

Celebrating life in Hinsdale and the surrounding communities

HINSDALE

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Sylvia PEREZ

LENDs HER SUPPORT TO HINSDALE
HUMANE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL PET WALK

THE PRESERVATION KITCHEN BY

Paul Virant

"Animals are such
agreeable friends – they
ask no questions, they
pass no criticisms."
– GEORGE ELIOT



FOR THE Love OF Pets

ABC 7 Chicago news anchor Sylvia Perez will lead the 23rd annual Pet Walk to support the Hinsdale Humane Society.

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY JIM PRISCHING
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Sylvia holds two German Shepherd shelter puppies, Ollie and Rascal, who have since been placed in loving homes by the Humane Society.



Sylvia Perez talks about career, family, dogs, and life in Hinsdale.

Sylvia Perez began her career in Oklahoma with a degree from the University of Oklahoma School of Journalism. She went on to work in Colorado and Texas before joining ABC 7 Chicago News as weekend anchor and reporter in 1989. Today, Sylvia co-anchors the network's number one rated 11 a.m. newscast and is the station's medical reporter, covering daily health and medical investigative stories for the 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. newscasts. Sylvia and her "Healthbeat" team of producers have received numerous awards including two Chicago Emmy Awards.

Hinsdale Living caught up with the busy newscaster and mom during our recent photo shoot to highlight her support of and work with the Hinsdale Humane Society. This will be the fourth year that Sylvia will serve as Master of Ceremonies for the annual Pet Walk that raises money to sustain the much-loved community organization.

HINSDALE LIVING: *Why did you and your family choose to settle in Hinsdale when you moved out of downtown Chicago 19 years ago?*

SYLVIA PEREZ: I was out in the suburbs doing a story here, and I fell in love with Hinsdale. It reminded me of Mayberry with its sidewalks and downtown. My husband and I have been married for almost 31 years, and we'd waited 15 years before having children because of our careers. This was a place I wanted to raise my family.

HL: *What are some of your favorite places to go and things to do in Hinsdale?*

SP: I'm a big believer in supporting local businesses and shopping at local stores. I meet my girlfriends for dinner at Il Poggiolo Ristorante, and my daughters think that Toni Patisserie's croissants are better than those in Paris. I love the farmers market in summer and bike rides into town with my family to get a bagel. Kramer Foods is a wonderful grocer; Hinsdale Fruit Store delivers fruit to us every Monday; and I went through Lamaze classes at Hinsdale Hospital.

HL: *What is it like to be a celebrity living in a small town?*

SP: There are a lot of newscasters out this way. When I'm out here, people don't see me as Sylvia Perez, the news anchor. This community is all about family and kids, and I'm one of them.

HL: *What do you attribute to your success as a journalist?*

SP: My dad was a military man, so I grew up on military bases and we moved around a lot. It made me more outgoing, and I became a little nosier and more inquisitive. It made me a good reporter.

HL: *What do you feel is the most important part of your job?*

SP: I feel so honored to work at Channel 7, and my goal has always been to help people. I consider my health stories to be the most important part of my job because they are news you can use. I receive positive feedback all the time from viewers. One woman wrote me a beautiful letter thanking me for saving her daughter's life after they saw my segment about the rare condition known as median arcuate ligament syndrome (MALS).

HL: *Do you have a family pet?*

SP: We have a 2-year-old Labradoodle named Dylan.

HL: *What is it about the Humane Society that motivates you to donate yours and your family's time and resources?*

SP: My youngest is a huge animal lover, and we got involved in the Humane Society's Pet Camp program about five or six years ago. When they approached me about being emcee, I thought it would be a fun thing for us to do together and to support such a great organization. It's such a fun event, and the Humane Society makes it so easy for me.

HL: *What other philanthropies do you support?*

SP: I'm involved with Easter Seals and am Master of Ceremonies for their children's fashion show every year. I also emcee an annual Latino fashion show to promote my Latino heritage. And I support Casa Central, which helps inner-city families in Hispanic communities. ☐



Sylvia with pet therapy Golden Retrievers Glory and Marly.

Humane Society

**“Celebrating
pets and the
people who
love them”
for 59 years.**

WALK TO HELP HOMELESS ANIMALS

The eagerly anticipated Hinsdale Humane Society Pet Walk attracts close to 500 attendees each year for good reason. Not only do proceeds benefit homeless animals, the Walk has evolved into a fun event for the whole family—including the furry members!

Funds raised during the Pet Walk will help feed and care for the Humane Society's animals in need of loving homes, provide medical services to sick and injured animals, rescue animals in emergency situations, and provide humane education to enrich the lives of individuals and animals alike.

To show her support of the Humane Society, ABC 7's Sylvia Perez will once again serve as Master of Ceremonies for the fourth year in a row. Participants can register to walk, collect pledges, win prizes, sign up as an event sponsor, set up a booth, shop in the pet mall, donate a raffle prize, buy a raffle ticket, or just stop by to enjoy the activities. There will be demonstrations—

like the popular annual K-9 Police Dog Demonstration; entertainment—such as dog agility, a pet psychic, petting zoo, and carnival games for dogs; contests—like Best Dressed Pet and Best Pet Tricks; raffle prizes; and much more.

This year's **Pet Walk** will take place on Sunday, June 3, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Katherine Legge Memorial Park. Visit hinsdalehumane.org for more information and to register.

HUMANE SOCIETY'S HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The Hinsdale Humane Society was the first Humane Society in DuPage County.

During the summer of 1953, local Hinsdale society women were appalled at the condition of the local dog pound and concerned about a potential rabies outbreak. So they started their own grassroots effort to provide better care and adoption of homeless animals. In the early days, the ladies paid for most of the supplies themselves, picked up stray dogs in their own cars, and answered calls from their home telephones. It is thanks to these dedicated volunteers that the Humane Society survived and eventually thrived.

HOME OF MORRIS THE CAT!

The very first “Morris the Cat” was once a homeless cat at the Hinsdale Humane Society. Previously named Lucky, he was adopted in 1968 and went on to act in 58 *9Lives* commercials from 1969–1978, the year that he died. Morris was a media darling who had so much fan mail, he had his own personal secretary. Among his many accomplishments, he starred in the movie *Shamus* with Burt Reynolds and won the Patsy Award, the animal equivalent of the Oscar, in 1972 and 1973. He was named “Animal Star of the Year” by *US Magazine*, appeared on *Good Morning America* and *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

HUMANE SOCIETY TODAY

At the heart of the Humane Society's work is finding homes for approximately 800 dogs and cats every year. But the organization has expanded its outreach and services far beyond care and adoption of homeless cats and dogs. It's hard to believe that this not-for-profit organization with its small staff of eight and relatively modest annual budget does all this:

HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAM for ages Pre-K to adult offers instructor-led programs such as “A New



SYLVIA AND MARLY

WHITE EBBY SENSUAL SLEEVELESS
TOP AND PINK NOVELTY BRACELET
COURTESY OF HOLLIS IN HINSDALE

Friend for Life" and "Safety Around Dogs" that teach important life skills, including kindness, compassion, and respect for all living things.

PET THERAPY PROGRAMS send trained pet owners and their approved pets to nursing homes, retirement communities, libraries, schools, and Adventist Paulson Pediatric Rehabilitation Center.

SUMMER PET CAMP offers one-week "Adventures in Animal Awareness" for students in fourth through sixth grades. Registration is going on now.

VOLUNTEER AND FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS offer hundreds of volunteers the opportunity to work with animals and support the Humane Society's mission.

The Humane Society also offers obedience classes, lost-pet assistance, internships, and an affordable microchip service. The list goes on. What can you do to help? ☐

Visit the new website at hinsdalehumanesociety.org for comprehensive information on the upcoming Pet Walk and all that the Hinsdale Humane Society does to care for homeless animals