



Charley's Strays, Inc.

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Dear Friends,

Meet Dixie above, a very happy girl who was adopted in 2004 by Marcia and Stan Smith, supporters of our Shelter. Dixie is the joy of the Smiths' life, and she looks like she has won the jackpot 12 years ago when she came to live at the home of the Smiths.

We have some very special dogs still at the Shelter, waiting to be adopted, but it seems like it's a very long process, this waiting for the right people. Of course we do have the occasional interested party, but they just don't always make a good match; either the "wanted" dog is too hyper for an old lady, or the old dog is not the right companion to take on 20 mile hikes. But we all keep hoping, sooner or later that special person will show up!

Sadly the lady who had adopted Dante in spring returned our old dog, the one with the Elvis smile. She has to deal with a husband in a wheelchair, and when Dante started peeing in the house, she could not handle it any longer. Now we are checking into this to see if it is a physical problem. He could very easily have a urinary tract infection, or if it's just old age. Who knows, it also could be a psychological problem: Dante has been very sad ever since his best buddy, Sammy, passed away. If you happen to come by the Shelter and see Reb chasing a dog with a cup trying to catch a urine sample- you know why. ☺

Things are not much different at Mary's home where lots of cats do the things cats do - looking out of windows, chasing down hairballs, hissing at each other, peeing next to the litter box. ☺ But they have a warm home and don't have to face the cold days and nights which will be upon us just too

soon for my taste. We already have to deal with snow up here in Limestone. A couple of days before Thanksgiving we had the first two inches, and since it has been barely above freezing, the snow is still on the ground, with another five inches on top of that right after Thanksgiving. Oh well, we did have a beautiful summer and perfect fall, so I guess we have to be grateful for that, at least.

Jim had to spend some time at the Shelter once again. As you probably know, the Shelter is right next to a swamp, and all year long we try to chase the swamp rats away. Well, they finally got the better of our food-storage building and ate their way through the bottom of the building into the top part where we store the food.

A very nasty job lay ahead of Rebecca who cleaned out the building and tore pieces of the 2-layered floor out, cleaning up the horrible mess the rats had made. Jim followed up by raising the whole building- over the past 17 years it had sunk a foot down into the ground. After jacking it up and putting new 4x4s underneath it, he put in a new floor, nailed metal sheets to the floor and the sides and put another floor on top of that. So now if rats try to get in to the building, they will have to bring some serious tools along to break in! ☺ A big **thank you** to Reb, she made Jim's job much easier and a day shorter.

But fixing and repairing always costs money: Even though we have no cost for labor, material seems to be going up at 10 times the rate than donations. Once again, I am pulling my hair, trying to figure out how to make ends meet.

Not an easy task, trying to get enough money together to make things at the Shelter run smoothly. There are always lots of vet bills to pay, and the food is not cheap, either. I hate to beg for money, but we do have to have it in order to keep our Shelter open. We just can't function without money. Please do send us a couple of your dollars if you can. Thank you!

A bit of good news came our way: Cynthia Thompson had her sixth annual Flea Bag Ball, and we were one of the lucky recipients of food and a check for our cats and dogs. Thank you so much Cynthia. Thank you so much Cynthia! And I just have to share a photo of Cynthia's granddaughter Payton and, of course, Greta the dachshund- cute as always:



Notice Greta is actually smiling? Just to clarify: Greta is the pink-garbed little person. ☺

More good news: Bonnie Buckmore delivered a huge load of food to us on Thanksgiving Day. Jim had bought a truckload full at Sam's Club when he was at the Shelter, so the additional bags donated by another Shelter and brought to us by Bonnie, along with the food from Cynthia Thompson, should give us enough food to make it through the winter, I hope. Thank you very much Bonnie!

A big **THANK YOU** goes to the following people, who once again helped with food and treat-donations, stamps, toys and the much needed money to keep our animals vet care and a warm home:

Albert Smith, Belmont
Bob Moore
Charlotte Paul, Chelmsford
Cindy Houston, Woburn
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
Dale Critchley, S. Weymouth
Deborah Phair
Donna Bering, Wakefield
Galen & Cynthia Thompson

Harry Clark Jr. Beverly
Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Irma Simon, South China
Joe D'Alessandro, Tuftonboro
Judy Rohweder, Northport
Linda Merriam, Dresden
Marianne Dalarue, Woburn
Marlene Kaplan, Melrose
Melody lavers, Wales

Nancy Capone, Wakefield
Patricia Thain, Dracut
Philipp Mann, Rowland Hts.
R.D. Bournival, Nashua
Sandra Nicholson, Beverly
Shirley Rancourt, Lebanon
Susan Borsic, Woburn

Charley Ames and Ruth McKinney sent a check for our critters in honor of Jim's birthday.

Cindy Houston and her son Jesse along with his children collected pennies throughout the year. She exchanged the pennies for a check to buy much-needed things for the Shelter, cleaning articles, soap and bleach is another one of those items we have to have.

To all the above Helpers of Charley's Strays a **HUGE THANK YOU**. We could not take care of all the dogs and cats without you.

Wishing you a wonderful Holiday Season and a good start into the New Year.

Gabriele, Mary, Ted, Eric and Jim



CAT REPORT – NOVEMBER 2016

Except for poor little Grover, who's been quite sick again, our cats have had a good enough month. We've so far had no significant snow, and many days have been warm enough for porch time. I do insist they come in at night; there's still one warm bed on the porch, even after Lucien had such fun tearing up the cardboard box last month, but I'd rather have them inside.

Grover's been back and forth to the vet repeatedly with symptoms that don't respond, as they should to treatment. Last week Amber finally found some unusual bacteria and put him on a different combination of antibiotics, and after two more visits he's acting livelier and eating a bit. When he's feeling low, he sleeps a lot on a soft bed in a warm corner behind a big chest, and frequently his sister Ashley curls up with him. His brother Ryan, aka Ribald, is often standing on his head on a windowsill – he's a total nut, the most Siamese-like of the half-Siamese threesome.

Tang, our newish boy who started out with litter-box issues, seems to have overcome them now that I've put a box where he thought one was needed (several other cats appreciate it, too). He still chews the spindles on the stairs once in a while. They're soft wood and seem to shred more than splinter; so far he hasn't hurt himself on them.

Thanks as always to the cats' friends for their help. Saturday after Thanksgiving the couple from up north whose brother/brother-in-law created the Fleabag Ball in memory of a dog he lost brought a truckload of donated cat and dog food, treats, beds, toys and other good things to the kennel for our animals. Suzanne Belisle, Irma Simon and Al Smith sent coupons; Pepper Charles provided canned food; a friend of his parents gave a bag of dry food; and I got a surprise email from someone I don't know asking if the cats have a wish list.

You likely won't get the next newsletter until after Christmas. I hope it will be a good one for all of you.