



P.O. Box 1756  
Orleans, MA 02653

WINTER 2011

# NEWSLETTER

## The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care



### SO HAPPY

by Olivia Miller, a writer  
who loves animals

Last year Susan Bethel's two beloved Border Collie rescues, Elliot and Woden, both 13 years old, died within four months of each other. Due to Lyme disease and other serious health issues, Susan had stopped working and was on disability insurance payments. To cover the dogs' medical expenses, she was forced into some "creative financing," which included stopping cable TV and selling her car.

"I had maxed out my credit cards when the dogs got sick," the Marstons Mills resident explained. "I wanted to pay down the credit cards before I got another dog." That resolution, she said, lasted three days. "I was so lonely. I cried all day."

Enter serendipity. While on a B Bus, Susan met a woman she knew who mentioned seeing an ad in the Cape Cod Times about a dog, a Border Collie mix, found in Mashpee. Susan sprang into action. She called the town's animal control officer and police department and learned that the dog was likely at the Animal Inn (in Forestdale). A friend drove her there.

When the dog, dubbed "Finnegan," was brought out, he threw himself on his back for a belly rub. "It was assumed he had been abandoned because no one was looking for him," Susan said. "He barked and I knew he wanted to go home with me."

But not so fast. First, Finnegan had to go to the Animal Rescue League in Brewster to be evaluated. Susan headed to the shelter to discuss adoption.

"He had a large tumor on one of his hind legs," she said. "If I wanted to adopt him, I was going to have to



take him 'as is' the next day. I really wanted him. But I knew it would cost a great deal of money to have the tumor removed."

It's a terrible dilemma for an animal lover, one that many people face during difficult financial times. Then Susan remembered The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care. A photographer and woodcarver, she had donated handmade items to the fund's annual birdhouse auction several years ago. She contacted The Sampson Fund to see if it would help Finn. (Susan had shortened his name, she said, to sound more "Border Collie-like".)

After hearing about Finn's medical condition and that he was a stray, the fund agreed to pay for

the operation to remove the tumor. Susan then contacted Barnstable Animal Hospital in Hyannis, a participating Sampson Fund veterinary practice, which agreed to do the surgery.

Because Finn had difficulty walking due to the large tumor, Susan wanted to bring him in right away. Hospital personnel recommended that she wait a week to give him a little time to settle in. "They were right," she admitted. "This dog had been dumped, picked up, brought to the Animal Inn, then to the Animal Rescue League, and then adopted by me. It was an awful lot for him to adjust to."

Finn, who is around five years old, underwent successful surgery last May. The tumor wasn't cancerous and he is doing fine. "Barnstable Animal Hospital was great," said Susan. "The staff was very nice and terrific with Finn. And I am extremely grateful to The Sampson Fund. Finn has been so good for me. We're very happy with each other."

Join The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care  
as we celebrate the launch of  
**"Ever By My Side" by Dr. Nick Trout,**  
staff surgeon at Angell Animal Medical Center and  
*New York Times* best selling author.

**Sunday, March 20, 2011 3:00pm - 5:00pm**  
**at The Orleans Inn, Rte. 6A Orleans**

Meet Dr. Trout and learn about his experiences behind the scenes  
into the heartwarming - and sometimes heartrending -  
world of veterinary medicine.

*"Ever By My Side"*  
and well as Dr. Trout's earlier books  
will be available for sale.

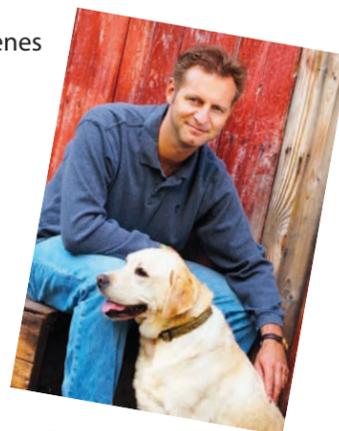
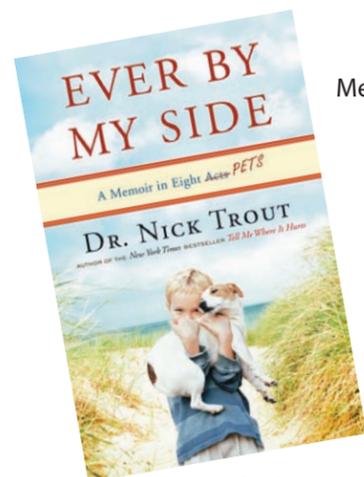
*Enjoy Champagne, Wine or Beer and Hors D'oeuvres*

*Live Music*

*Silent Auction*

**Tickets \$25 each**

Available at Brewster Book Store, CARE in South Dennis, Nauset Pet Services in Eastham,  
Paw Prints in Eastham and Barnstable Animal Hospital in Hyannis or by calling 508-240-pets.





P.O. Box 1756, Orleans, MA 02653  
www.sampsonfund.org  
508-240-7387

## Board of Trustees

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## Sampson Fund

### Affiliated Hospitals

**Barnstable Animal Hospital** - Hyannis

**Brewster Veterinary Hospital** - Brewster

**Cape Animal Referral Emergency (CARE) Center** - South Dennis

**Cape Cod Animal Hospital** - West Barnstable

**Falmouth Animal Hospital** - North Falmouth

**Dr. Michelle Jasny** - West Tisbury

**Lower Cape Veterinary Services** - Eastham

**Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital** - East Harwich

**Vineyard Veterinary Clinic** - Edgartown

### SAMPSON FUND MISSION STATEMENT

To provide financial assistance for the rehabilitative veterinary treatment of critically ill or injured dogs and cats whose caregivers cannot afford treatment or who are found without known caregivers, thereby offering an alternative to euthanasia and preserving the unique emotional, social and beneficial bonds that tie animals and humans together.

For further information about the Sampson Fund, please visit our website at [www.sampsonfund.org](http://www.sampsonfund.org)

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Friends:

The Sampson Fund is celebrating its 25th year!

The year of events kicks off Sunday, March 6, with a "Polar Bear Plunge" sponsored by CARE. Brave participants will take the "plunge" at noon at West Dennis beach. Sign up to "plunge" for The Sampson Fund by calling 508-398-7575.

This will be followed by a special party on Sunday, March 20 (the first day of spring), to celebrate the launch of noted veterinary surgeon and best-selling author Dr. Nick Trout's third book, "Ever By My Side." The Maas family and The Orleans Inn are the generous sponsors of this event. Look for additional information and how to get tickets elsewhere in this newsletter.

Then on Saturday, May 14, we will hold the first annual Sampson Fund "Plants for Pets" garden sale at CARE in South Dennis. Recognizing that many gardeners are pet lovers, this seemed a natural fit. The sale will be unique in its offerings. Aside from plants donated by Sampson Fund supporters (some of whom are master gardeners), there will be new and rehabbed tools and garden decor. On site tool sharpening and soil testing will be offered as well as chances to win terrific raffle prizes.

We hope to see you at these fund-raising events and thank you in advance for your continued support.

Last year The Sampson Fund paid almost \$50,000, the most ever, to help the owners of 85 pets. We raised these funds through our many events, memberships (still starting at \$25 per year), generous donations and grants. We were fortunate to receive grants in 2010 from The Mary-Louise Eddy and Ruth N. Eddy Foundation, The Cape Cod Foundation through The Thomas C. McGowan Fund for Animals, The Zachary Fund of The Grace W. Allsop Foundation and The Marian Craig Leers Charitable Trust. Also, The Eastham Firemen's Association, The Eastham Dog Owners' Association and Nauset Newcomers, Inc., made generous donations last year.

We thank Nauset Pet Services, Brewster Veterinary Hospital, CARE and Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital for holding special holiday fund-raisers to benefit The Sampson Fund.

We are grateful that you support our efforts. For 25 years you have made it possible for us to carry out our mission of providing financial assistance for critical veterinary care for dogs and cats on Cape Cod.

Patti Smith  
President

## Calling All Volunteers...

Your board of trustees is putting the finishing touches on an ambitious schedule for our 25th year, and we could use your help in making the events successful. They're fun, often filled with furry pets, and the gratitude you'll receive from those we assist is priceless! Call me at 508-395-1482 or email me at [tracyplaut@msn.com](mailto:tracyplaut@msn.com) and I'll find an event you'd like to participate in.

## Patti McGan of Paws 'n Claws Pet-Sitting to raise money for The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care and The Animal Rescue League of Boston

Patti McGan welcomes friends and pet lovers to gather on Sunday, April 10, from 2:00 to 6:00pm at Sons of Erin Hall on Route 28, West Yarmouth for a fun-filled afternoon of music, silent auction, 50/50

raffle, hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. Proceeds from the event will go to The Sampson Fund and The Animal Rescue League. For additional information call Patti McGan at 508-385-3638.

## PET INSURANCE - Should You Fetch Some FidoCare?

Two weeks ago I heard about an elderly couple in western Massachusetts whose two dogs ate an undetermined amount of rat poison. The bill for just two days of care at an emergency hospital was \$3,000 and probably would have been much higher had the dogs ingested larger amounts of the poison. Luckily, both dogs made quick recoveries and are back with their relieved owners.

Every month the Sampson Fund receives and reviews invoices for the veterinary care that our member hospitals provide to Sampson Fund applicants. We are constantly reminded of how costly competent care, especially critical care, can be. When life-saving care is necessary, owners have to make a terrible choice between euthanasia and covering the unexpected, overwhelming expense.

There is a way to prevent having to make that difficult choice. It is pet insurance. It is not a new concept; a few companies began covering pets more than 30 years ago. Now that larger dollar amounts are involved, there are many companies competing; and that has resulted in a bewildering number of plans and choices as each company offers a policy wrinkle that sets its plan apart from others.

In general, the companies reimburse the pet owner for incurred veterinary expenses instead of paying the veterinary facility. As in human medical insurance, pet insurance companies charge a monthly, quarterly or annual premium and offer various deductibles and copays. Of course, the smaller the deductible and copay, the higher the premium. Companies also have differing standards for breadth of coverage, some paying for routine preventive care, referrals to specialists, or holistic care. They differ in what limits are set, what conditions they exclude from coverage, waiting periods, and more. Premiums may vary depending on breed, age and location. I found that one company charged more to cover a dog in Orleans

than in South Orleans. I am still trying to understand that.

There are too many variables and choices, making it difficult to decide which policy is most appropriate. Perhaps that is why only 3% of pet owners have purchased policies. Fortunately, the American Animal Hospital Association has recognized how complicated the situation is and has organized a helpful webpage for pet owners wishing to compare plans. The AAHA starts with the assumption that the plans that make the most sense for most consumers are those with deductibles of at least \$500. It has selected one Canadian and five United States companies that offer plans considered similar to human catastrophic plans (high deductible, low premium), and it has constructed a chart that compares various features of the six plans as well as links and phone numbers for each company. You can access the chart by going to the AAHA's website at [www.healthypet.com](http://www.healthypet.com) and clicking on Pet Care and then Pet Insurance. The page that comes up discusses how the AAHA chose the plans that have received its "seal of acceptance." In the last paragraph of text on the page is a link in light green to the comparative chart of plans, where you can begin your search. Then go to the websites of the companies you selected. Most of them give you email quotes, or you can phone the companies for clarifications and quotes. Selling pet insurance is a competitive business, and quoted prices may be discounted if you mention you're checking other companies.

The Sampson Fund's mission is to help preserve the human-animal bond when the lack of funds for critical veterinary care might break that bond. It is in the spirit of our mission that I recommend you consider pet insurance for your own pets. It also could be a thoughtful gift for anyone responsible for the care of a cat or dog.

**Christopher S. Donner VMD**

**It's All About The Mouth: The Importance of Oral Hygiene For Your Pet**  
Talk by Mary Allen Bradley, DVM • Sat. Feb. 26 from 12:30 to 2:00  
At Nauset Pet Services • 2685 Nauset Rd. Eastham • 508-255-0081

## It's Not Just A Plant Sale

Oh, no, it's a unique GARDEN EVENT! We'll offer much more than plants at our first ever Plants for Pets sale on May 14 from 10-2 at CARE, 79 Theophilus Smith Road in South Dennis to raise funds to continue the good work of The Sampson Fund.

Do you need to replace your worn-out hand garden tools? Do they need sharpening? Our Tool Doctor, Charlie Wilson, has been refurbishing and sharpening donated tools to sell on May 14. He'll also be on site that day to sharpen hand tools while you wait. Come and see the selection of tools, a before and after shovel rehab, and try to guess the function of the mystery tool.

Does your garden décor need a bit of refreshing? We've been collecting large and small ceramic, wood and metal planters, plant stands, wall hangings, etc., to pique your interest.

Do you like to patronize local stores or shop by catalog? We've contacted local and national garden-related companies and have received generous donations of gift certificates and products to raffle on May 14.

Do you want to know your soil's pH so you can provide the nutrients it needs? Bring a soil sample and a master gardener will test it.

And, of course, we will offer heirloom and hybrid tomato plants (especially a giant pink oxheart tomato whose seeds were brought from Italy in the 1900s and have been kept going ever since), as well as unusual perennials and annuals, vegetables and herbs.

But we need your assistance to accomplish all this. We need your donations of plants and practical and decorative garden accessories. We also need volunteers before, during and after the sale; let us know how you can help.

Please contact Irene Cooper, Plants for Pets committee chair ([irenecooper@comcast.net](mailto:irenecooper@comcast.net) or 508-430-6105) for more information or to arrange for pickup of donated items or Tracy Plaut, volunteer coordinator ([tracyplaut@msn.com](mailto:tracyplaut@msn.com) or 508-395-1482) to volunteer your time and expertise.