



The Poop Scoop

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

Volume VI, Issue II

Spring 2011

Facts About Us & 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%, 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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Long Time Resident Gets a Deserved Break

Cassanova may have stayed here longer than any other dog. He had so many problems that after awhile we thought he was creating them because he didn't want to leave.



He had a dental problem where someone had chopped off his canine tooth. Then we discovered he had heartworms and a torn cruciate in his hind leg. He also had a small tumor that had to be removed.

Cassanova has now gone to the Canine Communication Center in LA with Brandon Fouche where he will learn to get along with other dogs. Dog Trainer, Mark

Lenci was kind enough to drive him all the way to Los Angeles. About a week before Cassie left he caught his toenails in the

kennel and had to have his feet bandaged for a few days. At the point of this self inflicted wound we decided that that Cassie was trying to delay his departure.

After all his time here we all became quite fond of the boy. Good luck buddy. Hope you enjoy your time with Brandon and Brutus and the other doggies.



Good Luck Buddy!



The Truth About "No Kill" Shelters

Various repeating questions have come up since Sammie's Friends has been running the shelter. I would like to address a couple of them.

1) Is Sammie's Friends A "No Kill Shelter"?

I have heard us referred to as a "no kill shelter" many times. Very few municipal shelters (previously known as the city or county pound) are "no kill." Municipal shelters are required to take in all stray cats and dogs, regardless of breed, age, physical condition and behavioral problems. These shelters were originally begun to reduce animal related public nuisances and had little to do with saving animal lives. Many municipal shelters today have the intent to save animal lives.

The "no kill" concept has been applied by many Humane Societies and ASPCA's and other private shelters. They have been able to become no kill shelters because they only take in what they are sure they can adopt out relatively easily. Some have restrictions, i.e. no Pitbulls, Chows, Shar-Peis and other more difficult to place breeds. They often do not take in injured or sick animals or animals over 4 years old. Some of these non-profits that have had contracts to run shelters for municipalities and/or provide Animal Control services have terminated their contracts and let Animal Control take the difficult-to-adopt, sick, injured and old cats and dogs back to a municipal shelter. This means their own facility does not do the euthanasia. It does not mean the animals don't get euthanized. They just get euthanized at the municipal shelter because they have no choice but to take in the animals that have additional problems of temperament, illness, age or breed.

In some ways the "no kill" shelters make it harder for the municipal shelters. The "no kill" shelters take the cream of the crop and send the others to "the pound." People like to come to places where they know the animals are being adopted and tend to stay away from the places where there is death.

Sammie's Friends is different than the "no kill" shelters. Sammie's Friends is a non-profit and we contract with the county to run a municipal shelter. We are faced with taking whatever comes

through our doors (like the municipal shelters) and we still maintain a less than 1% euthanasia rate (like the no kill shelters). This requires a serious commitment from Sammie's Friends and the entire community. It is very difficult to consistently pull this off. We do not have the option of sending them somewhere else to be euthanized. We have to find a different answer and we do.

The euthanasia rate at the Nevada County Animal Shelter 10 years ago was nearly 70%. It is now less than 1%. The reason for this is: a) volunteers, b) Sammie's Friends, c) community support and d) the internet.

2) If The County Pays Sammie's Friends To Run The Shelter Why Do You Need To Raise Money To Keep The Shelter Going?

The county does pay Sammie's Friends to run the animal shelter. Remember though that by just using what the county allots for the shelter you get a 70% euthanasia rate. Add in the many hours of volunteer work and the many donations from community members and the grants we receive we get down to less than 1% euthanasia. It costs money to save that extra 69% of the animals. Even though Sammie's Friends has only run the shelter since July 2010, it has subsidized the shelter for many years by providing thousands of dollars for veterinary care.

Many of the animals we get need medical care. They often have suffered for months and even years with miserable, painful conditions. We also help animals in the community with medical care so they don't end up at the shelter. If we stopped all of our community programs we would most likely have about 25% more animals coming to the shelter. Since we now teeter-totter on the edge every day of being too full, that increase would require full fledged euthanasia once again. Last year the average cost of veterinary care spent on each animal was \$310 for dogs and \$210 for cats. As many of you know who take your animals to the vet, this is not much money. When you multiply an overall average of about \$250 per sick/injured animal to the hundreds of animals treated, you get a whopping \$220,000. Yikes! Without the help of our wonderful veterinary

community this bill would be quite a bit higher. We also have animals with behavior problems that need to be resolved before they can be adopted. That doesn't cost anywhere near what it costs for the physical problems we see, but it is an expense.

Sammie's Friends has many creative approaches to helping our animals. We are able to efficiently and effectively spend the money that we do receive from the county, the public and grants and events. We currently need money to carry on, with our biggest need being veterinary care for the animals. We also need funds to create a new communal space for our cats so they don't need to be confined to small cages for months at a time. We need some fenced-in area with a few kennels for our great dog trainers to use for rehabbing some of our dogs. When the animals are less stressed and less confined and get more exercise they are more content and easier to adopt.

We need a lot of help from our community to keep going forward for our animals. Everyone who cares about animals is very proud of our 1% euthanasia rate. We may be the only shelter in the U.S. with that rate. It costs money to attain this. I hope this clarifies some of the questions I have been asked.

Love,
Cheryl



Look At What's Been Happening!

Pitbull Spay/Neuter Campaign a Success!

Starting with April Fools Day the "Don't Be A Fool — Spay/Neuter Your Pitbull" campaign was launched by Sammie's Friends. This innovative program was begun to try to reduce the pitbull overpopulation in Nevada County.

"DON'T BE A FOOL - SPAY/NEUTER YOUR PIT BULL"
 April 1 to April 7 (April Fools' Day Week)
 Call any vet in town for a low cost/no cost appointment

I'm no fool... I get spayed!

Enter drawing...one chance to win for every pit bull you spay/neuter.
 1st Prize: \$500 2nd Prize: \$150

The more pit bulls you spay/neuter, the better your chance of winning!

Transportation provided, if needed.
 Questions? - Sammie's Friends 530-471-5041
 www.sammiesfriends.org

All the veterinarians agreed to spay/neuter pitbulls from April 1 to April 7 at very low prices. Volunteers helped with making and distributing flyers and providing transportation when needed. Overall 69 pitbulls were spayed/neutered in five days. A giant thank you to everyone who helped.

David Forkner won the \$500 prize in the drawing. Blue is the dog who was neutered by Dr. Susan Smith at Brighton Greens. Second prize of \$150 was won by Jessie Clark who had his dogs, Moose and Grizzly, neutered at The Animal Clinic of Penn Valley.



L to R: Cheryl Wicks, Sammie's Friends Co-Founder; David Forkner, His Dog Blue and Two Sons; Dr. Susan Smith from Brighton Greens Veterinary Hospital

E-Waste Collection

On March 5th, Sammie's Friends conducted a special event organized and conducted by Claudia Ellis and her family, along with a score of Sammie's



Sharon Disposing of an Old Amplifier

Volunteers. This E-Waste Collection event involved setting up an collecting electronic waste from members of the community. Such items as old computers, laptops, monitors, hard drives, TVs and anything else that involved electronic components was fair game for the collection bin. Two large dumpster containers were located at Knight's Paints parking lot and tons of electronic waste was collected from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. One container, heaping with electronic components, was estimated to weigh 10,000 pounds. The second container was about two-thirds full when the event ended. After hauling the containers away, Claudia was able to collect another 700 pounds of waste and deliver it to the recyclers the next week. It was great fun to see all of the items brought in. Truck loads and car loads by the dozen were handled by the many volunteers who showed up to help on that sunny Saturday.

When the final tally was taken, over 16,000 pounds of waste was recycled and Sammie's Friends received a check for \$1,493 from California Electronic Asset Recovery. WOW, thanks Claudia and all the volunteers who participated!

A giant giant giant thanks to Claudia Ellis for putting our E-Waste day together. It was a lot of work organizing this and as always Claudia planned and executed perfectly. Many thanks to her loyal family who is always there to help as well. Also, big thanks to the volunteers who helped with this program.

I declare it a success. Yeah! Cheryl

A Generous Gift Helps Keep Sammie's Friends Rolling

Long time cat volunteer extraordinaire, Rita Hecoeks, hands over the pink slip to her trailer to Curt Romander, Sammie's Friends Co-Founder.

Curt is very happy about his new trailer. He can carry lots of dog and cat food in it and other things that need transporting.

Thank you Rita for this generous gift.



Rita, Curt and Das Trailer!

Did You Know...

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

There are two low cost clinics you can use:

Animal Spay and Neuter Clinic: 530-889-8800

AnimalSave: 530-477-1706

If you need financial support you can call:

- *For dogs: Kathleen at Pound Puppy Rescue 530-274-8079*

- *For cats: Cheryl at Sammie's Friends 530-471-5041*

**Wise Words
from Beverley**

**Balance Is Key
...doggie tips**

- ***I see this so often and it is a sure way of screwing up your dog.***

The dog is scared by a noise, a person or another dog....or, it is getting a shot at the vet and the owners launch into "it's okay, Momma's here, it's okay" while petting or stroking the dog. Arrrggg! You are reinforcing an unbalanced state of mind. You should keep all comfort and petting for after the dog has recovered from whatever stimulated it and even then a "good boy" is more than enough.

Make sure that your dog is in a balanced state whenever you praise, treat or pet.

Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteering at an animal shelter had never occurred to me. In 1971, I graduated with a Bachelor's degree (major in Industrial Engineering, minor in Business Administration). A 16 yr. career in corporate management, another 16 years in restaurant management and most recently in automobile sales, helping to raise a family, coaching little league and a stint with the Chamber of Commerce kept me busy enough. But four years ago, my wife, Terry, heard about the dog walking program from Carol Cox who was in charge of the activity that Cheryl Wicks had set up years earlier. Before I could say "woof, woof," I was a Sunday morning regular (I have recently moved to Tuesday mornings) and loving every minute of it.

We volunteers walk the canines twice a day, providing them some exercise, fresh air, attention, love, and a little playtime in the side yard (when time



*Kevin Garrity and Toby
Out for a Walk*

permits). We do it rain, shine, snow, sleet, heat or cold, and my hat's off to my fellow volunteers. The trustees from Wayne Brown also deserve kudos for their contributions.

In four years, I've seen over one thousand dogs come and go. Although I would like to take them all home, my wife and I have adopted two, a lab-border/collie mix and a beagle.

Currently, I'm coordinating a project with Barbara Graves to cover the trails with wood chips donated by High Sierra Tree Service and Curtis Roberts Tree Service.; this will provide better footing for the walkers and dogs.

Knowing that the dogs are being treated well by Cheryl, Curt, Ruth, Kristina, Sean and Debbie is reward enough, but I joke sometimes that when I'm much older, my reward might be that someone will have a heart and take me for a walk.

I was working with my husband in our consulting business, Collision & Injury Analysis, Inc., when he decided to retire in 2005 after 25 years. I was "forced" to retire also. After a few years of catching up on things around the house and yard, I needed something to do.

Having a lifelong love of pets, I decided in 2008 to volunteer at the Nevada County Animal Shelter. I'd always wanted a cat, but my husband was allergic to them. So I decided cleaning cat cages would allow me to get my "cat fix." One thing led to another and I decided to foster a litter of kittens. To my surprise, my husband had no allergic response to them.

My youngest dog Tucker, a Maltese, was very interested in one of the kittens and they played together. When it came time to return the foster kittens to the shelter, I could not return Tucker's kitten, which we named Noodles.

I've fostered cats and kittens, and lately one dog. It makes me feel like I'm doing something worthwhile, and I love working with the Friday crew. Since Cheryl and Curt took over the shelter, I do what I can to help out with things I think are needed for the shelter and the cats in particular. I've made numerous cat beds as a way to rid my home of unused fabric!

I look forward to Fridays!!!

Mary Studer is away for a bit, so we'll have to catch her photo the next time around!

California Says NO To Leaving Pets In A Hot Vehicle!

Did you know that leaving your pet in the car on a hot summer day is illegal in California?

Did you know that an outside temperature of 85 degrees can, inside a vehicle, climb to 102 degrees in just 10 minutes and reach a blistering 120 degrees within half an hour?

Did you know that your dog's normal temperature can soar to a deadly 107 degrees in minutes when left in a sweltering vehicle?

Did you know that your dog can withstand a body temperature of 107 to 108 degrees for only a **short time before suffering brain damage or death.**

Did you know that dogs don't sweat and that their only way to cool themselves is to pant?

There are countless, unnecessary deaths of pets every summer, because owners simply do not understand the severity of their actions.

Senate Bill 1806, which took effect Jan. 1, 2007, makes it a misdemeanor crime for someone to carelessly leave a pet unattended in a locked vehicle.

It is unfortunate, to say the least, that a law had to be enacted to rein in irresponsible pet owners. As stated in Section 1, paragraph (d) of SB1806:

(d) Numerous organizations and individuals have worked to educate pet owners of the dangers of leaving animals unattended in vehicles in the heat, however, it is well established that educational approaches by themselves do not improve safety behavior. To be effective, educational approaches must be integrated with enforcement activities.

Taking into account various factors such as number of times the offense has occurred and the degree of bodily injury to

the animal, violation of this law is punishable by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500), imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months, or by both a fine and imprisonment.

If you come across a situation where a pet has been left in a vehicle and is in danger, call 911 immediately. Time is of the essence!

A peace officer, humane officer, or animal control officer is authorized to take all steps that are reasonably necessary for the removal of an animal from a motor vehicle, including, but not limited to, breaking into the motor vehicle, after a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other person responsible.

If your dog is suffering from heatstroke, **COOL HER DOWN AS QUICKLY AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CALL THE VET IMMEDIATELY!** Heatstroke can be caused by various circumstances — **DON'T LET ONE OF THEM BE NEGLIGENCE!**

Thank You Momma Vicki, Love Madeline

Thanks to the most wonderful Vicki Fortini, Madeline has a life today. Here's her story:

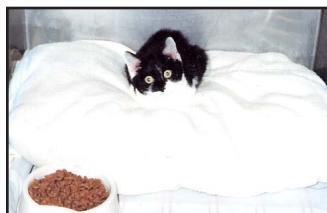
Cheryl showed up on my doorstep with this tiny little ball of black and white fluff in the summer of 2003. In humans, her condition is known as spina bifida — a failure of the tailbone to fuse completely; in kitties it is all too common in those with the Manx gene, like Madeline. This usually results in an inability to go potty on their own (which is why I express pee and poop for them everyday), and sometimes (though not in Madeline's case) partial crippling in the back legs.

Since we have found the magic combination of drugs to keep her poops solid and infection

at bay, she is a very agreeable kitty, but in the early days when I was figuring out what all would work best for her, she was none too happy about the expressing and bathing process, and let me know it in no uncertain terms — I actually used a welder's mask for awhile to protect my eyes. She would be fine — purring and happy — the minute we finished, but the clean out and clean up process was a little dicey there for awhile — that's why I bought a Beastie Band collar for her with little devils on it, because she **WAS** a little devil!

Now, she's just a happy and healthy kitty of 8 years(!) who hangs out with her other feline friends, who are similarly disabled, and loves to snuggle on

laps and pat you on the head. I adore her :)



2003: Just 2 Months Old Such a Tiny Kitty in Such a Big Bed!



2010: A Kitty in Clover



Spay & Neuter! No Hot Cars! Good Choices!



Don't Let This Pass

By: Susan Murphy, D.V.M. — Four Paws Animal Clinic



Dr. Susan Murphy

You have just arrived home from Sammie's Friends shelter with your new best friend. The decision was difficult, but you believe you have found just the right pet. You've filled out forms, received information and paperwork, and perhaps are feeling a bit overwhelmed by your experience. After all, it is difficult to forget those you had to leave behind, but all that paperwork has some important information, including information offering a free veterinary exam by local veterinarians. You have 7 days after adoption to qualify for that free exam, so don't miss out on this great opportunity.

While the shelter does it's best to be sure the pet you have adopted is healthy, they don't have the funds to test for all diseases. In Nevada County, we have a high incidence of Heartworm disease, transmitted by mosquitoes, occurring in both dogs and cats. Prevention is as simple as a monthly chew treat or spot on product. If your pet gets heartworms, treatment is expensive and can be a risk for the patient and stressful for you. Tick born diseases, such as Lyme disease and others, are also prevalent here and can cause serious health issues. Your veterinarian can give you advice on protecting your pet from these pests and diseases.

If you have adopted a puppy or kitten, they may have had their first vaccinations, but to be protected from the various viral diseases that can cause illness

and even death, they need to complete a series of vaccinations. Kittens can be born with the Feline Leukemia virus, which they may bring home to your family cat, so FeLV test-

identify any risk and your pet can be appropriately treated.

That early free visit may help to identify and protect your pet from more severe problems. It is also a great help to have established yourself with a veterinarian if your pet becomes injured. Several local vets share in an after hours emergency rotation and will be available to speak with you or see your pet if your pet has an emergency.

Adopting a new pet brings joy and sometimes challenges. When you adopt, you have committed to caring for all of your pets needs – shelter, food, exercise, safety, companionship and health. Your veterinarian can be a source of information and support, not only for health issues, but for behavior questions as well as questions about aging, nutrition, end of life decisions and pretty much anything else you are wondering about pet wise. Adopting a pet from a shelter is a wonderful act not only for the adopted pet, but for the new owner, as well. We, your local veterinarians, are all here to help, so please call and make that free appointment. We can work together to be sure your new pet has a long, healthy happy life.



ing is an important step to take before integrating them into your household. These little feline and canine balls of fluff and fuzz, may also harbor parasites. A simple stool test can

Taking New Doggie Home...*what to expect and what to do*

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

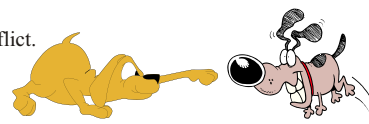
I'm coming home!

- ❖ Provide me with my own place/space like a bed, blankie, and toys.
A **crate** is wonderful if it's **never used as punishment** and the door is left open most of the time.
- ❖ Take me 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.



You mean I'm not the ONLY dog in the house?

- ❖ Pick up all of the resident pup's bowls, blankets, toys, etc. so that there is no "that's mine" conflict.
- ❖ Walk me side by side with the resident dog. Meeting face to face can sometimes be scary.
- ❖ Don't leave the dogs together unsupervised for at least several days.
- ❖ **The resident dog eats first, gets pet first, gets treats first.** I guess he needs to stay top dog for a while.



I'm hungry!!

- ❖ How come he gets to eat first? Because he lived here first!!
- ❖ **Feed me** and that other pup **separately** to be sure neither of us has any food aggression. Eventually we can eat together.
- ❖ Be sure I have a bowl of fresh water inside the house and outside.



You mean there are House Rules?

- ❖ **Establish rules right away** for the bed, sofa, counter tops, etc. But also let me know what I can do, as well as what I'm not supposed to do.
- ❖ Make sure I have a safe place to go if I am unsure or have been disciplined.



There are kids in this house!!

- ❖ **Do monitor the kids around me.** Make sure they don't pet me while I'm eating or sleeping.
- ❖ Be sure to approach me from the front or side, let me smell your hand, and then pet my chin or chest, — not the top of my head. Never pinch me or pull my tail.



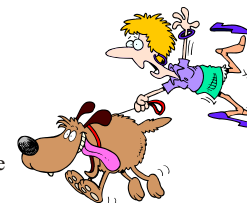
There are kitties in this house!!

- ❖ Make sure the kitty has a safe place to get away from me.
- ❖ Place the kitty's food out of my reach.
- ❖ **Never assume the cat and I will get along.**



What's this about Training?

- ❖ **Consistency and patience** are keys to training good behavior.
- ❖ **I may need potty re-training**, so keep a watchful eye on me. Go out with me every 2 hours until we establish a routine. Praise me when I "go," but **don't punish me if I make a mistake.**
- ❖ Consult books, internet, etc. to see how best to meet my needs and the needs of our family.
- ❖ **Sammie's Friends offers monthly professional training sessions free of charge.**



Dr. Who??

- ❖ **Get me a general check up right away with a veterinarian.**
- ❖ Talk with your local pet store about the food to best meet my needs.
We dogs often have allergies to corn. Talk to your vet about quantity and frequency of feeding.



If behavioral problems arise, e-mail our in-house dog trainer, Beverley: Beverley@sammiesfriends.org

Remember...PATIENCE, QUIET, AND TIME is needed for your new dog/puppy to adjust.

If things just don't work out, we will take back New Doggie 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



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 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


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Compassionate Care for  *Cherished Companions*
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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

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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