

Breakfast at Sniffany's

An Elegant Affair for Our Animal Companions



Story by Susan Wilkinson • Photos courtesy Breakfast at Sniffany's

You, and your four-legged friends, are invited to the poshest pet party this side of Beverly Hills. Breakfast at Sniffany's melds the glamour of the eponymous '50s movie and the fun of a barrel of puppies to raise funds for local animal relief organizations.

Heather Maertens, a local jeweler and proprietor of Maertens Fine Jewelry and Gifts in Lusby, is the driving force behind the event. "Several years ago, I was part of a group hoping to sponsor an animal-centric benefit that never made it past the planning stage. The notion evolved into the first Breakfast at Sniffany's (B@S)," she said. "The animals don't have a voice. They need us." Then, as today, the event was staged by volunteers – Maertens' employees, like-minded friends and the organizations that benefit from the event. In 2016, their efforts raised over \$10,000 for four regional rescue organizations.

Sugar Faces Senior Dog Rescue is one of the beneficiaries. "I so look forward to Breakfast at Sniffany's. The event radiates fun and flair," founder Melissa Carnes remarked, adding, "There are so many things to do, so many people to mingle and chat with, and, of course, so many dogs to play with." Maertens detailed the celebration of all-things-furry:

"Human guests enjoy a delectable brunch and breakfast cocktails while canine companions snack from a gourmet treat bar." Bacon sundaes, anyone? "There are prizes for the best trick and the largest, smallest and best-dressed canines. Some owners coordinate costumes with their animal sidekicks," she continued. "Pet-themed donations, including one-of-a-kind items by local artists, are offered at a silent auction. Guests are invited to pose in front of special backdrops for souvenir photos and visit exhibits hosted by rescue groups and sponsors."

Carnes commented, "I am always touched to see the auction and sponsor lists. I know there are many opportunities to give back to our community, and the fact that they chose to support our work through their gift to B@S moves me. I often refer to the program when I need a local product or service."

She continued, "The event has provided an incredible amount of financial support, which helps us pay veterinary costs for our senior dogs. Additionally, and equally important, is the exposure we've received. We are able to showcase our group to fellow animal lovers, which has led to volunteers, donors, and opportunities to participate in other events. Breakfast at Sniffany's has become an annual reunion event for many of our Sugar Faces' adopters and forever fosters." Pat Beyer, president of the Humane Society of Calvert County, another beneficiary, seconded Carnes' note of gratitude and added, "Dogs from the shelter enjoy the event – they get a day out and the chance to meet potential adopters."

"About 99 percent of our pet guests are dogs, but we've had cats in carriers and even a potbelly pig," recalled Maertens. It's a lively but peaceable gathering of well-socialized beings. "There's never growling," she noted, "and there are no scuffles."

Maertens feels she gets as much from the animal world

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Join animal-lovers and the subjects of their affection for the

6th Annual Breakfast at Sniffany's

May 21, 2017

The event will take place under a large canopy at Holiday Inn Solomons at 10 a.m.

Isaac's Restaurant is the event caterer and a major sponsor. Admission is \$35 and it is best to buy tickets in advance at Maertens Fine Jewelry, located in the Lusby Commons Shopping Center. Tickets can also be purchased at the door on the day of the event. Those that cannot attend but wish to help may make a donation or place an ad in the program.

Breakfast at Sniffany's is a Maryland nonprofit corporation. For more information, contact Heather Maertens (443-603-8318 or breakfastatsniffanys@gmail.com) or visit the Breakfast at Sniffany's Facebook page.



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as she gives. She is leader of a pack that includes five dogs of different breeds, including rescues. "I can't imagine my home without my dogs. I look forward to coming home to them. They are a true stress reliever and great entertainment." •



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