

Helping fulfill another dream

LI girl gives La. girl \$7,500 for diabetic alert dog

BY DAVIS CALAVIA-ROBERTSON
daysi.calavia-robertson@newsday.com

Emma Brussell's longtime dream of owning a diabetic alert dog finally came true last year. Now, the Farmingdale 10-year-old is helping a Louisiana girl get one of the highly trained dogs, too.

"This is something she wanted to do even before she got Rufus," said Kelly Brussell, Emma's mother. The yellow English Labrador retriever received months of training to use its sense of smell to alert Emma when her blood sugar levels are high or low; the dog cost \$15,000.

"That same day that we got the money we needed to buy her dog, Emma told me, 'I want to keep going [with fundraising] . . . to help other kids get their dogs,'" Brussell said.

Emma was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when she was 3. The autoimmune disease causes a person's pancreas to stop producing insulin, a hormone peo-

Emma's Journey.org Charity Art Show

Seven mixed-media artists will exhibit and sell their works, prices ranging \$5-\$500, to benefit nonprofit Emma's Journey. The charity will receive a 10 percent donation of all sales.

When Sunday, May 5, 1-4 pm

Where Charlotte's Speakeasy, 294 Main Street, Farmingdale

INFO Event organizer, Mike Pagano, 516-633-7297

FREE ADMISSION, Children welcome

ple need to get energy from food.

About a year and a half ago, the Brussells founded Emma's Journey, a nonprofit dedicated to helping children with Type 1 diabetes get alert dogs. Since then, mother and daughter, along with Emma's little sister, Lily, 9, have been hard at work fundraising for the charity at street fairs and community events.

Emma began raising money to buy her own alert dog by creating and selling paintings of fish, owls and penguins on Facebook. She had raised almost \$2,000 when two donors, who had read a Newsday story about

her efforts, contacted the family offering to pay the full cost for the dog.

"So, I've continued painting and selling and we now have prints, and greeting cards and magnets," Emma said. "It's been fun and exciting and a lot, a lot of work."

Diabetic Alert Dogs of America in Las Vegas, the company that trained Rufus, referred applicants in need of financial assistance to the Brussells.

Emma's Journey received seven applications, and selected AddieGrace Louviere, a 10-year-old from Louisiana who was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes last October, to receive the nonprofit's first \$7,500 grant.

AddieGrace, an animal lover whose hobby is riding horses on the family farm, lives with her parents and four younger siblings in Centerville, a rural community in the southern part of the state.

The school she attends is small and does not have a school nurse, and though she, like Emma, wears a Dexcom, a continuous glucose monitor that tracks blood sugar levels, the device often malfunctions, said her mother, Emily Fontenot.

"One of AddieGrace's main



MATTHEW HINTON

AddieGrace Louviere wears a continuous glucose monitor as she plays at her family home in Centerville, La., on Tuesday.

symptoms, when we found out she had Type 1, was weight loss," Fontenot said. "Because her body fat is so low the [monitor] often cannot read her levels accurately, so you can only imagine how thrilled we all are for this dog."

When AddieGrace and her mom, who have also been fundraising to afford the alert dog by hosting rodeo events like barrel races, received the call informing them that AddieGrace had been selected as the winner of the grant, "Oh, she was just speechless," said Fontenot.

"I was just so ... mindblown," AddieGrace said, adding that the dog would change her life.

"My mom would finally let me go to my friend's house," she said.

"It's hard to let her go anywhere without me being there," said Fontenot. "I'm always worried something bad could happen but once the dog is here, I'll have more peace of mind."

Diabetic Alert Dogs of Amer-

ica will train AddieGrace's dog, a process that takes eight to 10 months. As public awareness of alert dogs and the work they do grows, so does demand, said the company's client services director, Christy Weaver.

The dogs can cost \$10,000 to \$25,000, according to the handful of organizations that provide them.

Diabetic Alert Dogs of America, which delivers about 10 dogs each month, has a waitlist of 42 people, Weaver said, adding more than 95 percent of applicants ask for financial help.

"That's why I think what Emma is doing is so great," she said.

"That little girl's heart is so big. When she called me to tell me she had enough money to give another child, there was so much excitement in her voice, she must've been jumping up and down. I think she was almost as excited as when she called me to tell me she had enough money for her own dog."



Brian Toale, Janet Klinger and Mary McKenna at a rally outside St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre on Thursday.

Protesters demand

BY BART JONES
bart.jones@newsday.com

Advocates for clergy sex abuse victims protested Thursday outside St. Agnes Cathedral, demanding that the Diocese of Rockville Centre release a list of credibly accused clergy.

The diocese said this week it will not release such a list now but may do so in the future.

"They are hiding something," Janet Klinger of the advocacy group SNAP said. "I think they don't want this out. They don't want their history to be known to the diocese. It's an ugly history."

SNAP, which organized the protest, called on Rockville Centre Bishop John Barres to immediately post credibly accused clerics' names, at least those who are living "and pose threats to children right now."

"Every day that a predator's name is hidden, kids are at risk of horrific abuse," the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests said in a statement.

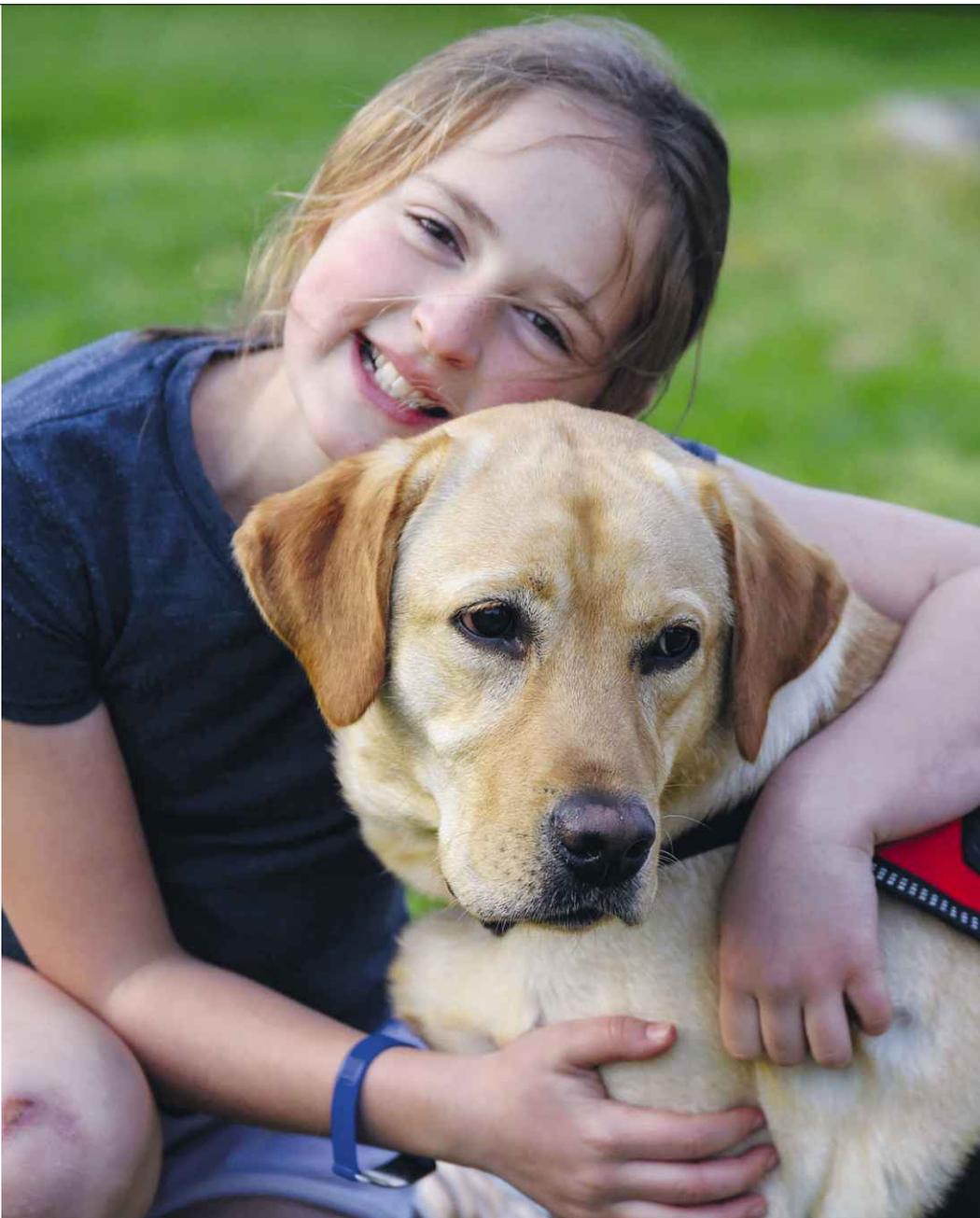
The diocese didn't respond to Thursday's protest, attended by a handful of advocates, but diocesan spokesman Sean Dolan said Monday: "At this time, the diocese believes that

while the investigations of claims and allegations are ongoing, it is premature to release a list of accused clergy," though it remains under consideration.

He added that "not a single priest or deacon of this diocese is currently in ministry who has been the subject of a credible and substantiated claim of abuse against a minor," and that the diocese turns over to law enforcement any allegations of sexual abuse against minors by clergy.

Another protester, Brian Toale, said the diocese was intentionally keeping the list hidden.

"Central to their strategy is keeping secrets," Toale said.



Emma Brussell with her diabetic alert dog Rufus. The Brussells founded a nonprofit to help other kids.

NEWSDAY / THOMAS A. FERRARA

Hempstead officials support police brass

BY JESSE COBURN
jesse.coburn@newsday.com

Hempstead Village officials and religious leaders gathered on the steps of Village Hall Thursday afternoon in a show of unity and support for the village police department's top brass, one day after Chief Paul Johnson pleaded not guilty to corruption charges stemming from alleged ticket fixing.

The local leaders expressed confidence that Johnson and indicted Deputy Chief Richard Holland would be exonerated, while some questioned the motives of Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas' investigation into the village, which has led to criminal charges against six current or former village officials.

"She promised that she would be fair to the community, but she's done nothing since but try to destroy us," said Bishop William A. Watson of St. John's Church in Westbury, standing next to village Mayor Don Ryan and Hempstead Town Senior Councilwoman Dorothy Goosby. "Every black man she finds in this village she tries to bring a charge against, and many of them are bogus." Johnson is black.

Singas said in a statement: "When Hispanic business owners told us that they were being extorted by a Hemp-

stead Village trustee and unfairly targeted by Hempstead Police at his direction, we began this investigation, which expanded when wire-taps uncovered additional criminal conduct." She added that she hopes the local community "will come together to make the changes needed to restore integrity and regain public confidence in village institutions."

The indicted village officials include Johnson, former trustee Perry Pettus, Holland, village Sgt. Joseph Saviano, former officer Randy Stith and village Officer Robert Van Wyen.

Mayor Don Ryan said he has "great faith in our police department" and "absolutely" supports Johnson and Holland.

He said crime in the village, while having increased recently, is down 17 percent over the past five years.

Deputy Mayor Charles Renfro noted that the board of trustees voted unanimously to appoint Johnson and Holland last year.

Village officials said that Chief Johnson, Holland and Savino are on modified administrative duty with pay.

Johnson retains his title, but Assistant Chief Patrick Cooke will lead the department for the time being, they said.

Van Wyen is on sick leave with pay.

accused priests list from LI diocese

If the names of more accused clerics get out, it could lead to more lawsuits after the Child Victims Act takes effect in August in New York State, he said. The measure raises the age by which victims can pursue criminal charges against abusers to 28, and allows survivors to file civil suits up to age 55.

That in turn would lead to the legal process of discovery that should reveal greater information about sexual abuse by clergy in the diocese, he said.

SNAP called on Catholics to withhold donations to the diocese and instead send their

money to groups supporting sex abuse victims.

"We don't want people to sit on their wallets. In fact, we urge Catholics to be more generous than ever, but to give to organizations that help kids and fight abuse, not those that hurt kids and hide abuse," said Klinger, of Plainview, SNAP's Long Island leader. "It's irresponsible for followers to financially reward officials who act irresponsibly."

If Barres does disclose the diocese's list, SNAP said, it should include the photos and whereabouts of the priests, which would help survivors identify

their abusers and protect kids.

Where these priests are now is important because nearby parents and prospective employers should be warned about their presence, the group said. "That is the single best step the diocese could take to prevent more horrific crimes against more innocent kids," Klinger said.

Many dioceses and orders began releasing the names of suspected abusers after a grand jury report released last summer detailed decades of allegations in the Roman Catholic Church in Pennsylvania.

On Friday, the Archdiocese

of New York identified 115 priests and five deacons who had been accused of sexually abusing children in one of the largest disclosures by the church.

Many of the priests named by the archdiocese served years or decades ago, and are defrocked or dead. The majority of the abuse took place between the 1950s and the 1990s.

Dioceses in Brooklyn, Newark and Hartford, along with the Jesuit province that includes New York State, also have released similar lists.

Dolan said law enforcement authorities "have the names of

all clergy known to the diocese who have been accused of sexual abuse of minors." The Long Island diocese "remains vigilant in its protection of all minors," he said.

He noted that the diocese has implemented an Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program "to offer the opportunity for some measure of healing and justice to those who were abused by diocesan clergy."

Under the program, people sexually abused by clergy in the diocese receive financial compensation if they agree not to sue the diocese.