



The Watchdog

Stevens-Swan Humane Society

May 2007

Starting off on The Right Paw: The Stevens-Swan Humane Society Foster Program

One of the subjects we at the shelter are most often asked about is our foster care program. People are curious about it, and want to know what it entails. At its core, fostering for SSSH is one of the most rewarding ways to give animals a fresh chance at life.

Throughout the year, but most often during the warmer months, the

shelter is deluged with puppies and kittens; only on rare occasions is the mother still with her litter. Depending on the age of the babies, the fostering period for young animals can range from 2-12 weeks.

Hundreds of injured animals also find a safe haven at SSSH in any given year, and they recover best with the help of a caring foster family.

Adults and juveniles alike are frequently brought to the shelter with injuries requiring surgery and illnesses that must be meticulously treated. Recovery is faster and the chances of contracting another illness are greatly reduced when an animal is cared for in a foster home.

Interested parties can become foster

parents by completing an application, which is available at the front desk of the shelter. Before fostering, we strongly suggest that people talk to their own veterinarian about precautions (such as additional vaccinations and setting up a separate area for fosters) to take before bringing an animal with a relatively unknown medical history into the home.

Fostering is a wonderful and selfless way to give unwanted animals a good start – or even a second chance – and we’re in need of families willing to open their homes and hearts to our most at-risk furry friends! For more information about fostering for Stevens-Swan, please call the shelter at 315-738-4357, or visit our foster webpage at <http://stevens-swan.org/foster.asp>.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Letter from the Executive Director | 2 |
| Dog Safety for Children | 3 |
| One Dog’s Happy “Tail” | 3 |
| Doctor’s Notes | 4 |
| Donations | 5 |
| Upcoming Events | 9 |
| Protect Your Pet | 9 |



This 5-week old Akita-Mastiff mix puppy was brought in after he was attacked by another dog. The SSSH veterinary team performed emergency surgery to remove his eye, and he then went into foster care for several weeks to recover and mature until he reaches adoption age.

Time on Your Hands? Volunteer!

The Stevens-Swan Humane Society is in need of a few good volunteers!

If you enjoy an office setting and working with people, we could use your help organizing and administering the shelter’s volunteer program.

Wiggle Waggle will be here before we know it (Sep’t. 16), and we’re looking for individuals to help plan, and to work the day of the event.

You can also preempt the winter blahs by

helping us plan the next telethon, which is scheduled for January 17.

Call Kathy at 738-4357 if you would like to help!

If you’re considering a new pet:

- June is National Adopt-A-Shelter-Cat Month
- October is National Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog Month
- November is National Adopt-A-Senior-Pet Month



Letter from The Executive Director

The Stevens-Swan Humane Society has a long history of caring for the abandoned, abused and unwanted. SSHS has been around for 97 years, offering our community an important service. But as all things evolve and progress, so has our organization. One of the largest issues we face is making sure our shelter is fiscally sound so it can serve our community into the future. I doubt the members of Stevens-Swan in 1910 could have envisioned a National Grid monthly bill of more than \$6000, or the cost of medicines and animal care at 2007 rates. As members and friends, you are all keenly aware that SSHS receives no local, county or state funding for our general operating budget. Without your generosity, this facility could not and *would not* exist. It costs money to operate this shelter, and in an effort to meet our financial obligations, we have put some new policies into place.

"I doubt the members of Stevens-Swan in 1910 could have envisioned a National Grid monthly bill of more than \$6000, or the cost of medicines and animal care at 2007 rates."

1. Stevens-Swan Humane Society now requests a donation for the care of animals turned in to us by an owner. We feel the responsibility of pet ownership needs to be a top priority, and that responsibility continues when relinquishing an animal to a shelter. This policy will help the shelter generate needed revenue to care for the thousands of animals that come through the facility each year.

2. On May 1st, we enacted a daily "shelter fee" for owned animals that have been brought in as strays by an animal control officer or by the general public. These fees are in addition to fines charged by the owner's municipality for the various violations. It is our feeling that this fee will make individuals understand the importance of keeping their pet from running at large. In addition, this charge will help compensate for the costs of housing lost animals until an owner comes forward.

3. The shelter is now closed on Mondays. This gives us an opportunity to give the kennels an intensive weekly cleaning. During the other 6 days of the week, cleaning is accomplished in the two hours prior to opening and continues while visitors are in our building. On Mondays, kennels can be soaked while animals are walked. Staff can concentrate on the socialization and training of animals which can only help increase the number of animals adopted. Additionally, it allows us a day for staff in-service training as is required by a variety of regulatory agencies.

Of course, our fundraising initiatives are paramount to the continued success of the Stevens-Swan Humane Society. We have started a fundraising committee that will be responsible for the Wiggle Waggle Walkathon, the Telethon and other initiatives. We meet at the shelter, and the more the merrier. Call 738-4357 for the next meeting date. You can also hold your own fundraiser, have a birthday party and in lieu of gifts make a donation to the shelter, or organize a bottle drive or bake sale. Get your friends, relatives and co-workers to become members of the shelter. Every little bit helps.

Stevens-Swan is *your* local humane society, the place where the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered and the abandoned receive care. With so many dedicated members and friends, it is my prayer that we continue to serve well into the future.

Kathy Contino-Turner

Executive Director



Mr. Frosty Comes out of the Cold and into a Home with Warm, Loving Hearts

On a bitter November evening, an adult Chow Chow mix was left discarded on a North Utica street by his owner. A witness to this abandonment called officials at the Stevens-Swan Humane Society and Animal Control, and both organizations sent officers to rescue the dog. A full 24 hours later, Animal Control was able to catch

the dog and bring him to the shelter.

The dog, named “Frosty” by the staff, was a freezing, frightened mess. After several weeks of recuperation and proper care at SSHS, Frosty met Stacie Luczynski and Renee Perch, who fell in love with him and decided to make him part of their family.

Frosty settled right in, and found himself to be the recipient of more love than he had probably ever known in his life.

The dog that had been so unceremoniously abandoned now has a home with all of the love and care he could ever need, plus



“Frosty” wasted no time getting comfortable with his housemates and new best friends “Cookie” and “Sugar.”



“Frosty,” the formerly unwanted Chow Chow mix, is now the king of his castle and the lord of his doggie bed.

two canine siblings – Sugar and Cookie!

There are thousands of cases like Frosty’s at Stevens-Swan each year... can you open your home to bring an unwanted pet in from the cold?

Three Most Important Items to Teach Your Children About Dog Safety

Dogs Don’t Like Hugs and Kisses – Teach your kids not to hug or kiss a dog on the face. Hugging the family dog or face-to-face contact are common causes of bites to the face. Instead, teach kids to scratch the dog on the chest or the side of the

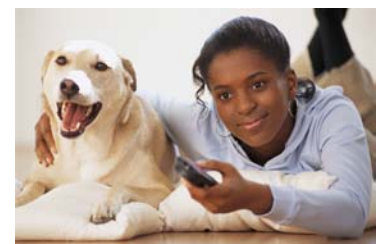
neck.

Be a Tree if a Strange Dog Approaches – Teach kids to stand still, like a tree. Trees are boring and the dog will eventually go away. This works for strange dogs and anytime the family dog gets too

frisky or becomes aggressive.

Never Tease a Dog – and never disturb a dog that’s sleeping, eating or protecting something.

Courtesy of www.doggoneseafe.com



Teaching your children how to behave around dogs will make everybody safer and happier.



Doctor's Notes



Stathis V. Demson, D.V.M.

*Healthy, well-behaved
pets require significant
effort on the part of the
owner, but this
investment – especially
with regard to an
adopted shelter pet—will
ultimately result in a
happy and rewarding
lifetime relationship.*

To many, it may come as a surprise to learn that the Stevens-Swan Humane Society takes in an average of 10 animals each day. Day-in and day-out, animals are brought to the shelter and the great majority arrives with little or no background information. A large percentage of those arriving have, unfortunately, lacked proper home management and preventative health care. In other words, they have had neither basic obedience training nor veterinary attention. We see evidence of this in the animals that are stray, un-neutered, infested with parasites, stressed and debilitated in varying degrees by exposure and/or malnourishment. Many times, even owned animals are relinquished to the shelter with no information regarding prior health care, ongoing behavioral or health problems and temperament concerns.

We are grateful to those individuals who do provide information about the animals they relinquish, as it is most useful to staff who work constantly to re-home as many of these pets as possible. When an animal is adopted and it is time to go to its new home we ask the adopter to:

1. Take 2-3 weeks to become familiar with the new pet, and observe it for any health or temperament concerns;
2. Schedule a timely post-adoption appointment with a veterinarian, and begin a regular health care management program with the doctor that will likely include a diet plan, parasite control, vaccinations and disease-prevention measures;
3. When necessary, schedule an appointment with a trained professional for obedience training, or to address behavioral concerns (which may be best addressed through a team effort among owner, veterinarian and trainer). Trainers and veterinarians tend to be very supportive of this type of approach, but the adopter must ultimately be the one to take the initiative to pursue these arrangements.

Because most adopted animals grow accustomed to life in the shelter, and learn to feel safe and secure with shelter staff, they may need time to readjust to a normal life. The pet may consider its rescuer as a stranger at first but, with very few exceptions, will respond favorably to a human who provides a secure environment characterized by good housing and confined and controlled activity. This success is only amplified when the animal is provided with quality nutrition, mental stimulation and physical activity. An animal can quickly respond favorably and with trust to a person, or family, who provides “2 balanced meals” daily, along with loving, caring attention. These persons are respected even more when they establish a line of communication with the pet that sets limits on what is – and what is not – acceptable behavior.



He's eager to please, but he needs his person to let him know what is—and what is not—appropriate behavior.

Local veterinarians and obedience trainers are able to provide assistance and the benefit of their experience at a reasonable expense. Whether an adopter is an experienced pet owner, or has just welcomed his or her first animal into the home, one appointment with a dedicated animal healthcare professional will pave the way to establishing an all-important veterinarian-client relationship. This will allow doctor and client to more thoroughly attend



Doctor's Notes, Continued from Previous Page

to routine health concerns as well as unforeseen emergencies for the lifetime of the pet. A veterinarian can provide a pet owner with a wealth of information aimed at the goal of a long and healthy life for the animal, from puppy- or kittenhood through the senior years.

Similar benefits, especially for those with limited animal-handling experience, can come from arranging a series of visits with a qualified obedience-training professional. If a pet is posing some challenges, the family can commit to a series of consultations that will allow each member to learn how to be a better animal handler and caretaker (experience that could be applied to pets that come into the home in the future). A trained and well-behaved pet is a joy to have, and is also less likely to exhibit behavioral problems as it matures.

Healthy, well-behaved pets require significant effort on the part of the owner, but this investment—**especially** with regard to an adopted shelter pet—will ultimately result in a happy and rewarding lifetime relationship. By spaying and neutering, as well as providing veterinary care and responsible, loving homes, we can *all* play an important role in reducing the numbers of unwanted, uncared-for, unhealthy and unchecked animals in our community.



Donations

The following donations were received between January 1, 2007 and April 30, 2007

Donations

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ms. Carmen Austin | Mohawk Valley Dog Training Club |
| Barbara Berlin | Moravian Church of the Good Shepherd |
| Edward and Barbara Bonham | Kathleen and Gordon Morrock |
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| Edith Lawton | Theresa Brindisi |
| Michael Mandry | William Gale, DDS |
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| Beatrice McBea | Florence and Joel Galinn |
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In Memory of Raymond Hertel

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In Honor of Kim Intino's Birthday

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Amy Burger



| | | |
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In Memory of "Perdy" Payne

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In Memory of "Mitzi" Provost

Florence and Diane Galinn

In Memory of "Harpo" Trisolino

Rosa Trisolino

Hot Tips for Warm Weather

The return of sunny skies and warm temperatures provides many wonderful things for pets and their parents: sunbeams in which to nap, endless games of fetch and the entertaining antics of birds and wildlife in the yard. There are, however, certain dangers specific to the warmer months that we all must mind.

- Do not leave a pet unattended in a vehicle, even with the windows cracked. Temperatures have been known to rise as much as 30 degrees per minute in the right conditions. Even though we may only intend on running into the store for a minute, we can end up getting stuck for much longer than we expect. If you have a dog that really enjoys going for rides, bring along another person to wait with your pet.



- If your dog or cat is out for *any* amount of time, make sure it has access to fresh water.
- Exercise caution when rolling down vehicle windows for your dog. Debris from the road can easily strike a dog's head if it is hanging out the window. Try rolling down the window just a little, so Fido and Fifi can get a nosefull while their heads remain safely inside the vehicle.
- A visit to your vet for vaccinations and parasite control will help your pets and your family have a healthy and care-free summer!

As always, enjoy your pet's love and companionship!

There's nothing else quite like it.



Hill's® Science Diet® feeding program at Stevens-Swan Humane Society made possible by





Coming Soon to A Shelter Near (and Dear) to You!

The always popular, always fun, Wiggle Waggle Walkathon has been scheduled for Sunday, September 16, 2007. Once again, it will be held at lovely Sherrillbrook Park on Route 12 in New Hartford.

Look for pledge forms in the next newsletter,

and at the shelter around August 1. It's never too early to start raising money for the animals, and there are currently sponsorship opportunities available.

As we look forward to 2008, our 3rd Annual Telethon will be held on Thursday, January 17 on

WKTU News Channel 2. Like this year's event, next year's will run from 6am until 8pm. There are also sponsorship opportunities available for this event.

Thanks to our wonderful supporters, these events get bigger and better each year!



Wiggle Waggle Hop-A-Thon? Stevens-Swan is able to help thousands of animals each year thanks to its supporters. "Bun Bun," adopted in April, is just one of many success stories.

The top reasons for calls to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center are:

- Pills and other medications for people
- Insecticides
- Mouse and rat poisons
- Pet medicine overdose
- Household cleaners

Just in Case...

Even the most diligent pet parent faces an emergency once in a while. Although emergencies are unexpected, there are some simple ways to prepare.

- Keep your regular veterinarian's number handy, and be sure to ask him or her where to call after hours or in a crisis.
- The ASPCA's Poison Control Center phone number is (888) 426-4435. The \$55 fee they charge is minimal, and they can offer advice if your pet ingests a toxic substance.
- The Red Cross offers tips on first aid for pets, as well as tips on how to care for your pets in the event of a natural disaster. Log on to www.redcross.org to learn more.
- Some items to keep on hand: an instant cold pack, aluminized emergency blanket, a fresh bottle of hydrogen peroxide and a bulb syringe, a pet carrier and a pet first aid kit.



In April, the residents of Gan Kavod in New Hartford held a bake sale and chose to donate the proceeds to the Stevens-Swan Humane Society. Representatives from Gan Kavod delivered their donation and met with Executive Director Kathy Contino-Turner, center, and "Shiloh."



The Stevens-Swan Humane Society Guide to Designer Dogs

Is your home the only one on the block without a “designer” pet? Are you Labradoodle-less? Sans puggle? Peek-a-Poo free? There are countless rare designer dogs available for adoption at SSHS. Below are just a few of the truly unique canines that have spent time at the shelter awaiting adoption:



“Rusty,” adopted in May, is a wonderful example of the “Shepweiler,” a mix of German Shepherd and Rottweiler.

A “Keeswhat,” like Deek, is a master of disguise. She could be a Keeshond mix, or maybe she’s a Shepherd mix. She knows how to keep her secrets under wraps, and she’ll never tell.



Take one part Corgi, add one part Beagle, throw in a snaggletooth and mismatched ears and, *voila*, you have an adorable, original “Corbeagle!”

Be a true original—adopt a one-of-a-kind shelter pet from Stevens-Swan!



Stevens-Swan Humane Society hours of operation:

Tuesday-Friday, 11-6

Saturday, 11-5

Sunday, 11-2

Monday, closed

Summer Reading for Animal Lovers of All Ages

Who doesn't love a good summer read? Whether it's children beginning to read, or students and adults spending some well-earned time off soaking up the sun with a good book, summer means reading for recreation! Some of our picks:

For Children:

What Pets Teach Us, by Andrea Donner

Harry Cat's Pet Puppy, by George Selden

Pet Show!, by Ezra Jack Keats

Charlotte's Web, by E.B. White

For Teens:

Black Beauty, by Anna Sewell

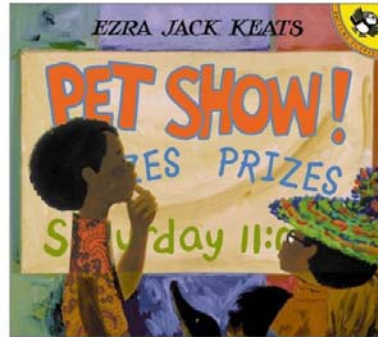
Watership Down, by Richard Adams

The Call of the Wild, Jack London

For Adults:

Pets in America: A History, Katherine Grier

Why the Wild Things Are: Animals in the Lives of Children, Gail F. Melson



The Lost Pet Chronicles: Adventures of a K-9 Cop Turned Pet Detective, Kathy Albrecht

Bridging the Bond: The Cultural Construction of the Shelter Pet, Tami L. Harbolt



Stevens-Swan Humane Society

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Utica, NY 13502

Phone: 315-738-4357

Fax: 315-797-6362

Don't Shop. Adopt!



Visit us on the web!

www.stevens-swan.org

“And the fox said to the little prince: men have forgotten this truth, but you must not forget it. You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed.” Antoine De Saint-Exupery, *The Little Prince*

Break The Chain, Bring The Dog Inside

The Humane Society of the United States, along with other animal welfare agencies, have started a movement to “break the chain” and bring the family dog inside the home once and for all.

There are a variety of reasons that people give for chaining their pets. Many of these are the result of misunderstanding. Chaining a dog in one spot for hours, days, months, or even years does not allow the animal to enjoy being

outdoors. Quite the contrary, it can cause the animal to suffer immense psychological damage and make the dog dangerous. The fact that dogs are social creatures that thrive on interaction with their human families should not be underestimated.

A dog that is chained outside in order to protect property is not an effective deterrent to burglary. A Chicago study conducted just a few years ago involved interviewing

felons convicted of breaking and entering. Of those asked, 98% said that the greatest deterrent to entering a home was a dog barking...inside the house.



For more information on this subject, log on to www.humanesociety.org or www.dogsdeservebetter.com. By educating ourselves and others, we can all help break the chain.