



The Poop Scoop

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

Volume VIII, Issue I

Spring 2012

Facts About Us & the Work We've Done:

- During Sammie's Friends' first year of managing the Animal Shelter, 2000 animals have been placed.
- Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter has a euthanasia rate of just under one percent.
- In the 11 years since Cheryl Wicks went to the Shelter, over 8000 animals have received veterinary care from Sammie's Friends.
- In 2011 Sammie's Friends has spay/neutered over 700 feral cats in the community.

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It Truly Takes a Village — A Day at Sammie's Friends

What the heck is it that goes on at Sammie's Friends Shelter that keeps those people hoppin' all day long every day.

Top of the morning - Pick up the trustees at Wayne Brown to clean the dog kennels, do laundry, dishes, clean up after the livestock, feed the animals and whatever else is needed.

Our cats head down to Auburn every Tuesday and Wednesday morning to be spayed and neutered.

We also send cats from the public and lots of feral cats. There have been as many as 50 cats going down in one day. All of this is coordinated by a volunteer. Staff is busy vaccinating cats before they go. All of these cats come back at the end of the day and if they are owned cats the owners pick them up after being given instructions on how to care for them. The shelter kitties must be placed back in their kennels provided litter boxes, bedding, food and water. This activity begins at 8AM and sometimes finishes up as late at 7PM.

Dogs head over to AnimalSave on Thursdays to be spayed/neutered. There is a mad rush to get those dogs walked and over to AnimalSave by 8:30AM. Scheduling this is madness. Of course AS wants to know who they are spaying/neutering and what size the animal is. We try our best but some-



"These guys are so busy, I get dizzy just watching them!"

times animals get redeemed that we didn't think would. Sometimes we get a new dog at the last minute. It's a never ending juggling act. Usually several dogs go to other vets as well during the week for spay/neuter, as AnimalSave can't always keep up with the number we have.

There are about 2,000 shelter animals to be vaccinated in a year. Many of them get more than one vaccination.

Puppies and kittens get 3 each. The adult cats get 1 or 2 and the adult dogs get 2 or 3. That comes to maybe 5,000 vaccines that the staff gives every year.

Blood gets drawn from all the dogs to see if they have heartworm. That's another 800-900 animals. From time to time tests are given to determine if a sick puppy has parvo or a sick cat has panleukopenia.

Morning medications have to be given as early as possible. Sometimes there are many animals on medication

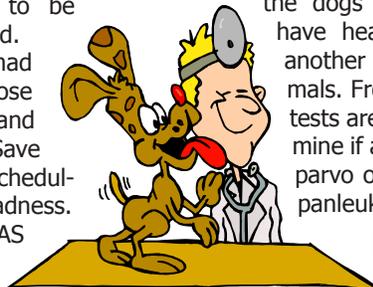
and sometimes not so many. This requires a variety of drops, pills, ointments and, in the case of one cat, making tea for her every day. Yes tea. All these medications must be administered in the evening again. Lest you think they all take their meds willingly, they do not. There are also animals that get dehydrated and need sub-q fluids. Sometimes easy but not always. There are times animals need to be force fed. It is dangerous for cats to go without eating for too many days. They get fatty liver disease and then you have big trouble.

Nearly every day some animal has to be driven to a veterinarian for an illness or an injury. We also have two vets visit us at the shelter every week.

Cat volunteers come to clean the cat kennels around 8:30AM to 9:00AM. This can take 2 to 3 hours. The cats get some attention as they clean. The dog walkers come about the same time and walk every single dog and carry the puppies to the puppy pen so they do not get any diseases walking on the grounds.

Next comes the dog behaviorist who works with the dogs every morning for about three hours to socialize them and make them more adoptable. Cat evaluators do their work to help place a cat in the right home where the cat and the people will be happy.

The feral cat colony, the outside enclosure and any livestock must be attended to twice a day. Sometimes there is wrestling with goats, ostriches, llamas,



It Truly Takes a Village — A Day at Sammie's Friends (cont)

horses, emus to get them loaded into a trailer to leave or to medicate them. Wow! This can be oh so fun. There are also ducks, geese, peacocks, turkeys, chickens to tend to.

All of the above gets accomplished with the very lean staff and many helpful volunteers. About 20 volunteers are utilized every single day. Our little shelter can almost not handle all this activity in such a small space.

While all of this is going on the phones are ringing non stop, many days with people who have lost their pets and want medical help for their pets and a myriad of other problems they are having with their pets. I get distressed when someone says "Don't you guys answer your phones?" I do

know that we miss some calls but when that's happening it's because everything is going faster than we can keep up with. Also there is often an endless stream of people at the counter wanting to get vouchers for spay/neuter, turning in animals they have found, dropping off food and other things, suppliers and county folks needing help with various things.

Then the afternoon starts with adoptions and trying to help folks get the right cat or dog for their family. We do a lot of counseling and screening for each animal. There is endless paperwork checking in and checking back out 2,000 animals a year and keeping track of their medical records.

All the animals must go up on facebook and petfinder so they can be seen. Also "For Pet's Sake" gets filmed about once a month on Thursdays and the Union comes for pictures of the animals that get displayed in the paper.

Staff checks every animal at the end of the day to ensure they receive meds, have water and extra food if they are skinny or a young animal or on a special diet.

Every day brings a surprise like a litter of kittens or puppies or some horses or one week six rats or sometimes there is a hoarder and we get 40 animals in one day to set up kennels (sometimes

it's dream up kennels) and get them fed and cared for. Sometimes animals come to us in such bad shape they need to go directly to the vet.

Some need to go to foster homes because they are too young to spay/neuter, they are injured or ill or old. At a high point we had 100 animals in the shelter to tend to and another 100 in foster homes. As you can imagine trying to find all of those foster homes and then keeping up with all the animals in the homes is a daunting task.

Running the shelter is a little like driving an ambulance, you must go fast and pay attention to detail because somebody's life may depend on it. You must be ready to turn on a dime at any moment because amongst the everyday work there are endless surprises.

In addition there are people making posters, writing to the paper, going on the air, decorating kennels, calling rescues and wheeling and dealing to trade animals with other rescues and whatever else can be dreamed up to get our animals adopted. Curt has driven two different dogs to Canada to give them a chance. We work with transports and put animals on airplanes to get them new homes. Of course they can't drive themselves to the airport.

Signs need to be made for the kennels to communicate to the dog walkers and kitty cuddlers necessary information about the care of the animal in that kennel. Paperwork must be kept in order so that the paperwork in the box in the office corresponds to the kennel the animal is in.

While all this goes on with 3 1/2 staff and about 20 volunteers every single day Curt toils away with all of the accounting, reporting and maintenance that is required. There is a tremendous amount of accounting and reporting to the county to fulfill our contract. He also does our taxes to keep the IRS happy. And of course there is payroll. Last year Sammie's Friends received money from about 16 different foundations. It is quite an undertaking to write a grant in order to receive the money. These foun-

dations want to know what we do with the money so Curt writes reports to them (remember there are 16 of them) to let them know what we are doing.

These reports are quite extensive. There is also the daily accounting of animals coming and going and the monies associated with that. There are annual reports to write and the creation of our collateral (i.e. brochures, thank you cards, donation cans, "Poop Scoop" and creating and supplying forms). Curt keeps track of the nearly 4,000 invoices that come across his desk every year for spay/neuter and medical care of both shelter and community animals. Some volunteers assist with this monumental task but the brunt of it rides on Curt's broad shoulders.

There are endless maintenance issues to attend to (i.e something is leaking, rigging a shelter for a pony or a goat because it's going to rain or worse). Curt fixes anything that's broken (i.e. kennel doors, locks, leaking dish washer, etc.). There is also the building of new structures such as the cat enclosure and the shed to store things in. Products have to be inventoried and ordered in order to feed the animals and keep the place clean.

Twice a month Curt goes to Reno at 5:30AM to pick up food for the animals in our community that would otherwise not have anything decent to eat. Once a month that food gets taken to the communities of North San Juan and Washington.

The saying "it takes a village" couldn't be used more appropriately than here. There is a very small staff of 4 1/2 people. There are more than 100 volunteers that help every week at the shelter which adds the equivalent of another 7 1/2 people. There are at least 50 people who provide foster homes. There are hundreds who donate money and others who donate food, blankets and towels. Wow! "It takes a village!"

Love, Cheryl



Sammie's Pit Stop Nearing Completion

Sammie's Pit Stop is close to being finished. This is a doggie rehab center named after the famous "Sammie." This will be a place where our Dog Behaviorist, Beverley Ward, can take doggies to work with them while they are becoming socialized to other dogs and learning new behaviors so that they will be better citizens in our community and we can have an even more successful adoption program.

Many shelter dogs have not had the most stable home. They have bounced from one place to another. They often do not have very good manners and don't

know how to get along with other dogs. Since Beverley has been working with the shelter dogs nearly every dog can be adopted into a home with other dogs. This is so helpful because many people who want to adopt a dog already have a dog and are looking for a doggie friend for the dog they have al-



ready. Beverley is also available to work with dogs belonging to private clients. Beverley can be reached at 530-575-6571.

Sammie "the Shar-pei" was a very special dog belonging to Sammie's Friends Co-Founders, Cheryl Wicks and Curt Romander. He is the inspiration for the many things that have been done at the shelter and in the community to improve the lives of the animals in Nevada County. He was an extraordinary dog and shall never be forgotten. His picture hangs in the shelter as an inspiration to us.

Did You Know...

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

You can get vouchers from Sammie's Friends.

- \$60 for female dogs
- \$40 for male dogs
- \$30 for female cats
- \$15 for male cats

There are two low cost clinics you can use:

*Animal Spay and Neuter Clinic:
530-889-8800*

*AnimalSave:
530-477-1706*

If you need additional financial support you can call:

• For pitbulls and chihuahuas:
*Kathleen at Pound Puppy Rescue
530-274-8079*

• For cats and other breeds of dogs
Cheryl at Sammie's Friends 530-471-5041

“Teamwork allows common people to attain uncommon results.”
~ Anonymous

We Are Making Headway on Our Storage Shed

So many wonderful people support and help Sammie's Friends. It is quite amazing. Jennifer Craigs and Rita Hecoeks (long term volunteer) have donated the funds to build this little shed to put our kennels and cages in so that they are not laying all over the place. The cages and crates got misplaced when we used their previous storage area to build the outside cat enclosure. We are grateful to Jennifer and Rita for being so generous. Mike, a volunteer was

offering his services to build the shed.

Everything was going along well until Mike misstepped and fell off the ladder and seriously

injured his shoulder. Mike will need about three months to recover. That put the building on hold. Then it was about to rain and the roof was not yet on. We had the good fortune to have a Wayne Brown trustee who is a carpenter coming to Sammie's Friends and he was able to finish the roof. The rest is waiting for Mike when he recovers. Many thanks to all. "It takes a village."



Wise Words from Beverley

Balance Is Key ...doggie tips

One of the things that I find very frustrating is that people wait so long before they do something about unwanted dog behaviors.

Thank you for rescuing, adopting, finding and loving a dog in need. I cannot tell you how many calls I receive from pet owners that are having problems...that are 10 months, 2 years or 6 years in the making. I truly believe that a lot of bad dog behavior is learned and can be mitigated easily, if nipped in the bud. Puppy teeth chewing on your finger may seem cute at 4 months old....not at 18 months old. Jumping up on people at 20 pounds may seem cuddly & cute....not at 80 pounds. Need I go on? Anytime your dog is exhibiting a behavior, that would be obnoxious at a later age/or weight, it should be addressed immediately.

E-mail me at beverley@sammiesfriends.org and I would be happy to give you some tips.



Oh my! I'd better email Beverley!

I'm Jean Helms, a cat volunteer and I am 88 years old; I don't know what that is in cat years, but it's a lot.

After I retired as an E.R. nurse from Marin General and moved to Alta Sierra, I was a volunteer for Hospice of the Foothills.

Needing a change, I made an appointment with Cheryl at the animal shelter about 10 years ago and she had recently began the volunteer program. I

Volunteer Spotlight

arrived dressed for an interview, but Cheryl needed volunteers on the spot.

She put me to work and told me to wear different shoes. Conditions were not so good back then. It was very scary when empty cat cages meant some of the cats had been euthanized. Now when I arrive at Sammie's Friends, empty cages mean kittens and adult cats have been adopted. Hooray!



“Volunteers are love in motion!” ~ Author Unknown

Hi, I'm Kali. I raise money for Sammie's Friends by having lemonade stands and selling stuff. I love animals so much. That's why I am learning how to do vaccines and other vet-like things. I also love horses, a ton. I have my own with two cats I ride every day and have so much fun doing it. I love all the dogs and cats at the shelter. Even though I'm allergic to animals, I don't let that get in my way. I also foster and bottle feed kittens. I wish everyone would spay and neuter their pets so there would not be so many homeless animals.



Some day I want to have my own rescue and call it Kali's Kritters.

Pitbull Spay/Neuter Campaign — Winners All Around!

The winner of the \$250 in the latest pitbull campaign is Chad Searls and his beloved dog Jacob.

The last campaign was titled "Don't be a Turkey Spay/Neuter Your Pitbull" from November 7 to 12. Anyone who got their pitbull s/n during that time had their name put in a hat and the opportunity to win \$250. Sammie's Friends and Pound Puppy Rescue paid for the spays/neuters. Every single vet in Nevada County agreed to do the spays/neuters at a ridiculously low



Cheryl Wicks, Chad Searls, Dr. Denny Nolet and Jacob the Pit

price. Many thanks to them and to Kathleen at Pound Puppy Rescue and to the pittie dogs and owners.

Last year Sammie's Friends sponsored three campaigns "Don't Be a Food Spay/Neuter Your Pitbull" starting on April Fool's Day. "Be a Patriotic American Spay/Neuter Your Pitbull" for the Fourth of July holiday and "Don't be a Turkey Spay/Neuter Your Pitbull" at Thanksgiving. Each campaign ran for 5 days and we were able to spay/neuter 116 pitbulls. Good job everybody, especially the dogs!

Knickers Gets a New Lease on Life

Knickers and eleven other horses were pulled from a property on Banner Lava Cap (some of you might remember the story from our last issue). The horses were living in horrible conditions, 4-5 feet of mud, with shelters that were so short the horses couldn't



get under them. The pens were tiny, 10x10's and 12x12's, the property was set in the dark, damp trees far away from sun and warmth. They were basically living in a barbed wire prison, so hungry that they started eating the wood shavings we put down when we came to do the rescue.

Knickers was probably once a beautiful Arabian stallion, with amazing bloodlines. Years in his prison landed him skinny and undersocialized. He was pulled from the property and brought to my home where we set about getting him vetted (teeth, feet and a vet check) and his weight back on. We found out that he had almost no teeth, so started feeding him a mash twice a day. Soon Knickers had his weight back on and had galloped full speed into my heart. Knickers has such a gentle eye and LOVES his human companions.

We placed Knickers in a new foster home. I got a call from her in December saying that she was planning on mov-



ing. I went into a panic, worrying: who is going to take a 28-year-old stallion that needs mash twice a day? Luckily, after much emailing and talking on the phone, an amazing sanctuary in Arizona agreed to take him.

Knickers is now bound for Arizona, the perfect climate for him as the damp weather takes its toll on his lungs. I am



proud to have been a part of Sammie's Friends, a place that doesn't give up on animals because they are "old." Knickers is now living life in the sun and warmth, something he lived without for more than 10 years. He can run and play and get all the love and affection he can stand. Thank you to everyone who's supported our Horse Fund. We still have several horses available for adoption, contact the shelter if you are interested in learning more: (530) 471-5041.

Jedi and Toby — More Than Meets the Eye!

Jedi is a nice little border collie/lab who came to the shelter when his owner could no longer care for him. We all loved Jedi. He had the black dog problem and wasn't getting adopted.

There have been studies done that indicate that black dogs have a harder time getting adopted. Jedi liked most people but not all, so he would sometimes bark at folks which didn't add to the charm factor necessary to get adopted. After



several months of seeing poor Jedi sit in his kennel we asked our friend, Lisa E. at the Well Balanced Dog Farm in Oregon to take Jedi in. Imagine living on a dog farm if you're a dog. Always the opportunity to play and interact. Jedi is doing well and we're grateful to Lisa and her dog farm doggies.

Precious Toby is a kitty that resided at Sammie's Friends for a very long time because of his shyness. He would hide and so always got overlooked by those coming to adopt.

Toby came to us as a stray kitty and, as always with stray kitties, we had no idea of his background and why he was so shy. It could have just been his nature or he could have been badly scared or traumatized at some time in his life.

First we had Toby in a kennel in general population. He hid under his bedding. We moved him to the conference room with a couple of other kitties. He hid

behind the desk. We moved him to the outside cat enclosure. He hid in the igloos or on the top shelf. We moved him back into one of the larger floor kennels in general population. He found his friend Tommy there who seemed to be a good influence on him. He got braver and came out where people could see him. Then one day it was Toby's turn and a wonderful person adopted him. Reports are that he's doing well.

Way to go Toby! We love you.



Feline Upper Respiratory Infection

By: Susan Smith, D.V.M. — Brighton Greens Veterinary Hospital



Dr. Susan Smith

(Hey, that's a dog, not a cat, you say? Well, the finicky feline absolutely refused this photo opp, so this handsome pooch happily stepped in to save the day.)

Feline Upper Respiratory Infections (URIs) are caused by several different viruses and bacteria. These are highly contagious diseases spread through the air or by touch, just like the human cold. They most commonly occur in kittens, especially in stressful conditions such as with feral cats trying to make a living on their own outside and in multicat situations like the shelter.

Most URI cases are minor with some sneezing and runny eyes. Healthy unstressed cats and kittens can recover on their own. But URIs can be more serious with severe conjunctivitis, nasal congestion, fever,

oral ulcers, dehydration and loss of appetite. These cases need medical help in the form of antibiotics, eye medications, fluids and pain medications.

Most cats and kittens will recover fully and without long term consequences.

Occasionally we see cats that have a lifelong rhinitis (nasal infection) from a URI. Rarely permanent eye damage can occur from the infection. It is not uncommon for cats to have mild recurrences of their URI signs during times of stress, such as boarding.

The FVRCP vaccine helps protect against the URI organ-

isms feline Herpes, Calicivirus and some also protect against Chlamydia. Sammie's Friends Shelter tries to prevent outbreaks of URIs by immediately vaccinating and quarantining all newly arrived cats and kittens. Any symptomatic cat is moved to a separate isolation ward. Still, these cats and kittens are stressed by being in the shelter and going through the necessary spay/neuter before being adopted. It is a difficult situation that the Shelter, foster homes and local veterinarians have been dealing with the best we can. You can help by keeping your own cats neutered and vaccinated.

“Snowflakes melt alone — but together they can be traffic stoppers!” ~ Anonymous

Escrip Program Helps Sammie's Friends

YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE WITHOUT SPENDING A DIME!!!

Escrip is a program that merchants participate in to reward customer loyalty by contributing a percentage of their patron's purchases to a non-profit group. **SPD** joined Escrip (called the SPD Community Card) last August and is **generously donating back to Sammie's Friends 3% of the total purchases by registered shoppers.**

We immediately enrolled Sammie's Friends because it is such an easy way to raise money. We currently have over 650 registered supporters. Look what has been raised through December, 2011!

- Aug.: \$880
- Sept.: \$1,403
- Oct.: \$1,460

- Nov.: \$1,743
- Dec.: \$1,982

As you can see, this is an incredible program that has tremendous potential. Just imagine if you, your family and your friends participated!!! The potential is limitless! AND, it costs you nothing, and requires basically no work or time on your part! **It's easy! This is all you have to do:**

- Each time you check out your grocery purchases at SPD ask the checker to enter the phone number of Sammie's Friends (530-471-5041) to participate in the program. That's it!! Three percent of your purchase will be sent to Sammie's Friends.
- OR, you can be registered with your own phone

number. Just email (jcastles@sbcglobal.net) to be set up.

PLEASE participate in this program (and ask your family and friends too also). This can be a windfall for saving and helping the lives of abandoned and neglected animals in Nevada County. Tear out the box below and put it in your wallet next to your checkbook or credit card to remember using it at time of checkout!

Any questions, call Joanne at 274-9919; or email at jcastles@sbcglobal.net.

Joanne Castles

Help Sammie's Friends!

Use the SPD Community Card! (Escrip)

Ask the cashier to enter Sammie's Friends phone # to contribute 3% of your purchases!!!!

530-471-5041

Whatever Happened to Winky?

When "Winky" came to the shelter he was a stray kitten that had a foxtail lodged deep in his eye, but with the help of Sammie's Friends he was able to get the surgery that saved his life. The surgeon removed the damaged eye and the kitty healed very quickly. In 2005 I adopted "Winky" and changed his name to "Corona."



When he rescued me he was a one eyed, skinny, 9 month old kitty who quickly adapted to indoor life. His favorite pass times included EATING, chasing the family Jack Russel Terrier, and sleeping in the sun. Several months after he came to live with me he had

grown into an enormous 18lb critter. Now, seven years later he is the most cherished member of my family and doing great!! He has developed quite the quirky personality!! with bad habits such as meowing all the time incessantly (he's got

his own kitty vocabulary), stealing food from cabinets any chance he gets, and sleeping on my head every single night.

I am blessed to know the little guy and look forward to the rest of our time together because every day with him truly is a gift. I really couldn't imagine my life without that cat, he is my EVERYTHING. He is the one who has inspired me to go to school and get the job I have now working in a veterinary hospital!!

Thank you Sammie's Friends from the bottom of my heart!

Miranda Leach

Euthanized Labrador Retriever Comes Back to Life!

Back in 2001 and prior to Sammie's Friends and Cheryl Wicks, the Nevada County Animal Shelter was euthanizing dogs weekly. A beautiful black lab was surrendered by his owner for allegedly killing chickens. This sweet boy had no one to defend his innocence and was euthanized after being in the shelter only a week. He was placed in the freezer with other euthanized dogs piled on top of him. The following morning an animal control officer heard barking coming from the freezer! By some miracle our black beauty survived euthanasia and we named him Lazarus! Unbelievably Lazarus was slated to be euthanized again(!) but his doggie angels, Cheryl and Kathleen, stepped in and put a halt to that nonsense.



Lazarus was adopted to a family in the bay area where he lived for almost ten years. He lived amicably with two house cats which makes us believe he never killed any chickens. One of the house cats followed Lazarus everywhere, including following him on his morning

walk in the neighborhood! Unfortunately there was a divorce last year and Lazarus came back to us needing to find another "forever" home.

Even though he was now considered a senior dog we were able to find him a wonderful home where he lives across the street from the beach in Half Moon Bay. Our boy Lazarus is happily romping and playing at the beach every day and you'd never guess he is eleven years old!

Lazarus was meant to live a full and happy life giving unconditional love to the humans who cross his path.

*Kathleen O'Sullivan
Pound Puppy Rescue*

“Humans: No fur, no paws, no tail. They run away from mice. They never get enough sleep. How can you help but love such an absurd animal?.”
~ Anonymous Cat

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!

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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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