

IS THERE A SILVER LINING?

From my earliest days as a child living on the desolate plains of South Dakota in a close to destitute family, I learned that no matter how bad things get life will be a little bit better with a positive attitude and a hopeful point of view. I have always found that to be true. As it has been said "Life is 10% what happens and 90% what you make of it."

As the co-founder of the largest animal organization in Nevada County I am always looking out for the animals. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit I heard that people would be dumping their animals in the panic and the shelters and rescues would be overrun with too many animals. I have to admit, I became frightened by these predictions, but in a short while put my feet flat on the ground, centered myself and looked around to see if reality was matching all these fears.

I have seen picture after picture on social media of shelters emptied out with animals going to foster homes and even getting adopted. Sammie's Friends Shelter was able to send most of our animals to foster homes and the shelter population is at an all time low. I should have known that this wonderful community would come forward and offer help at this difficult time.

As I mentioned clearing out shelters is not only happening in our community. People are home from jobs, kids are home from school and the family and individuals have time to smother a fostered cat or dog with love, even adopting some. To the benefit of the animals, through this process of fostering we have had foster failures. "What does that mean?" you ask. People take the adorable and fun kitties/doggies home and live with them for awhile and decide they cannot live with out this critter and decide to adopt the animal and give it a permanent home. Isn't that grand!

Fostering an animal provides another benefit, even if the foster family does not adopt. We get to learn how the pet behaves in a home, which is different from a shelter environment. That information will be invaluable when trying to place the animal in a permanent home.

Through the use of social media and the Internet Sammie's Friends has been able to do adoptions, and take in abandoned animals and practice social distancing at the same time. Our wonderful Shelter Director, Liz Taylor was right on top of it providing guidelines and directives consistent with the Governor's Shelter In Place orders. Everyone has gotten very creative in figuring out how to keep things rolling forward in this difficult time.

We, like everyone else, have had to close our thrift store, Sammie's Nifty Thrift, for the past four weeks. During this time our fearless thrift store leader, Joanne Castles, has found a way to continue some business on line.

So far, we have been able to continue to pay for medical care for the animals. We have received some contributions, when it was most needed and least expected. We are hoping and praying, like everyone else that our resources outlast the pandemic. We are always thinking of ways to do what is best for the shelter animals and the community animals that we help (after all they cannot help themselves) and be thrifty and resourceful at the same time.

We at Sammie's Friends are grateful for all the support and love this community gives to the animals. We love you and send virtual hugs. I'm gonna' keep looking for the silver lining and hope you will too.

Cheryl Wicks is the Co-Founder and President of Sammie's Friends