Two dogs find a home worth waiting for ~

**MIDNIGHT & SHADOW: Soulmates home at last**

Yes, it took a while, but when the right thing finally came along, everyone knew it.

For Jason Smith, it took a year of grieving the death of his wonderful basset hound, Marley. “I’d had him since he was a puppy, and 14 years is a long time,” Jason recalls. “I just wasn’t ready for another dog. I knew I’d have to wait until I was.”

Friends volunteer Sara Klopfenstein, who worked with Jason at Precision Computer Services in Shelton, Conn., knew how devastated Jason was at losing Marley. “During the following year,” she says, “he’d occasionally mention adopting another dog and told me he’d let me know when he was ready.

In June of 2011, he walked up to my desk and said he was ready. He also said he was thinking of adopting two dogs. I knew immediately that the shelter had the perfect pair for him, Midnight and Shadow.”

In September of 2009, almost two years earlier, two dogs had been removed from their home, where they’d been found lying in feces and urine in a 3-by-3-foot coat closet. Despite the awful neglect they’d endured, they were two of the most lovable dogs the volunteers and staff had ever cared for. Their names were Midnight and Shadow, and they were gorgeous. Naturally, they caught the eye of a lot of potential adopters, but no one wanted both of them. The staff and volunteers, however, knew that these two boys would have to go to a home together. They loved each other, and although it made it harder to adopt them, they were inseparable—they were a true pair. They’d survived the worst together and now they deserved to share the best future possible.

For Jason, all it took to seal the deal was a visit to Petfinder. He took one look at their photos, read their story, and that was it. Still, he did a bit of online research to familiarize himself with their breeds. (Midnight is an Australian shepherd, and Shadow, an Australian kelpie.) He’d had earlier experience with a border collie, a similar breed, and with four acres of land in Oxford, he felt confident that he could offer the dogs all the love and exercise they’d need. “Sara drove me to the shelter on a Tuesday. All I had to do was play with them a little in the dog run, and then we drove to his new home, which was a long time,” Jason recalls. “I’ve loved both of them from the moment I laid eyes on them. Now they’re out of the shelter and living the life they deserve.”

Sara recalls the adoption vividly. “It was such an amazing day at the shelter,” she says, “and I am so grateful to have friends like Jason who are committed to altering the fate of the dogs we work with.”

Friends of the New Haven Animal Shelter, Inc., is a non-profit, volunteer organization. Our officers are President Jill King • Vice President Deb Wan • Corresponding Secretary Jeannie Rusali • Recording Secretary Carol Feiden • Treasurer Elaine Spinato

Send mail to FNHAS • P.O. Box 9056
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Visit us online at: www.findafriendforlife.org or at www.petfinder.org/shelters/CT74.html

**AmonFRIENDS**

**AmonFRIENDS Contributors**

Officer in Charge of the Shelter Stephani Johnson • Sara Klopfenstein • Karen Marchione • Sarah Oren • Anna Schildroth • Elaine Spinato • Leo Taylor • Debbie Wan

This issue of AmonFRIENDS is dedicated to Leilani. We miss her.
Greetings from the Executive Board

Merriam-Webster defines volunteerism as "the act of doing volunteer work in community service."

At the Robin I. Kroogman New Haven Animal Shelter, we define the word much more broadly. Here, it means walks, pets and baths, treats and patience, training, caring and empathy. It means hard work, disappointment, and love, vet visits, phone calls, e-mails, and fundraising. It also means educating and reaching out to the public. In other words, it means everything you can imagine, and then some. And all of it is more than worth the effort every time an animal leaves the shelter in the care of a loving, responsible new human companion.

More than once, we’ve said to each other that the Friends wants nothing more than to put itself out of business. No more homeless animals, no more abandoned animals, no more animal cruelty. We realize, of course, that we will always have plenty of work to do; the problems associated with sheltering and placing animals will not be solved in our lifetimes. But the goal is still a worthy one, and something that we continue to pursue with a sense of urgency and compassion.

It’s a wonderful sight to see is a volunteer gently petting a dog just so the dog can have some quiet time…or stroking one of our cats just so the cat can relax and purr. And it is remarkable to watch the process by which our volunteers and shelter staff work together to turn a fearful, untrusting animal into one who eagerly seeks human companionship.

As we look forward to the holiday season, the Executive Board is especially thankful for the tireless work of our passionate and generous volunteers. Each volunteer makes a unique contribution to our group. And as the year ends, each can look back on 12 months during which he or she saved lives and made a lasting difference.

The dictionary says that volunteers perform their work for free, without pay, without compensation. On this, the dictionary is slightly wrong. Our volunteers receive the best payment possible: the knowledge that what they so freely give of themselves saves and enriches the lives of animals and people alike.

For what they do and for how much they care, the volunteers at the Robin I. Kroogman New Haven Animal Shelter can be defined in one simple word: priceless!

Pictured above, left to right: Vice President Deb Wan, Recording Secretary Carol Feiden, Corresponding Secretary Jeannie Ranalli, Treasurer Elaine Spinato, and President Jill King. (photo: Leo Taylor)

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“MY SWEET GIRL IZZY”

RIKA & IZZY

“MY FRIEND ROBBIN SEIPOLD is a great advocate for all creatures who could benefit from kindness. In mid April she sent out an e-mail through ROBBIN’S LIST with pictures of all these beautiful dogs at the shelter on the ‘Urgent’ list. Her message was, ‘If you have ever thought— even just a little bit—to adopt a dog, please consider doing it.’ Well, I was in the ‘even just a little bit’ category. I live in New Haven, just started a new position downtown, and suddenly, I had more free time on my hands since cutting down my commute significantly. I called volunteer Delette Corwel to arrange a meeting at the shelter.

WOW—what an experience...so many dogs, all with their stories. The whole team working there is amazing—the staff and the volunteers! I left after meeting two dogs that tested “not cat friendly.” (I have a sweet elderly cat who also had to be safe.) I was just back at my office when Lori Levitt, the volunteer who worked with me, called to say there was another really wonderful dog on the Urgent List. She sent me a couple of pictures of ‘Marianna,’ and I went back the next day to meet her.

Lori brought her out into the meeting space. She was beautiful, thin, and stressed out. She sat by my feet and leaned into me and looked up into my eyes—she has incredibly beautiful eyes, her face all wrinkled up in serious concentration. Lori suggested we take her outside for a walk and spend more time with her in open space. Lori had a cooked chicken breast and said ‘why don’t you give her a piece?’ ‘NOOOO,’ I said—‘I’m a little scared. Why don’t you give it to her?’ I watched as she took the meat from Lori, and then I tried. Marianna brought tears to my eyes. She took the food from my hand, never taking her eyes off me, so incredibly gently that it just melted my heart. I thought that if she shows this much gentleness under these circumstances, she has huge potential! To confirm my gut feeling, she tested fine with cats, I thought that if she shows this much gentleness under these circumstances, she has huge potential! To confirm my gut feeling, she tested fine with cats, and I started the adoption process right away.

I renamed her Izzy, brought her home, and watched her unfold slowly—one of the most rewarding journeys of my life. We went for training with volunteer David Henon, who was incredibly helpful and patient. Izzy is a beautiful soul, intelligent, funny, curious, and energetic. She teaches me about love, patience, how to set her up for success, that gentleness is more powerful than any other method of communication. I’ve had more fun and adventure with Izzy than I could ever imagine. We go for wonderful walks in the morning; we hike through the Branford Supply Pond. We trust each other and make each other feel safe. My heart swells with pride and pure love when she walks ahead of me, her body swaying from side to side, ears bouncing, and when she turns around and gives me a big smile!”

— Rika Visser, New Haven

“I Z Y”

“PATCHES HAD SPENT TOO MANY DAYS IN A CAGE that made too much noise among other ‘used-to-be’ pets who now felt lost. She was a scaredy cat who had left her mother too soon and was afraid of almost everything. But, she did learn that she could use her teeth and claws to attack and maybe protect herself. The problem is she didn’t know that people were trying to help her.

Thanks to the Friends of the New Haven Animal Shelter (who have a benefit at my store, Ten Thousand Villages, in New Haven every December) I learned about Patches after Echo, my cat of 20 years, died. I went to the shelter to meet Patches, who at first let me hold her then decided she wanted no part of me. She had already been adopted once and returned because of her ‘attack’ mode.

I have had cats my entire life of 68 years. Patches and I were going to learn to trust and love one another. She came home to Branford and had her own beautiful sun porch where she could watch squirrels and birds all day but feel safe in a not-overwhelming space where there were places to hide and be alone, which I respected…up to a point. So every day I sat on the porch, bringing her yummy food and soft talking. She wanted so much to be loved, but couldn’t trust, and so out came the claws and teeth more times than I care to remember. After a while she could get in my lap and climb up to suckle my neck. When she was startled she learned to walk away instead of attacking.

Now came the great part. A friend, Lee, Parker, who lives alone, always cared for my cats when I was away on business. Patches was ready to meet Lee. He took her when I went to a meeting for a week. I gave him Patches a few days before I left, just in case she wasn’t ready for her big step. He let her hide and come to him when she felt safe. By the time I came home, she was on his shoulder every morning and night, as he says, like a pirate’s parrot perched up there licking his ear.

Lee is a member of Fellowship Place, and having a good four-footed friend to bug him and love him wasn’t such a bad idea, so I kept putting off picking up Patches, and finally suggested that he keep her on a trial basis just to see. I would always be her godmother, and she could come back to Branford anytime.

That was almost a year ago. Patches is now Peaches Peekaboo and Lee’s best buddy. There is truly a perfect human friend for every special four-footed friend.”

— Liz Rider, Branford

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Featuring Special Guest OOGY and Honorary Chairman LARRY LEVIN author of “OOGY, THE DOG ONLY A FAMILY COULD LOVE”
National Bestseller & an Oprah Valentine’s Day Feature 2008
visit www.findafriendforlife.org

THE NEW HAVEN LAWN CLUB
We are grateful to everyone who made generous donations to the Friends during the past six months. We list here donations made in memory of and in honor of beloved animals and people. All of your donations help us provide a second chance for the good and loving animals who come to our shelter for help. We...and they...thank you.

in memoriam...

Elizabeth Adams in memory of Liz Adams's beloved Bella.
Lynn Autry in loving memory of Helene and Hezekiah.
David and Lyn Belt in loving memory of Zeus, beloved companion of the Tombaugh Family.
Brian Blakely “in loving memory of Kate and Nell-Bob. “Best old pooches...as all of them are.”
Elizabeth and Michael Bruneau in loving memory of Rowena Rogers and Kathy Hare.
Marsha Brunelle in loving memory of Nicholas, beloved companion of the Ballantine Family.
Joy Bush and Tom Gilmore in loving memory of Bailey, beloved companion of Lulu deCarrone.
Joy Bush and Tom Gilmore in loving memory of Beanie, beloved mustached companion of Sandy Sanford.
Diane Caffrey in loving memory of Molly.
Carol Cortese in loving memory of Zoe.
Rose Cretella in loving memory of her sister, Carmel Masotta, “who loved all animals.”
Carol Feiden in memory of Abby, beloved companion of Jill King.
Carol Feiden in memory of Norman Marchione, father of Karen Marchione.
Anne Finn in memory of Josephine Early O'Connell.
Holly Flugrath in memory of all animals.
Ruth Friedland in loving memory of Bubba.
Luis and Maria Garcia-Abrines in loving memory of Lady and Carl.
Barbara Grajewski in memory of Schaffer, “my beloved best friend.”
Anna Halligan in loving memory of “Gandi Gain, my sweetheart.”
Kathy Heinie, Christie Lau, and Mildred Peterson in loving memory of Vivienne Scott-Young.
Jennifer Iovanne: “To my beloved Max, You are missed.”
James Johnson and Laura Margolin: “In memory of our Norfolk terrier, Maxwell.”
Barbara Luke in loving memory of “all my dogs gone.”
The Macy Family in loving memory of Alfy Cat. “We miss you.”
Mary Malick in loving memory of Jr., Ollie, Millie, and Spike.
Eugene and Deena McCarthy: “For our beloved dog Jessie. Swim forever.”
Diane McGuire; “In loving memory of Shamus, Joey, and Scooby, three best friends.
And in honor of McGee from the shelter, who rescued me.”
Carmen Canales Matthews in loving memory of Lady. “Twas Heaven here with you.”
Mary Nelson in loving memory of all her cats.
Kate Paris in loving memory of Liz Adams's companion Bella Adams.
Marsha Rabe and Thomas Brown in loving memory of Bridie, beloved companion of Pat Sykes.
Jean Rubin in loving memory of Smokey, Baby Theodore, and Rusty Rubin.
Leslie Rudden: “In loving memory of my mother, Winifred Rudden.”
Janice and Mark Smolenski in loving memory of Maggie, beloved companion of Susan Smolenski and Family.
Janice and Mark Smolenski in loving memory of Conrad, beloved companion of Andrew Smolensk.
Edward Torello in loving memory of Zoey.
Sarah Whitlock in memory of Larry D’Angelo.

in honor of...

Teresa and Suzanne Beck in honor of Deb Lovely’s birthday.
Monica Micilizzi-Cofrancesco and Ernest Cofrancesco in honor of Harley D; “nine years old and fabulous.”
Lauren D’Alessandro “Thank you for my great big puppy, Georgia.”
In honor of Jillian and Amelia Rinaldi’s Seventh Birthday: John and Deborah Carpenter, Jeptha and Theo Curtis, Joann Hong Curtis, James and Laura Erlacher, Philip Haile and Sharon Callaway, Gerald Kiernan and Kathleen Connell Kiernan, the Labowe-Stoll Family, Kim Morris, Rebecca Paugh, AM Pingoud, and Kim Yal and Andrew Lewandowski.
Linda Turner in honor of Max, a great companion.

our special thanks...

Alison Brown, of Branford, for kitten food.
Gail Flynn, of Branford, for organizing a gigantic tag sale for the Friends. We thank her for her tremendous hard work and great generosity.
The Fusco Corporation, Lynne Fusco, President.
Jayden Nickerson, of Hamden, who requested cat and dog food for the shelter in lieu of gifts for her birthday party.
Lynn Page of New Haven for her handmade tablecloth. It will definitely spruce up our table at adoption events.
Many thanks to the New Haven Public Library and Carol Brown for including the Friends at author Tom Ryan’s reading of “Following Atticus,” a book about his quest to climb 48 of the highest White Mountains with his spunky miniature schnauzer, Atticus. We thank the library for inviting us to take part in this wonderful event and for allowing us to accept donations and distribute material about our work.
Petco Foundation, the 2011 Spring A Pet Fundraiser.
Petco of North Haven, “Shout Out to Kim, the manager,” for a generous donation of a wonderful selection of dog and cat goodies.
Pitney Bowes matching donation program
Pond Point Animal Hospital, Milford, for signing on for a full year as part of our New Haven Has Heart Campaign.
Sarah Rastalli, age 6, New Haven, for her generous donations.
Raven’s Wing Yoga of Branford celebrated the Summer Solstice with a special fundraising yoga session for our animals at Lighthouse Point. Namaste.
Shazam and Wowza to our magnificent, faithful, creative voters in the Summer 2011 Shelter Challenge, sponsored by Petfinder.com and The Animal Rescue Site.com. Thanks to your daily votes, we received a $1,000 grant for our medical fund!
Sara Welch, formerly of WTNH-News 8, for her long and dedicated support of The Friends. We wish her and her two collies, Bodie and Emmy, all the luck in the world in their new life in California. Happy wedding bells, Sara!
The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, New Haven.
CAR DONATIONS: Stephanie Barganier, Ina Colby III, Gregg Moody, and Joseph Ploszaj for donating their cars to us through Car Program, Inc. (For information on how to donate your car, visit www.findafriendforlife.org. Click How to Help and scroll down to Donate a Car!)

medical update

THIS SEASON WAS QUITE BUSY with medical issues, and thank goodness your contributions were there to help us. Tasha and Aldo had terrible skin problems—scabs, infection, and hair loss. They were just miserable. Special baths and medication routines over an extensive amount of time resulted in new hair growth and you can see the smiles in their eyes again. Through all the discomfort, Tasha has been loving and friendly to everyone. She even gives visitors a high five. Poor Aldo was frightened and worn down and is just learning that he is safe as he begins to feel better. Two unrelated, five-month old puppies, Lulu and Coco, both had life-threatening diseases. They were hospitalized and are now in new homes. Sheba, another canine friend, is receiving treatment for heartworm. Andre (poodle) had surgery for a serious knee injury, and Oz, the cutest little Yorkie, had to have an eye removed. They have both found forever homes. We were also able to assist with some of the spay/neuter charges on the larger dogs, as well as testing on Java for kidney function.
The cats have been doing well, with the exception of Joanie (right) a lovely, quite chubby calico who has been at the shelter for 10 months. She was evaluated for problems that might be contributing to her weight and lack of activity and is now on a strict diet while she is staying with a foster. Her lab work and special food were provided by you, and she is proud to say that she has lost 1.5 pounds! She is a lap cat who would love to receive all of someone’s attention.
Now we find ourselves coming to you to help just a little more, so we can treat a serious heart issue in two of our dogs. Bee Bee (right, a small Chihuahua mix) and Men (left, a mix of many) are two young dogs who require basic cardiac surgery to live happy, healthy lives. They are both sweet, adoptable dogs who have been patiently waiting to know if we had the money and when this might happen. Can you help them? It is expensive; however they are good candidates, young, good-natured, and strongly motivated by love. They will appreciate it forever! Honest!
— Karen Marchione, Volunteer