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SOS Animal Rescue Newsletter • Volume 09, Issue 4 • October 1, 2009

Sister and Brother Celebrate in Style

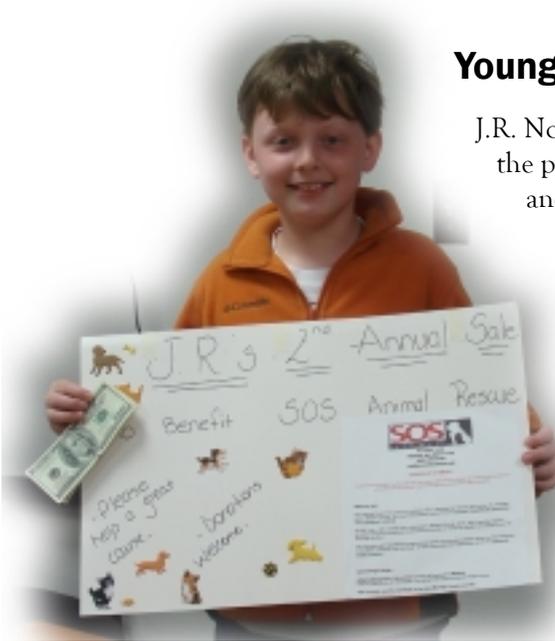
Haylee and Cayden Snyder (pictured at right) did not celebrate their birthdays like most kids their age. Yes, they had cake and ice cream, entertained lots of friends, and played games. However, in lieu of birthday gifts this year, these two asked for donations to help the animals. Haylee, Cayden, and their friends in the first, second, and third grades at Cook Elementary School helped to raise \$40 for SOS Animal Rescue. Thank you for your selfless efforts. And above all, the animals thank you!



Young Donor Gives Big

J.R. Nosal (pictured at left) conducted his annual fund-raising event and donated the proceeds to SOS Animal Rescue. He has been a great advocate for our group and is our youngest regular donor.

J.R. is a marvelous example that age is not a barrier to making the world a better place for the animals. SOS Animal Rescue sincerely appreciates his efforts on behalf of our organization.



MCC Dog Swim

The Midland Community Center Dog Swim was unable to be held this year. So for all of you doggy people who were looking forward to this event, please mark your calendars for June 2010. As that time approaches, a specific date will be announced.

SOS EVENTS

Sunday, October 4

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, November 1

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, December 6

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, October 18

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, November 15

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, December 20

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Adopt-a-Thons may be cancelled if no pets are available for adoption.

A Dog's Purpose? (Thoughts From Six-Year-Old)

Being a veterinarian, I had been called to examine a ten-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's owners, Ron, his wife Lisa, and their little boy Shane, were all very attached to Belker, and they were hoping for a miracle.

I examined Belker and found he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog in their home.

As we made arrangements, Ron and Lisa told me they thought it would be good for six-year-old Shane to observe the procedure. They felt as though Shane might learn something from the experience.

The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. Shane seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time, that I wondered if he understood what was going on. Within a few minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away.

The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulty or confusion. We sat together for a while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives.

Shane, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why."

Startled, we all turned to him. What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation. It has changed the way I try to live.

He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life – like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?"

The six-year-old continued, "Well, dogs already know how to do that, so they don't have to stay as long."

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Remember, if a dog were the teacher, you would learn things like:

- When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
- Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- Take naps.
- Stretch before rising.
- Run, romp, and play daily.
- Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
- On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.
- On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.
- When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.
- Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
- Be loyal.
- Never pretend to be something you're not.
- If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by, and nuzzle them gently.
- Enjoy every moment of every day!



Birthday Party Helps Animals

Gigi and Zoe Dauphinee's family adopted two wonderful kittens from SOS Animal Rescue. They also rescued another gray kitten from another rescue, and they already have a beautiful Pyrenees. Their family has given these little guys a wonderful home! Zoe decided that for her sixth birthday she would like to have a party to benefit animals. When guests came to celebrate, they brought pet beds, food, toys, leashes, and

other items all to be donated to SOS! We will give these gifts to animals who are in need of food, warmth, and loving care.

Thank you, Zoe, for helping these needy pets! And many thanks, also, go to the Dauphinee family for their support of SOS.



Spay/Neuter Statistics

From January 2004 to June 2009, SOS Animal Rescue has spayed/neutered 1043 cats and dogs.

SPAY/NEUTER	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Female Cats	41	90	93	109	90	42
Male Cats	26	64	57	70	49	19
Female Dogs	14	31	32	30	44	18
Male Dogs	13	17	30	41	20	3
TOTAL	94	202	212	250	203	82

In our last newsletter, we featured Rosie, the black lab. We are happy to report she has found a loving forever home. Thanks to all who helped with her medical expenses.

Recession-Proof Your Pet

Pets do not need that much to be healthy and happy, but they do need consistency and care.

Medical

Medical bills can be the biggest expenditure to break a struggling pet companion's budget, but serious health problems can be avoided or at least mitigated with regular health maintenance. Don't skip vaccinations and check-ups. Not only do shots prevent costly diseases such as leukemia, but regular vet visits can catch other maladies in initial, cheaper-to-treat phases. Some vaccinations are less necessary than others, though. (For instance, if you live in a geographical area with low risk for Lyme disease, then that shot isn't a pressing concern for your dog.) Talk with your vet about individualizing a preventive care program for your pet.

Food

Don't think that buying a 20-pound bag of generic commercial pet food is cutting down on anything but your companion's life-expectancy. Loaded with fillers and light on substance, these foods essentially starve your pet of nutrition. How long would you

expect to stay healthy if you ate fast food for every meal? Ensuring a balanced diet with proper exercise will keep complications associated with obesity, heart disease, and dental disease at bay.

If premium pet food is too expensive, consider making your own pet food. Some animals' dietary needs lend themselves to homemade meals (like dogs, who actually don't mind a bit of fruit in their diet), and oftentimes can be cheaper and more nutrient-rich than processed foods. Experiment with recipes and ingredients to see what works with your budget, but make sure to consult your vet before switching to homemade.

Signing up for special savings programs on manufacturers' or retailers' websites, and scanning for coupons also saves more money than you'd think.

Grooming

With the exception of certain breeds, most cats and dogs can be groomed easily at home with a consistent routine – and even the more high-maintenance breeds can be home-groomed with a bit of practice. Daily

to weekly brushings, depending on coat lengths and types, help to spread essential oils, remove detritus, and maintain overall coat health. And if you gently ease your pet into having its paws touched, rewarding it with positive reinforcement, nail trimming doesn't have to be an epic battle, either. Constant handling of your pet also allows you to feel for any unusual lumps or bumps that can indicate the early onset of medical problems.

Free or Discount Services

Check the Internet for comprehensive resources regarding financial aid, discount veterinary services, pet food banks, and other charitable assistance for special needs candidates, including the elderly, the ill, the disabled, and the just plain broke.

If you've tried everything to reduce expenditures, you still might find that you're no longer able to afford or house your pet. If you have to make that difficult decision to relinquish your animal companion, make sure to surrender them to a no-kill shelter to ensure your pet will find the home he or she deserves.

By Robyn Johnson, matadorlife.com

How to Keep a Pet Safe on Thanksgiving

Dogs and cats are part of the family, so of course we like to include them in holiday celebrations. However, not all of the festivities are okay for them to join in. The following tips can make your pet's Thanksgiving happy and safe.

Feed your pet a regular meal before guests arrive to reduce the chances of begging or stealing.

Reward your pet with a small portion of plain turkey (no bones) along with his regular food. Bones can splinter and cause choking or get lodged in the stomach or intestines. Rich, fatty foods can upset the stomach and bread may cause gas or bloat.

Let guests know whether it's okay or not for your dog or cat to go outdoors. If it's not, make sure they know to keep the door closed behind them. Check to make sure any outside gates are secured.

Tell guests not to feed your pet table scraps. This includes desserts containing chocolate, which can be fatal to dogs and cats. Sugar is not good either. Grapes and raisins can cause kidney failure in dogs.

Make sure leftover food, aluminum foil, and plastic wrap are disposed of quickly and the trashcan is covered well. Don't leave out snacks such as nuts and potato chips.

Give your pet a "time out" and a chance to settle down and take a nap in a quiet area away from all the hullabaloo. Hanging out with the company may be exciting for them in small doses, but they are liable to become stressed after a while. A nice walk with your canine buddy is also a good idea.

If traveling, make sure you don't wait until the last minute to make plans for your pet. Choose the safest and most comfortable environment. Take time to research boarding facilities and pet sitters, and keep in mind they book up quickly around holiday time.

Reprinted from Melissa Maroff, eHow.com

THANK YOU!

The Arnold Family

Jennifer and Khord Brieske

Wilma Lee and Bob Cook
in memory of Willie,
loving companion of Phyllis Sabin

Cheryl Dauer

Leslie Foote

Cinnamon Holthofer
for
cat food, kitty litter, and cat crate

Isabella Jansen
for Rosie's medical expenses

Lyuba Pace

Michelle Povinelli

Leslie Russell

Michael and Karen Ryan
in memory of
Jonathon B. Walter

Phyllis Sabin
for dog food and treats
in memory of
beloved pet Willie

My name is Claire Butcher and for my tenth birthday, I decided to collect money to donate to SOS and the Midland Animal Shelter. I invited some of my friends to my birthday party. In my invitation I wrote, "Instead of presents, bring any amount of money to donate to animal shelters." After the party was over, I collected \$100 and gave \$50 to the Midland Animal Shelter and \$50 to SOS. It really feels good to help animals.



Kitten's Rough Play

If playing with your kitten evolves from peek-a-boo to professional wrestling in a matter of seconds, follow these tips to keep playtime interesting and reduce the number of trips to the first-aid kit. Cats incorporate a variety of behaviors into their play, such as exploratory, investigative, and predatory behaviors—skills they would normally need for survival. As you've probably already learned, kittens like to explore new areas and investigate anything that moves, and may bat at, pounce on, and bite objects that resemble prey. It's not always easy for cats to draw the line between acceptable play and overly aggressive behavior, so play-motivated, aggressive behaviors are common in young, active cats less than two years of age, and in cats who live in one-cat households.

Kittens learn how to inhibit their bite from their littermates and their mother. A kitten who is separated from her family too early may play more roughly than a kitten who has had more valuable family time. If humans play with a young kitten using their hands and/or feet instead of toys, the kitten is liable to learn that rough play with people is okay. In most cases, it's not too difficult to teach your kitten or young adult cat that rough play isn't acceptable.

Encourage Acceptable Behavior

Redirect your kitten's aggressive behavior onto acceptable objects like toys. Drag a toy along the floor to encourage your kitten to pounce on it, or throw a toy away from your kitten to give her even more exercise chasing the toy down. Some kittens will even bring the toy back to be thrown again. You can also try toys that your kitten can wrestle with, like a soft stuffed animal that's about her size, so she can grab it with both front feet, bite it, and kick it with her back feet. This is one of the ways kittens play with each other, especially when they're young.

It's also one of the ways they try to play with human feet and hands, so it's important to provide this type of alternative play target. Encourage play with a "wrestling toy" by rubbing it against your kitten's belly when she wants to play roughly—and be sure to get your hand out of the way as soon as she accepts the toy.

Because kittens need lots of playtime, set up three or four consistent times daily to initiate play with your kitten. This will help her understand that she doesn't have to be the one to initiate play by pouncing on you.

Discourage Unacceptable Behavior

You need to set the rules for your kitten's behavior, and every person your cat comes in contact with should reinforce these rules.

Use aversives to discourage your kitten from nipping. You can use a squirt bottle filled with water and a small amount of vinegar to squirt your kitten when she starts getting too rough. To use this technique effectively, you'll need to have the spray bottle handy at all times—it's absolutely essential to use the aversive while the rough behavior is occurring. So either place a spray bottle in each room, or carry one with you as you move around the house. In some cases, you may want to apply taste aversives to your hands. If you have sensitive skin, you can wear gloves and put the aversive on the gloves. The possible disadvantage to this method is that your kitten may learn that "hands with gloves taste bad and those without gloves don't." Remember that aversives will work only if you offer your kitten acceptable alternatives.

Redirect the behavior after using the aversive. After you startle your kitten with the aversive, immediately offer her a toy to wrestle with or chase. This

will encourage her to direct her rough play onto a toy instead of a person. Keep a stash of toys hidden in each room specifically for this purpose.

Withdraw attention when your kitten starts to play too roughly. If the distraction and redirection techniques don't seem to be working, the most drastic thing you can do to discourage your cat from rough play is to withdraw all attention. She wants to play with you, so if you keep this limit consistent, she'll eventually figure out how far she can go. The best way to withdraw your attention is to walk to another room and close the door long enough for her to calm down. If you pick her up to put her in another room, then you're rewarding her by touching her, so you should always be the one to leave the room.

Please Note: None of these methods will be very effective unless you also give your kitten acceptable outlets for her energy—by playing with her regularly using appropriate toys.

What Not to Do

Attempts to tap, flick, or hit your kitten for rough play are almost guaranteed to backfire. Your kitten could become afraid of your hands, or she could interpret those flicks as playful moves by you and play even more roughly as a result.

Picking up your kitten to put her into a "timeout" may reinforce her behavior because she probably enjoys the physical contact of being picked up. By the time you get her to the timeout room and close the door, she may have already forgotten what she did to be put in that situation.

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Mission Statement

SOS Animal Rescue is a non-profit
501(c)3 organization whose mission is
to reduce the number of unwanted pets
in Midland County through placement
and public education.

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