

NEWSLETTER

The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care



Willa: Good As New!

**by Olivia Miller, a writer
who loves animals**

When Debra Dickinson learned about The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care over two decades ago, she thought, "Isn't that a Cape Cod kind of story!" The Wellfleet resident donated to the organization, never suspecting that one day she would need the Fund's assistance. "Circumstances change," she said. "I'm an art restorer and it's a difficult economy. Now I qualify."

Willa, her 16-pound mixed breed, was a seemingly healthy, active four-year-old dog. Last fall, however, she started limping, it was getting harder for her to walk without difficulty, and the situation was worsening. After an examination, her veterinarian recommended that Willa see Dr. Daniel Beaver, an orthopedic surgeon at Cape Cod Veterinary Specialists in South Dennis.

It turned out that Willa's rear left knee had a partial cranial cruciate tear and a related medial patella luxation, common problems in dogs. Willa underwent surgery last October, which corrected both problems. The operation was successful but expensive.

Since Cape Cod Veterinary Specialists is a Sampson Fund affiliate, Dr. Beaver suggested Debra contact the organization, which she did right away. Fortunately, the Fund agreed to cover most of the cost of the procedure.

"Without financial help, I probably wouldn't have been able to have the surgery done," said Debra, "and would just have hoped Willa could cope. Ordinarily, scar tissue develops, which stabilizes the knee and relieves aches and pains. But arthritis eventually develops and the condition worsens. Once arthritis starts, you can't do the surgery." Not a happy outcome.

Luckily for Willa and her family, they didn't have to face that scenario.

"I love my dog and would have lived every day with guilt. And it would have been really hard for my daughter, Emeline, who's eleven, and really attached to Willa. She wouldn't be able to grasp why I couldn't have the surgery done. It would have broken her heart."

Debra and Emeline adopted Willa when they were



living in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. She was a stray who was found in a parking lot when she was around ten months old, "an abused street dog, very fearful at first," according to Debra. "But Willa has thrived on Cape Cod!"

And Willa continues to thrive. The first three months post-surgery were critical: she had to be kept on a leash, no running and no chasing birds, a favorite sport. Five months after the surgery, she has completely recovered.

"She's really happy, really smiling. She recently started running...and chasing birds again!"

Debra and Emeline are truly grateful for the help they received. "This is such a huge relief," Debra added. "The Sampson Fund is so wonderful. It is really such a gift."



P.O. Box 1756, Orleans, MA 02653
www.sampsonfund.org
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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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear friends,

I'm writing this as another foot of snow is falling. This is a winter that just won't quit. On a positive note, it will make us appreciate spring days all the more. And our annual Plants For Pets Garden Event is coming up on Saturday, May 16. One would hope all this snow will only be a memory by then. The Plants For Pets Garden Event is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Chair Irene Cooper and Assistant Chair Donelle Denery have come up with some new ideas to make it a very successful day. Look for additional details elsewhere in the newsletter.

Did anyone else apologize to a pet for all the snow? I figure my dog Boomer thinks I can do almost anything, and he probably thinks I asked for the snow. He liked it when he was a puppy, but now that he's eight he prefers unobstructed runways.

The staff at International Federation of Animal Welfare once again chose the Sampson Fund for holiday donations. And Cape Cod Animal Hospital raised funds by selling calendars. We are fortunate to have so many supporters in our Cape Cod community.

Charitable grants play a big part in enabling us to fulfill our mission. We are grateful to Jenn Mentzer and The Hess and Helyn Kline Foundation, the Joan Bentinck-Smith Charitable Foundation, the Carson Family Foundation, The Cape Cod Foundation through the Thomas C. McGowan Fund for Animals, The Grace W. Allsop Foundation, The Bryce Family Foundation, The Mary-Louise Eddy and Ruth N. Eddy Foundation, The Kristen Elizabeth Davis Memorial Endowment Fund and the Marian Craig Leers Charitable Trust for awarding The Sampson Fund grants in recent months.

Many thanks to all of you who responded to our end-of-the-year donation request. Your support allows us to continue to help pet caretakers provide the veterinary care their pets need. The Sampson Fund has been helping "at both ends of the leash" for twenty-nine years now.

Patti



Cynthia Solarz, owner of fergus & bean – For The Proper Pup, a new company that sells canine cookies online, will donate 5% of proceeds from sales to The Sampson Fund. Learn more by going to www.fergusandbean.com. Your dog can enjoy 100% all-natural treats while supporting The Sampson Fund.



The Sampson Fund will be one of the nonprofit organizations participating in the Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival – July 10 through July 19. We hope three or four Sampson Fund supporters will open their special gardens to the public for one or more days during this time. Noted gardening personality C.L. Fornari and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce are working to make this a significant attraction for visitors to Cape Cod and a great opportunity for nonprofit organizations to raise funds. To offer your garden for the tour (to be staffed by our volunteers), contact Patti Smith at pattismith100@capecod.net. Or visit www.capecodhydrangeafest.com for general information.

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Plants For Pets Garden Event

Please join us at our fifth annual Plants For Pets Garden Event on Saturday, May 16 (rain date Sunday, May 17), from 10-2 at Cape Cod Veterinary Specialists-Dennis (formerly C.A.R.E.), 79 Theophilus Smith Road, South Dennis (off Rt. 134).

New for this year --

We welcome Donelle Denery as our assistant chair. Donelle is a master gardener who has volunteered at previous Plants For Pets Garden Events. Last year she located seeds of our featured tomato that combined the taste of an heirloom with the disease resistance of a hybrid. It was a popular seller. This year she's obtained seeds for seven Ukrainian tomato varieties, which we'll be growing for the sale. I doubt you'll find these plants anywhere else!

Rachel Kirchgessner, our hospitality coordinator, will once again be offering her home-baked goodies for people -- but something new this year -- home-baked goodies for dogs! So bring your furry pal with you for a free sample!

We'll again feature other customer favorites -- a garden boutique with high-quality decorative and useful items, our tool doctor selling new and rehabbed tools and knives and sharpening garden tools and knives, and hot dogs from the grill. Generous donors have given us many usual and unusual perennials and shrubs, and we'll have herb and vegetable plants as well.

And, of course, we'll have lots of tomato plants, about 70 varieties -

Want To Volunteer?

There are lots of ways that you can help The Sampson Fund. To find out more, contact Danni at dannij240@comcast.net, 508-737-4431 or Nan at nanpoor@verizon.net, 508-432-0742.

thanks to Tomato Growers Supply, Ft. Myers, FL, for donating tomato seeds for four years, and a new donor this year, Pinetree Garden Seeds, from New Gloucester, ME.

We plan to post the list of tomatoes (including their description, days to harvest, size) on our website and Facebook page, so you can decide in

advance what you'd like to purchase.

If you'd like to donate surplus plants, garden tools, or garden boutique items, please contact irenecooper@comcast.net or 508-430-6105 to arrange pickup or delivery (or even help in digging).

See you on May 16!

School Days

For a number of years dog trainer Vaughn Rowley has held obedience classes for dogs at her home in South Harwich, contributing her entire fee (\$75 for 8 classes) to The Sampson Fund. If there's a dog in your life who could use updating on appropriate

social behavior, you should consider these classes. They are fun for dogs and dog caretakers alike. Contact Vaughn at 704-616-7111 or Patti Smith at 508-432-3927 for information on spring and summer schedules.



P.O. Box 1756
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