

**January 2, 2015**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NINE TO GRADUATE FROM THE GULF COAST HUMANE SOCIETY TRAINING PROGRAM**

**FORT MYERS, FL. – January 2, 2015** – The Gulf Coast Humane Society is proud to announce that the next graduating class from the Cell Dog Program with the Lee County Sheriff's Office and the Second Chance Pals with the Department of Corrections will be held January 9, 2015. The Cell Dog Program will be held at 9 a.m. for testing with graduation to follow and Second Chance Pals testing will be held at 10:30 a.m. with graduation to follow at 2575 Ortiz Avenue, Fort Myers. Pre-registered media and approved guest are welcome to attend.

Cell Dogs and Second Chance Pals programs place homeless shelter dogs in an obedience-training program with carefully selected inmates. The dog training programs teach inmates how to obedience train dogs, using the C.L.A.S.S. Program, during an intensive 8 to 16 week course. Kelly Legarreta, certified C.L.A.S.S. evaluator and instructor said, "This program promotes positive training and gives the dogs real life skills to become an amazing family member when adopted."

Upon graduation, the dogs are highly adoptable and possess obedience skills such as how to heel, sit, recall, and stay. They are also housed trained, leash trained and responsive to voice commands and some hand signals. Some dogs in the Second Chance Pals program move on to receive more training to become Therapy Dogs.

Polly, a 2 year old hound mix is an example of the type of success the Second Chance Pals program offers. "She is considered as one of the long-term residents here at GCHS," said Jennifer Galloway, Executive Director at the Gulf Coast Humane Society. "Polly has been in the program since, October 8 and loves attention. She is a favorite with the Second Chance Pals handlers but seems to be the dog everyone walks by without notice. They don't see her personality. Polly is fun, goofy, so lovable and now trained. I am so proud each time I attend the graduation and see the progress the graduating class has made."

Attending media and guest must submit the attached form to complete a background check. For more information about the Fort Myers Work Camp or Second Chance Pals Program Graduation contact Officer Davis at (239) 332-6915 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or (239) 994-1693 after 3:00 p.m.

Gulf Coast Humane Society, located at 2010 Arcadia Street in Fort Myers, was established as the first non-profit animal welfare organization in southwest Florida in 1947. The 501(c)(3) mission is to rescue, provide safe refuge and compassionate care, and find forever homes for abandoned and neglected

