

Orcas Fire Dept. saves choking dog

by Colleen Smith
Editor/Publisher

Firefighters do more than rescue a cat stuck in a tree. They also dislodge vegetables from a dog's throat.

When Chantelle Hildreth's 9-pound toy poodle Tuffy started choking on a piece of broccoli late in the evening on March 22, she knew exactly what to do: the Heimlich. She had recently seen on Facebook how to do the maneuver on canines, so she gave it a go.

"He's so tiny, it was weird doing it," Hildreth said.

Unfortunately, the broccoli stayed in his windpipe, and Tuffy was starved for air. He was limp and his tongue was turning purple. With the vet's office closed, Hildreth and her daughter Stormy jumped in the car and drove straight to the Orcas Fire Department, which is just a few minutes from their house.

On their way there, Stormy continuously thumped Tuffy on his back,



and the broccoli moved just enough for him to take shallow breaths. When they arrived, firefighter and EMT Cory Harrington immediately set to work assessing the dog's con-

dition. He was joined by paramedic Patrick Shepler to further dislodge the obstruction, which was already on its way out. Harrington said it was his very first canine save.

"Tuffy was so grateful," Chantelle said. "He doesn't love everybody but he was right there with Corey doing his wiggly dance. He was so happy when he could really breathe again."

Tuffy, who is an 8-year-old rescue, was very grateful to return home in better health than when he left.

"He didn't move from my arms for the entire night," said Chantelle.

Heimlich maneuver for canines

For information on how to help your choking dog, visit https://www.petmd.com/dog/emergency/common-emergencies/e_dg_choking.

There are different ways to perform the maneuver depending on the size of the dog.

Nigretto wins 'Great Teaching' award in B'ham

by Colleen Smith
Editor/Publisher

Alexa Nigretto's love of children all began on Orcas.

Nigretto, an Orcas Island High School graduate, received the Bellingham Public School Promise award for "Great Teaching" on March 22.

Before leaving for college, she worked at Kaleidoscope Preschool and Child Care Center for a year and a half.

"My time there is definitely what made me want to go back to school and become a teacher," Nigretto said.

She received her teaching degree from Western Washington University and has been teaching kindergarten in Bellingham for the past five years.

Nigretto was hired by Bellingham Public Schools two days after graduation from WWU for the pilot year of their program "Promise Kindergarten," a free, full-day early-entrance



Contributed photo
Alexa Nigretto.

class for children who are scheduled to enter kindergarten in the upcoming fall. The program focuses on basic academic and social skills to help kids get a jump start toward success in school.

The Promise Awards provide an opportunity to highlight the "exceptional work of select honorees that make a significant difference."



Jaydon Krisch

Cross Country, Baseball



CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.9
PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: Attend Western and run for their XC team
HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS: Cross Country, Baseball
MEMORABLE MOMENT: Hitting a grand slam
FAVORITE SUBJECT: Applied Physics
PRE-GAME TRADITIONS: Get Psyched



Alanna Lago

Softball



CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.3
PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: Major in Criminal Justice
HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS: Volleyball, basketball, and Softball
MEMORABLE MOMENT: When Destiny dyed her hair purple at the state softball tournament
FAVORITE SUBJECT: Band
PRE-GAME TRADITIONS: A pep talk from my dad

Spelling success



Contributed photo
Above: Hazel McKenzie at the regional spelling bee.

Three island kids proved victorious at the 10th annual island Regional Spelling Bee on Feb. 5 at the Orcas Christian School. The annual event is coordinated with the Orcas Island Public Library.

Fourth-grader Hazel McKenzie (Orcas Island Elementary), seventh-grader Milana Schneider (Orcas Island Middle school) and eighth-grader Nicholas Rivera (Orcas Christian School) earned spots at the Skagit County Regional Spelling Bee on March 23 in Mount Vernon.

Rivera and McKenzie attended the off-island bee. Rivera made it to the final round while McKenzie made it to round 6, competing against kids as old as the eighth grade.

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