

**CANINES & COCKTAILS EVENT**  
April 25, 2009



Who let the dogs out on April 17 at Jacksonville Golf & Country Club? Poodles, one named Cherry, a pair of great Danes named - get this - Allie and Gator, beagles, schnauzers, pugs, a Lhaso apso, a Chihuahua and a bichon frise were among the pooches enjoying doggie treats while their humans sipped "wagaritas" and "pawtinis" at Canines and Cocktails, a fundraiser hosted by Pawsitive Pets. The Northeast Florida nonprofit serves as a facilitator for the Reading Education Assistance Dog program, which pairs children who have below-par reading skills with therapy dogs, so the youngster can practice reading aloud to a pup trained to listen.

Terri Neely and her dachshund Dotti, aka "Hotti Dotti," are a READ team that goes to third-grade classes at Neptune Beach and Twin Lakes elementary schools for child-on-canine reading sessions. Children lagging in literacy skills are intimidated by reading aloud in a group, but reading to dogs, such as Dotti, builds confidence and self-esteem. Dotti was smartly dressed in a pull-on that said, "Does this shirt make me look short?" She seemed to enjoy socializing with Jennifer Rothenberg's Yorkshire terrier Reese, and Incanto, a toy Pomeranian owned by Andrea Jaffe.

Pawsitive Pets President Lucinda Hietbrink and event organizer Kelly Blackburn saw to it that there were biscuits aplenty for the four-legged guests. Some pets posed for professional pictures by Elizabeth Carol Originals, and their two-legged owners perused a silent auction. There were drawings for Bow Wow Baskets, and vendors displayed pet-related services, such as The Jacksonville Humane Society, South Paw Canine Rehab, First Coast Scoopers, No Place Like Home Pet Sitting, Cloud 9 Mobile Pet Spa, Barnes & Noble, PRP Wines, Coastal Veterinary Hospital and Pet Resort, Southpaw Canine Rehabilitation and Jennifer Swanson selling her children's book about the crime-fighting dog duo Penny and Rio. For information about Pawsitive Pets, visit [www.pawsitivepets.org](http://www.pawsitivepets.org).