

NEWSLETTER

The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care



Keep on Rockin', **Roxy!**

By Olivia Miller

A little over a year ago Roxy, a five-year-old pit bull/boxer mix, started limping. Roxy's owner, Pat DeFalco, hoped that whatever was causing the dog to limp would resolve on its own. So she gave it some time, thinking that her 90-pound brindle would continue to be the active, happy dog she always had been since she was a puppy.

But the limp didn't go away and, in fact, over time it became worse. "I took Roxy for X-rays," Pat explained, "which showed that the tendons in both hind legs were worn out. The vet didn't know what had caused it. Roxy loves to run and gets a lot of exercise, but she was too young for this to happen."

Whatever the cause, the problem would not heal on its own and would require a surgical procedure. Both injured knees would have to be replaced with metal plates. Unfortunately, the surgery wasn't inexpensive – it cost around \$7,500.

Pat faced a predicament many pet owners have experienced. "I honestly didn't know what I was going to do. Roxy had to have the surgery," she said, "but I couldn't afford to pay for it. I've had two knee replacements, am disabled and have had to stop working. I was beside myself."

Not knowing where to turn, Pat called around and learned about The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care, which provides financial assistance for the treatment of critically ill or injured animals. She decided to apply, and



the fund agreed to help pay for the surgery.

The Cape Animal Referral and Emergency Center (CARE) in South Dennis, an affiliate member of The Sampson Fund, performed the operations on both legs. (One knee was operated on first, with the second operation about four months later.) Pat happily reported that both operations were successful. Now, one month after the second procedure, Roxy seems to be well on the road to recovery.

"She loves to run and swim, but I'm keeping her leashed and going on short walks, making sure she's doing exactly what she should be doing. She's up on the couch, sitting right next to me and is not in any pain at all."

Pat, an animal owner her entire life, declared that she "loves animals more than most people." Nonetheless, she admitted that she has always been leery of pit bulls. Roxy, however, has changed her perspective. "She is the most lovable, gentle dog. She gets along with everyone and all other dogs. My neighbor's toy fox terrier [who weighs five pounds] climbs on Roxy and jumps on her to get onto a chair.

"Roxy is a lovely dog. I am so grateful to The Sampson Fund for its assistance. I thought I would have to put her down, this beautiful dog, who is so young and full of life. I couldn't have done it without the fund and will do anything I can to help it."



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Sampson Fund

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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 hope you had a spectacular summer with many special times with your pets.

The abundance of sunny days gave us lots of opportunities to enjoy Cape Cod.

Our two summer dog washes were great fun. Check out the photo of one of our participants elsewhere in the newsletter. Thanks to groomer Randi Moberg, Sampson Fund volunteers, and all the dog owners who brought in dirty dogs for a worthy cause.

This year The Sampson Fund will reach a milestone. For the first time, if we maintain our current pace, we will pay out over \$100,000 for critical veterinary care on Cape Cod and the islands. The need for our help is increasing dramatically each year. Fortunately, loyal supporters like you believe in our mission of preserving the animal/human bond and avoiding euthanasia purely for the lack of money. With no paid staff and minimal overhead, almost every penny of your donation goes directly to helping dogs and cats on Cape Cod and the islands.

Two people have recently helped The Sampson Fund in creative ways. Dog trainer Vaughn Rowley gives dog obedience classes (8 weeks for \$75) and donates her entire fee to The Sampson Fund. If your dog needs some obedience training, call her at 508-432-0240. And disc jockey Kyle Chirgwin, host of "Side 'B' Deeper Cuts" on WOMR, hosted this summer a tribute show to his late wife Lisa, who died unexpectedly at the age of 46. Lisa was a great lover of dogs, and Kyle requested on air that donations in Lisa's memory be made to The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care. Some time ago Lisa and Kyle were helped by The Sampson Fund when their dog needed veterinary care.

The Sampson Fund is following the practices of many other nonprofit organizations and is "going green." Our next newsletter will be sent electronically to those who have provided us email addresses. Others will continue to receive their newsletters through the mail. And we will have copies at all our Sampson Fund events. You can also view our past and current newsletters on our website www.sampsonfund.org.

We hope to see you this holiday season at our Pet Photos with Santa events on Saturday, December 8, at CARE in South Dennis; Saturday, December 15, at Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital in East Harwich; and Monday, December 24, at Brewster Veterinary Hospital's annual holiday gathering. And Sampson Fund volunteers will again gift wrap for you at Snow's Home & Garden "Charity Wrap" program. Stop by the Orleans store and say "hi."

We welcome Oceanside Animal Hospital in Sandwich as our 12th Sampson Fund-affiliated hospital.

Patti Smith

Join the Christopher S. Donner Society

Ensure the future of critical veterinary care for Cape Cod dogs and cats whose owners cannot bear its costs alone.

The Society provides special recognition for those members who have included The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care in their long-term plans through bequests or other deferred-giving arrangements.

Christopher S. Donner, VMD, former director of Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital, founded The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care in 1986 and remains an active member of The Sampson Fund Board of Trustees.

Please contact us at sampsonfund@yahoo.com for a confidential Christopher S. Donner Society membership form.

**We are in need of a volunteer with grant writing experience.
If you are interested, please contact Christopher Donner
at emmasfam@galaxy.net or 508-255-6421.**

Rethinking Feeding Dry Cat Foods

By Christopher S. Donner, VMD

I recently attended a veterinary continuing education seminar, a part of which was given by Dr. Deborah Greco, staff veterinarian at New York's Animal Medical Center. Dr. Greco is New York's "go to" veterinarian for feline diabetes. Considering that one in two to three hundred cats is diabetic and that NYC may have more cats than bagels, Dr. Greco has plenty of experience to draw on when she lectures about diabetes in cats.

Some interesting notes from her presentation:

+ Just as in humans, cats are experiencing a significant increase in frequency of Type II diabetes. There are probably multiple factors causing Type II diabetes, including genetics, diet and obesity. Fat male cats are at the greatest risk.

+ Many cats are subclinically diabetic; meaning they are affected by the illness before showing classical symptoms of increased thirst and urination and weight loss. Clues that a cat might be pre-diabetic are unexplained lameness, reluctance to use a litter box, grouching when touched and an unwillingness to jump.

+ Once cats have Type II diabetes, diet becomes a major part of their treatment. Some cats will achieve remission as a result of weight loss alone, and many who eat a low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet may be weaned off insulin.

+ Fat cells promote diabetes by producing hormones that negatively

affect metabolism, increase appetite and create resistance to insulin

+ Cats are obligate carnivores and therefore must have high levels of protein in their diets.

So how does all this relate to Cape Cod cats and how we feed them? Cats on the Cape are now likely to live a "city life." Because of coyotes and other outdoor risks, most cats now live almost an entirely indoor existence. No more spending countless hours outside actively pursuing their natural high-protein diet of mice and birds. Instead, our felines have become four-footed couch potatoes, departing sofa or bed only to waddle a few steps to snack on a never-ending supply of high-carbohydrate, low-protein dry food. No wonder so many cats are overweight (by the way, the average in-good-shape cat weighs less than 10 pounds).

So what makes sense when feeding a housebound cat? To date no research has been published that has examined the relationship between dry foods and diabetes. That leaves us unable to definitively say that high-carbohydrate diets directly cause diabetes in cats, but if cats are obligate carnivores and show major response in insulin requirements when fed a low-carbohydrate diet, then shouldn't we intuitively be feeding low-carbohydrate, high-protein diets? And since fat itself promotes diabetes, shouldn't owners control meal sizes to prevent obesity? Dry foods are convenient, but unfortunately the average dry food contains excessive amounts of carbohydrates - about three times the amount of carbohydrates in canned food. Most canned foods are high protein and much lower in

carbohydrates. The average 5 oz. can of adult cat food contains enough calories by itself to maintain an 8-10 pound indoor cat for one day. So here is how I suggest feeding an indoor cat: No constant free choice source of dry cat food. For a nonoverweight 10 pound cat, I would give about 1/2 of a 5 oz. can twice per day (morning and evening) or a 3 oz. can twice per day (morning and evening), and perhaps a few crunchies, a "few" meaning no more than one to two tablespoons of dry food. That is it. I would also encourage daily games/play time--whatever gets a cat exercising and pouncing. (Or you could find a steady source of live mice to provide exercise and a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet.) Just kidding.

Bottom line: keep your cat trim, think Catkins Diet; low carb, high protein, and perhaps you will never need to give your cat insulin injections.

Perhaps some of you will recognize the above article. I originally wrote it for the 2006 winter newsletter. I have chosen to repeat it because I feel the suggestion that limiting dry foods to help cats avoid diabetes is important information for cat owners. On top of that, here is another reason to limit dry foods. A recent study showed that cats who developed dangerous crystals in their urine were much more likely to have been on an all-dry-food diet or a mixed dry food and canned food diet than cats on only canned foods. Cats and dogs have evolved to eat diets that are about 70% moisture--that's what their natural prey provides. Most dry foods have a moisture content of about 12%. Feed dry food to a dog and it will drain the water bowl to make up the difference. Cats, however, may not drink enough to replace the moisture they are not getting in their food. Consequently, they can be subclinically dehydrated, which means their kidneys and bladder are not being flushed out sufficiently and disease may result.

Is it time to rethink feeding cats dry foods? I think it definitely is, and good quality canned foods are probably the easiest substitution. But there are other moisture-laden possibilities such as carefully prepared, balanced, home cooked and raw diets. These are not for the faint of heart. Done improperly they have many risks, so be sure to consult with your veterinarian before feeding them to your finicky feline.

Schipperke "Bill" coming clean at The Sampson Fund's summer dog wash event.





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Pet Photos with Santa to benefit The Sampson Fund



Saturday, December 8, 9-12 at CARE (Cape Animal Referral and Emergency Center), 79 Theophilus F. Smith Road, South Dennis

Saturday, December 15, 9-12 at Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital, Queen Anne Road and Route 137, East Harwich

Monday, December 24, 10-12 at Brewster Veterinary Hospital, 56 Underpass Road, Brewster

\$15 per photo

**The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care
Annual Meeting – Thursday, December 6, at 6:30
at Brewster Police Station, Route 124, Brewster.
*Everyone is welcome.***

PLANTS FOR PETS 2013

The fall is a great time for gardeners to tidy their plantings, and The Sampson Fund is ready and willing to help them by digging out or picking up their excess or unwanted plants.

We had notices in the *Write to Know* Column of the Cape Cod Times, Craig's List and FreeCycle Cape Cod asking for donations of extra plants, garden accessories and new tools or those needing rehab. Incredible response from readers of *Write to Know* starting in the early morning the Sunday it was published and continuing for four weeks. Patti Smith and I have dug, picked up or had dropped off hundreds of perennials, herbs and shrubs. And in doing so, we've met many generous, caring people who now know more about The Sampson Fund and its mission.

Date for next year's sale is Saturday, May 18.

Irene Cooper

Chair, Plants For Pets 2013

508-430-6105 or irenecooper@comcast.net