

# Newsletter

## The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care



### 40 Years of Tails and Triumphs!

By Olivia H. Miller

Douglas Eldridge's dog Savior lives up to her name. Five years ago his brother gave him the five-week-old Golden Retriever puppy after Douglas suffered a brain and spinal cord injury. A second injury a year later upended the Yarmouth resident's life, and he trained Savior (aka Savy) to be his service dog.

"I haven't had a dog since I was a teenager and never knew dogs could be as smart as she is," he said. "When she was a young puppy and full of energy, she would pull me around in my wheelchair. I was just there for the ride sometimes because I wasn't fast enough for her!"

Savy settled down, providing not only physical help but emotional support as well, a role that suits her. "Golden Retrievers are very emotionally intelligent dogs," explained Douglas. "Our bond is incredible. We're in tune with each other and it seems like we can feel each other's thoughts and emotions.

"She doesn't bark much but has her ways of communicating. She knows when I'm in pain and to distract me, she'll bring me one of her toys to throw and play with her. She knows when I'm upset

and puts her head onto my hand so I'll pet her, which calms me down. Sometimes she understands my needs before I realize them myself."



A few months ago Savy started shaking and sweating. Something was obviously wrong. Douglas brought her to VCA Hyannis Animal Hospital in West Yarmouth, where she was quickly diagnosed with pyometra, an infection of the uterus that is fatal if not treated. She required surgery to remove her uterus, which could be done the next day. Savy had to have the surgery, but Douglas, who relies on Social Security Disability Insurance, didn't know how he would pay for it.

Douglas applied for a \$1,000 loan but knew that wouldn't cover everything. "The day of the surgery, the doctor asked me if I wanted to go home. I said I didn't

have enough money to put gas in the car, so I'll sit in the parking lot and wait until the surgery was done. That's when the doctor said, 'Why don't we talk about The Sampson Fund.'"

VCA is an affiliate member of The Sampson Fund for Veterinary Care. Erica Malcolm, Hospital Manager, helped Douglas fill out the paperwork. He applied and the Sampson Fund covered the rest of the bill.

Due to his disabilities, finances are extremely tight. His injuries were devastating, happening when he was working toward getting his electrician's license. "It's been a rough road financially," Douglas admitted. "I had never heard of The Sampson Fund and their help was great. Because of my health problems I really appreciate what the Sampson Fund has done."

Savy made a quick recovery with no post-surgery issues and is back to her loyal, helpful self. "She's not just support for me but she's emotional support for my family and my friends," Douglas emphasized. "She greets anybody at the door with a toy in her mouth to give to them. 'Have a toy, be my friend.' She's always smiling and is a happy-go-lucky dog."



## THE SAMPSON FUND For Veterinary Care

P.O. Box 1756, Orleans, MA 02653  
[www.sampsonfund.org](http://www.sampsonfund.org)  
508-240-7387

### Board of Trustees

President: Patti Smith  
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**Brewster Veterinary Hospital** - Brewster  
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**VCA Hyannis Animal Hospital** - West Yarmouth  
**VCA Pleasant Bay Animal Hospital** - East Harwich  
**Veterinary Associates of Cape Cod** - South Yarmouth  
**Veterinary Wellness Center of Provincetown** - Provincetown

#### ***The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care Mission Statement:***

*To provide financial assistance for veterinary care for critically ill or injured pets on Cape Cod and the Islands when owners cannot afford treatment.*

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Dear Friends,

The Sampson Fund is embarking on its 40<sup>th</sup> year. This achievement is due to the guidance of an outstanding board of trustees, a loyal and hard-working group of volunteers and generous donors who have supported our efforts over these four decades. I am truly grateful.

Dr. Christopher Donner, The Sampson Fund's founder started the Fund when a client gave him \$25 to help someone who could not afford treatment for their pet. From one hospital and minimal available funds, the organization has grown to fifteen hospitals and now spends over \$150,000 annually to help our pets and their people. And we are not done yet!

We have a busy schedule of events coming up:

We will hold our second of the year Pet CPR and Pet Safety Training Class on Saturday, February 28 at Eastham Council on Aging. These classes are led by technician supervisor, Eduardo Netto, CVT, who is RECOVER certified in basic and advanced life support.

On Saturday, March 14, you can turn your unused treasures into meaningful support! Bring your unwanted gold or silver jewelry and coins to LEXACO in Harwich Port and make a difference for animals in need...all while putting some extra cash in your pocket. LEXACO owners Ed and Lisa Guariglia will donate a portion of the day's sales to The Sampson Fund.

And our big event of the year, The Sampson Fund Pet Wellness Fair will take place on Saturday, May 16 from 10 to 4 at the Harwich Community Center. This Cape-wide event will be fun for both pets and pet lovers, featuring fun activities, the latest in pet products and professional advice to keep our furry friends thriving. There will be a chance to bid on fantastic items in our silent auction and take part in a day filled with joy, learning and community spirit. Mark your calendars now.

*Patti*

### **Mark Your Calendar and Join Us!**

**Pet CPR & Pet Safety Training** - February 28th at 10 a.m., Eastham Council on Aging, Suggested Donation: \$20, Call Patti at (508) 367-0551 to register

**LEXACO Gold & Silver to Cash** (Percent to Sampson Fund) - March 14th from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., 537 Main Street, Harwichport

**The Sampson Fund Pet Wellness Fair** - May 16th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Harwich Community Center, fun activities for pets and owners, silent auction, pet products, professional advice

**The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care is grateful for the support of:**

Agway of Cape Cod  
The Alfred Kobacker and Elizabeth Trimbach Fund  
The Arlan Wise Charitable Fund  
The Bryce Family Foundation  
Caithness Foundation  
Cape Cod 5 Charitable Endowment  
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Susan Bernier Fund  
Susan P. Jones Family Foundation  
Thomas C. McGowan Fund for Animals of The Cape Cod Foundation  
The Wallaby Foundation  
The Woods Hole Foundation

**Remembering Our Pets**

<b>Sammy</b> Shirley Knowles	<b>Tobias</b> Deborah Richlen
<b>Belle</b> Gerie Schumann	<b>Smudge</b> Laurie Stillwell
<b>Cliffy</b> Gerie Schumann	<b>Millie</b> Michael McCabe
<b>Abigail, Amanda, Phoebe, Samantha, Gracie &amp; Maggie</b> Anne Shields	<b>All the dogs we've known and loved</b> Karen Beetham
<b>Mica</b> Ann Beckert	<b>Baxter</b> Frank Pfeiffer
<b>Ben</b> Larry & Anne Spaulding	<b>Buca</b> Pablo Parada-Pentz
<b>Rascal</b> Judith Stolp	<b>All our passed Greyhounds</b> Helen Chestnut
<b>Caper</b> Michael Lach	<b>Harley</b> Paula Liska
<b>Pearl</b> Courtney Hawes	<b>Sammy &amp; Lily</b> Helene Gross
<b>Jett</b> Barbara Matteson	<b>Radar, Toby, Muffin &amp; Brenna</b> Kelly Hall
<b>Daisy, Sophie, Samson &amp; Squeaks</b> Kelly Lynn Wright	<b>Truffle</b> Melissa Marchand
<b>Socks</b> Jerry Curcione	<b>Ringo</b> Mary Powers
<b>Thurber</b> Alison Rilling	<b>Woody</b> Deanna Avery
<b>Sammy &amp; Lily</b> Helene Gross	<b>Bosco</b> David Luxenberg
<b>Maxie</b> Agnes M. Brophy	<b>Irwin, Molly, Betsy and Audrey</b> Heather Brenzel
<b>Rae</b> Robert & Carole O'Connor	<b>Kypa</b> Joshua Hogg
<b>Baily</b> Susan Griffin	



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P.O. Box 1756,  
Orleans, MA 02653

Please detach and return to: **The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care, P.O. Box 1756, Orleans, MA 02653**

**The Sampson Fund** DONATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Your email address will be used only for communications from The Sampson Fund)*

Level of Donation: \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other

My check (payable to The Sampson Fund) is enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to: Visa Mastercard American Express

Account# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ 3-digit code \_\_\_\_\_

Name as appears on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*The Sampson Fund For Veterinary Care is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible.*