



Charley's Strays, Inc.

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March 30, 2020

Dear Friends,

First of all: I hope you are all still okay, with no signs of any viruses or other strange animals ☺ in your home! So far all is well with Rebecca, and our volunteers. Hopefully we can all tough this one out.

Now to the above photo: A big thank you goes out to the Lawrence High School Cheerleaders and Boosters for designating Charley's Strays as the beneficiary of their Paws for a Cause February cheering competition for the fifth year in a row. This event not only provides an opportunity for cheerleading teams from around the state to compete, it also creates a forum for their friends and families to learn about and support Charley's Strays. Attendees donated items for the dogs and cats; bought 50/50 raffle tickets; made cash donations; listened to a speech given by volunteer Bonnie Buckmore; and, stopped by the Charley's Strays information table to pick up a brochure and talk to Bonnie.

Other than this event, nothing at all happened at the Shelter, which, I guess, is good news. The ot so good is that no one seems to be interested in little Matty, the small dog we took in over a month ago. He is doing great, and definitely would be a good companion for someone. On the other hand, with all the talk of the VIRUS, no one comes out to the Shelter any more, which, in a way, is understandable. Hopefully it will change again soon.

Jim and I did take a trip to Sam's Club a couple of weeks ago to stock up on more food for our animals, Surprisingly there was no cat food left in the store, and only one pallet of dog food. We bought most of that, so we will be okay for several months. Thankfully Mary had stocked up a couple of months ago on cat food herself. She said to me: ". . . while others bought toilet paper, I bought cat food. Kind of hit the nail on its head."

The problem I see, is that eventually people without their jobs will have no money left over to take care of their animals, so, again, hopefully we have plenty to help them out if necessary. And, I hope I am wrong, there will be many animals without homes, dropped off at shelters or just dropped off out there somewhere, because people will have no money or food, if this pandemic stays around for a long time. And no, I don't believe that it will be over and done with by Easter. All any of us can do right now is hope for the best.

Our supporters, once again they helped us with money, food, stamps, and coupons, and as always I enjoy reading their little notes. So, once again a HUGE THANK YOU to:

Al Smith, Belmont
Anne Haynes, Bernard
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
Dale Critchley, S. Weymouth
Donna Bering, Wakefield

Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Jacky and Kellee Lowney
Joe D'Allesandro, Tuftonb.
Linda Merriam, Dresden
Marlene Kaplan, Melrose

Nancy Brown, Olympia
Patricia Harrison, Litchfield
Patricia Caler
Sally Sawyer, Albany Twp.

As you can see, we are down to 14 supporters this month. Once again I am pulling my hair out to figure out how to make ends meet. I am getting close to the being-bald-point.

Okay, I take this back: Actually 16 supporters, because we also received a donation in memory of Stephen Robert Sherwood of Searsport, from Lilian Bryan. She said:
"Steve was a good friend and neighbor, who would mind your house, plants and pets and help you move, lift or fix something. He loved and cared for our many pets and will be remembered as that guy who walked his dog in all weather, picking up cans and bottles along the way."

I am so sorry, Lilian, guys like Steve are gems, and hard to find.

And luckily for our animals, it was my birthday this month and Ruth McKinney and Charley Ames, mailed a donation in honor of me becoming one of the elderly 😊😊 citizens.

Bonnie Buckmore also sent her collected money from the donation-boxes she has placed in various stores.

So, the only thing left to say or write is: Thank you for your continued help, and please stay healthy!

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



CAT REPORT MARCH 2020

In times like these I'm glad I have cats – totally oblivious to the craziness, and therefore very soothing. Although the morning I came downstairs to find the dining room temperature around 45 degrees because the cats had opened the doors onto the porch overnight, I was not soothed. Apparently I'd not fully latched the heavy wooden inside door, and once the cats pry that open several, especially grey and white Lucien (aka Loosey Goosey), are expert at batting the handle of the storm door until it opens. If Lucien was involved I suspect black and white brother Feather (aka Featherhip, because his white patch that looks like a feather is on his left hip) wasn't far behind, and on a guess most of the rest of the roomful enjoyed going in and out with them.

So far we're doing all right. I had time to stock up on cat food and have enough litter for a while; my favorite brand has been mostly unavailable, but I have some left plus two big bags of my fallback brand that the cats accept. I've not needed my veterinarians in two weeks (knock on wood), so this afternoon I called to check on them; everyone is well, and they're trying to be careful by doing curb service, carrying out supplies and asking clients to wait in their vehicles while their pets are inside.

Again, many thanks to the cats' friends for their ongoing support. I met a new donor (to cats and dogs both) during the normal first week of this month, though I didn't ask her name. As I was waiting to check out of Loyal Biscuit, a pet food store in Waterville, the young woman ahead of me stuffed some money into the Charley's Strays donation jar on the counter. The women behind the counter thanked her; I thanked her and said I was Charley's cat person. The young woman smiled broadly and asked if she could buy a bag of cat food for us. I gestured to the food I'd put on the counter, and she made a second generous donation to help pay for it. Then one of the women behind the counter gave both of us free samples of dry cat food.

We also got cat food from Pepper Charles and from Shirley and coupons from our anonymous donor (she [or maybe he] used another of the envelopes with cats on them), Iris Martinello, Teresa Parent and Al Smith. I used \$4.50 worth of coupons on just one shopping trip.

I hope all of you and your human families, your pets and your veterinarians are being careful and keeping well. The man who prepares my taxes (another cat rescuer) obviously believes this pandemic will end; when I signed forms today he gave me my appointment card for March 2021.

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