



Charley's Strays, Inc.
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Limestone, February 2010

Dear Friends,

A happy ending to the sad story of our "Max Brown" in above picture! No, our Shelter is not equipped with couches; our pooches do have to find a home of their own in order to have THAT comfort. And Max Brown did just that! He was adopted in January, and his new family wrote the following:

"Just a few pics of Max. We love him and he loves us. He has adjusted to us very well. He loves our son Jamie. We tried to make him a bed, but that didn't happen. He went right to sleep with Jamie in his bedroom. He is eating well and loves to play in the snow with Lacey and her dad Jamie. He does all his duties outside and is just a wonderful dog. I know we were trying to fill a void by getting Max, but he has a personality all his own. Max will never replace Molly, and that's ok. She was one of a kind, and we hope we have Max as long as we had Molly. We thank you all for doing what you do to save those unwanted animals by giving them a chance to have a happy life with a loving family. God bless you All . . ."

Wow. We were tickled to receive this letter!

Jim and I and our two dogs are back home from Florida. It was a rather weird work-vacation: it was cold. The only thing missing from home was the snow. Jim did not get to do much fishing because of the water temperature, which had dropped to 52 degrees. It was horrible to walk on the beach and see an unbelievable amount of huge fish lying on the beach, all dead from the cold! I found huge shells with the remains of hermit crabs: Beautiful crabs that also died from being too cold. It was very sad; when we went for rides we saw large fields with tomatoes plants, squash and other veggies, totally black, all dead.

The cold weather played havoc at the Shelter too: Two days after we came back from Florida, Rebecca called, telling us she had no water anywhere in the kennel or her house. Frozen lines? A broken pump 100 feet down in the well? That would have been terrible! So once again Jim saddled his horses and drove to the Shelter. We lucked out: the pump was fine, only the pressure pump, an electrical part, had to be replaced.

And since the good and bad things always arrive in three's, there was another nice letter waiting for us when we came back:

"To Everyone at Charley's Strays:

I adopted Chester around this time last year. I wanted to let you know how well he is doing. His new name is Jesse and he has gained about 10 lbs since coming home. He has become a completely different dog. At first, he did not know what the word "treat" meant or how to play with dog toys. Since then, he has learned, and even plays with other dogs and he definitely knows what the word "treat" means! He has certainly come out of his shell and has turned out to be a wonderful addition to the family. Jesse is always following me around and constantly has a warm couch or even bed available to him. Thank you so much for bringing him into my life!"

When I read letters like this I probably have this big goofy grin on my face, feeling just plain GOOD!

And another one, I promise this is the last one, and it's short, too:

"Dear Rebecca – Belle is wonderful and she fits in like she has lived here all her life. Thank you so much!"

One of our friends, Susanna, who runs "Dogs Deserve Better" also a animal rescue in the southern part of Maine, came up to take our dog Hunter to people she knows, foster parents. Hopefully he will find the right home too. Thank you Susanna, for caring!

So, as you can see, we are placing dogs (Not much luck with the cats). But if you think our Shelter is on its way to get empty – no way! As soon as one is gone, another one drops in. Ted's vet called again, telling him that he had a dog, which was supposed to be euthanized due to having a run-in for the third time in one year with a porcupine. The vet knew the dog, but only for removing the needles. The dog had never been there for shots, check-ups or anything. Well, Ted went there to talk to the owner, trying to convince her that she should keep the dog, if necessary we would come up with the money for the vet bill since she said she had no way paying for it. But she would not hear of it; she finally just walked out of the clinic. So the dog, a yellow lab/hound, and God know what else came to the Shelter.

Maybe by next month I have some pictures of her. Of course she needs to be spayed before we can find a home "Needles" to say that was not done by her previous owner, either.

That's about all of the doggie-news. You will find Mary's Cat Report, as always, on the end of this letter.

Now to the supporters of Charley's Strays: **A huge Thank you** to all of the following people, who helped our animals so much again through these past three months. If you wonder why there are so many names in the following columns, I can explain: It's from December through now. Having so many donors in one month is, well, just wishful thinking 😊

Ann Sargent, Chestnut Hill
Anne Tappan, Cambridge
Arlene Hayes, Reading
Barbara Askew, Quincy
Barbara Poulin, Oakland
Betsy Anderson, Framingham
Carole Parker, Stoughton
Cindy Houston, Woburn
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
David Hingston, Chelmsford
Denise Bolieu, Monmouth
Dorothy D'Alessandro, Oss.
Dorothy Eckstein, Medford
Doug Robertson, Dennis
Emilie Jorgensen, E. Boston
G&R Welch, Stonington
Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Irma Simon, S. China
J Yellow Robe, Old Town
Jean Catignani, Conway
Jean Tillson, Franklin
Jean Williams, Winslow

Joan Ryan, New Bedford
Joe D'Alessandro, Tuftonboro
Jon & Barb Anderson, Augusta
Joseph Blake, New Bedford
Josephine Ford, Holden
Josephine Smith, Woburn
Judy & Al Smith, Belmont
Judy Rohweder, Northport
Katie Clegg, Biddeford
Kelli Ruggere, Spencer
Laureen Alden, Stonington
Linda Merriam, Dresden
Linda Scott, Beverly
Lisa D'Alessandro, Raymond
Lorena & Harry Clark, Beverly
Lynn Frischmann, Los Gatos
Manuel German, Reading
Marcia Smith, Bucksport
Marian Delarue, Woburn
Marie O'Brien, Pawtucket
Mark Resendes, Revere
Marlene Kaplan, Melrose

Mary Jane Gorton, Floral City
Mary Klayda, Winchester
Mildred Walker, Presque Isle
Melody Lavers, Pownal
Nancy Capone, Wakefield
Nancy Brown, Waltham
Pat Thain, Dracut
R.D. Bournival, Nashua
Robert Hull, Lawrence
Rust Pappathanasi, Swampscott
Ruth Giusti, Titusville
Sandra Nicholson, Beverly
Somers Foundation
Susan Borsic, Woburn
The Bachrachs, Petersham
Victoria Lee, Stetson



A month before we went to Florida, our own dog, Casper, had to have more surgery (his body had rejected his skin transplant). One of the vet-techs at the clinic fell in love with him and sent me some photos of him while he was recuperating at the clinic. So as a "thank you" I had mailed her my book, the one about Charley's Strays. A couple of weeks later we received a \$200 check from the staff and the doctors of the Lucerne Veterinary Clinic as a donation to Charley's Strays! Again we were tickled. 😊

We also received a donation in memory of Harry Clark Sr. from Linda Scott. Jean Tillson, our artist whom some of you met at the fundraiser (she paints beautiful animal-portraits) has a husband, who has a piggybank, who killed the poor thing and gave all the coins in it's belly to Charley's Strays. A big hug to Jean's hubby! And a check was mailed to us from Barbara Poulin in memory of Bernard Thomas. Thank you much!

Since I still have some space left – a whole page, front and back; I give you something to laugh! Please read on.

**Gabriele,
Mary, Karen, Betty, Jim and Ted**

Taking Sammy to the Vet

By Rebecca

Sammy, our American Eskimo dog who's been with us for years, is still so wary no one can pet him, though once in a while he'll sniff or nudge me. So when he went off his food, and then started having spells of panting and shaking, we had a problem. I finally called the vet's office and said, "I need an appointment for this dog I can't touch." When the tech asked how I planned to get him to the office, I replied, "I have no idea."

On the day, I drove my car inside the fenced yard hours before the appointment time, left the door open and let Sammy into the yard to run. He showed no interest in the car. After half an hour I brought his friend Dante out to join him. Dante immediately hopped into the car, and Sammy followed him! I slammed the door, shutting both dogs in the car. When Dante moved to the front seat while Sammy explored the backseat, I quickly pulled Dante out and led him back into the kennel. Sammy stayed in the backseat, as far from me as possible, while I got behind the wheel and drove to Waterville.

At the vet's, I was able to lasso Sammy with the rope I brought. He was glad to get out of the car, but not happy when he realized he and I were attached. The only way to move him was to pull him away from wherever I wanted him to go; he reacted by going the opposite direction. Even that didn't work at the office door, where he froze and refused to move at all. So I picked him up and carried him over the threshold, to our mutual astonishment.

When it was our turn to see Dr. Slack, I maneuvered Sammy into the exam room. But he was having nothing to do with the doctor – backed into a corner, he barked, screamed and snapped. When we couldn't get any kind of muzzle on, Dr. Slack went for an injectable anesthesia. He held one hand above Sammy's head and when Sammy leapt for it slapped the needle into his hip with the other hand. Five minutes, he said, and Sammy would be out cold.

We went back to the waiting room, where Sammy paced. Five minutes. Ten minutes. Dr. Slack looked out. "Not yet," I said. Twenty minutes. Half an hour. Sammy was doing the drunken walk, but he was still walking. Dr. Slack didn't dare give another injection – Sammy already had a dose that should knock out a German shepherd, he said.

Three-quarters of an hour and we gave up. I led Sammy out to the car, which he was happy to jump into this time. On the way home he sat upright in the back seat, eyes half-closed, weaving from side to side, fighting to stay awake.

By this time I was starving, so I stopped at a store a mile or so from the kennel and picked up a pizza. Sammy paid no attention as I got out of the car. But when I got back in and put a hot ham and mushroom pizza on the passenger seat, Sammy came alive. This dog that hates being touched dived over the seat, between the seats, around the driver's seat, ignoring my pushing him back, determined to get that pizza. When we got back to the kennel it was too easy to get him out of the car and into his pen: he followed the pizza. As I closed the pen gate, I broke off a bite for him.

P. S. Even though Dr. Slack couldn't even examine Sammy, since the trip to the vet he's been eating better and the shaking and panting have abated. It must have been the pizza!

(Note from Gabriele: maybe instead of asking for chewie-donations we should be asking for Pizza donations)

One day an old German shepherd starts chasing rabbits and before long, discovers that he's lost. Wandering about, he notices a panther heading rapidly in his direction with the intention of having lunch.

The old German shepherd thinks, 'Oh, oh! I'm in deep doo-doo now!' Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the panther is about to leap, the old German shepherd exclaims loudly, 'Boy, that was one delicious panther! I wonder, if there are any more around here?'

Hearing this, the young panther halts his attack in mid-strike, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees. 'Whew!' says the panther, 'That was close! That old German shepherd nearly had me!'

Meanwhile, a squirrel that had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the panther. So, off he goes.

The squirrel soon catches up with the panther, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the panther.

The young panther is furious at being made a fool of and says, 'Here, squirrel, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine!'

Now, the old German Shepherd sees the panther coming with the squirrel on his back and thinks, 'What am I going to do now?', but instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet, and just when they get close enough to hear, the old German Shepherd says...
'Where's that squirrel? I sent him off an hour ago to bring me another panther!'

Moral of this story . . .

Don't mess with the old dogs... Age and skill will always overcome youth and treachery!
BS and brilliance only come with age and experience.



CAT REPORT – FEBRUARY 2010

Sorry about leaving you in November with the cliffhanger about Lisa being very sick. She recovered as mysteriously and almost as rapidly as she'd fallen ill, with no veterinary intervention. I spent lots of time coaxing her to eat a variety of foods, both human and cat, and made sure she had peace and quiet, and she's back to normal.

She and Pooh continue to be well satisfied living in the area that includes my bedroom, to which I moved them last summer. They still won't sleep on the bed with me at night, but during the day I often find one or both curled up there. Two cats I took in from other people are with them. Elvira is deaf and not friendly with me or other cats, so she and Pooh and Lisa ignore each other. Milo and Pooh are good friends, frequently cuddling together and washing each other. Lisa has reservations about Milo; he's chased her a couple times, playfully, but she wasn't sure how to take it. Sometimes she avoids him; sometimes Lisa, Pooh and Milo are all on the bed.

Since I last wrote several other cats, including Purina/Meg and some that I'm fostering for other rescuers, have done the same thing Lisa did, just stopped eating. Most I could take to the vet without risking scaring them until they were even worse off. They had the usual variety of tests, with uniformly normal results (which was reassuring, but not helpful), and each of them recovered on his or her own, with some special meals and for one a week or so in segregation so she could eat as often as she pleased. I have no idea what it was all about; the cats were different ages and sexes, in different rooms, some of them on slightly different diets. Right now – I'm knocking on wood – everyone seems to be eating and acting normally.

An update: you'll remember last fall's fund-raiser for our friends Laurie and Dave Mountain that helped them buy the building in which they run their thrift shop and animal rescue operation: they're doing very well. A mutual friend who went to see them a week or so ago says the shop has lots of great stuff. Laurie emails once in a while – in her spare time ☺ – to let me know she's finding good homes for multitudes of cats and kittens (and occasionally dogs, ducks and goodness know what else).

And a reminder for the Maine taxpayers who get this newsletter: when you file your state income tax, please add a few dollars for the companion animal sterilization fund, number 7 on the list of optional check offs. As usual, the demand for assistance is greater than the supply of money. You can also support state animal welfare programs by buying the animal welfare license plate that I hope you've been seeing on the streets.

The different kinds of food and treats several people sent the cats for Christmas were helpful with the invalids and have been enjoyed by all. They're almost gone now, though I've been rationing them to make them last longer. This week Karen's friend Jane in Alaska, who adopted Lisa and Pooh's sister and made her an Artic cat, sent a Valentine's Day box full of Alaskan catnip, so everyone will have extra entertainment for a while. I've also been pleased to get food from Olivia Charles (she's a very nice cat whose people tell me she goes shopping almost every week to buy canned food for my cats), Karen, Stephanie and Cris and coupons from Suzanne Belisle, Iris Marinello, Teresa Parent, Irma Simon and Judy Smith. Many thanks to all of you, from me and the cats.