

Making Waves is our honor roll for residents of Southwest Florida's island coast who, in their everyday lives, make the community special.



Four-legged Greeters Give Customers Paws

Judging by the number of canines that serve as greeters at local businesses, the islands seem to be going to the dogs

by Karen Nelson



PHOTOS BY BRIAN STROMLUND

More individual portraits on page 18.

🐾 *Times of the Islands/RSW Living* and Tyra & Bijou

“When Brian leaves them at home (which isn’t very often) we’re all very annoyed with him,” says Lauren Davies, President and Associate Publisher. Twelve-year-old Weimaraner Tyra, and 11-month-old Standard Poodle Bijou (she’s huge!) “officially” belong to Creative Director Brian Stromlund, but everyone thinks of them as the magazine’s dogs. “We have a rou-

tine,” says Maria Dispenza, Office Manager and Editorial Assistant. “Tyra comes in and goes directly to the water bowl for her morning drink, while Bijou goes directly to greetings, and always in order, Lauren first, then me. And when our Sales Manager Kip Buntrock arrives, she expects him to play fetch with her immediately. They just make our day!”



🐾 Sanibel Island Bookshop and Nico & Kiwi

Hollie Smith Schmid’s Nico, an akita/huskie mix, began “working” at Sanibel Island Bookshop when Hollie did, eight-and-a-half years ago. Shih Tzu Kiwi joined Nico three-and-a-half years ago, when she was just eight weeks old.

“People say, “We’re just coming in to see the dogs”, says Hollie. “They have a

loyal following for sure.”

On a recent morning, a favorite of the dogs came in, followed by a customer from Captiva who, Hollie says, “Picks up Kiwi and lets her lick all over his face and give him tons of love. The dogs were so happy to see two of their favorite customers first thing.”



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**PROUD PRINTERS OF *TIMES OF THE ISLANDS*
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♥ VIP Realty Group and Konnie & Izzie

Brother and sister Long-haired dachshunds Konnie and Izzie come to VIP's Periwinkle office with their proud papa John Fjeldstad. "Konnie is an 'Isabella' dachshund male, and Izzie is a 'Blue Dapple' dachshund female," says John, explaining the differences in their markings. "They are sweet and so darned cute," he says. "People just love seeing them."



♥ Salty Sam's Marina and Riley

Parrot Key Caribbean Grill and Salty Sam's Marina owner Matt Hanson's seven-year-old Weimaraner, Riley, is an office fixture. Since he was a puppy, Riley has been coming to work every day with Matt. "Riley just hangs out. He's very laid back and friendly," says Patty Payne, their accountant. "A day without Riley in the office just doesn't feel right."



♥ Island Paws and Jordyn & Lola

Liza Clouse, co-owner of Island Paws on Sanibel, says she began bringing eighteen-month-old yellow lab Jordyn into the shop because, well, "We owned a pet store and it seemed fitting. People who come in

expect to see a shop dog.

"Everybody loves her. A lot of people who come into the shop are on vacation. They tell us how much they miss their pets, and they come in to get

their 'dog fix'."

You may also see Island Paws' employee Billy Kay's two-year-old Lola at the shop. The ½ Chihuahua, ½ Pekinese occasionally accompanies Billy to work fix."



Barrier Island Title and Frannie, Dewey, & Maggie

Barrier Island Title owner Janet McBee explains that “Frannie is with her dad [David McBee] in the Bahamas.” Eight-year-old golden retriever Frannie, long an island fixture, has taken an early retirement. Golden retrievers Dewey and Maggie, both one-and-a-half, come to

work occasionally, but McBee notes that they still have to learn their manners, so they’re not regulars. Clients occasionally come in and ask for the pooches. “A couple of days ago, a friend came in looking for the dogs,” says Janet. “‘Hi to you,’ they said to me, ‘but we really came to see the dogs.’”



Generation Skating Rink and Molly

Kenny Hall, owner of Generation Skating Rink in Fort Myers, brings his two-and-a-half-year-old black lab/pit bull Molly to the rink. The seniors who come in for his “Organ Music Skates” just love her and bring in treats.

A Valentine’s Day gift from Kenny’s wife, Molly had been rescued by the Humane Society from an abusive owner. At adoption, she weighed twenty-five pounds (she should have weighed fifty). “She’s a real nice dog,” says Hall. With her pit bull face, she can look intimidating, but once people get to know her, they discover “she’s a big, old baby.”



PHOTOS BY BRIAN STROMLUND

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Island Dental and Lucy

Lucy the schnoodle (a schnauzer and poodle mix) has been soothing patients at Island Dental for the eleven-and-a-half years she's been with Lyle and Cookie Hotchkiss.

"People ask for her," says Lyle. "They say that she calms them down. When they're nervous, she can sit in the chair with them and they can pet her. She's definitely a positive."

Lucy graduated from therapy dog training in March and, in her off-hours, visits hospital patients recovering from surgery. "She's very popular there," notes Lyle. "We like to leave people in the hospital with a smile on their face, and she's a natural."



Trek Bicycles and Veruca

Boston terrier Veruca, a little over a year old, is riding high with Jane Avery-DuBois and her husband Steve. Veruca either accompanies Jane to the newly-opened Trek Bicycles in Naples, or Steve to Trek Bicycles at Coconut Point in Estero.

In Coconut Point, especially, "Veruca has fans who come into the store," says Jane, "but not to buy. The kids like to see her, so they stop in when they're in the mall. She's a little dog with a big dog personality."

"She was named after the spoiled rotten brat in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*," adds Jane. "She lives up to the character. What she wants, she gets."



Loretta Geiger and Moosie

Loretta Geiger, a sales associate with Waterstone Real Estate (formerly PMR Realty), loves bringing her Chinese pug to the friendly Captiva cottage at the corner of Andy Rosse Lane. Moosie loves to sit in the doorway and people love to come over and talk to her. In fact, says Loretta, a lot of people who first come in to talk to Moosie "wind up talking to me about real estate." Not a bad day's work for an eight-year-old, sixteen-pound sales rep.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN STROMLUND



♥ Lily & Co.'s Lily and Gracie

Labradoodle Lily not only holds court in Sanibel's Lily & Co. jewelry store, she is also the mascot and model in all of the advertising.

Karen Bell, who co-owns Lily & Co. with Dan Schuyler, notes that some jewelry designers originally balked at having their jewelry shown on a dog, but she says, "Now that they have seen the response, they think it's great!" In fact, Schuyler notes that a speaker at a March jewelry expo in New York City talked about how Lily & Co. had used their dogs as a brand.

Lily is not the only canine rep in the shop. Mellow Gracie, a yellow lab, "is the strong friend—the rock—standing behind the star," says Bell. Both dogs are about four years old.

This year, over ninety dogs (and their owners) came to Lily's birthday party (on May 3). Lily and Gracie are civic-minded, and money donated for caricatures and the proceeds from the raffle at the catered event went to ARC.

"Not a day goes by that a visitor doesn't come by to see and ask for the dogs," says Bell.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN STROMLUND

Luc Century and Gracie



A greyhound in a room full of delicate glass items might seem like a prescription for disaster, but Gracie is welcome to wander in and out of Sanibel artist Luc Century's glass workshop anytime. "She's so aware of her body, such an athlete, that she's never touched the glass and never broken anything," says Luc.

A former track dog, seven-and-a-half-year-old Gracie loves her early morning stroll to greet the people waiting for breakfast at the Lighthouse Café. "People remember her year after year."

Gracie "wants to meet everybody," he says. "Anywhere I go, I take her if possible. She loves to go for a ride, and she's so socially adept." 🐾



If you know of someone who deserves recognition, call us at 239-472-0205 or send an e-mail to editor@toti.com.

where's the weimaraner?



For quite some time now, our office dog, Tyra, has been "hidden" somewhere in the pages of our issues. As readers became more aware of this, we've been inundated with the question "Where's the weimaraner?" To keep up with this demand (and because it sounds like a lot of fun!), we are devoting space in each issue to answer that question. We'll tell you where Tyra was in the previous issue and provide a clue to help you find her in the current issue. We hope you'll play along.

If you find Tyra in this issue, email us at weimaraner@toti.com with the page number and description of where she's hidden, your name, full address, and phone number. If you locate her, we'll send you a certificate for a special gift redeemable at our sponsor **Island Paws** on Sanibel. Remember...you have to find the "hidden" Tyra. There are several photos of Tyra in this issue that do not qualify as finding her! Good luck!



In our Arts Issue, Tyra took a trip to Santa Fe's Indian Market (page 58). Look closely and you might find a second Tyra in the same photograph.

CURRENT ISSUE CLUE

It looks like Tyra has gotten herself into really dangerous waters.

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