

NOVEMBER 2009

# FURRY



# FRIENDS

## **Memphis Animal Shelter Location:**

3456 Tchulahoma Road  
Memphis, TN 38118  
(901) 362-5310

[www.memphisanimalservices.petfinder.com](http://www.memphisanimalservices.petfinder.com)

## **Shelter Hours:**

Monday- 10:00 to 3:00

Tuesday—Friday- 10:00 to 5:00

Saturday- 10:00 to 3:00

Sunday- Closed

## **Adoption Fees:**

Dogs/puppies- \$75

Cats/kittens- \$70

(includes shots, spay/neuter & micro-chipping)

## **Contact:**

Kathryn Rhea, *Furry Friends* Editor

[Kathryn.rhea@gmail.com](mailto:Kathryn.rhea@gmail.com)

*Furry Friends is written independently and the views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views, policies or actions of Memphis Animal Services or any other person(s) or group(s).*

## NEWS TO KNOW

- MAS needs volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering, visit the website or contact Tracy Dunlap, 362-5310, for more information.
- Currently, there is not a definite MAS mobile adoption event schedule. If you are interested in adopting, please visit the shelter during operating hours.
- If you have a dog house you no longer need and would like to donate, they are needed for dogs on tie-outs with no shelter. Call Leah: 323-1609.

## MAS: THE WAY FORWARD

*Plan of action Mayor Wharton released in the press conference on Nov. 6, 2009*

In light of recent developments at the animal shelter inclusive of preliminary findings of an internal investigation, the following actions are being taken as measures to improve the quality of animal care and the delivery of overall services:

### 1. Hire an Interim Facility Coordinator

The Interim Coordinator will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Provide leadership in managing the fiscal resources of the animal shelter;
- Monitor the department's operating and capital budget and make recommendations;
- Establish and administer performance measures to support the day-to-day operations within the budget;
- Report developments to the Mayor.

### 2. Enlist the services of an Interim Operations Control Manager/Reinstate the Operations Control Manager position

- In the interim, the city will enlist the services of a highly-qualified operations control manager with expansive knowledge of animal care and control; this individual will work in lock step with the Mayor's Task Force;
- This individual will ensure strict compliance with all updated policies and procedures;
- Qualifications for the Operations Control position will be rewritten to stress enhanced experience in animal care and control.

### 3. Activate the Mayor's Task Force to engage in systematic monitoring of the shelter and implementation of best practices

- Representatives from animal advocacy groups and animal professionals with the mayor's newly-formed Animal Shelter Task Force will work with the Interim Facility Coordinator and the Interim Operations Control Manager to implement best practices at the shelter;
- Members of the Mayor's Task Force will work with the Interim Facility Coordinator and the Division Director in providing daily monitoring of the shelter and of staff.

### 4. Install Video Cameras

- Starting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 6, operations at the animal shelter can be viewed by web camera 24 hours a day over the City of Memphis' website: [www.memphistn.gov](http://www.memphistn.gov)

### 5. Increase Veterinarian Services

- Two Veterinarians will now be contracted to perform services at the shelter.

## COME! SIT! STAY!

**30% of dog owners give up their pets to an animal shelter because of the dogs' perceived behavior problems.**

Shelby County Obedience Club is a nonprofit organization whose members share a love of dogs and developing them into better companions. They also offer beginner obedience classes for the pet owner as well as conformation handling classes for handlers and their conformation dogs. Their Beginner Obedience Class is a six-week session (one hour per week), where dog owners are taught the basics of training their dogs to heel on leash, sit, stand, lie down, stay and come when called. These classes have the added advantage of allowing socialization with other dogs and handlers in a group setting. The cost for the class is \$80. (A \$10 discount is offered for dogs that are rescued or adopted from



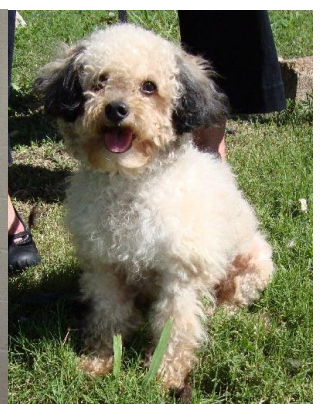
rescue organizations or shelters and enrolled in class within 6 months of their adoption. Please bring your paperwork or cancelled check as proof of your adoption.) Go to their website for more info: [www.shelbycountyobediencelub.com](http://www.shelbycountyobediencelub.com)

## VERY NEIGHBORLY

Thank you so much to the municipalities, groups and individuals who helped MAS during the raid. Many took animals into their care and lightened the load so investigators could concentrate on the current population. Our neighbors at the Collierville Animal Shelter took a pregnant momma dog when she was surrendered to the Memphis Shelter. They are happy to report that she had 14 adorable babies, who are doing great.



**"No man can be condemned for owning a dog. As long as he has a friend; and the poorer he gets, the better friend he has."**  
- Will Rogers



**THE WORK OF A VOLUNTEER** isn't always easy,

but for Anne Hill and Jeanne Chancellor a day at the shelter was all soap and bubbles. These dedicated volunteers took on the task of cleaning up a Poodle mix in hopes he would grab the attention of a potential adopter. They bathed this sweetheart at least three times to rid him of fleas and to try to remove the dirt that had stained his white fluffy hair. They removed the mats and did the best they could with scissors until he finally said no more. Well, their efforts paid off and he was adopted the very next day! Way to go, Jeanne & Anne!

## NEVER GIVE UP

Someone had stolen our dog, CoCo, so we posted pictures on Craiglist and checked the animal shelter about once a week in hopes of having her safely returned. It had been over a month since she went missing and we were about to give up all hope, then something told my husband to check at the shelter again. Our persistence and prayers were answered on October 20 when my husband found her at the Memphis



Animal Shelter! She had gotten a lot taller but she is nothing but bones now. My poor baby was starving! The shelter said it looked like the person that had stolen her probably wanted to fight her so they starved her so she would get mean when another dog would come towards her when they did feed her. However she is a very friendly pit bull and this wasn't the life for her (or any dog). My smart girl managed to get loose. The ugly collar they put on her and the thing she was tied to was still on her when the animal control officer picked her up. Luckily, we kept regularly checking at the shelter since they are held for only 3 days to be claimed. She had been there 3 days and it was her due out date when we found her! Now she is home and being fed a lot! So never give up hope on your missing pooch, just keep praying. And to the person who had my Coco, you're a horrible person and karma will bite you in the butt! - Lauren Rebertus

# SHELTER SENIORS

November is Adopt-a-Senior-Pet Month. At animal shelters and rescue groups everywhere, there are loving, healthy senior pets looking for that one special home to cherish them for the rest of their life, and they don't ask for much: just a warm place to sleep, good meals and plenty of love.

*Here is a portion of an article titled "Senior Dogs in Shelters" posted on WuffingtonWag.com by Val Israel of Animal Rescue Tree:*



## WHAT IS A SENIOR DOG?

There does not seem to be a universal definition of a senior dog. The easiest definition is that any dog eight years or older is a senior dog. However, different breeds of dogs have different life expectancies – so, an eight year old small dog that has a 15-year life expectancy is very different from an eight year old large breed dog expected to only live ten years. A more logical definition classifies small dogs as seniors at the age of 10-12 years and large dogs at 6-8 years old – this corresponds to an age that is about 75% of the life expectancy.

## THE PLIGHT OF OLDER DOGS IN SHELTERS

Dogs end up in shelters in different ways – often they are found as strays, too frequently they are relinquished by owners for a various “reasons”. Older dogs land in shelters for the same reasons, and then some. Though it seems cruel and hard to understand, it is not uncommon for older dogs to be abandoned by their owners at shelters. They are “turned in” to the shelters by owners due to health problems, death or severe illness of their owner, loss of home of owner, behavior problems, and more.



When a dog develops significant health problems the vet bills can be quite high and the level of care needed can increase significantly leading some people to dump their long-time loyal companion in the shelters. Senior dogs are often plagued with the same sort of health problems that people encounter. Periodontal disease is quite common and often with abscessed teeth since it is no surprise that someone who would abandon their dog also neglected that animal's health care. With advancing age comes the development of cataracts and progressive blindness as well as partial or complete deafness. Arthritic joints are common and exacerbated by obesity in older canines. Skin problems, benign and cancerous tumors, and a variety of other health conditions are also common in this population.

Older dogs have a much harder time in the shelters. They have been uprooted and displaced, and are frightened. They have a harder time adapting to the shelter environment and coping with the stress and can even become confused and disoriented. As a result, they may become withdrawn and depressed, or overwhelmed with anxiety. They may even develop behavior problems such as show aggression they would not normally display. Older dogs are more vulnerable to temperature extremes, are more susceptible to contagious illnesses, are often in discomfort or pain from the hard cement floors or from medical problems, and frequently do not receive the medical care they need while they are in the shelter and develop health complications. They may also get inadequate nutrition because they are not able to eat the hard kibble due to dental disease or have to compete with other dogs.

## ADOPTION OF SENIOR DOGS FROM SHELTERS

It is more difficult to adopt senior dogs out because of existing and the higher potential for health problems and the cost and care that accompany them. Many people are also concerned about the shorter life span remaining and fear the grief they will suffer from the loss. Also, because the older dogs can go into depression or become anxious and even quite cranky, they are less desirable to prospective adopters.

However, many do not realize the advantages of adopting a senior dog. It is very rewarding to adopt a senior dog who is so scared and bewildered and has little hope of making it out of the shelter. Senior dogs can be ideal companions for older people who also have a shorter life span and are worried about outliving a pet. They tend to be more mellow and compatible with people who are less active. It also seems that they tend to be even more appreciative and thankful of being rescued.

*Source:* <http://wuffingtonwag.com/articles/guest-wags/senior-dogs-in-shelters/>



## IT WAS ABOUT TIME

Countless citizens, animal lovers, and animal shelter volunteers have been voicing their concerns to city officials for a significant time now giving repeated examples of how the Memphis Animal Shelter was not being operated properly and how the animals were treated inhumanely.

Yet their observations were being written off as unmerited or were excused with 'explainable' excuses by the shelter director. We then contacted members of the media, and even national organizations such as the ASPCA and PETA, for someone to hear our pleas for help but most importantly the cries of the helpless animals that unfortunately found themselves at the shelter. Thankfully, a courageous individual inside the shelter sent documentation to the correct people and they listened! Shelby County District Attorney Bill Gibbons and Shelby County Sheriff Mark Luttrell announced on October 27 that deputies with the Sheriff's Office had executed a search warrant at the City of Memphis Animal Shelter. During the raid, they gathered evidence regarding the conditions at the shelter. I am confident that Mayor Wharton and the new administration will clean up the mess once and for all! If you would like to send a thank you to the individuals for their involvement, their contact information is below:

Bill Gibbons • District Attorney General

Shelby County District Attorney's Office

201 Poplar Avenue, Third Floor • Memphis, TN 38103  
(901) 545-5900



Shelby County Sheriff Mark H. Luttrell, Jr.

201 Poplar Avenue • Memphis, TN 38103  
public-info@shelby-sheriff.org

Memphis Mayor A C Wharton, Jr.

City Hall • 125 N. Main St. Room 700 • Memphis, TN 38103  
(901) 576-6000 • mayor@memphistn.gov

Join the

### COMMUNITY SPAY & NEUTER INITIATIVE

Working together we can improve the welfare of the animals in our community.

This meeting will offer you the opportunity to tour Mid-South Spay and Neuter Services and hear how we can improve the welfare of our companion animals.

Your support is critical!

We will be presenting the steps we need to take to make this happen.

**Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Mid-South Spay & Neuter Services**

**854 Goodman Street • Memphis, TN 38111**

**10:00 am - 11:30 am**

Spread the word and invite others to join!!!!

For more information call, Gail: (901) 491-9773

## A TEARFUL REUNION

While I was at the shelter, a mom & daughter brought in a cute little dog that they said followed them into a Kroger. They took the dog home & tried for two days to find his owner but were unsuccessful. I knew this guy was someone's baby, so I took a picture (left) of him & posted it on Craigslist in hopes of locating his owner. I received a call from an ecstatic woman who was thrilled to locate her missing pooch. She said they had just moved to the area & he had just gone to the vet & they put someone else's collar on him without his ID tags. Below is a picture of the tearful reunion of Angelina & Benjie. Amazingly, Benjie is 22 years old! So, Angelina was so glad to be reunited with her long-time best friend.



## HAPPY HUGO

Kittens and puppies that end up at MAS who are too young to be adopted out and need to be bottle fed have a very small chance of survival unless an incredible foster steps forward. Well, thankfully with the help of Villy with St. Francis Animal Rescue Refuge (SFARR), who paid for the food, vets visits, and medication (they ended up with ring-worms), a wonderful foster mom took care of Simba and a few other kittens until they were old enough to be adopted. Simba was adopted by a wonderful family who had this to say: "We call him Hugo. He is precious and has brightened up everyone's lives; even our dog Jack, but he only shows it when he thinks we're not looking. As you can see from the picture, they get along wonderfully." -Ansley & Toby





## MEET THE BREED: SIBERIAN HUSKY

Siberian Huskies are medium-sized, members of the Working Group with a distinct wolf-like appearance. First developed as sled dogs, Siberian Huskies are remarkable dogs and their ability to learn is staggering. They are typically friendly and gentle, but also alert and outgoing. Good with children and friendly with strangers, they are not watchdogs, for they bark little and love everyone. Siberian Huskies are energetic dogs who require a good deal of exercise—at least 30 to 60 minutes per day. Twice a year Siberian Huskies shed most of their undercoat over the course of two or three weeks. They are social dogs and do not like being left alone, and will be happier if they have a companion dog. Like many other Working Dogs, though, they can be very independent and hard to manage. An experienced owner capable of firm training is a must. The biggest caution about the breed is their reputation for being escape artists. They will wander away from home whenever they get the chance and have a strong prey drive. Although they have qualities that can make them difficult, Siberian Huskies are still a wonderful breed. When properly trained and cared for, Huskies make fantastic family companions. Source: [breederretriever.com](http://breederretriever.com)



If this breed is for you, the Memphis Animal Shelter many times receives Huskies. Also, Hogan's Husky Heroes is an all-volunteer non-profit 501c3 group dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and finding new homes for unwanted, abused and abandoned Siberian Huskies, Northern Breeds and Northern Breed Mixes in Tennessee and surrounding states.

All of their rescues come from shelters, mainly in Tennessee, Eastern Arkansas and Northern Mississippi. Pictured are just a few of the gorgeous Huskies they have up for adoption now. For more information, visit their [website](http://website) or email: [freireich@poochies.org](mailto:freireich@poochies.org)



## THEY ARE FAMILY

- In 70% of feline households, cats are allowed to lie on the furniture. In 40% of canine households, dogs are allowed to do so.
- In 65% of cat-owning households, cats are permitted to sleep at night on some family member's bed compared with 39% of dogs.
- 45% of pet owners set up a special bed for their pet in the house.
- In 75% of the nation's dog-owning households, the dog is treated to rides in the family car compared with 8 % of households with cats.
- In one third (34%) of households surveyed, the dog goes along on family vacations, whereas only 11% take the cat along.
- 25% of pet owners surveyed said they blow dry their pet's hair after a bath.
- When a pet dies, 58% of pet owners bury the pet on their property.

Source: [Petfinder: Facts- Pet Ownership](http://Petfinder: Facts- Pet Ownership)



## CODY'S COMPANIONS

Eight years ago we adopted two cats from the Memphis Animal Shelter. One is orange and the other is black. They were very young when we got them but they weren't small kittens. They were both fixed before we brought them home. The orange cat we named "Jerry" after Jerry Lewis, because of his fundraising efforts for Muscular Dystrophy. "Midnight" is the female black cat. They are house trained and rarely leave the yard. My son, Cody, has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, which is a terminal illness, and he is confined to a hospital bed. Midnight and Jerry love to hang out with him on his bed. They bring the whole family joy everyday but they mean the most to Cody.

Teresa Buchanan • Southaven, MS