

C.A.R.E.'s Critter Chronicles

The Official Quarterly Newsletter of the **Critter Adoption & Rescue Effort, Inc.**
1528 27th Street S.E. • Ruskin, Florida 33570 • 813.645.2273 • www.careshelter.org

Can You Help Dexter & Others Like Him?



Dexter, a Lab puppy, was recently rescued and relinquished to C.A.R.E. He appeared healthy but after intake testing we discovered that he had parvovirus, a highly contagious viral infection which could cause death if not treated promptly. Because treatment is costly and we are not able to treat this condition at the shelter, a decision had to be made quickly as to whether or not to take Dexter to an animal hospital and incur the resultant costs.

Our budget is limited, and our normal medical costs usually deplete the donations resulting from individual memberships. To date only 50 percent of our 2005 members have renewed for 2006. One look in Dexter's eyes, however, convinced us that this young

life was worth the financial gamble and we took him in for treatment. He's recovering nicely and based on his enthusiastic tail wagging, we're hoping he will soon be well enough for adoption to a forever home.

Unfortunately, Dexter won't be the last puppy or kitten brought to C.A.R.E. in need of medical treatment. **One way you can help is by joining or renewing your membership to C.A.R.E. today (look for the form on page 2). Another is by sponsoring a sick animal and/or sending us a donation designated for our Emergency Treatment Fund.** This fund will enable us to know, in advance, the extent of treatment options we can offer to homeless pets like Dexter who are brought to us with undiagnosed medical issues.

We hope you will find it in your heart to help Dexter and the others who will follow. We'll do the work if you will help us pay the bills.

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C.A.R.E. Hours of Operation

Tuesday-Saturday
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Newsletter Editor

Michelle Fitz



**C.A.R.E. is a
No-Kill Animal
Shelter**

Have You Signed Up For 2006 Membership Yet?

If not, please do so quickly so that we can finalize our medical budget for this year. Your membership will get you at least four more issues of the *Critter Chronicles* and will allow you to vote in September's election for C.A.R.E. 2006-2007 Board officers. With a "premier" membership, you will also get our new imprinted tee-shirt. MOST IMPORTANTLY, your membership allows you to know that you've contributed directly to helping save the lives of more homeless animals. Please sign up now, using the application at right or by sending your check indicating "membership." All the volunteers working at C.A.R.E. (and the animals, if they could talk) thank you.

Help Make A Difference...Join C.A.R.E. Today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

May we occasionally send you C.A.R.E. updates via e-mail? YES NO
(circle one)

Membership Level: _____ Regular Member \$30 donation
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Please send a check made payable to C.A.R.E. to the following address:

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Ruskin, Florida 33570

New Member
 Renewal

The Joy Of Volunteering *By Miki Janosky*

"GAL Day" (Get a Life Day) occurred 38 months ago when my life as a paralegal came to its long overdue end. My closets were purged; the kitchen cabinets were scrubbed and relined; and the stacks of old magazines were sent to the recycle bin. The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) deemed me worthy of holding a private pilot's instrument rating thereby wrapping up countless hours of aviation study and flying practice approaches. My daily company consisted of two adorable Burmese kitties and a Noble Macaw. I became fluent in "feline-ese" and bird chatter much like a stay-at-home mother masters baby talk. So now what?

Having spent time 10 years earlier as a volunteer with Hospice of Hillsborough, I recalled how much gratification I obtained from doing something for someone else. Making the decision to reenter the work of community service was easy but the "where" was difficult. I sat down and made an inventory of what really mattered to me. Not surprisingly, my "babies" topped the list (after my husband, of course!). I googled local animal shelters and came upon the C.A.R.E. web site thereby resolving my "where" problem.

Here it is March 2006, and I have six-plus months under my belt as a C.A.R.E. volunteer. Effective January 1st of

this year, I became the shelter's volunteer coordinator, vigorously trying to fill Betsy Hinderliter's larger-than-life shoes. It amazes me how quickly and intensely my dedication to C.A.R.E. has evolved. A major bonus is working side-by-side with many other equally committed volunteers each of whom is warm and friendly and with whom I am proud to be associated.

There are too many outstanding volunteers at C.A.R.E. to individually laud each in this brief article. However, three exceptional and dedicated people come immediately to mind. First is our inimitable Tim Otte. The blood (literally!), sweat and tears he has poured into the shelter are incalculable and invaluable. Next is Sandy Kepley whose indispensable gifts of diplomacy, diligence, and dependability keep the cathouse running smoothly. Last but not least, is Mary Beth Cammilleri, who, along with an endless willingness to serve, brings youthful exuberance and flexibility to the kennel area.

I shall end this article with a quote from a man who dedicated his life to and lost it due to his service to others:

"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve."
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Number 1,000 For C.A.R.E.— Number 1 With The Burkes

By John Fischer



Molly is a special cat. Not only is she special to C.A.R.E. but she is special to Betty and Dick Burke of Sun City Center. Molly, a domestic long haired feline, about three years old when admitted to the shelter, is special to C.A.R.E. because she was our 1,000th adoption since the shelter was established just over 5 years ago—an outstanding record for an organization run chiefly by volunteers and public donations.

Like many young ladies, Molly is very shy. When Molly first came to us in December 2004, she mostly stayed out of sight. The beautiful tortoiseshell-colored cat was initially adopted within weeks of her arrival. However, three months later she was returned. Molly's desire to remain out of public view prolonged her stay at C.A.R.E.

Cat lover Betty Burke called the shelter earlier this year looking for a short-haired cat, but found herself hopelessly smitten with Molly, who has beautiful long hair. It was a great match. Molly is slowly accepting her new quarters and losing her skittishness. "Her first day was spent in back of a couch. I guess she was seeing what was going to happen next," said Mrs. Burke. "That evening she did make an appearance but scooted back to the couch if we paid any attention to her. At dinner I felt a paw on my leg and when I looked down, I saw the prettiest face...so sweet."

Mrs. Burke points out the unusual drinking habit of her feline. "She drinks water in a most peculiar way. She dips her paw in the water than licks her paw. I have yet to see her drink out of the dish." Molly also brings big smiles to the Burkes when she heads for the food dish. She does it on the run. As she tries to turn a 90-degree corner from a hardwood floor to a tiled kitchen floor her legs and paws are flailing and as her body is gripped by centrifugal force, she skids around.

Mrs. Burke, who has had several cats over the years including one that lived for 26 years, said that Molly has begun to warm up to her. "I am able to hold her for a few minutes before she struggles to be released. She has explored every nook and cranny of our home and lately enjoys resting on top of the sofa looking all around and sometimes napping."

"Molly loves to be brushed and even lets me kiss her on the head but is still a little cautious," continues Mrs. Burke. "I assume that will change as time goes on. She has been a joy to have and not being a kitten her personality has taken shape and we see a softening of her manners and has recently decided our laps are not so bad after all. We love her."

On The Road...

On The Road At The Sun City Dog Show On March 11th C.A.R.E. attended the annual Sun City Dog Show. Jill (in photos below) was the official doggie representative from C.A.R.E. at the show and worked hard mingling with the crowd.



Arts Festival A Success! On March 11th & 12th C.A.R.E. attended the annual Manatee Arts Festival in Apollo Beach. C.A.R.E. volunteers (pictured below) were on hand to hand out information and answer questions.



Help Wanted!

Can you spare 3-4 hours every week to help us save the lives of homeless animals? We are always looking for volunteers to help in direct animal care and in other support areas for the shelter.

- We need individuals who can work 3-4 hours weekday mornings to open/clean our kennel and cat facility and get the animals started on a new day.
- If you are available to work between 1-3 p.m. on weekdays, we need volunteers to help close the shelter and put the animals 'to bed' for the evening.
- If you like dealing with the public and answering their questions, we are looking for volunteers in the office during the week from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

- We need someone with bookkeeping skills to donate approximately 12 hours a month. Tasks include posting entries to accounts for the shelter using Quickbooks. Loving puppies and kitties is optional.

We also have other initiatives awaiting your assistance.

- Are/were you a teacher and/or like giving presentations?
- Do you take pictures, like working with the media and/or enjoy writing short stories?
- Can you spare 2-3 days per month to help in our spay-neuter clinic?

If you can help in any of these areas, please call me at the shelter at 813-645-2273 or e-mail me at: Miki@tampabay.rr.com and express your interest.

Sophie's Story *By Gloria Blue*

It was roughly 10 weeks ago that a lady pulled into our parking lot bringing with her a very frightened dog in the backseat. She was frantic after having just witnessed two dogs being killed on Highway 301 and was able to rescue this one from the same fate. Visibly shaken, this innocent bystander on the way home from work witnessed a terrible incident. With some knowledge of C.A.R.E. and what we do, she brought the dog to our facility.



We took the dog into our shelter and named her Sophie. Ten days later at 5:30 p.m. on a Tuesday afternoon I went to check on her before going home for the day and realized she was in labor. The first puppy made an appearance at 5:45 p.m. and the birthing process continued for the rest of the evening. What a miracle to witness eight puppies come into this world!

Mom and puppies continue to thrive. Sophie is a delight to have at the shelter. She is a wonderful Mom to her babies and a welcome addition to the shelter. She loves to be with people and will stay by my side whether I'm working in the office or in the yard.

Unfortunately, Sophie's fate could have been much different. She too could have lost her life on that strip of road just like her companion and we would have never known what a great pet she would have ultimately turned out to be.

C.A.R.E. Annual Appreciation Luncheon

Approximately 48 volunteers and three local businesses were honored at the annual C.A.R.E. volunteer appreciation luncheon held at the Cypress Creek Golf Club on March 6. Volunteers were honored for their service to the animals and Coleman Connection, Ruskin Animal Hospital and Lanese & Associates were honored for providing needed services to the shelter. After lunch the attendees were briefed on future plans for the shelter and viewed a short video presentation about C.A.R.E.'s work. This video was produced by Renee Bray, a Clearwater resident who previously adopted an animal from C.A.R.E. Attendees were also awarded door prizes and tokens of appreciation for their continuing efforts on behalf of the homeless animals residing in the shelter.

Volunteer Spotlight: Thelma Dickman *By Miki Janosky*

Since C.A.R.E. first opened its doors to the public in 2001, many volunteers have come and gone with most leaving the shelter a better place for having been here. One such person is Thelma Dickman, who has continuously contributed her office skills to C.A.R.E. since 2003. For those who haven't yet had the delightful opportunity to meet her, one of the most noteworthy personality traits is her impish vitality. What is unclear is if her joie de vivre is in spite of—or because of—her 91+ years of life.

Thelma and her late husband, Morris, a building contractor, moved to South Tampa from Indiana in the mid-1950s and subsequently to the Ruskin area. While her husband continued his construction business, Thelma was employed by WCI in the early days of Sun City Center's development. Mr. Dickman passed away in 1984 leaving Thelma with endless happy memories, good health, and a loving family. Over the past 20 years Thelma has continued to enjoy life to the fullest with her family and friends and through her volunteer work.

Of late, Wednesdays have not been the same at the shelter because of Thelma's conspicuous absence. Due to a medical concern she has temporarily given up driving. Getting to and from her home in Apollo Beach to the shelter is impractical now. I have had the good fortune to spend one-on-one time with Thelma in these past six months and I'm better for the experience.

Thelma is not one to miss a party! So, on March 6th I was happy to play chauffeur so that she could attend the annual C.A.R.E. Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.



Recently I again shared an enjoyable car ride with her when we office volunteers found ourselves unexpectedly shorthanded. Thanks to Thelma's enthusiastic consent to cover the phones, the office continued running smoothly once again.

We hope C.A.R.E. continues to benefit from Thelma's services for a long time to come. Once she returns to the shelter, I encourage those of you at C.A.R.E. on any Wednesday to spend a few minutes to chat with Thelma and observe her intelligence and wit. Perhaps you will pick up a pointer or two on how to live a long, productive and happy life.

Website Of The Quarter *By Mike Fitz* www.healthypet.com

Need to find a veterinary hospital or information about common pet health problems? Then visit the Healthypet.com website. This site is sponsored by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and contains a wealth of information regarding all aspects of your pet's life. Their hospital locator page lets you search for an AAHA-accredited hospital by state or zip code. Be sure to check out the Petcare Library which has helpful articles on behavior, nutrition, illness, disease and general pet care tips.

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Jill

Jill has the look of a Smooth Coated Collie mix and is about 5 months old.

Jill is already showing signs of the gentle little lady she will grow up to be in a home that can provide her with loving guidance. Jill was diagnosed with hip dysplasia so she may need more veterinary care than the average pup.



Bubba

Bubba is a 4 year old that was turned over to us when his owners relocated. He was born without a tail but happily wags his fluffy stump. Bubba is a mellow fellow. He is not the least bit bothered by other dogs barking. He is more interested in making friends, going for a walks, and posing for pictures.



Tish

Tish is a friendly little lady who we think is about 2 years old. She likes to show off for the visitors to the cat house by hopping up on the counter so she can be at the perfect height to be petted. She is ready for her forever home.



Maurice

Maurice was born on November 2, 2002. He was surrendered to us with his buddy, Cheetah. Both are friendly and loving and would make wonderful companions. No worry about your screens or drapes with these guys as they have both been declawed.

Alumni Updates...

We are happy when our homeless animals find their forever homes. It makes us even happier when we hear that they and their new families are doing well. Here are some updates we recently received.

Sophie and Roxie, two adorable puppies, were adopted from C.A.R.E. in December by the Lewis family. "No amount of money could repay you for rescuing these puppies. I will be forever grateful to you," they write. We think Roxie and Sophie are also grateful to the Lewis's who opened their hearts and home to these little guys!



Gilligan was adopted last February by Bob Giannette. According to Bob, the dog has remained "glued" to his side from the first day he was placed on his lap. "Gilligan is just one fun dog to

be with," says Bob. "He likes to play with all his toys. If I would let him, he would ride in the golf cart all day," says his happy owner. "One of Gilligan's favorite activities is visiting people here at Sun Towers—and he wants to kiss them all!"

Debra Farrell wrote to say that **Kyle**, her recently adopted kitten, is adjusting just fine to his new home and new family. "The kitty is wonderful. We all love him and he is doing great. Our older cat loves him too!"

Heidi was a little kitten we remember who enjoyed curling around the necks of our volunteers and potential adopters. Evelyn Wojtas adopted the 4 month old Spotted Tabby about a year ago and renamed her **Lollie**. Evelyn says they "are living the good life... spoiling each other." Now that's what we like to hear!

Mark Your Calendar For Upcoming Events

There are some special events coming up in the next few months you don't want to miss, so please mark your calendars and join us for the fun.

April 22 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.) is C.A.R.E. Day At The 3-Legged Poodle. The 3 Legged Poodle, a Sun City Center pet boutique on Inmar Drive (across from Sterling Management) is sponsoring a spring celebration and adoption event to benefit C.A.R.E. This is an opportunity for you to learn more about the shelter, join or renew your membership, and meet and greet several of our adoptable cats and dogs. There will be refreshments, music, and a chance to win a \$25.00 gift certificate from The 3 Legged Poodle. Bring your pet along too! C.A.R.E. volunteers Elisa Chaney, a certified pet massage practitioner and Bonnie Lowery, of Portraits with a Purr-Pose, will both be on hand. Elisa will treat your pet to a massage and, if you bring your pet's photograph, Bonnie can turn your picture into an 22"X14" sketch for just \$30.00, and all proceeds go to C.A.R.E. So come over to the Sun City Plaza, enjoy the festivities and have a dog-gone good time!

May 6-7 we will be at the **Ruskin Tomato/Heritage Festival.**

July 15 (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.). Join us at the **First Annual Ruskin PetFest 2006** at Ott's Off Leash Dog Park sponsored by the *St. Petersburg Times*. Events for people of all ages are planned: a live band, a silent auction, a dog house painting for the adults (to be auctioned), a "monster mural" painting for children, a pet fashion show, a dog wash and our annual C.A.R.E. Pet Reunion. More information will be available soon at our website, www.careshelter.org and in the newspaper closer to the event.

Goings...

The following dogs and cats found their forever homes this past quarter and hopefully are enjoying their lives with their new owners:

Cats: Calli, Maggie & Bug, Durango, Nicki, Spooky, Rudy, Oreo & Goober, Bootsie (Charlie), Jilly, Kaylie, Leo, Bobbi, Ben, Dolly, Diva, Ziggy, Precious, Kyle, Molly, Ms. Tick, Kitty (Valentine), Lindy, Zoe & Lola, Joey, Blacky, Jeri & Thor, Flame, Cesar, Bayley & Prowler....

Dogs: Maddie's puppies (2), Poncho, Henry, Dexter, Chihuahua, Ebony, Wolfie, Puppy, Daisy, Lab mix puppy, Riley, Dweezil, Snowball, Goldie, Jack, Husky/Shepard puppies (2), Louie, Freddie, Martha, Minnie, Mary, Sophie's puppies (6), Rebel.

**By The
Numbers
First Quarter
2006**

2,239 Volunteer Hours

151 Current Members

110 Spay/Neuter Surgeries

65 Adoptions

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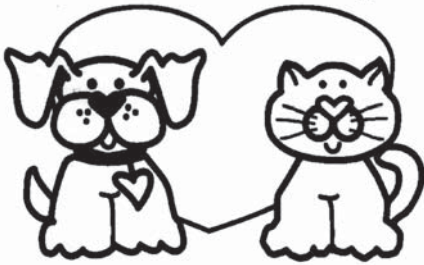
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C.A.R.E.



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Charley's Story

My cat, Charley, is a yellow short-haired male. He has four white paws and a white chest. He's a beautiful cat. He's playful in the morning, but by noon he becomes a calm "pussy" cat. He likes to be petted but will let you know when he's had enough. At other times he seems to want more petting than I have time to give him. Every morning for 15-20 minutes I exercise him with a feather tied to the end of a string. In fact, he sits on my desk chair in the morning waiting for us to play. I usually wear out before he does. During the day he "runs" the entire house space. Whenever I sit on the couch, Charley will come to visit and or sit on the couch with me. He goes with me to the screened-in patio. We each have our own chairs where we watch the cars and people go by. At times he sits on my desk while I'm trying to write. Some mornings at 6 a.m. he jumps on my bed and I raise the cover. He crawls in; turns himself around so his head is also on the pillow. And I pet him. He stays there about 10 minutes. He eats well. He sleeps well. He's my cat friend.



—Leonard E. Wedel