

## County declares 'Archie Day' in honor of shaggy therapy dog

By Tony Biasotti (Contact)  
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Photo by James Glover II

Casa Pacifica Director of Development and Operations Vicki Murphy talks about Archie the dog at a Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday.



Photo by James Glover II

Archie the dog was honored at a Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday.



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Archie takes his celebrity in stride.

Already a star of the Internet, the printed page and the small screen, Casa Pacifica's 165-pound therapy dog appeared before the Ventura County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday to receive a proclamation in his honor.

It was a media event, with Archie fans inside the board room and camera crews in the aisles. The guest of honor sat at attention at first, but before long he lay on the floor as his human admirers sang his praises and declared it to be "Archie Day."

Archie lives with a Casa Pacifica employee and works every day at the home for abused, neglected and emotionally disturbed children.

The staff members and the residents of Casa Pacifica rave about Archie's knack for comforting and calming children. It's not unusual for the kids to talk to the dog before they'll ever talk to the other people at the home.

"The one thing that most of these kids have in common is trauma, and Archie is an expert in trauma therapy," said Steven Elson, Casa Pacifica's executive director.

"He really is a gentle soul," Supervisor Kathy Long said. "It's amazing the way he lets the children climb on him."

Archie gained a bit of fame two years ago, when he needed surgery and his story was picked up by newspapers and television outlets around the world. Today, he is more celebrity spokesdog than a pet; he has a Web site, <http://www.archiethedog.com>, and a Facebook group, and he receives regular fan mail.

He's also one of Casa Pacifica's top fundraisers, with his story attracting thousands of dollars in donations.

And there's another Archie on the way, in a sense. A member of Casa Pacifica's board has commissioned a bronze statue of the massive Newfoundland dog, which will be unveiled on Sunday at Casa Pacifica's annual Wine & Food Festival at CSU Channel Islands.

The bronze Archie will stay for a while at Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks, and after that he'll roam around the county. At every stop, he'll be soliciting money for Casa Pacifica, with a spot for people to drop donations into.

More information about the Wine & Food Festival is available at <http://www.casapacifica.org>.