



# The Poop Scoop

Tails and Tidbits for Team Sammie Volunteers and the Animal Lovers of Nevada County and Beyond . . . .

Volume VI, Issue I

Spring 2011

## Facts About Us and the Work We've Done:

- Sammie's Friends has been managing the Animal Shelter since July, 2010.
- As of January 2011, the Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter has had a euthanasia rate of just under 1.5%, thanks in large part to the work of the volunteers.
- In the 10 years since Cheryl Wicks went to the Shelter, over 3500 animals have received care from Sammie's Friends.

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## Meet Sammie: How Sammie's Friends Came To Be

How would a shelter and a movement come to be named after a dog? If you knew Sammie, the answer is clear. Let me introduce Sammie.

Sammie is the inspiration for the effort that we (Cheryl and Curt) have put in at the shelter. He was the beloved Shar-Pei who came to live with me as a seven week old pup in 1991. Curt joined up with us in 1994. Sammie loved his "Cuwtie." He asked many times "Mama where did we get him? Was he a stray?"

When Sammie was seven months old he went to dog training. His trainer said "I have trained about 7,000 dogs and I've never met one as interesting as Sammie." Since I first arrived at the shelter on March 21, 2001 I have met at least 7,000 dogs and never met one as interesting as Sammie.

What made him so interesting? From the time I knew him at seven weeks old he was self determined, had a mind of his own and pondered what actions he took and was excellent at observing people and providing what they needed. Whether your heart hurt or your body hurt, Sammie seemed to know what to do—like curling up next to you, warming your aching back just where you needed it. Sammie did this kind of thing many times in his life.

We called Sammie "The Family Shar-apist," as he not only knew how to help with physical



problems, he also understood the emotional life of others. One evening, when Curt and I were having a somewhat disagreeable conversation, the atmosphere in the room tense, Sammie sat down and studied us. He then walked over and sat next to Curt, mimicking his body position—one leg tucked under and the other out in front. This actually is a technique that therapists use to connect with their patients. Sammie had determined that at that moment his beloved Cuwtie needed his support more than I did. Curt and I both started laughing and that was the end of the dispute.

Sammie was a party animal and that boy went many places. One of his favorites was Casa Nova, a

restaurant in Carmel. The owner particularly liked Sam and would bring him his very own steak!

I felt that he had given us so much and we were so blessed to have been the family picked to be his, and in turn we had given him a good life with lots of fun and interesting adventures.

Before Sammie, I had never had a pet and wasn't looking for one, when he came into my life. I had a lot of learning to do. Because Sam was strong willed and independent minded (kind of like myself), he wasn't such an easy dog; but I couldn't have had a better dog!

Sammie started every day with his "romp-a-rooni" with Cuwtie. This was a round of pushing and shoving and ramming and laughing. Sam thought it was the best fun in the world. Sammie finished every day with his MaMa rocking him to sleep for an hour at bedtime.

I went to the shelter, inspired by Sammie, on March 21, 2001. If I had not had Sammie I would never have gone to the shelter to help the other animals and would not have started a volunteer program and Sammie's Friends and eventually run the shelter with Curt and Sammie's enduring energy. To this day he is our inspiration.

See a collage of his life by going to <http://www.sammiesfriends.org/scrapbook.htm>

**Did You Know...**

*Lack of funds is not a reason to leave your cat or dog unspayed/unneutered.*

*You can get certificates from Nevada County Animal Control worth:*

- \$60 for female dogs
- \$40 for male dogs
- \$30 for female cats
- \$15 for male cats

*There are two low cost clinics you can use:*

*Animal Spay and Neuter Clinic:  
530-889-8800*

*AnimalSave:  
530-477-1706*

*If you need more financial support than the certificate, you can call:*

- *For dogs:  
Kathleen at Pound Puppy Rescue  
530-274-8079*
- *For cats:  
Cheryl at Sammie's Friends 530-471-5041*

Oh my goodness have we been busy since July 1 when Sammie's Friends contracted with Nevada County to run the county animal shelter. From July 1 to December 31 we took in 1040 animals and sent out 1020 animals. We had so many kittens this year. It seems the season is now year around. With people losing their homes and their jobs, more animals have just been dumped and people who find them are kind enough to bring them to us for protection and care and adoption.

We have gotten all the animals that come to the shelter spayed/neutered vaccinated and now heart worm tested. We paid for medical care of 165 dogs (including 89 spay/neuters) and 537 cats (including 380 spay/neuters) in the shelter.

**Hello Animal Lovers**

We still run our Sammie's Friends program that provides medical care for animals in the community who have no one else to tend to their needs. Last year Sammie's Friends provided medical care for 273 dogs, 158 cats 20 horses and 348 feral cats. In total, between the shelter and the community Sammie's Friends provided medical care and spaying/neutering for 1,502 animals. Now I know why we're so tired.

Sammie's Friends still delivers dog and cat food to North San Juan and Washington once a month to help the hungry cats and dogs in those communities

Sammie's Friends is grateful for the opportunity to run the shelter and provide the animals with the care they deserve. We have 100 volunteers who lovingly tend to the dogs

and cats every day. There are many people that donate their time and/or their money to Sammie's Friends. We have a wonderful generous supportive community and we absolutely know we could not have taken on this huge endeavor without this wonderful support.

We love being able to do this for the animals of Nevada County. Thank you for your help.

Love,  
Cheryl



**Home for the Holidays Was a Smashing Success!**

It was my task to organize Home for the Holidays for Sammie's Friends. The idea behind "Home for the Holidays" was get lots of animals adopted and to raise a little bit of money to help pay the bills. We did a raffle, Santa joined us and photographer Linda Taylor took pictures of members of the public and their animals, a vaccine clinic, bake sale and so much more. A few weeks in, we had some 15 raffle prizes gathered. I thought, if this is all we get, I'm OK with that. Seventy donated raffle items later, I am dumbstruck by the generosity of



*Santa with His Best Little Helpers Ever!*

our community. Everyone came together to make this a success: volunteers, staff, local business and animal lovers. I am truly proud to be a member of this extremely dedicated and generous community. Sammie's Friends was able to place 20 animals during the Home for the Holidays weekend and raised over \$1,000. There are so many people to thank, I couldn't possibly list them all. Hopefully we'll be doing another "Home for the Holidays" next year, I hope ya'll will be able to make it!

Love,  
Kristina

### Amazing People Helping Sammie's Friends

**G**irl Scout Troop 1642 is a very good friend to Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter. These wonderful girls have been busy collecting dog and cat food for the shelter animals. We are grateful and very proud of them for being so charitable at such a young age. The troop is working towards an award which will be given after completing several merit badges.



**Girl Scout Troop 1642**

Left to right: Sherrie (Troop Leader), Kelly, Taylor, Avery, Danielle, Caitlin, Tiger Lily, Jessie, Cheryl (Shelter Director), Dane, and Eileen (Troop Leader)

On September 18th Lori and Christy presented **"Zumba Love"** for Sammie's Friends. Zumba dancing in Gateway Park was a lot of fun for everyone and produced funds for veterinary care for the shelter animals.

On September 20th **Mountain Mike's Pizza** had a special pizza night to help Sammie's Friends. It was well attended and 15% of the proceeds went to Sammie's Friends. Thanks Mike.

Cindy Hermosa put on **"Little Dog World,"** a party for small dogs, at the Moose Club and made \$500 for the animals.

When **Kendall and Brooklyn** had their birthday parties they asked their friends to bring gifts for the shelter animals instead of presents for them! What sweeties! Thank you so much!



**Kendall and Brooklyn Share Their Birthdays with the Animals**

In back: Mom, Justine and Cheryl, Shelter Director; in front: family friend, Messiah and Kendall holding Taffy and Brooklyn holding Murphy



*Popeye Bobbing for Hotdogs at the "Little Dog World"*



*Popeye Meeting New Friends*

### Lions Club Tees Off to Raise Money for Sammie's Friends

**G**rass Valley Host Lions Club member and representative from Knight's Paint, Krista Putnam, presents Sammie's Friends Founder Cheryl Wicks and adoptable friends Mia (the dog) and Amelia (the kitten) a check for \$3000, raised from the Charity Golf event "Putts for the Mutts and Kitties Too!" held on Oct 2nd at Alta Sierra Golf course. The event took place on a spectacular fall day in the foothills. As usual the wildlife at Alta Sierra was amazing. Deer, geese, ducks, and a few lone rabbits all lent a paw to the cause. All in attendance had a great round of golf, a fabulous feast, and took home fond memories of the adoptable pups brought to the event to promote Sammie's

Friends Nevada County Animal Shelter. Raffle prizes, thanks to the generosity of volunteers and businesses that stand behind service organizations such as the Lions, were abundant. It's wonderful to know that our community promotes animal

welfare and adoption as a priority in these hard times. Knight's Paint and GV Host Lions, as well as Sammie's Friends and the animals, send out a GREAT BIG, TAIL-WAGGIN'...THANK YOU!!!! And we'll try it again next year!!



### Wise Words from Beverley

#### I'm Coming Home ...doggie tips

- Provide a crate or at least my own place, bed, blankie, and toy. (The crate should **NEVER** be a punishment.)
- Take time for a long walk before entering the house.
- Keep me on a leash for 24-48 hours (even in the house).
- Introduce me to one room at a time while on a leash.
- Play time and affection are critical.
- Microchip or tag me with name and phone number.

Beverley was born in Africa, and it is there that her childhood love of any kind of animal began. She always seemed to have some critter in tow and the critters ranged from chameleons, hedgehogs & mongoose to a cheetah, monkeys, an African grey parrot and snakes. Dogs and cats were part of the household mix, too.

"Until about two years ago my career placed me in the corporate world – specifically biotechnology sales and marketing and most recently as an executive recruiter (head hunter) in the retail sector. I was laid off in 2009 and after 30 years of working, I started to question whether I was following my passion or not. I was not!" Beverley explains.

It was at this time that Sammie's Friends and the Nevada County Animal Shelter came

### Volunteer Spotlight

barging into her life, and she began volunteering as a dog walker. That was it! Rain or shine, 100 or 40 degrees – she was happy. She had the op-



portunity to work with Cheryl (Sammie's Friends) and Mark Lenci (K911 Training) and with their encouragement she filled her life with all that has to do with dogs. The rest is history.

Beverley is our "resident dog behavior specialist." From 9-1 every day and some days longer as her time allows, she is evaluating all new dogs who come into our shelter as to their level of socialization and making appropriate intervention to assure they have "acceptable doggie manners." Beverley not only volunteers her time in the mornings at the shelter, but also works with private clients and their dogs in the afternoon.

"My goal at the shelter is to improve doggie manners and increase adoption retention rates. Love it!!!" What a joy it is to see the positive impact she has on the dogs with whom she works. It is truly amazing and very clear all who work with Beverley that she, indeed, has found her passion.

Although Lauren had only a Guinea pig growing up, she always had a deep respect for all animals and knew whether a cat or a spider that they had feelings. These feelings led to her decision at seventeen to become a vegetarian. She had her first pet cat in 1989 when a "feral" cat living in a bush outside her office where she worked in the electronics industry. This forlorn little cat tugged at her heart string, and she was drawn to the cat because it seemed so alone. When a coworker took the cat to the Grass Valley Shelter, she quickly went to retrieve it. Sadly, when she got there the cat was not; happily, she found another cat who became her special feline companion she named Brie. Lauren and Brie shared 19 very happy years.

Lauren has two main contributions she makes to our shelter. The first is to help facilitate spay/neuter surgeries

of all cats and kittens that will be put up for adoption. Lauren and her dedicated crew of drivers transport about weekly to Auburn Spay And Neuter



Clinic. Her second contribution is placing feral cats into caring barn-type homes. She talks to prospective barn cat owners about the three week acclimation period and the need of a shelter "home base" out of the weather and out of harm's way

from predators and cars. She gives them many tips on how to increase the cat's chances to stay chose by and safe. When a prospective owner is deemed by Lauren as having suitable shelter and a desire to do the right for the cats, she delivers the cats and helps setup their temporary confinement area complete with bed, hidey box, and cage.

Beautifully expressed in Lauren's words: "It is rewarding to work with Sammie's Friends because SF wants only the best for the animals. Cheryl and Curt are committed to the welfare of creatures that were born homeless, or were left to die, or were rejected by other animal rescue organizations. If there is one thing that will forever make a positive impact on the quality of life of animals in our community, it is spay and neuter. That is why I help at Sammie's Friends shelter."

### Sammie's Friends and Local Woman Help Twinkle

Sammie's Friends is joining forces with a local woman to help a young horse in need.

Twinkle was rescued from deplorable conditions. She was emaciated and barely able to walk when Susannah Jones, of Rough and Ready, first found her. Twinkle was living on a ranch run by two caretakers who had picked up a bad drug habit. At six months of age Twinkle suffered some sort of blunt force trauma that shattered her shoulder and left her in excruciating pain. Unfortunately, the caretakers did not seek veterinary care for Twinkle. Instead, Twinkle was left in a barren pasture for six months.

In early September, Susannah approached the caretakers of the ranch and asked if she

could rescue the horse. Luckily, the caretakers accepted. Susannah was able to pay for a preliminary veterinarian visit

able to provide Twinkle with the care she so deserves. Cheryl Wicks, of Sammie's Friends, graciously offered to help raise funds to care for Twinkle's ongoing veterinary bills.

Twinkle is slowly improving; she has gained weight and is gradually beginning to trust people. She is currently under the veterinary care of Dr. Linda Reznicek of Grass Valley and chiropractor, Jeanette Miller. Donations are desperately needed to help offset the cost of veterinary care and feed. Donations can be sent to:



*Twinkle Gets a Well Deserved Hug from Kristina and a Gentle Pat from Shilynn*

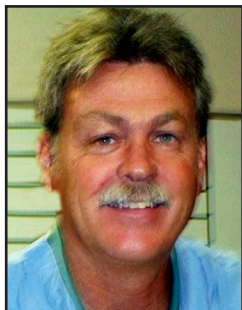
and set her up with a nice green pasture to graze in and even an elderly pasture mate. She soon realized that without the help of the community and a rescue organization like Sammie's Friends, she wouldn't be

Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter  
The Twinkle Fund  
14647 McCourtney Rd,  
Grass Valley, CA 95949



## Pet Dentistry: Exploring the Benefits

By: Timothy Van Geem, PH.D., D.V.M.



Dr. Van Geem

In the past twenty years, advances in Veterinary dentistry have been remarkable. Almost any dental procedure available to humans is now available to pets. For many, some of this advanced dentistry may not be affordable, but it is essential that pets receive at least basic dental care to prevent periodontal disease, and alleviate pain from diseased teeth.

By age four, more than 85% of cats and dogs will develop periodontal disease. Without proper care, brushing and proper diet, periodontal disease may rapidly progress, with possible serious consequences. The least serious consequences are gingivitis and halitosis. More serious consequences are painful, loose and abscessed teeth.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for disease teeth to go unnoticed for long periods of time, with unchecked infection developing around the tooth roots. Infection can result in significant bone destruction in the maxillary or mandibular jawbone.

The most alarming consequence of unchecked periodontal disease is bacterial infection that can affect the heart, bladder, kidneys, prostate and more recently linked to pancreatitis.

For decades veterinarians have been treating serious infections of this kind without understanding the source of entry into the body. In many cases the source was diseased teeth. Renowned veterinary cardiologist, Robert Hamlin, DVM, has presented convincing evidence of this link between acquired heart valve infection and periodontal disease. This association has long been realized by human dentist and physicians.

Unfortunately, many heart valve infections are not caught early enough and the resulting heart failure significantly reduces the pet's life expectancy. It is no coincidence that the highest incidence of bacterial endocarditis occurs in toy breeds which tends to be genetically predetermined to premature periodontal disease.

Pets experience pain with diseased teeth just like people. Teeth become painful when traumatized, fractured, loose or when dentin or pulp exposure occurs from cavities, trauma or other disease. Dentin, when exposed, is sensitive to temperature extremes, certain liquids, pressure and other environmental factors. Cats commonly develop cavity-like lesions underneath calculus that accumulates at the gum of the tooth interface. These cavities are almost always painful, with the pain obvious to the pet owner by tenderness in the area. Even under deep anesthesia, many cats exhibit a reflex contraction of the jaw in response to the pain of probing the cavity in the tooth. Mouth pain is often overlooked by pet owner because pets do not always paw their mouths. Indications of mouth pain may be difference in appetites, there may be drooling, depression, irritability, or the pet may seek to

be alone. There may be difficulty in swallowing, differences in food consistency preferences, or a reluctance to open or close mouth.

How do you find out your pets problems? Begin at home with an oral examination and check for (1) halitosis, (2) tartar or calcium build up on the teeth, (3) red inflammation along the gum line, (4) broken or discolored teeth, (5) swelling of the tissue below the tooth, (6) abnormal growths around the teeth or anywhere in the mouth, (7) loose or painful teeth, (8) holes in tissue above a tooth or draining place on the skin of the muzzle, or (9) chronic sinusitis. If you have any doubts, see your veterinarian. It is very important to regularly check the mouths of older pets for any abnormal masses. 7% of all cancers in dogs and cats occur in the mouth. Early detection and intervention is critical in order for treatment to be lifesaving. Is it dangerous for your veterinarian to clean your pets teeth on a regular basis? It is true that most all pets will require a general anesthetic to properly clean the teeth, or address any other tooth problem.

When done thoroughly, a dental prophylaxis should 30 to 60 minutes, involving removal of all tartar and calcium, sub gingival calculus removal, root planning of deep periodontal pockets and a thorough polishing of all the teeth. Pets will rarely allow a good sub gingival cleaning without a general anesthetic. Most veterinarians today use extremely safe gas anesthetics. If pet is found to be in good health, the procedure is safe and the risk is very small compared to the benefit. Some pets require blood test or x-rays before anesthesia. Results of these tests may require the pet to be given antibiotics prior to teeth cleaning. After cleaning, home care is essential for disease prevention.

Brushing the teeth is the most effective way of combating disease. If brushing is begun when the pet is young, they will accept the process. Crunchy foods, rawhide chews, carrots and chew toys can help to keep teeth clean. Small breed dogs and dogs with allergies may need to avoid certain animal-derived types of chews.

Dental emergencies should be treated immediately to alleviate pain. Early care may save the teeth. Broken or damaged teeth require immediate care, with the newest restorative dentistry.

Your pet's health and long life can be greatly improved with proper dental care at the veterinarian and at home.

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*Dr. Van Geem is a member of the American Dental society and provides general dental care, endodontic, periodontics, restorative dentistry and oro-maxillary surgery at the Mother lode vet hospital.*

## Taking New Kitty Home...*what to expect and what to do*

See if you can find out about your cat's history, eating habits, likes, dislikes, before leaving the shelter

### Hiding is a kitty specialty!

- ❖ If your new cat hides, this is very **normal** cat behavior!
- ❖ Know that your new cat feels apprehensive and does not understand what is happening.
- ❖ Going into hiding is a cat's natural reaction to change.



### I am a creature of habit

- ❖ Cats/kittens like routine. **Change can be difficult** for them.
- ❖ Please understand that acclimating to their new home may take time (days to weeks to months). Each cat is different.
- ❖ Your shy new cat may turn out to be outgoing once he/she gets accustomed to the new home.

### What I need at my new home

- ❖ **A room or space** that he/she **can call his/her own** with litter box, bed, food, water and scratching post.
- ❖ A cardboard box or a carrier with the door taken off and a blanket in it, can provide a secure cozy place to sleep.

### Spend time with me, but don't go too fast!

- ❖ Spend time with your new cat in the same room (watching tv, reading, etc), not necessarily directly interacting.
- ❖ Let New Kitty **come to you** (rather than dragging him/her out from his/her hiding place).
- ❖ Allow him/her to **explore** his/her **new world slowly**.
- ❖ Make sure children and other pets are not introduced until New Kitty is comfortable in one room
- ❖ **Introduce** one family member at a time in the same **non-confrontational** manner.
- ❖ **Gradually** introduce New Kitty to the rest of the house while you monitor the experience.



### WHAT?! There's another kitty here?!!

- ❖ When introducing two cats, start by **feeding each cat on either side of a closed door** so they can sniff and sense each other. Hissing or growling may occur at first. **Go slow.**
- ❖ If there is **more than one cat**, it is essential to have **more litter boxes**. (Cats are territorial and don't like the smell of urine and feces from other cats.)



### No, I don't want to go outside, yet!

- ❖ If you are planning to allow the cat outside, **wait several weeks** before doing so.
- ❖ New Kitty must first be comfortable inside before being let outside.
- ❖ For safety, New Kitty (or any cat for that matter) **needs to be able to get into the house** without having to wait for a human let him/her in.
- ❖ A kitty door is a very good idea.



### You want me to get along with the family dog?

- ❖ If introducing New Kitty to the family dog **make sure your dog is crated** and let your cat sniff and come up to the crate on his/her own. **Always proceed with caution. Some dogs will kill cats!**
- ❖ Do not leave the dog and cat alone together!
- ❖ You can **use a baby gate in a doorway** that the cat can jump over (assuming the dog cannot jump over it) or put the gate 4-5 inches above the floor so the cat can crawl under the gate (assuming the dog cannot) in case New Kitty needs an escape route.

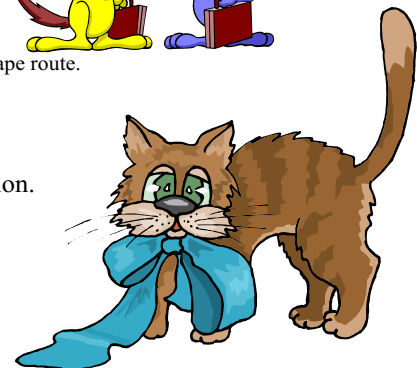


**Remember...PATIENCE, QUIET, AND TIME is needed for your new cat/kitten to adjust.**

If things just don't work out, we will take back New Kitty without hesitation.  
We want all parties to be happy!

**Call if you have any questions or concerns:  
Sammie's Friends (530) 471-5041**

**For more information go to [www.sheltermedicine.com](http://www.sheltermedicine.com)**



YES, I want to help make a difference in the lives of the unwanted animals of Nevada County! Sammie's Friends is a volunteer organization created to raise veterinary funds for the animals at the Nevada County Animal Shelter and other disadvantaged animals in the community. Our work with the animals is made possible by the donations of generous individuals in our community. All donations are greatly appreciated, and all monies raised are for the benefit of the animals. Checks may be submitted to the address below, or visit our website at [www.sammiesfriends.org](http://www.sammiesfriends.org) and click on the Paypal link for credit or debit cards donations.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, ST, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

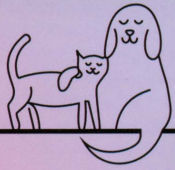
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

*As a 501 (c)(3) Non-Profit, all donations made to Sammie's Friends are fully tax-deductible and can be mailed to Sammie's Friends, 128 High Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945.*

**THANK YOU!**

Please Support Our Local Businesses

**Pleasant Valley Veterinary Center**



Mimi Vishoot, DVM  
Owner

10171 Commercial Ave.  
Penn Valley, CA 95946  
(530) 432-8443



**Caleb's Creamery & Coffee**  
"Old Fashioned Ice Cream"

17329 Penn Valley Dr., Penn Valley, CA 95946  
sarajeromy@hotmail.com 530.432.3129

Carlos DelCid  
Owner  
Penn Valley



530-432-0700

17464 Penn Valley Dr.  
Penn Valley CA 95946

**Everything for your pets & then some!**  
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Bird Boarding

If you would like us to email you a pdf version of the Poop Scoop in the future, send an email to [info@sammiesfriends.org](mailto:info@sammiesfriends.org)

**Veterinary Care for Disadvantaged Nevada County Animals**

**Sammie's Friends is a 501c Non-Profit organization founded in 2004 by Cheryl Wicks and Curt Romander to provide veterinary aid to the animals at the Nevada County Animal Shelter. Today, Sammie's Friends provides medical assistance to shelter animals and other disadvantaged animals in the community, and works closely with the NCAS Volunteers who help to socialize and find forever homes for the unwanted dogs and cats of Nevada County.**



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