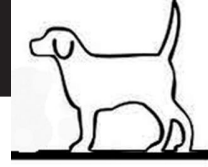


# Meeting Molly!



If you are like most people who love having pets and even more advocate for animal rights then you probably already know about a new ordinance passed in Marion County in 2016 called "Molly's Law". In a nutshell it essentially states that any person who is convicted of animal abuse must be registered in the county under the Animal Abuse Registry along with their address. They are not allowed to own any animals under this law for a period of three years if they have a misdemeanor offense and up to five years for a felony offense.

They also must pay a fee of \$125 to be added to the registry and anyone knowingly who sells, transfers or adopts out an animal to an abuser can be fined up to \$500.

Molly's sad story began in 2014 when she was home alone at her residence in NE Ocala when the occupant's boyfriend, Steven Scott Fleming, broke into the home and stabbed and beat the Boxer/Lab mix and then attempted to flee. He



**THE PRESENTATION OF THE 'MOLLY'S LAW' PROCLAMATION** at a recent meeting of the Marion County Board of Commissioners meeting.

was later captured and charged with Aggravated Animal Cruelty, Resisting Arrest and Violation of Probation. Fortunately

Molly survived her ordeal and was treated by the Animal Control and then later adopted to her new forever home by current Director of the Ocala SPCA Lilly Baron. Ms. Baron has provided Molly with the loving and supportive home she deserves ever since the ordeal and even has set up a Face-

Book page for her where everyone can follow her and read her story as well as watch all her playful videos!

Recently Lilly Baron contacted me to let me know Molly would be honored by receiving a Proclamation extended by Marion County Commissioners proclaiming January to be officially known as "Marion County Animal Abuser Registry Awareness Month." Quite an achievement

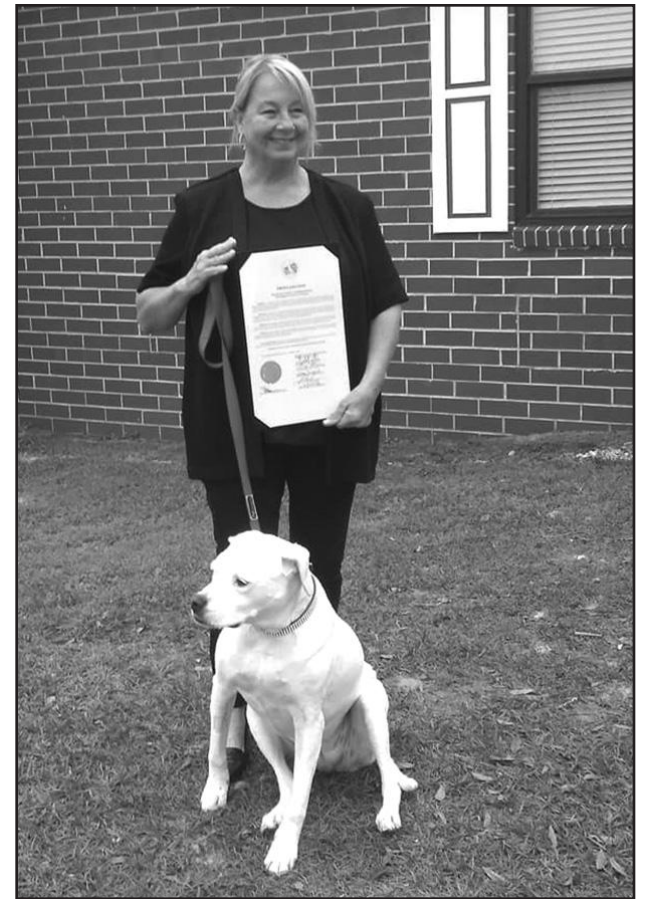
proudly bore by the nearly now famous white Boxer! Lilly and Molly were present for the proclamation and Molly very graciously and modestly accepted!

Marion County is not the only County that has adopted this law as many more Counties are now following as other states as well recognizing the importance of an animal abuse registry. The registries are also online in Marion County and can be accessed by anyone to see who is listed on it. The hope is that this type of law will eventually go nation wide. I learned that one of the strong advocates who pushed very hard for Molly's Law was animal advocate Linda Little Wolf who has been a very strong voice in getting this ordinance passed as well as Betty Coville. Ms. Coville made the point of expressing the need for such as law because of the obvious connection of abusers who abuse animals also have a tendency to abuse people as well.

From a very sad story to a happy ending that helps protect other animals is such an achievement which has

also catapulted Molly to a highly recognized celebrity like loved dog! She now makes appearances at many local events including the recent Marion County Christmas Parade and Dunnellon's Christmas parade as well. She

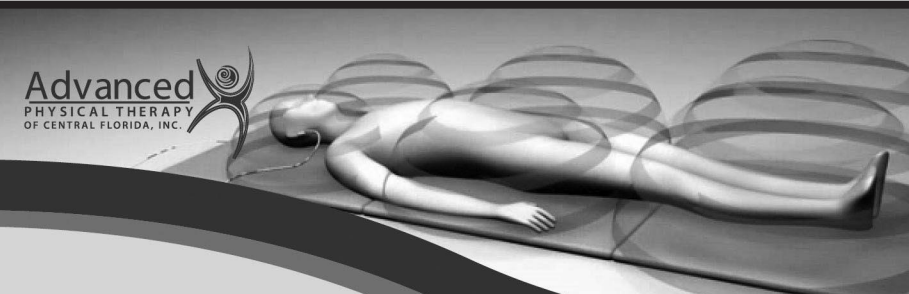
has appeared at dozens of local events bringing her cause to light to help other abused or neglected animals. To learn more about this heroic little Boxer Mix contact Lilly Baron at SPCAofocala@gmail.com.



**MOLLY IS PICTURED HERE WITH OWNER AND SPCA PRESIDENT LILLY BARON** holding the proclamation presented to them. (Photos by Pam Guenther)



**MOLLY AND LILLY** are presented here also receiving another award that day presented to them by SPCA board members."



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## Zookeeping Courses Available To Students

The Florida International Teaching Zoo (FITZ) is offering an Introduction to Zoo Keeping 9 week course for the very first time ever.

Orientation for "All Wanna'be Zookeepers" is June 2 at 4:30 pm at the Teaching Zoo. It is located at 7725 Florida 48 West, between Bushnell and Floral City. FITZ's Zoo Management program is in its 25 year of teaching the next generation of zoo animal caregivers.

The 9 week short course consists of instruction by Real Zoo Professionals covering subjects of taxonomy, veterinary medicine, public management and related zoo subjects. ZooKeeper students are required to spend two days per week in the Zoo Lab caring for species including jaguars, endangered birds, spotted hyenas, patas monkeys, tortoises, and a plethora of cool zoo animals (with lunch time lectures.)

For the first time ever, FITZ is offering all "Wanna'Be's" 16 years and older a chance to explore the world of zookeeping! (All participants 16 thru 18 years Must have written parental consent.) The intro to ZooKeeping course will begin the week of June 3 and run thru August 4, 2019. Cost of the Intro to ZooKeeping short course is \$1000(tax deductible.) Weekly payment plans are available. Class size is limited. Participants will be required to prove a Negative TB test. (available for a nominal fee from county health clinic- Masks will be required until a negative TB test is completed.)

For more information visit our Facebook page, [www.floridazooschool.com](http://www.floridazooschool.com), or leave a message on the Zoo Tour recorder 866-937-1115.