

A Letter From Save A Dog's President

Hi everyone,

I just wanted to let you all know that we're entering our third successful year of placing abandoned dogs into permanent homes. People often ask us how we can go on, doing this in our spare time weekend after weekend without getting burnt out and I have to say that the joy of re-homing a dog who would otherwise not have a chance at life is worth it. We are continually inspired by you, the adopters, who have not only provided great homes for these dogs, but who also keep us updated with your news and photos of your dogs. Sometimes when I look at the pictures I hardly recognize them because they bear no resemblance to the sad, emaciated dogs we took in just a few months prior. Working in dog rescue brings us to see the best and worst of humanity, but for every disheartening case we have ten good ones to off-set it and that keeps us going.

Another thing that keeps us going is that we have a fantastic group of volunteers. Never have I met people so dedicated nor tireless in their willingness to rescue, transport, foster, train, drive dogs to vet appointments, go out and evaluate dogs, pull dogs from overcrowded shelters, bathe, feed, walk and a number of other things for they do for the dogs. As you will see in this issue, sometimes our work takes us as far away as Georgia and the volunteers are willing to go to great lengths to pick them up and drive them back here. Volunteers who think nothing of using their hard-earned vacation time to go rescue dogs or to take dogs to vet appointments, are a constant source of inspiration to those of us who facilitate. We have a regular group of folks who walk the dogs that we have to board and another group who regularly transports dogs from one state to another. We have people who focus on fund raising and in particular, our upcoming dog walk, to benefit the dogs yet to be rescued. We have second graders who held fund-raising events for the dogs (as you will read on page 3). We have a group of folks who are willing to bottle feed kittens every two hours for weeks at a time. The list goes on and on and I could fill more than a newsletter with all the wonderful things these folks have done for the animals. Where would one ever meet people like this? Our idea of a good time is to sit around watching dog training videos and talking for hours on end about how each dog is doing and what we think would be the best home for them. So, when we get weary we think about all of you, the adopters and the volunteers, and we're refreshed and inspired and ready to go save more dogs. When I think about all the dogs who've come through the program and where they are now as compared to where they would have been it gives me chills. This issue is dedicated to all of you. I hope to see you all at the dog walk on September 30th so we can celebrate together the joy of our canine friends.

Shirley Moore
President and Cofounder
Save A Dog, Inc.



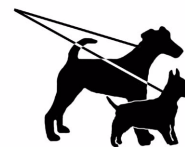
Garvey, A Save A Dog alumni, takes time from his busy schedule to enjoy life.

Garvey. A Love Story!

We recently received this letter from Nate, Joellyn and Garvey. We thought we'd share it and a great picture with you!

"Since it's been just about a year since Joellyn and I adopted Garvey from Save A Dog, we figured we'd drop you a line to let you know how well he's doing. I guess he's pretty much full grown by now, and he weighs 53 pounds (he was about 35 when we adopted him). He still loves to play ball and stick, and will play for hours on end. He loves swimming also. We take him to a nearby pond to let him play in the water whenever we can. Last summer while at the beach he stood up on a surf board and floated around for a while! So here is a picture of our buddy taken a few weeks ago. He is doing great, and we love taking him places and having him as part of our lives.

Joellyn, Nate & Garvey"



Paws in the Park

Save A Dog's first annual Paws in the Park dog walk will be held on Sunday, Sept. 30th from 9:00am to 2:00pm at the VA Hospital Picnic Grounds in Bedford, MA. See the enclosed Sign Up Sheet for more details.

ATLANTA RESCUE

It took one van, 24 hours, and 1100 miles to make a remarkable difference in the lives of 23 dogs.

On April 27th of this year, two Save A Dog volunteers flew to Atlanta, Georgia, to drive two dozen dogs back to Massachusetts. "Why would Save A Dog go all the way down to Atlanta when there are so many dogs up here," you ask? Although most of the dogs coming into Save A Dog are local dogs, there is a shortage of small dogs in the shelters around in the Boston area. Shelters in Atlanta are filled with small, adoptable dogs who are euthanized because there are not enough homes for them. In some areas of the south, 80% of the dogs taken in are euthanized. The counties surrounding Atlanta alone euthanize over 90,000 dogs a year while here in Massachusetts, we have people waiting to adopt small dogs.

In Massachusetts when you adopt a dog from a shelter most likely it has already been spayed or neutered—or you are required to do it within a reasonable time frame. These policies do not exist or are not enforced in some areas of the country. This means that the animal control facilities are overrun with unwanted dogs. In some cases dogs are held for only 2 days before being euthanized and some shelters pack several dogs into each cage because they don't have enough room. These poor dogs spend their last days in extremely stressful conditions. One shelter we know routinely takes in 100 dogs a week, most of whom are euthanized. When we hear about these situations we feel compelled to help.

So last April, Linda McGreal and Pam Aparo flew south, rented a cargo van, and filled it with abandoned dogs. Including breaks for water and walks, the trip back took 24 hours. Linda and Pam took turns driving and napping so the dogs would have the shortest trip possible. Armed with cell phones to call in progress reports to the team

waiting for them back home, dogs and drivers finally arrived at Best Friends in Sudbury, at 7:30 P.M. on April 28th. There, other volunteers started bathing, walking, and comforting the dogs after the long trip. After helping to unload the van, Pam and Linda went home for a shower and some much-needed and well-earned sleep.

Once in Massachusetts, Save A Dog quickly found a loving home for each one. All of the dogs we brought back from Georgia were very young, and many were breeds that we don't see often in local shelters. By changing the location of these dogs we were able to save their lives. In Atlanta, they were unwanted animals, destined to die in a matter of days. Here they have become cherished pets and family members.

After such a success with this transport, we hope to continue to help dogs in other regions whenever we can. Thanks to volunteers like Pam and Linda and to the dedicated supporters who send us donations, we can continue this labor of love. 🐾

Calendar

FUND RAISING EVENTS

Sept. 15th – Bedford Day Fair

11am to 3pm, Bedford Center, Bedford MA. We will be selling crafts and t-shirts at the fair.

Sept. 30th – Paws in the Park

9am to 2pm, Veterans Administration Medical Center Picnic Area in Bedford, MA

ADOPTION DAYS

September 15th — 11am to 2pm

Especially for Pets in Wayland, MA

October 6th — 1pm to 4pm

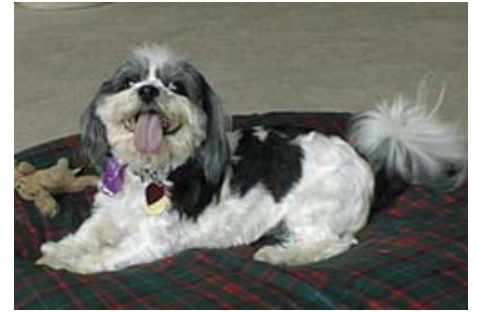
Especially for Pets in Sudbury, MA

October 14th — 12pm to 3pm

Especially for Pets in Acton, MA
444 Great Road (Rt. 119/2A)

November 10th — 1pm to 4pm

Especially for Pets in Sudbury, MA



A chance meeting between Tina (pictured here) and her new owner Jane has developed into a life-long friendship.

Two of a Kind

By Jenny Norton

Fate is a strange thing. It can help us find the perfect mate, the perfect job and even the perfect dog.

I had to take a road trip down to Connecticut to pick up two dogs. They had been pulled from an overcrowded shelter where they were awaiting euthanasia. They had not come in together, but happened to both be purebred Shi-Tzus. Not wanting to make the long trip myself, I asked my mother-in-law if she wanted to come for the ride. Jane agreed and we were on our way.

The two dogs looked alike, but the similarity ended there. Stella was about a year old, exuberant and outgoing in typical puppy style. Her coat was glossy and her teeth were clean and solid. She was so active that we put her into a crate for the ride home.

Tina was a different story. The teeth that she had remaining showed her age. She leaned into each pat and was content to sit on Jane's lap for the entire drive. Her tail thumped hard against Jane's legs each time Jane reached down to stroke her.

For the entire ride home, Jane and Tina commiserated on the burden of age and loneliness. Jane had lost her fourteen year old dog the year before. She herself was 70 and had not acquired another dog, feeling that she was getting too old to start over.

Tina and Jane spent the trip in silent dialogue. Their eyes, both soft with age and experience, gazed lovingly at one another. By the time we hit the

(continued on page 3)

Teaching Children to Care About Their World

by Sally Kindleberger

The school motto at Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, Massachusetts, has long been:

Work Hard! Be Kind! Play Fair!

A few years ago a fourth part was added to the motto—**Reach Out!** It is the reaching out part of the school's ideals that I wish to address in this article. Each year, every class chooses to support several community service projects. The smallest members of the community may plant bulbs and make birthday hats for the faculty. The older girls may support a child's schooling in Africa or raise funds for the Heifer Project, which sends poultry and cattle to communities around the world. The first grade raises funds for The Greyhound Friends.

When the second grade teachers put their heads together to choose their community service projects, they were stymied about which worthy projects to pick, given so many! Along with UNICEF, Save A Dog sounded like a perfect and important organization to support. It would be a clear segue from what the first grades had been doing, and it had meaning and value for children. Animals are important in children's lives and to save animals from miserable situations and often



death, was a perfect fund raising project for second graders.

One class set to work to make dog cards and at the same time they studied dogs. They learned about breeds and dog care. A few kids decided to write dog stories and an industrious group started a dog encyclopedia. One family rallied around the idea and scanned and printed all the cards—30 in all. The classes chose to support Save A Dog around Thanksgiving and soon it was time for The Nashoba Brooks Holiday Fair, (which is put on by the Parent's Association). It had been decided that any proceeds from the fair would be divided equally among classes and would be sent to Community Service Projects. The second grade decided to send their earnings to Save A Dog.

After combining the earnings from cards and the Holiday Fair, Grade 2 was proud to present Save A Dog with a check for over \$800. Not bad for 7 and 8 year olds.

In May, Shirley and Jenny from Save A Dog came and presented every child in the NBSC second grade with a Save A Dog tee shirt. They also brought along a Save A Dog alumnus dog, Tina, who cheered everyone with tail wags and friendly greetings. In

addition, Shirley and Jenny spoke to the children about the importance of taking good care of pets and a little about the Save A Dog organization. As a result of the talk one of the teachers became a Save A Dog volunteer and started fostering dogs this summer, eventually adopting her own little Save A Dog dog, the best little guy in the world.

Next year's classes will continue their support for Save A Dog and in doing so will learn the value of "Reaching Out" beyond themselves. We hope that as they develop and grow they will learn the merit of helping others. 🐾

Two of a Kind

(continued from page 2)

Massachusetts border it was all over. They had found one another and neither was willing to let go.

That was three years ago. The strange thing is that we have never figured out exactly how old Tina is. At first we guessed that she could be as old as 10, but strangely, each year she seems younger. Her body wiggles delightedly each time she hears her name. She has learned to play with toys and will avidly chase her stuffed animals around the house. And each night, she settles serenely on the couch with Jane to watch TV.

Even more amazing is that we are now wondering if there is a similar misconception about Jane's age. Each year since Tina came into her life, Jane herself seems to get younger and younger 🐾

How to Keep Your Dog from Becoming Aggressive

- 🐾 Socialize your dog by introducing him to a variety of people, especially men and children. Invite lots of people over during those crucial first weeks, especially if he's a puppy.
- 🐾 Leash walk him several times a week so that he can meet people and other dogs on neutral ground; do this even if you have a large fenced-in yard.
- 🐾 On his first birthday switch him from puppy food to adult food. Research shows that a high protein diet contributes to aggression in dogs. (Lamb and rice is very calming.)
- 🐾 Do not chain him or tie him out in the back yard. If you have to put him on a run temporarily try to switch the location of the run so that he will not become territorial.
- 🐾 Take him to obedience training classes. Trained dogs are easier to manage than untrained.
- 🐾 Do not allow a dominant dog on the furniture. Once you've established leadership let him on the furniture by invitation only.

If you adopted your dog from Save A Dog, please call us at the first sign of any aggression! We'll be happy to help you and we can offer referrals to trainers who specialize in behavioral problems.

WHAT IS FERAL FIX?



Each evening in towns across the Metrowest and all over America the eyes of feral cats snap on like flashlights in the dusky evening. They scrounge, they play, they mate and they die—victims of

disease, cold, starvation and predation. But mostly, they are the victims of human ignorance.

What is a feral cat? Feral is defined as “having escaped from domestication and become wild.” Feral cats live in colonies, usually near a food source such as a dumpster, and are generally afraid of humans. Colonies may consist of anywhere from 8 to 80 cats and are commonly found at apartment complexes, college campuses or strip malls.

Where these cats come from is even more tragic. Many were pets who were left behind when their owners moved. This is a common occurrence at apartment complexes where renters are faced with moving to non-pet friendly apartments. Unfortunately, the same people who abandon their cat also tend not to spay or neuter their pets. The cat population grows exponentially and, in just a few short generations, two unaltered cats can produce thousands of kittens. Although the mortality rate for kittens born outside is high, enough survive to create a population explosion in just a few short years.

With an estimated 60–100 million feral cats across the country, the problem can seem impossible. Fortunately, it is not. Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) programs have sprung up across the country with spectacular results.

TNR, a form of non-lethal colony control involves humanely trapping feral cats, neutering them, vaccinating them for rabies, testing them for Feline Leukemia and FIV,

notching their ear for identification and returning them to their colony. This works in partnership with “caretakers” who provide food and often some sort of outside shelter for the cats. The end result is that the colony shrinks and the remaining cats are healthier.

On occasion, while crawling through the brush to set traps, we find litters of kittens. To prevent them from becoming feral, our network of volunteers hand raise these litters, neuters them at 8 weeks and adopts them out to good homes—saving them from a short life of hunger, cold and disease.

Stanford University implemented a similar program to Feral Fix in 1989 in response to an exponential annual growth in feral cats on campus. By 1994, the Stanford Cat Network had not only ended the population growth, it had actually reduced the number of cats on campus from over 500 to 300.

The Feral Fix program is striving to bring success like that to our area. However, we cannot operate without help from the community. It costs approximately \$85 to neuter and vaccinate on cat. That money comes exclusively from private donations. Kittens are even more costly to care for, as they need expensive formula until weaned, along with their neutering, testing and vaccinations. The kittens are adopted out at \$125, which barely covers the costs that they incur.

For our volunteers this involves crawling through poison ivy to set traps, dealing with unhappy feral cats in traps, undergoing painful rabies vaccinations and bottle feeding orphan kittens every couple of hours for weeks on end. But the end result is well worth it. If you would like to make a donation to our **Feral Fix** program, please make the your check out to **Feral Fix**. Thank You! 🐾