



Animal Chatter

Washington Area Humane Society **WINTER 2008**

1527 Rt. 136 | Eighty Four, PA 15330 | 724-222-PETS | washingtonpashelter.org

A No Kill Shelter Giving Pets A New Leash On Life Funded By Your Contributions

★ Wish List ★

- Dry Cat & Dog Food
- Frontline Plus
- Dry Kitten Food
- Clay Cat Litter
- Bleach (*we use a lot*)
- Laundry Detergent
- Paper Towels
- Baby Food (*meat only*)
- Small Envelopes
- Postage Stamps
- 39 Gal. Garbage Bags
- HP15, 17, 78 cartridges



The Angels

This past holiday season boasted an inordinate number of angels for the shelter and the animals who "live" there. Usually a single Angel Tree, trimmed with dog and cat ornaments requesting wish list items is erected and donations stream in. But volunteers led by Sherri Shamonsky and Jet Miskis took this concept to a whole new level. Their team constructed not one, not two, but nine Angel Trees around the south hills area

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Sadie: Out of the Shadows *by Caryn Sousa*

On April 26th 2005, I held my darling beagle, Max in my arms as he passed away. He was 14, and my baby since he was 8 weeks old. I had known he was not happy here; he wanted to be with his best buddy, my husband James, who had passed on a month before. As I wept, knowing they were together again on Rainbow Bridge, I wondered what would become of me, since I was now totally alone. I didn't have long to wait because my mom and James' daughter literally put me in their car and took me on a drive that changed my life.

In one hour, we arrived at the shelter. I decided that I was too emotional to go in, we just had to go back home. Again, the force of love gently guided me in to the world of high hopes and bitter disappointments. I was fearful as I walked to where the adoptable dogs were. Every pair of eyes watched hopefully as we walked through. Every dog barked and jumped, whined and waited to be touched by loving hands. All but one.



My mom said, "How about this one?" I knelt down to find a terrified black dog, cowering in the shadows of the kennel. She had been "dropped off" two days before and the staff didn't know much about her, except she wouldn't eat or drink, and they thought she had been abused in some way. Her name was Sadie. I went back, knelt down in front of her, and talked to her quietly for a few minutes. Then she looked up with the eyes of an angel, telling me she was the one. She told me that we could look past each other's pain, and share a life, a "LIFE" of adventures, quiet times, and becoming a family. That day I took my Sadie out of the shadows and into the sunlight of our new life together.

As the weeks passed, we became less afraid, more adventurous, and willing to trust again. It was a

rebirth for both of us.

We learned how to play, do belly rubs, and shop for new slippers weekly. We made cottage cheese and dog food artwork on the wall, caught lightning bugs and took them to bed with us. Chewing grass, trapping bees in flowers with unpleasant results, eating rabbit poop, and exploring the world again opened our eyes, and our hearts.

Sadie makes me laugh when I'm sad. Her magic ways touch my heart ... and it doesn't hurt quite so much. When we sit together, she always touches me with part of her body, as if to say "I will not let anything hurt you again." I feel the same way.

My gift to Sadie was total commitment, a loving and safe home for life. Sadie's gift to me was my life, laughter, fun, and unconditional love for the rest of our life together.

Are we afraid? You bet! Are we determined? Absolutely! We have both made our way out of the shadows.

And in heaven above James and Max smiled.

BamBam Goes My Heart

by Judy Bonaparte

You don't know what you're missing. I've been an official volunteer for the humane society for a few months now. Among other things, I've taken adoptable dogs out into



I know little about BamBam's past except that he was confiscated by the humane society at around one year of age after leading a miserable life chained inside of a dark garage. He is a hulking 100-pound mass of Rottweiler mix who looks very ferocious but isn't. When he came to the shelter, he was aggressive and left scars on some of the volunteers who cared for him. He spent a year at the shelter without much adoption interest from

the community to show them off. One thing I often hear is "he/she looks like a great dog but I really want a puppy."

Sadly, many of the homeless dogs at the shelter are adults. They are friendly, lovable, obedient, intelligent, know some commands, and desperately need homes. There is nothing wrong with them other than the fact that they are not puppies.

Now, let me tell you about my BamBam who I adopted on the spot at the Wags and Whiskers event in 2006.

the public. But the volunteers didn't give up on him and they kept working with him.

At the Wags and Whiskers event, my dear friend Robyn spotted him peeking out from behind a table. I was dragged over see him and talked to the volunteers about him, who were completely honest about his good and bad points. The next day I picked him up from the shelter and the rest is history.

I wanted an adult dog for several reasons. First, I have had puppies before and did not want to go through the chewing,

housebreaking, etc. routine. Puppies are often cute until you've had them in your home for a few days. Secondly, I am such an animal lover and wanted to open my home and my heart to an unwanted one.

BamBam was housebroken in three days. He has never destroyed a single thing, had an accident in the house, or basically done anything wrong. He's amazing. I crated him for four months while I was at work and then gradually stopped. He has the run of the house and can be completely trusted, even with a tiny kitten.

The first two weeks were difficult and he needed a lot of my attention. He

The worst part is when he would run away. Never too far, just enough to make me put a coat over my pajamas and go and get him. Gradually he learned that this is his home and now never leaves the yard without one of us. In fact, he's never too far from my side.

The more experienced volunteers at the humane society were terrific. They always gave me support and good advice during that difficult time. They are there and they are knowledgeable if you need them.

Please consider giving one of these adult dogs a home. There's going to be a difficult transition period when they first

Judy has participated in offsite events, and recently has been helping shelter staff by entering data into the computer.

had never seen a cat before so he had to learn that they were his friends and not chew toys. Now he lets them sleep with him and cleans them. I kept him near me on a leash at all times since he had never been in a house before and gave him freedom gradually. He learned to have his own toy basket, feeding, and sleeping areas that give him security.

come home with you but that will pass. Give them a chance and keep working at it. The companionship, devotion, and love that I get from BamBam on a daily basis cannot be measured or explained in words.

Judy Bonaparte

We always need volunteers especially to walk the dogs, participate in offsite events and to help us with fundraisers.



A whole lotta nothing is what the ultimate goal is so that future dog play pens or an agility course can be built.

Help Us Win a Million Dollar Shelter Makeover

Seventy percent of Americans don't know where their local pet shelter is. Zootoo.com wants to generate national awareness, raise community support and ultimately, funding for pet shelters in America. Any shelter can win, small, medium, or large. But we need your help to win the makeover or one of the nineteen cash prizes made available by the

Once you do, zootoo sends you an email with a validation link to click on. You must follow that link to earn us 100 points.

Earn Even More Points

Once your profile is on zootoo, you can continue to earn points in various ways such as writing product reviews, volunteering and referring another pet lover like yourself (you both get 100 points).



program. It's Free. It's Fun. It's Easy. The contest began October 1st and ends March 31, 2008.

How You Can Help

What you need to do is register with zootoo.com.

Here is the perfect opportunity for those of you who have wanted to do something for the shelter from home. Visit zootoo.com and help our shelter be a winner.

Volunteers Clear the Back Acreage of WAHS *by Jamie Ivanec*

WAHS volunteer Jet Miskis has a "pet" project – no pun intended.

Her goal? To clear the overgrown 5.9 acres behind the shelter. But she can't do it alone – and so far, we're happy to report that's she's had a lot of help!

Over two Saturdays in late October and early November, Jet and a group of more than 30 volunteers pruned, trimmed, raked and burned the brush to make more room for dog walking, additional play

pens, and maybe someday even an agility course and pavilion.

Peters Township, North Strabane Township and Paul Quast from the McMurray Lions Club donated their time and equipment to first brush-hog the land. Joseph Benebetti from Finleyville Hardware donated 24 pairs of heavy duty work gloves, and Dennis and Deanna Maffei from Pine Ridge Mini Mart and Landscaping provided ice, pop and water for the workers.

Volunteers included:

Girl Scout Troop #3531 of Cecil: Tammy and Arlane Wagner, Morgan and Alexis Eytcheson, Cindy and Chyann Piendl, and Amelia and Cassie Wauthier

The Hon. and Mrs. John DiSalle

Donald and Anthony Persinski

Dr. Mark Berkley

Colin Kenney

Harry L. Funk, McMurray Rotary Club

Karen Harper

David Thompson

Sherri Shamonsky

Kevin, Patrick and James Gallagher

Lauren Spagna and Jason Kurnot

Ryan McLaughlin

Cathie and Ken Havelka

Ross Wagner

Shayne Mull

Floree Aquino

Megan Munts

Sandra Latherow

Chris Alavi

Lynn Ponchione

According to Miskis, there's a lot more work still to be done. Elliott Lawrence R Surveying Inc. has volunteered to do a survey of the land. Miskis is also looking for donations of grass seed and mulch, as well as fencing. Volunteers will be needed in the spring to do some additional cutting and burning.

If you are interested in helping out with the land clearing project, please call Jet Miskis at 724.942.0759.

Volunteer Inspiration

Volunteer Jeanne Tomanio received her Fall 2007 WAHS newsletter and was moved to action after reading the article about appealing to local vets for expired medications for the animals at the shelter. She immediately contacted all the veterinarians within a 50-mile radius of her O'Hara Township home and was delighted by the generous response. She drove to each locale and has twice filled the hatchback of her car with



a wide variety of medicines, treatments and miscellaneous first aid and surgical equipment for the dogs and cats at the Humane Society. Items such as FrontLine and Rymadyl – routinely necessary and expensive to stock – were donated thanks to Jeanne's appeal and follow-through. She plans to check back with all the donor vets on a regular basis to keep the supply line flowing.

A Little Bit from a Lot of People Eased Tough Breaks for Ouna and Patrick



WAHS would love to be able to pay for every procedure, test and operation an animal needs, but it is not economically feasible. Unlike most of you who know where the next paycheck is coming from, we don't know if we will make a thousand dollars or ten thousand dollars next month, because it is our supporters who we depend upon to pay our utility bills, medicine for our animals and the staff who takes care of them.

Ouna and Patrick each had a broken leg – complicated breaks that would require plates and pins – an orthopedic specialty. Each operation was estimated to cost \$1,200 to \$1,800.

It is very hard to consider spending \$3,600 on two animals when more than 100 are in our charge, and we are faced with those expensive decisions often. Amputation is the undesirable alternative, but a reasonable choice

in these cases. Many 3-legged dogs and cats hopped happily out of our shelter into new homes. We prefer that be the last resort.

Why don't we have a fund for this? If we did squirrel away funds for future medical crises, it ties up money we need to run the shelter. Funds are spent responsibly month after month to keep us functioning.

Why not do a mass mailing? Because it costs nearly \$2,000 in postage!

Why not get the media involved? The public would likely burn out from hearing about every case we had. A broken leg is not uncommon, but it is expensive.

So we tried something different and it worked. An email plea was sent out to 200+ supporters asking for as little as \$5.00 for the kitties to help finance their operations. People opened their



hearts and their wallets. They shared the load and took the deduction. Donations came in through our website and checks arrived in the mail. The response was immediate and within a few weeks, we had the funds to cover the procedures.

Sadly, Patrick's leg could not be saved and his limb required an amputation. Ouna did have the plate and pins operation and both cats were recovering well and made available for adoption.

If you would like to be part of this community effort to contribute on a case by case basis, please fill out the form on the next page and return it to us. You can also send an email (washahs@fyi.net) requesting to be added to the list. Put "Share the Load" in the subject line. We will let you know when we need your help with those dogs and cats who need special medical attention.

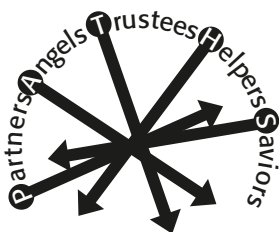
New Food Shed Erected

Patience has to be the most practiced discipline at the Humane Society. Not only do the animals sometimes wait interminably to be adopted, the people who work at, with, and for the shelter need patience to bridge the gap from wish to reality. Day to day, the food, medicine, and cleaning supplies evaporate and must be replenished constantly. Other more pressing maintenance issues, like the two furnaces that conked out on us just before the thermometer saw the first frost, require immediate attention and a large outlay of cash. So it is understood that other big ticket items, that we can limp along without, are put on the back burner where few make it beyond the simmering point.

It has taken nearly two years of targeted fundraising nudged along

by a few well-fed rats who started the whole ball rolling, but time wore down patience. The two rotting wood sheds were replaced by a spanking new 20 sq.ft. metal food shed — weather and rodent proof — set upon a poured concrete pad. It now houses the dog and cat food where stock can be efficiently rotated and donors can even pull their cars into the garage bay for easier unloading.

Sound silly to be this excited over a metal box? It is this kind of banal capital improvement that increases efficiency, reduces spoilage and saves money. But it sure was a long wait.



The new metal food shed is twice as large as the previous wooden shed and can hold a lot more food, so keep it coming!

Thank You For Making A Difference

Tear off and mail back with your tax-deductible contribution.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Enclosed is my donation for a WAHS Membership*

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 _____ \$Other

**\$25 Minimum. All members may vote at annual meeting.*

_____ Save a stamp. I don't need a thank you note.

_____ Please contact me about fostering animals.

_____ I would like to help with offsite events.

_____ I would like to help with fundraisers.

_____ Contact me about in-store Collection Banks.

_____ I will help with the cats at PetSmart.

_____ Send me information about including WAHS in my estate planning.

_____ I will "Share the Load" for injured animals.
Add me to your email list. My email is: _____

I would like to Join P.A.T.H.S. as indicated:

I pledge to send \$ _____ per month to the Washington Area Humane Society's **P.A.T.H.S.** Program. My first envelope will be mailed to me the last week of the month in which I enroll. I will mail it back as soon as possible. If at any time I wish to stop my tax-deductible donation, I will contact WAHS at 724-229-0404.

Please make checks payable to: WAHS.

Or pay by credit card: _____ MC _____ VISA

Card No.: _____

Exp. date: _____ / _____ 3-digit code: _____

Signature: _____

Name as it appears on credit card: _____

Make all donations payable to WAHS

Coping with Cats and Allergies by Patty Gregg

It's estimated that 15-20% of the U.S. population is pet allergic, yet one third of these people choose to have a pet. People with pet allergies tend to have other allergies such as seasonal and food allergies. Common symptoms are similar to what people experience with a cold; runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes and a scratchy throat.

The big thing with allergies is the "itch." Symptoms include skin reactions, such as redness and itchiness, and in extreme cases, full-blown asthma. People with severe allergies should see an allergist. Allergists can conduct a skin test to see exactly what and how severe the allergies are.

According to Dr. Jeff Weber of Century Veterinary Group in Los Angeles; every cat is potentially allergenic. Someone could have two of the same cat breeds and be allergic to one cat but not the other. Hair length has nothing to do with a person's allergic response to cats. The allergen that triggers pet allergies is called FEL-D1, which is in the cat's skin and saliva. Dr. Weber was terribly allergic to cats as a child, but today owns 4 cats.

An allergist may suggest a series of allergy injections for a period of several months. About 75% of patients see some results in six months. Some

lucky people outgrow their allergies. For a child with mild or moderate allergies, years of subjection to allergens may build resistance. Many cats have been surrendered to the Humane Society because someone in the home had allergies, assuming the cat was the problem. But this is not always the case. After allergy tests, some found that the allergy was to something else and they would return for the cat, hoping it was not adopted into a new home.

To minimize cat allergies, try the following:

1. Dipping a cat in warm



distilled water once a week for about ten minutes and towel drying the cat reduces dander production. Studies show a 90% decrease in airborne dander after 9 months of bathing. If the cat hates

baths, use a spray bottle with distilled water and mist the cat every few days.

2. ALLERPET/C spray is available at pet stores. When sprayed on the cat's coat, it neutralizes allergens on the cat.

3. Dust and vacuum regularly. Use a flea comb on your cat which holds the hair, keeping it from falling on the floor and getting into the air.

4. Keep cats out of the bedroom and you will be allergy free at night.

5. Wash after handling the cat and keep the cat away from your face.

6. Use low-dust cat litter and change furnace and AC filters often.

7. Keep cats inside. Cats with fleas scratch and shed more.

8. Use an Air Purifier with a HEPA filter that collects allergens and dander.

9. Healthy cats produce less dander, so schedule meals of high-quality cat food twice a day.

An Update on Poppy

I just wanted to update everyone who donated to Poppy's relief fund on her condition. I fostered Poppy this summer and she needed several expensive



surgeries to mend a shattered back leg. Thank you a million times to everyone who donated to her cause. After several months of recovery (during which time I

adopted her), I can now happily report that Poppy is walking very well on all fours and always has a smile firmly in place while out socializing with people and other dogs. Though her back leg does get tired before the rest, she can still give other dogs at the dog park a run for their money (or their ball, or their frisbee). Most everyone says she is beautiful and I tell them about the good Samaritans at WAHS who have never even met Poppy but helped to give her a normal life. I cannot express my gratitude to everyone who donated to her cause but just know that your donations really made a difference, and that Poppy is almost completely a normal dog again. THANK YOU!!

Hilary Pierpoint, mother of Poppy and Louise (black Lab mix adopted from WAHS at the Black Cuties Sale 2005)



At Home At Camp Bow Wow

Camp Bow Wow in Castle Shannon has a goal – to do charity work, a goal that's working out great for three WAHS dogs.

Camp Bow Wow owner Doreen Valentine-Martin contacted several shelters about fostering some dogs in need of homes. WAHS was the first to respond to her request.

Velvet, Sinatra and Trigger "checked in" to the doggie day care/boarding facility November 26th and all three were adopted in little over a month. They spent their days playing with dogs who are there for daycare and overnight boarding. They went to their cabins only at meal times and bed time.

"The dogs are doing very well here," said Valentine-Martin. "Camp Bow Wow is pretty much their home. We even took them home with us for Christmas."

A former Camp Bow Wow employee adopted Trigger, the seven-year-old Rottweiler mix deemed "least adoptable" by WAHS volunteers. "I was

Help at a Taxing Time with H&R Block

H&R Block thinks WAHS is an important part of Eighty Four's non-profit community; and they have invited us to join in an innovative partnership that may raise funds for our organization while helping our constituents strengthen their financial futures. This is a win-win proposition.

The program is easy and convenient. For each new client referred to have

their taxes done by H&R Block, H&R Block will provide a program reward of \$25.00 to our shelter. To receive the program reward, participants must be new clients and must bring a referral form to H&R Block when they have their taxes done. Referral forms can be downloaded from our website.

The "Use Our People, Help Your People"

program runs January 1, 2008 through November 1, 2008. A few weeks after May 1, 2008 and November 1, 2008 WAHS will receive one convenient check for our total program reward amount.



surprised when they told me that Trigger was the least adoptable," said Valentine-Martin. "I loved him right away, and he quickly became our favorite camper!"

New campers, Parker, Pebbles and Mojo are now enjoying the perks. Camp Bow Wow features profiles of the foster dogs on its website, in hopes of finding the dogs a loving home. Someone has already shown interest in adopting Parker, a young, playful rottie mix who has been at our shelter for a very long time.

Pebbles (*pictured*), a young rottie-hound mix has warmed up to the Camp Bow Wow staff and plays enthusiastically with other campers.

For more information about Camp Bow Wow and these wonderful dogs, stop in or visit www.campbowwow.com/us/pa/pittsburgh2/

Clinic Memberships Keep Basic Care Affordable

If you have adopted an animal from WAHS, your adoption packet had a form in it about our Clinic Membership and many adopters have joined the Clinic to avail themselves of the services that are provided to clinic members at greatly reduced fees.

Now, the membership is available to anyone who owns dogs and cats.

The annual fee is \$30 for the first animal, and \$15 for each additional pet. Our veterinarian will see clients on scheduled clinic days at our facility. An appointment is required. Eligible pets are entitled to unlimited office visits during the year. In addition to affordable spays and neuters, members can get reduced-price vaccinations, tests and medications including:

- Rabies Vaccination
- Feline Leukemia Test
- Heartworm Test
- Coronavirus
- Flea Control
- Distemper
- Fecal Exams
- Bordatella Vaccine
- Lyme Vaccine

Please call the shelter or visit our website at www.washingtonpashelter.org/about.htm for an application and our current fee schedule.

Protecting your pet's health ensures a long and happy life. In addition, spay/neuter participation is the most responsible way to control animal overpopulation.

More than 1200 dogs and over 825 cats were adopted from WAHS during 2007

Dog Treats

Here is a recipe for simple, nutritious, delicious, low cost treats for your best friend. You can just mix them up and drop them onto baking sheets. Or if you want to make them really special for Fido, roll them out and cut them into desired shapes.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 cup unsalted natural peanut butter
- 1 cup skim milk

Preheat oven to 375°
Grease baking sheets. Mix together flour and baking powder, set aside.

In medium bowl, mix together peanut butter and milk. Gradually add flour mixture.

Turn out dough on lightly floured surface 1/4-inch thick and cut into desired shapes.

You can also just drop by tablespoonfuls onto baking sheets

Place 2 inches apart on the sheets

Bake 20 minutes or until lightly brown

Remove and cool. Store in container in cool place.

by Judy Bonaparte

Come see us the first Saturday of every month at Sun Chevrolet on Rt. 19 south in Washington, PA from 11am-3pm where you can meet some of our adoptable dogs.

*Angel Tree
continued from page 1*

including Washington Crown Center, 5/3 Bank in McMurray, Tractor Supply Company, Sue's Pet Parlor in Greentree, Z-Spot Tattoo & Piercing Parlor in Dormont, Conte's Hair Design in Dormont, Washington Animal Hospital, Camp Bow Wow in Castle Shannon and Quail Ridge Shoppes. Donations of dog and cat food, treats, toys and necessities like toilet paper, rock salt and paper towels flooded the shelter which have helped replenish the dwindling supplies for the new year. The months after the holidays are the lowest for donations, making the work of all the angels even more important.



Washington Area Humane Society
P.O. Box 66
Eighty Four, PA 15330

Happy? 'Nother Year at the Shelter



Mojo

Mojo is a senior dog who celebrated his 1-year anniversary at the shelter. His only break was when another dog attacked him and he was able to recuperate in a foster home. Mojo is a small collie mix with a lot of personality. He got on well with the resident dog and cat in his foster home and he really needs a permanent place to rest his little head.



GOLDIE

Goldie is a darling, buff, 12-week-old kitten, who had a broken leg and is now in a cast. She also has Calicivirus, and is currently in the isolation area where she is recuperating. She would do much better in a foster home where she could move around more and exercise her leg, but she should not be in contact with other cats until she is over her virus.



Ripley

Ripley is a very pretty, mostly happy, young shepherd mix. She had puppies upon her arrival at the shelter who were all adopted leaving mother Ripley the only one without a home. Ripley has a winning disposition beneath her frustration at being caged for so long. Ripley is about 2 years old and would be a great companion for a family.