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www.sampsonfund.org
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2nd annual The Sampson Fund Day at Moby Dick's Restaurant

Route 6 in Wellfleet

Friday, June 17, 11:30 to 9:00

Enjoy lobster, broiled and fried seafood,
mussels, steamers, burgers and clam chowder
in a casual atmosphere while supporting
The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care.

Check out the full menu at
www.mobydicksrestaurant.com

Extra Plants in Your Garden?

There is still time to donate them for
The Sampson Fund's Plants
for Pets Garden Sale on May 14.

To donate or for more information, contact Irene Cooper
at 508-430-6105 or irenecooper@comcast.net

Dog washes to benefit

The Sampson Fund

Sat. July 16, 9 to noon

Sat. Aug. 13, 9 to noon

Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital
Rte. 137 and Queen Anne Road, East Harwich

SPRING 2011

NEWSLETTER

The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care



Where Did All Those Elastics Go?

by Olivia Miller, a writer
who loves animals

Nearly two years ago Cheryl Taravella of Brewster adopted two kittens from the Animal Rescue League, littermates Shamus and Nahla. Although she was warned that Shamus had "litter box issues," Cheryl wanted to adopt the pair; she was advised to put out multiple boxes for the little guy. "We worked on it," was how she described the early days, "and now he is perfect." Both cats are very loving and, happily, there were no other issues.

Well, at least not right away. Cheryl discovered that one of Shamus's favored pastimes was playing with elastic hair bands. "He'd bat them around, chase them, and chew on them," she explained. "He loved them and had so much fun."

A few months ago, though, she realized something was wrong. The usually healthy, playful Shamus was sick. She brought him to Brewster Animal Hospital to be checked; an X-ray uncovered his problem. All you quick studies out there (or anyone who owns an elastic-, string- or ribbon-loving feline) probably know what was found. Bingo! It was an elastic band. Well, actually that's not exactly correct. Stored inside Shamus was nearly an entire bag of elastics. He apparently loved elastics a little too much.

"I feel like a bad owner because I would give them to him!" Cheryl admitted but, in her defense, she thought she had thrown away all the chewed elastics. And, she added, "I've had cats all my life and never had a cat that did this. Nahla didn't have an interest in the elastics. I guess it was 'my bad' for giving them to him, but I didn't realize what he was doing."

After the elastics were discovered, Shamus was brought to the Cape Animal Referral & Emergency Center (CARE) in South Dennis for surgery. "The people at CARE and at Brewster Animal Hospital were amazing," Cheryl said. "They were so helpful and informative. It was rough for me to see him so sick, and they explained everything that was going on."



Surgery was not optional; Shamus would not survive without it, but the procedure would be expensive. "I was already into it for \$1000," said the single mother, who works several jobs. "I wasn't going to be able to afford it. And Shamus was a young, healthy cat who could live a long life." It was an excruciating

situation faced by many pet owners.

Fortunately for Cheryl and Shamus, Brewster Animal Hospital and CARE are Sampson Fund participating veterinary practices. After learning about The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care at Brewster Animal Hospital, Cheryl applied for assistance to help pay for Shamus's surgery. She was accepted.

Shamus underwent successful surgery in mid-March. Everything—literally and figuratively—came out fine. "I am very grateful to The Sampson Fund," she said. "I couldn't have done this without its help."

According to Cheryl, Shamus is a "perfectly healthy, happy boy, running around and playing"...but not with elastics anymore!

"Shamus was pretty sick. I was so scared when this happened," she admitted, "and I felt so responsible. We are very much animal people. They're like our family. I guess what happened to Shamus is a common thing but I had never heard of it, so I really think it's important to get the word out to other cat owners to be careful."



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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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Friends:

The winter months have been active ones for The Sampson Fund. We redesigned our website, www.sampsonfund.org. It now features information on upcoming events, photographs from past events, our current newsletter, how to donate online, how to purchase tickets for our kayak raffle, and lots more. We hope you will take a look. Also, The Sampson Fund is now on Facebook and Twitter.

While it was a sunny day for early March, the wind and surf were mighty cold on March 6 when brave plungers participated in the Annual Polar Bear Plunge at West Dennis beach. CARE hosted this event, which brought in \$1625 for The Sampson Fund.

Later in the month The Sampson Fund celebrated the first day of spring and the release of "Ever By My Side," veterinary surgeon Dr. Nick Trout's third book. Ed Maas of The Orleans Inn and Dr. Bill and Meghan Kaser were generous sponsors of the event. Brewster Book Store supplied the books to sell; the RobertChez Band delighted us with music; Barbara Anne-Foley photographed and Jen Sexton of The Cape Cod Chronicle videotaped the event. Many generous donors offered wonderful items for our silent auction. Dr. Trout entertained us as he described some of his funny as well as poignant experiences interacting with pets and their owners. This was a first-time event for us, and we were pleased to have raised over \$5,000.

Upcoming Sampson Fund events include our Plants for Pets Garden Sale on Saturday, May 14, from 10 to 2 at CARE in South Dennis, Sampson Fund Day on Friday, June 17, at Moby Dick's Restaurant in Wellfleet, and Sampson Fund dog washes on Saturday, July 16, and Saturday, August 13, from 9 to noon at Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital in East Harwich. And look for us at Paws and Claws' Pet Expo in Chatham on Saturday, June 4, and The Animal Rescue League of Boston's Paws for Celebration in Brewster on Sunday, June 12.

We are grateful to the many folks and organizations that support our efforts. Chatham Beach Dog donated 10% of the store's December sales to us. Patti McGan organized a spring fundraising event with an auction and raffle to benefit The Sampson Fund and The Animal Rescue League of Boston. And The Pancake Man of South Yarmouth chose us as the recipient of donations on National Pancake Day. We received generous grants from The Rabideau Family and the Carson Family Foundation, Lynn and Tim Weller, and the Kristen Elizabeth Davis Memorial Endowment Fund of The Cape Cod Foundation.

We hope the upcoming summer days are filled with wonderful experiences for you and your pets.

Patti Smith
President



Brave participants take the "plunge" at the annual Sampson Fund Polar Bear Plunge at West Dennis beach.

The Lesson of The Parrot

Those of you who attended The Sampson Fund event at The Orleans Inn in March need no introduction to Dr. Nick Trout, whose talk and book signing were a big boost for us. Nick is a staff surgeon at Angell Memorial Animal Hospital, as well as author of three books, and his wit is scalpel sharp. His newest book is *Ever by My Side*, but it was an earlier book of his, *Tell Me Where it Hurts*, about some of his clinical experiences at Angell that got me remembering some of my own experiences and the lessons learned from them.

Experience is a forceful teacher. That's from my Dad's repertoire of adages, and I was about to find out just how true it was. I was a newly minted, wet behind the ears veterinarian fumbling through my second day of real practice. I had survived four grueling years at the University of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine, an eight-week stint at Angell, national and state boards, and had begun to work at a well-established practice in Worcester, Massachusetts. None of my training, however, had prepared me for my next office visit.

I was already behind schedule--which happens constantly with new veterinarians--and before entering the

exam room, I quickly glanced at the medical record to see what my next patient would be. The record showed that it was a 35-year-old parrot. I sensed my heart speeding up. I felt I knew zip about parrots. Lamely trying to appear confident, I went into the exam room. On the exam table, in a partially covered cage, huddled and barely balancing on its perch, was a large parrot. Its feathers were sadly disheveled, and its eyelids were closed. Next to the table was a diminutive elderly woman, also huddled, with a shawl pulled tightly over her gray hair. As I was introducing myself, I noticed the parrot slowly lurch forward in a 180-degree downward arch. With its toes still grasping the perch, it hung upside down for an agonizing moment and then fell the short distance to the cage floor, landing in a motionless heap. I quickly opened the cage door and confirmed what I feared and the owner instinctively knew; life for her parrot had ended. Before I could say a word, she turned, struggled across the room, flung herself into a corner and began to sob and, in Italian, wail in unbounded, unremitting grief. She didn't cease and I didn't know what to do or say. I was completely overwhelmed by the unexpected depth of her attachment to her parrot.

For a young vet, who grew up on a farm where dogs and cats may have slept on beds but chickens often ended up in a pot, the lesson that day was about understanding that humans, strange creatures that we are, can form deep and lasting bonds of affection for just about anything with a heartbeat. It can be wrapped in fur, feathers, scales or a shell. It doesn't matter, and if it somehow seems to return our affection, then so much the better. And when the bond is broken, the pain is every bit as real and valid for the person mourning a parrot or a gerbil as it is for someone grieving for a dog or a cat.

The mission of The Sampson Fund, and thereby the mission of those who give of their time to work for it, is to try to preserve the bond that seems to so profoundly benefit animals and humans. It is that relationship, between person and companion animal, that teaches us so much and that we honor. And, although at present Sampson Fund assistance is limited to cats and dogs, I look forward to the time when we have the resources to help those who do come with feathers, scales or shells.

Christopher S. Donner VMD



Angell Animal Medical Center staff surgeon and New York Times best-selling author Dr. Nick Trout entertains attendees at The Sampson Fund's book release party at The Orleans Inn.
Photograph by Barbara-Anne Foley.

You could win a kayak!



The Sampson Fund is selling raffle tickets for a **NECKY RIP kayak, 10'6" with Aqua Bound Manta Ray Paddle and Stohlquist Adult Size (Sm/Med) Life Jacket.**

Total value is \$845.

Drawing is July 4. The winner will be notified.

Raffle tickets are \$5 each and may be purchased on our website at www.sampsonfund.org

or at Sampson Fund events in May and June.

Kayak, paddle and life jacket donated by Sampson Fund trustee, Lottie Austin.