

Volume 1 Issue 3

American Pet Magazine™

CATS, DOGS, FERRETS, CHICKENS AND MORE

Inside:
KarpKatZ
Pet Memorials

Ms. Pineapple's
Playground:

- * Ask MissKitty
- * CharlieBear Woofs

FURRY FINDS:
Pampered Pet Essentials

Pet Celebrations

Photo by:
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'Harley'

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AP MAGAZINE™

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The Publishers Note



From The Desk of the Editor

WOW! A special thank you goes out to everyone who has joined American Pet Magazine's cause by helping be a voice for our non-human friends. This publication is for faithful pet owners, their pets and those that need our help.

Beautiful 'Harley', takes priority on the cover. Her mother, Dorothy Wills-Rafertry took this picture while she was honoring her county's colors. Harley is one of five Siberian Huskies, known as the FiveSibes™ and they are featured in Wills-Rafertry's: A FiveSibes™ Tale illustrated book series.

Come celebrate with us!

There are all kinds of PET holidays in the next 2 months. Our awesome writers have great information to share with you. Among them are National Dog Week, National Pet Memorial Day, National Pet Obesity Awareness Day, Responsible Dog Ownership Day, Adopt-a-Dog Month, and especially HALLOWEEN, where our pets love to sport their favorite costumes.

Stop by Ms. Pineapple's Playground for some great advice, Furry Finds product reviews and Around the H2O Bowl Events. Her new friend, Charlie Bear will be there to share about rescues and how you can make a difference. You may also like to check out our Best in Print. Inspiration in Words!

American Pet Magazine is a new resource to help you and your pet live safely and confidently. I encourage you to support the advertisers and contributors by passing along this complimentary copy. A percentage from every paid advertiser will be donated to no-kill shelters, rescues and events. Together, we'll help save lives, One pet at a time .. One day at a time .. One life at a time!! Your voice matters!

I tell everyone that it is because of my ultimate inspirations, my beloved felines and canines of past and present (not to forget a rabbit, a parakeet, fish & mice), that has made American Pet Magazine a reality. KarpKatZ created a picture memorial (pg 15) of most of them. I can't imagine life without any of them!

The staff, #GypsyPrince, #MissKitty & #PeanutButter all send Purrs. :-)
Thank you again and enjoy your reading time! #Meow #Woof

Join our Cause for Pets! Be a Voice with Us!

Suzin Karp

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VISIT Ms.Pineapple's Playground Pages 8 & 9



*Photographer:
Gene Cannon (RIP)*

Ms.Pineapple was rescued by a friend, owner of Thug Custom Cycles. She is grateful for her second chance without having to stay in a shelter.

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Photographer:

©Dorothy Wills-Raferly

'Harley'



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SEPTEMBER

- 11 National Pet Memorial Day
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- 22-28 National Dog Week
- 23-29 National Farm Animals Awareness Week

OCTOBER

- 1-31 Halloween and Halloween Safety Month,
- 1-31 National Animal Safety & Protection Month
- 1-31 National Animal Wellness Month,
- 1-31 World Animal Month
- 1-31 Adopt-a-Shelter-Dog Month
- 3-9 Animal Welfare Week
- 4 World Day for Animals
- 16 National Feral Cat Day www.nationalferalcatday.org
- 16-22 National Veterinary Technician
- 21 Reptile Awareness Day
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無条件愛

a Haiku for You



Pet Memorials
Remembering Special LOVE
Unconditional

~SuziK

Written by Stu Goldman

Flea Bitten

“911, what’s your emergency?”

“IT’S A HOME INVASION!

There is a cat burglar in my bedroom and my babies are MISSING!

For the love of God, HEEEELLLLP!”

While that’s not exactly the way I was introduced to Ralph the cat, the facts being tweaked for dramatic purposes, essentially the grain of truth can be found squeezing sideways through it. Here’s what actually happened...

I received an emergency phone call from my friend that a homeless cat had broken into her parents’ house in Hollywood, Florida; gaining entrée through a pet door during the night. The interloper had pulled a full-Goldilocks; stolen food, water and, most importantly, the position at the foot of the bed in the master suite where the local cats, Fluffy and FruFru (the names have been changed to protect the innocent), could usually be found.

This cat was conspicuous by his looks. At first glance it was a dark grey cat, with a dirty white muzzle and chest; scrawny, matted haired, having wild yellow eyes and a black chin that, juxtaposed against the white face and chest, gave the impression that his mouth was ajar in a gape of shocked horror.

I arrived at a typical suburban ‘70s ranch house, knocked on the door and listened as a person approached. I was taken directly to the kitchen where upon the louvered door of the pantry was flung open to reveal a scraggy seven pound cat, having finished some food, now trying to lick the Lilly pattern off a saucer. The stray looked up at me with his strange facial design seemingly indicating that I, like Norman Bates, had burst into his shower banishing a raised can opener. He (as the cat proved to be) then leapt up onto the food prep counter where I was standing and went to nuzzle me. I held him off. Upon close inspection, the cat had sparse



hair on his tail, ears and belly due to what looked to be mange...a condition that a neighbor’s cat had recently been treated for successfully, so it didn’t frighten me, but it did cause me to hesitate.

That cat was obviously non-feral, very people oriented and had apparently been on the streets for some time, as illustrated by battle scars decorating his face, and front legs. My first impulse was to name him Lefty, after an improve character I used to do of a retired prize fighter. The cat then ‘spoke’ in an extremely high pitched falsetto, much like a feline impression of Mike Tyson...another boxing tie-in. Lefty it was to be.

I placed the semi-furless foundling in a cardboard filing box and secured the box on the passenger seat of my tiny black Ford Festiva. Conversing with the now very vocal cat, I headed to a vet I had seen in my neighborhood. Being stopped at a light, I opened the top of the box enough to see the cat, who was rapidly gaining the reputation of a ‘poor traveler’, regurgitate all the food and lily colored glaze from his breakfast. His name was immediately changed to Ralph.

A few moments later, at the now late vet’s office, we were viewing walls that were decorated with posters of German Shepherds and Doberman Pinchers...‘das Dokter’ declared that the “da kitty” was about seven to nine months old, basically sound physically and was highly allergic to fleas and mosquitoes which accounted for his mange-like appearance. A cleanup proved he was Russian Blue mix. The doc gave him a shot for allergies, rabies, distemper, worms, alien abduction and a couple other things to round out the bill. I placed Ralph back into the cardboard box, now wet and stained from where the poop and puke had been cleaned, and headed home.

...Continued on Next Page



...Ralph Continues

He hurred twice in the 15 blocks it took to finally arrive, thus ensuring me the rightness of “Ralph”.

During the ensuing thirteen years, Ralph and I lived together in South Florida and in Philadelphia and back to Fort Lauderdale. In Philly we lived with a set of feline sisters, now 18 years old. Ralph survived two short-term relationships with a feral female and a itinerant neighborhood cat. Our girlfriend from Philadelphia joined us several years ago, bringing the ‘sisters’, married us and made us all an instant family. Ralph went a step further, surprisingly and generously mentored a foundling male kitten, only weeks old whom had been living off garbage scraps behind a local diner; now four years and the size and color of an orange Hummer.

Ralph also enjoyed playing doctor. He was responsible for discovering I was diseased. Ralph was always a biter and needed an extra set of hands to be examined. When the doc asked me if he had broken my flesh, my affirmative answer was enhanced by echoes of pain. Within a couple of hours, my hand was swollen to the size of a baseball. My people doctor, to whom I had been assigned to but never met, did a full blood series in addition to looking for feline-carried infection. The blood tests revealed that I was not turning into a werecat, but that I had full blown diabetes. Good catch!

Ralph had a complex personality; in addition to being a secret EMT he was like a dog in many ways. He knew his name, followed me around the house, would sit and stay on command, he would go to the door at the sound of a bell; these bells were on TV, as I didn’t have one, apparently a habit he had picked up at his first home, along with climbing into the refrigerator every time that door

was opened. He had a pillow perched on a taboret next to my desk, where he would sit or nap while I worked; sort of like a lovable but lazy brother-in-law. A note here - Ralph was the fourth cat since 1972 to sit on this pillow, each one having pillow privileges until their demise at which point another cat would take over, no questions asked.

Ralph recently developed a cough and suddenly went blind in his right eye. Our newest vet mentioned things like tumor, cancer and other bad words. A cortisone shot helped and Ralph was looking better. Within days his coat was matted anew, his spine was poking through his fur, both eyes were oozing and he was off balance. Back to the vet where new blood work revealed he had a tremendously high white blood cell count; seemingly good news as infections could be treated. The new meds worked for a few days again, then a week later he was back where he had left off...and worse.

Only a month after the first symptoms appeared, Ralph was struggling to walk, stand and to breathe so I did what I would want someone to do for me; I stopped his struggling, ended his pain and broke my heart. It seems so humane in theory and yet I can’t think of it without a floodgate of tears opening in a vain attempt to fill the hole in my life.

So, I sit here trying to type my grief away, weeping like a child, secretly and selfishly feeling sorry for myself and my loss, my hurt, my emptiness...as the survivor I get to write this history. And yes, I know, I’ve been through this before, and I am aware I’ll go through this again, with people and cats; but every once in a while there is a special bond attached to your very core that when torn away rips you apart...and all the king’s horses and all the king’s men just stand around trying not to stare at your grief.

WWRD? If Ralph were here now, he’d climb onto my chest, fold his paws under him like crossed arms and give me one of those head-lowered, peering out from under furrowed brow stares, and telepathically snarl at me, ‘Pull yourself together, Cupcake...exactly which one of us had his balls cut off?’

Stu Goldman is a retired cartoonish and writer. He has had a number of wives, a few kids and 14 cats. He writes about the cats.



**NatuRepel
Donates To Dogs in Need**



Dear MissKitty

NatuRepel is a product of A Balanced K9, a company dedicated to help canines through the art of natural living. All natural canine flea and tick repellent, NatuRepel, offering a safe choice for people and canines to enjoy the great outdoors. Formulated with only premium essential oils including lemongrass and cedar wood, NatuRepel is not only healthy for dogs, but also healthy for the environment. For more information please visit their website www.abalancedk9.com, call 320-241-7913 or send an email to paula@abalancedk9.com.

Dear MissKitty,
My heart is broken. I have lost yet another furry friend. How do I honor and celebrate the great memories we have had? Even though they are gone, they are not forgotten. They all had such great souls.

From Rufus in Long Island, NY

*Dear Rufus,
There is a new App called "iPetMemorial" and you can share your pictures and memories to those around the world. Check out Ms. Pineapple's Playground: Furry Finds for more information. My condolences! #Meow
Peaceful Paws, MissKitty*



Memorial Pet App

The iPet Memorial App was created to enable the memory of a beloved pet to remain and be shared with people all around the world. iPet Memorial uses the latest Cloud Technology to enable quick and easy access to all memorials. iPet Memorial allows you to both BROWSE and SEARCH all the memorials that have been uploaded. It also allows for marking those that you like as a FAVORITE for instant viewing in the future. Although your pet may be gone ... their memory can continue to live on and be a blessing to many. www.iPetMemorial.com

MissKitty, a 16-year-old Siamese Polydactyl, the professional expertise and insights of "MissKitty". MissKitty lives in Fort Lauderdale with her human mommy and two kitty siblings, GypsyPrince and PeanutButter. When she's not working on this column, she spends most of her time indoors scratching with her clawless front paws and enjoying catnip or soaking up the sun in her backyard.

I was found roaming the streets in Los Angeles, fending for myself with no one to care for me. If I'd been taken to a shelter, I would have never made it out because I had a bunch of issues: I threw temper tantrums, guarded my food and toys, and was sensitive to touch. So my rescuer took me to a foster home and from there I was adopted and found my forever home.



Meet Charlie Bear *the Rescue Dog*

Pretty cool story, huh?

But it wasn't all peaches and cream when I came to my new home. It was hard to adjust (I was used to roaming free, doing my own thing), but with loving patience my new Peeps gave me the second chance I needed.

5 Things to Remember When You Adopt

- 🐾 Give me space. Provide a crate where I can go to be alone.
- 🐾 Expect a bit of unruly behavior. It will take me time to adjust to a new home.
- 🐾 Establish yourself as my pack leader. Reinforce any training and good habits I do have.
- 🐾 Take me for walks. Provide exercise and play time. If I'm a tired dog I'm a good dog!
- 🐾 Don't give up on your love for me. Bonding takes time. Please be patient.

October is **Adopt-a-Dog Month**. Perfectly fitting for me because that's when I was adopted two years ago now. Did you know that rescue dogs get their needed shots, are spayed or neutered, micro-chipped, and are deemed in good physical health before adoption? What have you got to lose? Just ask my Mom and Dad Peep:

Rescue Dogs Make Great Family Pets!

Charlie Bear is a 3-year-old muttgree who believes he won the lottery. No way could life have been predicted to turn out this good. In fact, his Mom Peep, B.J. Taylor, wrote the story of Charlie Bear's first year in their lives. It's an emotional, heart-tugging story that includes the big dog, Rex (Mom Peep's forever love): Charlie Bear: What a Headstrong Rescue Dog Taught Me about Life, Love, and Second Chances. www.bjtayloronline.com

“Hi my name is
Durango.
I may look like
a tough guy,
but i'm just a **BIG**
sweetheart.”



Durango was adopted on April 25, 2005 by Dawn Parisi.

Connecting Pets With People.



Humane Society of Broward County

www.humanebroward.com

954.989.3977



My Beloved Scottish Terrier,

Alex

Written by Kara Kennedy

This story about my beloved Scottish Terrier, Alex, was originally written in 2009 after I had to make the decision to let him go. Alex was like no other dog I have ever owned. This is my memory of my experience of letting him go and of his life. My memory and love for him lingers to this day.

These days I am not sure if I am coming or going, it has literally been that busy. Last week, however, I was stopped in my tracks. It had started out as a typical busy workweek. Monday came so quickly after the weekend. On weekends I spend a lot of time walking my Scottish terriers, Alex 13 and Abby 4. They love to walk. Alex the most. In the early hours of the morning on Tuesday, I was awakened by Alex gasping for air. He had been wheezing some over the past few weeks, which I thought were part of his allergies. He was prone for allergies, but this gasping for air was something new. I took him outside to see if that would help and he couldn't walk. He just fell over. I got dressed very quickly and rushed him to the emergency vet where after a couple of hours of tests, I had to make the horrible decision to let him go. I have to say it was the hardest decision I ever had to make. I loved Alex and he loved me. He was constantly by my side, even with the other Scotties I have and had he was always there for me.

Alex entered my life at eight weeks old. I have always loved Scottish terriers. Never owning one until Alex, I loved them all the same. One of my favorite periods in history to study is the rise of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and WWII. President Roosevelt was famous for the New Deal, but he was almost as famous for his little Scottish terrier, Fala. Perhaps the study of Roosevelt and Fala was the beginning of my love of political campaigns and politics. Fala was known all across the world and loved by Americans. He was constantly at Roosevelt's side, and traveled with him everywhere, including Warm Springs, Georgia where the President went for his spa treatments for his polio. Fala also stirred a little controversy during the 1944 campaign when the Republicans accused FDR of leaving Fala behind accidentally on a visit to the Aleutian Islands and according to the Republicans, sent a Navy destroyer to pick Fala up and bring him home. Falsely accused and angry, President Roosevelt gave his famous Fala Speech during a campaign rally with the Teamsters. As I said Fala was always at FDR's side and much beloved. To this day, the town of Warm Springs hosts a Fala Festival to celebrate Fala's life.

Fala was my experience with Scotties. Reading about Fala and visiting Warm Springs as a little girl I thought how wonderful it must have been to have a dog like Fala. When I was able, I got a Scottie, I found Alex. I have learned over the years, that Scotties are warm and loving dogs that are more like people with four legs. Alex communicated with me like no other dog I had ever owned. He would "tell" you when he wanted to go outside and he could pick out his favorite toy from the toy bin merely by my mentioning the name of the toy.

It took every fiber in my body to make the decision to let Alex go. I had to do it. He was in such pain, but selfishly, I didn't want to have to. There is now a void in my life where Alex was and much sadness in my heart. I miss him so much. I don't know that there will ever be a dog that I know like Alex. He was a blessing to my life and I was glad to have known such a special creature. He was and always will be my Little Buddy.

Kara Kennedy, a native of Birmingham, has worked extensively in the areas of Public Relations, media relations, events marketing and networking. Kara started her consulting firm, Kennedy Resource Development in 2006. She also serves as the Director of External Affairs for the Brock School of Business. Kara was a volunteer for the Humane Society Auxiliary and Hand-In-Paw Therapy Dogs and co-hosted a Pet Radio Show before 2001. She now is a member of the Friends of the Fultondale Bark Park (Dog Park). She also owns rescues, one of which is a Catahoula named Louie www.louiethepup.blogspot.com

Angel's Grace: Worth Remembering

Written by Nena Gulbrandsen

There is something extremely amazing about the unconditional love of a dog. Angel wasn't a show dog, nor did she do anything extraordinary through-out her life – but to us there was none like her. She was part of the family. Angel had a unique beauty and grace about her, yet at the same time she had the heart of a lion, fearless and protective.

The natural instinct of a Shetland Sheepdog, often known as a Sheltie, is to herd and to protect. During Angel's puppy years, our trainer told us that dogs will naturally gravitate to what they view as their role and responsibility. We quickly learned that Angel saw herself as the "protector".

One night after we had set the home alarm and went to bed we heard Angel begin to growl softly under her breath. She stayed on her bed a few minutes then got up and positioned herself at the top of the stairs ... very alert and attentive. We waited to see if the alarm would sound in the event of an intruder, but it never did. However, there was something about that night that Angel was aware of. When we got up to double check things, we found Angel sleeping in the doorway to our young daughter's bedroom. Nothing or no one was getting past her. From that moment on we knew that Angel was our own "Guard Dog on Duty"!

Being also a herding dog, we loved to play shepherding games with her. Many times when our daughter was young we would line up in the back yard. All of us would start walking and then one of us would take off running in a different direction. Angel would take off after that person and coral them back into the fold nipping away at their heels.

Not only was she a great protector, a tremendous herder, but also she was an amazing companion. A lot has happened in our family over the past five years. With each event and turn, Angel was there for each of us in her own way. For our daughter, she was a true friend and a confidant throughout the turbulent teenage years. For my husband, who works from home, she was a daily companion and "co-worker". She loved following

him into the office every day. She would sleep right by his desk. As for me ... she was a huge source of comfort at the passing of my father. Angel had a calming demeanor about her. She would love for me to sit and brush her, while giving her a massage. These things I found to be greatly therapeutic for me, also. Towards the end of her days, I spent a great deal of time holding and rocking her.

Anyone who has had a dog understands that special bond and unconditional love. Dogs don't judge when you blow it, nor do they criticize when you make a mistake. They don't smart off or back talk. Dogs are just there to love and to serve.

For these reasons and so many more, at the passing of our beloved Angel, we decided to do something to honor and to celebrate her memory. My husband and I have created an App called "iPet Memorial". It's a place where you can share pictures and special memories, not only for your viewing pleasure, but for sharing with others around the world. For more info, you can go to www.iPetMemorial.com. For us, although Angel is gone ... she will never be forgotten!

Nena Gulbrandsen is a wife, mother and entrepreneur. She has been married for 25 years. Her interests include writing, painting, interior design and other creative avenues. She loves spending time with her family, making memories and supporting and encouraging her friends.



Petey's Promise

Written by
Liz Mellott

On September 15th, animal lovers all over the world will recognize **Responsible Dog Ownership Day**. However, let's take a moment to view this important day for pet owners from a slightly different perspective. What, do you suppose, happens when even the most responsible and respectable pet owner faces financial or personal tragedy? Well, here in the South, the first and only acceptable immediate solution would be to feed them.

Blame it on my geographical location, but when a friend, relative or acquaintance of a Southern woman faces any type of problem or tragedy, our first response is to show up on their doorstep with a casserole or cake. We often even keep "crisis casseroles" in our freezers, so we are at the ready to be first to feed our friends in need. It is a matter of Southern pride; and we truly believe comfort food can heal all evils. I like to think this desperate need for feeding away one's problems was the driving force behind the founding of Petey's Promise.

In 2008 it came to my attention that elderly pet owners were forgoing purchasing their medication in order to buy food for their pets. These were not pet hoarders, or puppy mill owners. These were loving pet owners who had worked hard all their lives to retire in peace. Never, would they have thought they might not be able to afford the simple companionship of their dog or cat. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, they were being forced to choose their own health over the loving company of their faithful-furry friends. So, with the help of a few close friends, Petey's Promise – Provisions for Pets in Need, a 501c3 pet food bank, was formed to help solve the problem in our community by temporarily helping these financially-struggling pet owners.

However, after having only a few months under our belts, we discovered that feeding one's pets wasn't just a problem for the elderly on fixed incomes. Applications started flooding in from everyone from high-level executives who had lost their jobs, to struggling single mothers who just needed temporary help due to an unexpected bill, like a broken water heater.

Our applicants have faithfully done everything responsible dog and cat owners do for years. Their problems have nothing to do with their ability to be good pet owners, quite the opposite really. As loving animal owners, they have diligently kept their pets up-to-date on shots, spayed or neutered, administered flea/tick and heartworm medication, and fulfilled every other pet owner obligation. Then, one day, due to some unforeseen circumstance, their lives financially changed for the worse.

Throughout the inception of Petey's Promise, I would often cite a quote from one of my favorite Southern ladies, Dolly Parton, who puts difficult situations in perspective by saying, "We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails."

Simply put, we knew we couldn't do anything about the financial crisis of our Country and citizens, but we could help adjust how it directly affected the pet owners in our community. We can't help pay bills or fix a broken appliance, but we can offer the mental relief of easing the financial burden of temporarily feeding their animals.

"What could a couple of bags of food and kitty litter possibly do to help," cynics have asked us.

...Continued on Next Page



STYMIE CANINE CANCER FOUNDATION

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STYMIE CANINE CANCER FOUNDATION AWARDED \$50,000 PETCO GRANT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2012 – Aurora, Co - - Aimee Thompson and the Board of Directors of Stymie Canine Cancer Foundation today announced that they are recipients of a 2012 Petco Foundation Grant in the amount of \$50,000 to assist families with treatments of canine cancer.

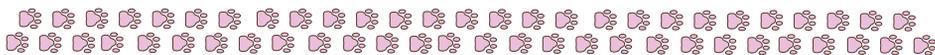
Stymie Canine Cancer Foundation founder, Aimee Thompson, stated, “Canine Cancer is the number one killer of our pets and so many with this disease in their dogs cannot afford treatment – this is where Stymie CCF steps in. We raise money for those that cannot afford the high cost of canine cancer. The \$50,000 grant from Petco Foundation is so wonderful and will go a long way to meeting our mission.”

“This Grant from Petco is earmarked as follows: 55% of the Petco Foundation funds will be used for Stymie Canine Cancer Foundation Grants to families with canine cancer for medical and associated costs under the Stymie CCF guidelines and the balance of the Petco Foundation grant will be used to increase outreach to potential donors and recipients and to support a knowledge base and dissemination of basic canine cancer information,” continued Thompson.

Based in Aurora Colorado, Stymie Canine Cancer Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation, which raises funds for families in need of financial support for the cost of cancer treatment for their pet. Canine Cancer is the #1 disease and killer of canine pets. 1 in 4 pets will get cancer and the treatment can be financially debilitating to the family - this is where Stymie Canine Cancer Foundation steps in to provide financial and educational support.

The Petco Foundation donates more than \$10 million a year to benefit companion animals. More than half goes to local community and regional animal welfare efforts, while the remainder supports disaster relief and other national causes and programs. The Petco Foundation uses money raised through local, regional and national fundraising events to support other IRS-designated nonprofit groups, government agencies and educational institutions involved in animal welfare.

Contact: Aimee Thompson at 303-617-3955 or <http://stymieccf.org>



...Petey's Promise Continues

Our answer relies upon the statistics of the average yearly cost of feeding domestic pets. Currently, the cost of feeding one dog spans from \$20-60 per month (\$250-700 per year), and the average cat is \$9.58 a month (\$115 per year), not including litter costs of \$14 per month (\$168 per year). Therefore, with help from gracious food and financial donors, we are able to help applicants apply the money we save them towards whatever they need to get their feet financially back on the floor.

Of course, we could sit here and quote facts and figures all day, but that doesn't do anything to help solve the problem. Therefore, our organization holds a realistic view of **Responsible Dog Ownership Day**. To us, this day never was, or is, about solely being responsible for our own pets, but all pet owners in our community as well. **After all, isn't that the "Southern" way?**

In 2008, Liz learned of individuals who were struggling to make ends meet and, in turn, having to give up their pets. Involved in several other charities, and having rescued pets of her own, this problem touched her heart. With the help and hard work of friends and family Petey's Promise was born, and was named in honor of Liz's rescued lab-spaniel mixed dog, Petey. Realizing that no one is able to rescue all the abandoned animals in NC, she decided to start by helping to feed them one pet at a time. At this point, Petey's Promise has fed over 4,000 animals. Today, Liz continues to spread her story of survival and love for giving back to others, by speaking about Petey's Promise to groups and charities across the southeast, and also is an active member on the Speaker's Board for RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest, National Network).

National Dog Week Barks ...ER, ROCKS

What are you doing the week of September 24-30?

Written by Linda O. Johnston

You could be spending at least part of it in a way that can help dogs--
shelter dogs, your own dog, service dogs... maybe all dogs!

How? Well, that's when **National Dog Week** is celebrated this year.

I had never heard of National Dog Week before, but I undoubtedly should have since it has been around for decades. In any event, I'm thrilled with the idea. I learned about it from American Pet Magazine and of course had to conduct my own research.

I found out quite a bit about it, including its origins--all online. Apparently the event was begun in 1928, founded by Captain Will Judy, who was, among other things, the publisher of Dog World Magazine--not to mention a World War I hero and, later, an author of several books. His intent was said to be focusing attention on how to be a responsible dog owner as well as honoring organizations that helped dogs.

One thing I found especially interesting was the original seven primary objectives of the celebration:

1. A good home for every dog.
2. Elimination of stray dogs from the street
3. Better-informed dog owners
4. Consideration for dogs and all animals
5. Emphasis of the dog's use as companion and protector
6. Fair laws for dogs and dog owners
7. Respect for the rights of non-dog owners

(I got this from the Recycler Blog: <http://www.recycler.com/blog/pets/7-original-objectives-national-dog-week.php>.)

They're great objectives. But what particularly struck me, as I did this research, was that, if those were the objectives over 80 years ago, why haven't we fully achieved them yet?

As a volunteer at a private pet shelter, I know there are a lot of people out there striving for nearly all of those objectives all of the time--although, frankly, I don't understand people who fit within item #7: non-dog owners. But every dog lover can work on some or all of the other objectives, and not just during **National Dog Week**. I'm an unabashed cynophilist, by the way. Are you? For those who aren't familiar with the term, it means "dog lover."

So how can you help dogs? Get involved. Take your own dogs on some extra walks or play with them a little more. If they're not spayed or neutered and you're not a legitimate breeder, get them fixed right away to prevent unwanted puppies. Adopt another dog from a shelter. Donate to your local shelter or a reputable national organization or both, including those that recognize service dogs, K-9 units and search and rescue dogs. Sign up to volunteer to help dogs at a local shelter by socializing them or helping them find new homes, or whatever else that shelter needs.

That's what I do. I'm a dog adoption counselor at a wonderful private shelter near my home: Pet Orphans of Southern California. It'll be featured as the location of the upcoming season of Pit Boss.

And during **National Dog Week** give your dogs some extra hugs. I'll definitely do that with mine!

Linda O. Johnston is the author of 31 published novels, including the Pet Rescue Mysteries from Berkley Prime Crime. Beaglemania was a March 2011 release, The More the Terrier was published in October 2011, and Hounds Abound came out in April 2012. Watch for Oodles of Poodles in February 2013. The Pet Rescue Mysteries are a spinoff from Linda's Kendra Ballantyne, Pet-Sitter Mysteries. Linda also writes for Harlequin Nocturne and Harlequin Romantic Suspense. Visit Linda at www.LindaOJohnston.com or friend her on Facebook. She also blogs each Wednesday at KillerHobbies.blogspot.com.

KarpKatZ' Personal Memorials ... Their Unconditional Love is Inspiration for Our Voice National Pet Memorial Day



PrettyBoy
December 1996-
December 26, 1998



MommaTogo
15 yrs old



Amelia Earhart aka MIA
July 1988 - August 2005



Tuffy
1973-
1981



ThrasherMan aka Fat Man
April 12, 1990 - Oct 13, 2002



**Maxwell the
Papaya King**



CutiePie 11 yrs old
MommaTogo's Baby

R.I.P.

NO PICS
Butchie
BunBun
Johnny
Peaky

MonkeyChow
June 2000 -
April 15, 2002



TabithaWitch SISTERS
April 8, 1989
March 21, 2004

ChilliAnn
April 8, 1989
November 1998

Rest In Peace

American Pet Magazine & KarpKatZ
send thier special condolences to
Sarah & her family. RIP Duncan

Written by Sarah Hosick

I thought it was important that I write a quick update to explain my absence for the last few days. On Thursday, August 2nd, my family and I had to make the heartbreaking and painful decision to lay our dog, Duncan to rest. It has been a very, very difficult time for me and I am taking a much needed break from blogging to heal my heart as best I can. I really don't know if I'll get anything up this week, but I will do my best. Right now, my priority is remembering the good times and spending quality time with my other babies.



Duncan was my first rescue dog. I was working at a boarding kennel where Duncan had been abandoned by his owner, and with a bit of coercing, my parents let me bring him home. He immediately needed surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament and only a few months later, while he was healing, he tore the other ACL and required a second surgery. At a fit, 105lbs, having two bum knees didn't bode well for his future, but he didn't let anything slow him down.

I learned so much about dogs, dog behaviour and training because of Duncan. I am eternally grateful to him for everything he taught me and my heart is so heavy knowing I will never get to kiss his sweet face ever again.

May you rest in peace, with friends at the rainbow bridge.
We love you and miss you immensely.

Pet Safety

Keeping the 'Scream' out of Halloween

Dorothy Wills-Raferly, also known as the FiveSibesMom, is an author and award-winning photographer and journalist. Her family's five Siberian Huskies, known as the FiveSibes™, are featured in Wills-Raferly's A FiveSibes™ Tale illustrated book series. The Huskies are also muses for Wills-Raferly's FiveSibes™ award-winning blog (www.FiveSibes.blogspot.com), which is ranked as one of the Top 100 international Siberian Husky websites.

Written and Photograph of 'Bandit'
by ©Dorothy Wills-Raferly

There is always a buzz of excitement in the air as **Halloween** approaches. With October being **Halloween Safety Month**, which goes paw-in-paw with **National Animal Safety & Protection Month** and **National Animal Wellness Month**, it's a busy time for pet parents. While it is a really fun and festive time of year for us humans, let's keep in mind that our pets are not always quite so thrilled with all the loud, noisy, and sometimes frightening goings-on, whether it's the scary costumes, constant ringing of the door bell and knocks on the door, or the loud music and screaming at some of the neighborhood scary "haunted" houses. So while we are all having fun on **Halloween**, here are just a few safety reminders to ensure that all of our pets remain happy and healthy during the **Halloween** season:

-  Keep chocolate and all **Halloween** candy away from where dogs can reach it. So many of these "treats" are toxic to canines.
-  Ladies, keep those purses closed so dangerous contents such as sugar-free gum, medications, candy, coins, batteries, etc. are not accessible to pets.
-  If adults are having some **Halloween** beverages containing alcohol, be sure your furkid does not. Alcohol is not for pet consumption.
-  Be careful of kids' toy treats as they could become choking hazards for pets.
-  If you dress up your pet in a costume, keep the pet where you can see him/her at all times. Costumes can catch and hurt your pet's limbs, and some fabrics that tie around the neck can also get caught on something or tighten, thereby choking the pet.
-  When the trick-or-treaters come ringing your doorbell, keep your dogs safe by keeping them in another room to avoid anxiety, as well as minimizing the possibility of their escaping out the front door. Some feel more secure in their own crates or rooms with a TV or radio playing in the background for white noise. If your pet enjoys greeting trick-or-treaters, be sure to have him secured with a leash.
-  Be sure to have your canine pal's collar on with current ID tags, just in case they do escape during the commotion.
-  Tails wag; dogs jump – so be careful not to have any candles or jack-o-lanterns lit anywhere near your dog (and his tail and paws) to avoid burns and fire hazards.
-  While many dogs love socializing and playing with children, please don't take them out while trick-or-treating. Even the most docile pet can become scared and react differently from the norm, i.e. jumping, growling, breaking free, etc. Leave them at home where they can be calm and safe in their own environment.
-  If you know your pet gets stressed from all the creepy talking **Halloween** decorations, music, visitors, and doorbell chimes, you may want to use a calming aid, such as the all-natural Rescue Remedy, or spray his/her pillow, blanket, or kennel with pheromone-mimicking Comfort Zone (or use the plug-in style) to help ease their anxiety. Or, if your pet requires something stronger, please consult with your veterinarian.
-  If you have outside dogs, PLEASE don't leave them out alone on Halloween (or even the night before). If for some reason you can't bring them in, stay with them. There have been some horror stories of people tossing poisoned food into yards and having deadly, or at the very least, sickly results. And, even some reports of animals being physically hurt.
-  Have your vet's, the nearby 24-hour animal hospital's, and Animal Poison Control numbers programmed into your cell and landline phones' speed dial, as well as having them posted in plain sight. (ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888) 426-4435 and Pet Poison HelpLine (800) 213- 6680. Incident consultation fees may apply.)

During the holidays, it is also important to remember pets less fortunate than our own. Our Blogger colleague, the Cybersibes (<http://sscyber-sibes.blogspot.com/>) have started doing something extra spooktacular for **Halloween**. On October 27th, they will be hosting their third annual "Show Us Your Treat Jar" event, where bloggers can share fun photos of their pets and their favorite treat jars, while encouraging hu-parents to donate some treats to local pet shelters. Cybersibes blogger Pat believes, "Every furkid deserves a treat!" and thought this would be a fun way to celebrate **Halloween** and help out homeless animals. So while you are shopping for treats for the neighborhood children, don't forget a box or two of treats for your neighborhood shelter animals!

With a little planning and an eye on our pets' safety and well-being, everyone can have a safe and Happy Howl-oween!

FINDING FOREVER



5 Things *to ask yourself... before getting a dog*

Written by Dobie Houson

 What's your purpose for getting a dog? Unless your answer is that "you want a companion and partner to be an integral part of your life", don't get a dog. Dogs require love, patience, training, exercise, care, and devotion just as children do. If you want a dog simply to protect your property, because you think it would be fun to breed, or as a playmate for your children, reconsider your decision to get a dog.

 Have you done your research? Different breeds have different needs. You need to be well educated about your preferred breed's disposition, health and conformation challenges, dietary needs and exercise requirements in order to be certain the dog you want will be a fit for your routine and lifestyle.

 Are you committed to being an appropriate "parent"? A dog is a huge responsibility. A dog's lifespan can be anywhere from 7 to 16 or more years. You need to be thinking about this as a lifetime commitment. Dogs require an environment where they are an integral part of the family. Don't even consider getting a dog unless you are committed to being a partner with your canine for years to come and are emotionally, physically, and financially able to meet their needs.

 Is your home appropriately designed for your breed? Do you have enough space in your home? Do you have a secure fenced yard? Are toxins and other dangers safely out of reach? You must approach "dog-proofing" your home the same way one would child-proof a home to provide a safe and secure home for your dog.

 Is your daily routine structured in a way that is ideal for the breed you're considering? It's key that you consider how many hours each day you'll be away from home and how often your dog will be alone. Dogs want to be with their people so if you work outside the home you will need to consider how you will provide the amount of exercise and stimulation your dog needs. Additionally you will need to be committed to establishing a compassionate training and communication process with your dog.

Dobie Houson is a freelance writer and amateur animal communicator. She is a contributing writer to Why We Ride: Women Writers on the Horses in their Lives and the author of Finding Forever: The Dogs of Coastal German Shepherd Rescue. She is the founder of Finding Forever, an organization that raises funds for rescue through writing and art projects. Dobie lives in Southern California with her family and animal companions.

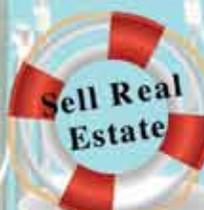
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Finding Your Lost Pet

Written by
Mike Deathe



I am writing the blog on this topic because a good friend of mine, Mark Garcia, recently had to answer this question himself. As the founder of www.mutzzrus.com and owner of Keep it Simple Stupid (K.I.S.S.) dog training, I felt this topic needed to be covered. I also want to offer a special “Thank You” to Mark for doing what every person in this situation should!

What should you do if
you find a stray?
Microchipping
your pets is a must!

Mark was doing what many of us do every morning, going to Starbucks for his start of the day cup of coffee, when he noticed a small terrier mix running around the parking lot! This little dog was going in and out of traffic and running up to everyone he met, saying hi, and looking for help! As Mark headed in to get his coffee, another customer asked “what do you think we should do about this little guy?” After some discussion it was decided Mark could, while on his way to work, drop the little guy off at the police station! ☺

But on his way there, Mark had another thought, what if this dog was micro chipped? Mark knew that both of his dogs were...what if this little guy was, as well? Mark knew that taking the dog to the police station was a one way ticket to the pound and a sure fire hefty fine for the owners. So instead of dropping the dog off at the police station, Mark decided to go to the nearest veterinarian, Oxford Animal Hospital, 13433 Switzer Rd, Overland Park, KS 66213, and have the dog checked for a micro chip. Guess what, this little guy had one (his name is Benji), and in a matter of hours (with the help of the folks at Oxford Animal Hospital) Mark was talking to some very appreciative dog owners that not only had their dog back (without fines), but three very happy kids who thought they had lost their family friend forever! Dr Allison C. Bradshaw, D.V.M. stated, “Here at Oxford Animal Hospital we are strong advocates for the microchip system. About once a month we are able to return a lost pet to his/her owner. Collars and ID tags are very important, but are not permanent means of identification. Microchips are the only permanent means of identification that we have available, and they are very reasonably priced. They are easily placed with an injection and just take a few seconds! We always scan stray or found cats and dogs and have found pets, but many times owners forget to update their registry when they move, so this is important as well.”

...Continued on Next Page

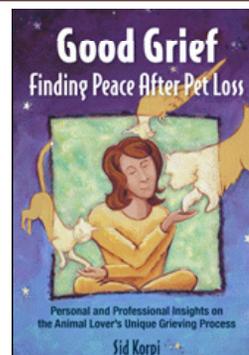
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Good Grief
Finding Peace After Pet Loss

Written by Sid Korpi

Who thinks you're the most wonderful, irreplaceable being in existence (even when you're cranky, have bed head, have put on some pounds, etc.)? Who forgives you virtually anything, never holds a grudge, and loves you unconditionally?



Who among your best friends will you likely have to make the unthinkable, heartbreaking decision of when they must die when ill-health and/or pain dominates their life? The answer to all of the above is our animal companions. With them we share an intense emotional bond. So why is it that, when grieving their passing, many of us still feel we must suffer in silence or be labeled somehow defective?

www.GoodGriefPetLoss.com

...Continued

There are two very important lessons to take from this story:

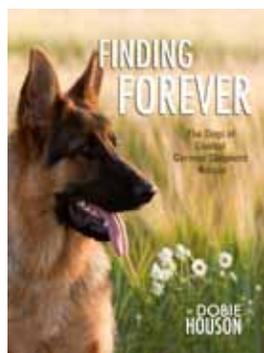
1. If you find a dog, don't assume the animal shelter or police department is the best place to take a lost dog. And for those who just look on and keep driving, shame on you. Either of these choices just puts more pressure on an already stressed resource! Take the time to help out someone you have never met. A chilling fact to support this...the Humane Society estimates between 3-4 million pets are killed each year in shelters! If each person reading this does just what Mark did last week, think of the difference we could make!

2. **MICROCHIP YOUR DOG!!!!** The cost here is minimal, at the high end, it will cost you around \$40, and if you go to some of the local pet events in your area, I have seen them done for as little as \$5 per dog.

So the moral of this story, treat others as you would hope they would treat you. Thanks to Mark's decision to go a little out of his way and stop by a Veterinarian instead of the city pound or police station, Benji's owners now have their dog back along with some very happy kids. I know that if they get the chance to do the same for someone else, they most certainly will. Thanks to the personal phone call from the owners, I know Mark would do it again! Now the big question...how many of you will go out and micro chip your dogs (if not done already), or will take the extra time to stop and pick up the next dog or cat you see and head to the nearest Veterinarian and most likely make someone's day! I think Mark put it best when I asked him why he did it...“My main objective that morning was to reunite the dog with its family/owner. When I found out that the dog was micro-chipped I knew that reunion would take place before the day ended. Receiving the phone call from the owner showed their gratitude with thanks and praise for my actions, and that was all I needed. My last words were to pass it forward, meaning that if you encounter a similar situation make the next person happy and keep the cycle going.” I think we could all learn a lot from Mark, and owe him a big thank you for a good deed that we should all do as well!

Mike Deathe is a stay-at-home dad who found his passion as a dog trainer in 2008. He enjoys identifying unique and useful dog related products. He is the author of Keep It Simple Stupid (K.I.S.S.) Pet Blog, and has written several books on dogs and dog training. As an avid pet lover, he regularly sees the number of dogs and cats that never find a home, so in 2009, he and his wife Kate founded Muttz “R” Us, a t-shirt and pet product company with the motto of “Saving Pets...One T-Shirt at a Time” In 2010 KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID (KISS) DOG TRAINING was born and since then has been teaching dogs and owners at Broadmore Kennels, located in western Shawnee, Ks.

*For more information about KISS or Muttz “R” Us
Visit us on facebook, twitter or follow the blog @
<http://muttzmembers.blogspot.com>
We can't wait to help you speak dog as a second language.*



Finding Forever
The Dogs of Coastal
German Shepherd Rescue

Written by Dobie Houson

Finding Forever:
The Dogs of Coastal German Shepherd Rescue,
is a heartwarming, profound, and joyful
book about 26 amazing dogs and their
search for a forever home. Anyone who

has ever gazed into the soulful eyes of their
animal companion and wondered what
they were thinking will fall in love with these
German Shepherds and their beautiful stories
Find it on Amazon.com at <http://ow.ly/CHA5B>

best
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Lessons Learned

from the Flock

Written by Wendy Thomas



Baby chicks don't need much care. They need food, water, and protection. If they are older than a few weeks like ours were then you don't need a heating lamp. If they are younger then you need to have a source of heat as the down they are covered with is not sufficient to keep their bodies warm.

A 60 watt bulb is really all that's necessary but it's best to get a brooder lamp which is essentially a metal cage for the light-bulb. This keeps the little ones from getting too close to the bulb and perhaps burning themselves. The light should be shone in one corner only of the nursery, this way the chicks can move to the light to get warm and move away when they need to cool down.

For bedding we used untreated wood chips gotten at the local Tractor Supply store. You want to stay away from hay and newspaper, both which can get very messy, very quickly. Newspaper is particularly nasty as the paper can get moldy quickly and the chemical ink when wet can transfer to the chicks' feet.

Chicks are fed something called Mash. It's broken up regular food which has a little bit of medication in it. We used this just in case our chicks had picked up any bugs in the transfer from the farm to our house. Water was constantly supplied by a plastic feeder.

During the first week, the chicks were adorable, they cheeped and jumped all over their new home. We spent hours playing with them and getting to know each of their personalities.

By the second week, however, we started to detect a smell rather reminiscent of the petting zoo at our local animal farm. Chicks grow quickly, in order to grow quickly they have to eat a lot and as we all know, what goes in must come out. The kids started to balk at the bedding changing duties. "I did it last time," they all seemed to shout at the same time.

I don't care who does it, I told them. All I knew is that with 6 kids, I had had enough to "bedding changing" experience to last me a lifetime. If they wanted chicks they had to learn that the good came along with the very smelly bad.

Wendy Thomas is an award winning journalist, columnist and blogger who believes that taking challenges in life will always lead to goodness. She is the mother of 6 funny and creative kids and it is her goal to teach them through stories and lessons. Wendy's current project involves writing about her family's experiences with chickens at www.simplethriftp.wordpress.com.



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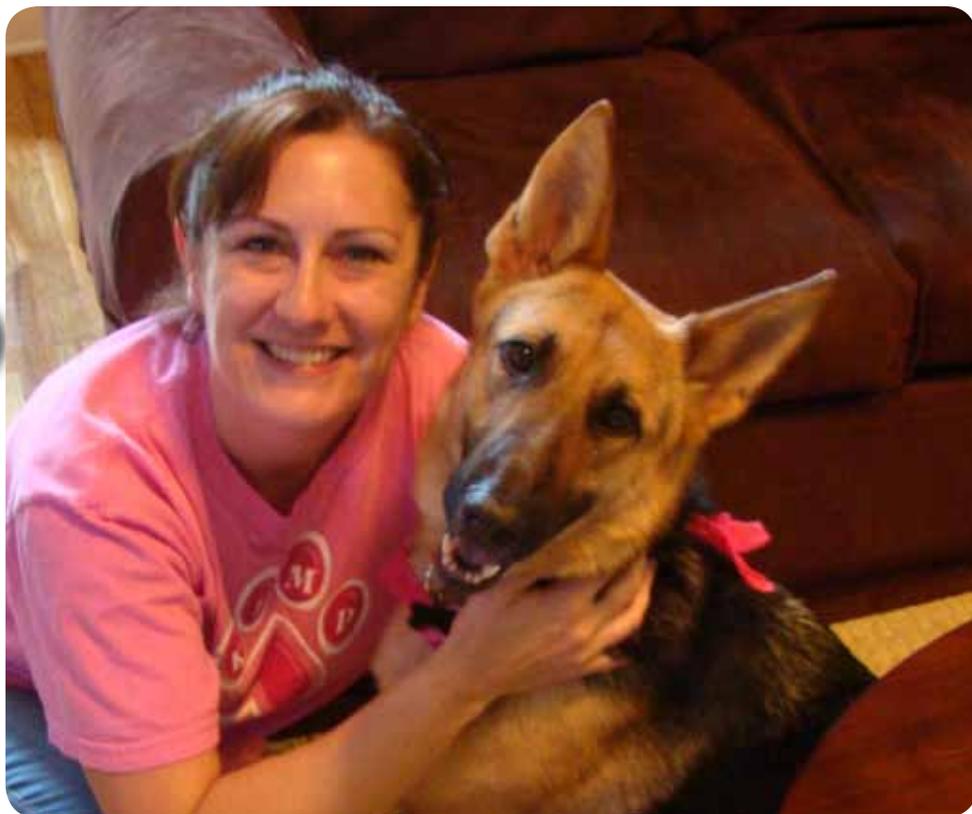
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Pam's GSD 'Angel'

Written by
Debbie Tringale



Angel is a three-year-old German Shepherd Dog (GSD). She was brought to the Dade Animal Resource Team (DART) to be spayed by her new foster family in January of 2012. At that time, a routine test showed her to be heartworm positive, low positive. Her history was incomplete but it was believed that she was an exclusively outdoor dog. She was brought to Me And My Dogs to learn the skills necessary for her to survive her heartworm treatment and recovery; staying in a crate, walking on a leash and resting calmly in a 10 X 10 outdoor kennel.

Angel was scheduled to have her treatment after five days of boarding and training then return to her current foster for the 30 day recovery where she would be outdoors in a kennel while DART looked for a permanent home for her. When she arrived I brought her into the small house next to my training field. After three hours of crate training, it became apparent that Angel was not willing to be in a crate and could not calm down when left alone. That night, I slept in the field house with her.

Her behaviors were a puzzle because we were told that she was an exclusively outdoor dog but she clearly did not like to be alone. I felt this was unusual for a dog that lived outside. We began to suspect she had separation anxiety (SA), but separation from what, as far as we knew she never lived indoors with a person who loved her. When the directors of DART questioned the Angel's foster family a second time they learned that she did live indoors with a friend's Grandfather who recently died. When he passed away, Angel moved to different family members until she ended up there.

The directors of DART and I were in agreement, Angel indeed had separation anxiety and would not tolerate being in a crate during her heartworm treatment and would not survive being confined in a 10 X 10 kennel during recovery. Her treatment was cancelled and she came into full custody of DART. I immediately brought her into my home and began a new training plan.

For the next 30 days she had to be kept calm and quiet. It was time for the next phase of her training, gaining independence. Stay is an important skill for SA dogs to learn so they can be alone for brief periods of time. Angel would not stay. Angel was also afraid of wind, rain and the dark and would not go outside by herself in those conditions. By the end of her 30 day recovery time, she achieved an out of sight stay for just over a minute and was able to leave the porch on her own to potty in the rain.

...Angel continues

Although her attention seeking behaviors such as pawing and whining improved, I felt they were still a problem. I was growing increasingly frustrated when I learned that these behaviors are not uncommon among German Shepherd Dogs. It was then I understood why DART was working with German Shepherd rescue groups to find her a home.

I usually write stories about me and my dogs or stories about you and your dogs. This story is about Angel, she didn't have anyone...until the Schlemmer family of Atlanta. They are German Shepherd people. They wanted a companion for their GSD and when the rescue group showed them her pictures, they immediately fell in love with Angel. Pam and her husband had several telephone conversations with DART and with me about Angel and her history. They explained they rescued German Shepherds in the past and were prepared to deal with her issues. They actually were okay with the shadowing, the pawing and the whining. To them these were signs of affection and are very happy to return her love.

Angel is doing well in her new home. Pam recently reported that Angel does not paw or whine anymore, and Pam doesn't mind having Angel as her shadow.

**For more information on DART:
visit www.DARTSavesLives.org**



Debbie Tringale is a dog trainer in Rising Fawn, GA. She specializes in fearful and reactive dogs and dogs with separation anxiety. Her business is called Me And My Dogs. The "Me" comes first because Debbie believes dog training is the most effective when it changes the way people think about themselves and their dogs.

*To learn more, visit her website at
www.MeAndMyDogs.biz*



Every Ferret Counts!

The American Ferret Association's “Ferret Census 2012”

The American Ferret Association is pleased to announce the first-ever, national ferret census. Recent research indicates that there is no accurate count of pet ferrets, in America or around the world. In addition, there is just so much information we want to know about ferrets and their humans. The new AFA survey has categories for many ferret demographics, nutrition and health information. Gathering these statistics will help in efforts to improve the care and enjoyment of these amazing pets.

Ancient China was the first culture to count its people, followed by Egypt and Greece. The Romans began population counts within the republic back in the 6th century BCE, the term census being derived from their Latin language. In the United States, the government began systematically counting the population in 1790. So, it is high time we got a more accurate count of ferrets in America and even around the world.

Top Two Reasons to *Complete the AFA Ferret Census*:

1. Help complete important research that will improve our care of ferrets!
2. Automatically be entered into a drawing for a free one-year AFA membership!!

We will be offering the survey online as well as in paper format. Look for this Ferret Census on the AFA web site and at our upcoming events. By completing the survey, you will automatically be entered into a drawing to win a one-year membership to the AFA! Lastly, with the collection of what we hope to be large amounts of data, we will also be seeking volunteers to help collate and analyze the facts. We always need new volunteers, so come join us in this groundbreaking research!

*KARU says,
“Please Do What I Did!
Click or Use This Link now to
complete the AFA Ferret Census:”*

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SXS78G>



Ferrets Ready for Trick or Treat Night... After all, Halloween is in Dooktober!



Mr. America (Jessie Molan's ferret, T.C. Chaser)



Bagpiper (HTF's Bellianna of LW owned by Sara Hamilton)



Vegas Show Girl (LW's Annabelle owned by Sara Hamilton)



Elvis (LW's Bellagio owned by Sara Hamilton)



Fireman (GFX's Stryker owned by Cathy Hamlett) & **Biker** (Doc, owned by Bonnie & Thomas Cole)



Indian Chief and his Squaw (LW's Bello Tino & owner Sara Hamilton)



Queen Bee (LW's Mirabella owned by Sara Hamilton)



What to Think About

When Considering a Ferret As a Pet

Written by Vickie McKimmey

Ferrets are friendly, smart, funny, and loving, and they make excellent pets. If you've never met one before, the easiest way to think of them is somewhere between cats and dogs in personality. Like cats, ferrets are small, quiet, and easy to care for. Like dogs, they enjoy being with people. Some are cuddly, others more independent; they vary a lot in temperament, just like other pets and humans.

Ferrets are a lot of fun. They are very playful with each other and with you, and they don't lose much of that playfulness as they get older, which would be at about 6 to 9 years of age. They can be very entertaining companions with proper socialization.

What Is a Ferret?

The domestic ferret is a small, furry mammal whose average size ranges from about 1 to 5 pounds. Ferrets are NOT rodents! They are intelligent and will surprise and delight you with what they can do and learn. They recognize their name, respond to verbal and visual commands, and can even learn to do tricks. Ferrets can be litter-box trained. The behaviors you want to see in your ferret can best be achieved by training using praise or appropriate treats.

What Do I Need to Know to Properly Care for My Ferret?

Ferret ownership should not be taken lightly. These are not "caged" pets. Ferrets are financial and emotional commitments - much like a dog or cat. For their protection, ferrets should be kept in a ferret-proofed area of the home or in a large, well-ventilated cage when not under human supervision. However, ferrets should never be confined for an extended period of time. They need exercise, affection, and human companionship to remain happy and healthy. Ferrets need a MINIMUM of 4 hours per day out of their cage, at least 2 of which should include human interaction.



Ferrets have very specific nutritional needs as they are obligate carnivores, meaning they must eat animal protein to survive. They should also regularly see a veterinarian for vaccines and preventive health checks. Before adding a ferret to your household, consider your lifestyle and your family or roommates. There may also be local laws or ordinances governing ferret ownership, so be sure to check these.

Visit the American Ferret Association's (AFA) web site for many excellent articles and resources on ferret ownership and care
www.ferret.org

The best way to learn more about having a ferret share your life is to reference a detailed book on their care, nutrition and behavior. An excellent book to read more before you bring a ferret home is "Ferrets" (Animal Planet Pet Care Library). It is a must have book for both novice and experienced ferret owners.

Where Do I Get a Ferret?

Ferrets can be acquired through breeders, shelters and pet stores. Shelters are full of ferrets that need good homes, and many shelters have young ferrets available. For a list of shelters in your area, go to <http://www.ferret.org/links/shelters.html>. Shelter operators and breeders will be able to help you choose a ferret that fits your unique situation. They are a wealth of information and are generally very supportive as you learn to care for your new ferret.

What If I Have Other Pets?

A ferret's playful and curious nature makes it a natural companion to most larger house pets. Introductions should be made with caution, however, and proper supervision is a must. Dogs with a strong prey drive should not be introduced to ferrets. It is not recommended that ferrets be introduced to birds, rabbits, rodents (this includes hamsters, gerbils, and guinea pigs), or reptiles.

How Can I Learn More About My Ferret?

American Pet Magazine has great articles on caring for your pets. There are also many local ferret clubs and the national organization is the **American Ferret Association**. These groups offer many volunteer opportunities and organize fabulous events such as ferret shows and fundraisers for shelters, the endangered Black-footed ferret and disaster relief. There are Facebook pages for ferret-owners and the AFA is on Twitter! The best way to learn more about your ferret is to socialize and chat with other ferret-owners!



Vickie McKimney is on the Governing Board of the American Ferret Association (AFA) and has had ferrets since 1988.

She operates Just a Business of Ferrets (www.jbferret.com), breeding show ring winners and lovable pets since 1990. She also serves as the Director of Shows and Special Events for the AFA and has authored numerous articles and the book, "Ferrets: An Animal Planet Pet Care Library Series Book."

Always A.S.K.

Written by Christina Bournias

Imagine you are a misplaced dog on a different planet. A two-legged creature with sticky paws lunges at you. This little monster suddenly screeches and whirls an inch from under your nose. The repulsive stranger corners you. “It” squeals, darts wildly, then tumbles over.

Panic sets in.

Distraught, you search for a familiar face in the crowd, hoping for your knight in shining armor to appear. Options to escape the madness are slim to nil. To your right, lurks a man sporting a unibrow. To your left, towers a lady doused with cologne. She holds a enormous clutch.

Claustrophobic and defenseless, a low growl emanates from your jaws, but is drowned out by confusion. The screaming kid becomes louder than a runaway jet plane slamming on its brakes. When retracted gums fail the advance, you reveal teeth. Unfortunately, fangs don't seem to stop the toddler from its frenzy.

You lash out.

Abruptly, things go from bad to worse. The last thing you remember is a glimpse of the massive purse, the lady, and a blow to your cranium.

Everything else goes black.

Congratulations, you are now labeled an aggressive danger to society. Your breed is prohibited, and parents of children all around the world hate you.

Though most dogs are friendly and love appropriate human touch by polite people, not all dogs are friendly. We often forget that dogs are animals. Animals with innate behaviors; some, once—or twice over—neglected; others, over-bred and traumatized.

Most dogs have a history attached to their collars.

Even friendly dogs can become unpredictable if over-stimulated. If we want to communicate with courtesy and cohabit with these beasts we often refer to as ‘man's best friend’, we should not take dangerous risks. Instead, we must be safe with the animal we call “dog.”



...Continued on Next Page

Ask permission

“May we approach your dog?”

A waving tail is not always a wagging tail. Pricked ears don't necessarily express interest. These signals are telling, but only half the story. Observe the dog's entire body language and learn its warning signs. If a dog's body quickly turns from fluid and relaxed to stiff and tense, beware.



Stay your distance

“Is your dog friendly?”

Respect a dog's need for space and safety. Allow the dog to make the first move. Even with permission, never approach a dog. The dog may be unsure of you or its current circumstance. Keep a distance from the “bite zone” (over mouth, face, or head) and do not go near a dog if they are tethered or resting in a crate.

If a dog wants to greet you, they will. Remain certain with fingers closed inside a loose fist. Never come on too strong. If a dog isn't ready for a “hello”, move along.

Avoid menacing eye contact. A stare down is interpreted as dominance.

Keep quiet and calm

“Does your dog welcome visitors?”

*50% of all dog bites are fear related. Earn a dog's trust by speaking and behaving gently. Do not make frightening noises or sudden movements.

Most tragic instances come from dogs people know. Just because a dog is a member of the family is no excuse for rude or thoughtless behavior. Children who are confident and cautious are much safer than children who are taught to be fearful. If we exude confidence and move steadily, it is less likely to provoke a dog to attack.

Responsible dog owners practice proper handling skills and regular exercise. Obedience, socialization, and environmental training is also beneficial. But, before we expect our dogs to be “good”, we must discipline ourselves about the species.

Seek out a recognized trainer or animal behaviorist to help keep *your* family safe.

Christina Bournias resides in Michigan with her 3-pack; three new beautiful adopted miracles. As her “Angelwriter”, Nicodemus (1997-2010) is the wisdom behind the stories Christina shares. (#nica_knows) As an accredited dog trainer, Christina champions the magnitude of building the bond between a dog and their person(s) by means of respectful communication and enduring admiration.





HAND4PAWS

All for one and one for the paws. It is up to us to make a difference.

Our mission brings attention to the suffering of animals. We want to help end their torment and promote, with emphasis, at risk companion animals. Reaching a broader audience through social media is our way of advocating for animals.

Since most of these animal cases do not make headlines world wide, Hand4Paws works together with other individuals to encourage action and give a voice to those who have none.

Hand4Paws is not a registered organization. It is a group of world wide animal activists that use social media to promote animal rights and fight for animal welfare.

Hand4Paws informs the rest of the world and brings together people that take action and give a voice to the animals. All work is done on a volunteer basis, just people who truly care.

All physical and mental acts of violence
Bestowed upon any animal or human
Ultimately will stop when we band together to
Stop the abusers by being the voice of the voiceless.
Everyone has a choice.

Choose To Help Stop Abuse!

When I see it, I *stop and report it*. I DO NOT TURN AWAY!

Dolores Paddock:

My twitter page is @dapperandclassy and my fb animal community page is Dapper Dog and Classy Cat. I have recently become more involved with animal rights and fighting BSL across the United States and the world. Hand4paws has had a large impact on my desire to help fight for all animals. I have a passion for all animals and feel that we must be the voice of the voiceless. I have two cats Maurice and Cassie and one dog Beauregard, they all have rescued me!

Here's the Skinny:

Obesity in Pets is a National Problem

Written by Sarah Hosick

As a responsible pet owner, one of the most important things you can do for your pet is to help them maintain a healthy weight. Why? Because they can't do it on their own. Wednesday, October 10th will mark the sixth annual **National Pet Obesity Awareness Day** and is as good a day as any to get your pet on the right track to living a long and healthy life. The very sad reality is that most household pets are overweight and as a result, obesity is the No.1 health problem currently affecting pets in North America. According to last year's study conducted by the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOP), it was discovered that an estimated 54% of cats and dogs in the United States are obese; a number that's growing every year.

Dr. Ernie Ward, founder of APOP, said of the findings, "this year's data suggests that our pets are getting fatter. We're seeing a greater percentage of obese pets than ever before." But it shouldn't come as a surprise when owners are struggling with obesity, too. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention compiled statistics that one-third of the American population (35.7%) is considered obese, so it makes sense that our pets are part of this epidemic. They are, after all, affected by our choices.

There are a multitude of reasons why humans are obese, but only one reason our pets are: us. A common thread with weight gain between the two is emotion; many people seek out food as a way to celebrate successes or wallow in sadness and similarly, we give treats to our pets out of love. Although owners may think they are proving their affection by cooking their dog a t-bone steak or serving their cat a can of tuna, no one is benefitting. Not our wallets and certainly not our pets.

The following are some of the primary risks obesity poses to our beloved pets:

- 🐾 Osteoarthritis
- 🐾 Insulin resistance and Type 2 Diabetes
- 🐾 High Blood Pressure
- 🐾 Cranial Cruciate Ligament Injury
- 🐾 Heart and Respiratory Disease
- 🐾 Kidney Disease
- 🐾 Cancer
- 🐾 Decreased life expectancy up to 2.5 years



When it comes down to it, owners must remember that pets cannot calculate their daily caloric intake, nor take themselves out for an extra walk to make up for the hot dog they were given. Owners are 100% responsible for making the right choices for their pet whether they own a dog, cat, horse, rabbit - anything. That means, devising a weight loss or maintenance plan with your veterinarian's assistance which will include an appropriate dietary change and/or activity increase. If cutting out the Beggin' Strips and Milkbones meant a shot at an extra 2.5 years with your furkid, why wouldn't you do it?

You can visit www.PetObesityPrevention.com for weight loss tips and information on how to get started.

Sarah Hosick is a freelance writer, editor, blogger and animal lover based out of Toronto, Canada. She has spent most of her time working hands-on in the many sides of the pet care world from veterinary clinics to non-profit shelters and draws on those experiences when writing. She is currently the Pets Expert for the Canadian news portal, Sympatico.ca. Sarah considers herself lucky to share her home with two comical Boston Terriers, Remy and Ira and a Persian cat with incredible vocal range, Robin Van Purrrsie. You can follow Sarah on Twitter @thesarahhosick or on her website and blog, www.SarahHosick.com

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