



The Poop Scoop

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

Facts About Us & the Work We've Done:

- * During the 8 years that Sammie's Friends has managed the Animal Shelter, 15,000+ animals have been placed.
- * Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter has a euthanasia rate of under one percent.
- * In the 18 years since Cheryl Wicks went to the Shelter, over 19,000 animals have received veterinary care from Sammie's Friends.
- * In 2018 Sammie's Friends s/n over 3,000 dogs and cats in the community.

Volume X, Issue 1

Winter 2019

BIG SHOES TO FILL

by Lorie Hennessey

From the start, when I accepted the position through my first days, my meetings with community members, volunteers and well just about anyone else, who allowed me to share my exciting news of being the new Sammie's Friends Shelter Director, all came with the same comment, "You've got big shoes to fill."



was built through love, dedication, and passion for the animals, but also for our community who shares in this humanity toward all living things. It's evident in the support the community provides daily by signing up to volunteer, donating or being the biggest cheerleaders. However, the root of this starts with Cheryl and Curt. They are Sammie's Friends and that will never change.

The meaning behind the phrase, "have big shoes to fill", comes with the following definition: to have to meet high expectations about something that came before. Each time I was met with that phrase, I knew it to be true and even though I am 6'3" with size 11 shoes, I knew they were oh so right!

Because here's the thing. I've been watching, reading and following (bordering on stalking) Cheryl and Curt since the start, through the many stories of how Sammie's Friends was born and brought to life. Interestingly, I had lunch with Cheryl way back when they first started Sammie's Friends. I remember then being in awe of two people who found a need (which is the easy part), but then actually building, planning and bringing it to life (that's the hard part). The foundation of Sammie's Friends

So, when I hear, "you have big shoes to fill", I humbly accept this opportunity to live up to and continue the passion started by these two-amazing people. And, by the way, they aren't going anywhere and will continue to lead, because Cheryl and Curt are the SOUL of Sammie's Friends.

Sammie's Friends has new additions to the team. Liz Taylor started in September as the new Finance Director, while Lorie Hennessey started as the new Shelter Director on January 2. Along with their passionate and dedicated team, they will embark to carry on the culture and mission of Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter. To contact Lorie or Liz, please call the Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter at (530) 471-5041.

In This Issue

Big Shoes To Fill	Pg 1
Doing it Again!	Pg 2
County Improvements at the Shelter	Pg 2
VolunteerSpotlight: Rita Hecocks and Cyd Rochford	Pg 3
Say What 21 Thoroughbreds?????????	Pg 4
Coming Home - Lucy	Pg 5
Lilly Madison	Pg 5
Other Rescue Groups	Pg 6
Vet Spotlight - Josh Ettlin, DVM	Pg 6
The Real Reality Show	Pg 7
The Back Page	Pg 8

We're "Doing it Again!"

In September 2017, we launched the "2017 Cat Crisis Program" which paid for all cat spays and neuters for people needing financial help in Nevada County. We are now launching the "2019 Cat Crisis Program" to continue the mission of alleviating the over-population of unwanted cats in Nevada County! If you have a cat that needs altering, call a participating vet (listed below) and ask for the "2019 Cat Crisis" fund to pay for it. It's that easy!!

The cat crisis programs are in response to the number of kittens turned in to our shelter increasing significantly in 2015 and 2016, after basically being flat the preceding three years. Approximately 800 cats were spayed or neutered during the 2017 Cat Crisis Program and resulted in a decrease in the number of kittens brought in to the Shelter in 2018 (down 12%) to 386. Remember, this is in addition to the adult cats, dogs, and other animals we routinely manage and care for until long term homes are found.

This program obviously costs money and the response far exceeded initial expectations. Please consider donating to Sammie's Friends, including a note designating it to be used for the Cat Crisis. You can send or drop donations off at the Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter (14647 McCourtney Road, GV 95949) or Sammie's Nifty Thrift Shop (627 E. Main Street, GV 95945). If you have any questions, contact Joanne Castles at joannecastles@gmail.com or come into the thrift store and talk to her.

Participating vets include: Alta Sierra Veterinary Clinic (271-0101 neuters only), Animal Clinic of Lake of the Pines (268-1266), Animal Save (271-7071), Best Friends Animal Clinic (272-2817), Brighton Greens Veterinary Hospital (477-6863), Brunswick Veterinary Clinic (477-2287), For the Love of Pets Veterinary Hospital (477-5683), Four Paws Animal Clinic (265-3722), Mother Lode Veterinary Clinic (272-6651), Penn Valley Veterinary Associates (432-3125), Pine Creek Veterinary Clinic (478-9141).

County Improvements at the Shelter

The County has stepped up to the plate to make some much-needed repairs to the Shelter. For the past two winters, the roof of Sammie's Kitty Kove has leaked, making cleanup and maintenance of the kitties' home difficult. This fall, after much discussion, the Board of Supervisors approved a budget amendment to include roof repairs at several County buildings. Fortunately, our Cat Facility was included in this amendment. In mid

January, during a break in the weather, roof repairs were begun and finished in five days. Now, the kitties, the staff and the volunteers will not have to contend with leaks and messes to clean up. Thank you, County. Another important repair was needed to increase the safety of staff, volunteers, and animals. The fences of the large animal corrals at the rear of the Shelter needed strengthening. A fence contractor was hired by the County to bolster the corral between the two conex storage containers. This safety



issue came to our attention when a rambunctious steer broke out last summer. The fence has been reinforced and additional changes will be made in the near future. Also, the chain link fencing in the other corral was reinforced to make it more secure.

Volunteer Spotlight

RITA HECOCKS --ME-WOW!

Proudly wearing a shirt decorated with sparkly cats, Rita Hecoeks is one dedicated volunteer who you will find at Sammie's

Friends' Kitty Kove every Friday. In her 17th year of volunteering, starting back in 2002, when she moved to Grass Valley with her husband, she has been a dedicated volunteer helping to enrich the lives of Sammie's Friends furry residents.

So, what got Rita involved? Well it all started with a Bloody Mary! Rita and her husband were always involved in charitable work, so it was a given once she resettled in Grass Valley that she would give her time where it was needed. So, Rita and her good friend and neighbor met at the golf course bar with a Bloody Mary in hand to discuss just where they would dedicate their time. It was decided, animals!



From there, her commitment provided countless days and time given to the shelter, convincing her late husband (a pilot) to fly 2 cats to southern California for an adoption ("it was just the right thing to do") says Rita, a generous donor and adopting six cats of her own. An immigrant from Germany, all six cats

have German names – Rudi, Moretz, Max, Lola, Ulli, and Chatzi (and it's best when you hear her pronounce them with her fabulous German accent).

If you've ever met Rita, she's not the type who likes to sit around. She exercises 7 days a week, enjoys a good glass of wine and supports the animal's 100 percent. When asked what she would like to tell others about Sammie's Friends, her response is DONATE, DONATE and DONATE!

Cyd Rochford - Offsites WITH A KISS

Sammie's Friends is grateful for so many fabulous volunteers. They range anywhere from dog walkers, and kitty cuddlers to kennel cleaners and office work. But on any given Saturday, you may find Sammie's Dogs adorned with a large red kiss right in the middle of their forehead. That sweet reminder of love is from longtime volunteer, Cyd Rochford.

Volunteering for the past 14 years, Cyd started as a dog walker/kitty cuddler but then soon discovered her passion for taking dogs, mostly pitties, out on Saturday day trips. "I LOVE the pittie personality," says Cyd. "Getting the dogs out in nature gives them the opportunity to just be dogs, checking their "pee" mail, wading in ditches/creeks and just smelling the millions of smells that nature has to offer."

Wearing her Sammie's Friends shirt, with each dog adorned in their Sammie's Friends vest, Cyd always welcomes the conversation of others to hear great stories about adoptions from Sammie's Friends or to share about adopting, fostering, donating or volunteering. "It's a win-win. Hopefully helping a homeless animal find a loving, forever home because they now know humans can be kind, while a spiritual experience for me, to touch, pet, and kiss an animal while walking in a natural environment amongst beautiful trees near a stream or creek fills my cup!"

The most inspirational, according to Cyd, is when a dog, usually a pittie, who's she's taken on many outings finds its loving, forever home. From Big Blue, Lucy Lou, Rosie, Pinot, Arnold and Tigger, to Lobo, "it all makes my heart sing and is the reason I do what I do."

"In animal rescue, it truly takes a village – we can't do everything, but we all can do something." Wise words, Cyd!



Say What21 Thoroughbreds??????

Imagine our surprise when we learned in mid December that Sammie’s Friends was soon to become the guardian of 21 older thoroughbreds. This was almost as amazing as a similar event in January of 2015 when we gained custody of 41 horses. Receiving this news right before Christmas was not ideal. I thought “With people busy with Christmas, it will be hard to convince the public they need a new horse, especially a horse that may not have been ridden in years and is in its late teens.” I told myself “Be calm, ask for help and all will be well.” This formula worked. All is well. 12 of the 21 have been officially adopted and the remainder are now safe in foster homes.

Some of the best horse people in Nevada County came forward to help. The veterinarian who had treated them all these many years gave generously of her time and the person who had owned them helped us identify them and gave us a lot of information about them. Sammie’s Friends staff jumped right in to help organize the whole open house day and lots of follow up. People were there to show the horses, load them and transport them. Even an attorney came forward to write a release of liability form for us, in case anyone got hurt. Animal Control was there to support us in this huge effort. Numerous people made donations to help us care for the ones that we still have in foster. Nevada County has the most amazing, giving people.

Justin Dunne, who bought the Diamond F Ranch, now the Magic Horse Ranch, was a very patient man while all this was going on. He bought the ranch believing that within 48 hours of escrow closing the horses would be gone. Two months later he still had them, creating an obstacle for him doing what he wants to do with his new property. That’s where Sammie’s Friends got involved. The previous owner simply could not deal with them and yet did not want to give them up. Horse racing and breeding had been his life. Ultimately the decision was made that he would turn the horses over to Sammie’s Friends. Sammie’s Friends went into action and within two weeks all of the horses were off the property and well cared for.



Three of the horses were still stallions at 9, 14 and 22 years old. They had never been used for breeding and because they were stallions lived their lives in isolation. This was so sad for these incredibly beautiful horses. They have been gelded, one of them has been adopted and two still in foster have fabulous accommodations. These stallion boys turned out to be incredibly nice boys. Such sweethearts. Their lives, as well as the others, have improved immensely.

Thanks Horsey Community for helping these wonderful horses. We love you and appreciate you so very much.

COMING HOME

by Suesan Larsen

I first met Lucy in early September 2018, Animal Control received a report of a dog hanging out at Alta Sierra Elementary school that had been there for a couple of days. When Animal Control arrived at the school they found a skinny old brown dog standing in a ditch. She appeared weak and sick, she clearly needed medical attention. Off to Mother Lode Vet. Lucy (the name I gave her) was very sick, she had cancer and an infected uterus both were the result of not being spayed. Rotten teeth, flea infested, and a heart condition. Her prognosis was poor. I took her home, as a foster for Sammie's Friends, thinking she would only have a week or two to live.

Two weeks, then three passed and Lucy was doing amazingly well given her condition. Lucy started at 53lbs when she was found, she was now 60 lbs. Her infection was clearing up and she seemed happy. With sedation her rotten teeth were removed along with a couple of the tumors. My hospice dog was now playing Frisbee!

After 4 months with us she was almost 70lbs, but the cancer had spread. She was clearly in pain and there wasn't anything more we could do for her except alleviate her suffering and let her go. It was a heart wrenching decision. This sweet wonderful dog had done nothing to deserve the neglect she had suffered. All of her conditions could have been prevented. A week before I had to say good-bye she became a legal Larsen, we adopted her. She died having a family, a home and surrounded by love. I am most grateful she was in our life and I miss her deeply.



Lilly Madison



Cyndy Hutchison has been a volunteer at Sammie's Friends for 3 years. About a year ago she met Lilly Madison, a sweet loving deaf kitty. Lilly was picked up by Animal Control one rainy February night, she was about a year old, not spayed. When Cyndy started volunteering at the shelter she definitely wasn't looking to adopt a kitty. She felt that she could fulfill her kitty cuddle needs by volunteering. That was true for the first 2 years of her time at Sammie's Friends.

When Cyndy met Lilly she was immediately drawn to her. Cyndy used to be a special needs teacher, in particular deaf children. Although she knew it was a match, she denied her feelings for this sweet feline. It had been many years since she had a cat, she just wasn't sure she was ready for the commitment. Lilly went off to a foster home for 2 weeks, but then returned to the shelter. Cyndy decided it was time to make the commitment, Lilly Madison needed her.

Lilly Madison is a very spoiled feline; she gets extra special treatment because of her disability. Cyndy uses lights to let Lilly know that she is home or in a particular room, when Cyndy approaches her she comes at an angle so Lilly can see her. She has taught her some sign language and Lilly Madison is an indoor kitty only. Cyndy and Lilly couldn't be happier together. It is important to note that animals with disabilities can lead full happy lives. Lilly Madison certainly is, thanks to Cyndy Hutchinson.



Sierra Oaks Veterinary Services

10171 Commercial Center, Penn Valley, 95946
530-432-8443

Sierra Oaks Veterinary Services is a mixed animal practice in Penn Valley, CA and was founded by Dr. Josh Ettlin in January 2017. Dr. Ettlin is a 5th generation Nevada County resident and was involved in the local 4-H and FFA programs while growing up. This helped spark his interests in large animal veterinary medicine. He attended UC Davis where he earned his DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine). Dr. Ettlin spent the early part of his career at mixed animal practices in Northern California and Southern Oregon. When he and his wife found out they were expecting their 2nd and 3rd child (twin girls), they moved back home to Grass Valley to be closer to family. Dr. Ettlin spent a short time at both Brunswick Vet Hospital and Grass Valley Vet Hospital before founding Sierra Oaks.

Originally, Sierra Oaks started as a solo-practitioner large animal mobile service. However, last October Sierra Oaks purchased Pleasant Valley Veterinary Center. The combination of small and large animal practices makes Sierra Oaks one of the few practices in the area that offer both services. Dr. Mimi Vishoot, Dr. Sue Lester, and Dr. Linda Fossum make up an excellent team of small animal doctors. Our newly remodeled clinic is a full-service general practice capable of handling the needs of your dog or cat. All our doctors and staff are very friendly and knowledgeable. The livestock division of our practice offers a unique twist to the every day small animal clinic. Dr. Ettlin performs mobile farm calls daily. Cows, sheep, goats, and pigs are all part of his practice. He is a big supporter of local agriculture and strives to help farmers and ranchers as much as possible. Because Dr. Ettlin is also a skilled small animal practitioner, he offers a few mobile services for his small animal clients too. In-home euthanasia is the most requested service, and something so many of his clients greatly appreciate.

Above all, Sierra Oaks is an amazing clinic with an amazing staff. Please come visit us any time!



Other Rescue Groups

Sammie's Friends loves our rescue friends. Together we make an enormous difference for the animals. In an upcoming edition we will feature farm animal rescues.

Scooter's Pals, an all volunteer, foster based organization rescues animals from high kill shelters and helps local animals who need new homes. These animals are provided with spay/neuter, vaccinations, heart worm test and prevention and microchips. Once a Scooter's Pals dog - always a Scooter's Pals dogs.. We will take them back any time they are at risk. We appreciate our volunteers, fosters, adopter and donors. Call 530-350-2099 for information on how you can help. Susan Wallace, a retired attorney, is the Volunteer Executive Director and Founder. - SusanWallace@Scooterspals.org



The City of Grass Valley Animal Control Shelter, located at 556B Freeman Lane provides services for the cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City. We house stray, impounded and surrendered animals. All animals receive the necessary medical and behavioral help before adoption. All are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, heartworm tested before adoption. We help other shelters when we can. See our animals on petfinder or our facebook page.

(continued on page 8)

SAMMIE'S FRIENDS, the REAL REALITY SHOW

Reality shows fill up the major networks, cable and streaming services supposedly documenting unscripted real-life situations. The day in the life of Sammie's Friends staff and volunteers could be compared to many current and long-time running reality shows. In my short tenure alone, if I had a nickel for every time someone said that Sammie's Friends was like a reality show, well I would have like fifteen cents, but I've only been here for one month, so the ratio is pretty good.

The day starts like the *Amazing Race*. The staff arrive to welcoming calls, usually through barking and meowing and with extreme excitement. This is followed by the mad dash to complete all the tasks that are assigned and necessary to complete our goal of finding forever homes for all our animals. Dog walkers, in particular, race through thoughtfully, caringly and swiftly to ensure all dogs get their morning walk.

They do this with the eagerness and passion as if there's a prize at the end. Unlike the *Amazing Race* where you continue as tasks are completed within the time provided to ultimately win a big prize, our dedicated volunteers and staff do it for our animals to ensure their adoptability through exercise, socialization and with their devoted love.

If you've ever been on our side yard during dog behavior training or in the Kitty Kove's roaming free room, you may think, this is a lot like the *Housewives of Orange County, Beverly Hills, Atlanta* (well, you get the drift) with personality clashes and alpha moments. This is at first glance, of course.

A pack of dogs running around together, playing, talking back . . . er, I mean barking/meowing back or maybe having an alpha dog moment with our behaviorist, Beverley - may look chaotic at first, but it's such an important part of the preparation needed for an animal's adoptability. Teaching social skills and building positive habits is essential, as well as understanding any of their quirks. We all have quirks, right?! And don't get me started on our cats, they may look calm, cool and collected (well, they are), but they also desire to have a family to themselves with hopefully fewer roommates. You may see a paw swipe, hear a hiss or witness straight up aloofness but don't be fooled, it's just their special way of saying, "Hey, look at me!"

If you're a Bachelor or Bachelorette fan, you know that the end always comes with a rose and if you're lucky, the final rose. This is the very reason why our volunteers and staff work so hard, so that our animals will receive a "rose" or be chosen as the ONE to be part of a loving forever family.

So, what it comes down to is this . . . Sammie's Friends shelter isn't like a reality show at all. It has heart, and compassion, and winning is for the animals we serve, and for the families who present the final "rose".



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, 14647 McCourtney Rd., Grass Valley, CA 95949.

THANK YOU!

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*

For additional financial support you can call:

- For pitbulls, huskys, chihuahuas, and malamutes:

*Melise at Pound Puppy Rescue
530-272-1716*

- For cats and other breeds of dogs

pick up a voucher at Sammie's Friends

For questions call 530-471-5041



14647 McCourtney Rd
Grass Valley, CA 95949
Phone: 530 471 5041
Email:
info@sammiesfriends.org

(continued from page 6)

AnimalSave has been rescuing cats and dogs and providing spay/neuter services since 1973. Each year we provide 100's of animals with new homes. We have spayed/neutered over 22,000 dogs and cats. AnimalSave envisions a time when all animals are valued and treated with kindness. 530-271-7071



Pound Puppy Rescue saves approximately 200 puppies and sometimes their mothers who are at risk for euthanasia in high kill shelters. They are fostered in homes, free from stress and disease. Pound Puppy Rescue will pay for spay/neuter of pitbulls, chihuahuas, malamutes and huskies. Call 530-272-1716

Rescue For Pet Sake is an all volunteer, foster based organization rescuing dogs. We have no borders, we save animals locally and from other areas. We have saved 100's of animals lives from high kill shelter, puppy mills and others that have been abused or abandoned. We find loving, well checked out, homes for them all. "Spaying and neutering" is our motto. Our mission is to find safe loving homes. Our office and thrift store is on Bank Street in downtown Grass Valley.



Nevada County Pets In Need is a volunteer organization whose mission is to keep pets and families together. We offer free and low-cost services of pet food, spaying/neutering, vet care, collars, leashes, pet coats, etc. to keep pets and families together. We have a Thrift Store at 434 Colfax Avenue to fund our activities. "We are One. We are Love."

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 Volunteers who help to socialize and find forever homes for the unwanted dogs and cats of Nevada County.