



## **Charley's Strays, Inc.**

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December 2019

Dear Friends,

I know, Christmas is over, but I could not resist sharing this cute photo with you. It was mailed to us by Cynthia and Galen Thompson, and it shows Greta, the dachshund who always was the star of the Fleabag Ball in Bangor. Greta has now a new friend, the newest addition to the Thompson Family is little Lara. Three years ago Jim and I lost our much loved and terribly missed dog Nikki, who looked just like Lara, at least when she was a puppy. Fourteen years later she looked more like a very happy overweight older lady. Hopefully the Thompsons will keep us up-to-date on the development of Lara!

By the time you receive this letter, a new year will have started, and hopefully it will be a happy one for all of you, and of course a happy one for our dogs and cats at the Shelter. I usually read the Yahoo news on the computer, and what I have been reading lately about the animal abuse going on not only all over the world, but especially here in the States, is heartbreaking. So my biggest wish for 2020 is that these poor creatures which have no choice to choose where and with whom they have to live, will be rescued from those people that call themselves humans.

But, thank God, not all humans are bad. As a matter of fact, Charley's dealt with some very nice ones last month. Here is an article by Eric Westbye about 2 girls which are making a difference, printed in our local newspaper, *The Town Line*, which is published weekly in China, Maine.

As the Christmas season approaches, two local teenage sisters from Sidney are giving back to the community in a big way. Sierra Gagnon, 17, and her sister, Macie, 15, have grown up in a family that stresses giving and putting others first. This is evidenced by what they did recently for some dogs at a local shelter.

The entire Gagnon family, mother Tricia, left, and dad Jason, back, help Macie and Sierra in their project. Last month, Sierra and Macie volunteered at Charley's Strays, a dog shelter in Benton. They spent several hours walking dogs on a cold November Saturday and while they were there they noticed that some of the outdoor dog houses could use a makeover. They decided to take matters into their own hands and build some new homes for the dogs.

With a little help from their dad, Jason, and some donated material from Hammond Lumber, they were able to build three new, insulated, heavy duty dog houses. Three weeks ago they proudly brought the houses to the shelter.

They built each house in three parts, and along with their dad and mom, Jason and Tricia Gagnon, they assembled them on site. They designed the houses with three specific dogs in mind: two are huskies that enjoy being outside almost all winter, but will enjoy the winter even more now that they have insulated homes!

Far too often teenagers these days are labeled as self-absorbed and lazy. Not enough attention is given to the kids that do the right thing every day. These two girls are an example for us all that change starts with the person in the mirror and everyone can do something to make the world a better place.



**Macie, left, and Sierra Gagnon with the completed dog houses.**

A big thank you to the girls and the *TOWN LINE* who published the article.

And there are many more Charley-supporters to thank this month:

Al Smith, Belmont	Iris Martinello, Tewksbury	Melody Lavers, Wales
Charles Ames/Ruth McKinney	Jackie & Kellee Lowney	Michael Kane, Greenwood
Charlotte Paul, Chelmsford	Jean & Ralph Catignani	Nancy Brown, Olympia
Cristine Cardello, Melrose	Joe D'Allesandro, Tuftonboro	Nancy Capone, Wakefield
Dale Critchley, S. Weymouth	Judith Gallo, Canton	Pat Thain, Dracut
Donna Wade, Unity	Judy Rohweder, Northport	Patricia Harrison, Litchfield
Donnas Bering, Wakefield	Kim Doherty	Rust Pappathanasi, Swampscott
Elizabeth Morgan, Portland	Linda Merriam, Dresden	Sally Sawyer, Albany
Ellen Bolton, N. Dartmouth	Manuel German, Reading	Steve Martin, Augusta
Fridow Family, Plymouth	Mark & Kelli Resendes	Zee Zee Dreams
Grace Kiley, N. Andover	Marlene Kaplan, Melrose	
	Mary-Grace Lenihan, Melrose	

We also received a donation from Lee Wallace in honor of Susan, Gus and Coco Culver.

The Thompson Family mailed us, besides the cute Grata and Lara photo, a donation in memory of their brother-in-law, Andy Small, and their pup Remy.

Harry Clark, Jr. also sent us a donation in memory of his parents, Lorena and Harry, Sr. Clark.

Bonnie Buckmore emptied many donation boxes again and mailed us several checks.

John Wells set up his table at Shaw's once again and mailed us a check from the proceeds. We always need small toys, especially cat toys, for his table, so if you find some cheap ones at Marden's or a similar store, please send us some.

We also had some great news: As I have mentioned in previous letters, Loyal Biscuit has given us quite a few donations of food for our cats and dogs. They also host the nail clinics, which in 2019 benefited Charley's Strays. The previous years benefitted other shelters, always for one year. So it came as a big and wonderful surprise when Bonnie Buckmore told me that the attendance has grown since supporting Charley's, since we always have spread the word. The 2020 proceeds of the nail clippings will also go to Charley's Strays! We are very happy and grateful to receive this much needed funding. Thank you to Chelsie, Adam, and Melissa the nail-trimmer. ☺

Then there was some sad news: Marian Delarue, who had never missed a month to send us a donation for our animals, passed away. To her family: We are very sorry for your loss.

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2020,

***Gabriele, Mary, Ted, Eric and Jim***



## CAT REPORT – DECEMBER 2019

Happy new decade, everyone! The cats and I hope the past one has been good to you and the next one will treat you even better.

Again not much news. We're enjoying Christmas gifts (as I hope you are too) and at the moment mild weather, though there's a storm in the forecast. Days like today, when it's mild and I'm home to be the doorkeeper, I put a water bowl on the porch and let cats in and out until dark. When it's so cold the water would quickly freeze, they have less outside time.

Tang's been to the vet to see about a sore mouth and is to be scheduled for a dental in January. Most of his teeth are already gone, and he might lose the rest. I expect no big problem if he does, as he prefers canned food but, like many toothless cats, can handle dry when he's in the mood (I think he swallows the bits whole). Today Lucien, one of the four brothers, is feeling unwell; he has until tomorrow morning to shape up or he'll see a doctor.

Many thanks to many people for cat food, coupons and Christmas gifts: Lisette Beaulieu, Suzanne Belisle, Pepper Charles, Shirley Jordan, Steve Martin, Dave and Laurie Mountain, Teresa Parent, Aline Poulin, Al Smith, Karen Tobias and I hope I haven't forgotten anyone.

