

CRITTER CHRONICLES

Nov/Dec 2026

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

Our Volunteers Are the Heart of C.A.R.E. Meet the amazing volunteers who make it all happen.

COME ON OUT AND SEE OUR SWEET CATS AND DOGS UP FOR ADOPTION.

C.A.R.E. In the Community, exciting events coming up!

Keeping Pets Safe Over the Holidays

January 25th - Bingo fun at Salty Shamrock

AND MORE!!!

careshelter.org

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Become a Volunteer . . . . . BC

C.A.R.E. Mission Statement - "To reduce the number of homeless and unwanted dogs and cats through adoption, sterilization, and education."

Special Note:

This is an Electronic Issue C.A.R.E. has produced. If you are viewing electronically check for links associated with buttons, ads, and stories throughout this publication.

The Official Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort, Inc.
1528 27th Street S.E., Ruskin, FL 33570 • (813) 645 -2273 • careshelter.org

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ON THE COVER:



Cover Photo Volunteers from left to right, Karen (C.A.R.E. Office Manager), Andy, Sandy, Kim, Laura, Dave, Gloria (C.A.R.E. Animal Manager), John (Board of Directors member) and Nick from Nick's Property Services.

The Heart of C.A.R.E.

Behind every rescued animal is a dedicated team of volunteers who give their time, compassion, and hard work to keep C.A.R.E. Animal Shelter running. As Ruskin's only no-kill shelter serving the SouthShore area, C.A.R.E. relies on these caring individuals to provide daily care, comfort, and attention to animals waiting for their forever homes. From walking dogs and socializing cats to organizing donations and welcoming potential adopters, every volunteer plays an important role. Discover the people behind the mission, the difference they make every day, and how you can join them in giving local animals a second chance at a happy, loving life.

Read story PG 5

Sunshine
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CAREing thoughts



President Joann

I often reflect on how much we depend on our members, volunteers, staff, and the community for support. C.A.R.E. relies on donations, adoption fees, dues, and fundraisers to cover expenses. Our operating expenses are like any small business and include things you don't usually think about such as utilities, insurance, maintenance and repairs, and garbage collection. As expected, animal care expenses remain the largest portion of our budget. This year we had to cancel our Annual Gift & Wine Fair event due to an unanticipated loss of our venue. This was a major loss of revenue for us. If you are considering a charitable gift this season, I hope that you will think of us. While monetary gifts are most welcome, you can help with a donation of food, litter and other needed items by viewing our Wish Lists at Amazon or Chewy. Or consider volunteering your time and make some dogs, cats, and yourself very happy. Best wishes to all during this holiday season.

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A Toast to Ray Edel

Family and friends gathered at Leaven Brewing on September 18 to raise a glass and celebrate the life of Ray Edel.

A devoted husband, father, grandfather, and friend, Ray was also a music enthusiast, an animal lover, and a supporter of C.A.R.E. He was the father of Jillian Lynch, who, along with her husband, KJ, owns Leaven Brewing and shares Ray's support for C.A.R.E.

In Ray's honor, attendees were invited to bring supplies or make a donation to C.A.R.E., turning a heartfelt celebration of his life into an opportunity to help animals in need.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Ray's family and friends and offer our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to C.A.R.E. in his memory.

Here's one more toast to you, Ray!



Great Sunset View. Great Company. Greater Impact.

Whether you gather with us to play Bingo, support a great cause, or simply join family and friends for a fun evening, everyone always has a good time! And the sunsets never disappoint at the Sunset Bar & Grill at Little Harbor. Hosted by Amy Harris and supported by Sunset Bar & Grill's great staff, fun and great prizes abound. Monday, October 19th's Bingo did not disappoint as winners got to select their prize from a plethora of gift cards and bottles of "beverages".

Watch our website at careshelter.org for our Bingo and other events coming in 2027, as well as other ways to financially support C.A.R.E. and see our cats and dogs that are ready for adoption!



C.A.R.E. Outreach Committee Members (L-R) Sue Hanson, Kris Hart and Cheri Schumacher welcome attendees and help get them ready for the evening with Bingo cards, 50/50 Raffle tickets, and C.A.R.E. information

Celebrating Our Volunteers This Holiday Season

The holidays are a time for giving, and our volunteers give so much all year long. Their time, compassion, and dedication make a difference in the lives of animals waiting for their forever homes.



student volunteers with one of our kittens.

The Heart of C.A.R.E.
Volunteering at Ruskin's No-Kill Shelter

By Rula Urso

C.A.R.E. volunteers keep Ruskin's only SouthShore shelter running.

Every dog walked, every litter box scooped and every donation box unpacked at C.A.R.E. happens because someone chose to show up. Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) no-kill shelter in Ruskin and the only animal shelter serving the SouthShore area. It receives no county, state or federal funding, so its people are its engine.

That engine runs on volunteers. They clean kennels, socialize shy cats, greet adopters, sort donations and keep the office humming. Without them, the shelter's promise to every animal in its care simply could not be kept.

A day at C.A.R.E.

C.A.R.E. is not a cage-all-day kind of shelter. The dogs spend their days outdoors with fresh air, exercise and playtime, and the cats roam freely in one of three rooms. That approach takes a lot of hands, but our volunteers do it every day!

By morning the dog crew is at work: cleaning runs, filling water bowls, walking dogs and giving each one time with a person. For a dog waiting on a family, those hours of attention build trust and confidence. They are often what turns a nervous newcomer into an adoptable companion.



Just like home, we do laundry! Linda Hodge hauling a pile of clean towels to the cattery.

FiND YOUR PURR-FECT MATCH

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
10 AM to 3 PM • Tuesday - Saturday



Mango

She is sweet and loving, quiet and reserved but loves to be around you. Frankly, we are all surprised no one has adopted this sweet girl. She is ready for her forever home!



Jelly Bean

Quiet and sophisticated but loves to check out what's happening outside the window. Especially if there's a lizard nearby!



Joni

She is affectionate and sweet and loves to be by you as she takes her naps.

The dog crew: walks, play yard or kennel cleaning

The dog crew gives every dog exercise, play and one-on-one time.

The work is muddy, loud and sometimes exhausting. Volunteers will also tell you it is the best part of their week.

Meet the people who make it happen

Gloria Blue, C.A.R.E.'s Animal Manager, has given 25 years to the shelter's cats and dogs. She knows each animal's history, quirks and needs, and her steady presence is the thread running through a quarter century of rescues.

Karen, the Office Manager, keeps the front of the house running. She coordinates volunteers, answers donor and adopter questions, and makes sure nothing falls through the cracks.

John, a member of C.A.R.E.'s board, proves that leadership is not just a meeting-room job. He is as likely to be found hauling supplies as reviewing plans.

Then there is the core crew: Andy, Sandy, Kim, Laura, Dave and Nick. About once a month, Amazon wishlist donors send a wave of boxes filled with food, litter, cleaning supplies and treats. This team turns that driveway full of cardboard into stocked shelves, sorting and carrying until the job is done.

Volunteers unboxing Amazon wishlist donations

Volunteers turn a driveway full of donation boxes into stocked shelves.





Michelle and Jessie



Kristinn and Michelle are the Sunday power duo. Experts in all thing's dogs and C.A.R.E. This duo has done it all, from volunteering on the board (Michelle and Kristinn), managing the C.A.R.E. facebook page (Kristinn) to handling our special dogs.



Cheryl and Peppermint. Peppermint is a long resident of C.A.R.E. and is very picky with who she shares her love with. Cheryl is one of the lucky ones!

They are joined by the dog crew, cat crew, and office volunteers who give their time week after week. Board members pitch in too, including Vice President Rula Urso, who has volunteered with the dog program for three years. Brenda Knebel, also a board member, volunteers at the cattery three days a week. Marlene Greenberg, C.A.R.E.'s Treasurer, and Joyce Maggio, C.A.R.E.'s Secretary, volunteer every Tuesday running the office, answering phone calls, and responding to emails. Volunteering at C.A.R.E. takes time, devotion, and hard work, but every one of these volunteers will tell you it's worth it, knowing they make a difference in an animal's life and in the community at large.

Ways to help

There is a role for nearly every interest and schedule:

- Kennel and cattery care: cleaning kennels and cat rooms, scooping litter boxes, doing laundry and keeping living areas safe and fresh.
- Dog and cat socializing: walks, play and quiet time that help animals become confident and ready for adoption.
- Office and front desk: greeting visitors, answering questions and helping with mailings and paperwork.
- Donations and supplies: unboxing wishlist deliveries and keeping the supply shed organized.
- Events and outreach: helping at adoption events and fundraisers that keep the shelter funded.



Karen and Bryan



Guinness - getting brushed by Caroline Janney, who chose to spend one of her Progressive company community service days with us.



Helen is a Saturday cattery volunteer. She can't help sneaking in puppy cuddles.



Sally with one of our youngest pups. Sally is a longtime volunteer, donating her time and expertise Saturdays with the dogs.



Kathy is a longtime volunteer on Saturdays, she has a way of making the dogs feel right at home, with her gentle touch and sweet smile.

C.A.R.E.'s cats roam freely in one of three cat rooms.

C.A.R.E.'s cats roam freely in one of three rooms that are seperated by age. One for Kittens and youngsters, a second room for middle age cats and the third for mature and senior cats.

Before you sign up

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old and commit to a regular schedule of at least four hours a month. Reliability matters, because the animals count on routine.

C.A.R.E. looks for people who are dependable, mature and comfortable working alone or as part of a team. Phones stay mostly in pockets during shifts, so the focus stays on the animals. Schedules are flexible, from a couple of hours one day a week to several days a week. No prior animal experience is required, just a willingness to learn and get a little dirty.



Chris and Halo



Jim is all things cats and kittens, he is a long-time dedicated cattery volunteer. Even his shirts have cats on them!

A bigger home, and room for more volunteers

C.A.R.E. is building a new, roughly 9,000-square-foot shelter at 1925 14th Avenue SE in Ruskin, just blocks from its current home. More kennels and more space mean more animals saved, and more volunteers will be needed to care for them.

The new shelter construction is under way. This is an exciting time for C.A.R.E. as a new building is greatly needed. The new location is located at 1925 14th Ave SE in Ruskin. We are still raising funds for the new building and our goal to completion is $500,000.00. Donations are welcome in any amount, please visit https://careshelter.org/our-new-home/ to learn more and ways to donate.

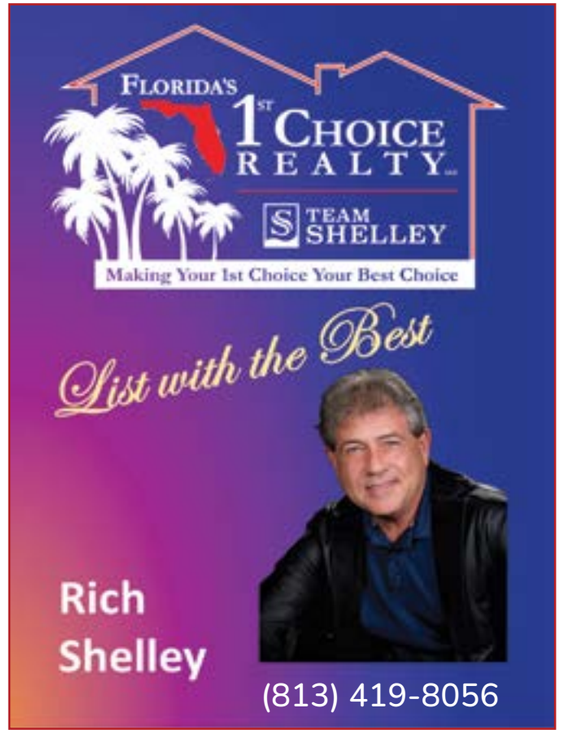
There has never been a better time to join. To get started, visit careshelter.org, call (813) 645-2273, or stop by the shelter at 1528 27th St. SE in Ruskin. Come for a shift, and you may find, like so many others, that you keep coming back.

To every volunteer who already gives their time: thank you. You are the heart of C.A.R.E.



Ginny and Betty





November - December 2026 Pet Holidays

NOVEMBER

Cooler temps and crisp mornings are great for getting out and enjoying a walk with your furry friend. This month is also National Adopt a Senior Pet Month. Many senior dogs and cats are overlooked for puppies and kittens however senior pets offer so many benefits from being housebroken to being accustomed to around children or older adults. If you are looking for a new furry friend, please consider those that need the most love and care, a senior pet.

MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES

- Adopt a Senior Pet Month.
- Pet Diabetes Month.
- One-Day Holidays
- Nov. 1: National Cook for Your Pets Day.
- Nov. 7: National Canine Lymphoma Awareness Day.
- Nov. 15: National Shop with Your Dog Day.
- Nov. 16: National Slobber Appreciation Day.
- Nov. 17: National Black Cat Day. Also celebrated on October 27.
- Nov. 17: National Take a Hike Day.
- Nov. 18: National Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) Awareness, Research and Education Day.
- Nov. 23: Wolfenoot. This annual holiday, started in New Zealand, celebrates the Spirit of the Wolf and "is about celebrating our pack – human and animal – helping where we can, and making the world a better, kinder place."
- Nov. 23: Thankful for My Dog Day. Founded in 2020 by M.Y.O.S. Canine Muscle Formula, this pet holiday gives thanks for all that our dogs give us each and every day.
- Nov. 24: National Border Collie Day.
- Nov. 26: Coton de Tulear Day.
- Nov. 26: National Dog Show. Always broadcast in the US on Thanksgiving, this event is held at The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, Pennsylvania and is hosted by the Kennel Club of Philadelphia.
- Nov. 30: World Pet Day.

DECEMBER

Holiday traditions, family and friends. A time to celebrate with the ones you love both human and furry. Joy and peace to all!

MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES

- National Cat Lover's Month.
- One-Day Events
- Dec. 1: National Twin With Your Dog Day. Created in the UK by Leo Charley & Me, this day encourages dog owners to match their outfit to their dog's! #twinwithyourdogday
- Dec. 2: National Mutt Day.
- Dec. 3: Celebrate Shelter Pets Day. Humane Society of the United States. Always the first Thursday after Thanksgiving.
- Dec. 9: International Day of Veterinary Medicine.
- Dec. 10: International Animal Rights Day.
- Dec. 11: Holiday Food Drive for Needy Animals Day.
- Dec. 15: National Cat Herders Day.

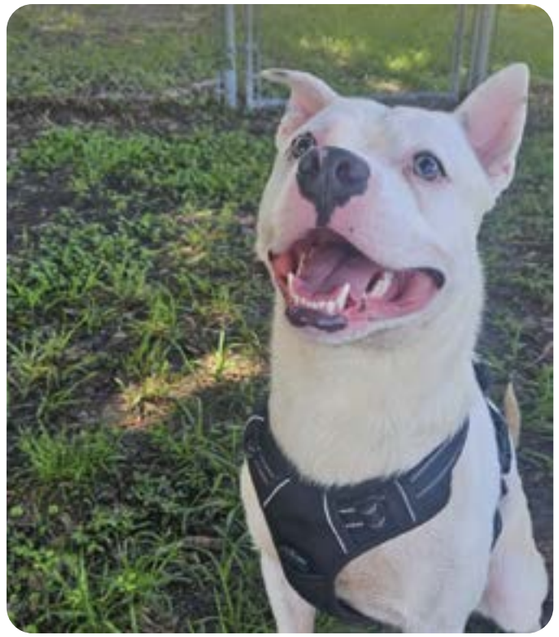
A NEW BEST FRIEND IS JUST A PAW AWAY

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
10 AM to 3 PM • Tuesday - Saturday



Arthur

Is a Lab mix young pup. He is sweet, affectionate and loves to play. Puppy cuteness abounds with this guy. He will need a family that is patient and will potty train him, leash train and give him lots of attention and play time. He will be neutered when age is appropriate, he is current on vaccinations and will be microchipped.



Bryan

This guy is full of love and life! Loves to play in the yard chasing toys and splashing in the kiddie pool. You must spend some time with him, but he warms up quickly and is softie at heart. He is neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped.



Dolly

She is a true lap dog and super sweet. She loves to sit on your lap take her naps while you do your work. Four of her five pups have been adopted to loving homes and Dolly is waiting for hers. Dot is her last pup and is also waiting for her forever home.



Dot

This sweet tiny girl has a dot next to her eye. She is one of the last five puppies that recently arrived at C.A.R.E. and is ready for her forever home. Her sweet demeanor will melt your heart. Dolly is her mom and just like mom she is affectionate and mild mannered but in puppy form. She will need a family to show her the ropes from potty training to leash walking and take extra care as she is super tiny.

A Little Help Goes a Long Way

Every day, C.A.R.E. works to provide loving care, comfort, and support for animals waiting for their next chapter. From everyday essentials to special treats and enrichment items, our Amazon and Chewy Wishlists make it easy for our community to help make a difference.

Your generosity helps provide the supplies our pets need while they wait for their forever homes. Every donation, no matter the size, helps us continue giving animals the love, attention, and care they deserve. Thank you for being part of the C.A.R.E. family and helping us create brighter futures for the pets in our community.

Please visit https://careshelter.org/donate to view our Chewy and Amazon Wishlist's. For our online version , you can simply click on the links below:

Chewy

https://www.chewy.com/g/care-critter-adoption-and-rescue-effort_b152529454#wish-list%20

Amazon

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2C27OPQLUI6Y3?ref_=wl_share



All proceeds will benefit Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort (C.A.R.E.) in Ruskin.

Monday, January 25th

Bingo Night at Salty Shamrock

BINGO starts at 7:00PM

Grab your friends, enjoy great food and drinks, and try your luck at winning exciting prizes while helping local animals in need.

All proceeds benefit C.A.R.E. Animal Shelter — because every game helps a pet find a home.

C.A.R.E.

invites you to participate in our annual

TREE OF LIGHTS FUNDRAISER

Your donation will benefit the animals of C.A.R.E.

Honor or memorialize your pet(s) by purchasing a Christmas bulb (non-personalized) or personalized ornament*. Bulbs and ornaments will be hung on one of the Christmas trees that decorate the shelter from mid-November through December. Purchasing additional ornaments for the animal lovers in your life can be a wonderful Christmas gift. (*Ornaments remain the property of C.A.R.E. and are reused each year.)

Each year, one dog and one cat are selected as mascots for the fundraiser. This year's stars are Bryan and Jellybean. We hope they find their forever homes this holiday season.



Bryan



Jellybean

Number of Bulbs (non-personalized) _____ @ $5.00 = $_____

Number of Personalized Ornaments _____ @ $10.00 = $_____

Tax Deductible Total = $_____

Names of Pets for Personalized Ornaments:

_____ Cat/Dog _____ Cat/Dog

_____ Cat/Dog _____ Cat/Dog

_____ Cat/Dog _____ Cat/Dog

_____ Cat/Dog _____ Cat/Dog

Name of Donor:_____ Credit Card#:_____

Address:_____ Exp. Date:_____

_____ Check#:_____

Please return the completed form with your payment to:
C.A.R.E. 1528 27th Street SE, Ruskin, FL 33570

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



C.A.R.E. is grateful to the many Business Partners who support our mission.

Annual Business Partner donations help us continue to provide food, shelter, and medical care for the cats and dogs we take into our shelter each year.

Because we know that business owners are inundated with requests for donations, we would like to offer better value for your support. Business Partners are promoted in this and every issue of Critter Chronicles. We also post your logo on our website and hyperlink to your website to help you reach a large consumer group – pet owners.

Let's work together to promote your business and further the mission to reduce the number of homeless and unwanted cats and dogs in the Southshore area.



















We hope you will consider supporting C.A.R.E. and the mission to rescue homeless cats and dogs.
For additional information, contact C.A.R.E. Outreach Coordinator cherischumacher2@gmail.com.



we want to hear from you

Do you have a story or an article you would like to see in our magazine? We are always on the lookout for the community to participate in what we do here at C.A.R.E.

PLEASE EMAIL
Urso.Rula@gmail.com
Please put Critter Chronicles in the subject line with your ideas and submissions.

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advertising opportunities

C.A.R.E. is a non-profit no-kill animal shelter. We rely heavily upon the financial assistance of concerned citizens and socially responsible businesses to reach our goals. To help support our activities, we offer advertising opportunities in our monthly Critter Chronicles newsletter.

Critter Chronicles Newsletter Ad Rates

Full Color	Price
1/6 Page Vertical 1/6 Page Horizontal Short 1/6 Page Horizontal Long	$75 per edition
1/3 Page Horizontal	$150 per edition
2/3 Page Horizontal	$300 per edition
1/4 Page Vertical Ad	$125 per edition
1/2 Page Vertical Ad 1/2 Page Horizontal Ad	$250 per edition
Full Page Ad No Bleed	$400 per edition
Full Page Ad	$400 per edition

Additional Value	
Advertising creation	$40
Inside back cover placement	Additional $25
Inside front cover placement	Additional $50

Anyone interested in placing an ad in the Critter Chronicles should contact Urso.Rula@gmail.com

Electronic files should be at least 300 dpi and in .jpg or .pdf file format (no Microsoft Publisher).

Dedicated volunteers are always needed at C.A.R.E.

PLEASE EMAIL
volunteers@careshelter.org
if interested.

LOVE ANIMALS? VOLUNTEER WITH C.A.R.E.!

C.A.R.E.

CRITTER ADOPTION & RESCUE EFFORT

A No-Kill Dog & Cat Shelter in Ruskin

MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND FUEL YOUR PASSION HELPING ANIMALS

- **Save lives and give hope: Your time helps animals find safety, care, and loving homes.**
- **Make a tangible impact: Walk dogs, socialize cats, or assist with shelter tasks to improve their lives.**
- **Be part of a compassionate community: Connect with others who share your love for animals.**



HAVE QUESTIONS? READY TO JOIN?

- **Apply online at careshelter.org**
- **Or call 813-645-2273**
- **Or email** *volunteers@careshelter.org*

FLEXIBLE HOURS THAT FIT YOUR SCHEDULE!

BE A PAWSITIVE FORCE: VOLUNTEER WITH C.A.R.E. TODAY!

C.A.R.E. Animal Shelter, a 501 (c) (3) Public Charity
careshelter.org