

PetGazette

INFORMATION THAT NURTURES THE PET-PEOPLE BOND

Western North Carolina

July - August 2021

Volume 10 - Issue 4

Events

Pet Food Giveaways
Sarge's Dog Walk

Behavior

Educating a competitor
Reducing July 4th Stress

Health

Home Vet Care
Dog DNA
Feet First
Pet Loss Support

And

furthermore...

COVID Impact
Pets for Adoption
Sister Kitten Rescue



Sister Kitten's Liam available for adoption at Petco – story page 4.

Calendar of Events July-August 2021

July

Thur. 7/1 – By appointment. Alliance of Therapy Dog Testing. Contact Leslie Maier, lesmaier@icloud.com or 828-513-1311
Sun. 7/4 – 9am-2pm. Summer Yard Sale at Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue, 5526 Hendersonville Rd, Fletcher. Good deals for a good cause. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com, 828 885-3647
Mon. 7/5 – 2-6pm. Charlie's Angels Adoption Event, Hillman Brewery, 25 Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com, 828 885-3647
Tu. 7/13 – 6pm. Free webinar: Bottle Baby Kitten Care 101. Register at kittenalliance.org/classes-events
Thur. 7/15 – By appointment. Alliance of Therapy Dog Testing. Contact Leslie Maier, lesmaier@icloud.com or 828-513-1311
Sat. 7/24 – 3pm. Free webinar: Bottle Baby Kitten Care 101. Register at kittenalliance.org/classes-events

August

Thur. 8/5 – By appointment. Alliance of Therapy Dog Testing. Contact Leslie Maier, lesmaier@icloud.com or 828-513-1311
Sun. 8/8 – 3pm. Free webinar: Bottle Baby Kitten Care 101. Register at kittenalliance.org/classes-events
Thur. 8/19 – By appointment. Alliance of Therapy Dog Testing. Contact Leslie Maier, lesmaier@icloud.com or 828-513-1311
Thur. 8/19 – 6pm. Free webinar: Bottle Baby Kitten Care 101. Register at kittenalliance.org/classes-events
Sat. 8/21 – 2pm. Two year anniversary celebration of Esther Kitten Alliance. kittenalliance.org

Coming in September

Sat. 9/18 – 2-9pm. Rockin' for Rescue at Blue Ghost Brewery, Fletcher. Food, beer, live bands, adoptable dogs. Proceeds to Asheville Humane Society.

Sat. 9/24 – Sun. 9/26 Western Carolina Dog Fanciers Association All Breed Agility Trials, Smokey Mountain Event Center (Formerly Haywood County Fairgrounds) Waynesville

Ongoing Events

Ongoing events at area rescue organizations follow. Please be sure to confirm events since schedules often change due to pandemic restrictions.

Every Saturday – 12-4pm. Cats and Kittens for adoption from MPR at Petsmart, 150 Bleachery Rd., Asheville. 828 298-5670

Every Saturday morning – 10-11am. BRHS Yoga with Cats! Venues change. Details at blueridgehumane.org 828 885-3647

Every third Mon. of the month – 1-5pm. Low-cost vaccines at BRHS, Hendersonville. blueridgehumane.org, 828 685-7107

Every second Tu. of the month – Hendersonville Paws for Love tests potential therapy dogs.

Sign up, get directions at 828 692-5641
Every second Tu. of the month – 10am-1pm. ACW Cat Pantry distributes food at the Thrift Hound, 234 New Leicester Hwy., Asheville. pantry@ashevillecatweirdos.org
Every Wed., Sat., Sun. – 10am. BWAR Outward Hounds Hiking Club meets at shelter to take dogs on hikes. volunteer@bwar.org. 828 505-3440
Every Sat. & Sun. – 10am-5pm. Forever Friends Cat Adoptions. Petco, 825 Brevard Road, Asheville. fureverfriends@att.net; 828 398-4943
Every Sun. – 10am-2pm. AHS Hiking Hounds. Take shelter dogs for hikes. ashevillehumane.org., 828 761-2001
Every First Sat. of the month – 11:30am-1pm. Volunteer orientation at AHS, 14Forever Friends Lane. volunteer@ashevillehumane.org., 828 761-2001
Every Fourth Sat. of the month – 10am-4pm. ACW Cat Pantry distributes food at the Thrift Hound, 234 New Leicester Hwy., Asheville. pantry@ashevillecatweirdos.org

ACW=Asheville Cat Weirdos AHS=Asheville Humane Society BRAC=Blue Ridge Agility Club BRHS=Blue Ridge Humane Society CAAR=Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue FF=Forever Friends Cat Adoptions FHS=Foothills Humane Society MPR=Mountain Pet Rescue

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The DOG'S PERSPECTIVE



Kathryn R. Gubista, PhD
CPDT-KA



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The High Costs of Cheap Dog Food

by Kathryn R. Gubista, PhD

A recent article offered advice on how to prioritize spending on Fido when money is tight, discussing what should you splurge on and what to hold back on in lean times. The choices espoused in this article are frustrating and the reason why over 50% of Americans and their trusty canine companions are unhealthy, overweight and/or obese. To cut costs, the article recommends feeding "cheap dog food" in lieu of more expensive specialty pet foods. This advice is contrary to current research and logic. Although many of us need to budget our expenses, we also must be mindful of the ultimate outcomes of our choices.

Junk In = Junk Out

Poor food choices, combined with sedentary lifestyles, lead to unhealthy beings. You are what you eat! And, the same holds true for dogs. The adage, junk in is junk out, rings true for humans and dogs. Just as humans need to be aware of their nutritional intake, we also must be mindful of our dog's nutritional intake. Being overweight or obese can negatively impact so many aspects of one's life, aside from what is reflected in the mirror.

They Are What They Eat

One of the most important facts about food consumption is that providing higher quality foods at the front end typically reduces costs at the back end by enhanced health. This applies to dogs and humans. The front end costs include increased prices for higher quality dog foods, while the back end costs are vet bills and, more importantly, your dog's deteriorating health.

After weighing the positives and negatives, paying a little more each month for higher quality dog food is less costly than vet trips and decreased longevity caused by disease.

Currently, pet food isn't regulated like human food, and probably never will be regulated. However, that should not stop anyone from choosing higher quality foods for pets. Although studies proving that premium foods are healthier for your pets may not be extensive, early scientific evidence supports the fact that healthier diets produce healthier beings. In fact, a brand new TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design)Talk, with pet nutrition author and blogger Rodney Habib, published in June 2016, explains how the quality of dog food combined with lifestyle are linked to canine health, longevity and diseases, including cancer.

The Lose-Lose Situation

By paying a few bucks less for cheap food, your beloved dog's health may be compromised and lifespan may be shortened, ultimately costing more than you had ever dreamed. By feeding high quality foods, a lose-lose situation becomes a win-win for everyone. Exercise regularly and feed your pups high quality foods. Both you and your dog will be thankful.

Kathryn R. Gubista, PhD is an evolutionary biologist and a certified professional dog trainer (CPDT-KA) with Lucky Dog Training Asheville and has over 30 years of training experience. The article above first ran in July, 2016.



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PetGazette

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PetGazette focuses on the fun and care of pets in WNC. It is written by local experts for local pet lovers. The opinions and recommendations of contributors are their own, not necessarily those of **PetGazette**.

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Dear Friends:

We hope you enjoy this July/August issue. Here's how the cover happened. At our mid-June deadline, as we were enjoying the WLOS coverage of Eric Phelps and Sister Kitten, and wishing Eric a Happy Birthday on Facebook, we received author Ryan Jo Summers' column. And the subject was... envelope please – Sister Kitten, and Eric Phelps. So to top it all off we just had to have a Sister Kitten kitten on the cover. Liam and brother Linus are available for adoption at Petco at 875 Brevard Road, Asheville.

The fireworks cover was bumped but the subject hasn't been. Independence Day is foundational and should be celebrated but oh- the noise. Comora Tolliver of Barker's Anonymous in Hendersonville gives us some tips and techniques to help our furbabies cope in her piece on page 5. The summer season lets us get out more, so it's important to care for our pets' feet – page. 9 – and speaking of feet – the Annual Sarge's Downtown Dog Walk is baaack! Page 12. "But wait, there's more..."

Coming in the September/October issue: A scoop on changes in Hendersonville animal control, and a Rockin' for Rescue party! So what about you? Are you planning a Halloween parade or Oktoberfest or other fundraiser or adoption event? Is it time for you to start advertising in **PetGazette**? Let us hear from you! Call the office at 828-633-1348. Please leave a message, we're probably out with the dog.

Have a great summer. See you in September.

Carol and Jim

Free Pet Food Giveaways

The Blue Ridge Humane Society (BRHS) is offering free pet food giveaways during July and August. The dates, times and locations are listed below. In all cases, supplies will be given out while they last, distributed on a first come, first served basis.

Social distancing and protective measures will be taken by all BRHS staff and BRHS asks the public to follow CDC recommendations, too.

Food will be distributed car-side at all locations, so all recipients need to do is pull up and get directions from the staff member or volunteer on duty. Staff will get your info (zipcode, number and type of pet), and place the food in your car trunk.

BRHS asks that those fortunate enough not to need free pet food please share the information about the giveaways so those that might need supplies can come!

The BRHS free pet food giveaways will take place on the following days, times and locations:

Tuesday, July 6 from 3pm – 6:00pm
At BRHS Warehouse, 802 S. Grove St
Hendersonville

Saturday, July 24 from 10am – 2pm
At Boys & Girls Club of Henderson County,
1303 Ashe Street, Hendersonville

Tuesday, August 3, from 10am – 1pm
At BRHS Warehouse, 802 S. Grove St.
Hendersonville

Saturday, August 28, from 10am – 2pm
At Boys & Girls Club of Henderson County,
1303 Ashe Street, Hendersonville



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Sister Kitten Animal Rescue

by Ryan Jo Summers

Eric Phelps is an animal lover. For the last thirty years, his career has involved a wide range of animal rescue activities. In 2019, he started the Sister Kitten Animal Rescue (SKAR), based in Maggie Valley, NC.



Sister Kitten is active in nine WNC counties, most heavily in Buncombe and Henderson Counties. Its programs include rescuing and rehoming abandoned and neglected animals, TNR (Trap, Neuter and Return) of feral cats, and providing veterinary care for rescued animals. In addition, SKAR provides support, education and assistance to caregivers of community cats and promotes community animal welfare. Sister Kitten is a Petco Adoption Partner and has kittens available for adoption at the Petco store at 385 Brevard Road, Asheville. SKAR also maintains a highly active foster program.

In 2020, their first full year of operation, Sister Kitten logged many important accomplishments: hundreds of animals spayed/neutered, over 150 caregivers assisted throughout nine WNC



SKAR rescued mother and kittens.

counties, and over 35,000 meals provided to community cats. Most importantly, they saved dozens of kittens from lives on the street.

With an unlikely name, Sister Kitten Animal Rescue, some might wonder how it came to be. Years ago, Founder and Executive Director, Eric Phelps, had a foster kitten called Sister Kitten. This name was a nod to the song, "Sister Christian", and that special kitten's name went on to become the organization's name as well.

SKAR works with county animal shelters when contacted, pulling animals in need of specific attention or at high risk of euthanasia. In addition, SKAR is also called upon to investigate situations where outdoor dogs might be living in substandard conditions and also deals with injured wildlife or even lost pets. Domestic

rabbits hopping along the interstate, squirrels clipped by cars, opossums stuck on fences, and lost dogs are just some of the unpredictable events that can occur in a day of the life of Sister Kitten workers. Animal rescue is never dull, as working with animals can be as unpredictable as it is rewarding!

A major focus for SKAR is managing community cat colonies and increasing the number of foster homes for adoptable kittens. This includes controlling future populations through TNR and removing kittens at the right age for fostering and ultimate adoption. Unfortunately,



Community cats have community meal.

there are no government funds for this program and it's usually volunteer driven. More homes are needed to foster incoming kittens and more people who are willing to work with community cat colonies are needed too.

Compassionate and dedicated volunteers are the lifeblood of any rescue organization, and Sister Kitten is no different. It needs volunteers

who are devoted and dependable people who love animals and want to help. All such volunteers would be appreciated and welcomed to assist in whatever capacity they could.

Eric Phelps is highly experienced in weather-related rescues, having been active during Hurricane Katrina and other hurricane and flooding events. This year, he intends to equip Sister Kitten with the necessary gear and to join forces with other rescue teams.

Sister Kitten can be reached in a variety of ways and more information found online. Their Facebook page is facebook.com/sisterkitten. Their website is sisterkitten.org and they can be reached via email at info@sisterkitten.org. Individuals wishing to donate or support their efforts can do so at sisterkitten.org/how-to-help. And SKAR also participates in the Amazon Smile program at Amazon.com.

Ryan Jo Summers is a local author and an animal advocate. She has worked in the professional pet care industry for more than thirty years in both business and non-profit sectors. Her home is a haven to a menagerie of rescued animals of various species. To find out more about Ryan's writing and her pets, visit her website at ryanjosummers.com or her Facebook pages Facebook.com/RyanJoSummersAuthor and facebook.com/ryanjosummers. "Getting to Know your Local Rescues" is an on-going series highlighting WNC animal rescue groups. Any organization interested in being featured in WNC PetGazette should contact Ryan Jo at ryanjosummers.com and use the 'Contact' tab. 🐾

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Reducing dog anxiety on Fourth of July

by Comora Tolliver

While the Fourth of July is a joyous time, our noisy celebrations can be very traumatizing to our pets and wild animals. The loud booms and flashes of light cause extreme stress that make dogs run and shake in fear. Your dog may experience whining, barking, crying, shaking, dilated pupils, frantic running, or hiding.

We can help reduce canine stress by planning ahead and setting up training sessions to desensitize our dogs to the noise and loud booms. But since we are so close to the holiday as I write, let's focus on how to reduce the anxiety caused by the Fourth.

For openers: Never leave your dog(s) outside on the Fourth. July fifth is the biggest intake day at shelters every year. Pet's run and become disoriented and lost. Always make sure your pet is microchipped and wearing a tag in case they accidentally escape the safety of your home.

We can set our dog up for success by having a plan. The first part is to talk to your vet in advance about giving medications that can be administered to help relieve anxiety. Don't wait until the day of to try the medication



Microchips help get lost dogs found.

out. Do a trial run to see how the medication affects your dog. You can also try calming chews or CBD. Having medication or calming chew will help you be more successful in supporting your pet through the booms.

The second part of our plan is to start the day of the fourth off with a nice walk, game of fetch, or other activities they love that involve exercise. We don't want to exhaust them, but a fair amount of exercise will help them be calmer in the evening.

The third part of our recipe to success is to set up an area that is in the quietest room in the house with

the fewest windows. Any windows that are there should be covered to help limit the exposure to the big



Dogs often hide from fireworks.

flashes of light that accompany the big booms. Adding white noise to the room will help to muffle the booms outside and add another layer to ease your pet's stress. Classical music or watching fun movies is also another great choice to muffle out the booms. A pheromone diffuser, collar, or spray will also help to make the room feel calm. We can use wraps like a Thunder Shirt to help keep breathing at a normal pace.

If your dog loves her crate, put her crate in this room. Leave the door open, but cover the crate with blankets and spray the inside with pheromone spray. This can be a safe space for her to choose to go to.




Collars with tags can get lost dogs returned.

The fourth part of our Fourth plan is to be sure the dog has company. While we may be inclined to leave our dog in her room to go enjoy

the festivities, it is important that someone be there to support her through the evening. Hunker down in your favorite jammies, grab some popcorn and your dog's favorite treats and toys and get ready to party with your dog!

Yes, that's right, PARTY with your dog! We are going to make the booms and flashes of light become fun! When a boom goes off, throw your dog's favorite treats or toys! YAY! Good girl! Playing games that are triggered to begin with the sound of the booms and the flashes of light will cause your dog to shift the association from fear to hooray!! Play time!!! Dog's that love tennis balls will be delighted with a ball toss each time a boom happens. If your dog is too stressed to eat treats or play, comfort them with cuddles and pets. Touch and comfort go a long way to sooth anxiety and create a feeling of safety.

Happy "calm" 4th!

Comora Tolliver, KPA CTP is a certified dog trainer and founder/owner of Barkers Anonymous pet supply store in Hendersonville. 

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Educating a puppy to be a competitor

by Susan M. Young

This is article No 4 in my series about raising a puppy for the show ring. It's been fun working with Toke. He is now 7 months old, and he is intelligent, stubborn, persistent, sweet, cuddly, and absolutely the best puppy. He has been a lot of fun!

We have been taking agility classes at Shooting Stars Agility. For any beginner agility dog, learning foundation exercises and communicating with each other is where you start. Toke is not jumping and will not be jumping until his little baby bones solidify into strong adult bones. This will take well over a year, but in the meantime, we are learning to work as a team. Toke is learning to watch me for direction, follow those directions, and do exercises that we call doodling. These are fun little moves, like spinning in a circle, that don't mean much now, but they lay the foundation for specific exercises in the future. Toke must enjoy these classes because he lays down in the parking lot and becomes dead weight when I say it's time to leave!

We are also practicing for obedience competitions, but this is moving at a slower pace. The group that I have always trained with has a new building opening soon. Once it does, obedience training will begin in full force. I can't wait! This has been my main passion for over

25 years.

Then there is conformation showing, the pretty boy stuff where dogs are judged against the breed standard and awarded points if they meet that standard better than any other dog at the show that day. My friend Lynn talked me into this sport. She loves grooming and showing in conformation, so I am indulging her hobby.

Toke was entered in the 6-9 month old puppy class at the Blue Ridge Classic shows over Memorial Day weekend. He got second every day! (Don't ask how many puppies showed.....) Day one went ok. Toke was a bit frazzled by the loud building and the multitude of dogs. Nothing in his life had prepared him for the sights and sounds of an indoor dog show, so it was all new to him, and it was very, very loud. Toke entered the ring and behaved for Lynn. He stood still and stacked (posed) as she asked him to. Gaiting (moving in a trot to show movement) was another story. We think the rolled-up mats in the corner contained monsters. We aren't sure, but Toke said they were scary.

After the show, he had terrible dreams, so we thought maybe a day off would be good for him. He next showed again on day three. I had the stupid idea that keeping him in the van and only going inside to go straight in the ring might be a good idea. It wasn't. We won't speak of this. I feel rotten.

For the final day, we decided on a new tack. We showed up early and let Toke hang out in the building to get used to

the atmosphere. We also brought his own emotional support dog, big brother Tripp. Tripp is 9 years old, and nothing phases him. He has hung out at dog shows, competed, earned titles, and could care less about anything but seeing his friends.

When we entered the building, Toke pulled Lynn in, wagging his tail and looking at Tripp. "See this! This is where I get to go!"

My dogs have always lorded it over their siblings if they think they are doing something special. Toke happily trotted into the building, said hello to his friends, hung out, and then entered the show ring like a rising star. He was up, happy, and mostly behaving.

Note to self: Emotional support dogs are helpful

for everyone, even other dogs. The lesson learned here is that I should have paid more attention to my puppy and had a better game plan going into the weekend. I didn't support him well on that second day and completely ignored everything he had been trying to tell me. Remember how I said we were learning to communicate in agility class? That communication goes both ways, and I have as much to learn as he does.

Susan M. Young is a long-standing Asheville, NC Real Estate Broker and has been active in dog sports with her Golden Retrievers for over 25 years. She can be reached through her website at SusanMYoung.com. You can also follow Toke's progress on Facebook at the Golden Dog Patch.



Tripp, Toke's big brother and mentor.



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House call veterinarian speaks

by Leslie Dragon

When I am asked why I decided to be a house call veterinarian, I have several answers. The best part is the individual, uninterrupted personal time with the owners. They have my undivided attention until all of their concerns are addressed.

The best part, however, is getting to see the pets in their own environment. I can then make recommendations based on my observations in the home.

For example, some owners have multiple cats, and one of them has decided to stop using the litterbox. I will walk through the house to determine the number of litterboxes, their cleanliness, and location. Is a litterbox in a closet where a pet dog is waiting outside to pounce on the cat? Or is it in a high traffic area where the cat has no privacy? I can then make suggestions based on the situation – useful suggestions I couldn't make in an office because I wouldn't have the requisite knowledge.

Consider the large, arthritic dog who can't get into a vehicle to travel to a

stationary facility. I also check out their environment. Do they have to walk across slippery floors? Do they have to use stairs inside or out? What type of bedding do they use? Are they in the house, garage, or outside? I will then suggest measures like throw rugs on any slippery surfaces, baby gates to prevent falling, thick orthopedic bedding for comfort, ramps, or slings for support, etc.

Aggression between pets in the household is also fairly common. I can witness their relationship in their own environment and make recommendations. Who is the aggressor and in what situation? Does one or both of them need calming medication? Some animals who are considered aggressive at a stationary veterinary facility do much better in their own home.

These are the things that I love about making house calls. You don't get to experience this in a stationary facility, and it is easier to make accurate assessments of the situation.

Dr. Leslie Dragon is the founder and owner of Paws Mobile Veterinary Clinic.



Dr. Dragon loves taking care of her patients. There's nothing like meeting patients in their home environment.



Dr. Leslie Dragon



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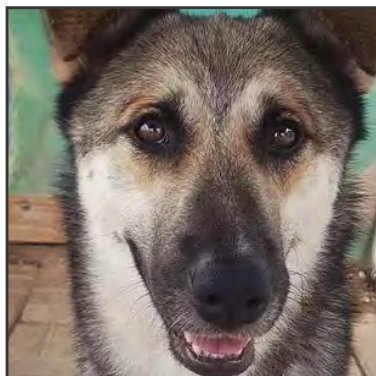
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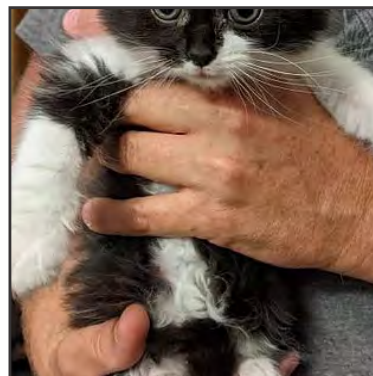
PetGazette will make a donation to that rescue toward the adoption fee. Here are just some of the pets waiting for their forever homes.



Rory
Sarge's Animal
Rescue



Dawson
Carolina Poodle
Rescue



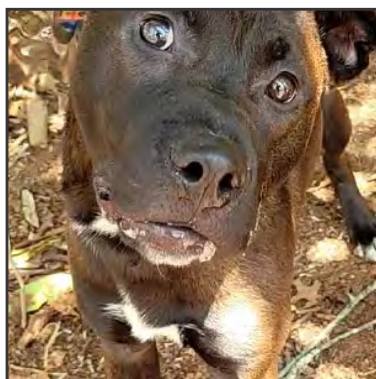
Belinda
Sister Kitten



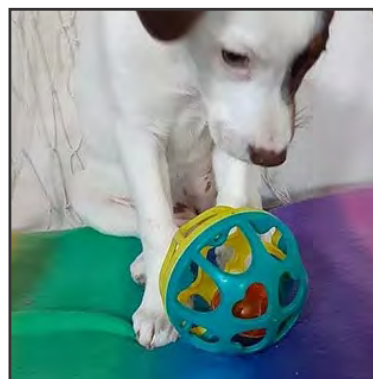
Pineapple
Pisgah
Paws



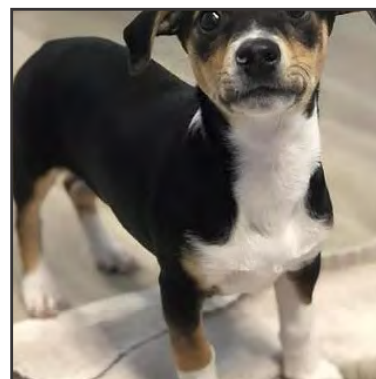
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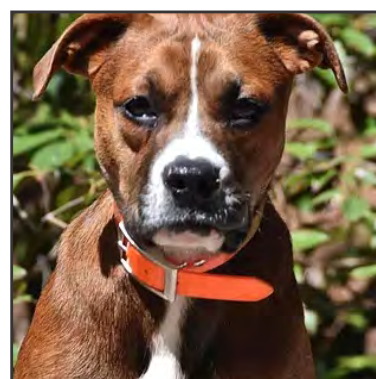
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Henderson County
Animal Services



VooDoo
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Sienna
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CPPI broadens scope, continues mission

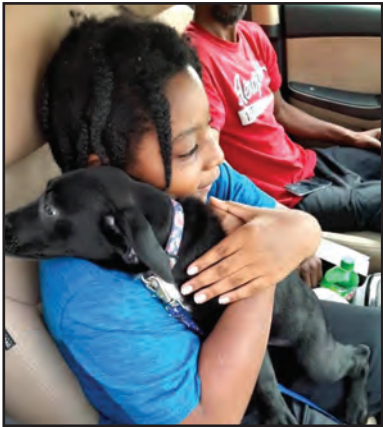
The accompanying photo is of one of the wonderful people that Community Partnership for Pets, Inc., (CPPI), had a chance to help earlier in 2021. His story is another example of how the group has continued its mission of helping people, pets and North Carolina animal shelters since 2005.

This young boy's Mom had died in January 2021 and a week later their beloved dog passed away. But in a few weeks, they found a stray puppy and took him in. Within days, the puppy became ill and was diagnosed with parvo. Thanks to the partnership between CPPI and the Pitt County Pet Food Pantry, both agencies and volunteers stepped in to pay for the vet care for this little puppy. The result was that a little much-needed joy came to a family which had seen far too much sadness.

Since its beginning, CPPI's focus has been to reduce the number of animals that enter and die in animal shelters. One of the easiest and most cost-efficient ways to reduce animals coming into shelters is to have affordable spay/neuter surgeries available and to provide programs to help low-

come families with their pets.

Between 2005 and 2016, CPPI's focus was in Western NC. The group provided a variety of programs, including low-cost spay/neuter services, and rabies and micro-chip clinics to anyone asking for help. It also provided pet food assistance and both routine and emergency veterinarian care for pets belonging to low-income families.



Then, starting in 2017, CPPI began rolling out the same proven programs across North Carolina, helping poor, rural NC counties first, as they tended to have large numbers of animals entering and dying in their shelters. This year, CPPI started its fourth year of geographically expanded services and is currently working with 14 counties and 23 agencies within these counties. Intake

and euthanasia numbers at these shelters are trending down and the number of people and pets CPPI is helping is trending up.

For more information about CPPI, visit its website, communitypartnershipforpets.org. Donations can be made on line or mailed to CPPI, PO Box 1021, Flat Rock, NC 28731.



Caring for pets feet first

by Kim Slagle

I believe one of the easiest things we can do as pet parents is to give their feet regular attention. Their entire being starts with the four legs that carry them around. If we care for their feet on a regular basis, we can keep them comfortable for years.

Let's start with the nails. Nails should be up and out of the way when your pets stand as well as when they walk. Remember, dogs walk on their toes and their pads absorb shock to protect joints, muscles and bones. This gives them a nice balanced foot with no straining on the ankles, knees, hips and spin. If a dog's nails are digging into their paws, dogs will compensate by putting their weight onto the backs of their pads, straining muscles and joints. Many dogs can suffer from arthritis, back pain, hip pain, and joint pain because of the straining.

Dogs that go without regular nail trims can also get their long nails caught on anything and rip the nail. Ripping the protective nail will expose the quick, which will then be more prone to infections. Untrimmed nails can grow into the pads and cause lots of pain and even an infected pad. On a healthy adult dog, I would recommend having those nails trimmed every four to six weeks. On senior dogs, I would suggest every two to three weeks.

If your dog's nails are now long, it will take some work to get them short. The

quicks themselves will be long. So have the nails cut every 10 days until they are short. This could take from six weeks up to a few months.

Cats also need their nails trimmed regularly, especially indoor cats. Cats have scent glands in their feet and scratch furniture and walls to mark their territory. Cat nails will also grow and curl into their pads, which can lead to infections.

Do you notice all that extra hair in the bottoms of your pet's pads? That should be removed when you get their nails trimmed. This hair can become matted and uncomfortable. It can also cause your pet to slip on tile or hardwood floors and could even cause an injury. Dogs sweat through their pads. So keeping this hair removed will help keep them cooler.

Many groomers, vets and even some pet store offer nail trims. It usually costs less than \$10 and is a walk-in service. You could be in and out in less than 10 minutes. And your pet(s) will be comfortable and happy.

"We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals." – Immanuel Kant

Kim Slagle is a retired groomer who has worked with animals for decades. This article first appeared in a prior issue of PetGazette, and we reprint it for the expertise needed today.



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Preparing for pet care - a cautionary tale

by Leslie Maier

Merit is a real dog (name changed). He is a 12 ½ year old blue merle Shetland sheepdog who, along with another two Shelties (aged about 7 and 8) were relinquished to a very busy county animal shelter in another state. The dogs quickly shut down as they were taken from a very quiet single-owner home where they were cherished companions and placed into a noisy frightening place.

Fortunately for these dogs, NJ Shetland Sheepdog Rescue, a very effective rescue group, found out about them and, through a great deal of investigation and legwork, was able to find the owner, then her family, and have the dogs turned over to rescue so they could be cared for and eventually placed into forever loving homes.

You see, these dogs' owner had become permanently disabled and was unable to tell rescuers what to do with her beloved pets, so they were placed into the busy shelter in her area. At their ages and due to the busy intake there, the dogs would have been euthanized within a short time. The rescue found out about these dogs four days after the police took them to the shelter. The only person to whom the shelter could legally give the dogs was the legal owner, who was unable to care for herself any longer, let alone her beloved dogs.

The president of NJ Sheltie Rescue was able to track down the telephone number for an elderly family member thanks to the owner's friend, and, through many calls back and forth with the shelter and the family, the dogs were moved from a stray hold to a longer hold. In the meantime, these

senior dogs, who had always led a very quiet life, were in a high kill shelter with 300 other dogs. It was a noisy, stressful, and scary situation for these sensitive dogs. Due to the stress, they stopped eating and all got upset digestive systems, which could very easily have turned into something worse. Thankfully, the shelter was willing to set up the rescue as a 'rescue partner' once the appropriate information was provided. This took two very long weeks for the dogs.

The family tried to get the doctor at the hospital to write something up, basically saying that the owner was unable to make decisions so the family members were the only ones capable of making decisions. The doctor refused. After lots of phone calls and brainstorming, the rescue president asked permission from the family to 'stick a piece of paper' in front of the owner at the hospital, and have her sign the dogs over to them. They agreed and said, "Do what you have to do to get the dogs". So a letter was drafted with full names, addresses, and phone numbers, basically saying the owner was signing over ownership of the three dogs to her family members. The owner's friend then went to the hospital and sign the dogs over. The letter was witnessed, and notarized. Then the owner's friend hand delivered

this letter to the shelter. The family then turned the dogs over to the shelter, which in turn turned the dogs over to the NJ Sheltie Rescue group. The rescue group was able to pick up the dogs the next day and get them into a quarantine situation.

This is not a far-fetched story – it happens almost every day. What can you do to prevent this happening to your pet(s)?

Have a written document available which states your plan for your pets if you were to become unable to care for them. Keep it with their veterinary records and DO make a plan with family, friends, a rescue group, whatever, so your pets would go to a safe haven if you couldn't speak for them. It's also a good idea to set aside a pre-arranged sum of money to go toward their care and rehoming. Speak with whoever your emergency contact would be and give a copy of your signed wishes to them (it would probably be a good idea to have this notarized).

In the above case, the three Shelties were saved. If something happened to you, would your pets be?

Leslie Maier is an active volunteer with the Blue Ridge Humane Society and a founding member/president of Canine Therapy Partners-WNC.



Sideways Farm & Brewery tips go to BRHS in July

As part of its ongoing "Tip Our Community" program, the Sideways Farm & Brewery will donate 100% of the tips it receives in July to the Blue Ridge Humane Society (BRHS). In 2020, the brewery donated over \$17,000 back into the community.

Sideways Farm Brewery is at 632 Eade Road in Etowah. It is open to the public on Fridays, 3-8pm, Saturdays, noon-8pm, and Sundays, noon-6pm.

In addition to growing its own ingredients, Sideways Farm grows acres of flowers. Some are picked by staff and turned into beautiful fresh bouquets that can be purchased online at sidewaysfarm.com. Many of the remaining flowers go to guests who can come and pick their own. It's a perfect way to spend a day or evening with a special someone.

One unique offering at Sideways Farm is the Bridal U-Pick Experience. The farm and tasting room are opened to only the bride and her guests to pick their own flowers two days before the wedding. This provides time to design bouquets and table arrangements. Brides have reported that, "The bonding opportunity that picking our own flowers offered before our wedding was my favorite part of the whole wedding."

Flower lovers, beer lovers and pet lovers can all enjoy a visit, or several visits, to the Sideways Farm & Brewery in July. Especially if they remember that all the tips they leave – hopefully generous – will be passed on to help the Blue Ridge Humane Society.



BRHS offers Pet Loss Support Group

To support grieving pet owners, Blue Ridge Humane Society (BRHS) has instituted a free peer support group with a professional moderator.

The program provides a safe and non-judgmental space for community members to support each other through their grief at the loss of a beloved pet. Sessions will be held via Zoom on the first Wednesday of the month from 6-7pm. Registration is required and can be done online at blueridgehumane.org/pet-loss-support/.

"Pet loss is the worst part of being a pet owner. We at Blue Ridge Humane Society want to help people navigate the time of mourning and offer what support we can," said Angela Prodrick, Executive Director. "Our pets are our family. Every pet is different and brings a unique light into our lives. The loss of that light can be devastating."

The sessions are led by Judi Moolten and moderated by BRHS staff. Henderson resident Moolten is a former clinical social worker with a PhD certificate in Stress and Somatic Psychology who volunteers with BRHS. She will be available to just listen or, when asked, offer feedback.

Pet loss and grief can trigger intense emotional responses that may need to be addressed with professional resources which are beyond those BRHS can provide through the Peer Support Group. It cannot take the place of professional counseling and therapy.

Additional information and/or support for those who have suffered pet loss can be found at The Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement, online at aplb.org.



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HOW COVID IS IMPACTING ANIMAL RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS

by Andee Bingham

The effects of COVID on our day-to-day lives were impossible to miss. Many worked from home; children were homeschooled; maybe you knew someone who became ill. If you aren't active in the animal welfare world, though, you may not know about the impact the virus has had on each and every rescue organization.

“Funding is one of the biggest barriers rescues face.”

In 2020, due to the same logistical nightmare COVID caused in all other aspects of society, low-cost spay and neuter surgeries were nearly nonexistent in our region. Now in 2021, rescues are feeling the effects of the lack of that critical resource in five key ways:

1. There are more kittens needing help because more cats have been able to breed over the past year.
2. Kittens are arriving at shelters much sicker and weaker than normal due to an increase in inbreeding and depleted moms who have had litter after litter after litter.
3. Spay and neuter surgeries are still VERY backed up, so adoptable animals are taking up valuable space in shelters for much longer than average.
4. Every rescue organization is at or over capacity and is turning animals away several times a day.
5. The need for animal rescues has increased dramatically, but donations are down due to the insecurity caused by the pandemic.

At Esther Neonatal Kitten Alliance, we've seen a dramatic uptick in kittens who have congenital defects: cleft palates, twisted legs, etc., or neglected injuries.

Just a few months ago, we rescued a litter of newborns whose legs had been tangled in their umbilical cords for 4 days! With around-the-clock care and many, many veterinary appointments we were able to save their lives, but this litter is just the tip of the iceberg of newborns who desperately need a safe place to heal and grow strong.

The ripple effect of the virus has been immense, and

I'm here to say on behalf of all rescues: WE NEED YOUR HELP! Now more than ever before, we need animal lovers to step up in whatever way they are able to help save as many as we can.

Got some extra time? Please consider becoming a volunteer or foster parent. Whether you want to help orphaned newborn kittens, seniors, those recovering from illnesses or injuries, or feral cats, there is a local organization that will be so grateful for your time.

Are you able to make a monetary donation? Whether you are able to give \$5 or \$50,000, it will go a long way toward making sure the animals get all of the food, medical care, and attention they need to have the very best chance. Funding is often one of the biggest barriers rescues face when deciding whether or not they can say YES to an animal who needs help.

Would you rather donate supplies instead? Great! Drop off a bag of food or cat litter. If you want to have the biggest impact, ask the rescue what they need most -- the answer might surprise you! They may have recently gotten a big donation of food and now need something else more urgently, like cat carriers or comfy dog beds.

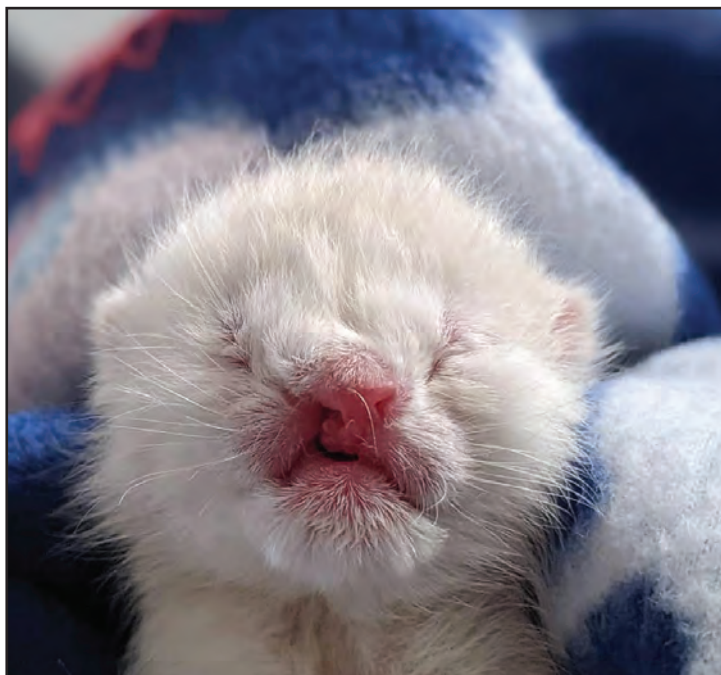
And finally, please be kind to the animal rescue workers who are trying so hard to do the best we can for the animals who need us. We are physically and emotionally exhausted, and we are tender. If we must say no, please understand that it's not because we don't WANT to help, it's because we simply cannot.



With your support, organizations can increase the number of animals we are able to take in. We can give a chance to many who would otherwise be turned away. We can save lives.

To learn more about Esther Neonatal Kitten Alliance and the work we're doing to save the lives of the tiniest and most vulnerable animals, visit kittenalliance.org

Andee Bingham is Executive Director at Esther Neonatal Kitten Alliance. 🐾



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Sarge's Downtown Dog Walk Saturday, August 7

The 16th Annual Downtown Dog Walk – the biggest fundraiser of the year for Sarge's Animal Rescue Foundation (Sarge's) – will once again start from the Haywood County Court House on Main Street in Waynesville at 9am. All events should be over by 11am to avoid the hottest parts of the day.

Dogs, owners, volunteers and spectators will take a 15 minute walk through downtown, eventually circling back to the courthouse. Then



the fun will continue with contests for human and canine participants judged by Waynesville locals. As in past years, only humans are eligible to win the “most money collected” division and only dogs can compete in the other categories.

Throughout the event, adoptable dogs handled by Sarge's volunteers will meet and greet spectators and participants in the hope of finding a new home. Those dogs available for adoption will be wearing

an “adopt me” bandana and introduced to the crowd on the court house steps.

The Downtown Dog Walk volunteers



raise money for Sarge's in several ways. Some volunteers collect money directly, or take pledges on a pledge sheet. Other volunteers become virtual dog walkers for donors who want to sponsor dogs in the parade but can't, or don't want to, do the walking themselves. In past Dog Walks, those who collected more than \$20 were awarded a free Downtown Dog Walk T-shirt, but that policy had not been officially established for the 2021 Dog Walk at PetGazette press time.

Official 2021 Dog Walk T-shirts will also be sold directly to the public before, during and after the event. Adult T-shirts are \$15 and children's

T-shirts are \$10.

Sarge's is offering a participant pricing structure simplified from past Dog Walks for the 2021 event. For one fee of \$30 per person, participants will get admission to the Dog Walk, admission for as many dogs as he or she wants to walk, a bag full of goodies provided by Sarge's sponsors and an event bandanna for his/her pup!

Those who would like to support Sarge's work through the Dog Walk but cannot walk themselves



or simply don't want to do the walk can sign up as a Virtual Walker. Then a Sarge's volunteer will walk a dog in the event on the sponsors' behalf.

Sponsorships by individuals and businesses are crucial to the success of the Dog Walk. Sarge's benefits greatly from the money paid for sponsorships at various levels. And the sponsors benefit, too. In addition to knowing they are supporting a worthy cause in their community,

those sponsors donating more than \$150 will have their names mentioned in pre and post event press releases to area media and printed on the back of



the T-shirts. (More than 400 shirts were distributed at 2019's event!)

Deadline for Dog Walk Sponsorship is Wednesday, July 7, 2021 for those who want to have their name on the T-Shirts. Online Ticket sales cease Tuesday, August 3 at midnight. Tickets may still be purchased at the Dog Walk on Saturday, August 7.

For more information about the 16th Annual Sarge's Downtown Dog Walk on Saturday, August 7, 2021 or about Sarge's work to save Haywood County dogs and cats, go to sargeanimals.org, visit Sarge's Facebook page, or call 828 246-9050. 🐾

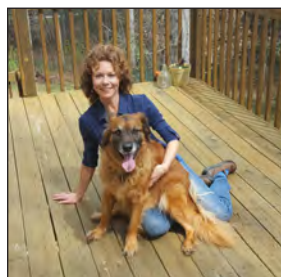
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Deciphering Dog DNA

It's Gotcha Day, and there's no way to tell who is more excited – the human caretaker, or their new furry companion who has just left a shelter. There's also no way to tell exactly what kind of dog or cat has just been gotcha'd – until recently. With the development of over-the-counter Dog DNA kits, we can satiate our curiosity about what is behind that handsome face, for only about \$150.00. Since different breeds have different needs, knowing our new friend's makeup can help us be better pet parents.



doesn't look like any of these breeds. A recent dog genome scientist declared,

“... Appearances are so confusing that even dog experts are outwitted. In a 2012 study of 100 shelter dogs that surveyed 5,922 dog professionals, the professionals correctly guessed a dog's prominent breed just 27% of the time. And a 2015 study across four shelters reported that DNA tests determined one in five dogs were pit bull mixes, while staff had guessed that half the dogs were pit bulls.”- www.nytimes.com/wirecutter

Wirecutter's pick for best dog DNA test was Embark Breed + Health Kit, for it's large breed database, many inherited-disease screenings, and good customer support. The breed database covers some street dogs and the gray wolf. Embark analyzes twice as many genetic markers as the competition. The genetic-disease detection tool screens for over 200 mutations, more than any kit tested.

Wirecutter chose Wisdom Panel Premium kit as the best option if you have a dog which may include a breed uncommon in the United States. This service tests for 350 different breeds, including the coyote, the Mexican street dog, and the wolf. However, Wisdom Panel analyzes fewer DNA markers in your pet's saliva than Embark. 🐾

This is George Stubbs. According to Wisdom Panel, one of the leading DNA analysis companies, George's DNA is 37% American Cattle Dog, 25% Jack Russel Terrier, 12.5% Siberian Husky, and 25% “mixed breed groups”. He