

Rescued...from Page 1A



Victoria Stilwell was the keynote speaker for the event. Stilwell is a famed dog trainer and TV personality from the U.K.

to Hassett, is the reason she feels RESCUED is an essential aspect of Colwell.

“Over the last four and half years, we have established one of the most unbelievable teams to carry out our mission of rescuing and rehabilitating dogs while making a positive impact on the lives of the detainees,” said Hassett. “We are proud to be the first dog rescue program within the Georgia Department of Corrections. RESCUED’s current success rate is 62 percent, and it’s accredited to our team of volunteers.”

Of the dozens of guests present, one in particular traveled from Atlanta to congratulate the men and their dogs on their achievements.

Victoria Stilwell, owner of Positively dog training and TV personality of Animal Planet’s “It’s Me or the Dog,” spoke to the group on the importance of dog training and the benefits that are provided, not only for the dogs, but for the trainers as well.

According to Stilwell, the unconditional love of a dog is sometimes all one needs to have the perseverance to get back up and keep moving forward.

“It means a lot to me to be able to be here with you today,” said Stilwell. “This is exceptional, coming in here and being able to be lucky enough to be taken around and meet some of the guys. Now, to see you with your family and the people who love you, that’s what it’s all about.”

“Dogs don’t judge you.

You can look horrible and they don’t care. It doesn’t matter what you’ve done, they’re going to love you no matter what. I think they really teach us something.

“When you go out there, especially the guys who are graduating today, I know there are going to be challenges. If you have a down time or a down day or a down moment, or you’re thinking of making a bad choice, look at that dog. Go to your local rescue shelter. See what you can do, and let these animals heal you.”

All members of the program were given a chance to stand and share their impact stories, how the experience affected them and what they hoped to achieve in the future. One of the detainees, Forrest Blake, shared a speech on behalf of the entire group, emphasizing the word integrity and what it came to mean to them throughout the duration of RESCUED.

“This experience has been life-changing and has had a bigger impact than words can describe,” said Blake. “We came here broken down and defeated, wanting more than anything to change. Many of us have tried on our own, but always fell short of success.

“We let the worst of ourselves get the best of our potential. Understanding and learning from the mistakes that our actions can be better, not only for ourselves, but for those around us.

“The word integrity is more than just doing what’s right when nobody is looking. It’s a lifestyle, a way to go through your day knowing that nothing can fail when you trust and abide in it.”

Each detainee was presented a certificate during the graduation ceremony, provided and awarded by community groups that aided in the program: Humane Society, Castoff Pet Rescue, Cold Nose College, North Georgia Technical College and St. Francis of Assisi.

Before participants showed off their training skills and enjoyed refreshments with friends and family members, the group performed a rendition of “Stand by Me,” per the instruction and leadership of Colwell PDC Officer Phillip Carter.



Cold Nose College out of Murphy, North Carolina, helped the detainees train their animals.



Colwell Probation Detention Center Officer Phillip Carter



Family and friends of detainees attended the graduation ceremony on Thursday, Jan. 26. TV news out of Atlanta also paid a visit.

Carter worked closely with the group throughout their stay at Colwell, and wished them luck and encouragement as parting words, explaining that integrity and perseverance are key to maintaining success after Colwell.

“You can ‘if’ anything to death,” said Carter. “If I hadn’t gotten in that car... if I hadn’t hung around with those people... if I hadn’t taken that one hit... if I’d listened to that Officer Carter. If you walk with integrity, you won’t regret it.”

UC Lions Club Annual Trash/Treasure Sale

The Union County Lions Club will be holding its annual trash/treasure sale on February 25, 2017 at the Civic Center on Wellborn Street, Blairsville.

We plan to have over 40 vendors selling many different wares plus the Lions kitchen will have chili and hot dogs for sale. Come and enjoy the indoor shopping in this heated facility. The time for this event is 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. and those who would like to take advantage of early shopping, you can come at 8 a.m. for a fee of \$1 per person.

For you sellers call 706-745-8053 to reserve your place. For any questions call Gene or Louise Little at 706-374-6638. N(Feb1,22)CA

Seifarth makes Dean’s List

Peter Seifarth, a senior majoring in theatre arts, from Young Harris, GA was among 2,253 students at Coastal Carolina University who made the Fall 2016 Dean’s List.

To qualify for the Dean’s List, freshmen must earn a 3.25 grade point average, and upperclassmen must earn a 3.5 grade point average. To qualify for the President’s List, students must earn a 4.0 grade point average. All students must be enrolled full time.

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