



Charley's Strays, Inc.

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Limestone, October, 2016

Dear Friends,

This is the story of Gurr-Gurr, the pigeon. If you look close, you will see her on the rung of Jim's ladder, trying very hard to help painting the gutters. Here it goes: Last year our vet from Caribou called us, asking if we could raise a pigeon which had been dropped off by a woman, so we said yes, and we did. We raised her until she was ready to fly away. I had my concerns about her survival last winter, but we did see her again in spring. It came as no surprise when, once again, the vet called a couple of months ago, saying that the same women had brought in another bird, totally naked, and the vet said from the looks of the bird it was most likely a heron with a long neck, really ugly looking, or something else in this nature.

Two weeks ago we received another call from her, saying well, no heron after all, but a pigeon. Should she keep it and take it on a road trip and let fly, or would we, being a sucker when it comes to creatures in need, I said sure, we will take her. My thoughts are that there is a pigeon-napper on the loose, who climbs around on window sills and takes them out of the nests.

Honestly I am no fan of pigeons. I always called them flying rats, and when they came in a herd (flock) to munch on the sunflower seeds put out for my other birds, I would chase them away.

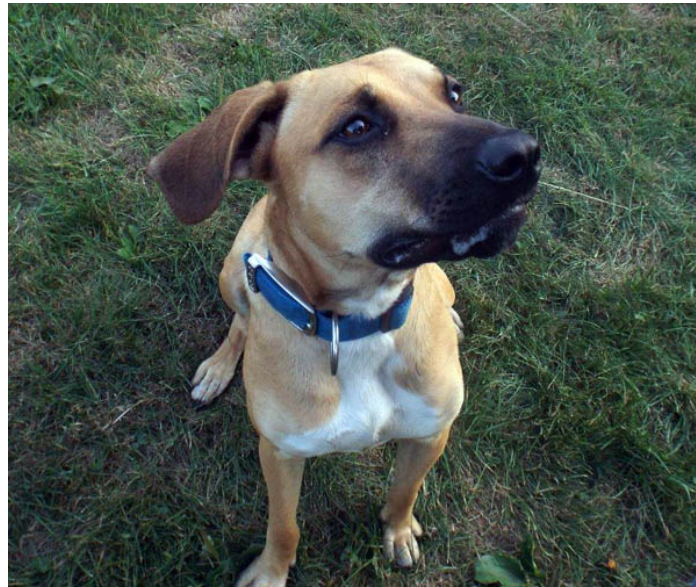
Well, Gurr-Gurr (who I would have named Gurrtrud or Gurrinde if we had kept her) is a totally different story. She cleans her self constantly, pulls out little feathers, and grooms her wings and tail, actually a very clean bird. The problem with this pigeon is that she has no connection at all to other birds. In the morning I would put her out to fly and to hopefully learn how to pick up the birdseeds of the ground, but she would have none of that. I either feed her by hand, or she takes the food out of her bowl. She only wanted to be close to humans [See Jim climbed the ladder above]. She would be one step ahead on the next rung. I would walk around and she would land next to me and walk along right beside me. She certainly is quite intelligent. She does not gurr, but peeps, but that will change once she gets older, which I noticed that on last year's pigeon.

Anyway, now I was stuck with a bird that thought she was a human, was afraid of other birds and had no idea how to survive out there. Every time a car drove into our driveway, she would land on the ground next to the car to check out the people, and eventually would have been "driveway-kill". I told my daughter about it, and she knew of a lady in Vermont who rescued a pigeon with a broken wing four years ago and still had her. The lady was very interested, wanted to know if it was a male or female. Well how do you tell that on a pigeon? For all I knew our vet already had her neutered or spayed. I was told to put her in front of a mirror, if she would ignore herself, she was a female, if she strutted around acting really stupid, she was a male. Guys, I am not even going to comment on that one!



I did not do the mirror test, and the lady said she would take Gurr-Gurr anyway. The pigeon would stay in the house, fly around wherever she wanted, and have a pigeon companion she hopefully would accept as one of her own kind. So a week later, we took a road trip with Gurr-Gurr to New Hampshire, where we met up with the lady from Vermont, and a pigeon exchanged homes and humans. "Heidi" will stay in touch and let me know how Gurr Gurr is doing, and I can say: Another happy ending for a creature.

Not so happy is the story of another dog we took in: One year-old, in two homes already. Supposedly food aggressive, gotten "rid of" by her last owner because she nipped at their 6-year old when the kid messed with the dogs food. A one-year-old pup is only food aggressive when people tease him by taking the food away or other stupid things. I never ever had a food aggressive dog, but I never messed with their food, either. Imagine sitting down on the dinner table and someone keeps pulling your plate away while you eat? Well, I would definitely stab him or her with my fork, or worse. When Reb handfed Riley a treat, there was no problem whatsoever, so he either does not like kids, or being with us got over his food aggression already. Of course the dog never has been seen by a vet, had no shots at all, not neutered, either. Another big vet bill coming up for Riley.



This is Riley

Another very sad thing happened on September 22nd: Our former dog Jake, who had the unbelievable good luck to find John Wells, went to dog heaven. John had told me two months ago that Jake had back problems and then started having seizures. Then on the 22nd Jake really went down hill- John called the vet who administered some valium, but Jake ran a fever of 108, which most likely would have caused brain damage, and so he had to be put to sleep. We are so sorry for your loss, John. I know many people, who had met Jake at the tables when he and John collected donations for Charley's, will miss him.

Cindy Houston had her fundraiser and yard sale for Charley's. Her helpers, like every year, were husband Steve, and our supporters Jackie Lowney, and Kim Doherty. The fundraiser turned out to be pretty good, besides the occasional nut cases they had to deal with. But what's new when one has to deal with humans? Animals are so much nicer many times. ☺

A **HUGE THANK YOU** goes to Cindy and her three helpers!

Once again the following supporters of Charley's Strays helped us tremendously with donations, care packages, toys, blankets, stamps, extra donations to help pay our taxes, items for Cindy's yard sale and PEANUT BUTTER. ☺

Al Smith, Belmont
Bonnie Wiegand
Cathy O'Connor
Charlotte Paul, Chelmsford
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
Dale Critchley, S. Weymouth
Deborah Phair
Emile Jorgensen, E. Boston
George Watkins, Amesbury
Glenna Hawthorne
Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Irma Simon, China Village
Joan Ryan, New Bedford
Joe D'Alessandro

John Walsh, Estero
Joseph Kogut, Upton
Judy Rohweder, Northport
Karen Deady, Skowhegan
Karen Johnson
Kelley Smith, Rockland
Linda Merriam, Dresden
Lori Furrow, S. China
Lynn Frischmann, Los Gatos
M. Kaplan, Melrose
Manuel German, Reading
Marian Delarue, Woburn
Mark Resendes, Revere
Maureen Dowd, Sargentville

Michael Kane, Greenwood
Nancy Capone, Wakefield
Pat Thain, Dracut
Paula Wisniowski, Tyngsboro
Phil Mann, Rowland Heights
R.D. Bournival, Nashua
Ralph & Jean Catignani
Rancourt Family, Lebanon
Sally Sawyer, Albany Twp.
Sandra Nicholson, Beverly
Steve Martin, Augusta

Thank you very much, your help is much needed and appreciated!

I will be including the last fundraiser tickets for this year. The fundraiser winners will be drawn around October 20th. If I still receive tickets after that, I will not be able to put them in the box anymore. Sorry!

The prizes should be packed and on their way by the end of this month. Thank you to all of you who have participated in getting the money together to buy fuel for the winter, to be able to keep our dogs and cats warm and comfortable. Most of them are getting on in years, and get cold much quicker than the young ones. I know from my own experience, I am turning into an old dog, myself. ☺

That's it for the dog and people news this month.

Wishing you a nice month of October, don't scare the animals on Halloween, and take care of yourself and the fur-babies



Gabriele, Ted, Eric and Jim

CAT REPORT September 2016

Along in mid-month I commented to Gabriele, as I ran up the vet bill some more, that at least there'd be plenty of news this month. Now it's two weeks later and I had to look back in my records to find out what I was talking about, because two of the expensive cats are completely normal and the third is doing well with a bit of extra maintenance. (ep)

The first invalid was Grover, one of the three half-Siamese siblings. He developed a major upper respiratory infection, to the point where he wouldn't eat. He dislikes being picked up, hates carriers and dreads the vet, and sick as he was it was a fight to get him boxed. He stayed in hospital a couple days getting antibiotics plus fluids for rehydration, but he refused to eat, even overnight when all was quiet. I brought him home and he immediately started eating again and has regained the weight he lost. The interesting thing is that for the first three days after he got home he was unusually affectionate, under my feet almost as often as his brother Ryan is, and he's still more likely to ask for attention than he was before this episode. I think I'm getting credit for rescuing him from the hospital, not for curing his cold.

A couple weeks later I took in Tang, our new cat. Tang has two bad habits: ever since I got him he's been confused about what's a litter box, and this month he started sharpening his teeth on the spindles on the stairs. Instead of litter boxes Tang uses vinyl, and since I have vinyl remnants under food and water dishes and one at the bottom of the stairs where cats sometimes get evening snacks, things get messy. My theory is that he was brought up in some kind of cattery where it was okay to use all washable surfaces, but I can't prove it. Anyway, I decided before concluding his issues were behavioral and/or psychological, I needed to rule out physical causes. So he got a thorough examination and blood work and a clean bill of health. He's lost weight since he came here in the spring, but he's not underweight; I figure sitting in a Humane Society cage let him get fatter than usual and now he's exercising back to normal. This week I've been experimenting with putting additional litter boxes where he seems to want them; I'm waiting to see if I've solved that problem or just relocated it. I don't know what to do about the spindles – hope he doesn't bring down the banister, I guess.

Mr. Tom is the third cat who got vetted again, and with minor adjustments in his meds and fluids a couple times a week he's been doing very well (knock on wood). The FIV room has two walk-in cages, and Tommy gets fed in one of them. He's the only cat in the group who's figured out how to get into the cage when the door is closed but not locked; if he doesn't finish a meal at one sitting (he usually doesn't) I can let him out knowing he'll go back in and empty the dish when he's ready.

Thanks, as always, to the cats' friends: they got food from Pepper Charles, very nice toys from some people who visited the kennel and coupons from Suzanne Belisle, Caley Pillow, Irma Simon, John Walsh, Iris Martinello, unknown person from Waterville and Al Smith. And thanks to all of you who care enough to help animals, ours or your own or other rescue organizations'. In spite of all the stories on the web about people who abuse or abandon animals, there are many of our kind of people, too. When I check out of the grocery with my cartful of cat food, I often get into happy conversations with cashiers or other patrons about their rescued pets.