



Charley's Strays, Inc.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 64, Limestone, ME 04750
Tel. Shelter 207-426-9482 or Jim at 207-325-8894
www.charleysstrays.us

Limestone, November, 2013

Dear Friends,

I hope you had a beautiful Thanksgiving with your friends and relatives!

It's hard to believe that 2013 is nearing its end, and reflecting back on it, it was not a very happy one for us and many of our friends.

People passed away, beloved pets went across the rainbow bridge, and then there was the constant struggle to make ends meet. Our fundraiser was a total bust this year, had it not been for the tables John Wells set up during the summer, the yard sale Jean Tillson held, and Cindy's yard sale end of September (more about that later), we would not even have enough money to cover a couple of months of heating oil this winter. I know the way it looks right now; we will not be able to heat all winter if we have a hard one.

After 25 years, maybe even longer, not sure how long Charley had been doing it, we will stop doing the Boston fundraiser. It's just not feasible to spend lots of money for gasoline, 900 miles driving up and down to Boston, baking, collecting things for sale. Cindy having to pay out of her pocket the church-space we are renting. Jackie Lowney having to pay and arrange the items for her beautiful baskets, so we are calling it quits. The idea behind the fundraiser was not only collecting enough money for building projects, which we gave up several years ago, because we had to worry more about the monthly expenses, but also in recent years to be able to heat the kennel building all winter. Besides that, it was/had been a little get-together and getting to know our supporters. But other than a handful of regulars, the people stopped coming, so that reason is also a thing of the past. Sometimes we just have to let go of the old ways.

My big worry now is: How are we going to survive the years to come? For instance, we had carried insurance on the buildings for the past 15 years, ever since Charley died and there were buildings to be insured. We just received the new invoice for \$2200 (they consider us commercial even though we are nonprofit) so now for the first time we have to cancel the insurance policy, no money to pay it. Which means, God forbid – should something happen to the kennel, we will NOT be able to re-build. Then either we go on with dogs tied to doghouses in a horrible environment, like it was many, many years ago, or we just close down altogether.

We have a huge food bill to cover every month. We can't cut Rebecca's minimum wages down without losing her, since she has to survive somehow. We have the constant fear of animals getting sick and having to pay enormous vet bills. Reb is already cutting out as much electricity as possible, for instance, she hangs up the laundry to dry instead of using the dryer, and she is trying to save us pennies whenever possible. I am at my wits end, and so is Jim.

We have lost many of our donors, some to death, some to having fall onto hard times themselves, some to just not want to be bothered with our animals any longer. Jim and I have tried very hard to make ends meet, many times advanced money of our own, but there is just nothing left any more to advance.

So, PLEASE, if you think about helping out some noble causes this year on Christmas, think a little bit of our animals, too: What is going to happen to 50 some critters if we have to close down? And all the futures ones you could have helped saving?

Which brings me to some very interesting information a friend send me, and this is certainly an eye opener. Please keep the following in mind when you open your pockets to do a good thing and maybe make yourself feel good:

The American Red Cross

President and CEO Marsha J. Evans'
salary for the year was \$651,957 plus expenses

MARCH OF DIMES

It is called the March of Dimes because
only a dime for every 1 dollar is given to the needy

The United Way

President Brian Gallagher
receives a \$375,000 base salary along with numerous expense benefits

UNICEF

CEO Caryl M. Stern receives
\$1,200,000 per year (100k per month) plus all expenses including a ROLLS ROYCE.
Less than 5 cents of your donated dollar goes to the cause

GOODWILL

CEO and owner Mark Curran profits \$2.3 million a year.
Goodwill is a very catchy name for his business.
You donate to his business and then he sells the items for PROFIT.
He pays nothing for his products and pays his workers minimum wage! Nice Guy.
\$0.00 goes to help anyone!
Stop giving to this man!

Instead, other than to us 😊, give it to any of the following, where your money will do more good:

[The Salvation Army](#)

Commissioner, Todd Bassett receives a small salary of only
\$13,000 per year (plus housing) for managing this \$2 billion dollar organization.
96 percent of donated dollars go to the cause

[The American Legion](#)

National Commander receives a \$0.00 zero salary.
Your donations go to help Veterans and their families and youth!

[The Veterans of Foreign Wars](#)

National Commander receives a \$0.00 zero salary.
Your donations go to help Veterans and their families and youth

[The Disabled American Veterans](#)

National Commander receives a \$0.00 zero salary.
Your donations go to help Veterans and their families and youth

The Military Order of Purple Hearts

National Commander receives a \$0.00 zero salary.
Your donations go to help Veterans and their families and youth

St. Jude Research Hospital

100% goes towards funding and helping Children with Cancer who have no insurance and cannot afford to pay.

Ronald McDonald Houses

All monies go to running the houses for parents who have critical Children in the hospital.
100% goes to housing, and feeding the families.

Lions Club International

100% OF DONATIONS GO TO HELP THE BLIND, BUY HEARING AIDES, SUPPORT MEDICAL MISSIONS AROUND THE WORLD. THEIR LATEST UNDERTAKING IS MEASLES VACCINATIONS (ONLY \$1.00 PER SHOT).

So, there you have it.

Of course there is always a bright light on the sky to help us a little out of our misery ☺☺☺, and the following people helped our animals again, be it with lots of work, donations, stamps, and the nice note here and there.

A big THANK YOU goes to Cindy Houston and husband Steve, to Jackie Lowney and Kim Doherty for the yard sale they put together on September 28th. Cindy said they really did not have much luck this year with customers, but our supporter Lynn Frischmann from California mailed her some jewelry. Cindy took that to a local jeweler who gave her a break "because he loves dogs" and so she made almost as much money as last year between the jewelry and the yard sale. Thank you to the three ladies and the gent for all their work they put into this fundraiser!

Cynthia and Galen Thompsen, proud owners of Greta the Dachshund, had their annual Flea bag ball. The proceeds are split amongst three Shelters, and Charley's Strays is one of the lucky ones. Cynthia and Galen came to the Shelter to bring us much needed food and cat litter, and also presented us with a check. Thank you so much for caring for the "unwanted ones".

The following supporters of Charley have made sure that our dogs had at least their "daily bread" to chew on:

Al Smith, Belmont
Anne Tappan, Cambridge
Carole Parker, Winchendon
Charles Soares, Burlington
Charley & Ruth Ames
Cindy Houston, Woburn
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
Cynthia & Galen Thompsen
Dale Critchley, S. Weymouth
Dorothy D'Alessandro, Oss.
Dorothy Eckstein, Medford

Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Irma Simon, China
Jean & Ralph Catignani
Joe D'Alessandro, Tuftonboro
Joseph Blake, New Bedford
Josephine Smith, Woburn
Judith Gallo, Canton
Judy Rohweder, Northport
Karen Dowd, Madison
Linda Merriam, Dresden
Marcia Smith, Bucksport

Marlene Kaplan, Melrose
Nancy Brown, Olympia
Pat Williams, Litchfield
Phil Mann, Rowl. Heights
Phil Mann, Rowland Hights
R.D. Bournival, Nashua
Sandra Nicholson, Beverly
Susan Borsic, Woburn
Todd & Bonnie Buckmore

Karen Deady sent us a check in memory of Judy Waugh. Our Website "guy" Charles and his wife Ruth also mailed us a check in honor of Jim's birthday for the Shelter. Thank you very much to everyone.

Something else worthy to mention: Our friend and supporter Joseph Blake celebrated his 87th birthday in November. Wishing you many happy returns, Joe!

Have a wonderful Holiday Season
Gabriele, Mary, Ted and Jim



CAT REPORT – NOVEMBER 2013

Another month, more vet visits, but luckily nothing serious. Early in the month Prince was in (again) to see why he wasn't eating well and got treated for a sore mouth (again). Mr. Tom went in as planned after the house call and had his ears cleaned; he was on antibiotics for a couple weeks, which he didn't mind as long as the medicine was disguised in canned food. Then Robin went off his food, so I took him in – turned out he had a sore mouth and something odd and apparently painful about his hindquarters. He, too, will take his antibiotics in canned food (now that I've figured out the approved way to serve him – add warm water, stir well and use a dish that has curved rather than straight sides so he can easily lick around the edges) and seems to be back to normal.

This sore mouth bit is not uncommon in the household. Fortunately, so far every cat who's had it has responded promptly to any of several antibiotics. I'm quite sure it's not contagious; for example, although Prince and one of his roommates need to be treated every few months, the rest of that group has been okay (so far – knock on wood). I'll guarantee Prince, Mr. Tom and Robin didn't infect each other: they live in three different rooms, each with its own set of food and water dishes.

The rest of our cats seem to be doing well. I'm always pleased to have them lively and happy, considering that a lot of them, including Mr. Tom (probably) and Robin, are well into their teens now. I've been keeping a close eye on Lisa, because sometimes she slacks off on her food and spends more time than usual at the water bowl, leading me to wonder if her kidneys are beginning to go. She's 15 and a half years old; as the sole survivor of the first litter born in my house, she's one of the few for whom I have an exact birthdate. As of this writing she's back to eating more and drinking less, and if you watched her jump from the floor into her bed on top of a storage bin you'd never believe she's a senior citizen.

Many thanks to the people who brought presents for the cats to the open house. I know some of the food came from Jennie and Donna Bering; they or others also brought some nice beds, brushes and other small useful items, litter and a handsome new carrier. Other gifts this month have included canned food from Pepper Charles and coupons from Suzanne Belisle, Amanda Boucher, P. A. Lenk, Iris Martinello and Al Smith. Since I don't get a Sunday paper, the only coupons I use come from you diligent clippers – your work is appreciated.

I hope by the time you get this newsletter you and your four-legged companions will have enjoyed a pleasant Thanksgiving and be looking forward to Christmas.