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VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2014

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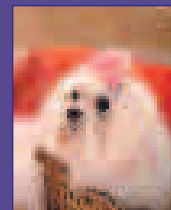
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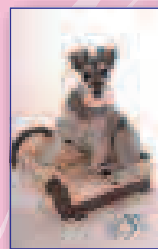
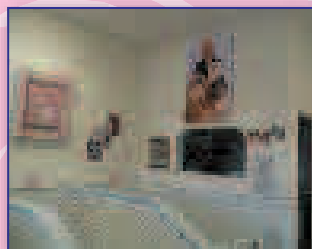
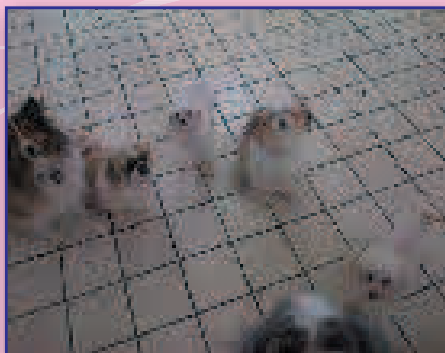
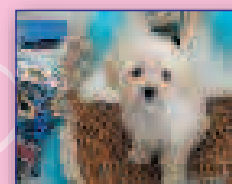
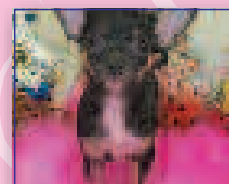


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- When bathing, take the chill off the water but not hot. Your dog's temperature is 102 degrees.
- Check ears and wipe clean with an ear wash on cotton.
- Have your dog's teeth check by vet twice a year. Brush at home twice a week. Use 'doggie' toothpaste. I brush on counter next to a sink. Now if I could just get her to 'spit'.

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Flight of Fancy

New Year's Resolutions

It's that time of year again... another chance to get things right... to start fresh... time for New Year's Resolutions! So, inspired by the critters who share my home and heart, I resolve to emulate those whom I admire most...

In the year 2014:

- I will not come when called, unless called to dinner.
- I will live according to the belief that whenever I am good, I deserve a treat.
- I will decide who I like and who I don't like, and I will not listen to "reason." I will trust my instincts.
- I will run, in terror, from the vacuum each and every time it appears.
- I will not go out in the rain to conduct my business. I will, however, go for long walks in it, romp and splash in it, and definitely consider a mud bath.
- I will always pick the most comfortable chair, and I will not relinquish it easily or graciously.
- I will stretch when I wake up, before I go to sleep, and just for the sheer pleasure of it.
- I will practice agility, since life is full of obstacles and it's fun to overcome them... followed by a treat.
- I will go for long rides in the car, and I won't always need to have a destination. I will simply enjoy the ride.
- I will pick friends who like to play, and friends who don't tend to snarl at me. If they do snarl, it will have to be for a darned good reason.
- I will snarl at door-to-door salesmen and unwelcome guests. If they keep bothering

me, I just might bite!

- In the presence of really good food, I will take the last helping without guilt... and I will clean my plate (and maybe yours). Who says you have to be polite when it comes to food? If it looks really good, I'm not too proud to beg.

- I will stop worrying that I can't carry a tune. When I want to join in, I will just howl along and be happy.

- I will nap often. If there's a warm spot, it should be mine.

- I will make "walkies" an important part of my day... almost as important as my naps!



- I will practice looking innocent, even when guilty, knowing that sincerity can usually get me off the hook.

- I will be loyal and devoted to all I consider "friend"... regardless of our differences.

- I will seek out those who make me want to purr.

- I will avoid, at all costs, those who make me want to hiss.

- I may grumble, but I will try never to growl, especially at those I love.

- I will greet friends and family with enthusiasm and affection... and always make them feel welcome and important!

- I will never be too old to play, or to sit up for a treat.

I am now going to say, "Goodbye, Pet Gazette readers, until next year." It's time to practice my final and finest resolution...

- Now is as good a time as any to take a nap!

Happy New Year!

Kathie Lynch, Publisher

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Happy New Year!



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In Fine Fettle



2014: Resolving for a Healthier Pet

by Dr. Andrea Bivens

Each January, we start a new year by promising to become better versions of ourselves; we will eat a healthier diet, lose those extra few pounds, stop smoking, or give up some other deliciously naughty habit that we treasure. Most of the time, we find the draw of the old habit ultimately dwarfs our resolve, and we revert to the prior, less perfect version of ourselves. One proven way to keep a resolution is to join a partner in developing the new habit. Guess what, pet owners? You have a fitness, wellness, self-improvement partner sleeping on your couch!

If you are a dog owner, and you have a fairly healthy dog, please consider your dog's potential as an exercise partner. Even small dogs can walk a fair distance. You can begin with very short walks and increase them weekly. If your dog is very small, you can buy a used baby stroller and push the dog in the stroller. There are commercially available strollers for dogs and cats, so even cat owners can have their pet's company while they exercise. The benefits of good, long walks are twofold: first your pet will become thinner and increasingly fit. The surprise benefit, though, will be the improvements in both temperament and bonding.

There are also several sports one can enjoy with dogs, many of

which are available locally. There are several businesses and clubs in our area which offer instruction in the sports of agility, dock diving, tracking, and many other sports. These sports give the dog physical and mental exercise; some offer the owner exercise as well.

Most of us also seek to improve our eating habits, and that is another arena in which our dogs and cats can join us. The vast majority of American dogs and cats are "big boned," "chubby," "fluffy"... you get the idea! A twenty-pound dog needs about 370 calories of food a day; for most brands of food, that is roughly one cup. Perhaps I should be more clear. The cup to which I refer is the kind we use when measuring flour; not the kind from which we drink our Super Ultra Giant Gulp. If your pet is overweight, meaning he or she does not taper in at the waist; meaning you cannot easily feel some ribs; then you need to reduce the food to slightly less than the daily requirement in order to drop weight.

If cleaning up your diet makes your New Year's Resolution list, bring your pet along for the ride. Reduce the treats. Buy nutritious, high-quality foods. Feed your dog or cat only what he or she requires to be fit.

Another self improvement goal that you can share with your pet is improved dental care. As you strive to floss, water pick, gum massage or whatever 12-step program your dentist has outlined to keep your teeth bright, white and strong, consider brushing





your dog or cat's teeth once a day. I can already hear you: "Oreo hates when I brush his teeth." Turns out, he doesn't. He hates when you pry his mouth open. Get the right equipment: a soft-bristled toothbrush for your dog, or a kitty toothbrush for your cat, as well as an enzymatic toothpaste. (We don't use Fluoride toothpaste in our pets; they will not spit. They can have their fluoride treatments during dental procedures when we can swab it out safely). I, personally, do not care for the finger brushes. They don't have bristles all the way around, and they spin when you use them. Pull your pet's lips back so you can actually see the back teeth. Then gently rub the teeth with the toothpaste and toothbrush. They will naturally lick and chew because you have put something in their mouth. Distinguish that from dislike.

Maybe 2014 is the year you commit to your appearance. Apply

the wrinkle creams, manage the hair, spruce up the look for 2014. Share that commitment with your pet. Plan regular grooming appointments so the hair does not get matted and the toenails gets regularly trimmed. Many times, when an owner brings me a pet, it is because the groomer, while picking through the hair, nails, or ears, came upon something that seemed abnormal. It is great to have a fresh set of eyes looking closely at your pet every now and then.

The most important resolution, I saved for last. We should all strive for

2014 to be more diligent in following the directions on medications: ours and our pet's. Give the Heartworm medications the same day you pay your mortgage or on the first of the month. Attach it to a day you can easily remember. If you or your pet have been prescribed antibiotics, finish the course. Taking a partial course of antibiotics is a very good way to get dangerous resistant bacteria. If your pet takes arthritis medications, get the recommended blood test every 6 months. Following directions on medications and monitoring drug levels and effects are among the safest ways to stay well.

It is inevitable that we will make promises to ourselves that we do not keep. However, we can only be more and do better when we strive to do so. Let's all prepare to make 2014 a safe, better, healthier year for both our four- and our

two-legged families.

Dr. Andrea Bivens received her doctorate from the UF College of Veterinary Medicine. She now operates a mobile veterinary clinic, Medi-Waggin'. Dr. Bivens was voted Charlotte County's best veterinarian 2010-2012. She lives in Punta Gorda with her husband, son, three dogs, three cats and two horses. You can reach Dr. Bivens at andrea@floridapet.net



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Good Dog!

Keeper had a Merry (and safe) Christmas!

by Carol Tollini



Human's Viewpoint

Here we are after some great family holidays with no significant problems with Keeper, our puppy. All of our guests respected our wishes with Keeper. They were all amazed that Keeper would sit for his treat. This was good practice for our puppy kindergarten class since it was difficult finding enough time during the holiday season to work with the little guy.

Our Christmas holiday was the most challenging. The presents under the tree with all the wrappings were a potential danger, and, oh, the tree, what to do about the tree! Guess we never gave it much thought until now. We decided to call Keeper's puppy kindergarten instructor to see if she had any advice. She suggested we place our tree inside baby gates or an exercise pen to keep our presents, the tree, and Keeper safe! Our friend told us his adult dog got into a wrapped box of candy, a gift from a friend, which had been placed under his tree. His dog ate the entire box of chocolate candy while he and his wife were out of the house. Needless to say, a vet visit was next on his agenda. Glad he informed us; something else we would not have thought about.

Keeper's Viewpoint

Carol Tollini is owner of Pleasant Run Dog Training, Grooming, and Boarding, located in south Punta Gorda. In addition to dog training, boarding, grooming, and puppy kindergarten, Pleasant Run also offers agility classes from September through May. You may email Carol at carol@floridapet.net

Yeah, I heard the human's talking about Christmas and a TREE in the house. Important word in that sentence being TREE. Wow, how lucky can a dog get? I'll bet you know what I was thinking! Even better, they also talked about presents under the TREE. Can you imagine the fun I thought I was going to have with those? At first, it sounded like my very favorite holiday. Just as I was making the best plans of my life, they decided to put my exercise pen around the tree and presents to keep my out. I ask you, what fun is that? That was the end of the best thought-out plans of my young life. So, I'm back to unraveling the toilet paper. I still had some hope of making it to a Christmas TREE, as we were invited to our friend's house, and I figured they wouldn't have an exercise pen around their tree! Guess you can tell what I am thinking. But then my humans remembered to bring my crate. There went another awesome idea.

In Summary

Now that the humans and Keeper are on the same page, let the New Year's festivities begin. Happy New Year to all. Remember your blessings

Licks and Wags,
Carol Tollini and Keeper



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Shampoo

A New Year's Resolution

by Nicole Kane

So many of us make resolutions for ourselves, but what about for our pets? Especially for those of you that got a new furry family member for the holidays.. what was the breed? Oh yeah, cute. But even if they are not new to the family, they still deserve care and maintenance.

When it comes to cats, long-haired need regular brushing to keep the undercoat from binding up at the base of the fur, causing painful matting. You can also buy deshedding tools for short- and long-haired breeds to assist in less shedding, and they learn to love the rub down.

Dogs, on the other hand, have many different coat types and needs when it comes to grooming. The shorter the coat, the lower the maintenance. You can utilize a rubber curry brush though to minimize shedding.

Then you have you double-coated medium length dogs like Shepherds. These take more consistent brushing, as they lose their entire undercoat twice yearly; and they should not be bathed

more than 4-6 times a year. Too frequent bathing can cause skin irritations and conditions. There are also long-haired, double-coated shedding breeds like Retrievers and Shelties. These dogs need to be brushed and combed, reducing shedding and matting. There are also breeds that do not shed, such as curly Poodles, drop-coated Shih Tzus, and fine-haired Yorkie types. These dogs need weekly brushing, at a minimum, if kept more than a half inch long, and they need to be seen by a groomer every 4-8 weeks. These breeds have human-like hair and can be bathed as much as weekly, as long as they are brushed after they are dry.

Don't be discouraged, I know it sounds like a lot of work, but we spend hours each week grooming ourselves, and I am suggesting an hour every two weeks for your pets. You probably spend more time than that watching TV commercials in a week! And the perk, your pets will smell much better when snuggling!

Nicole Kane, the Owner/Operator of Dog Days Delight, an award winning cageless boarding, daycare, and grooming facility in Cape Coral, can gladly be reached at nicole@floridapet.net. With over a decade of experience, Nicole strives to help the animal community and their families.



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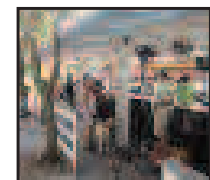
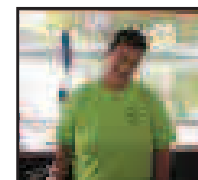
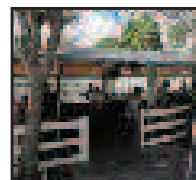


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PurrSnickitty

Cat Naps... or how a cat sleeps!

by Kathie Lynch



Cats are among the world's best sleepers. They slumber away about 60 percent of their lives... up to 16 hours out of every 24. This schedule means that a nine-year-old cat has been awake for only about three years of its life!

A typical feline day includes over 15 hours of sleeping and dozing and four to six hours of grooming and playing, with the rest of the day devoted to hunting, eating, and exploring.

There are three types of adult feline sleep... the short nap, the longer light sleep, and the deep sleep.

Periods of light sleep and deep sleep alternate. When kitty settles down for more than a brief "catnap," the phase of light sleep lasts for about half an hour. He then experiences deep sleep for six to seven minutes. During deep sleep, the cat's body relaxes, and he appears to be dreaming (twitching and quivering). In humans, this phase is referred to as REM sleep (rapid eye movement). After the deep sleep, the adult cat then returns to another bout of 30 minutes of light sleep until he eventually wakes up.

A napping cat is on "radar patrol," scanning the environment for any small sound. His very keen senses keep him alert to any changes in the environment when he is in light sleep phases. Thus, when you choose a site for your cat's bed, keep in mind his need for warmth and security. Look for a site that is high and protected. If his napping place is enclosed on at least three sides, he'll feel relaxed and secure. If the enclosure has a top, he'll feel even safer.

Observers have noted that the temperature

of the room determines the sleeping cat's body position. When the temperature is less than 55 degrees (not that common in our area), a cat usually curls up with his head tucked into his body. As the temperature increases, the cat's sleeping position opens up. At over 70 degrees, a cat usually lies uncurled with his paws out in front.

When a cat wakes, he usually takes a few minutes to stretch and restore his circulation. A yawn or two later, followed by a quick face wash, he's ready for action.

If you have a cat, chances are very good that you have a cat carrier to transport your cat. Consider also using the carrier for kitty's catnaps. If the carrier is padded with his favorite blanket, the familiar scent will help him to accept it, giving him plenty of opportunity to explore the cat taxi before you have to use it for transportation. Place it in a room where kitty likes to hang out, and remove the door, if possible. Put treats or favorite toys inside, and let him discover it on his own. Perhaps he will find the carrier suitable for his next catnap. A little work ahead of time will make the dreaded trip to your cat clinic easier, and may provide the perfect spot for a catnap!

Give your cat a hug... but don't wake him up!

...Kindly arrange the sun so it falls upon me more evenly as I nap...



Dear Tabby...



Cat Etiquette For A New Year

by Tabby

Bathrooms

Always accompany guests to the bathroom. It is not necessary to do anything. Just sit and stare.

Doors

Do not allow any closed doors. To get a door open, stand on hind legs and hammer with forepaws... loudly. Once door is opened, it is not necessary to use it. After you have ordered an "outside" door opened, stand halfway in and out and think about several things. This is particularly important during rainy weather, or mosquito season.

Chairs and Rugs

If you have to throw up, get to a chair quickly. If you cannot manage in time, find the nearest rug. When throwing up on the carpet, make sure you back up so what you leave behind is as long as a human's bare foot.

Hampering

If one of your humans is engaged in some activity and the other is idle, stay with the busy one. This is called "helping," otherwise known as "hampering." Following are the rules for "hampering."

When supervising cooking, sit behind the left heel of the cook. You cannot be seen and thereby stand a better chance of being stepped on... and picked up and comforted.

For book readers, get in close, between the eyes and the book, unless you can lie across the book itself.

For paperwork, lie on the work in the most appropriate manner so as to obscure as much of the work as possible. Pretend to doze, but every so often reach out and slap the pencil or pen. Rolling around is also good.

When a human is holding the newspaper, be sure to

lunge for the back of the paper. Humans love to jump.

When your human is working at the computer, jump up on the desk, walk across the keyboard, bat the mouse, then lay in the human's lap, across the arms, hampering typing. It's best to do this while the human is typing, before they have time to do what they call "save," as it will get them really excited.

Walking

As often as possible, dart quickly, and as close as possible, in front of the human... especially on stairs, or when they have something in their arms. It also works well in the dark or when they first get up in the morning. This will help their coordination skills.

Bedtime

Always sleep on the human at night so he/she cannot move around.

Litterbox

When using the litter box, be sure to kick as much litter out of the box as possible. Humans love the feel of kitty litter between their toes.

Hiding

Every now and then, hide in a place where the humans cannot find you. Do not come out for three to four hours, under any circumstances. This will cause the humans to panic (which they love), thinking that you have run away or are lost. Once you do come out, the humans will cover you with love and kisses, and you will probably get a treat.

One Last Thought

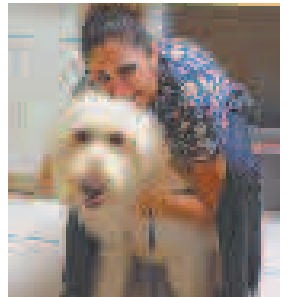
Whenever possible, get close to a human, especially their face, turn around, and present the underside of your tail to them. Humans love this, so do it often. And don't forget the guests.



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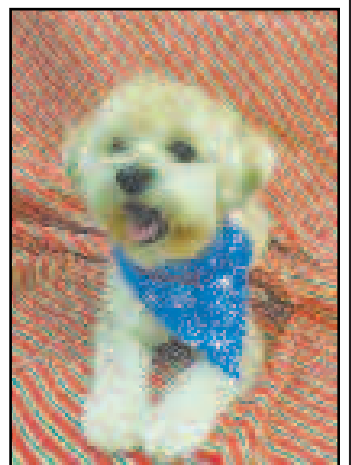
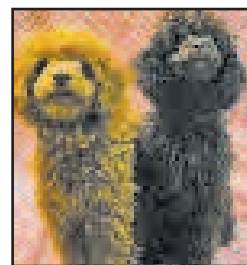
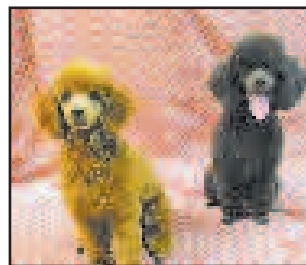


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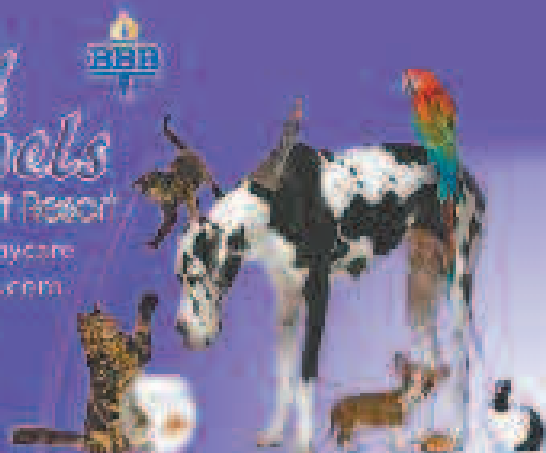
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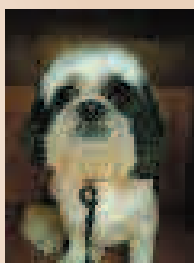
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Nature Calls

Food: Basic To Life

by Susan Blake Gonzales

One of most controversial topics in the veterinary industry is pet food. Food is the most basic element of good health. Yet food type is often the subject of dispute and varying opinions. It can be hard to decide what is right.

The truth is that veterinarians disagree on what is a nutritious diet for our animal companions. Some have suggested that animals eat what makes their owners happy. Others think sometimes animals seem to want a little variety. Still others, in a more traditional one-size-fits-all approach, recommend a commercial diet consisting of meat, meal, corn or other grains, meat by-products and fillers, stating that this diet is fed "successfully" to billions of animals on the planet.

How it Used to Be

Ancient dog diets are referred to for what to feed today, yet what did they eat? Dogs evolved around humans in ancient China, where they were fed what was left over, often meat scraps and a cheaper alternative – rice. Today wolves eat the weaker old and young animals consuming all of the parts including the stomach contents, which contain partially digested seeds and grasses.

It has only been since the 1950s that kibble was a source of pet food. Whole food was made into extruded pellets using meat, corn and animal by-products, and thus a cheap source of food was created. Still sold in the US, the agricultural and meat industry benefit from selling these products not used for human food.

In the multi-billion dollar commercial pet food industry food trials are routinely conducted. Food with chem-

ical additives and musky, sprayed-on scents are popular with dogs.

Allergies and Food Sensitivity

When an animal is fed one thing for months or years, allergies and/or food sensitivities can develop. Like us, if our pets only eat chicken and corn every day for 10 years, over time the immune system may not handle this so well. Humans and dogs have a similar physiology although dogs have strong stomach acid and can digest some bones.

So variety, even within the same brand of food, is often helpful. Switching to another source of protein from time to time gives variety and lowers the risk of a reaction from the food.

Pesticides, GMOs and Antibiotics

Go organic. Many good reasons exist for buying organic food whenever possible. Commercial, processed foods use GMO corn, billions of pounds of chemical fertilizers, heavy pesticide spraying and meat raised on steroids and antibiotics.

No matter if you go raw, grain-free or cook for your animals... avoiding environmental toxins is crucial. Filtered water is the best choice for your animals too. As some say, if you don't filter, you are the filter.

Raw, Cooked or Kibble

Some animals like raw food and some do not. Your local holistic pet food store can guide you to brands that are flash frozen and tested for pathogens like Salmonella, which is the main risk with these diets. It may be more expensive to feed a raw diet. Some people swear by them

(continued on p 21)

Gimme Shelter



Older and Wiser

by Sharon Thomas

One of the most heartbreaking things is an old dog or an old cat left at our shelter. Some are left or abandoned by an uncaring family and some by people who are forced into that situation for one reason or another. Regardless of the cause, our hearts melt for all these senior animals. Even more heartbreaking is that their time at the shelter is spent watching people walk past their cages, barely seeing them at all, instead rushing over to ogle and "ahh" over fluffy puppies and frisky kittens.

People see the gray hair of an older dog spreading across the muzzle and over the eyebrows and look the other way. They notice it takes a little longer for the old-timer to stand and get their attention. Instead of showing patience, they hurry to the next cage. As the old dog wags its tail for approval and gives them a smile, they shake their heads when they notice the missing teeth. But to me, I see something totally different. There's nothing more beautiful than a graying face with all the wisdom and experience it communicates... and especially all the love it speaks that is still there to give!

Maybe people are reluctant to adopt a senior dog or cat because they fear that the time with their new friend will be cut short. But they need to realize that the privilege (yes, privilege) of loving a senior animal makes every single day special, as you share love,



friendship, and a true bond that grows stronger with the knowledge that you have given this remarkable animal a second chance.

So, the next time you consider adopting a new furry pal, don't pass by those frosted faces so quickly. You might be giving up the sweetest, most devoted dog or cat that has EVER graced your home and your heart.

Sharon Thomas is the Executive Director of the Animal Welfare League located at 3519 Drance St. Port Charlotte. Call 941-625-6720 for information or check all adoptable animals and shelter news at www.AWLshelter.org



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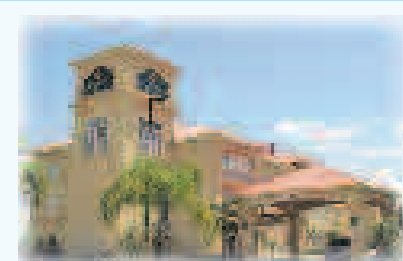


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Reading With Dogs at Spanish Point

by Lucy Tobias



Their owners sat in comfortable chairs, leashes loose and assorted dogs sitting nearby.

All the dogs perked up their ears and looked to the library door as it opened. In walked an adult.



"Ah, bummer," their expressions clearly said. "We were hoping for more kids!"

It is the third Saturday of the month and, hurrah, this is Read With the Dogs day at Osprey Public Library at Spanish Point.

It is free and open to the public. Hours are 10-12. The program is for children who are ages five and up, younger if accompanied by a caregiver.

Read With the Dogs happens on the third Saturday morning of each month as part of Historic Spanish Point's "Pups at the Point"

(Note: Pups at the Point now happens every Saturday).

"This is a wonderful opportunity to do something for the community with dogs," said Gay Haines who came with five-year old Oliver, an Australian Labradoodle. "Oliver is interested in doing things with children. Anything to help children read is useful."

Why partner dogs, children and books? Because a dog doesn't correct a child who mispronounces a word and a dog, as dog owners know, will listen with unconditional attention.

"The idea for Read With the Dogs is that children have different reading abilities. Dogs are non-judgmental," said Sue Melton who came with her dog Maggie.

"My grandchildren love the dogs," said Richard Clay who brought two

grandchildren, Simon and Sadie. "We have cats at home. I think Simon (pre K) reads better when he comes to read with the dogs."

But not just any dog can come. All wore green vests with gold embroidery saying they are certified pet therapy dogs. They have been trained to be great listeners.

The Suncoast Humane Society in Englewood, in conjunction with Pet Partners, a national organization, does a training course and evaluation that pets have to pass in order to be certified.

Notice the use of the word "Pet." It is more than just dogs.

"Dogs, cats, rabbits, llamas, pot-bellied pigs, we have a list of pets that can be accepted," said Claire Berten, director of resources and outreach services at Suncoast Humane Society.

"AH, BUMMER...WE WERE HOPING FOR MORE KIDS!"

"DOGS ARE GOOD LISTENERS. THEY ARE NOT CORRECTING THE READERS. IT IS GREAT BECAUSE IT GETS THE KIDS EXCITED ABOUT COMING TO THE LIBRARY."





A number of libraries offer Read With the Dogs at different times (morning or afternoon). The libraries include Gulf Gate, Osprey, North Port, Jacaranda and Elsie Quirk. Check the individual library schedule at www.suncat.co.sarasota.fl.us.

And dogs that like interaction with people of different ages also go to nursing homes.

"All I have to do is say to Daisy 'do you want to go to work?,' said Danielle Jaeger who came with Daisy, a four-year old Pekingese. "We do all the libraries plus one nursing home. It is a prime time to be with the kids."

Every month Jennifer Propson brings her daughter Sophie to Read With the Dogs.

"We come to the library every month because she likes the dogs."

One dog owner could easily use her dog as a footstool. Boaco, a Leonberger, came with Audrey Patterson. "He is very tuned into pet therapy. Loves seeing kids and having contact with kids."

Joanne Lize, retired librarian, founded the Read With the Dogs program. "I recently retired from Venice Library. For 12 years we did Read With the Dogs, partnering with Suncoast Humane Society."

Lize sat on the porch leading to the library, a large moose puppet in her hands as an "attractor" to get children and adults into the Osprey library, sometimes called 'the little library' as it is one large, light-filled room with many windows.

Erin Thayer, customer service representative at the Osprey Library looks forward to the monthly Read with the Dogs event.

"Dogs are good listeners. They are not correcting the readers."



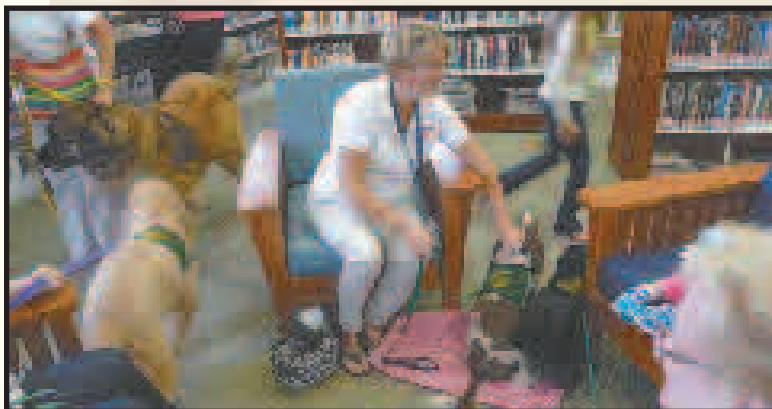
It is great because it gets kids excited about coming to the library."



"We offer this free to the community. We evaluate a team... that would be one pet, one handler... and we look at the animal closely since they will be representing the Suncoast Humane Society."

An online course offered through Pet Partners (there is a charge) is required (or take a course with an instructor, but none are nearby) as well as a face-to-face evaluation at the Suncoast Humane Society. Berten noted that pets have to be able to handle noise and visual activity. To know more, contact Berten by e-mail at: cberten@humane.org and visit www.petpartners.org.

If the team passes both the course and the evaluation, they are given the name of the embroidery company to order their green vests.



- Where To Go -

Reading With the Dogs happens on the third Saturday morning of each month from 10am - 12pm

Osprey Public Library
337 North Tamiami Trail, Osprey
On Historic Spanish Point Grounds
941-966-5214

A number of libraries offer Read With the Dogs at different times. Check the individual library schedule at www.suncat.co.sarasota.fl.us.





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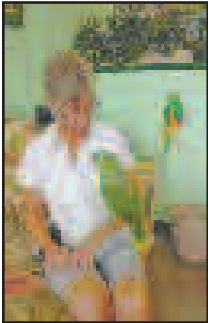
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Home For The New Year

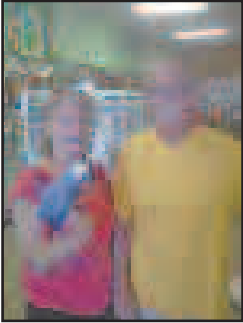
by Rebecca Stockslager

I've always stressed that parrots are not the right pet for everyone. On the upside, there are some amazing people out there who absolutely get it; they do their research and educate themselves on the type of parrot to fit in their home and lifestyle.

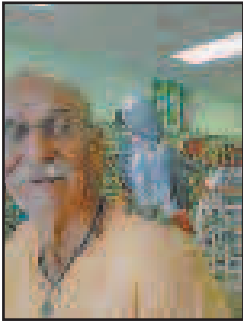
I'd like to share some of our adoptees with you and remind you that all any parrot really wants is a flock of its own! These amazing people opened their hearts and homes to a parrot in need and got so much more in return!



Bob and Shari adopted Digger two years ago.



There are several parrots in this family, but all are bonded to Roger. Alice decided she wanted a special bird relationship of her own. She and Paco picked each other and, much to our surprise, Paco is a sweet little girl!



This past spring they adopted Snuggie to their flock. Love and patience is abundant with this family.



Sunshine's adoptive family also has a beautiful Blue and Gold Macaw. Their living room is the "bird room" and it's a parrot dream-come-true of toys, swings and playstands.



Maggie was originally known as Astro and she had some "colorful language" issues. Her new papa says she's given up that talk and just wants to hang out with him and watch the ball game!



Beeper is a Moustache Parakeet and the light of Debbie's life! He's a very well-socialized little guy thanks to his new family.

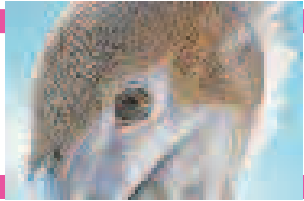


Loki was adopted by Mallory, Andrew, and Aiden and her adopted flock-mates are Chico Amazon and Lulu Congo African Grey.



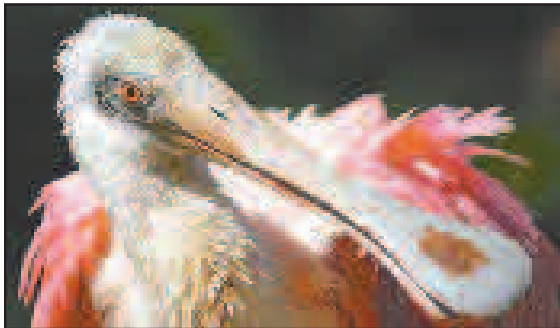
Rebecca (Becky) Stockslager is the owner of Noah's Birds Nest, formerly Bonnie's Birds, in Port Charlotte.
 Contact her with questions at:
becky@floridapet.net.

Wild Things



It's For The Birds

by Rachel Rainbolt



For those of you who live in Southwest Florida year round, you know that snowbird season is right around the corner. The roads are already beginning to fill up with out-of-state license plates, and although this may be somewhat of an inconvenience when you are trying to make it on time to work in the morning, comfort yourself knowing that they have a redeeming quality: the love of wildlife.

Every five years, the Association of Fishing and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) collects data from each state to determine how many people participate in the following activities: hunting, fishing and wildlife-associated recreation. The survey includes both residential and non-residential participants, and thanks to our snowbirds, there are more visitors that come to Florida for wildlife recreation than any other state.

Snowbirds aren't the only ones that make their way south for the winter; Florida has documented over 500 species of native and migratory birds. The survey results from 2011 showed us that three million people organized a birding trip within the state or simply from their backyard. Bird watching makes up the largest population statistic within the category.

Birds appeal to all of our senses. From plumes changing to attract mates, to complex vocalizations spliced together to form a song, each and every species is unique. I am no ornithologist, but if you are bored with basic identification, try adding a layer to it. Challenge yourself. Ask and wonder why each bird has the special adaptations they do? Why is the beak shaped like that? Does their species' diet coincide with where I found

them? If not, then why would that be? I guarantee that connecting the dots will leave you with a feeling of self-confidence.

I have a confession to make: I used to be a skeptic. Why should I go bird watching? I am already outside a small chunk of my week, and the last thing I want to be doing is identifying bird species especially if I already know most of them. Then it happened; my sister converted me. It has even gotten to the point where I now have favorites. The Roseate Spoonbill and Osprey are the chocolate chip cookies I wait to eat all day without the extra calories.

If you are considering giving this a try, do a little bit of research on the species of bird that you would like to observe before heading out. Think about the lifestyle of your bird. Is there a time of day where it is most active? This is especially important if it affects the availability of its food source. All wildlife spends the majority of its day foraging, so birds are no exception. Next, identify any specialized habitats that your bird needs. Much of Southwest Florida is surrounded by freshwater and saltwater. For example, a shorebird varies from a wading bird.

Save yourself from going on a "wild goose chase." Knowing the quirks of your birds ahead of time can make the difference between 10 sightings and no sightings. Join the masses that call themselves "birders." Besides being inexpensive, this activity doesn't require a wifi connection. It encourages families to get their children outside for a little sun exposure. It offers a way to teach the next generation other ways to appreciate the beauty of the natural environment. While on your adventures, if you happen to come across one of our feathered friends that appears to be distressed, you know who to call!

Rachel Rainbolt is Education Coordinator with the Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW) on Sanibel. You may reach her at rrainbolt@crowclinic.org

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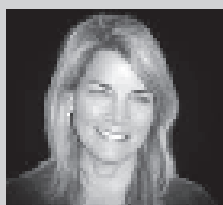
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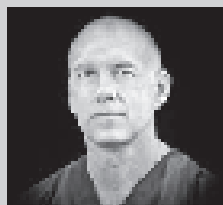
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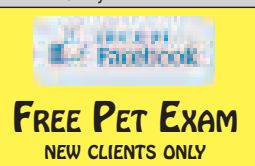
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Calendar of Events

Please send your events to us at info@floridapet.net!

JANUARY

January 2 - Muttini Mingle 5:30pm to 8pm - Fishermen's Village. Salty Paws 941-575-7599

January 2 - 4 - Associated Field Trial Clubs of Florida - Everglades Trial. Contact Petie Brown 941-962-4024

January 4 - Horse Show, Performance - 9am to 5pm- Punta Gorda Horseman's Association, 6905 Florida Street, Punta Gorda. Contact Laura St. John (941) 769-4720

January 8 - Come Sniff Stay Yappy Hour & A Half 5:30 - 7:00 PM. Treats, refreshments, goody bags for pets & their people. Raffles to benefit Florida Cocker Spaniel Rescue. Cats n Dogs, 2826 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte 627-4093. NO RETRACTABLE LEASHES PERMITTED for your pets' safety.

January 9- Cat Depot Night at Ruby Tuesday - Sarasota Square, 8201 S. Tamiami Trail 941-926-8804 - also held at Cooper Creek, 8306 Tourise Center Drive, 941-360-3687. For info: www.CatDepot.org

January 11 - Horse Show, Speed - Punta Gorda Horseman's Association - 5pm to 11:30pm - 6905 Florida Street, Punta Gorda. Contact Laura St John 941-769-4720

January 12 - 1 to 3 PM BRING A CHAIR & FOOD TO SHARE - COOKIE EXCHANGE - Cats n Dogs will supply tables, water, treat sampling & goody bags for the fur balls. You bring a chair to sit on & people cookies to exchange with others. 941-627-4093. NO RETRACTABLE LEASHES PERMITTED for your pets' safety.

January 10 - Yappy Hour - 6pm to 8pm - Bell Tower Shops, Fort Myers - A pet happy hour benefitting Gulf Coast Humane Society.

January 13 - Punta Gorda Horseman's Association 7pm - 6905 Florida Street, Punta Gorda.

January 16 - Companion Bird Club of Charlotte County - 7pm at the GFWC Woman's Club of Port Charlotte, 20271 Tappan Zee Drive, Port Charlotte.

January 17-19 - Associated Field Trial Clubs of Florida - Piney Wood Trial - Contact Don Wood 352-406-0011

January 19th Dog Club of Lee County, Show and Go 9:00 A.M. at ABC 4 K9, 18481 N. Tamiami Trail, North Fort Myers, FL

January 22 - Dog's Nite Out - 6pm to 8pm - Orange House Wine Bar, 320 Sullivan St., PG - Fundraiser for Animal Welfare League - 941-625-6720.

January 25 - Horse Show, Hunter/Jumper - 9am to 5pm - Punta Gorda Horseman's Association - 6905 Florida Street, Punta Gorda. Contact Laura St John 941-769-4720

January 25 - 26 AKC Obedience & Rally Trials - South County Regional Recreation Center, 670 Cooper Street, Punta Gorda. Contact Dog Obedience Club of Lee County, Sue Davis 239-464-0239

ONGOING

Ongoing - Agility Classes & Focus Classes - Pleasant Run Kennels, Zemel Rd, PG - (941) 575-4022 - All Levels - Mon. thru Thurs. - Don Soucy 603 493 5254.

Ongoing - The Peace River Schutzhund Club - Meets every Saturday at 10am - Training Field off SR 74 (Burmout Rd.) in Punta Gorda - tracking exercises start at 7:00 AM. Contact Noel Coward 941-628-1738.

Ongoing - Dog Agility Classes held at the Shell Factory Doggie Heaven Dog Park. Beginner Agility Class 7:30 P.M. Thursdays and 9:00 A.M. Sundays. Intermediate/Advanced Agility 6:30 P.M. Thursdays and 8:00 A.M. Sundays. Call Kelly @ 239-281-7777 for info. US 41, 2787 N. Tamiami Trail, North Fort Myers, FL 33903

Ongoing - SWFL Weiner Dog Club racing 101 on the 3rd Sunday of every month. 9-11 A.M. at the Shell Factory Doggie Heaven Dog Park. US 41, 2787 N. Tamiami Trail, North Fort Myers, FL 33903

Ongoing - Dog-friendly Cruise - Thursdays at 1pm - Nav-A-Gator Grill & Marina - 941-627-3474

Please send your events to us at info@floridapet.net!

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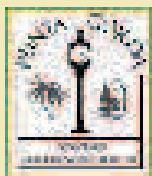
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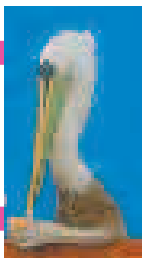
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The Art of the Matter



Watercolor and Whimsey Will Bullas

by Kathie Lynch

This month's cover artist, Will Bullas, has a gift for making the ordinary extraordinary. His fanciful art, such as "The Party Animal" displayed on our cover, will make you laugh even as you admire the artistry. The following information, taken from Will's website, tells a bit more about

arship and majoring in art and drama when he was drafted and served in Vietnam.

After returning from combat duty, Will



took up his art studies at the Brooks Institute of Fine Arts in Santa Barbara, California,

where he studied with master painter, Ray Strong. There he met his wife Claudia, who is also an artist.

Will is a signature member of the American Watercolor Society, the National Watercolor Society, and was elected to membership with

the Knickerbocker Artists of New York in 1986. He is a past president and a continuing member of the Carmel Art Association.

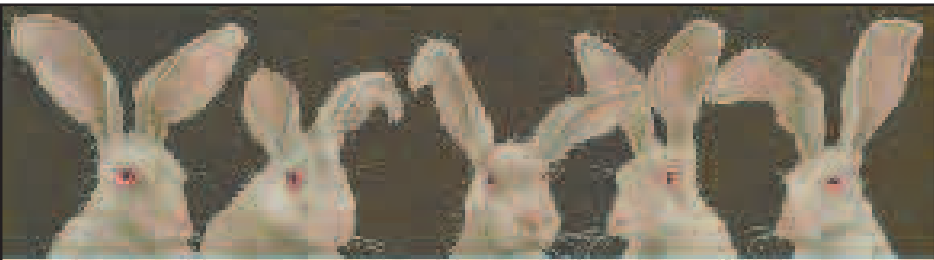
Will has exhibited twice the the National Academy of Design in New York. In 2007 Will received the Mario Cooper and Dale Meyers Medal from the American Watercolor Society for his contributions to watercolor.

Will Bullas makes fine art fun. This master of one-liners combines award winning artistic skills with a hilarious point of view, creating a refreshing (con't on p.21



the artist... although I believe, in his case, the axiom "a picture is worth a thousand words" certainly holds true.

Will Bullas was born in Ohio in 1949 and raised in the Southwest. He was attending Arizona State University on a schol-





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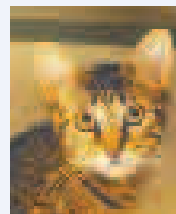
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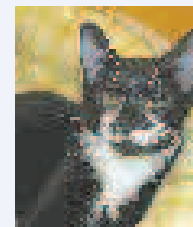
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Beebe is a 3-month-old Domestic Short Hair. She is sociable and gets along well with other cats. Beebe loves to play.

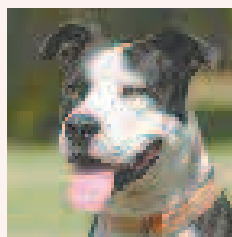


Earl is a 5-month-old male Domestic Shorthair. He loves to lounge, is very sociable and gets along with other cats.



Adoption fees are \$75 for dogs and \$65 for cats and \$6 for cats over 6 years old. Pets come fully vaccinated and spayed/neutered. Dogs also come with four free training lessons at the studio of ABC 4 K9's. Pets

also come with one month free pet insurance. Adoption hours are noon to 4pm Wednesdays-Sundays. The Animal Refuge Center is located at 18011 Old Bayshore Road N. Ft Myers Florida. For further information on any of our pets visit our website www.animalrefugecenter.com or call (239) 731-3535.



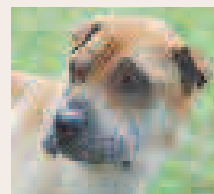
Opid is a one-year-old Staffordshire Terrier mix. He is an energetic dog and would be best in a home with acreage and no other pets.



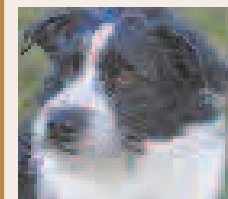
Zeph is a 6-year-old Rat Terrier and is an all-around great dog. Loves his lodge mate Cosmo. We'd consider a 2 for 1 on this duo!



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Louie is a 5-year-old male Shar-Pei mix with a cute wrinkly coat and a cuter personality. He gets along with other dogs too!



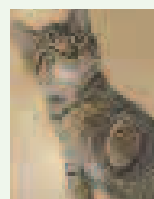
Beau is a 1-year-old male Border Collie/Terrier mix. This playful guy knows all his basic commands!



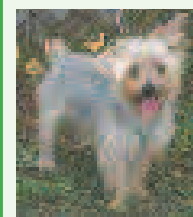
Call Deva at
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941-681-3877,

stop by at 145 W. Dearborn St. in Englewood. Visit us online at www.EARS4life.com.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BOBBI AUSTIN



Amani is a cute, lovable 3 month old kitten that loves to play. He gets along well with other cats.



Duke is a Yorkie mixed with poodle maybe? He is small, non-shedder, neutered male, who loves people and gets along with other dogs.

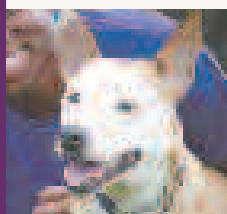
Gulf Coast Humane Society

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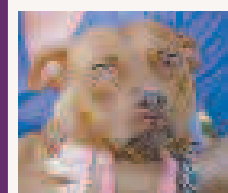
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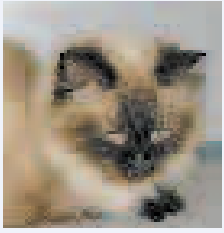
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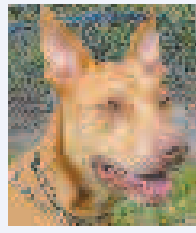
Blossom is a 1-year-old Besenji mix, very sweet and lady-like. Her gentle nature makes for a low-maintenance companion. And she rarely barks!



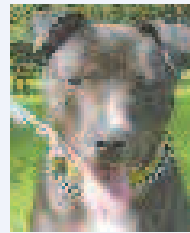
Fern is a 2-year-old Pit Bull Terrier. She came to GCHS very pregnant, with an alligator bite on her mouth. Her wound is healed and her puppies have all been adopted. She is about the sweetest dog you will find.



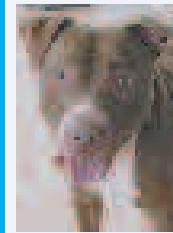
Mocha is a 2-year-old female Domestic Long hair. She can be frisky when its play time, but is very sweet and lovable.



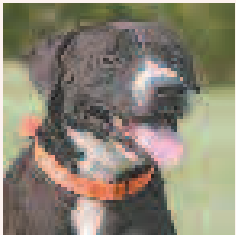
Savannah is an 8-year-old female Pitbull mix. She is an owner give up for financial reasons. She is housetrained and walks well on a leash



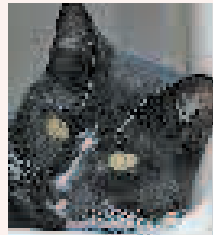
Zena is a 2-year-old female Hound mix. She is sweet and kind, house and crate trained. She needs someone to love her.



Lucy is a 1 1/2-year-old female Pit Bull terrier. She is a happy girl who loves attention, people, and going for walks. She would get along with children of all ages. .



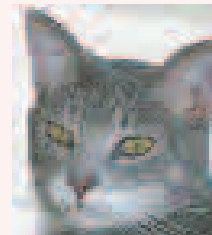
Diesel is a 2-year-old Retriever-Basset mix. He is very fond of walks and loves people.



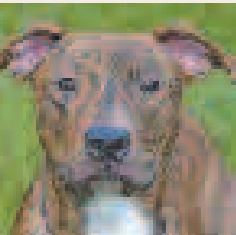
Courage is an 18-month male. He is as confident as his name yet warm hearted and kind.



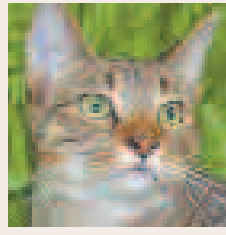
Minnie is a three-year-old female. Her favorite thing is to cuddle.



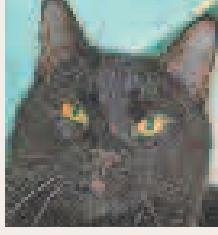
Sullivan is a one-year-old gray tabby. He loves one-on-one time and would probably prefer to be an only pet.



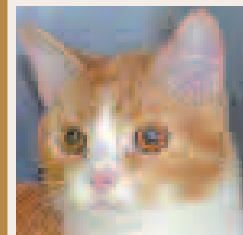
Trouper is a handsome 1-year-old male American Pit Bull terrier mix. This smart boy knows a few basic commands and loves to run and play fetch!



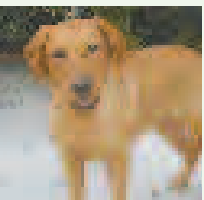
Elton John is a 1-year-old male domestic shorthair with striking green eyes. He is very playful and talkative!



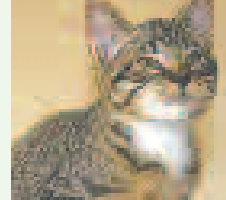
Bucky is a 4-year-old male domestic shorthair. His remarkable almond-shaped eyes will implore you for pats and cuddles!



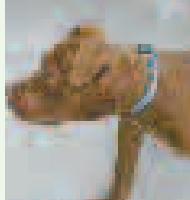
Mozart is a 1-year-old male domestic shorthair mix. This spirited boy loves to run, climb, and play



Shannon is a three-year-old "mostly" Labrador Retriever spayed female. She knows commands, likes kids and other dogs, and loves to ride in the car.

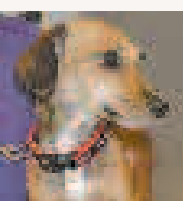
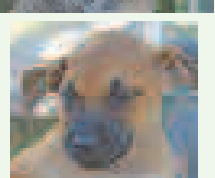
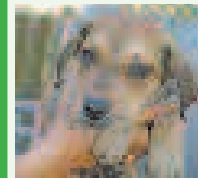
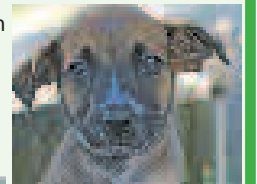


Vera is a cute little spayed female kitten. She is very sweet and has lived with other cats.



Jessey is a Lab/pit bull mix puppy, spayed female, about 3 months old. She is all play and fun and loves to be cuddled, also gets along with other dogs.

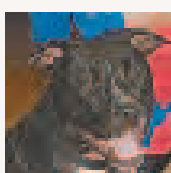
Jake, Billy and Stan are 10-week-old, male Shepherd mixes. They are very affectionate and playful.



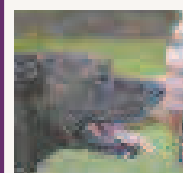
Oscar is a 3-year-old miniature dachshund, a bit timid at first, but then he will be your best friend! His favorite place to be is in your lap.



Sara is a 2-year-old Pointer mix. She and her sister, Rhonda, were abandoned in the Everglades. Her sister has found her home, and Sara longs for the same security and love.



Begonia is a 2 1/2-year-old Terrier mix. She is very smart, a Staff Favorite who loves to have her back scratched and her cheeks rubbed



Aaliyah is a 7 1/2-year-old American Bulldog mix with expressive eyes and great hugs. She is playful once out of her cage.

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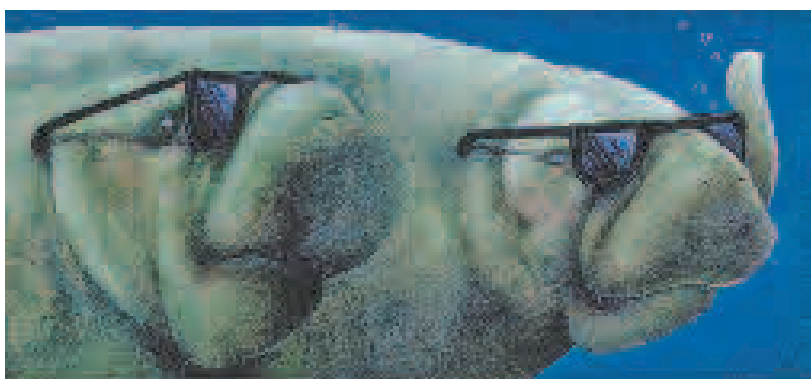
and their dogs and cats do great. Feeding refrigerated meat, which has more bacteria, is not recommended.

For proper nutrition, animals need bone meal and certain vitamins and minerals. We live in a hurricane state so feeding raw food is not always practical. Another option is to use part kibble

with cooked food so you are covering the nutritional needs without feeding dry food day after day. Remember the movie Marley and Me? In some breeds dry food can create digestive problems like bloat. Dogs and cats teeth are not flat like ours; their teeth are made for shearing food and swallowing it whole. Food with moisture is better. When we say cooked food

we are not talking about pizza and your leftover pasta. More tips next time on how to cook food for your animals.

Bear Creek Veterinary Alternatives is a holistic specialty practice in Sarasota that is co-owned by Susan and Dr. Jamie Gonzalez. They combine 22 years of conventional, emergency medicine experience, energy medicine and other alternative modalities. Contact Susan at FloridaPet.net



(Continued from p. 17)

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trip through the amazing brain and artistic brilliance of Will Bullas.

Check out his 'Cocktails at Six' gallery. It's a real happy collection!!

Will and his wife live and create in Carmel Valley, California. Visit the Will Bullas Studio at www.willbullas.com or call (831) 659-5060.

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Jones & Co. Realty
Kindness Animal Hospital
Mily's Hair Sylist & Nail Salon
Moorings Seafood & Moor
Patriot Pets & Supplies
Pet Carol Resort & Veterinary
Pets Universe
Rum Runners Waterfront Restaurant
Santa Barbara Animal Hospital
South West Veterinary Care Center
The Dog Bar & Grill
The Groomers
The Yuppy Puppy
Viscaya-Prado Veterinary Hospital

ENGLEWOOD

Becky Borci Realty
Critter Cottage
DNT Wine & Liquor
Ears Animal Rescue
Elsie Quirk Public Library
Englewood Animal Health Ctr
Englewood Animal Hospital
Englewood Public Library
Fountain of Youth Spa
Ocean Aesthetics Hair Salon
Publix Supermarkets
Shear Magic Hair Salon
Shear Sailing Salon
Suncoast Humane Society
Sunnybrook Animal Hospital
The Clip Joint
Tru Value Hardware
Winn-Dixie Supermarket

FORT MYERS

A Tropical Touch Salon & Spa
Academy Kennels
Ada's Natural Food
Affordable Animal Care Clinic
All American Pet Resorts
Alliance of The Arts
Animal Care Center
Animal Clinic At Kelly Crossing
Animal General Hospital
Aquarium and Reef Center
Associates In Veterinary Medicine
Calusa Nature Center
Cat Doctor Just For Cats
Chez Pooch
Cooper Vet Clinic
Coral Veterinary Clinic
Cozette Salon
Daniels Parkway Animal Hospital
Dog In Sudz Grooming
Dora Senich's Shampoodle
Downtown Deli
First Watch Cafe
FL Rep Theater
Futral's Feed Store LC
Giovanni's Pizzeria
Glamour Paws
Golden Paws
Groomingdales
Gulf Coast Humane Society Inc.
Gulf Coast Veterinary
La Casita Restaurant
Little Paws Bakery
Los Cabos Restaurant
Lucia's Grooming Salon
McGregor Grill
McGregor Medical
Miracle Mile Animal Hospital
Mother Earth Natural Foods
Myerlee Pharmacy
Perky Pets
Pet Angel Memorial Center
Pet Kingdom
Petland
Pinchers Crab Shack
PK Nails & Spa
Plain And Fancy Pet Salon
Plakka II Restaurant
Planet Fitness
Pooch Grooming Salon
San Carlos Pk Animal Hospital
Skip One Seafood Market
South Gate Veterinary Clinic
Suburban Animal Hospital
Summerlin Animal Hospital
Tails - A- Waggin Animal Hospital

The Dog Resort
The Grind Coffee House
The Grooming Station
Verandah Pet Hospital

LAKE SUZY

Nav-A-Gator

NORTH FORT MYERS

5 Star Nail & Spa
ABC 4 K9
Banana Joe's Tiki Bar & Grill
Bayshore Animal Hospital
Best Western
Brower Boarding And Grooming
Critter Clippers
Darlene's Hair Hut
Days Inn
Dee's Grooming Room
Dorado's
Econo Lodge
Englunds Deli
Everybody's Brunch Place
Fishbone Restaurant
Hair Connection
Hancock Bridge Animal Hospital
Ice Cream Parlor
Knight's Inn
Lenny C's Pizzeria
Locarno's Pizza And Restaurant
Love on A Leash
Lucky Dog Grooming & Daycare
Mundos Kitchen & Deli
N. Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce
North Shore Animal Hospital
Our Hope Center Inc.
Petsupermarket
Red Roof Inn
Richard's Salon & Barber Whop
Stamatis Family Restaurant
Subway
Winn-Dixie

NORTH PORT

Angel Medical Clinic
Circle K
Heron Creek Animal Hospital
North Port Animal Hospital
North Port Public Library
Paw Pals Pet Sitting
Publix Supermarkets
Toledo Blade Animal Clinic
Winn-Dixie Supermarket

PORT CHARLOTTE

All Creatures Animal Hospital
All Florida Real Estate
Amazing Faces Hair Salon

Animal Medical Clinic
Animal Welfare League
Artful Canine, The

BB&T Bank
Caldwell Banker Sunstar
Cathy's Pet Grooming
Cats N Dogs
Century 21 Aztec & Assoc
Charlotte Animal Hospital
Charlotte County Cultural Ctr
Cindy & Co Hair Salon
Collingswood Animal Hospital
Cultural Center Public Library
Days Inn
Dr. Karen's Animal Hospital
Gensis Salon
Groves Animal Clinic
Harbor Lakes MH Park
Heads 'N Tails Dog Grooming
La Quinta Inn
Lakes of Toscana Apts
Lexington Manor Retirement
Mercers Coffee Shop
Mid-County Public Library
New Hope Animal Hospital
Noah's Birds Nest
Paw Bright Pet Salon
Pet Supermarket
Port Charlotte Village Mobile Pk
Pretty Pooch Grooming
Publix Supermarkets
Re/Max Palm Real Estate
River Commons Senior Living
Royal Palm Retirement Center
Salon Rio Hair Studio
Salty Paws
Sandhill Gardens Retirements
The Animal Clinic
The Hair Studio
Tru Colors Hair Salon
Turning Heads Hair Salon
Winn-Dixie Supermarket

PUNTA GORDA

Advanced Orthopedics
Alligator Mobile Home Park
Animal Medical Clinic of PG
AnimaLuvrs
Bean Coffee House
Blue Heron Pines
Body & Soul Massage
Calusa National Bank PG
Cat Cottage
Charlotte State Bank
Choice Veterinary Clinic

Copperfish Books
CRMC Therapeutic Wellness Center
Crossties Farm & Garden
Dr Kevin Van Nostrand
Eagle Point Park
Elena's Restaurant
Encore Gulfview RV Park
Florida Animal Care
Four Points By Sheraton
Hair Hut
Isles Hair Salon
Kay's Kloset
Laishley Crab House
Mom & Pop Pet Shop
Old Town Convenience
OPUS Restaurant
Palm Auto Mall Repair Shops
Parrot Outreach Society
Peace River Seafoods
Peggy's Bow Wow
PGI Café
PGI Civic Assn
Pleasant Run Dog Training
Presseller's Restaurant
Publix Supermarkets
Punta Gorda Animal Hospital
Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce
Punta Gorda Public Library
Punta Gorda Waterfront Inn
Punta Gorda YMCA
Re/Max Anchor Realty
River Oaks Mfg Home Park
Robin's Pet Salon
Salty Paws
Tourist/Visitors' Center @ I75
Towles K-9 Club
Trattoria Limoncello Restaurant
True Blue Pool Store
The Shipping Post
Ventura Lakes
Village Fish Market
Whitco Insurance Co
Winn Dixie Supermarket

SANIBEL

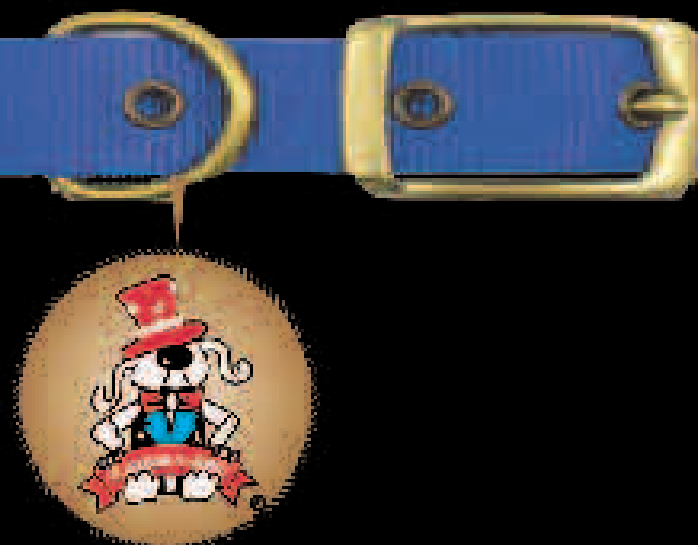
Beachside Animal Clinic
Blue Giraffe Restaurant
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CROW
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Island Grooming
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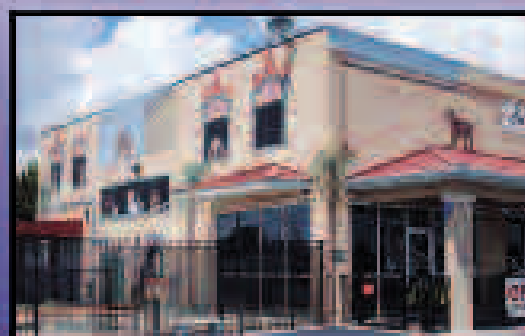


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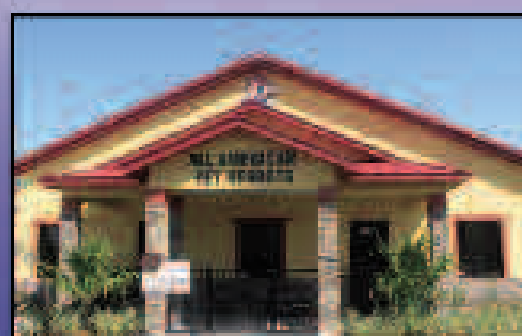
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At Tails-A-Waggin Animal Hospital our mission is to provide exceptional veterinary medical, wellness, surgical, and dental care for your pet by emphasizing and strengthening the human-animal bond you have with your pet (*we also cater to exotic animals*). In addition to comprehensive veterinary care, we also offer pet boarding, grooming, dog and cat daycare, a fenced dog park, and a fully-stocked, in-house and online pharmacy!

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