

Bulldog's Birthday Party Raises Money for Nonprofit

Rosie the Bulldog was presented with a "Leash to the City" by Long Beach, Calif., officials for her role in fundraising for a local nonprofit.

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Photos courtesy of Thomas McConville Rosie the Bulldog celebrated her 10th birthday on Sept. 25, 2007. But Rosie isn't your typical Bulldog, and her birthday celebration had more well-wishers than many birthday parties for people.

Rosie's fame stems from the plethora of dog-friendly fundraising activities organized by her owner, Justin Rudd. Rudd is responsible for making Long Beach, Calif., one of the top dog-friendly cities in the country. A few of his contributions include Easter and Halloween dog parades, a Bulldog Beauty contest, treat and toy collections each December for shelter animals, and efforts that resulted in getting an ocean beach designated as an off-leash dog zone. And for most of the activities, Rosie can be seen right behind Rudd as he pulls her along in a little red wagon.

She's been featured in local and national publications and appeared on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno." So when Rosie celebrated a decade of life (her actual birthday is Oct. 7), many weren't surprised that more than 100 people attended the festivities. One of the attendees was Nancy Foster, the wife of Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster.

Nancy Foster gave Rosie a proclamation – signed by Mayor Bob Foster – along with a "leash to the city." The proclamation was presented to Rosie for helping raise money for Rudd's nonprofit and her contributions to the city. Rosie's party took place at a local restaurant and in lieu of gifts, donations to Rudd's nonprofit, Community Action Team (CAT), were requested. Rosie's birthday party raised \$2,645 for the organization with more "checks in the mail." CAT funds activities and programs that benefit animals, children and the environment.

"Rosie is a pioneer in what she does," Rudd says. "She's proud to be a role model and representative for all her four-legged friends."

Rudd's next event takes place Saturday, Sept. 29 at Heartwell Park in Long Beach. The Interfaith Blessing of the Animals will feature several faith leaders from many different religions who will bless the animals. The event is held in conjunction with St. Francis Day; St. Francis of Assisi is known as the patron saint of animals.

The event is the second largest pet blessing in the United States that's celebrated in conjunction with St. Francis Day; more than 300 animals are expected to be blessed, according to Rudd. The blessing will incorporate a moment of silence for pets who are involved in dogfighting and other inhumane treatment.

For details about Long Beach dog events or for more information on the Community Action Team, visit www.justinrudd.com

-Heidi Hatch, Associate News Editor for DogChannel.com