



### WHO'S THE TRASH?

By definition, "trash" is described as "anything worthless, useless or discarded; rubbish."

We couldn't think of a better way to describe Anthony Lee Bellman (DOB 10-02-1968) who tied a rope around his dog's neck, stuffed her into a black trash bag and proceeded to throw...yes, *throw*...the bag into a Lehigh Acres dumpster.



The Lee County Sheriff's Office received a call for service from the Family Dollar store, located on Bell Boulevard, stating that an employee had located a bound dog inside of the business' dumpster.

"Xyla," a 16-year-old Shih Tzu, was found with a rope around her neck and transported to a local animal hospital.

Surveillance video obtained by the Lee County Sheriff's Office clearly shows Bellman arrive at the dumpster, remove a black trash bag from the trunk of his Hyundai, and proceed to throw the bag, containing the bound dog, approximately eight feet into the open trash receptacle.

LCSO deputies went to Bellman's home, which is approximately one

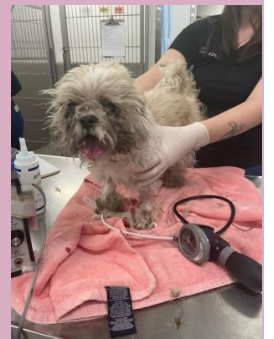


DECEMBER 2023

### (Who's the trash...continued)

mile from the location at which Xyla was discarded and, following an interview, arrested Anthony Bellman.

Bellman was subsequently charged with one count of Aggravated Animal Cruelty.



### LIEUTENANT HOPE SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

The holiday season is a difficult and stressful time for an individual to be hospitalized, especially for a young child.



What better way to bring seasonal cheer to children receiving care at Golisano Children's Hospital than to have Lieutenant Hope plop down in the middle of their bed?

We couldn't think of a finer way...so, there she is, sprawling out, sharing love!

As the Lee County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Task Force Ambassador, Hope visits countless schools, summer camps, senior-living centers and, of course, hospitals.

Hope's gentleness and cautious behavior make her the ideal ambassador. And, of course, the love that she emits brings smiles and happiness to all that she encounters.



## Q&A WITH DR. MEGAN DAVIS, DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL OPERATIONS AT CAPE CORAL ANIMAL SHELTER

Dr. Megan Davis joined the Cape Coral Animal Shelter as Director of Medical Operations in April of 2022 and oversees the veterinary care for patients at the shelter's veterinary clinic as well as their shelter animals.

Monthly, Dr. Davis kindly takes time out of her busy day to answer questions emailed to the Lee County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Task Force.

**Question:** "I've been reading about a respiratory disease that dogs are contracting. Is this happening in Florida?"

**Dr. Megan Davis:** "Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC) is more commonly known as kennel cough. The newer terminology reflects that a large group of bacteria and viruses can cause illness in our dogs and that they are often infected with more than one organism at a time.

Around July, vets in Oregon started seeing cases of



atypical respiratory illness (termed aCIRDC). PCR tests were coming up negative for common culprits like bordetella, pneumovirus, canine influenza, canine distemper and parainfluenza; and cases were not

responding as usual to common treatments (cough suppressants and antibiotics such as doxycycline).

The Oregon Department of Agriculture reports that this new mystery illness seems to have three main presentations:

- Chronic mild to moderate tracheobronchitis with a prolonged duration (6 to 8 weeks or longer) that is minimally or not responsive to antibiotics.
- Chronic pneumonia that is minimally or not responsive to antibiotics.
- Acute pneumonia that rapidly becomes severe and often leads to poor outcomes in as little as 24 to 36 hours.

At this time, the causative agent remains a mystery; but

## (Dr. Davis...continued)

numerous universities and diagnostic laboratories are working on diagnosing the organism. Since the initial west coast outbreak, up to 16 other states (including Florida) have had cases but there is no centralized reporting system to determine the true extent of cases.

Experts suspect at least some cases that are being reported are typical winter CIRDC outbreaks that would have occurred with or without a new variant.



H3N2 canine influenza has been active this season and several Florida animal shelters have had recent outbreaks of *Streptococcus zooepidemicus* (a potentially fatal respiratory bacterium for which there is no vaccination). To my knowledge there is no significant CIRDC spike in Lee County over baseline.

aCIRDC symptoms may include coughing, sneezing, fever, eye discharge or nose discharge. If your dog becomes lethargic, has a poor appetite, or is struggling to breathe then call your vet to schedule an evaluation. It is important to note that the majority of dogs that have passed away had concurrent health issues.

Risk factors are the same as for "typical" CIRDC. The pups that go to dog parks, day care, boarding and grooming are going to be at higher risk than the dogs that stay home and have little interaction with other canines. The young and the old remain the most vulnerable as do brachycephalic breeds who already have respiratory compromise (ex. French Bulldogs). If your dog shows signs of respiratory illness, be responsible and keep them isolated at home until they've fully recovered.

If your dog does have exposure to lots of other dogs then the best method of protection remains vaccination for common CIRDC illnesses such as bordetella, parainfluenza and influenza.

This is something dog owners should be aware of but not something they should panic about! Use risk benefit analysis when deciding if your dog should continue to attend day care. If you have to travel, then use a



### (Dr. Davis...continued)

boarding facility that requires vaccination for common respiratory pathogens (and ensure vaccination is performed at least two weeks in advance). Don't postpone routine care out of fear of exposure to other dogs at the vet's office. And above all, be vigilant in monitoring your dog's health and seek veterinary advice if any concerns arise.

### SANTA, "MURREY KISMOOSE" HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR CAPE CORAL ANIMAL SHELTER

Children's book author, Jim Harrell, was on hand at the Lee County Sheriff's Office Miromar Outlets Community Outreach Center, along with his newest character "Murrey Kismoose," to help raise funds and awareness for the Cape Coral Animal Shelter.



Santa greeted children of all ages...most of whom stopped by to play with the incredible puppies brought by the animal shelter.



Murrey Kismoose, the main character in the new Christmas book, "How Murrey Saved Christmas," and Santa took photos with guests, shoppers and tourists.

### PET DOOR DONATION

Animal shelter donations, whether from residents or from corporate sponsors, go a long way toward assisting Lee County Animal Shelters to address their enormous overhead.

The LCSO Animal Cruelty Task Force received a generous donation of 17 new pet doors for cats and dogs...interior doors, doors for sliders, wall entry doors...all of which were subsequently donated to the Gulf Coast Humane Society.



These items will be sold or auctioned and serve to raise funds to assist the shelter.

**SHERIFF CARMINE MARCENO AND THE LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ANIMAL CRUELTY TASK FORCE WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL WHO HAVE WORKED DILIGENTLY TO ASSIST LEE COUNTY'S ANIMAL POPULATION A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY 2024!**

### LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER! Annual Homeowners Association Presidents Council

February 6th, 2024

Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall  
13350 PSW Pkwy, Fort Myers, FL 33919

**All HOA Board Members & Residents Welcome!**

Complimentary Food and Beverages will be provided

**9:30am-11:00am HOA Expo**  
Lee County Sheriff's Office Assets and HOA Vendor Displays

**11:00am-12:00pm Forum**  
- Applying New Technology  
- Community Policing Strategies  
- Question & Answer with Sheriff Carmine Marceno



**Limited Seating  
Register TODAY!**

[www.sheriffleefl.org/hoapresidentscouncil](http://www.sheriffleefl.org/hoapresidentscouncil)  
239-477-1CRU

### "KARMA," LCSO NARCOTICS DOG, PASSES AWAY

It was with great sadness that Sheriff Carmine Marceno announced the passing of retired K-9, Karma.

She transitioned peacefully surrounded by family.

Karma began her career with LCSO in 2014 and specialized primarily in narcotics detection. Karma was previously assigned to Captain Russell Park before finishing out her career as a loyal partner to Sergeant Justin Adams.

Karma was responsible for countless narcotics seizures including over 70 pounds of marijuana, one hundred grams of methamphetamine, one hundred grams of heroin, two hundred grams of cocaine and over one million dollars in drug money.



Karma assisted narcotic detectives and several federal agencies with major narcotic investigations, resulting in over one hundred felony arrests.

We extend our deepest condolences to Captain Russell Park and Sergeant Justin Adams on their loss.

Thank you for your service to our agency and the great residents of Lee County, Karma. Rest easy.

### SENIOR OF THE MONTH...

A part of the "Dolly's Dream Project," our furry friend, "Billy" is hoping for a forever home this holiday season.



The Dolly's Dream Project pays Billy's adoption fees, as well as provides a leash, collar and harness, a dog bed, food and water bowls, toys and much more to the adopting family.

As for Billy, he has become a staff favorite at the Gulf Coast Humane Society!

Reportedly, Billy is a cuddler and so deserves a safe and

loving home of his own!

Come and meet this sweet boy at the Gulf Coast Humane Society located at 2010 Arcadia Street in Fort Myers or call 239-332-0364 for additional information.

### ANIMAL ABUSE REGISTRY BECOMES A REALITY

This month, Lee County commissioners passed legislation creating a county-wide animal abuse registry.

An enormous gesture, the new registry will list those who have been convicted of crimes against animals.

In conjunction with the diligent work performed by the Lee County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Task Force, the unanimous approval of this legislation sends an unmistakable message to the entire county...as well as the rest of the state...that Lee County has zero tolerance for the mistreatment of animals.

"My promise to the great residents of Lee County will always remain," stated Sheriff Carmine Marceno, "that we will go to every length imaginable to protect those who cannot protect themselves."

This legislation is the next step towards making Lee County a safe place for all animals.





### FOSTER HOMES DESPERATELY NEEDED FOR LOCAL SHELTERS AND RESCUES

With space often limited at local shelters, it is the remarkable work done by local foster homes that save countless dogs and cats from unhappy endings.

Animal shelters and rescues are always seeking caring individuals willing to share their homes and their hearts with homeless pets.

Fostering requires that you provide a safe and loving environment for a predetermined period of time or until an adoptive home is found.

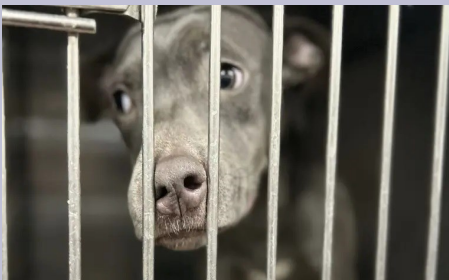
All food, veterinary care and incidentals are paid for ensuring that these furry friends are not a financial burden to foster families.

On occasion, shelters ask for assistance, from foster parents, to house shelter dogs and cats that are struggling in the stressful shelter environment or when an animal requires specialized care and/or supervision.

Fostering a dog and/or cat often proves to be an incredibly rewarding and satisfying activity. In addition to helping an animal to learn social skills or to learn to be around other pets, fostering often saves the lives of animals likely to be euthanized.

Interested in fostering? Do you wish to be the bridge between homeless and home?

Please email Gary Levine at [glevine@sheriffleefl.org](mailto:glevine@sheriffleefl.org).



### TWINKLE, TWINKLE...

Meet Starr...one of the sweet kitties residing at the Animal Refuge Center.

This soft, long-haired girl enjoys people-watching and lounging...much like most felines.

Reportedly good with other cats, Starr wouldn't mind sharing her home.

We would love to find a safe and caring home for her prior to the holidays, if possible.



Interested in meeting Starr? Please stop by the Animal Refuge Center located at 18011 Old Bayshore Road in North Fort Myers, or call 239-731-3535.

### A SINCERE THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED...

Wanting to deliver treats and gifts to the homeless dogs residing in Lee County shelters, the LCSO Animal Cruelty Task Force posted a message asking residents to please drop off new toys and snacks for our furry friends.

As always, the community showed how much they genuinely care about our shelter animals!

The multiple boxes of assorted treats and toys were subsequently donated to the Cape Coral Animal Shelter.



**“The ACTF has dozens of animal success stories. Thanks to their efforts, many of these helpless animals have been given a second chance.”**

**- Sheriff Carmine Marceno**

