



The Poop Scoop

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

Volume III, Issue II

Fall 2009

Facts About Us and the Work We've Done:

- The NCAC Volunteer Program currently has over 100 volunteers helping to socialize dogs and cats.
- As of June 2009, the NCAS had a euthanasia rate of just under 3% thanks in large part to the work of the volunteers.
- In the 8 years since Cheryl Wicks went to the Shelter, over 2000 animals have received care from Sammie's Friends.

A Big Year for Sammie's Friends

Hello to Sammie's Many Friends

This has been quite a year. So much has happened. With foreclosures and people losing jobs Sammie's Friends has been busier than ever.



Milo

So far this year we have provided medical care for 375 animals. When the going gets rough Sammie's Friends just works harder to make up the difference. It is beyond us to say no to a suffering animal.

Sammie's Friends has the following programs:

- Providing medical care for the shelter animals, so that they can recover from their injuries and illnesses rather than be euthanized.
- Providing veterinary care for animals in the community that have no one else to care for them. This year there have been more animals with no one to care for them.
- Our horse program provides veterinary care and farrier services for horses. This year Sammie's Friends has helped 14

horses. Three of these horses were rescued by Fran Cole (volunteer extraordinaire) and Sammie's Friends. They were about one month away from starving to death.

They are all shiny and pretty and back to a normal weight now. Ariel has been adopted. Kris Van Roos (volunteer extraordinaire) has been training the beautiful mustang, Mariah. Queenie remains with Fran. Both of these horses need permanent homes.

- In 2008 Sammie's Friends provided 42,000 pounds of food to the cats and dogs of North San Juan and Washington. Sammie's Friends has the largest pet food distribution program in Nevada County.



Curly and Moe

- As of January 2009 the county stopped spaying/neutering the feral cats and Sammie's Friends picked up this program. Thanks to a generous grant from PetSmart Charities and help from Animal Spay/Neuter Clinic in Auburn, we are able to do this for the cats.

Sammie's Friend celebrated its

5th year as a 501(c)(3) non profit. 2004 is the official date of the beginning of Sammie's Friends. However, all the activities began at the shelter in 2001 that changed every-



Queenie

thing for the animals of Nevada County. In 2001 Cheryl Wicks started the volunteer program and the meager beginnings of Sammie's Friends. In 2002 Dawn Allmandinger started the Petfinder website allowing animals to be seen all over the world. In 2002 Ruth joined the shelter team and has been helping the animals ever since.

Thank you to the many many volunteers in this community who do so much for the animals and who help Sammie's Friends keep on keepin' on. We couldn't do it without the hard work, good spirit and love for the animals that so many bring to the animals. Many thanks to those who donate money to the cause to help the animals.

Hugs to all creatures two and four legged.

Cheryl

In This Issue

Chuckie's Excellent Adventure	Pg 2
"Bittersweet" by Suesan Larsen	Pg 3
Sammie's Friends Frustrations	Pg 4
Sammie's Friends Yard Sale	Pg 4
Claudia Sanford Special Volunteer	Pg 5
Kathleen O'Sullivan Orig. Sammie's Friend	Pg 5
Sammie's Friends Receives Grant	Pg 5
"Winter Health Tips for your Pet"	Pg 6
Sammie's Friends Submits Proposal	Pg 7
"Ridin' High"	Pg 8

Chuckie's Excellent Adventure

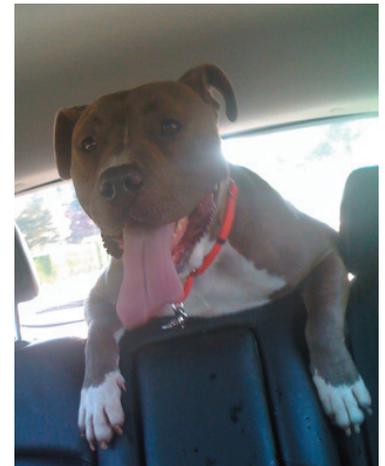


Chuckie

Chuckie is a sweet pit bull mix who came to the Nevada County Animal Shelter a while back along with his associate Kong. Kong was not so friendly to other dogs and was sent to LA for some rehabilitation. Chuckie, on the other hand was a great big sweet heart but was difficult to place because of his breed. He has the biggest head you could imagine. Well, we just had to find him a home, so Cheryl put on her thinking cap and located a person just over the border in British Columbia who was looking for a dog companion for his Mastiff mix. He saw Chuckie on PetFinder and called us about him.

take him to Salem, Oregon if Jose will meet me there". Now that's a 520 mile trip one way. Jose agreed to meet Curt there on August 2nd. So, off Curt and Chuckie went at 4 am on their adventure. As luck would have it, the temperatures moderated that morning and the trip was made in good time. They arrived in Salem at 12:30 pm and met Jose right on schedule.

Chuckie being the sweetie-pie that he is, warmed up to Jose immediately and off they went to Vancouver, BC.



Chuck, the Backseat Driver

Curt turned around and made it back home to Grass Valley by 9 pm.

Jose sent us some pictures of his trip back home with Chuckie, and later sent some pictures of Chuckie's new home and pal Alexia.

In all, it was an excellent adventure for all involved, and now Chuckie is leading the good life with a good family and new pal.

Chuckie, being the sweetie-pie that he is, warmed up to Jose immediately



Chuckie meets and greets Jose in Salem



Jose, the potential adopter in Canada asked all the right questions and we were satisfied that this would be a good home for Chuckie. The problem was, how to get him to British Columbia. This was just at the time that they were having a record heat wave in Seattle, the closest airport and the airlines would not transport a dog with these temperatures. It was just not a good idea. That's when Curt, Cheryl's partner said "I'll



Chuckie and his pal Alexia

Bittersweet by Suesan Larsen



Bandit before surgery

If you have ever fostered a dog you know the mix of joy and sadness when you have found the perfect home. Usually I foster a dog and fail. By fail I mean that

it no longer is a foster, it has become a member of my family. But not this time, I did it, I actually placed a dog.

His name is Bandit he is a sweet not a mean bone in his body, Boxer. He was brought to the Nevada County Animal Shelter in mid August. He was skin and bones, and weighed in at a mighty 26 pounds, "Dead Dog Walking". With the help of Sammie's Friends, Bandit received the medical care he needed. After several diagnostic tests it was determined that Bandit needed exploratory surgery. The ultrasound had revealed that he had a mass in his stomach. Dr. Tim at Mother Lode Veterinary Hospital successfully removed the mass and discovered he had an ulcer as a result of the mass. It was no wonder Bandit was so skinny. He was surely in a lot of pain and was unable to keep food down prior to surgery. The mass was biopsied to determine the cause. It would be a couple of days before we received the results.

After surgery I offered to take Bandit home. I felt comfortable caring for a dog that was recovering from surgery. I would surely only have him a night maybe two. (ha) Although there were several people that offered to take Bandit after he had a couple of nights at my home, there was no point in moving him if his bi-

opsy results were "bad". So, 2 nights turned into 4. With each passing day I became more and more attached to Bandit. Instead of sleeping with my husband I was sleeping with the dog! Probably not a recommendation that a marriage counselor would make!

Finally good news arrived in the form of a benign biopsy report. It appeared that the tumor was the result of a foreign body. The surgery was curative! This meant that Bandit could be placed. Not so fast though, he still needed some recovery time under his belt and more meat on his bones. Well, since he had

putting on weight. His energy level was increasing. He was becoming a juvenile delinquent. I was so happy! He is so mischievous and funny. We were getting a glimpse of a healthy Bandit. After almost 3 weeks at my home it was time to take him to his new forever home. It was a bittersweet day for me. I had grown quite fond of this funny faced Boxer. On the day we left, Bandit was up to 30lbs and was eating solid food. He had come a long way.

We made it to our Northern CA destination. The family was just as wonderful as we had hoped. They welcomed not only Bandit, but Cheryl and myself into their home. It was clear that Bandit was in the right place. After spending a couple of hours visiting, Cheryl and I said our goodbyes. I felt terribly sad that I was leaving my friend behind but I remembered the lessons he taught me in his short time with me. "Forgiveness", Bandit loved everyone and everything. He clearly had been



Bandit and his foster mom, Suesan

**Every day
Bandit got
a little bit
stronger and
was putting
on weight.**



Bandit travels to his new home

been with me for several days now it just wouldn't be right to move him, hmm. I was falling into the foster failure trap.

In the mean time, Cheryl Wicks was fielding several inquiries regarding Bandit. Numerous people sent in donations to Sammie's to help pay off his large medical bill. There were also several individuals that were interested in adopting him. Bandit had become a local celebrity. As Cheryl considered each party that wanted Bandit, there was one family that seemed to stand out. They had been interested in Bandit ever since they had seen him on Sammie's Friends Website. It would mean a road trip for Cheryl and myself.

Every day Bandit got a little bit stronger and was gradually



Bandit and his new pal Cameo

neglected but yet he held no grudges. A zest for life despite his adverse circumstances. He wanted to live, there was no doubt about that. Each day he greeted with enthusiasm. I can't help but smile when I think about him. His family updates me on his life frequently and last I heard he was 42 pounds, and having the time of his life!

Cheers Bandit!

Sammie's Friends Frustrations: Pups with Parvo and Run-Over Chihuahuas



Please, people, take care of your pets. This summer I have been called endlessly about puppies with parvo and chihuahuas that have been run over. This is inexcusable and shouldn't be happening.

It costs anywhere from \$10 to \$30 for a vaccination to prevent parvo and anywhere from \$600 to \$1,000 to care for a puppy, sick with parvo, that needs to be hospitalized. Parvo is a deadly virus that attacks the intestinal lining of a puppy and causes bloody diarrhea and vomiting and severe dehydration. Without veterinary intervention, the puppy will die. A puppy needs three vaccinations three weeks

apart before it is considered immunized. You should not have your puppy out in public until it has been fully immunized. I cringe when I see all the puppies walking around town on the hot cement and too young to have been fully immunized.

Now, for dogs that have been run over. Please, if you have a dog of any type, have it on a leash if it is anywhere near a road, even if you are standing right by it. I have endless calls about run over dogs, chihuahuas in particular. If there were no Sammie's Friends, these dogs would be euthanized as they nearly always have broken bones and the owners

have very little or no money.

I also receive calls about larger dogs being run over. I've received too many calls of dogs falling over the side of the back of a pick-up and the owner not realizing it and dragging the dog. Yes dragging the dog. It's pretty darn awful. I cringe every time I see a dog in the back of a pick up. The dog belongs in the cab where it is safe.

Please people, take care of your pets so they don't need these expensive interventions. Save money for your pet's medical care. Even healthy animals need some veterinary care.

- Cheryl Wicks

Sammie's Friends Yard Sale



Sharon admires a T-shirt she found at the yard sale.

Sammie's Friends held a yard sale in Grass Valley on the Labor Day Weekend hosted by Lori Perry and her family. There were many great items up for sale and almost all of them were snatched up by happy shoppers.

Among the items were a very useable air compressor, an antique (ca. 1920) bed frame, many books, both hard-back and paperback, and lots of clothes and kitchen items.

Over \$1,500 was raised at this event, for which we are very grateful.

Sammie's Friends will be holding yard sales in the future, so if you are interested,

please let us have some of those items you have been wanting to clear out of your garages and storage areas.

Events like these are very important to support non-profits. Yard sales, at this time of economic uncertainty are very popular.

We thank Lori and her family for supporting Sammie's Friends and making her place available for this fund raiser.

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

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!

Claudia Sanford: Sammie's Friends Volunteer Extraordinaire

Claudia Sanford started as a morning dog walker at the Nevada County Animal Shelter five years ago. She was encouraged to volunteer at the shelter by her daughter, Stephanie, who was a dog walker and then teamed up with another daughter, Sarah, to carry on the dog-walking tradition. She has fostered kittens and cats and adopted all but one of her dogs from the shelter. Though she no longer walks dogs, she continues to be an avid supporter of the animals at the shelter and homeless pets everywhere.

Claudia has supported Sammie's Friends through her planning, organizing, and carrying out the "Ride for Sammie's Friends" mo-

torcycle ride for three years and spearheaded food sales at the Nevada County Food and Toy Run. Her daughters, son Chris and husband, Ralph, helped organize these events and supported her efforts. She started writing grants for Sammie's Friends three years ago. She states she thoroughly enjoys writing grants. The grant writing process involves extensive research and writing and can sometimes take several months.

Claudia lives in Grass Valley with her husband, Ralph Ellis, who also spends a great deal of his time volunteering. He is a member of the Nevada County Sheriff's Search and Rescue and a firefighter with the Rough and

Ready Volunteer Fire Department. Claudia has worked at Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital for 13 years as a cardiology technician. In addition to working full time and doing fund raising and grant writing for Sammie's Friends, Claudia has recently completed the requirements for her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and continues to take classes in accounting. She hopes her hard work will encourage others to reach for their dreams as well.



Claudia Sanford and husband Ralph Ellis and their dogs Tina and Annie

Kathleen O'Sullivan: An Original Sammie's Friend

Kathleen began volunteering at the Nevada County Animal Shelter in 2001. At the time she and Cheryl were the only two volunteers walking dogs. Her first week of volunteering at the shelter was heart-breaking. Puppies were being euthanized due to overcrowding. She watched in horror as the third in a litter of beautiful border collie mix puppies was being taken to the euthanasia room. What to do? Rescue the last two puppies of course!

One of those puppies is now 8-year-old Charlie and he con-

tinues to bring joy and love to Kathleen and her husband. Charlie is lovingly called the "border collie on stilts" when anyone asks his breed.

Kathleen began taking entire litters of puppies surrendered to the shelter and founded Pound Puppy Rescue, a non-profit organization. To date she has saved and placed over 1200 puppies. Pound Puppy Rescue takes puppies out of overcrowded shelters where they are at risk for disease and euthanasia. Puppies are fostered in private homes where they are kept healthy and

well-socialized until old enough to be placed in "forever" homes.

A year ago Kathleen and her husband Russ moved permanently to Nevada City. Russ sometimes wishes Kathleen had a different passion when foster puppies are taking over their home but for the most part he is a good sport. Although Russ does not share her sentiment Kathleen thinks there is nothing better than puppy breath!



Kathleen and her dogs Apache, Jada and Charlie

Sammie's Friends Receives Grant for Feral Cat Spay/Neuter

In January 2009 Nevada County made a decision not to spay/neuter the feral cats that come to the shelter. This was not good news. The cats would not be released unaltered so that most assuredly meant death for 200 to 250 cats a year. Sammie's Friends then offered to spay/neuter those cats so they could live.

Sammie's Friends wrote for a grant to **PetSmart Charities** and were

awarded \$7,500 to spay/neuter these cats and to provide rabies



Feral Cat Colony at Feeding Time

shots. A wonderful volunteer, Lauren Drutz, takes these cats to the Auburn Spay/Neuter Clinic to have them altered. Many thanks to Lauren and the Auburn Spay/Neuter Clinic.

Money from other grants is used for testing for FIV/FELV testing and for (fvcrp) distemper shots. Thank you so much for all of the many people and organizations that care about the feral cats.



Thank You, PetSmart

Winter Health Tips for your Pet

by Dr. Tom Strolle, DVM



Dr. Strolle



Winter is a beautiful season here in the foothills bringing the holidays and outdoor fun in the snow. With this season, however, are some potential hazards for your pets that can be avoided with a little foresight and planning.

Senior pets and any pet with a chronic disease such as kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease, hormonal imbalances and arthritis can be much more susceptible to the cold. Ideally, all pets should be kept indoors as much as possible in winter weather. If for some reason this is not possible, they should have access to a shelter that is warm, dry and protects them from the elements. Many cats are able to find warm hiding places like under the hood of a car near the engine. Before starting the vehicle, make some noise by banging on the hood or honking the horn.

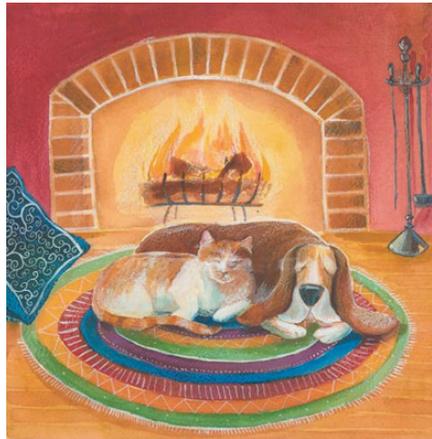
Make sure the outdoor water supply does not freeze. If their water supply is frozen, they may be tempted to drink from unclean sources. It is best to use plastic or ceramic bowls as their tongues could stick to cold metal.

Pay attention to your pet's feet. When pets go outside, their paw pads may become magnets for salt, ice, and chemical ice melts. Any snow or salt should be removed from your pet's paws as soon as they come indoors.

Wood stoves, fireplaces and space heaters can be a hazard to curious paws and wagging

tails. The favorite sleeping place in the summer may have become unexpectedly and dangerously hot. If the heat source gets knocked over, the entire household may be at risk.

There are several foods and beverages that can be toxic to pets and are often found



in greater abundance around the holidays. Uncooked yeast dough, if ingested (most cases are with dogs) can rise in the stomach and cause severe pain. Some cases like this require surgical removal of the dough. Semi-sweet and baker's chocolate and some dark chocolates when ingested can cause intestinal upset, hyperactivity and even seizures. This can happen with as little as 1/2 ounce of baker's chocolate eaten by a 20-pound dog. In dogs, macadamia nuts can cause muscular weakness, depression, vomiting, disorientation, tremors, abdominal pain and muscle stiffness in dogs. The effects can last days. There have been several cases of dogs and of one cat that developed kidney fail-

ure after eating a large amount of grapes or raisins. Alcoholic beverages can cause alcohol poisoning. Yes, even pets may overdo it in this area if given the opportunity.

Holiday plants that can cause problems include lilies (Tiger, Asian and Easter among others) that can cause kidney failure in cats, mistletoe that can cause gastrointestinal problems and sometimes cardiovascular problems, holly which can cause gastrointestinal problems, and although generally overrated in toxicity, poinsettias can cause mild nausea and vomiting.

Hazards around the Christmas tree include the Christmas tree water which may contain fertilizers, ribbons and tinsel if ingested, electric cords when chewed on, batteries when swallowed and glass ornaments used for batting (think cats) practice.

Some miscellaneous toxins to pets often found this time of year are antifreeze of which even a small amount can be lethal, liquid potpourri which can cause mouth, skin and eye damage, rat and mouse bait taste as good to your pets as they do to rodents and are equally as deadly, and ice melting products which can irritate the paws and mouth.

With some simple precautions and awareness, you and your pets can enjoy a safe and fun winter season. Romp in the snow and then curl up together in front of a warm, glowing fire.

Some additional sources of information about winter care for your pets can be found at these web sites: <http://www.doityourself.com/stry/winterdogtips>
<http://www.stop11animalhospital.com/winter.htm>

or Google "Winter Health Tips for your Pet. - editor

Sammie's Friends Submits Proposal

At long last, Sammie's Friends has submitted its proposal to operate the Nevada County Animal Shelter as a private non-profit organization. The proposal was delivered to the Nevada County Buyer's Office on July 14th, two days before the July 16th deadline.



Cheryl signs the proposal

The proposal effort culminates two and a half years of discussions, research, planning and writing. We began the effort in March 2007 by discussing with Rick Haffey, County Executive Officer, the possibility of privatizing the Shelter. We were encouraged that the idea was well received. Apparently, the idea had come up a few years earlier but was dropped.

Cheryl Wicks and Curt Romander then began to research other shelters that had been privatized and found a wide range of experience. In some instances, privatization led to much more efficient operations.

We visited the Nevada Humane Society in Reno to get first hand information about their privatization of their County Animal Shelter and were given much good advice and encouragement. We investigated the Animal Shelter operation in Santa Barbara County and found that

they operate as collaborators with the County, using a strong volunteer program to cover the care and adoption program for the animals in their shelter.

Cheryl and Curt then met individually with each of the Nevada County Supervisors to get their opinions and concerns about privatization of the Animal Shelter. They offered some encouragement and some advice about what a successful privatization program would look like. We gained a lot from this experience.

Sammie's Friends then set up a committee to discuss how we could privatize the Shelter and what pros and cons such an effort might entail. This committee of 5 to 7 members provided valuable insight on specific issues ranging from medical care, staffing, working hours, expanded programs and other shelter related issues.

In March, 2008, Curt submitted a white paper that lay out the benefits to the County of privatizing the shelter. This paper was well received, but the Sheriff still had reservations, primarily about liability issues. Finally, in October, 2008, after several discussions with the Undersheriff, the Sheriff said he would entertain the idea of privatization.

In January, Curt and Cheryl presented a Business Plan that layed out in detail, including a detailed budget, how Sammie's Friends would operate the Shelter.

The County then began the process of preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) that was finally issued on June 9th. The follow-

ing weeks were devoted to getting detailed cost estimates to operate the shelter from vendors like PG&E, telephone, water delivery, accounting and others to make a financially sound proposal. With this information, the process of writing the proposal and assembling it took two more weeks.

Included in the proposal were over 45 letters of support from members of the community. It was very gratifying to have this much support and made the final proposal very impressive.

The proposal review process was begun after the August 6 sumittal deadline. It turns out that Sammie's Friends was the only organization that submitted a proposal. It is under review

The proposal effort culminates two and a half years of discussions, research, planning and writing.



Cheryl delivers the proposal

and a decision will be made in mid to late October.

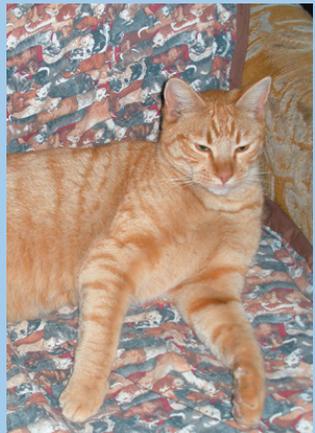
We are keeping our fingers crossed.



I wuv my momma



Tigger and his pal Korey



Tigger on his throne



Sammie's Friends © 2009

128 High Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Phone: 530 272 8833
Email: info@sammiesfriends.org

Ridin' High

On a recent trip to visit a feral cat colony to observe feeding time, we were introduced to several mules that were being trained for various events, including taking part in Nevada County's renowned "Draft Horse Clas-

sic". While visiting with the owner and trainer it was mentioned that one of the cats on the property liked to "ride" one of the mules. It turns out that a grandchild of the trainer often rides one of the mules during a work-

out in the arena, and along comes "Tigger" to ride too. We were astonished until we saw a picture of this trio doing their thing. We thought you would like to see this wonderful sight.

- Editor



Emmalee riding "Sweetie" with "Tigger" on behind

Sammie's Friends
128 High Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945

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.