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Therapy dogs among volunteers at Palm Beach Children's Hospital



As organizations across the country celebrate National Volunteer Week this week, the Palm Beach Children's Hospital is also recognizing some of its four-legged volunteers.

 By Stephanie Schmitt

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As organizations across the country celebrate National Volunteer Week this week, the Palm Beach Children's Hospital is also recognizing some of its four-legged volunteers.

One of them is a Yorkie named Peaches. Her owners, Bob and Claire Spielman, call her the "smile maker" and it is easy to see why.

They bring Peaches to the hospital once a week to meet patients and brighten their days. Peaches rides in style in a pink stroller, and she often is dressed up with a crown and outfit.

Sara Sapp, Volunteer Coordinator at the hospital says they have seven therapy dogs that visit patients. "It kinda gives them a break from the realities of being in these walls, it gives them a taste of the streets as I like to say, or a piece of home. Some of them might have dogs or cats at home."

When the Spielmans brought Peaches home almost five years ago, they never imagined her becoming a therapy dog. But when they saw her kind nature and how she related to their grandchildren, they decided to give back. They got her trained to be a therapy dog and all three became volunteers.

"There is absolutely no words in the English dictionary, as you've seen, that compare to seeing those smiles. They just forget whatever pain they had and their day is complete having seen Peaches," Claire says.

Peaches leaves every patient with her 'paw tograph,' a paw print sticker, to give them a small reminder of a special new four-legged friend.

Peaches was also named America's Top Dog Model and she has her own Facebook page where you can follow her adventures.

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