

Cane Island's ambassador, Hub, is named in recognition of the city of Katy being the hub of three counties: Waller, Harris, and Fort Bend



Hub with Cane Island representatives Jennifer Jones, Olivia Montagna, Corey Barlow, Mathew Lawson, and Dan Naef.



# Pawer Pups

These four-legged friends are hard at work bringing joy and unconditional love wherever they go

*Written by Elizabeth Padgett | Select photography by Shanna Kenney*

Not only do animals provide unwavering affection, they've also been able to lend some of their talents to aide Katy in the line of duty. Meet five professional pups who maintain positions in the community across different industries.

## Golden Ambassador

Being intelligent, well-mannered, and great with kids made a golden retriever an easy choice to be the face of Katy's newest community, Cane Island. As ambassador, Hub's role is to welcome guests and residents as well as help host events throughout the year.

He is named in recognition of the city of Katy being the hub of three counties: Waller, Harris, and Fort Bend. Hub's spirited personality is the best embodiment of the attitude Cane Island hopes to offer. Anyone visiting the welcome center is permitted to a meet-and-greet with the canine, while residents are able to take him out for walks around the neighborhood.

When Hub is off-the-clock, he can be found inside his private shelter and yard at the Cane Island welcome center. At the end of the day, he gets to go home and relax with

his host family, leaving the ambassador's suite available for overnight stays by residents.

## Fighting Fires

Keeping with the tradition of using Dalmatians as firehouse dogs, the Katy Fire Department has its very own mascot named Katy. The Dalmatian breed initially became associated with firehouses when horse-drawn carriages were still the primary mode of transportation. Being able to keep speed with a horse is no easy task, but Dalmatians were able to do so while sprinting long distances. Along with being highly compatible and easily trained, Dalmatians soon became the service dog of choice for fire stations in order to help guide horses to fires.

Though times have changed and transportation has advanced, Dalmatians' long service history and association with fire departments remains. Katy's main roles are in raising fire safety awareness and city publicity. She has visited elementary schools, as well as numerous daycare centers in the area to perform safety presentations. Katy is wonderful with kids, able to demonstrate the "stop, drop, and roll" training, and is able to help secure a broken leg in a traction splint.

Katy has been on live calls, but stays in the fire truck for her own safety. When not visiting Katy ISD students or performing press appearances, Katy can be found at the Katy fire house. One of her biggest services is providing companionship for the firefighters during their time at the fire house. Eating and sleeping with the crew, she is loved for her sweet personality and keeping everyone laughing with her canine antics.

## Tracking Narcotics

There are a few exemplary breeds utilized by law enforcement for special purposes, and Marcel is no exception. A 10-year-old black Labrador retriever, Marcel is a narcotics dog and works with his handler Sergeant Justin Moyer in Katy ISD to help detect illegal substances across the campuses.

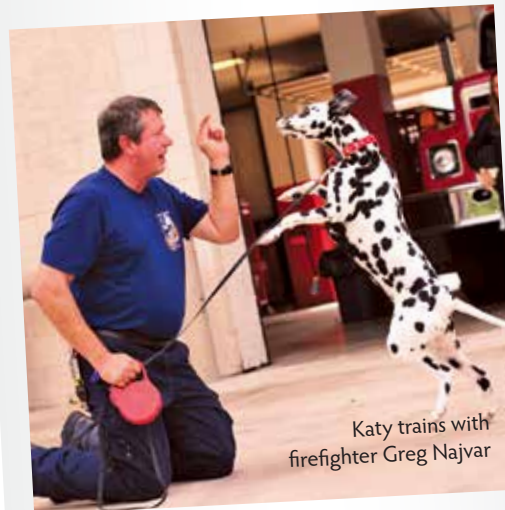
Even-tempered and well-behaved, labs' roles in K9 units are typically in fields of detection and human tracking. Marcel is able to sniff out the odors of cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamines, and heroin. He then uses a passive alert to signal his partner. Marcel is used in many situations across the district and also assists other agencies when a narcotics canine is requested.

Marcel's training took roughly six months to complete, and he has been an active detection canine for seven years. For him, his job is more like a game of hide-and-seek. When he locates the hidden substance, he is rewarded with a Kong toy.

Marcel is originally from France and was taught commands in both French and German. Along with becoming multi-lingual, Sergeant Moyer is also able to recognize when Marcel detects different odors and the subtle changes he makes when picking up scents.



Katy's main roles with the Katy Fire Department are raising fire safety awareness and city publicity



Katy trains with firefighter Greg Najvar



Marcel works with Katy ISD police to help detect illegal substances on campuses



Gracie and Christopher are members of Tender Loving K9's, and regularly visit patients at Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital to provide canine therapy



## Pawfect Therapy

There are many different types of therapy dogs, but they all have one special skill in common: their ability to instinctively connect with the needs of each individual they meet. Gracie is one of the founding pets of Tender Loving K-9's and was born to be a therapy dog. Gracie has made over 400 visits to the Memorial Hermann Katy and Memorial City hospitals since starting in 2007.

Christopher has been visiting patients with his owner Ruthe Warren since July of this year and they are already working on becoming registered for the Reading Education Assistance Dog (READ) program. They plan to begin working with Katy area schools this year to help children improve their reading skills.

Their role at Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital is to greet visitors in the lobbies, waiting rooms, and notably patients that have requested visits from the teams. Gracie has been with many stroke patients who end up speaking their first words to her and raise their arms in order to pet her after months of limited or even zero movement.

While the dogs are most recognized for interactions with patients, Sharon Evans, founder of Tender Loving K9's, says their work is also beneficial for staff members. "The staff often comments that petting the dogs really helps to lower their stress during the day as well." KM

*ELIZABETH PADGETT is a professional writer and has two power pups of her own, Maggie and Lucy.*

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