation for our pets, thereby making Indian River County a even better place to live.



## The Benefits Are Many

Throughout history dogs have played a significant role for humans, and the importance of dogs in modern industrial societies is repeatedly demonstrated in the popular press. The bond between people and their dogs is incredibly powerful. Dogs are more than just companions; they are characterized as "man's best friend". In fact, a Pfizer-commissioned Gallup survey revealed that 92% of dog owners consider their pet to be a member of the family.

During the past two decades the folk wisdom that "pets are good for you" has been supported by research demonstrating that owning a dog significantly improves the physical and psychological well-being for both dog owners as well as others who come into contact with these pets.

Some of the benefits include:

- Dogs help improve physical fitness by providing a stimulus for exercise
- Dogs contribute to the overall senses of family well-being; studies have even shown that dogs improve owners' self-esteem
- Dogs help relieve the damaging effect of loneliness, isolation, and depression, particularly among the elderly, by
  - providing companionship and meaningful daily activity
  - promoting interests and varied lifestyle
  - providing an impetus for nurturing
  - serving as social "facilitators"

Dogs also help decrease anxiety and stress by:

- providing a pleasant and relaxing focus for attention
- promoting feelings of security and safety (owners are less afraid of being crime victims)
- providing a source of contact comfort

Dogs have also been shown to help children

- develop nurturing behavior
- learn responsibilities and how to share
- overcome learning disabilities

Dogs have a positive effect on our local economy

- There are 74 Related Dog Businesses in Indian River County
  - 29 Veterinarians
  - 20 Dog groomers
  - 8 Pet Shops
  - 7 Boarding Kennels
  - 3 Dog Sitting Services
  - 2 Dog Trainers
  - 2 Pet Cemeteries
  - 1 Pet Crematories
  - 1 Pet Photography Studio
  - 1 National Dog Travel Newsletter

Dogs commonly assist Indian River County residents in many ways

- "K-9" Police Dogs
- Fire Department Explosive & Arson Detection Dogs
- Drug-Detection Dogs
- Search & Rescue Dogs
- Seeing-Eye Dogs for the blind
- Hearing Dogs for the deaf/hearing-impaired
- Assistance Dogs for the physically challenged
- Therapy Dogs for hospital patients & nursing home residents
- Termite Sensor Dogs





Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club  
P.O. Box 1792  
Vero Beach, FL 32961

"To Make The Best Better"

**4-H "BEST FRIENDS" OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**CAPITAL DONATIONS**

Our entry area will display bone-shaped plaques personalized with each donor's name or business (optional). Capital Donors may also make their donations in memory of a loved one or pet. Bone sizes available:

- 8" x 6" \$1,000
- 6" x 4" \$ 500
- 4" x 2" \$ 250
- 2" x 1" \$ 100

Please personalize my Capital Donor Bone as follows (20 letters max.):

**PARK FACILITY NEEDS**

I do not wish to make a Capital Campaign Donation, but would like to contribute to the Off-Leash Dog Park's development with a donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**POTENTIAL DONOR, MATERIALS & SERVICES CONTACTS**

If you know any individuals or businesses who you believe would be willing to help us, please indicate their name(s) below or call Shelly Ferger at 567-8969

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

I am interested in a membership application for my dog.

Please make your check payable to: *I. R. County 4-H Dog Master's Club* and mail to:

Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club  
P.O. Box 1792  
Vero Beach, FL 32961

Thank you very much in advance for your support and contribution!



Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club  
P.O. Box 1792  
Vero Beach, FL 32961

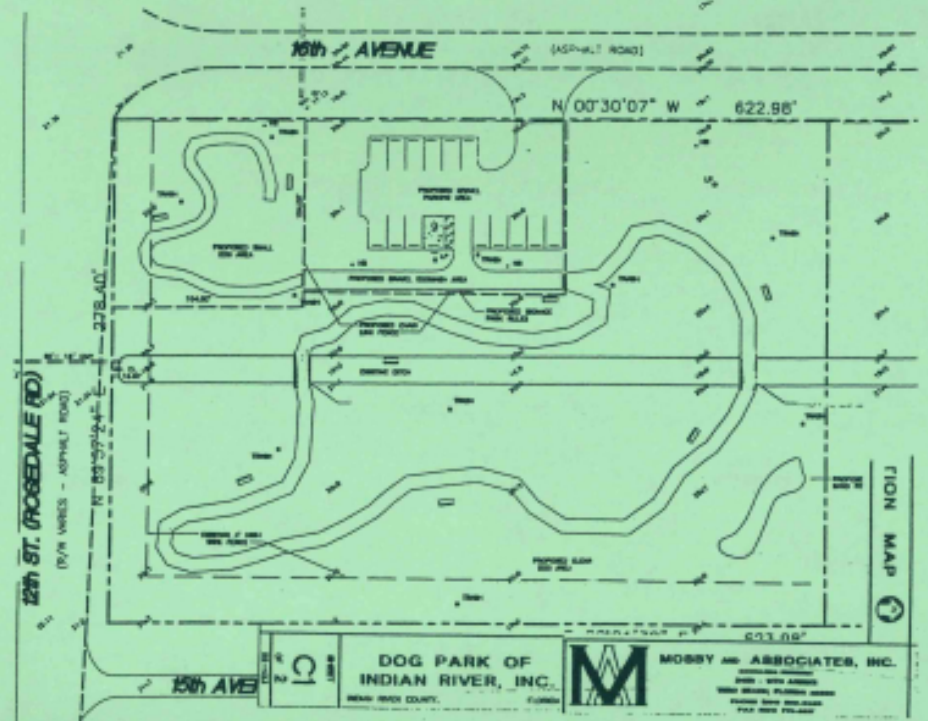
"To Make The Best Better"

**4-H "BEST FRIENDS" OFF-LEASH DOG PARK**

**THE RULES**

1. Dogs must wear a dog park tag and only a flat collar while in the park
2. Dogs must be leashed at all times when outside the park
3. Dogs must be current on inoculations and provide proof of a Indian River County license
4. Dogs are not allowed to chase people
5. Dogs are not allowed to dig
6. Owners must clean up after their dogs
7. All dogs over 6 months of age must be neutered
8. Male dogs must be closely supervised
9. Puppies under 4 months of age are not allowed in the park
10. If your dog acts aggressively toward others, you must immediately leave the park
11. No dog can be in the park without a responsible adult in attendance
12. Do not leave the park gate open and watch for other dogs on the opposite side so that they do not escape
13. Bicycles, skateboards, or other motorized devices - except wheelchairs are prohibited
14. Do not play or let your children play on any dog equipment
15. No glass containers are allowed in the park
16. No smoking and no alcohol allowed in the park
17. Do not bring any food into the park
18. Do not bring a sick dog into the park
19. Children under the age of 6 years are not to be brought into the park. At no time should children run or chase dogs
20. No more than two dogs may be brought into the park by one individual at the same time

**PARK SITE PLAN**



**Frequently Asked Questions... and Answers**

*Won't there be danger of dogs biting people or behaving aggressively?*

Evidence from existing off-leash recreational areas across the country shows that this fear is misplaced. The incident of dog bites and aggressive behavior is minuscule nation-wide. Most cities reported no incidents or confrontations at all.

Usually dogs who fight are under trained, under socialized, and under exercised.

The natural nature of dogs is to form hierarchies but not to actually injure each other. Misunderstood behaviors such as dominance, aggression, submission and fear are all natural behaviors that dogs use to establish themselves in a group. Dogs are naturally pack animals therefore they are usually social.

Unfortunately most puppies and dogs do not have adequate opportunity to learn social skills. This is when some dogs will act inappropriately. When dogs act inappropriately, they will in most cases be corrected by other dogs.

A dog park creates a safe environ-

ment to allow dogs to release pent-up energy while playing with other dogs.

Further our "Off-Leash" dog park will require all users to attend an Orientation Class as well as have their dogs temperament evaluation before they are allowed in the park. Aggressive dogs will not be admitted to the park. This could be a model plan for dog parks across the country.

*Won't the "Off-Leash" Dog Park become unsanitary and unsightly because of urine and feces?*

Dogs will create waste regardless of whether or not they are on a leash, inside or outside of a park. Thus, the more important issue is finding a way to ensure that waste is properly disposed of in a timely fashion.

There are a number of effective methods that have been employed to encourage and ensure that dog owners clean up after their pets. All will be used in our off-leash dog park.

- Conveniently located pooper bags and trash cans

- Mandatory compliance on the part of the dog owner to immediately remove waste

- Regularly scheduled removal of waste from trash cans

- Regularly scheduled volunteer patrols to sweep the park of all debris

There is considerable social pressure for park users to clean up after their dogs in off-leash recreational areas, based on studies conducted in parks throughout the country. This social pressure is not as concentrated outside parks. Finally it is not uncommon for park users to clean up after irresponsible dog owners because they value their off-leash recreational areas and do not want to have their existence jeopardized.

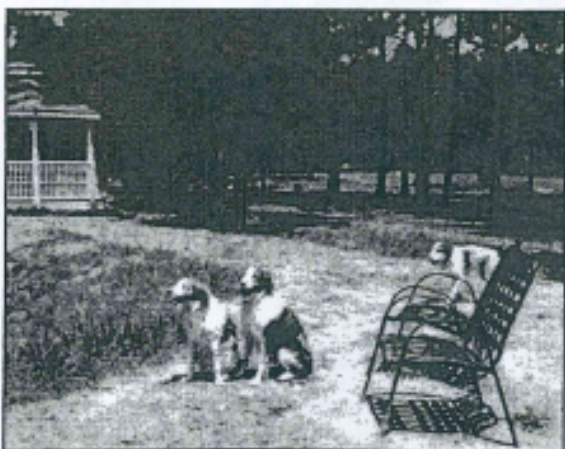
*Who will be responsible for enforcing the park rules?*

Most off-leash recreational areas are informally monitored by park members who use the park. The Dog Park Club of Indian River will spearhead this effort as well as set up a grievance process.

**How Can I Help the Park Development or Get an Application For Membership**

- Donations are needed toward:
- Fencing
  - Landscaping
  - Benches
  - Waste System
  - Water Fountains
  - Maintenance
  - Security System
  - Parking area
  - Signs
  - Dog Rinse Area
  - Walking Paths

Information on applications for membership can be obtained by contacting Shelly Ferger at (561) 567-8969. You can help now, by sending your tax-deductible donation toward development of the Off-Leash Dog Park to: The 4-H Dog Master's Club, P.O. Box 1792, Vero Beach, FL 32961.



**LOOK INSIDE FOR NEWS...EVENTS...UPDATES...AND MORE!**

P.O. Box 6895, Vero Beach, FL 32961



**Subscriptions**

Would you be interested in receiving The Barker Bulletin on a quarterly basis. If so, updates on the center's activities as well as dog related issues will be sent to you at the cost of \$20.00 per year. Please call Shelly Ferger for more information 567-8969.

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- Puppy & dog socials
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2055 13th Ave. • Vero Beach • 567-8969



**MAY**

VERO BEACH

# County planning staff gives off-leash dog park once-over

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

Dog lovers unleashed plans for a new park for their four-legged friends on county planning staff on Wednesday.

The Indian River County Technical Review Committee examined a proposed site plan for the 2.5 acre off-leash dog park planned for 12th Street at 16th Avenue. The committee examines development plans to ensure they comply with county codes.

Planning staff raised hackles of park organizers by recommending that the park include a 6-foot masonry wall along the eastern property line to protect adjacent residents from noise.

"This is a project that doesn't have a lot of money," said Randy Mosby, the engineer designing the park. "A 6-foot high masonry wall would be the most expensive part of the development."

Organizers are paying for the park through private donations and fund-raisers.

Mosby estimated the wall would cost about \$26 per foot. The eastern edge of the property is 300 feet to 400 feet long. Planner Jeff Blackstone said, which would put the cost of the wall at \$7,800 to \$10,400.

The park is envisioned as a spot where area dogs can romp unfettered with their masters and other dogs, organizer Shelly Ferger said. That socialization

should keep barking to a minimum.

"Studies show that barking is less with a dog park," Ferger said. "Barking occurs out of excessive frustration and boredom. When they're running in a dog park, they've got other things on their minds."

Community Development Director Bob Keating said the wall is only a recommendation and that organizers can meet the buffering requirements with a 3-foot berm planted with shrubbery. A wooden fence would also work, if the Planning and Zoning Commission gives permission to use one.

"We're at a disadvantage because we don't know how a dog park operates," Keating said. "But

I'm sure when this goes to Planning and Zoning they're going to empathize with the surrounding property owners."

Organizers also snarled over a Utilities Department requirement that the park be connected to the county water system. They said such a connection is unnecessary because the park won't have bathrooms and the only water on the site will be used to cool thirsty dogs and rinse dirty ones.

The club wants to provide water with a private well.

"When people aren't going to be drinking the water, saying you have to connect, that's pushing the law," Mosby said.

Mosby said the park will be open to dog club members only and will be monitored so that people don't drink from the spigots.

Utilities engineer Mike Hotchkiss responded that thirsty park visitors aren't likely to refrain from drinking the water, regardless of the source.

"If it's there, it'll be used for whatever people want to use it for," he said.

Mosby said applicants shouldn't be required to respond to every contingency.

"Somebody can break into your house and drink out of your commode and you can't stop them there," he said.

At the end of the debate, Hotchkiss said he would have to consult his superiors, but park organizers may be allowed to use well water if they erect signs warning that it is unfit for human consumption.

After the meeting, Ferger said such glitches are to be expected whenever a new concept comes to a community.

"We're breaking ground, and that's what's important," she said. "Any progress is progress."

Organizers hope to bring the park plans before the Planning and Zoning Commission on May 25.

## Dog lovers lease land for dog park

■ A local property owner is leasing the land for the "Best Friends" dog park at the northeast corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue.

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

After more than two years of begging unsuccessfully for help from Indian River County, dog enthusiasts have decided to fetch their own off-leash dog park.

A local dog lover and property owner has agreed to lease land for the park at the northeast corner of 12th Street and 16th Avenue, said Shelly Ferger, a leader of the 4-H Dog Masters' Club and organizer of the park effort.

Park advocates have formed the nonprofit Dog Park Club of Indian River and plan to work with the 4-H Club on the project. The 4-H Club will raise funds and the dog park club will manage the facility, to be named the 4-H "Best Friends" Dog Park, Ferger said.

The campaign for the park began with a petition drive in October 1997, and the 4-H Dog Masters' Club later adopted the project as its own, Ferger said.

"This is our main community service project," said 4-H Dog Masters' Club President Lindsey McAlarnen, 11.

"We'll still donate food to the Humane Society and raise money for K-9 bulletproof vests, but this'll be where most of our money will go."

Organizers plan a 2.5-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station and bathing area where dogs can be allowed to exercise and socialize without leashes.

Although county officials had promised help in establishing the park, organizers decided to go it alone because they were making no progress toward finding a publicly owned site.

Then the proposed site became available at a bargain price, Ferger said.

"We were always looking for other properties, but we weren't really in the financial position to just lease 2 acres," she said. "I think we're disappointed the county wasn't willing to work more with us."

Jocelyn Woodruff, president of the Dog Park Club, said the group hasn't given up on county involvement.

She said one park will increase the demand for such facilities, and hopefully the county will respond.

"I think if this is a success, it will open doors for other parks," Woodruff said. "We just have to show that it works."

...ing to appear all over the state, citrus officials said.

In Carter's case, he began replacing sour-orange rootstock

problem, growers still view citrus canker as the bigger potential threat.

Canker is a tree-killing, leaf

(tristeza).

"Do you want to be shot in the head or shot in the gut?" he asked rhetorically.

## Park

■ CONTINUED FROM A1

Ferger said the county has a responsibility to provide recreational opportunities for dog lovers, just as it provides public facilities for tennis players, golfers, boaters and others.

"We haven't given up on the county effort," she said. "We want the county to look at dog recreation areas as part of their long-range planning for parks."

"Everyone has their interests. I pay taxes, but I don't play basketball; I don't play soccer."

County Commission Chair-

man Fran Adams praised the group for its initiative.

Adams also chairs the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

"For the time being, they have it under control," Adams said. "They've got a piece of property that's better than what the county has or can get for them. They've got a better deal than they could ever get from the county."

The dog clubs have raised \$14,000 in cash and \$3,000 worth of in-kind donations toward the park project. They expect a budget of about \$50,000 and hope to begin construction in May and

finish by July.

In order to exercise tight control, the park will be open to members only, Ferger said.

Membership will require attendance at a canine behavior workshop, a canine temperament evaluation, county licensing, proof of vaccinations and a membership fee to help maintain the park.

The number of memberships available and their cost have not yet been determined.

Those interested in making a donation toward the park can call Ferger at 567-8969 or write to 4-H Dog Masters' Club, P.O. Box 1792, Vero Beach, Fla. 32961.

## Criticism forces university to alter policy

By PAGE IVEY  
Associated Press Writer

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Bob Jones University is dropping its ban on interracial dating in the wake of the criticism that followed George W. Bush's visit to the school.

"As of today, right now, we're dropping it," Bob Jones III said on CNN's "Larry King Live" Friday night.

During Bush's appearance at the fundamentalist Christian school last month, the Texas governor told his audience that he shared their views. Bush later apologized for failing to criticize the school's anti-Catholic views and racial policies during his visit to the Greenville campus.

"I'm pleased that they've changed the policy," Bush said

Friday while campaigning in New York.

"Right after my speech, I spoke out against the policy. The university has made the right decision," Bush said.

The school banned interracial dating, although it started admitting black students after it lost its tax exemption in 1983 after a 13-year battle with the Internal Revenue Service that cited the school's discrimination.

Jones told King that the school had no biblical reference to support its ban, but that it was "an insignificant" part of the school's stance against a one-world order.

Jones said the blending of worldwide governments, ethnic groups and religions would signal the coming of the Antichrist and so the school stands against that.

Earlier Friday, the university

used full-page newspaper advertisements in USA Today and South Carolina's largest newspapers to answer some of the national criticism directed at it.

GOP candidate Alan Keyes, who recently spoke at Bob Jones University, said Friday night he thought lifting the ban was "a good step forward."

"As you know I'm married to an Indian American, so our marriage would have violated their own guidelines," he told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley said through a spokesman: "It's about time."

The university, in the Appalachian foothills city of Greenville, has 3,500 students. It has long established itself as a bastion of fundamentalism.

and orange trees because it grows the best citrus in the warmer, wetter climate here, growers say.  
Citrus tristeza attacks all rootstocks, but sour orange is the most susceptible.  
And since the Indian River district is the world's grapefruit capital, the problem is most significant for those growers.

... trees as the virus is already prevalent in groves.  
"Everyone who has sour-orange rootstock has tristeza and an estimated 60 percent of the trees in the Indian River district are from sour-orange rootstock," said Stan Carter, the citrus division manager for MacArthur Farms and the production committee chairman for the

ices for consumers, depending on far production dips, the economic message is if tristeza becomes widespread, instead of 50 million boxes, you will see 35 million boxes, which may mean higher prices for consumers.  
n said after the meeting.  
However, while agreeing with their

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

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

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

#### **The Dog Park is open!**

As of Monday, May 4, the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park is "un-leashed" for 25% capacity.

Please follow these guidelines:

Continue to practice social distancing: Keep gatherings to 10 people or less and stay at least 6 feet apart.

Wash your hands or sanitize before and after pressing buttons to dog park access gates, chairs, faucets, etc.

Soap pumps are provided at water stations as always.

If you're sick, stay home!

Thank you for the cleaning supplies donations. Your contributions will help get the organization up and running quickly! Please visit our website at [dogsforlifevb.net](http://dogsforlifevb.net).

#### **First Wednesday of each month**

**Monthly meeting,** Vietnam Veterans of Indian River County, 6 p.m. at VVIRC Office, 696 8th Court, Vero Beach. For more information email VVIRC at [vvirc@comcast.net](mailto:vvirc@comcast.net), or at our website [VVIRC.org](http://VVIRC.org). You can also call us at (772) 794-0005.

#### **Third Saturday of the Month**

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

The April 18 meeting of the USN Armed Guard/Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII Museum was canceled due to COVID-19. You will be updated regarding the status of the 16 May meeting. The Museum has temporarily closed due to COVID-19; however, the expenses are ongoing. We would greatly appreciate a donation from you and/or someone that you know who might be interested in helping to keep the Museum open and the story of the USN AG/MM alive. Donor names will be listed on the Museum Honor Roll for all to see. To receive

**U.S. Navy Armed Guard** World War II veterans, monthly breakfast meeting,

9 a.m. at Marsh Landing Restaurant, 44 North Broadway, Fellsmere. Interesting and informative speakers at each meeting.

Please try and get to the restaurant early so you can get your order in before the kitchen gets busy. A lot of work was accomplished over the summer at the USNAG & MM Museum.

Come and enjoy the camaraderie of your old buddies and meet some new ones. Everyone is welcome at our meetings, so please bring a friend.

For anybody that needs a ride to the meetings, please call Korky at (772) 571-0230.

**Please note: Meetings are held September through May. There are no meetings June through August.**

#### **First Thursday of each month**

**Korean War Veterans Association,** Chapter 318, meets from 11 a.m.-noon at Vero Beach Veterans, Inc. 2500 15th Avenue, Vero Beach.

#### **Second Wednesday of the month**

**Monthly meeting,** Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1038, 6 p.m., Victory Center Military Store in the Vero Mall. For more information email [vva1038@yahoo.com](mailto:vva1038@yahoo.com) or [www.vvachapter1038.org](http://www.vvachapter1038.org) or call 772-562-8794.

#### **Second Monday of each Month**

**Monthly meeting,** American Legion Post 39, 1535 Old Dixie Highway, Vero Beach. E-board meeting begins at 6 p.m., followed by general membership meeting at 7:30 p.m.

#### **First Wednesday of the Month**

**Monthly meeting,** Veterans Council of Indian River County, 1 p.m., County Administration Complex, Building B.

a donation form, please contact C.F. "Korky" Korker, President, phone: 772-571-0230, or E-mail: [korkykorker@gmail.com](mailto:korkykorker@gmail.com)

#### **Fourth Thursday of the Month**

**Monthly meeting,** Indian River Detachment of Marine Corps League, 7 p.m., at the Victory Center in Indian River Mall.

# CALENDAR



The background of the entire page 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.

**MARCH**

# Off-Leash Playground

## Off-leash Playgroups expanded to Saturdays

As of March 4th, 2000 Shelly's has expanded its off-leash playgroups to include Saturdays. Lizzy Warner's "Mom" Janet, informed us that Lizzy just couldn't wait from Thursday to Tuesday without a playgroup. See how accommodating we are!

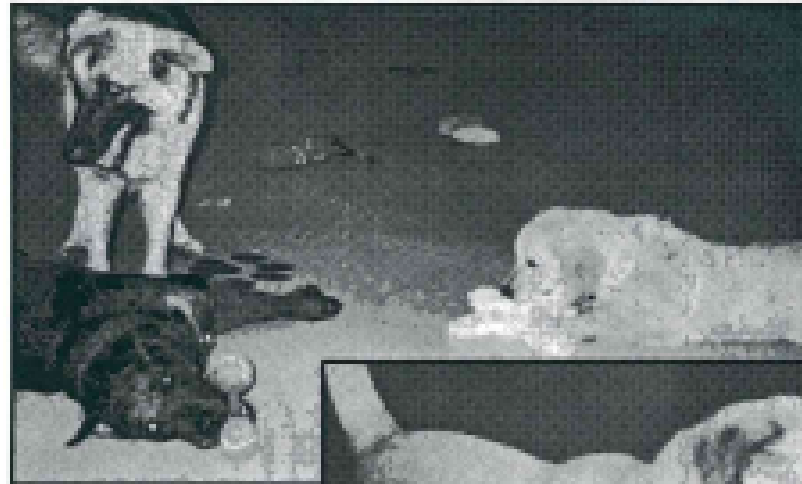
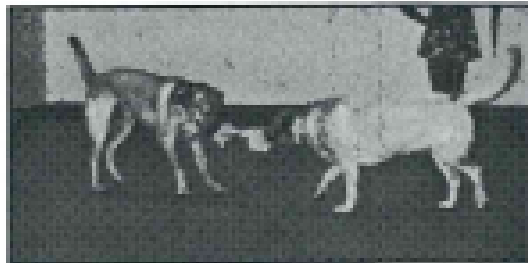
### Small dog playgroup

Saturday at 8 A.M.  
Tuesday at 10 A.M.  
Thursday at 9 A.M.

### Large dog playgroup

Saturday 9 A.M.  
Tuesday 9 A.M.  
Wednesday 6 P.M.  
Thursday 10 A.M.

Reservations required. For additional information please call Shelly 567-8969.



(PLAYGROUP PHOTOS)

## FDGFD Lifetime Achievement Awards

By Beth Stryker

Two Volunteers from our district recently received Lifetime Achievement Awards from Florida Dog Guides for the Deaf, Inc. Dot Davidson past President of the Vero Beach district, trained the first hearing dog guide on the east coast, "Sonar". He was adopted from the Humane Society of Vero Beach in 1989. "Sonar's" silent partner Beverly was also honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award. FDG Vero Beach President Shelly Ferger, Beth and hearing dog guide "Bandit" attended the awards ceremony honoring these two outstanding volunteers.



Dot Davidson and Beverly Barger receive Lifetime Achievement Awards

# Humane Society Walk-A-Thon

## Shelly's Supports Humane Society's Walk-a-Thon

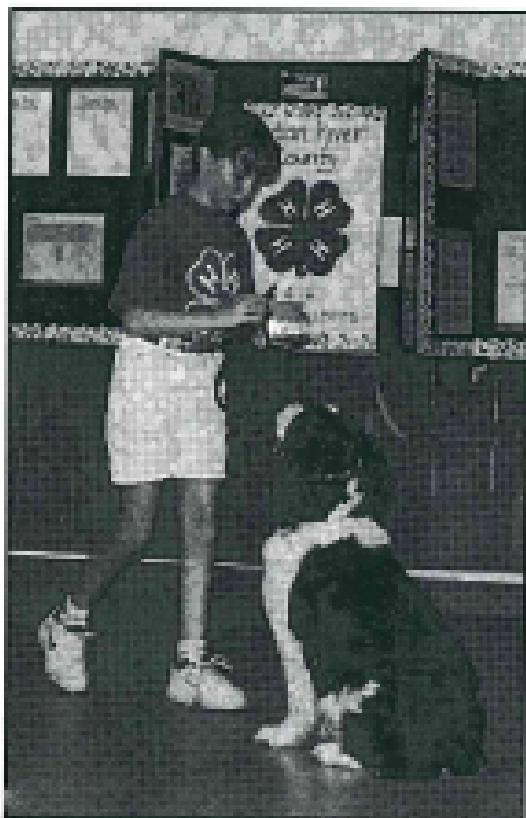
Poco Fergar, Shelly's Official Mascot, participated in the Humane Society of Vero Beach's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Dog Walk-a-Thon at MacWilliams Park on March 28, 1998. More than 150 dogs took part in the walk-a-thon. Dr. Kim Crawford held a great fund-raiser for the Humane Society. Pete Lenz was the Number One individual fund-raiser.

*Congratulations Pete, well done!  
Lindsey McAlarnan, I.R. County  
4-H Dog Master, came in second.*



Poco proudly wears his 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk-a-Thon T-shirt.  
Photo by: Theresa T. Motley

## 4-H Dog Masters Club Kicks Off Fund-raising Drive at Shelly's



4-H Dog Master Member Lindsey McAlarnan demonstrates with her English Springer Spaniel Barclay.  
Photo by: Pawtraits

The Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club kicked off their fundraiser for the First Off-Leash Dog Park at Shelly's Open House. Over \$500 was raised toward fencing, landscaping, benches and maintainance for the park.

Display boards presented information about the benefits of a Off-Leash Dog Park to canine and human residents of I.R. County. Dog Master Member Betsy Yount gave a presentation on the "Tragedies of Pet Overpopulation". Dog Master Member Lindsey McAlarnan and her dog Barclay demonstrated a dog obedience routine. Both Lindsey with Barclay and Betsy with her dog Olive, showed off tricks, much to

the enjoyment of the crowd.

If you are interested in helping with the planning, fund-raising or would like information on how you can bring your dog to the park for recreation, call the club at 567-8969.

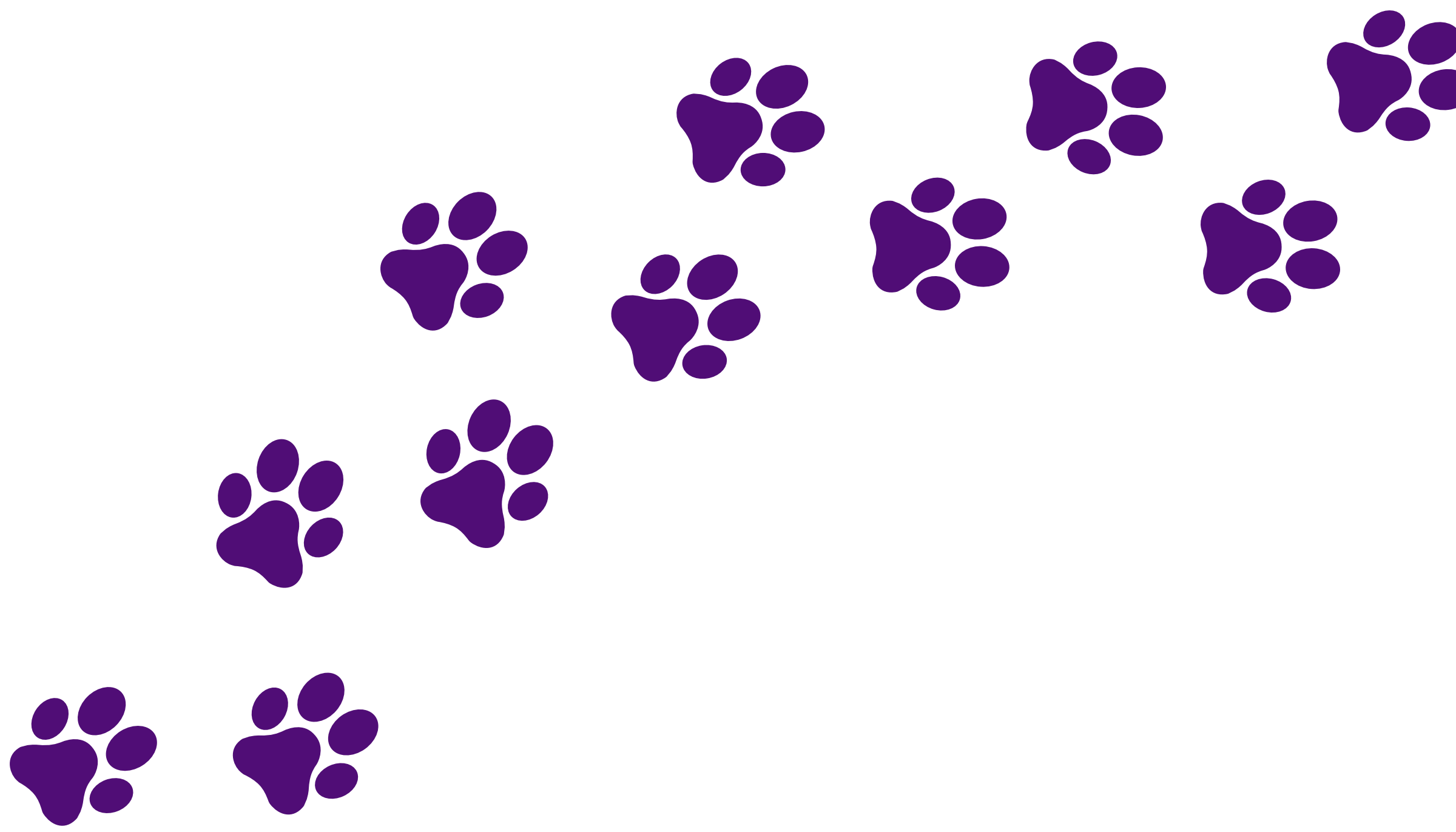
**THE BARKER BULLETIN**  
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF GREAT CANINE CHARITABLE EVENTS

**Editor/Publisher: Shelly Fergar**  
**Layout: Eric Haller**

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# Scrapbook

## 1999



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**SEPTEMBER**

# Volunteers hope county will help pay for off-leash dog park

■ Volunteers say job's too complicated for them to do properly

By **MICHAEL KAISER**  
Press Journal Staff Writer

While they will continue to sniff out funding, advocates of an off-leash dog park want Indian River County to dig up a site for and operate the facility.

The Off-Leash Dog Park Planning Committee agreed Thursday that the project is too big for a small group of volunteers if they want it done properly, said Shelly Ferger, owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center.

Members of the committee took a field trip to the Inno-Pet dog park in Coral Springs last week, where they realized the magnitude of the planning and construction of such a park.

"Seeing it first hand made us realize that it's beyond what we can handle as a group," she said. "We just are not in the position to handle the liability end of a dog park."

However, the group has raised about \$14,000 in cash and \$3,000 worth of in-kind donations, such as fencing, toward the park and will continue to raise more to help the county pay for the project.

"There are tons of people who are chomping at the bit to give us money," Ferger said.

Organizers want a 2-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station and bathing area where dogs can be allowed to exercise and socialize without leashes.

A petition drive for the park began in October 1997, and the 4-H Dog Masters' Club later adopted the project as its own, Ferger said.

The group voted Thursday to draft a "business plan" to outline what the dog park should consist of, how it will be paid for and how it should operate. The subject is scheduled to come before the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee in October.

The dog park committee has also printed up 1,500 fliers about

the park project and will distribute them during the Labor Day parade Monday in Vero Beach to generate more interest among the general public.

Organizers pointed out that the county has 28 golf courses, 10 tennis facilities, 17 beach access points, 19 parks and nine boat launches to meet the recreational needs of its residents; meanwhile, there is no place where pet owners can legally allow their pets to exercise without a leash.

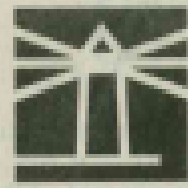
"We are taxpayers. We are dog owners. That's what we want to do for recreation," committee member Wendy Ballard said.



**AUGUST**

# Dog Park Gets Passed Over

D4 Press Journal Sunday, August 15, 1999



© SCOTT BOWARD

## Press Journal

Founded in 1919

"Give light, and the people will find their own way."

A10 Press Journal Saturday, September 11, 1999

### Don't use taxes for dog park

Do you want your tax dollars to pay for an off-leash dog park in Indian River County?

Wabasso does not even have drinkable water. Many streets do not have sidewalks or street lights. Some streets are not even paved in Vero Beach, and the street and lighting conditions are worse outside of the Vero area.

At 10 a.m. Oct. 7, the Indian River County Commission will be voting on whether to foot the bill for this park. The liability against being sued would be astronomical. A person to maintain and be on duty 24 hours a day is not what I want my tax dollars to go for.

How about you? Write or call your county commissioner at 1840 25th St., Vero Beach, Fla. 32960.  
Priscilla Painter  
Vero Beach

### Chance at dog park gets passed over

I must admit that after reading the Aug. 6 article on the dog park, I was somewhat confused. On March 30, after reading a similar article, I wrote a letter to Ms. Shelly Ferger suggesting some alternative sites for the dog park. Ms. Ferger said the county would not consider alternatives to the Humane Society location.

Finding this difficult to understand, I wrote Mr. Jim Davis, public works director of Indian River County, and again suggested some alternative sites. The county was extremely gracious and replied to my letter. It was willing to consider one of the sites in the Hobart area as a temporary park until the Humane Society site was feasible. I found this to be very reasonable.

The initiative was then back on Ms. Ferger to contact the county.

### LETTERS

At the time, I was away for an extended period of time. Ms. Ferger was copied on the response from the county, and I left word with her that I was out of town and that she might want to pursue this alternate site.

Upon returning, I found a message from Ms. Ferger that she had not contacted the county and was working with another group to secure property west on State Road 60. Her objection to the county proposal was the concept of a "temporary location," as the fence would eventually have to be moved when the Humane Society location became available.

I thought this was a minor inconvenience in light of finally getting the park. It is disappointing that a solution seemed close at hand in May, and now it's back to square one. I thought it was important for your readers to know that Commissioner Fran Adams, Mr. Davis and Mr. Jim Romanek, superintendent of parks maintenance, were, in my view, responsive and willing to help.

Judy Koehler  
Vero Beach





**APRIL**

# Shelly's Canine Community Center



The purpose of this letter is to inform residents of the Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club and its effort to establish an off-leash dog park. The Club is nonprofit and provides youngsters with the opportunity to care for and train their dogs. For two years this Club has been involved in many community service projects one of which is the establishment of a dog park. Food and toys are collected for homeless families at the Samaritan Center. Pet food, blankets, newspapers, and aluminum cans are collected for homeless animals at the Humane Society. Club members give speeches, on responsible pet ownership, to the public.

An off-leash dog park would benefit residents in many ways. An exercised dog is a happier, quieter dog. A socialized dog is less aggressive and makes a better neighbor. Use of a dog park would require inoculation, licensing, training and cleaning up after dogs. As with any park, rules are necessary. Established dog parks across the country have provided useful guidelines. More than 20,000 pet owners pay annual licensing fees to Indian River County. Many area residents are responsible pet owners. However, taxpayers pay over \$200,000 per year for sheltering animals belonging to irresponsible owners. User fees could be a source to offset costs.

There are 28 golf courses, 10 public tennis facilities, 17 public beach access points, 9 public boat launching sites, 19 county parks, and 16 city parks in this community. Dog owners should be allowed a safe area to exercise their pet off leash.

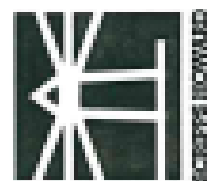
The Club's request to Indian River County and the City of Vero Beach has been for two acres of property and assistance with maintenance. Questions regarding club projects should be directed to Post Office Box 1792, Vero Beach, 32961.

Shelly Feger  
Leader, Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club

# Dog Park Benefits

112 Press Journal Friday, April 16, 1999

**Press Journal**



Founded in 1919

"Give light, and the people  
will find their own way."

© SCOTT BOWARD

## Opinion

### Dog park offers array of benefits

The purpose of this letter is to inform residents of the Indian River County 4-H Dog Master's Club and its effort to establish an off-leash dog park. The club is non-profit and provides youngsters with the opportunity to care for and train their dogs. For two years, this club has been involved in many community-service projects, one of which is the establishment of a dog park. Food and toys are collected for homeless families at the Samaritan Center. Pet food, blankets, newspapers and aluminum cans are collected for homeless animals at the Humane Society. Club members give speeches on responsible pet ownership to the public.

An off-leash dog park would benefit residents in many ways. An exercised dog is a happier, quieter dog. A socialized dog is less aggressive and makes a better neighbor. Use of a dog park would require

inoculation, licensing, training and cleaning up after dogs. As with any park, rules are necessary.

Established dog parks across the country have provided useful guidelines. More than 20,000 pet owners pay annual licensing fees to Indian River County. Many area residents are responsible pet owners. However, taxpayers pay more than \$200,000 per year for sheltering animals belonging to irresponsible owners. User fees could be a source to offset costs.

There are 28 golf courses, 10 public tennis facilities, 17 public beach access points, nine public boat launching sites, 19 county parks and 16 city parks in this community. Dog owners should be allowed a safe area to exercise their pet off leash.

The club's request to Indian River County and the city of Vero Beach has been for two acres of property and assistance with maintenance. Questions regarding club projects should be directed to P.O. Box 1792, Vero Beach, Fla. 32961.

Shelly Ferger  
Indian River County  
4-H Dog Master's Club  
Vero Beach

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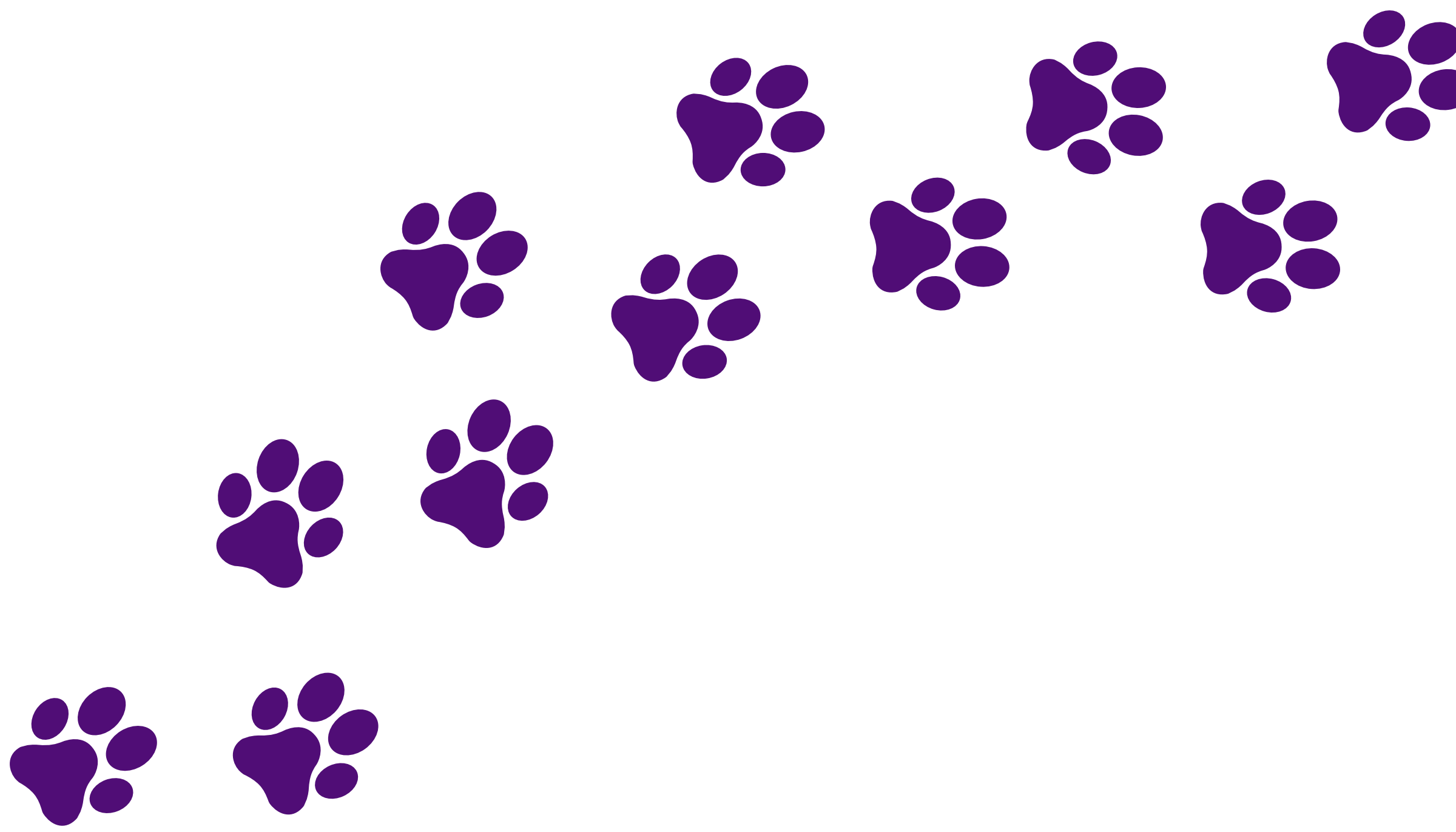
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# Scrapbook

## 1998





**SEPTEMBER**

# New Dog Park

A4 Press Journal Wednesday, September 16, 1998

COUNTY

## Dogs will chase more than their tails in new park

■ State Department of Environmental Protection has to approve use of 5 acres at former landfill

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

After months of barking up the wrong tree, Indian River County dogs took a step toward getting their own park on Tuesday.

The County Commission signed off on a plan to lease 5 acres of a former landfill on Gifford Road to the adjacent Humane

Society of Vero Beach for use as a park where dog owners can allow their pets to exercise unleashed.

The deal is subject to approval by the state Department of Environmental Protection, which is monitoring the site for pollution.

"There's no reason they can't use the top. There's no construction debris or stuff like that sticking out of the ground that could impale a dog," said Commissioner Fran Adams, who also chairs the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Adams said the county should get preliminary word on the permissibility of the use within 60 days.

Jim Bradner, DEP program manager, said there are two main concerns when developing a former landfill: whether the public might come into contact with contaminated materials and whether the ground can support any planned structures.

"One of the most common uses for old landfills is recreation areas. There's very little structural problems," Bradner said. "It sounds like the ideal sort of situation."

The Humane Society will work with the Indian River County 4-H Dog Masters' Club to develop the park, Executive Director Joan Carlson said.

"There is a tremendous need in

this community," she said. "There really isn't any place where you can take your dog. And for those of us who consider our dogs members of our family, that's important."

Club leader Shelly Ferger said plans call for a 2-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station, benches and hopefully a bathing area.

Eventually the park might include agility equipment so owners can put their pets through their paces on an obstacle course — a sport that is growing in popularity, she said.

The club has raised \$3,000 cash toward the park, and a fencing

contractor has agreed to donate \$3,000 worth of work toward the \$7,320 cost of fencing the park.

"We're so excited about the dog park," Ferger said. "One of the major reasons for canine behavioral problems is because they're underexercised. It makes a better dog."

The club has been trying since October to find a place for the park, Ferger said. A plan to temporarily use South County Park foundered on fears about mixing dogs with playing children and concern that owners wouldn't clean up after their pets.

The county then offered a trash transfer station in Oslo, but that site was too wild and inaccessible, Ferger said.

"It took us four-wheel drive to get in there," she said. "It would have taken too much effort and money to get it to where we could use it."

The club will hold a fund-raiser starting 10 a.m. Sept. 26 at Shelly's Canine Community Center, 2055 13th Ave. Members will offer the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen Test.

The event will also include the board game "My Dog Can Do That," which allows dogs to use their training and tricks to advance their team.

"Our dogs are our hobby and recreation," Ferger said. "We have a right to a place of our own."



**AUGUST**

# Volunteers hope county will help pay for off-leash dog park

■ Volunteers say job's too complicated for them to do properly

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

While they will continue to sniff out funding, advocates of an off-leash dog park want Indian River County to dig up a site for and operate the facility.

The Off-Leash Dog Park Planning Committee agreed Thursday that the project is too big for a small group of volunteers if they want it done properly, said Shelly Ferger, owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center.

Members of the committee took a field trip to the Inno-Pet dog park in Coral Springs last week, where they realized the magnitude of the planning and construction of such a park.

"Seeing it first hand made us realize that it's beyond what we can handle as a group," she said. "We just are not in the position to handle the liability end of a dog park."

However, the group has raised about \$14,000 in cash and \$3,000 worth of in-kind donations, such as fencing, toward the park and will continue to raise more to help the county pay for the project.

"There are tons of people who are chomping at the bit to give us money," Ferger said.

Organizers want a 2-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station and bathing area where dogs can be allowed to exercise and socialize without leashes.

A petition drive for the park began in October 1997, and the 4-H Dog Masters' Club later adopted the project as its own, Ferger said.

The group voted Thursday to draft a "business plan" to outline what the dog park should consist of, how it will be paid for and how it should operate. The subject is scheduled to come before the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee in October.

The dog park committee has also printed up 1,500 fliers about

the park project and will distribute them during the Labor Day parade Monday in Vero Beach to generate more interest among the general public.

Organizers pointed out that the county has 28 golf courses, 10 tennis facilities, 17 beach access points, 19 parks and nine boat launches to meet the recreational needs of its residents; meanwhile, there is no place where pet owners can legally allow their pets to exercise without a leash.

"We are taxpayers. We are dog owners. That's what we want to do for recreation," committee member Wendy Ballard said.

# Humane Society has to unleash proponents for county dog park

■ The Humane Society is busy with its own expansion, so the dog park issue will go back to the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee in order to find a new county-owned site suitable for it

By MICHAEL KAISER  
Press Journal Staff Writer

A petition drive for the dog park began in October 1997 and the 4-H Dog Masters' Club later adopted the project as their own, Ferger said.

The county and the club examined and rejected several sites before the Humane Society got involved in September 1998. A proposal to use part of South County Park foundered on fears about mixing dogs with playing children and concern that owners wouldn't clean up after their pets.

The county then offered a former trash transfer station in the Oslo area, but the site was too wild and inaccessible, Ferger said.

to work on the dog park in the near future, said Shelly Ferger, owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center and an organizer of the park campaign.

"The Humane Society is undergoing a major shelter expansion, and the dog park ended up being a back-burner priority for them," Ferger said. "We just didn't want to be in a position where we had to wait."

Organizers want a 2-acre fenced and landscaped site with a watering station and bathing area where dogs can be allowed to exercise and socialize without leashes, Ferger said. Eventually the park might include agility equipment so owners can put their pets through their paces on an obstacle course — a sport that is growing in popularity.

"We've got a lot of people chomping at the bit to have a place for their dogs to recreate," she said. "There is not one park or place in this county where dogs are allowed (off-leash)."

The dog park issue will go back to the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee in order to find a new county-owned site, said Ferger and County Commission Vice Chairman Fran Adams, who chairs the parks committee.

Adams, Ferger and Public Works Director Jim Davis will examine lists of county-owned property in order to come up with some recommendations for the committee's September meeting, Adams said.

"It looks like we're back to square one with those folks," Adams said. "We'll just have to study what the available properties are and their needs and come up with something that's compatible for both."

missioners decided that the site could also serve as a dog park.

However, the society's time and resources are currently devoted to a \$2.3 million plan to build a new adoption and education center, Executive Director Joan Carlson said.

"It is something that's needed in this community," Carlson said. "We support the efforts to establish a dog park. In the future we want to be able to help. It's just that at this time we can't."

On July 27, the County Commission deeded the 5 acres of former landfill to the Humane Society. Current plans call for the group to use part of it for an access road and retention ponds. But, in the future, the remainder will be used for another public purpose, such as a wildlife rehabilitation center, Carlson said.

"It depends on what the community's needs are in the future," she said. "Hopefully, that land will have potential for a multitude of uses. There are many unmet animal needs in the community."

Ferger said she doesn't see the new development as a setback because giving the project back to the county should cut the waiting time.

"We never really wanted this to be any sort of problem or conflict between our club and the Humane Society. They just had different priorities than ours," she said. "We're happy we're back before the county."

Meanwhile, dog park organizers have raised about \$14,000 in cash and \$3,000 worth of in-kind donations, such as fencing, toward the park, Ferger said.

"We have the dog park: It's sitting in the bank," she said.

Backers of a proposed dog park are again sniffing out possi-





**MAY**

# County

## Garbage transfer station holds promise for dog park

**■ Parks Committee rejects South County Park as site because children play nearby**

By **MATT GRIMISON**  
Press Journal Staff Writer

An effort to carve out a sliver of South County Park for people to exercise their dogs failed Thursday, but backers are nipping at the heels of a second, more desirable site.

The Indian River County Parks and Recreation Committee

defeated a proposal to set aside an acre or more in the park for dog owners to let their pets frolic without the restraint of a leash.

But instead of killing the proposal, members breathed new life into it by suggesting a site of county-owned land off Old Dixie Highway at First Street would be better suited for the park.

"I'm encouraged with this," said Shelly Ferger, a member of the 4-H Dog Master's Club that is leading the park effort. "It sounds good."

County Public Works Director Jim Davis presented the idea of us-

ing an acre of South County Park on 20th Avenue for the dog area, which is proposed to be temporary while the Indian River County Humane Society develops a permanent park.

The park has space going unused and ample parking, and there is some room between the proposed park and ballfields.

Committee members began expressing concerns when Ferger asked them to double the space set aside for dogs, then brought up questions of liability, hours the park would be open and who would monitor the area.

And even with a buffer be-

tween fields and the dog area, there is a concern about a large number of children converging where children do, Vero Beach-Indian River County Recreation Department Director Pat Callahan said.

"It concerns me greatly when you take a youth activity area and bring in dogs because they do not blend," Callahan said.

There is the added issue of setting a precedent, Callahan said.

The area in South County Park being considered is tagged to be developed for athletic fields in the future, Callahan said, and putting the dogs there would change the park's original plans.

Once a conceptual plan has not been adopted for a park, it's not a good idea to change it, she said.

There was a motion to approve the idea in South County Park on a six-month temporary basis, but it died.

Further discussion brought up the idea of using the county land off Old Dixie Highway, a 25-acre site located on an old landfill that now houses a garbage transfer station and radio antennas.

It is isolated from any other recreational activities and has more space — around 20 of the acres are available, officials said.

The club has agreed to take on much of the responsibility for the dog area, including paying for the fence and any other improvements and buying liability insurance in case a dog bites someone.

Bakers said a dog area is needed because there are as many as 50,000 dogs in Indian River County, but nowhere they can be taken off their leashes legally, including parks and beaches.

The committee directed Davis to put together a proposal on allowing the park in that area and report back to it next month.

By **Lou Misselhorn**  
**FLORIDA TODAY**

**VERO BEACH** — A county advisory committee promised Thursday to look for county-owned sites, one on which to build a sports complex for a women's group and another one which dog owners can let their pets run unleashed.

The county's Parks and Recreation committee seemed encouraged that it could place a fenced in dog park on two acres at an old landfill site south of Vero Beach.

Such sites have become popular in South Florida and are in

## Committee also reviewing location for penned-in dog park

demand in the county. There are about 15,000 registered dogs in the county, but they are prohibited from running unleashed outdoors.

Officials couldn't make a firm promise for a site for a women's softball complex in the county. The county earlier this year offered to lease to the Indian River Women's Sports Association a nine-acre site in a Sebastian neighborhood, but residents complained it would cause too much noise and traffic.

The county will take up both

issues at next month's advisory meeting before sending them to a vote before the Indian River County Commission.

"There's a lot of land, but the challenge is to find a cleared spot where you don't have a nearby residential area," County Public Works Director Jim Davis said.

Regardless, the sports group's leader seemed pleased the county wants to help.

"They obviously seem to be committed to it, which is great," Tom Batchellor said.

Shelly Ferger, who has tried to spearhead a drive for a dog park for about a year, said she was excited about the committee's action.

She had asked the county to let her group have two acres in South County Park on 20th Avenue in Vero Beach on the agreement her group would raise the \$20,000 for the fence.

However, committee members were reluctant to commit to that site, saying it might lead to dog owners leaving their pets un-

attended at the park to go play at the nearby ballfields.

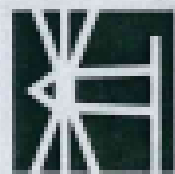
The dog park is intended to have owners supervising pets at all times.

Putting the park in an isolated area improves the chances that the idea will succeed, Ferger said.

"This sounds more like a long-term solution," said Ferger, the coordinator of the 4-H Dog Master's Club and the owner of a canine obedience school. "I'm encouraged by that idea. It sounds great."



**April**



Press Journal

Founded in 1919

"Give light, and the people  
will find their own way."

© SCOTT HOWARD

# Opinion

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

**FEBRUARY**

# Park in the Works

2A, Press Journal, Monday, February 9, 1998

## Vero Beach/County

### Park Just For Dogs? It Could Be Possible

#### Parks Committee Considers Request From Pet Owners

By CHRISTINA MITCHELL  
Press Journal Staff Writer

Man may not have figured out the meaning of life, but there is one indisputable principle in regards to his best friend: "Fido poops, therefore I scoop."

Of course, not everybody can be counted on to embrace that little jewel of transcendental canine thought. That's why Indian River County parks are off-limits to Spot and all his pooch friends.

Shelly Ferger, owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center on U.S. 1 south of Oslo Road, is hoping to change the rules a bit. She wants the county to create its first dog park — somewhere dog owners can take their faithful friends for unleashed exercise.

Dogs currently are not allowed

in county parks for sanitary reasons, said Jim Davis, county Public Works director. And most of the parks are geared toward small children, who often are frightened of animals, he said.

"For years, people have wanted a legal place to take their dogs," Ferger said. "We have off-leash play groups, and we wanted an opportunity for that to happen on a larger scale."

The Indian River County Parks and Recreation Committee — spurred by a petition signed by 108 county residents — directed staff this week to look into the idea. Davis said the county may be able to offer temporary facilities at South County Park until something more permanent is available at the Humane Society of Vero Beach.

Humane Society officials are in negotiations with the county for 5 acres adjacent to their 4701 41st St. site. That land is too swampy to support most development, but it might be a good location for a

dog park, society Director Joan Carlson said.

"It would be nice for the community if there was a place dog owners could bring their pets and not interfere with any other activities," Carlson said.

Davis said he expects staff to recommend a temporary dog facility — which would entail a fenced enclosure, agility equipment and pooper scoopers — for South County Park on 20th Avenue. That park is one of the least used in the county and has some vacant land available, he said.

"The park is a pretty good size; all they need is an acre," said Davis, who expects to return a proposal to the committee next month.

Dog parks especially are important to the well-being of puppies, Ferger said.

"For puppies to develop social skills with other dogs is so important," she said. "Most behavioral problems with dogs are because of social skills."

Page 4

Vero Beach FORUM

Feb. 27, 1998

## Humane Society wants pooch park to teach socialization

By Doug Bialecki  
Forum staff writer

Indian River County could have a park for dogs someday.

Joan Carlson, director of the county's Humane Society, said the society plans to negotiate with the county for five acres adjacent to their site for a park to be used exclusively by canines.

"It would be nice to have a park that people can bring their dogs to," Carlson said. "The area used to be an old landfill, so there's not much else it could be used for. This might happen down the road since we are currently planning a 20,000-square-foot expansion."

Before a permanent park becomes reality, a temporary park for dogs could occur.

Shelly Ferger, owner of Shelly's Canine Community Center on U.S. 1, said the county might offer a one-acre tract at South County Park near Oslo Middle School.

"The goal is to have a place where people can bring their dogs, unleash them and not be concerned with animal control prob-

lems," Ferger said. "This is certainly needed, it has always been an issue. We get calls all the time from people asking us where they can take their pets."

A petition for a dogs-only park, signed by 108 county residents, was recently presented to the Indian River County Parks and Recreation Committee, she said. The committee plans to issue a recommendation later this month.

Currently, dogs are not legally permitted in county parks.

If approved, the park would emulate a similar facility in Coral Springs, Ferger said.

"They have dogs go to their park all the time so if one becomes available here, people will use it," she said. "This would enable the dogs to develop social skills with other dogs. Usually a dog is being walked and does not have the opportunity to interact with other dogs. This would be a window of opportunity for the dog to learn how to behave."

The proposed park would have a fence

enclosure, agility equipment and pooper scoopers, Ferger said.

"We have to raise money for this equipment so we plan to have some fundraisers in the near future," she said.

Anyone interested in raising funds for the proposed park can call Ferger at 567-8969.

