



Pawprints



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTT COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY
GATE CITY, VA

December 2012

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PERRY, THE THERAPY DOG

We first laid eyes on Perry at Pet Smart in Bristol, VA in August or September of 2008. We were on our way to purchase crickets for our daughter's lizard - NOT looking for another dog! Perry was lying on the sidewalk, with his back legs stuck straight out behind him. He looked like he didn't have a care in the world; just out for a Sunday afternoon of people watching.

At the time, we had an aging chow mix, Lucy, who was my soul mate and was slowing down with arthritis and dementia, and a Boxer, Paco, who was being used at my workplace, Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute, as a therapy dog. Something about Perry just struck me. I had never been a fan of small dogs. I asked about him and was told he had been picked up as a stray and that he was about two years old. I told the SCHS volunteer that I coordinated the Animal Assisted Activities and Therapy at the state hospital; he said his wife worked with clients there and she was aware of our program. My husband just gave me "that look". He knew I wanted this little dog. I told the volunteer I was interested in giving Perry a forever home, but couldn't take another dog at the time and explained the situation with Lucy. I filled out the paperwork to adopt him, but said that if they found a good home for him, to let him go.

In late October, Lucy began failing. She was having more and more difficulty getting up and down and was obviously more confused. Perry had never left my mind. We made the hard decision to let Lucy go, and as I waited on the vet to come put Lucy down, I called SCHS to see if Perry was still available. I was told that there had been some interest in him, but it never had worked out for him to have that perfect home. I told them that that home was here with us, in Chilhowie! *Continued on page 4*



THE LIFE
OF
PERRY,
THE
THERAPY
DOG!



RESCUE ME!

Most people are aware that humane societies are involved in placing abandoned animals in forever homes. There are many avenues available to Humane Societies and Rescue organizations when trying to permanently place a dog. The Scott County Humane Society spends considerable time developing and maintaining good working relationships with breed specific rescues. A breed specific rescue (BSR) dedicates itself exclusively to the rescue/placement of one breed. SCHS works with Border Collie, Australian Shepherd, German Shepherd, Coonhound/Bloodhound, Beagle, Bassett, Great Pyrenees, and many other rescues in our region. Many of these rescues will also accept a mixed breed dog provided, of course, that it isn't TOO mixed.

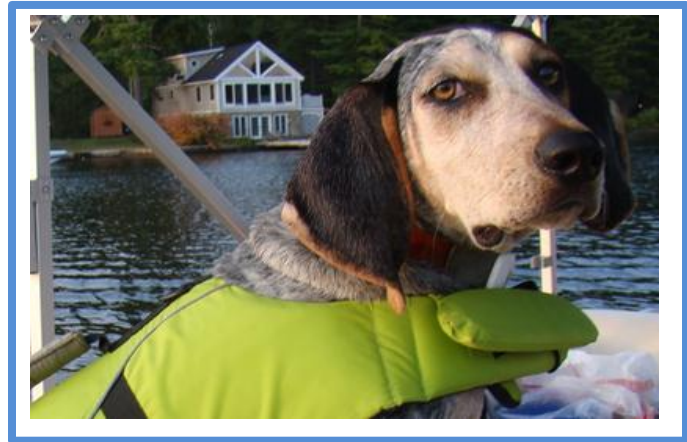
The process for placing a dog in a BSR: Our shelter volunteer spots what appears to be a purebred dog. Pictures are taken and the dog's physical condition is assessed. This information is forwarded to the BSR contact. The BSR is looking for an adoptable dog – one that meets the breed standard and has the personality to match. The BSR often has a waiting list of potential (and picky) adopters. That said, a dog is not automatically rejected due to poor physical condition or less than stellar disposition, as most dogs are not at their best under stressful shelter conditions. These dogs are taken to loving foster homes where much effort is spent restoring them to physical and mental well-being.

Two dogs come to mind – Claude, the absolutely hairless Great Pyrenees and Lisa Marie, the Bluetick coon hound puppy. Claude's condition was shocking. Poor Claude had lost his entire coat due to mange. SCHS saw great potential in Claude – pictures were taken and the Great Pyrenees Rescue in Richmond, VA was contacted. This wonderful rescue accepted Claude immediately and our volunteers embarked on a regimen to cure Claude's mange – this included bathing Claude every 48 hours and some powerful medications. But, he made it and went to the BSR sporting a few new tufts of fur here and there. Lisa Marie (her father was nothing but a hound dog!) was a 3 month old Bluetick coon hound in terrible shape. Eaten up with fleas, worms and starved, she literally was on death's door. Lisa Marie was pulled from the shelter in the nick of time. When her health was restored, the Black and Tan Coonhound Rescue placed Lisa Marie with a couple in Massachusetts. We received pictures of Lisa Marie on a float boat wearing a doggie life jacket living the good life.

Breed Specific Rescues are besieged with requests from all over the country. Unfortunately, they cannot accept every dog SCHS presents to them. We greatly increase our chances that a Scott County dog goes to a great rescue (and permanent home) by providing a foster home until the dog is permanently placed and handling all the vetting (spay/neuter-shots). It is a great day when the rescue calls and a home is found! Arrangements then begin to find transport to get the dog to its new home. But, that's another story!



Claude



Lisa Marie

MIKEL CARMON FINDS CARMEN THROUGH SCHS

My soul is a traveling one. I love to camp, ride horses, run, and hike. And I have ALWAYS DONE MY LIFE WITH GOOD DOGS! Always!

I recently lost two of my best traveling companions, Kate and Webster, to old age and cancer. They had more highway miles than most folks! I needed a new companion. A traveling and living companion that could help me navigate the trails of life's adventures. I found her and her name is Carmen. I saw her online and when I saw her name.....the same as my own, I knew in a moment that Webster had guided me to her.

We (Carmen and I) just made our first road trip together. We left VA on Sat and arrived in Colorado last night and we had a terrific time. Motels, friends, dirt roads, side of road pit stops and snacks, and just being silent in that lovely space together. Freedom and adventure. What do I have in store for Carmen.....more of the same. In 4 days she has met many dogs, many dog people, and many miles of country. We are going to Alaska, do wagon trains, camp, run and walk and see where the journey takes us. Right now she is a friend to an almost blind dog that I met at the St. Francis Animal Shelter in Buffalo, WY (which is the same place I found Webster). Bleu has become very sensitive to other dogs and has been aggressive. Carmen and Bleu played together today, lay in the sun and enjoyed one another. Angels with four legs! Priceless!

Happy Trails to you all!

Mikel Carmon

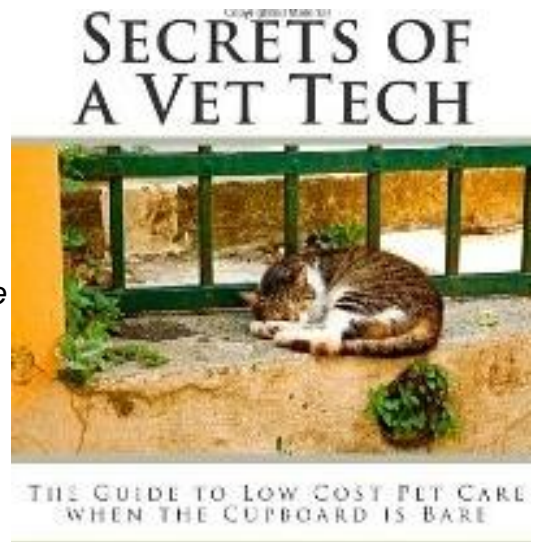


THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR THE PET LOVER ON YOUR LIST!

Scott County Humane Society member J. C. Farris has written a practical, down-to-earth guide to taking care of your pets on a limited budget. *Secrets of a Vet Tech: The Guide to Low Cost Pet Care When the Cupboard is Bare* is full of great information and a good resource for any pet owner. If you implement just one of the ideas in this book, it will have paid for itself!

It is available from

<https://www.createspace.com/3983562> .



SAVE LIVES - SPAY AND NEUTER

SCHS places top priority on our lower-cost spay/neuter program. It is the most viable means we have to reduce the number of unwanted, abandoned animals that are euthanized in shelters annually. Since February 2008, we have assisted in the cost of surgery for 1,596 dogs and cats.

Call 276-452-7247 or 276-386-9754, leave a message. Your call will be returned.

Perry, the Therapy Dog, Continued From Page 1

Even though Paco was a therapy dog, he didn't always get along with other dogs. He and Lucy were good friends and we were afraid he would mourn her being gone, and I was concerned about how he would react to a new dog. After doing some research, we decided that we would take Paco with us to Pet Smart when we picked up Perry. They would meet in a neutral location and hopefully have no issues.

When they met, it was a non-event! Paco was more interested in smelling every other scent there than meeting a new friend. We loaded them both up and took them home. Perry ran in to the house, jumped on to the back of the sofa and looked at us like "OK. I'm here, now!" He has been a wonderful addition to our family. He and Paco have gotten along beautifully. They play and eat together, with very few cross words.

Perry was accepted in to the Animal Assisted Activities and Therapy (AAA/T) program at SwVMHI soon after setting in to life with us. He goes to work three days a week and sees patients (and staff) all over the hospital. He has a special intuition for what people need when he is with them. He may need to be a snuggle bug with some and be playful with others. He accompanies me to team meetings in the mornings; spending up to four hours in a meeting room. He is quiet as a mouse and there have been many times that a patient may feel ill at ease when meeting with "the team", but when they see or pet Perry, the anxiety melts away. He also sees patients on a one to one basis on all units at the hospital. He is my gift from God and I am thankful for him each day! We are so grateful for SCHS for seeing what we see in Perry and taking him in so that he could find his way to us!

*Story by Leta Cole, who works at the Southwest
Virginia Mental Health Institute in Marion, VA*

THE HOLIDAYS CAN BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR PET!



Even though Christmas is several months away, pet owners need to be aware of some harmful elements of certain plants, products and foods to ensure the holidays are a happy time for their pets. The holidays are a busy time and we tend to forget how toxic some plants and foods can be. It is best to “take the blanket approach” with plants, certain foods, alcoholic beverages, and medicines and *always* keep them out of the reach of animals. If you would keep these items out of the hands of children, the same approach should be taken with pets.

Poinsettia plants actually are not as toxic as widely feared. Consumption of one leaf or flower petal is unlikely to cause symptoms more serious than mild vomiting requiring little to no treatment. Here’s a partial list of plants and foods that can be toxic to cats and dogs, not only during the holiday season, but all year around.

- * Lily – causes kidney failure in cats
- * Amaryllis – all parts of the plant are toxic to both dogs and cats, however, the bulbs are worse, and consumption can cause hypertension, weakness, ataxia, tremors and seizures.
- * Holly - All parts are considered to contain potentially toxic compounds, and most of those can cause gastrointestinal irritation and depression, which can usually be managed with dilution, or water, with cats apparently being the most sensitive.
- * Alcoholic drinks – are toxic to dogs and cats
- * Baker’s dark chocolate – toxic to dogs and cats and one of the most harmful forms of candy
- Onions, macadamia nuts, and raisins – toxic to cats and dogs
- * Aspirin – toxic to cats
- * Acetaminophen (Tylenol) –can kill a cat with one dose

If you think your pet may have ingested a poison, call one of the following:

- * **Pet Poison Helpline at 1-800-213-6680 (has a \$35 incident fee)**
- * **ASPCA Pet Poison Control Number - (888) 426-4435 (has a \$65 incident fee)**

Unfortunately, there is no free pet poison control center.

Or you can call your local vet.

**The Scott County Humane Society would like to thank the
following donors.
We couldn't do it without you!**

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TO:

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FROM: