

pets & animals

ADOPT-A-PET



Bermuda is an 11-pound, 1-year-old Chihuahua blend. He loves to be close to his humans. He has a reduced fee to help him find a home. Call the Animal League at 352-429-6334.



Dorito is a 1-year-old domestic short-hair blend. She is friendly, sweet and laid back — she even tolerates dogs. Call the Animal League at 352-429-6334.



Lex is a 1-year-old mini dachshund blend. He is less than 15 pounds. Lex would like a family that will not leave him alone for very long. Call the Animal League at 352-429-6334.



Lemon is a 5-year-old hound mix. She is a playful, enjoys going for walks and does well on a leash. Call Marion County Animal Services at 352-671-8700.



Lola is a 1-year-old gray and white beagle mix. She is current on all vaccines, microchipped and spayed. Call the Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County at 352-793-9117.

First-Time Dog Owner Finds Longtime Friend

Susan Wiehn, of the Village of Osceola Hills, adopted Brinkley the Havanese in 2013.

By VALENTINA BORÉ
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Growing up, Susan Wiehn always wanted a dog.

So when she met Brinkley, a Havanese puppy, in 2013, it was love at first sight.

"I've wanted a dog my whole life, so I always said, 'When I retire, I'll get one,'" Wiehn said. "I loved Brinkley from the first moment I saw him."

Before taking the step to get her first dog, Wiehn did a lot of research about breeds, until she found a Havanese breeder in Florida.

The Havanese, a small breed known for its charm, often is said to be Cuba's national dog, according to the American Kennel Club, and is the only Cuban breed recognized by the AKC.

"A friend brought me to pick him up, and when we drove into the driveway of the house, I looked over and there's the breeder with Brinkley," Wiehn said.

She recalled seeing a white ball of fluff standing on the grass — Brinkley as a puppy, at only a few weeks old.

From a young age, Brinkley began showing signs of a charismatic personality that still is visible today. Before moving to The Villages, Brinkley charmed all of Wiehn's neighbors in Connecticut.

"He was the mayor of our

road in Connecticut. Everybody loved Brinkley," she said. "He was like a rock star. Girls would run down the street to see him and he ate it up."

While the charm may have run in the family, as both of Brinkley's parents were show dogs, that quality wasn't passed on to Brinkley.

"Brinkley isn't a show dog. He likes to play in the dirt, he wouldn't be good for that," Wiehn said. "But he's always been happy. He's been a happy dog since the day I met him."

Nevertheless, Brinkley has quite a few tricks up his paw, which he performs on Wiehn's command — most of the time and usually with an incentive.

As a first-time dog owner, Wiehn did extensive research on discipline and social skills that would benefit Brinkley.

"This was my first dog, so I did all the reading about getting dogs acclimated to all people and I kept a notebook with notes," she said. "I did more research than was necessary, but it was all worthwhile."

Brinkley's outgoing personality helped him stand out in his "puppy class," where the trainer knew to contact Wiehn if she had a shy dog who needed help coming out of its shell.

"Most of the time, within 15 minutes of meeting, Brinkley would have the dogs playing with him," she said. "He has never met anyone he didn't like."

His social skills make him a popular dog in Wiehn's Village of Osceola Hills neighborhood, where Brinkley is friends with most of the dogs. He even enjoys visits to his vet and his groomer, Wiehn said.



Susan Wiehn, of the Village of Osceola Hills, adopted her first dog, Brinkley the Havanese, in 2013. Wiehn did a lot of research about breeds before finding a Havanese breeder in Florida.

"He's just wagging his tail when his groomer pulls up and he jumps into her van," she said. "She says he's one of two dogs who are actually happy to see her."

Brinkley is a perceptive dog who is good at reading emotions, which made him a good candidate to become a therapy dog — a program he and Wiehn completed in November 2016.

His perceptiveness adds to his happy personality, because

he knows when to be a source of comfort for people who are going through a tough time, Wiehn said.

"I have seen him with my friends when they're having a bad day, and he just looks

in their eyes and makes them feel like they're the only thing in the world," she said. "He's joyous and joyful. He spreads joy throughout the land."

As his owner, it makes Wiehn proud to see the comfort

FOUR-LEGGED FUN

Pets need to stay active, too. Get the kids and their furry pals moving with these ideas from Jeffrey Levy, D.V.M., a house-call veterinarian in New York City.

Give chase: Dogs and cats both enjoy chasing after moving objects, so attach one of your pet's favorite toys to a string or rope and have your kids pull it around the house or yard.

Break out the bubbles: Have the kids run with the wand — many dogs and cats will follow the trail of floating bubbles.

Get a set of wheels: Rover is sure to keep up with his best friend's bike, blades, or board.

Do the dog paddle: Many breeds love the water, so take the gang to the ocean or let them jump in a pool.

— Tribune News Service

Brinkley can provide for people.

"I absolutely love his interactions with others. It makes me feel good that I can see it in somebody's face when they really connect," Wiehn said.

To celebrate his fourth birthday June 2, Wiehn's friend — who shares Brinkley's birthday — got him a treat from Woof Gang Bakery.

Of course, Brinkley had to get Wiehn's friend a cupcake and a card to celebrate her, too.

Valentina Boré is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 9061, or valentina.bore@thevillagesmedia.com.

Pet Passings

Chessie



Jan. 2, 2009 - May 24, 2017

Chessie lived with us for 8 great years before cancer took her. She was a bright spot in our lives. She always met us at the door, greeting us with a short meow. We will always remember her, a loving (albeit a bit independent) family member.

-Bob & Elaine Francis

Lucky Pooch: Shelter Dog to Be Adopted After Ill-Timed Bite

JACKSONVILLE

A shelter dog in Florida is getting a second chance after biting a man who stepped on him during a presentation to promote pet adoption.

Jacksonville spokeswoman Tia Ford told the Florida Times-Union the 2-year-old pit bull mix named Elvis had been quarantined for 10 days and now someone has applied to adopt him.

Elvis had been at the

June 13 city council meeting as part of a plan to promote pet adoption. A Jacksonville Sheriff's Office report says an audience member told officers a 63-year-old man was barreling down a crowded aisle when he became tangled in the dog's leash and stepped on Elvis. The man was taken to a nearby hospital for stitches.

Officials still aren't sure whether shelter animals will return to council meetings.

— The Associated Press

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