

April 2016

Richie Rebel says, "*Peanuts is right.  
Happiness is a warm puppy!*"

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## Life & Times of the Rebels of '69

Thornton Fractional Township High School South, Class of 1969, Lansing, Illinois

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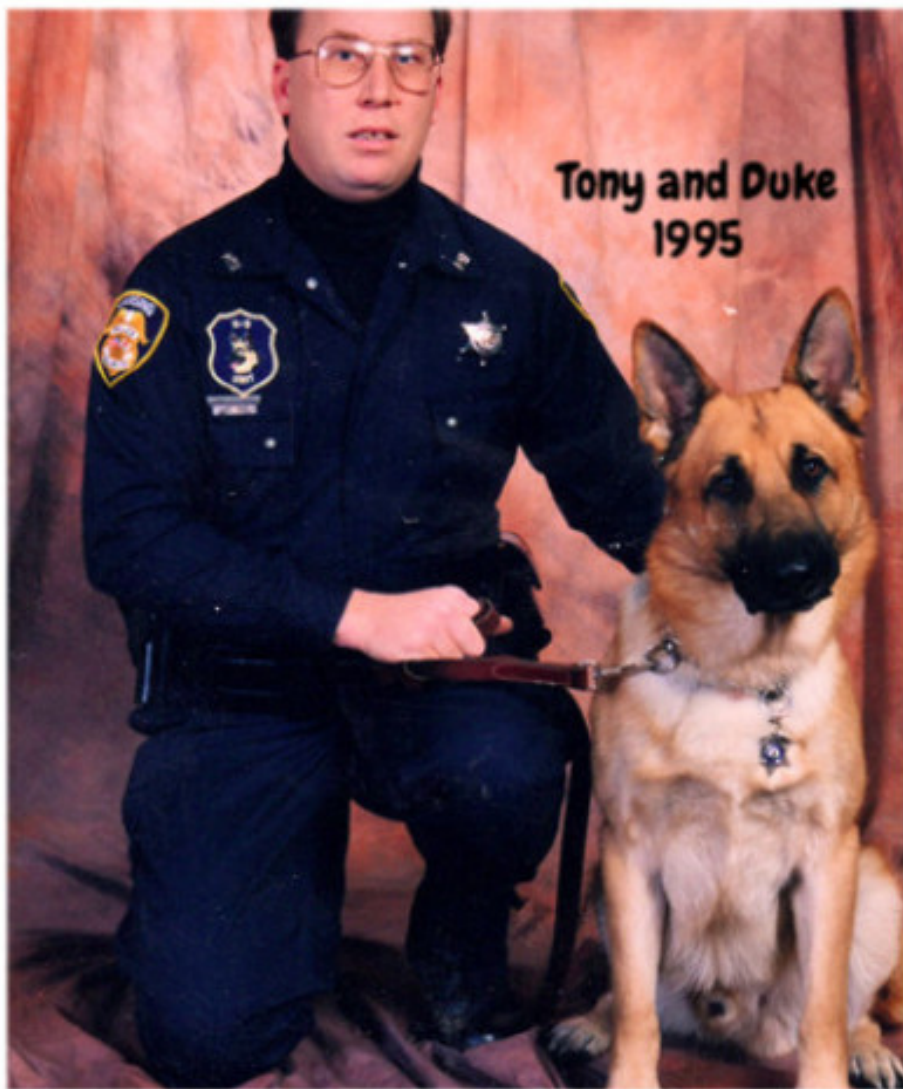
# 1 Man, 1 Dog, 1 K-9 Unit

by Tony Perovich (Illinois)

I was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1971 and, after basic training, was sent to the Military Police school at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Trust me. I never asked to become a cop. The closest thought of law enforcement was usually in the rear view mirror with **Butch Porter** yelling, "Turn here!"

I really enjoyed the school and while there watched quite a few demos of Military Police dogs. To volunteer for the K-9 program at that time would most definitely get you sent

to Viet Nam.



Ultimately I was sent to a Nike Hercules missile site in Kingston, Washington, on Bainbridge Island in the Seattle area. The missile site had a K-9 unit, which I volunteered to assist in training. The dogs were nothing but land sharks and training consisted of wearing a bite suit and the handler sending the dog after you.

### **Return to Lansing**

I was discharged in 1973 and returned to Lansing to start a family. I applied for the Lansing part-time police and was hired. While a part-time cop, I was involved in several situations where I felt a properly trained K-9 would have been a great asset. I expressed my thoughts to the higher ups on the department and was always told NO.

In 1979, **Paul Warn** and I were hired as full-time officers. It seemed like every six months or so I would catch Chief Dean Stanley and express my desire for a K-9 unit. Chief Stanley would shake his head and walk away.



### **First Lansing K-9 Unit**

On April 8, 1992, Lansing Officer Kenneth Novak, Jr. was killed in the line of duty. Paul and I were extremely involved in one form or another. The day of the funeral, Chief Stanley said to me, "I WANT 3 POLICE DOGS AND I WANT THEM YESTERDAY." The Chief caught quite a bit of grief from several citizens because the dogs and equipment cost \$20,000 each.

Two other officers and I were chosen, and the Lansing Police K-9 unit was started. One officer was sent to Texas where she spent eight weeks training with her new pre-trained dog, Dan was sent to southern Indiana where he, too, spent eight weeks training with his pre-trained dog.

### **Duke Gets a Bad Guy**

I was sent to the Cook County Forest Preserve K-9 training center in Orland Park. I spent six months there. I was paired with a one-year-old German Shepherd named Duke, a donated dog with no training at all.

Training consisted of attack on command, narcotic detection, evidence recovery, and tracking suspects or lost persons.

In February 1993, Duke tracked and found a suspected car thief hiding under a swimming pool deck. The thief was identified and charged.

### **Windfall Drug Bust**

A policy was instituted where the handler and dog would walk the motel parking lots. In April of 1993, one of the dogs alerted to a van for the presence of drugs. Arrests were made and a search warrant obtained. Inside the van, 5.8 million dollars in cash was found (drug money headed to Mexico).

Lansing PD was awarded 65% of the find per Illinois seizure law. Due to this windfall, another dog and handler and a K-9 training facility were added, and a state-of-the-art firearms range designed by Paul Warn was built. I was allowed to attend K-9 training seminars in the Netherlands and Germany along with a trainer's course in southern

## **Attempted truck theft goes to dogs**

By KYM LIEBLER  
Times Staff Writer

LANSING - Two dogs were credited with helping nab alleged car thieves Saturday morning when one barked loud enough to wake up a woman whose car was being stolen - and the other tracked down one of the alleged thieves.

One dog is the average canine citizen, and the other is a K-9 cop.

The incident began in the middle of the night Saturday when a 28-year-old woman woke up to the sound of a barking dog, police said.

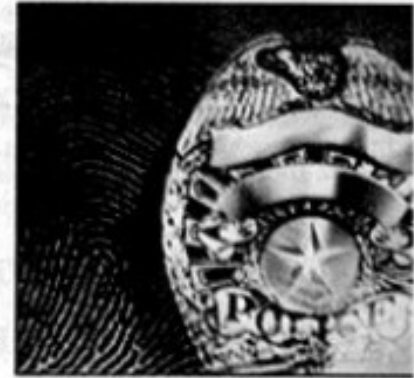
She looked outside from her front picture window and observed two men sitting in her truck, which was parked in her driveway in the 17200 block of Chicago Avenue.

As she was peering out the window, the woman was able to call Lansing police and give dispatchers a description of the men who were sitting in her car.

While she was talking to police, the woman watched as the two men got out of her car and began pushing it down her driveway onto Chicago Avenue.

The men proceeded to push the car south on Chicago Avenue, where they were soon confronted by Lansing police. The two men ran after spotting the squad cars, police said, and a chase began.

Police quickly caught one of the men in the vicinity of 173rd Place and Chicago Avenue but



lost track of the other man.

Duke of the Police Department's German shepherd K-9 unit was summoned to the scene, accompanied by his handler, Officer Tony Perovich.

Duke tracked the suspect south across 173rd Place into a back yard, which was located three homes east of Bernice Avenue. The dog found the suspect hiding under a swimming pool deck, police said.

The two men were identified as Juan V. Alvarez of 3462 Pennsylvania St. in Gary and Luis P. Gonzalez, 21, of 2810 Stevenson St., also in Gary.

Because both men are Latino, police called Spanish-speaking Officer Gabriel Barajas to read the men their rights in English and Spanish, police said.

Both men were charged with car theft, police said, after the victim identified them as the men who allegedly tried to steal her truck.



California.

### **K-9 Bomb Dogs After 9/11**

I retired in June of 2001 and was hired by the Tribune Corporation to set up a K-9 unit for Tribune towers in the Chicago Loop. On 9/11 a bomb dog was needed at the Tribune due to the events of the day. That night the Loop was a ghost town. Everything was good, but probably one of the scariest nights of my life.

Shortly after 9/11, I was asked to supervise a bomb dog unit for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Knoxville, Tennessee. In late October of 2001, I went to Washington, D.C. to supervise a bomb dog unit for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. I was working alongside people I had previously only seen on the news.

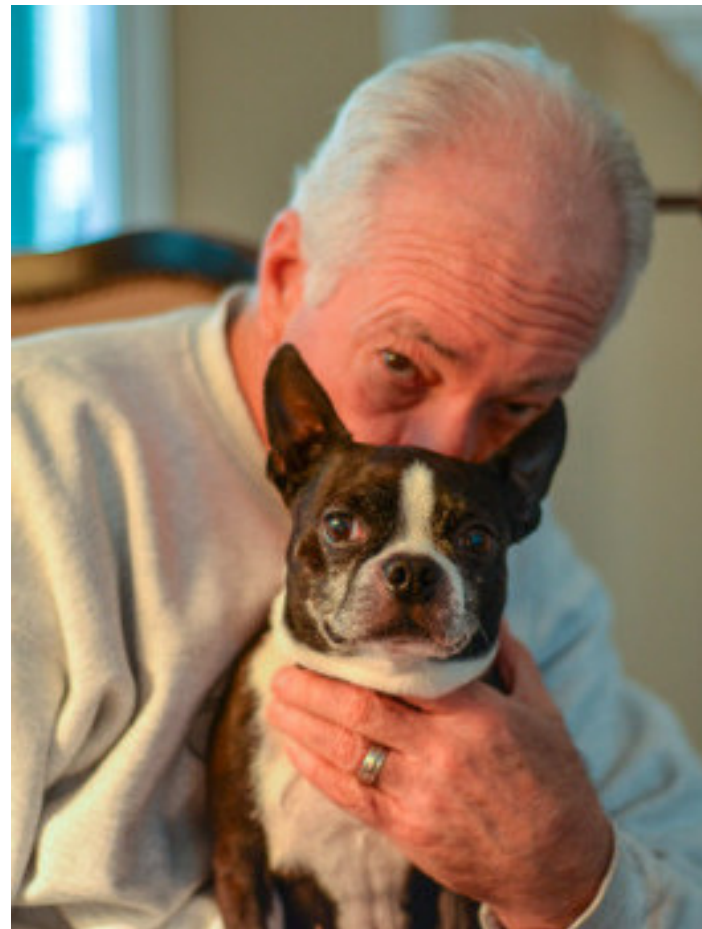
*Tony's Training Tip: Training a dog starts with obedience. Consistency is a must. A reward in either a food treat or high praise is a necessity. Training is a game and the dog wins the game every time.*

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## **Our Loyal Companions**

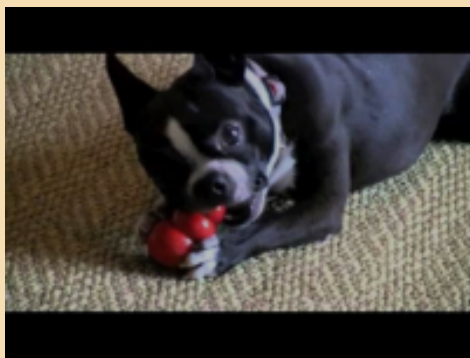


**Harrison "Butch" Porter** (Michigan) and Joan with their yellow Labrador retriever, Gunner "The Wonder Dog" Porter



**Bill Hutchison** (Indiana) and his much loved Boston terrier, Bella





### VIDEO DOGGIE TREAT #1

Who's a good girl? Bella's a good girl!

Click the photo of Bella and watch her Kill the Kong on YouTube.



**Grace Demanuelle Talbot** (California) and new puppy Max, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. Grace says, "He is such a cuddler and that is exactly what I wanted."



Dakota, a 10-year-old English Springer Spaniel and best friend of **Dave Dickinson** (California). Dakota has "a wonderful peaceful soul, unless you're a squirrel."



**Glenn Wierzbicki Opened His Heart and Home for Sadiegirl and Ladygirl**

**This is Sadiegirl.** We had just lost our dog. When I went to get my medicine, the gal behind the counter had this black dog. I asked if anyone had spoken for her. She replied there was one interested party. Next week the dog was still there. When I got her home, my family instantly fell in love. My ex tried to grab her, but after two years my daughter called. "Dad, can you take Sadie forever?" Sadiegirl lives with me on the farm in Crete, IL, and enjoys hunting and stalking moles and squirrels.

**This is Ladygirl.** She is 80 pounds of brown pit bull/whippet. Some stupid guy in Chicago Heights was trying to breed fighting dogs, but she was a female, so he turned her out into the street.

When I got her she was 40 pounds but quickly filled out like the sponge in the gelatin capsule. She is a lover, not a fighter. Pit bulls get a bad rap.



### **VIDEO DOGGIE TREAT #2**

"I guess it got started 'cause it looked like fun when other people had a dog. I'm gonna get me one."

Click the photo of Chicago folksinger Tom Dundee to hear him sing his song "Dog" on YouTube.

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## **TEAM69 Heard from...**

**Pam Neal Pfeffer** (Michigan)—You did a wonderful write up putting all of this together. A job well done! Thank you for all of your work. [Making Wine in Michigan, *Life & Times* March 2016]

**Paul Warn** (Indiana)—Thoroughly enjoyed Pam Neal Pfeffer's article. What a great "hobby." [Making Wine in Michigan, *Life & Times* March 2016]

**Christine Nelson Haro** (Indiana)—Enjoyed March's issue. We are going to check out the wineries up by Pam (Hey Pam, been a long time!) and make it a mini-vacation. [Making Wine in Michigan, *Life & Times* March 2016].

Looking forward to any get-togethers this year and, of course, April's Issue of our newsletter. Have a great Spring and Easter everyone!

**Lynda Schneider Gleim** (Indiana)—Thanks a million for the interesting stories and all of your hard work.

**Judy Kaufer Lohr-Safcik** (TFS English Dept., retired)—Enjoyed all the stories (as usual) in this month's *Life & Times* [March 2016]. Many thanks for that and the news about your classmates.



## *Happy April Birthday!*

*Donna Woods Tadd, Bob Guadagno, Bob Ranfranz, Ken Jayne, Donna Nigohosian Magro, Tom Novak, Dave Mellendorf, Dennis Knoerzer*

## *Celebrating a March Wedding Anniversary*

Conrad and **Cindy Graham Kats** (Indiana)—46 years

## *Celebrating a February Wedding Anniversary*

Mario and **Christina Nelson Haro** (Indiana)—27 years

## *Congratulations!*

Karen and **Lee Fetscher** (Wisconsin) welcomed their new granddaughter, Kennedy Leia, in March.

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**Our condolences** to Bill Bramowicz of Indiana, who lost his wife, Shannon Marie (Hudor) in March at the age of 62. Bill and Shannon were married 44 years. Shannon is lovingly missed and remembered by Bill, son Eric and his wife Deb, grandson Adam, and step-granddaughter Joelle.

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## **Help Us Connect with Our Classmates**

If you are in contact with these classmates, please invite them to subscribe to our TFS Class of 1969 *Life & Times* e-newsletter at our website [tfsclassof69.weebly.com](http://tfsclassof69.weebly.com) or ask them to email us at [TFSouth69@gmail.com](mailto:TFSouth69@gmail.com). Use the **Forward** button below to share the newsletter with classmates, family, and friends.

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Nancy Flaws  
Christine Feeley Moore  
Lena Ekseioo  
Art Edelstein  
Jean Duzek Wood  
Donna Draus Vick  
Linda Dommer Peres  
David Dodaro

Ken DeVries  
Ron Devalk  
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### **For the April *Life & Times***

Photos: Tony Perovich, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis, Grace Demanuelle Talbot, Bill Hutchison, Dave Dickinson, Glenn Wierzbicki

Technical and Design Consultant: Bill Hutchison

Editorial: Pat Walsh, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis, Dave Dickinson

Correspondent: Dave Dickinson

Cat herder: Bud Jenkins

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***Our Mission: To promote and grow our network of TFS Class of 1969 friendships by sharing information and planning reunion events to keep the spirit of the 40th Reunion alive and vibrant.***

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