

News PRINTS

Vol. 20 / Issue 2 / Fall 2020



Members of the Treasure Coast Jeep Club present a check to Dogs For Life. (L. to R) Trish Keller - Customer Relations Manager Vatland Automotive with Gigi, Ralph Wnuk with Zoey, Roy Griffith, Julie Martin-Lillquist, Stacey Griffith, Jameson Ward - Jeep Club President, Denise Adams, Shelly Ferger - DFL CEO with Honey, Lee Rech - Jeep Club Secretary, Michelle Dale - AGSMIRC President with Sunny, and Jim Hoekzema - Jeep Club Vice President. Photo by Ben D'Andrea.

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What's New?

The Foster Dog/Puppy Program

This program, the most popular of all DFL programs, gives volunteers the opportunity to learn how to raise a puppy from 8 weeks to 8 months of age. Puppies are raised in an “in-home” environment where they learn all the ins and outs of family life. Foster families learn to care for the dogs at home and through trips to the veterinarian and weekly trips to the DFL Training Center for puppy class. They continue into Level 1 and 2 obedience and introductory task training until the dogs are placed with their disabled owners. The teams then move on to public access work and certification.

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NEWSPRINTS Spring 2020 Correction

DFL is grateful that Michael Wright, US Army (Ret.) RCSWI/MCAP, agreed to be featured in our Spring 2020 issue. Unfortunately there was a typo in a very important statement in the article made by Michael.



The paragraph should have stated, “I have seen this as an Airman, a soldier, a social worker and a chaplain and those experiences led me to believe that though people suffer from mental health issues, diseases, addictions and phobias, that does NOT define who they are, it’s just a part of their human tapestry and in that sense I feel we can be of service in some way, shape or form.”

From the President



*President Eleanor M. Bengyak
with her service dog Rufus*

Although all Dogs For Life teams that were in training prior to the COVID-19 quarantine have returned, DFL has seen a slow down with new clients because of the pandemic.

Because DFL is listed as one of five organizations accredited with Assistance Dogs International, people from all over Florida contact our small organization. We have become an important resource for so many, in particular veterans.

DFL is one of the few organizations that people said called them back or replied to an email while they are searching for a service dog. Although our accreditation requires a six-month relationship with any team to certify, we are willing and able to assist anyone with information concerning the laws

associated with service dogs, what types of dogs to look for and how to train a service dog on their own.

The Off-Leash Dog Park has seen an increase in members, who are happy to be outdoors where it's easy to social distance, while their dogs are also exercising and socializing.

The Board of Directors are moving forward with planning fundraisers, hoping for the best and examining new and inventive ways to hold events, as well as having a back-up plan in the event the conditions worsen.

So, while the effects of the pandemic have slowed us down in the physical sense, we have not really slowed down assisting people with disabilities.

Founder and CEO

What happens when a pandemic occurs and Florida's governor tells you to shut down your organization?

Well, you shut down. However, we were prepared, and all staff members were equipped with laptop computers and the ability to log in from home to our respective data bases.

Daily mail and telephone messages were checked, and information continued to be distributed to our clients, volunteers and prospective clients.

The DFL Board of Directors continued to conduct the organization's business via regular emails and telephone conferences. In the third week of the shutdown, Indian River County officials deemed DFL's Service Dog Program as essential and trainers got back to work!

For two weeks, we trained two clients at a time with their dogs; and when the quarantine was lifted, all teams were back to a regular training schedule, following new safety procedures.

Once confidence was built in DFL's COVID-19 safety procedures, which

include temperature taking, hand washing and disinfecting practices, our front desk volunteers were back to work on a regular schedule.

We continue to conduct all our programs within the requirements handed down by local and state government officials. DFL's safety procedures are firmly in place.

Training service dog teams takes six months to over a year to reach certification. When we are shut down, even for a short period of time, our educational programs take a hit, but like many we've made it work and are proud of our Board of Directors for leading our staff and volunteers through a turbulent time.

PTSD SUPPORT GROUPS

During the COVID-19 shut down, Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County created a virtual platform for DFL therapists Michael Wright and Tom Metzinger to continue offering support group meetings for anyone with post-traumatic stress syndrome.

Michelle Dale, DFL vice president and president of Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County, also secured funding to offer telephone support to any veteran during the initial crisis.



*Founder & CEO Shelly Ferger
with service dog St. Cloud*

Once the quarantine was lifted, regular PTSD support group meetings began again at the DFL Training Center, providing support for mental health issues that our veterans find themselves facing as they withdraw from life, isolate themselves, self medicate, and in far too many cases commit suicide.

Dogs For Life is doing everything within its power to learn more about Post Traumatic Stress and to help those suffering with its effects.

JEEP CLUB

“Goes Topless” for DFL

Just before COVID-19 shut down public gatherings, the Treasure Coast Jeep Club had selected Dogs For Life to be the recipient of its annual “Go Topless Day” fundraiser. It was scheduled for May 16 at Hobart Park in Indian River County.

Go Topless Day is an annual tradition that celebrates the return of spring and the sense of adventure and comradery that comes with owning a Jeep. Thousands of Jeep owners around the globe “drop the top” and participate in a local Jeep community get-together.



While the raffles, games and food had to be canceled because of the pandemic, over 200 Jeeps rallied and with the assistance of the Vero Beach Police Department convoyed around Vero Beach and Indian River County on a mission to raise money for DFL. Their efforts resulted in over \$5,000 going to DFL.

“Thank you to the Treasure Coast Jeep Club, Vatland Jeep and Extreme Terrain for helping to pull off a successful fundraiser even in the midst of a pandemic,” said Shelly Ferger, CEO of Dogs For Life’s Veteran Dog Training Program.



Jeep Club members visited the Dogs For Life facility where their vehicles made themselves at home in the parking lot.

*Telly Antona, Mental Health Coordinator
Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County*

Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County: Still Serving



Telly Antona and Lila, an 8-year-old Labrador Retriever Mix.

The Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County was formed in 2016 to serve as a means of assistance, connection and social support for the veterans and their families residing in Indian River County. “Next Generation” refers to the generation of veterans who have served from 1990 to the present. In addition to serving vets, NGVIRC has also participated in efforts to assist people in the community.

Thanks to a collaboration between Dogs For Life and NGVIRC, a support group for veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress began in October 2019. During the challenging times of the last several months, the group has continued to do its part to provide constant support by changing the format of the meetings to an online format during quarantine. Now with social distancing rules in place and

with the health and safety of all participants in mind, the meetings have been moved back to the original in person format with temperature checks and masks provided as well as thorough sanitization protocols.

Though the name of the group has undergone a change, the commitment to assist those struggling with PTSD remains the same. Now named the “Veterans PTSD Recovery and Support Group,” meetings are still at 7 pm every Monday and facilitated by mental health professionals. With the help from American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County, and other organizations and members of the community, NGVIRC plans to further the reach of the group to the veteran community through upgraded advertisement.

NGVIRC has also broken ground on its Words from War Monument just outside



Veterans Memorial Island in Riverside Park. The monument honors those who have served in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts.

Veteran PTSD Recovery and Support Group

Mondays 7:00 PM

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

PTSD Coach Online Tools
ptsd.va.gov/apps/ptsdcoachonline/tools_menu.htm

Dogs For Life
Training Service Dogs For Veterans

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

Thomas R. Metzinger, LCSW, CCHT
Therapist/Owner Progressive Mind Center, PLLC

Love in the Time of COVID-19



Apologies for my 1985 literary reference, but I couldn't resist. It seems that our communication with one another lately has been akin to the love letter correspondence between Florentino and Fermina at

the beginning of "Love in the Time of Cholera," and we are in desperate need of face to face interactions.

Despite this playful correlation, collectively our stress levels have been at an all-time high, coupled with increased anxiety, confusion and miscommunication about what is real vs. not real as it relates to the current pandemic. I think we are definitely over it, yet it's not over us.

It's easy to see how our mental health has been challenged over the past few months. Usually Floridians can appreciate increased stress as we are faced with hurricane season, yet hurricanes are typically short-lived, and we can quickly return to normal. The stress felt by the pandemic on the other hand is more chronic and long lived. This poses a challenge for maintaining our mental health and intestinal fortitude, however, there is hope.

We can look to our veterans for advice on this and remind ourselves of our ability to adapt. Military members quickly learn how to "improvise, overcome and adapt" in response to stressful stimuli and we can too. I think that this is the big take away.

Things will NOT go back to normal. We must create a new normal. We must adapt. We must make positive changes to secure healthy lives in the present. And we are not alone. We have each other, well at least virtually for now, but we resolve to exploit each other's strengths and overcome challenges together.

The government's role is to do the thing that best supports the country, not necessarily individuals. This is why it is important for us civilians, service members, and veterans to be agents of change for each other. Stress is neither good, nor bad, it's just how you perceive it and how you use it to your advantage that matters.

So, use that stress response for good. Get some exercise and clean your space. Learn something new and engage in long forgotten hobbies. Do that "thing", whatever it is, that you've been putting off doing. And most of all, show love to yourself and show love to your brothers and sisters. Our mental health depends upon it.

Jim Romanek

Executive Director of Veterans Council of Indian River County

There's Just No Slowing Down



Jim Romanek with Savannah.

I would like to say we slowed down during the pandemic, but I am happy to say we haven't.

The Veterans Council of Indian River County has been open throughout the COVID-19 shutdown and reopening. We have

served over 64 veterans and their families with UAV emergency financial assistance totaling over \$70,000. Thank you to the COVID-19 gifts we

received from the United Way COVID Team and MOAA as we couldn't have done as much without them.

We also have not had to stop with the VHV program support during this time. Our VHV group, Terry Treat and Hap Allston have been hard at it supporting veterans with home projects to allow them to have a better quality of life that they deserve.

If you would like to reach out to support the Veterans Council, call 772-410-5820 or visit us on our website at www.veteranscouncilirc.org.

Michelle Dale, President

American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County

Walk-A-Thon for Suicide Awareness

The American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County, Inc. is making plans for the November 14, 2020 Walk-A-Thon for Military/Veteran Suicide Awareness.

Keeping our county aware of the struggles of our military and veterans is extremely important and necessary in this time of Covid 19 and the unrest in America. The stress felt by all Americans is more difficult for veterans as they have to deal with the trauma of their service in how it relates to both; especially the unrest in our country.

Veterans have fought and know many who are disabled from their service and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to keep our country safe. The unrest in our country brings to mind what they witnessed on deployment and what is now happening in America.

Because of the pandemic many veterans have lost their jobs; need to care for their children who are at home due to school closures; see their parents struggle with the stress of COVID-19 plus they must keep their own PTS under control. It is a time when we need to be available even more to help them with their trauma to keep them safe.

American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County, Inc. is reaching out to our community, who very generously donated to our cause last year. Prayerfully, many will be able to help us continue our work bringing awareness of Military/Veteran suicide and the importance of continuing to help those who gave up so much to keep us safe.

Proceeds from the 2019



Walk-A-Thon helped the Mental Health Association of Indian River County provide free walk-in mental health screenings and up to 10 therapy sessions for veterans who do not have insurance. MHA is working on establishing a veteran peer to train as a peer specialist and establish a liaison between veterans, the MHA and other collaborating outreach services.

The Next Generation Veterans of Indian River County collaborating with Dogs For Life have implemented the Veterans PTSD Recovery and Support Group to help the veterans in our community who struggle with post-traumatic stress. Whether the trauma is from military or combat service, sexual trauma, current job stresses, COVID-19 or the unrest in our country, our veterans could find healing and support from others in the community with like experiences.

The peer to peer group experience is a steady involvement of veterans from Vietnam era to current OEF/OIF. The group meets every Monday night at the DFL center at 7 with veteran therapists Thomas R. Metzinger or Michael Wright. Veterans are much more at ease speaking freely with another veteran rather than a civilian therapist who has no comprehension of the struggles they endured.

The funds donated from our 2019 Walk-A-Thon are being used to expand and continue the Veterans PTSD and Recovery and Support Group and continue committee meetings to explore ways to get the word out to our veterans. There are many regular members attending the Monday



night group sessions. Veterans in attendance have stated that they have benefitted more from these sessions than any counseling therapy they've had. It provides a safe, comfortable environment to discuss their issues with veterans who share the same problems.

The group sessions are held in a non-clinical environment creating a relaxed, comfortable and safe place to share and discuss their issues. Attendees realize they are not alone; that others experience the same feelings as they do and realize it is extremely helpful to open up and share. There are times when veterans in need just drop-in to help them cope with a particular stress of the day and leave with a feeling of thankfulness and relief.

American Gold Star Mothers of Indian River County, Inc. plans for our 2020 Walk-A-Thon include seeking sponsors and benefactors and encouraging participants to register online to plan a walk in their own developments virtually following CDC guidelines for their safety. Keeping the awareness of the struggles of our Veterans in the minds of our community and nation is vital to help reduce the numbers of veterans turning to suicide.

Contact Michelle at michdaleircgoldstarmoms@gmail.com.

Jim Taylor, Retired US Army with Pia Pia **Retire or Not to Retire**

By Dawn Taylor



When Jim retired from the U.S. Army and relocated to Florida, he had so many plans to travel and enjoy life.

However, one trip to Hollywood Studios destroyed that dream when Jim realized he suffered from debilitating anxiety and post-traumatic stress, resulting in him becoming home bound. He decided that maybe having a dog to keep him company would help.

Jim rescued Pia Pia, who was to become a companion dog for him. It was during her obedience training the trainer noticed Jim needed more than a companion dog and that Pia Pia had more in her than just being a companion dog.

When the obedience training was finished, the trainer introduced Jim and Pia Pia, a pug, to Dogs For Life. DFL was hesitant to accept Pia Pia as a service dog because of her breed, but she passed the temperament test and Jim was approved to move forward with Service Dog training.

Pia Pia and Jim worked diligently and within the year Pia Pia's first test came up and she passed. Jim and Pia Pia continued working on their own for six more months, resulting in Pia Pia becoming a Hearing/

PTSD Service Dog.

Pia Pia also has become Jim's angel and companion.

Jim is now able to again travel on planes and in cars for long distances, traveling across the country several times. Jim has gone to his retirement base in Washington state, along with Washington D.C., Old Faithful, Cheyenne, Lil Bighorn, Mount Rushmore, Sturgis Bikefest, Branson, Lake of the Ozarks, the Metalline Falls, an adorable little city near the Canadian border, the Corvette Museum in Kentucky, and even his basic training base in Alabama.

While in Alabama, Jim went to the USS Alabama, something he has been wanting to do, resulting in a photo of Pia Pia standing next to a bomb on their website.

Jim and Pia Pia also have traveled to North Dakota to see the birth of his first grandson; several times to Missouri to spend time with his daughter, and numerous times to Texas to spend time with his boys.

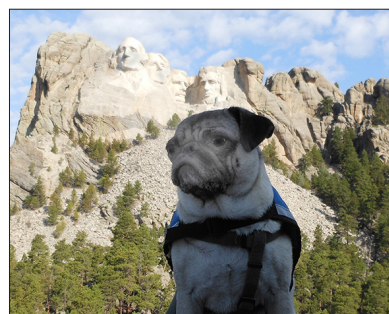
One huge hurdle was when Jim returned to Hollywood Studios with Pia Pia, but this time he enjoyed his visit. He laughed, enjoyed the park and even some of the rides. It was a totally different experience than before, something that could never have been done without Pia Pia by his side.

Two years ago for Christmas he surprised his boys and spent Christmas and New Years with them. It was a wonderful time and what was best was that everyone knew Pia Pia was the reason he was able to be there and spend time

with the extended family. She was included in all the festivities and even got more and better gifts.

On the way back from that trip, he knew something was changing but no one wanted to talk about it, yet it needed to be discussed. Things were changing for Jim because of his anxiety, PTSD, and other health issues. He knew it too.

It was getting close to time for Pia Pia's re-certification when Jim received some negative health information about his dog. Thank heaven she had good veterinarians and he has good doctors, but he knew it was time for them to retire as a team. Jim will not go back to being homebound, as he still plans to travel some, but he and Pia Pia plan to slow down and smell the roses.



Pia Pia still tags him when the doorbell rings or someone knocks at the door. So, you may take the service dog vest off the dog but you haven't taken the service out of the dog.

We are very appreciative for the 10 years of service she gave him and for those who took the time to train her; and Jim, who had faith that even a pug can be a service dog! Thank you!

Kris Hasenauer, US Army Veteran with Jasper
Jasper is a Game Changer!

By Katherine Bauman

Every placement at Dogs For Life seems like the perfect match between client and service dog. And the connection between U.S. Army veteran Kris Hasenauer and Jasper is no different.

Dogs For Life raised Jasper from eight weeks of age to adolescence, when he was ready to be teamed up with a DFL applicant. This process typically is second-nature, but sometimes it's just extra special but it's also not without some challenges.

"As a pup matures, we always look for its natural talents," said Shelly Ferger, founder and CEO of Dogs For Life. "Breed is always considered, but some traits are not naturally inherited by every pup in a litter. For example, a Labrador Retriever may not be a natural retriever. This was the case with Jasper.

"Actually his retrieving 'instinct' was in overdrive," said Ferger. "For example he always wanted something, almost like a pacifier, in his mouth which made it difficult for him to focus when asked to pick up or drop something. And he was a bit short for the average person to use for support, which ruled him out as a stability dog.

"But in walks Kris. And he just happened to see Jasper in the training center and said 'Now, that's the dog for me.'"

During the interview process, it was determined that Jasper was the perfect dog for Hasenauer, so placement was made and for the next year the two will continue to complete the Service Dogs For Veterans training program.

In question and answer format, Hasenauer recently shared more about himself and Jasper.

DFL: Kris, tell us about yourself. Where did you grow up and attend school?

Kris: I am 41 and I went to Sebastian River High School and Florida State University. I have a graduate degree from the Army's physician assistant program.

DFL: Why did you enlist and what branch of the military were you in?

Kris: I joined the military right after Sept. 11, 2001, and I have 19 years in the Army.

DFL: What was your rank and job in the military?

Kris: I am a Captain with a lot of prior enlisted time. I was a Special Forces medic and a physician assistant.

DFL: What would you like NEWSprints readers to know about your time in the military?

Kris: I love the military and it gave me a lot. I love the people and find the service rewarding. There were lots of challenges, and some that still need to be overcome.

DFL: How did you learn about Dogs For Life and its Service Dogs for Veterans program?

Kris: Google, for real!

DFL: What helped decide if you wanted or needed a service dog?

Kris: I have a friend with a dog that was particularly trained to help him, so I started looking into it.

DFL: Tell me about Jasper.

Kris: He is awesome! He is definitely a good compliment to me.

DFL: You've only had Jasper for a couple months: What is going well with your training?

Kris: He was very well trained when I got him, and he works well on his tasks.

DFL: How has your life improved with Jasper in it?

Kris: He helps me stay calm.

DFL: What is your advice to veterans considering getting a service dog?

Kris: Do it, it's a game changer.

DFL: What message would you like to leave with readers about Dogs For Life?

Kris: I just want to say thanks to your donors for the help and support.

The Service Dogs for Veterans program is just one offered by DFL, a nonprofit organization devoted to improving lives of veterans, first responders and other individuals by task-training dogs to provide independence and self-reliance for people with hearing or mobility issues or who suffer from post-traumatic stress.



Grants Awarded to DFL

Dogs For Life recently received assistance from a local charitable organization, university and business.

Head, Heart and Hands of Indian River Club

The Head, Heart and Hands of Indian River Club has awarded a \$10,000 grant to DFL to go toward the Veteran Dog Training Program.

After the Indian River Club's committee and board of directors interviewed DFL board members, staff, clients, veterans and other individuals with their service and hearing dogs in February, DFL staff learned the funds were granted in March.

A traditional check passing was not possible because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but plans are being made to have the Head, Heart and Hands committee members back to DFL as soon as possible.

Thanks to the generosity of clubs like this, service dogs can be trained at no charge for DFL's disabled clients.

University of Central Florida

In January, Dogs For Life partnered with a team of graduate students from the University of Central Florida to create a Strategic Plan focusing on advancing Dogs For Life's mission.

"We were excited for the collaborative effort that went into the planning as it has now moved our small, non-profit organization into its next stages of fund development planning," said Shelly Ferger, DFL Founder and CEO.

UCF has also selected to help DFL develop a Volunteerism In Non-Profit Management Plan. "We are coordinating this effort now and look forward to future reporting on this plan," said Ferger.

Target

Dogs For Life was excited to learn it was recently selected to participate in Target's Circle Partners Program, and that it had received over 25,000 votes and was awarded over \$4,000.

Officials from Target also informed DFL that it would be included in the next cycle of Target's Circle Program.

"Imagine our amazement when we received the grant and were told that support would continue," said Ferger. "Way to go Target! Thank you to the supporters who voted for Dogs For Life's Veteran Dog Training Program."



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Sponsorship

Have you ever wanted to name or sponsor a service dog or puppy? If you answered YES, Dogs For Life has just the opportunity for you or your business!

Individuals and businesses can sponsor puppies, dogs in training or a service dog team at Dogs For Life Inc. As a sponsor, you will receive benefits such as an advertisement, regular updates and photos of your pup or team, recognition at DFL Donor



Appreciation events and a great feeling knowing you have changed the life of a person with a disability.

From purchase to full certification at \$30,000, there are many levels of sponsorship opportunities. All DFL teams are listed on our website, so feel free to browse www.dogsforlifevb.org and let us know which puppy, or team you want to sponsor.

Service Puppies / Dog and Program Sponsors

Richard and Jane Manoogian
Kathi G. Schumann

Honey Bun, Golden Retriever
Kathi G. Schumann

GiGi, Golden Retriever
Mrs. James E. Heile
William Heile

Zoey, Labradoodle
Pam and Dennis Holisky
Legacy Golf Club

Savannah, Labrador Retriever
Rita and Bob Turner
Kathi G. Schumann
Patsy Daniels
Legacy Golf Club

Jasper, Labrador Retriever
Quality Solutions Support
Legacy Golf Club
Ellie Clinton

Ryder, Labradoodle
Martine and Charlie Furman
Legacy Golf Club

Platinum Corporate Sponsors \$100,000

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Sebastian Exchange Club
Spanish Lakes Fairways
St. Helen Catholic School
St. Lucie Battery & Tire
Treasure Coast Animal Emergency Hospital
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Vero Beach Veterinary Hospital
Vero Beach Country Club
Walmart
Windsor Properties
Zeran Jewelers

DFL Volunteer Trainers Workshop

Dogs For Life offers a variety of programs for veterans, volunteers and families interested in giving back to the Dogs For Life community.

Veterans Training Veterans

In its third year of programming, Dog For Life's Veterans Training Veterans program has trained over 80 volunteers, applicants and clients in all aspects of DFL's Service Dog Training Program. This program is offered twice a year and will be offered again in Spring 2021.

Trainers Workshop

The DFL Trainers Workshop follows the Veterans Training Veterans program. Attendees learn how positive reinforcement training methods can accelerate the learning process for dogs and how dog behavior can accelerate the training process for people. The laws associated with public access and what is involved in task training to mitigate their owners' disabilities also are explained.



Trainers Workshop Participants – (L to R Standing) Harriet McCarthy, Cassie Ford, Gale Bracken, Clayton Kettle, Diane Kimball, Denny Velarde, Bob Cheshire and Bo. (L to R Seated) Jasper, Maurine Turner, Barbara Defrino, Michel Brew and Judy Warman.



CITRUS THREE

Social Media Marketing

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Puppies! Teams!



Service puppy Zoey in training



Foster mom Sheri Taylor holding Savannah and Jasper



Service dog Honey teaching puppy Ryder not to mess with her bone

Foster Dog / Puppy Program

The DFL Foster Dog/Puppy Program is a training program that allows volunteers or clients to foster a service dog or puppy in training. This 3-part program instructs families or individuals on how to introduce a puppy or dog to a new environment and how to safely socialize dogs while teaching basic manners in a home.



Service dog Honey looks on as Savannah chews her bone

Participants must be available to bring their foster puppy or dog to weekly training classes and to attend workshops on higher level training as the foster puppy or dog progresses.

Topics to be addressed include:

- Puppy/Dog Socialization
- Puppy/Dog Health Care
- Basic Obedience Overview
- Introduction to Dog First Aid
- Dog Bathing and Handling

Who should plan to attend:

- Families or individuals that have attended Veterans Training Veterans and Volunteer Trainers Programs and are interested in fostering a service dog or puppy
- Families or individuals that can spend the majority of their day with a puppy or dog to help socialize and de-sensitize it in a suitable manner

Howl-O-Ween Mask-A-Rade

Yes, Dogs For Life is moving forward with plans to hold the 20th Annual Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Pawrade on October 24, but in a new way.

The venue will be the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park and Training Center, where the goal is to combine three events into one: DFL Class of 2019 Service and Veteran Dog Team Graduation, the Donor & Volunteer Appreciation BBQ, along with this year's Mask-A-Rade Pawrade.

All events will occur if Vero Beach and Indian River County moves into Phase 3 of the COVID-19 pandemic.



If Indian River County remains in Phase 2, only the Graduation and Donor & Volunteer BBQ will be October 24 since gatherings will be restricted to 50 people or less.

If we move into Phase 3, the Mask-A-Rade Pawrade will commence and vendors will be able to set up tents at this outdoor event. Also The Treasure Coast Jeep Club and the IRC Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit have been invited to demonstrate. Raffle baskets also will be presented for drawings at the end of the Pawrade. Proceeds from DFL's signature event helps to fund the Veteran Dog Training Program.

Graduation Ceremonies Postponed

Many disappointments have been associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, but no greater at DFL than the postponement of the April 4th Class of 2019 Service and Veteran Dog Team Graduation.

Traditionally, the graduation ceremony and DFL Donor & Volunteer Appreciation BBQ are on the same day. It is the one time a year graduates are

recognized for their hard work and dedication to service dog training, and the time DFL awards donors and volunteers who keep the wheels turning at DFL.

Graduates were given their service dog jackets and certification cards just before the quarantine began since they were trained and ready to go for public access.

2019 Service and Veteran Dog Team Graduates

Lauren Carr and Cocoa
Jessica Jacobs and Honey
Tammy Mandeville and Poppy
Kimberly Mann-Day (US Navy) and Elvis
Elizabeth McGoldrick and Oliver
Howard Rizio (US Marines) and St. Cloud
Earl Tindol (US Army) and Arrow
Claude Vitali (US Marines) and Beebe

2019 Donor and Volunteer Award Recipients

Kathi G. Schumann Award
Beth Stryker

Military Veteran Volunteer Trainer of the Year
Bob Cheshire (US Navy)

Military Veteran Volunteer of the Year
Steve Defren (US Army)

Volunteer Trainer of the Year
Linda Barberi, Sue Bergmann, Sally Dunn, Laurie Iodice

Foster Dog Family Award
Dave Kolesnik and Family

Individual Philanthropist Award
Robert G. Bowman, Kathi G. Schumann

Corporate Philanthropist Award
Dyer Auto, Coast To Coast, a Juniper Company





Dogs For Life

Training Service Dogs
For Veterans

Howl-O-Ween Mask-A-Rade Fundraiser

October 24, 2020

featuring the
20th Annual Howl-O-Ween
Dog Costume Pawrade



DFL Off-Leash Dog Park
1230 16th Avenue, Vero Beach

Free and Open to the Public

Outdoor Booth Space Available to Sponsors

Contact DFL at Office@dogsforlifevb.org
or call 772-567-8969



WINDSOR

Puppies ... Puppies ... Puppies

DFL Puppies Update

Dogs For Life has two labradoodle puppies in training thanks to the generosity of the Ladies Legacy Golf Club in Port St. Lucie. And thanks to being notified about the availability of a litter of labradoodle puppies right here in Vero Beach.

DFL was notified about the puppies when they were 6 weeks old, giving DFL the opportunity to temperament test the litter. On three different occasions, seven volunteers held, rolled over, tapped and poked the 11 puppies while evaluators recorded responses. When the pups were 8 weeks old, DFL made its selections.

“Here we are, eight months later, very happy with our pups, Ryder and Zoey,” said Shelly Ferger, DFL founder and CEO. “These pups have received the very best foster care and all the love we have to offer at the DFL Training Center.”



In eight months' time, the puppies have advanced from romps in the park and constant socialization to obedience Level 1 training classes. These pups will now move to Level 2 and the advanced obedience work required to prepare them for the task

work that will make them certified service or hearing dogs.

“Thank you to Rita Turner, committee chair of the Legacy Ladies, for your commitment to these pups and to Dogs For Life,” said Ferger.



Rita Turner presents a check for Puppy Sponsorship. (L to R) Joann Marozzi with Poppy, Rita Turner, Shelly Ferger, Kimberly Mann-Day with Elvis and Earl Tindol with Arrow.



VCA Florida Veterinary League

1360 US Hwy 1
Vero Beach, FL 32960
772-567-3070

Diane Kimball, US Navy Veteran with Ralfee

I Can't Wait to be a Trainer

By Katherine Bauman

As a young woman in her 20s, Diane Kimball's passions were diving, skiing and gymnastics; hobbies that suited her strong athletic body.

"Those were the things I loved to do," she said.

Now a mature woman in her 60s, she's found new passions to replace those youthful activities taken from her because of an injury she suffered in the Navy in 1978. It's her service dog Ralfee and the nonprofit organization that brought him into her life: Dogs For Life.

"I was very into those (athletic) activities, they were my hobbies and when they were taken away from me, it sent me into a tailspin," Kimball said.

Kimball's early passions led her to join the Navy in 1978, where she was one of the first women recruited, along with three others, to join the deep-sea diving program. "I was 21. It required wearing a 200-pound Mark V Deep Sea Diving suit. I probably weighed at the most 130 pounds," said Kimball.

The suit was made of brass, lead, and canvas. It's the same suit featured in the movie "Men of Honor," starring Cuba Gooding Jr. and inspired by the true story of Master Chief Petty Officer Carl Brashear, the first African-American master diver in the Navy.

"That suit, it just weighed a ton," she said.

She remembers being able to easily get into the water wearing it but getting out was a different story: "I had to walk up a ladder from a state of buoyancy. I could feel the weight of the suit bearing down the more I came up out of the water." She said she felt something in her lower back sort of pop: "I was young, so it didn't cripple me, but I knew something had happened. On my second dive a week later, I couldn't get up the ladder."

But she doesn't view herself as being handicapped. Yes, she has a brace on her leg and uses a cane occasionally but "I don't feel I have problems because I can walk," she said.

Kimball now has her service dog Ralfee, a Labradoodle,

thanks to Dogs For Life.

While Kimball doesn't consider herself disabled, her Navy injury continues to challenge her mobility. Thanks to seeing how a DFL Service Dog helped her friend Richie, she decided to have a service dog. "I started working with Ralfee and his sister Zoey in March," said Kimball. "I'd go in on Tuesday and Thursday and work with one or the other." COVID-19 and the government shutdown in April impacted the training, but things got back on track in May.

So Ralfee has been living with the Kimballs in their Sebastian home since May. "He's absolutely great in the house. Whatever room I'm in he comes in and lays down," Kimball said.

Ralfee is being trained to help Kimball with her stability and mobility issues. If she were to fall he's trained to push a 9-1-1 call button or retrieve her cellphone. He's also trained to provide support if he senses she's going to fall.

Dogs For Life provides Ralfee and his training at no cost to Kimball. And since she's a veteran, Ralfee is "a benefit, a working tool for me," so the VA will eventually help with the veterinarian bills.

Her goal once she's completed her Service Dogs for Veterans program is to help other veterans through Dogs For Life's Veterans Training Veterans program.

"I really love going down there," said Kimball. "I can't wait until I can be a trainer and help others, help veterans.

"I have to tell you, many things have happened in my life and there are times when I suffer from depression. It's been a real blessing to be working with Dogs For Life.

"Shelly is such a natural at training the dogs, they really respond to her. I'm committed to being in this program for up to two years and beyond."



Memorial Garden

Soon, the memorial garden located on the north-west corner of the 4.5 acre off-leash dog park will be upgraded.

Dog Park Committee members Eleanor Bengyak, Eddie Boatwright, Suzie Gomez and Laurie Iodice will oversee this project. The Bald Cypress trees in this area have had tremendous growth that has resulted in a root system that is interfering with the gate system and infringing on the memorial pavilion.

The decision was made to replace these trees with a species that is easier to maintain and friendlier to dogs' fur.

The memorial stone placement area will be expanded with a larger fence enclosure and walk in entrance gate will be installed.

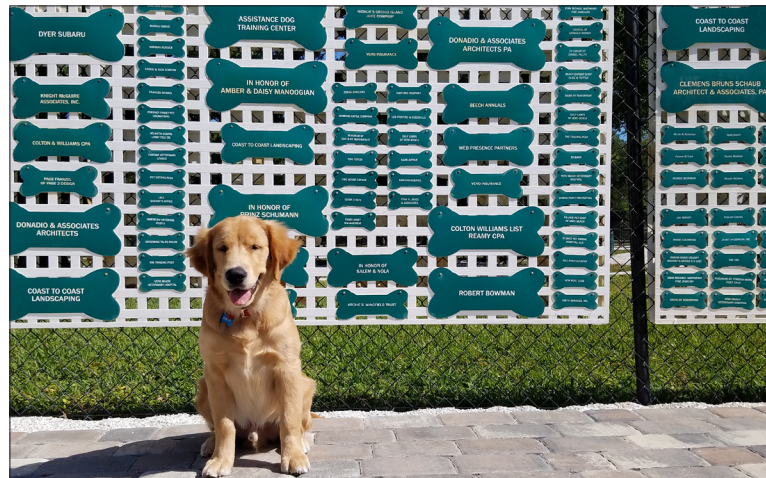
Any dog park members who would like to serve on the Dog Park Committee, please contact the DFL office at 772-567-8969.

Membership Up and Maintenance Projects Underway

During the summer months, dog park memberships normally slow down, however we've seen an increase in people and dogs joining the park.

Thank you to our members who refer the park to their friends, family and neighbors. Many people are pleased to learn there is an evaluation process for the dogs and an orientation for the people that acquaints them to the property layout, the water and pick up stations, as well as an Ambassador Program that helps introduce new members to existing ones.

Since 1997, the rules have not changed which allows dogs that are inoculated, neutered and social to join and have access 365 days a year. Currently the membership fee is \$100/annually with no charge to DFL service dog clients, or dogs belonging to veterans and first responders in our community.



A baby Rufus displays the Donor Bone Lattice at the Off-Leash Dog Park.

Recently routine maintenance has been occurring at the park. Light bulbs are being replaced and fence repairs have been underway. The park security system was recently upgraded with additional surge protection that is helping keep power to the gates during frequent lightening storms.



571 Beachland Blvd • Vero Beach, FL 32963
772-231-6611
1450 US Hwy 1 • Vero Beach, FL 32960
772-778-6713



3125 Windsor Boulevard
Vero Beach, FL 32963
772-388-8400

Volunteering Under the Watchful Eye of Linda

Linda Barberi joined Dogs For Life as a volunteer last year, quickly becoming the volunteer coordinator. Under her watchful eye the DFL Volunteer program has expanded and continues to grow.

Each volunteer brings a special talent to DFL and we are sure to utilize their talents to the fullest. Each day of the week a volunteer is scheduled at the front desk, answering the phone and questions from the public who come to visit.

Volunteers are scheduled for training in all of the DFL Educational Programs, from Veterans Training Veterans to Volunteer Trainers to the Foster Dog/Puppy Training Program. Talents also are needed in the fundraising arena, such as fund development, fundraising events and general non-profit management.

Contact Linda at DFL at 772-567-8969 to schedule a volunteer orientation.

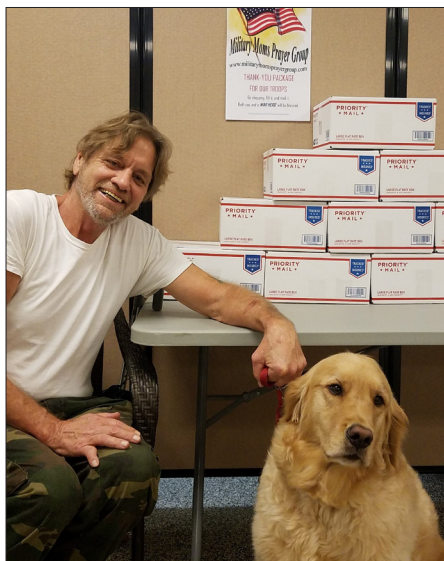


Volunteer Coordinator Linda Barberi with service dog Honey

Please Donate to Help Deployed Troops

The public is invited to pitch in before December 1, to help Dogs For Life team members Richie and Gigi collect Christmas gift boxes for members of the military station overseas.

Each year, DFL Dog Park members and others donate items needed by actively deployed U.S. troops. The items should be dropped off at Dogs For Life, Training Center located at 1230 16th Avenue in Vero Beach, where they will be sorted and individually packaged under the skilled eye of Richie and his service dog Gigi. DFL pays the bill for postage and away the packages go!



Items to donate:

- Socks (black or white)
- Nuts (individually packaged)
- Cookies (boxed or individually wrapped)
- Crackers (individually wrapped)
- Protein bars
- Beef jerky/Slim Jims
- Hard Candy
- Chewing Gum
- Small board games
- Electronic games (with batteries)
- Books and magazines



Educational & Volunteer Programs

Fund Development Program

Board of Directors

- Governance
- Visionary
- Nominations
- Community Partners

Special Events: Assist with events, such as:

- Service/Hearing & Veteran Dog Graduation
- Donor & Volunteer Awards Ceremony
- Bridge Tournament
- Howl-O-Ween
- Bengyak Legacy Society

Fund Development

- Public Demonstrations
- Grant writing, data entry
- Social Media
- NewsPRINTS Newsletter

Veterans Training Veterans

The Veterans Training Veterans Program is a starting point for all volunteers. It is an introduction to all aspects of this non-profit and is a pre-requisite for all other programs.

The course is once per week for 6 weeks.

Topics addressed include:

- Volunteer Handbook and Expectations
- Client Application Process
- The Road to Service Dog Certification
- Service Dogs and the Law
- Assistance Dogs International
- Introduction to Dog Communication and Basic Training

Volunteer Trainers Program

This 3-week program introduces volunteers to DFL's positive reinforcement dog training methods beginning with training theory and leading into practical training. The course is geared for volunteers wanting to be more involved in the Service Dog Training program.

Topics addressed include:

- Qualifications and Experience of a Trainer
- How to Instruct a Class
- Dog Behavior and Training Theory
- Dog Temperament Testing
- Introduction to American Sign Language

Dog Park Ambassador

This 3-week program trains volunteers to be DFL Dog Park mentors. Ambassadors help members understand dog behavior and assist new members in finding a compatible group for their dogs.

Topics addressed include:

- How to Read Dog Behavior
- How to introduce new dogs in the Park
- Introduction to Dog First Aid

Foster Dog/Puppy Program

This 3-part program allows volunteers or clients to foster a service dog or puppy in training. Volunteer families or individuals learn how to introduce a puppy or dog to a new environment and how to safely socialize dogs while teaching basic manners in a home. Participants must be available to bring their foster puppy or dog to weekly training for 3 months, 6 months and potentially up to 1 year.

Topics addressed include:

- Puppy/Dog Socialization
- Puppy/Dog Health Care
- Basic Obedience Overview
- Introduction to Dog First Aid
- Dog Bathing and Handling

'Spot,' the Service Dog Presentation

This 2-hour informational presentation introduces the public, organizations and businesses to a well-trained service dog and allows those in attendance to learn more about service dogs in public places: what is and isn't appropriate.

Topics addressed include:

- How Service Dogs are Protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- What Questions a Business can ask an Individual Entering with a Dog
- What Defines a True Service Dog by Assistance Dogs International standards

Volunteers

Dogs For Life Volunteers

Hap Allston
Kathy Allston
Telly Antona
Arleen Arsenaault
Linda Barberi
Eleanor Bengyak
Suzanne Bergmann
Eddie Boatwright
Gale Bracken
Al Cabral
Annalea Celio
Bob Cheshire
Robin Coburn
Chris Consi
Ben D'Andrea
Michelle Dale
Steve Defren
Barbara DeFrino
Drinnon Family
Sally Dunn
Ashlee Duval

Karen Emerson
Robert Gallagher
Raymond Giustizia
Dan Gladieux
Chase Gomez
Suzie Gomez
Barbara Gormas
Wanda Haaland
Brooke Hardie
Caela Hayek
Edna Hitzel
Curtis Holden
Darrell Horn
Laurie Iodice
Scott Keele
Richard Keller
Clayton Kettle
Nancy Kicherer
Diane Kimball
Kolesnik Family
Amanda Krieger

Brian Lieberman
Phyllis Lundy
Tammy Mandeville
Kimberley Mann-Day
Jane Manoogian
Richard Manoogian
Joanne Marozzi
Perry Martin
Betty McCalister
Cynthia Merrick
Tom Metzinger
Marcia Michael
Tabitha Miller
William Moruzzi
Next Generation
Veterans of IRC
Daniel Nolan
Dennis Och
Nicky Olson
Margie Owens
Pam Pelliccia

Mark Poziomek
Kim Prado
Judith Ricard
Charles Ringgold
Howard Rizio
Kevin Rockwell
Judy Schmidt
Kathi G. Schumann
Beth Stryker
Taylor Family
Pat Theriault
Sean Timberlake
Earl Tindol
Maureen Turner
Denny Velarde
Claude Vitali
Jocelyn Woodruff
Michael Wright
Olivia Zugay



Save the Date

Dogs For Life's Bridge Tournament

Monday, February 22, 2021

Help raise funds to train Service Dogs in 2021.
For more information, call 772-567-8969.

Thank You!



Jasper with supplies. A huge thank you to our volunteers and dog park members for supplying our Training Center and Dog Park with cleaning and sanitizing supplies during COVID-19.

Robert E. Bowman

DFL Founding Member and Benefactor



Dogs For Life CEO Shelly Ferger holding Robbie with Robert E. Bowman

Dogs For Life and Indian River County lost a true friend and philanthropist, Robert E. Bowman, in June.

A supporter since 2011, Mr. Bowman's love for dogs and his service in the US Army must have inspired him to give year after year to DFL's programs.

Although Mr. Bowman's passion was for the Veteran Dog Program, he also was instrumental in helping to establish the DFL Off-Leash Dog Park Memorial Garden, where his beloved Robbie, a Schnauzer, rests today.

A very generous and humble man, Mr. Bowman will be remembered for not only his generosity, but also for how he helped to inspire and guide our small non-profit organization.

Hearing Dog "Holly Scott"

A few months ago, Dogs For Life lost a beloved service dog that served faithfully for 14 years. When we met the little Boston Terrier pup, we were skeptical she could focus long enough to certify as a hearing dog. However, Pat and Holly had a few things to teach us.

Pat diligently taught this little dog not only to alert her to the doorbell, telephone, smoke alarm and tea kettle, but to retrieve her own special portable phone that had been installed at Boston Terrier height in the living room.



Patricia Scott with hearing dog Holly

It was a pleasure to re-certify this team year after year. Pat never stopped training Holly and each year she was excited to show DFL a new task she had taught this pup.

Holly can never be replaced, however, we are looking diligently for a new dog for Pat and look forward to the next round of training.

Tributes and Memorial Gifts

In Honor Of

Laura Bonney's Birthday

Linda Barberi
Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller

Sally Bricker's Birthday

Eleanor Bengyak
Suzanne Bergmann
Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller
Joanne Marozzi

Mandy Espinal's Birthday

Linda Barberi
Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller

Shelly Ferger's Birthday

Eleanor Bengyak
Suzanne Bergmann
Steve Defren
Richie Keller
Joanne Marozzi

Cassandra Ford's Birthday

Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller

Laurie Iodice

Elizabeth Bybee

Joe and Ann's 13th Wedding Anniversary

Paula Floyd

Mark Poziomek's Birthday

Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller

Kim Prado's Birthday

Steve Defren
Shelly Ferger
Richie Keller

In Memory Of

Shane Aburamen

Erin Saucerman Fernandes

Doug Beckman

Eleanor Bengyak

Peter Benedict

Don & Sally Schultz

Robert G. Bowman

Sally Bowen
George & Mary Collins Jr
Gregor & Janet Downey
Shelly Ferger
Tom & Judy Hamilton
Ann Hamner
Aileen Hoguet
Laurie Iodice
Bruce & Debbie Long
Mary Ellen Replogle
Bill & Judith Schneebeck
Don and Sally Schultz
Richard Standish
Susan Sussman
Anne Wallace

Phyllis Calvert

Don & Sally Schultz

Penny Coxe

Patti Schell

Grace D. Davis

Marc & Sharyl Ogle

Charles Herring

Don & Sally Schultz

"Kona" Hoffman

Jon & Barbara Hoffman

In Memory Of

Patrick Michael McCalister Sr.

Eleanor Bengyak
Shelly Ferger
Kathi G. Schumann
"Gwendolyn" Morgan
Joe Beck & Donna Kasprzak
Ben & Deb D'Andrea
Your Friends at the Dog Park

Thomas O'Haire III

Don and Sally Schultz

Peter M. Orrick

Shelly Ferger
Peter & Maureen Lee

Cornelia Auxier Perez

Shelly Ferger
Tomas Rene Perez

"Romeo" Richardson

Carolyn Richardson

"Holly" Scott

Shelly Ferger
Pat Scott

Arllys Tilberg

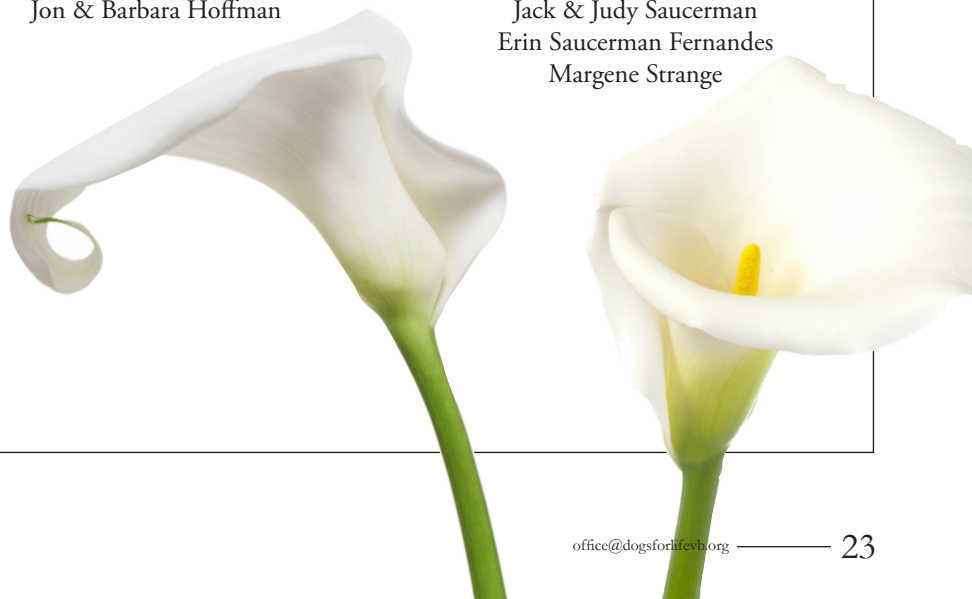
Linda Barberi

Kelly Saucerman-Gladder

Erin Saucerman Fernandes

Robert Saucerman

Pat Coverdale
Shelly Ferger
Danny Jeffreys
Rickey & Lenora Rice
Frank & Shirley Roscoe
Jack & Judy Saucerman
Erin Saucerman Fernandes
Margene Strange



In Memory of
Alma Lee Loy
*Named "First Lady of Vero Beach"
by Vero Beach Magazine*

Vero Beach mourned the passing of Alma Lee Loy, a local leader and philanthropist, in April 2020. In 2010, Dogs For Life Inc. was blessed to have Loy as guest speaker at the Ninth Annual Howl-O-Ween Pawrade. Below is our humble introduction and her grateful words.

Since 1961, Alma Lee Loy has served on 48 committees and boards of directors in Vero Beach and Indian River County. She also holds 22 Lifetime honors and awards for her contributions to our citizens. Alma Lee agreed to be DFL's Event Guest Speaker on behalf of the DFL Veteran Dog Program.

In 1961, she and Helen Glenn were instrumental in establishing Memorial Island, where services are held each year on Memorial and Veterans Day.

Thank you for those very kind words. I hope all of you here this afternoon realize, as I do, that most of the accolades and awards I have received were because of the many wonderful people I have had the opportunity to work with over the past 50 years.

It is a special pleasure to be with you this afternoon, to share a few thoughts about the active role and programs being undertaken by your Dogs For Life organization. From time to time, I will be presenting direct quotes from your executive director as her explanations are directly on target.

I stand before you, with a very large grateful heart. Grateful that we live in a beautiful city and state. Grateful that we are free, to enjoy a way of life that is available only in the United States. Grateful to our veterans – old and young. A Quote -- "These men and women have served our country, and deserve an opportunity to live a self-reliant, productive life and to pursue the American Dream" – end of quote.

Let us never forget the extraordinary service given by our



veterans, and continue our efforts to honor them. Grateful that we are protected by men and women who are willing to make multi-sacrifices to assure our safety, both at home and abroad. Grateful for leaders and volunteers, who continue to give and give, to help create meaningful ways to enhance the lives of their fellow man. Through the training programs of Dogs For Life, programs such as hearing dogs, service dogs, trauma dogs and others, lives have been changed. The richness of one's life, has been increased.

Today, the Dogs For Life organization is embarking on a new Veteran Dog Program. A quote "These specially trained service dogs can provide a life of independence and dignity, to meet the unique needs of these American heroes" – end of quote. The need for this type of program is staggering, especially in the State of Florida.

I am grateful for an organization, known as Dogs For Life. Each of you, as members, should be very proud, of the forward thinking of your organization. It takes courage to step outward and undertake a new field of service.

Your leadership has positioned yourselves to be of additional service, to our veterans suffering from PTSD there is no question, everyone involved will receive a benefit.

In closing, thank you for giving me that opportunity, to join with each of you, in honoring our veterans, and for the pleasure of announcing the newest program for Dogs For Life. With continued support from each of you, the future is promising for everyone involved. Thank you for your kind attention. Now let's get on with the parade!