



# The Poop Scoop

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

Volume X, Issue 4

Winter 2020

## WE COUNT OUR BLESSINGS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

During the holiday season we reflect on the past year, count our blessings, and give thanks to this great community. Curt and I have replaced ourselves with two outstanding people. Lorie Hennessey, Shelter Director, has done a great job taking on a tough job this past year. Liz Taylor, Finance Manager, has carried on where Curt left off. Liz has developed a new shelter management system, Shelter Tracker. This was a requirement of the June 2018 contract with the county. Liz's new system is easy to use and costs \$50 a month. By contrast the old system, Pet Point, was difficult to use and had gone from \$3,000 per year to \$15,000.

We are grateful for our awesome staff. They work hard, are dedicated to the animals and are all around great people. We are lucky and so are the animals. We couldn't do what we do without our 150 volunteers, who have walked the dogs and cuddled kitties for 20 years. Our office volunteers are essential to the smooth running of the shelter. I can't forget our many foster parents who do the impossible of caring for and loving with all their heart and then letting go to the new family.

Our immense gratitude goes to Joanne Castles and her crew (staff and volunteers) at Sammie's Nifty Thrift Shop. Our new store opened at 535 Main Street, Grass Valley, on November 4th. Many people have come to visit and made purchases already. Every cent of profit goes to the animals. Many thanks to all of you who choose to donate your used and sometimes new items to us. Without you we would have nothing to sell. Getting

from the old store to the new was a huge job and Joanne and team managed to pull it off without missing a single day of business. If you've ever wondered who the real Wonder Woman is, her name is Joanne Castles. We love her. We thank her.

Sammie's Friends provides \$230,000 for the medical care of the shelter animals every year and another \$200,000 for our community veterinary program and spay/neuter program. Where does that money come from? As they say "Money doesn't grow on trees." It comes from the many donations our wonderful supporters make, the Thrift Store, grants, events, and estates. My oh my what on earth would we do without all you amazing people.

We are grateful to our veterinary community. I marvel every day at how fortunate we are to have so many exceptional veterinarians in such a small community. Our veterinarians have great minds, great skills and big hearts for the animals. They are truly a blessing for all of us (two and four legged, finned and feathered).

Sammie's Friends receives support from many of our local businesses in the form of money, supplies and time. We know that our local businesses get asked repeatedly by many non-profits. We also know that with power outages our local businesses have had their own problems, but they keep on giving. Many thanks for being there for us in so many ways.

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Sammie "Our Inspiration"

### Sammies' Friends Accomplishments:

- \* Reduced euthanasia rate from 68% to less than 1%
- \* In 2018 we spayed/neutered 2,022 community animals and 1,524 shelter animals.
- \* More than 28,000 animals saved since 2001.

Visit us at [www.SammiesFriends.org](http://www.SammiesFriends.org)



## Two Perfect Store Kitties

When we opened the thrift store back in March of 2013, we thought that having a “Store Kitty” would be a good idea. We asked Janis Linfield to recommend a cat from Sammie’s Kitty Kove and she brought us Patches. Patches was about 8 years old when she was brought into the shelter after her owner passed away. We weren’t sure how it was going to work out and if Patches would feel at home and interact with customers.

Well, from Day 1 Patches was right at home. She loved all employees, volunteers and customers; and they in return loved her! She was so comfortable there that we brought in other cats that would be adopted out when the perfect forever home was found. Several cats came, stayed for a while and then would go to their forever home! Patches accepted and loved every cat that came and went. She was the perfect Store Kitty!

THEN, in 2018 Aurora came as our next foster kitty. She came to the shelter from a hoarding situation and was the last cat found in a mobile home with 107 other cats! She was hiding in the walls. Well the friendship that bonded between Patches and Aurora was a special one. They instantly loved each other, slept together, groomed each other and you could just tell that there was something special between them.

Because of that, we decided that Aurora would also become a permanent store kitty and they would live out their lives together! Today Patches is around 14 or 15 years old. She has definitely slowed down and you can tell the years are starting to take a toll on her, but Aurora is by her side and that keeps a sparkle in Patches eye! We were so lucky to find the Two Perfect Store Kitties!

## Nifty’s Moved!

On November 4, 2019 Nifty’s opened its doors in its new location at 535 E. Main Street (just down the street from its original location).

In August of 2019 we secured and signed a lease to take over the old “Walker’s Office Supply” building at 535 E. Main Street. We received keys to the new location on September 15th and had 45 days to begin improvements: dressing rooms, office, utility sink (thank you Mike Fondiller and his crew of “monkees”), clean, set up and stock shelving in order to open on November 4th. This sounds much simpler and easier than it was!



Long story short: On Saturday, November 2nd we had our monthly half-off sale at 627 E. Main Street, closed the doors at 5:00 PM and worked like mad-men/women Saturday evening and all-day Sunday to move and set up everything needed to open doors Monday morning at 10:00 AM in our new location. It was grueling but we did it and it was worth every minute of stress, exhaustion, and lack of sleep!

We just finished our third week of being open and sales have been phenomenal. The public has reacted with great enthusiasm and love the larger, more open retail space, better parking and easier donation drop off location! Employees and volunteers love it because it is all on one level (no carrying heavy boxes up and down stairs all day), policing the parking lot, and having to move furniture outside to display and back in at the end of each day).

Naturally the rent is much higher. We need to increase sales by \$250/day to cover the extra rent in order to continue to make the monthly profit we did at the old location. We are doing better than that and are very optimistic that this will continue to be the trend.

Thank you volunteers and employees who helped with the move in any way and to all of you who come in the store and support us. It is such a fun place to work, volunteer and shop!





## Mary Serpa, the Purrfect Volunteer!

Volunteering at Sammie's Friends started 3-4 years ago when Mary's cat passed over the rainbow bridge. Not ready to commit to adopt again and needing to find somewhere to intern as part of her interest in becoming a vet tech, she saw an appeal from The Union for cat volunteers after a trailer of 108 cats arrived at the shelter, inundating the shelter with an overload of cats. And so, her journey began . . .



Since we couldn't get a picture of Mary Serpa, here's her substitute, Mary, the cat.

Mary spent 30 years in customer and account services with UPS where she built strong, long-standing relationships for the organization. After retiring and relocating to Nevada County, where she used to visit as a child, Mary continues to exercise her great customer service skills in so many ways in support of cats and kittens.

After spending a year volunteering, which resulted in a cat adoption of her cat, Hidey Haiku, she was approached to help coordinate kitten fosters during (what we all know as) KITTEN SEASON. "I was told it would just be a few hours a week. Well...it was more than that but mostly because I insist on saying hello to every cat when I walk through the shelter doors." Mary has been coordinating kitten fosters for two years, organizing all files, outreaching to potential and current fosters, as well as keeping up with the crazy number of kittens that come through our doors during a very busy kitten season. "Our fosters are amazing. They are the most giving and caring people who go to great lengths to help."

Mary knows that she is making a difference in reducing the number of cats reproducing. And she adds, "I just love those darn babies."

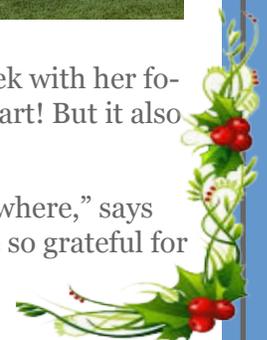
## Kate Frame, Take Home Some Love

Kate Frame has the perfect slogan for the next Sammie's Friends bumper sticker or t-shirt, Take Home Some Love. That's literally what it means to Kate when someone adopts a dog from the shelter. "What's better than taking home some love?"

A 17-year Nevada County resident, Kate retired recently from Newman's Own, who donates 100% of profits to charity. So, she is no stranger to being part of the giving world. However, getting started at the shelter wasn't so easy. "At first, I just couldn't do it; I would just cry," said Kate. But Kate will also tell you that she waited too long to start. "Volunteering gives me the full the range of emotions but it's worth it knowing it's helping to get them adopted."

Kate has been volunteering her time for two years and sometimes up to five days a week with her focus on the dogs. "My favorite thing is to take dogs out on field trips; it lights up my heart! But it also gives the dogs a chance to be normal and come out of their shell," she adds.

"When I hear people say they don't have time to volunteer, I tell them, just start somewhere," says Kate. "I'm all about the action for the dogs; they deserve it!" We agree Kate and we're so grateful for the love and care you give to all of our dogs.



## Wendy the Wonder Kitten!

Edie, volunteer and foster extraordinaire, is no stranger to kittens. Since starting back in 2010, she has fostered over 350 kittens! But when you bring up Wendy, a kitten she fostered back in 2011, it brings tears to her eyes.



*Wendy having acupuncture*

“Wendy was a very special kitten,” shared Edie. Wendy came to Edie with her mama and three siblings and it was clear from the get-go that something was not quite right with little Wendy. After a few vet visits, it was determined that Wendy had Spina Bifida and Manx Syndrome. A special vet visit for acupuncture didn’t help, unfortunately, and her back legs were paralyzed.

So, what’s life like for a cat with Spina Bifida? Well for Wendy, no different from her siblings as far as she could tell. Although her hind legs didn’t work, she would climb and play.

“She was just a really spunky kitten,” says Edie. Mama cat helped Wendy express her bowel and bladder in the beginning but as she got older, Edie had to take over in helping Wendy.

Knowing that Wendy had a tough road ahead, Edie took to researching the best place for Wendy to live and hit the jackpot. Edie found Mt. Index Creek Rescue and Sanctuary in Washington, which focuses on Manx cats and German Shepherds. Wendy lived at the sanctuary for six years until she passed away in 2017. Anywhere, else, Wendy may have been euthanized or deemed unadoptable. But Edie knew that this spunky and loving cat deserved the best life . . . and that she did.



## THE BEAUTIFUL BELLA

In 2004 Bella was found in the streets, nearly a year old, with very bad mange, as you can see in picture #1. She also had a thyroid problem and weepy goopy eyes. She was scared to death. Poor Bella, seeing her was heart breaking. A wonderful person named Laura was willing to foster Bella until she got better.



*2 Bella after treatment*

With the support of Sammie’s Friends, Bella received medical care from Dr. Avery at For The Love of Pets, and in a few months Bella looked beautiful, as in picture #2. Eventually Laura adopted Bella and has given her a long happy life.

Bella is now an old doggie lady at 16 years old (picture # 3). She is doing pretty well. Over the years Bella has gained confidence and isn’t afraid of everything anymore. She was initially very afraid of rain and of men. She has overcome her fears and loves her human Papa and brother as well as her Mama and sister. She has lived with other dogs over the years and enjoys them.

This poor dog came to us in the saddest most pathetic state and for many years has been a happy and glorious creature loved by many. Many thanks to Laura and her family and to Carrie Moore of Sacramento Independent Animal Rescuers for saving her from the streets. Finding dogs like Bella is so sad and seeing them blossom is exquisite: thanks for saving them. Bella we wish you the best and hope you live a lot longer.



*1 Bella when found*



*3 Bella now, at 16 y/o*

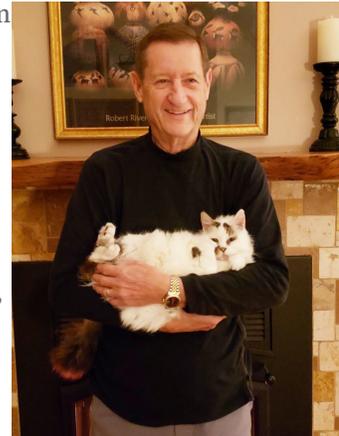
### Mike Fondiller

Mike has been a valuable volunteer for Sammie's Friends for many years dating from the time we were setting up to run the Animal Shelter. He has done many projects for us including painting the interior of the Shelter, organizing a group of retired men who are handy with tools and familiar with construction to build the deck on the backside of the Kitty Kove. Mike also assisted in setting up the interior of the Kitty Kove and made the window seats for the kitties in Room 1 and Room 2.

He and his band of handy men worked tirelessly in setting up the original Thrift Store and, recently, constructed the dressing rooms and office in the new Thrift Store. These are huge contributions to our organization. As well, Mike and his wife, Janis Linfield, have been generous donors to our community and shelter veterinary care programs. Their dedication to the mission and values of Sammie's Friends has been fantastic.

Mike has been a long-time resident of Nevada County and has involved himself in other volunteer activities. For a long time, he was heavily involved in the firewood for seniors program. He led a team of volunteers who harvested suitable wood stock, transported it to a local area where the wood was split into firewood sized pieces, and then delivered it to seniors. What a fantastic program.

We are glad that such civic minded individuals like Mike and Janis support our local non-profits, particularly Sammie's Friends. THANK YOU MIKE!



Mike and his cat Rocky



# THANK YOU

to these awesome local breweries for participating in Octobers Pitbull Awareness month. Each brewery designated one of their beers as a Pitty Pint for one weekend and helped raise \$450! Cheers Friends!

All funds raised benefited our shelter animals.

### “THE DEDICATEDEST”

Do you know these two - Ruth Rasmussen and Debbie Freele? They have seen it all and done it all. These two were hired at the shelter long before Sammie's Friends operated the shelter. Ruth joined the county shelter staff in January of 2002 at a time when it was very much a kill shelter. Debbie started as a dog walking volunteer in 2003 and became an employee in 2004. We sat down for a visit to reminisce about how things have been over the past nearly twenty years.

Debbie had been a hairdresser for 20 years and was ready for a change (more than a new hair do). It is the good fortune of many of the shelter staff to have a hairdresser at the shelter. Debbie gives many staff members haircuts. Everyone is so busy that it is really helpful to have our talented Debbie right there.

Ruth had worked as a preschool teacher and manager of a pet food store. She knew a lot about nutrition and thought that would be helpful in working with the animals. Animals in many ways are like young children, so her preschool training was useful training.

Since these two started at the shelter they have seen upwards of 35,000 animals. I asked them to reminisce about some of their favorites. Debbie loved a pitbull named Thor. Thor was not getting adopted and the shelter manager said he was going to be put down. Debbie pleaded for his life. The shelter manager said he'd give her 10 days. Soon thereafter an older couple came in who lived in a trailer park. Debbie begged them to take him and they did. It turns out they were all a perfect match for each other and all the trailer park dwellers loved Thor too. For many years the adopters would bring Thor by to see Debbie. Debbie says "these are the stories that make all the hard work worthwhile."

Ruth once drove a Bernese Mountain dog all the way to Wharton, Texas. This dog had gotten into trouble with his owner and it "took a village" to save him. Joyce, the cat lady, started the ball rolling as she knew how much Ruth loved him. Cheryl contacted the Sheriff's office to see if they would let him go if we could find a sanctuary where he could live the rest of his life. Dawn Allmandinger found that sanctuary. Cheryl made the arrangements and Ruth drove that dog 1,959 miles to save this life. She had to drive another 1,959 to get back to Grass Valley. That's amazing and that's dedication!

Things were pretty rough when they joined the shelter in the early 2000's under county management. A lot has changed. Ruth and Debbie said the day they learned that Sammie's Friends was going to run the shelter there was a double rainbow in the sky and they knew that was a good omen. On July 1, 2010 Ruth and Debbie became Sammie's Friends employees and they are very happy about that. So much has changed. Neither have had to worry for many years about coming to work and finding their favorite animal had been euthanized.

Sammie's Friends is lucky to have them with all of their experience and wisdom gained over the years. These two women never lose their cool and lovingly deal with each and every animal that crosses their paths. Thank you for a job well done for many years.



**Ruth, with Sarah the cat, who came to us with such an infected eye that it had to be removed.**

**Debbie, with Bean, the dog, who came to us from an Animal Control impound**

### Stacy Hart

My journey at Sammie's began over six years ago. I was newly retired from owning a Travel Agency and found myself a little restless and eager to start a new adventure. My dog Andy, who was my best friend and constant companion of 13 years, passed away around the same time. I wasn't ready to adopt another dog but I missed that animal spirit so much that I decided to volunteer at the shelter as a dog walker. I loved it and as I learned more about Sammie's Friends and met some of the wonderful and dedicated people who support it, I became passionate about their cause. I have always been an animal advocate so it was a good fit for me.



After about a year of volunteering I heard a rumor that they might be opening a thrift store to raise funds for the shelter. By that time I was hooked so I volunteered to help there too. I still remember my first day at the store. All the wonderful people I met, the joy of a shared goal and the crazy fun we had lit a fire in me and I knew I was going to be involved for a long time. I became an employee at the store after volunteering for six months and was offered the manager position a year later.

I had found my new adventure.

I've been asked what is the most difficult part of my job and I find it hard to answer. Of course it can get stressful but when you love what you do and why you do it it really isn't work. The employees and volunteers are amazing and hardworking which certainly makes my job easier. Getting to know our customers and generous donors has been great. Sometimes I feel like it's party time here at the store. We work at keeping it a fun shopping experience and customers say they love the positive energy here.

Now we're into a brand new store and Sammie's Nifty Thrift Part 2. Opening the new store was challenging but somehow we pulled it off and the feedback has been terrific. The feeling of being a part of the future of Sammie's Friends is very rewarding.

Every cloud has a silver lining. Losing my dog Andy was hard but it led me to Sammie's and that was a blessing for sure.

## Local Veterinarian Offers Alternative To Western Medicine



Dr. Mace Dekker is the Medical Director at Grass Valley Veterinary Hospital. Originally from the Netherlands he moved to the United States in 1993. He has been practicing veterinary medicine for about 22 years. Dr. Dekker attended veterinary medical school at Washington State University. He was required to complete a “Senior Project”. He had a particular interest in alternative medicine. After reviewing the research he determined that acupuncture stood out among the options. Upon graduation he not only obtained his degree in veterinary medicine, but also a certificate from the “International Veterinary Acupuncture Society”.

Dr. Dekker currently implements acupuncture in his practice as a compliment to Western Medicine. According to Dr. Dekker acupuncture can be beneficial mainly for musculoskeletal pain, such as arthritis or post operative pain management. It also has been found effective in treating allergic dermatitis in rare instances.. As a general rule he does not use it as a stand alone treatment, rather as a complimentary treatment when Western Medicine is not enough.

Dr. Dekker welcomes all into the practice that are seeking acupuncture treatments for their pets. You do not have to be using Grass Veterinary Hospital as your primary vet.

One really special story that stands out to Dr. Dekker (although he says there are many) is the story of Oscar. Oscar was a dog that was brought into the clinic to be euthanized. He was suffering from a severe back problem and had exhausted all treatments (Western Medicine). He had intractable pain and was suffering terribly. Dr. Dekker offered to try acupuncture before putting him to sleep. The owner agreed. Once Dr. Dekker initiated the treatment Oscar fell asleep and slept over an hour. Once he woke up, he stood up and never looked back. It gave him a new lease on life. Although not every case is that dramatic, acupuncture can certainly have very positive benefits. According to Dr. Dekker there is about a 60-70% success rate, and it is safe and without side effects. It is another option for us pet parents to add to our arsenal of medical treatments.

On a final note Dr. Dekker will be taking a 6 month sabbatical leaving for Europe in 2 months. His journey begins in Spain on the Camino Walk. He will return to practice in June of 2020.



Sammie’s Friends would like to thank all of the veterinarians in the community for supporting “our” organization. Without you our mission could not be completed. We appreciate each and every one of you. A special thank you to Brunswick Veterinary Hospital for the years of care you provided to Sammie’s Friends animals, you will be missed.

### Use Your eScrip!

SPD participates in the eScrip program and makes a 3% contribution to Sammie’s Friends every time you shop there if you are enrolled and participate in the program. SPD does this to generously support non-profits in our community and Sammie’s Friends is so appreciative as it raises close to **\$1,400 every month** for them! There is **ABSOLUTELY NO CHARGE** to you.



Sammie’s Friends has over 1,500 eScrip members (people who have signed up to support this program) yet **ONLY 21%** participate. To participate, all you have to do is have the cashier scan your Community Member card OR ask them to enter the phone number you signed up with – **YOU DON’T EVEN HAVE TO CARRY YOUR CARD IF YOU’VE LOST IT**). Just imagine how much money Sammie’s Friends would raise with 100% participation! This is such a no-brainer, easy way for you to help raise money to support and care for all the unwanted animals that Sammie’s takes in. The 3% contribution is donated to Sammie’s Friends in your name and you can see just how much of a difference you make each month.

I’m sure many of you have signed up in the past and forgotten you ever did. To check out whether or not you are signed up, the next time you shop at SPD ask the cashier to enter your phone number (try a couple numbers if you don’t remember which one you signed up with). If you are signed up, then your account will come up and you will be making a 3% contribution to Sammie’s Friends on that purchase! If you aren’t signed up, then email me at [joannecastles@gmail.com](mailto:joannecastles@gmail.com) and I’ll register you!

Thank you everyone who has been participating and thank you in advance to those that are about to begin making contributions in their name to Sammie’s Friends by participating in the eScrip program when shopping at SPD!

YES, I want to make a difference in the lives of the animals in Nevada County! Sammie's Friends is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization that was created to raise veterinary funds for the animals at the Nevada County Animal Shelter and other disadvantaged animals in our county. Our work is made possible by the generous donations of individuals like you. All donations, big and small, are greatly appreciated. Checks may be submitted to the address below. Please visit our website [www.SammiesFriends.org](http://www.SammiesFriends.org) to donate by credit card or text SAMMIE to 41444 for a link to our donation form. Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, ST, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**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*



*Sammie's Friends*

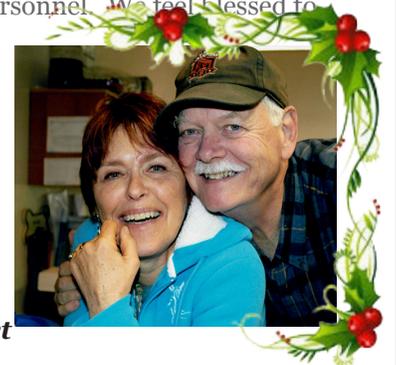
**Sammie's Friends**

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We are grateful to our Animal Control partners, who work hard at difficult jobs, ensuring that the animals in this community are treated well. We are appreciative of the good relationship we have been able to establish with county personnel. We feel blessed to have several other animal rescues in this community who work every single day to help the animals. Thank you!

It really does "Take A Village". We love the village and couldn't do what we do without every single one of you. Working together we have made a huge difference for the animals in Nevada County. Sammie's Friends has saved the lives of 28,000 animals. The other animal rescues have saved many animals as well. Wow!



**Love, Cheryl & Curt**

**FA-LA-LA-LA FOSTERING FOR THE HOLIDAYS!**

The holidays are a time for togetherness and our shelter animals would love to celebrate with you! Open your home this holiday season and foster a shelter animal. Whether it's for one-night, consecutive nights, or long-term, fostering provides these animals the opportunity to be part of a home environment and time away from their kennel.

**VOLUNTEER WITH US!**

- Cat Care
- Foster Homes
- Animal Transportation
- Office Helpers
- Dog Walkers
- Kennel Assistants
- Thrift Shop
- AND MORE!

More Info...  
[www.SammiesFriends.org](http://www.SammiesFriends.org)

Take photos and video and help promote our animals for adoption to help get all our animals into loving homes for the holidays. To reach the shelter, please contact us at (530) 471-5041 or visit [www.sammiesfriends.org](http://www.sammiesfriends.org) to complete the online Pre-Foster Questionnaire.

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)

Sammie's Friends is a 501(c)(3) 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.