

Caring



Helping homeless and unwanted animals through rescue, adoption, and spay/neuter education since 1997

Summer 2004
Volume 1, Issue 2

the quarterly newsletter of Animal Compassion Network

Community Backs ACN's Efforts

Support for ACN's mission has come from all corners—making it clear that the animal welfare effort touches a lot of hearts. We are fortunate to receive the assistance of organizations across Western North Carolina. These events help to fund ACN's live-saving programs and broadcast our message across the region.

Among our benefactors: Chris and Kim Slagle and Cat Wilson of Sprouting Grass Productions who organized the "Give a Dog a Bone" festival at the Slagle Farm in Mars Hill. All proceeds went to ACN. Earth Fare named ACN the "Friend of Earth Fare" for the entire month of June, pledging 10 cents to ACN for every recycled bag—handed out by ACN volunteers—that customers used. A total of 17,743 recycled bags were used, netting a \$1,774.30 donation from Earth Fare.

The Geneva Riverside Lodge hosts the annual Strut Yer Mutt, a fun dog show to benefit local animal rescue groups. This year, ACN was selected as the recipient of half the show's proceeds. ACN was also invited to the Lions Horse Show, where volunteers handed out literature, collected donations, and showed available adoptees.

More support came from the National Public Radio station WCQS (88.1 FM) and their FunDrive (see story, page 3); AB Tech, who offered us an information booth at their Earth Day celebration; the local restaurants that participated in "Dining for Pets" to benefit our spay/neuter programs; and At Play With Sparky and A Good Dog's Life, who offered the use of their facilities for our shot clinics.

A big thank you to all the businesses and their patrons who support ACN.

by Kate Rheney and Libby Riker

Pet Projects *supported by your donations*

Last year, **515** unwanted animals found safety in our no-kill foster network. In addition, **983** pets received partial or full funding for their spaying or neutering expenses, exponentially reducing the number of unwanted litters that would find their way to shelters.

This year, we are gearing up to help even more animals in need. The new **Sponsor-a-Pet Program** will provide additional slots for safe haven

through foster care, beyond the 120 currently allotted (see Pet Cetera, page 5). We have also been busy writing grants and raising funds to continue to spay and neuter animals here in Buncombe County, while increasing our **spay/neuter assistance** and **low-cost vaccination clinics** to our neighboring counties (Rutherford, Madison, Haywood, and Henderson), where financial aid is often lacking but the need is great.

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Upcoming events

July

Sun., 7/11, 11am-3pm: Kitten Adoption, SuperPetz

Tue., 7/13, 7-9pm: Board Mtng, Earth Fare

Tue., 7/27, 6:30-8pm: Fundraising Committee Mtng, At Play With Sparky

August

Tue., 8/3, 7-9pm: General Membership Mtng, Earth Fare Community Room

Sat., 8/7, 11am-3pm: Adoption Day, SuperPetz

Tue., 8/17, 7-9pm: Board Mtng, Earth Fare

Sat., 8/21, 1-4pm: Low-Cost Shot Clinic, Waynesville Recreation Center

Tue., 8/31, 6:30-8pm: Fundraising Committee Mtng, At Play With Sparky

September

Sat., 9/4, 11am-3pm: Adoption Day, SuperPetz

Sat., 9/18, 1-4pm: Low-Cost Shot Clinic, Jackson Park, Hendersonville

Tue., 9/21, 7-9pm: Board Mtng, Earth Fare

Tue., 9/28, 6:30-8pm: Fundraising Committee Mtng, At Play With Sparky

From the Director's Desk *by Executive Director Eileen Bouressa*

It takes a lot to fill me with "shock and awe" after all these years, but it happened just two weeks ago. A grant application asked for the number of active ACN volunteers and their weekly time commitment. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the figures: **ACN has 92 active volunteers who average a total of 513 hours a week! A week!**

I know these volunteers—most have 40-hour-per-week jobs, families, numerous animals of their own, and other volunteer commitments outside of ACN. One even fosters needy children and homeless pets simultaneously. These are not people just looking for something to fill their time. These are people so dedicated to the cause of animal welfare that they **make** the time.

Ask anyone involved with animal welfare and they will tell you that one

of our biggest hurdles is volunteer burnout. After the third or fourth call from someone who wants to re-home their 12-year-old dog because she sheds, it's natural to wonder if we will ever see the light at the end of the tunnel.

But, just as all hope is about to fade, the universe sends a message of reaffirmation for what we do. ACN was recently involved in a neglect case in which 13 dogs were being kept in a 10x10x6 outdoor kennel and fed randomly about once a week. One of the dogs gave birth to six puppies under those conditions; two of the puppies were born blind as a result. Buncombe County Animal Control did an outstanding job of getting those dogs to safety, and ACN promised to do what we could to get them into our network. We had one weekend to find foster homes for as many as we could. Once people heard the story, they couldn't open their homes up fast enough, even though most were already filled to capacity. In two days' time, those dogs went from hell to being well cared for and genuinely loved in homes until they were ready for adoption.

Concerned for the future of the two blind puppies, but trusting in the humane spirit, we put them up for adoption and held our breath. Both blind dogs were among the first to find a new home. The adopters knew the additional work required but took on the challenge gladly. (Both adopting families also adopted one of the other siblings as a "seeing-eye dog" for their blind sisters.) I am so happy to report that every last one of the neglected dogs we took in has now found a "forever home" and we get regular progress reports on how well they are all doing. And then it all comes back—*that is why we do this.*

One only needs to look at how society is changing to find more hope. Just this year, our county government voted to make historic changes in our local animal welfare ordinance, including mandatory sterilization for all companion animals without a permit and making it illegal to chain a dog for

24 hours a day. On the state level, the North Carolina General Assembly is preparing to hear recommendations on funding low-cost spay/neuter services and creating a Division of Animal Welfare. Other states are reporting similar successes in their legislation.

There is still so much more work to be done. But, from where I sit, I am absolutely amazed that these issues are even being brought before our governing bodies, that your average layperson understands the importance of spaying and neutering, and that today, animal welfare is more synonymous with compassion than "fanaticism."

We can also look overseas for inspiration. Under Austria's new anti-cruelty law, one of Europe's toughest, pet guardians and breeders can no longer mutilate dogs through ear cropping and tail docking. Sweden has banned the practice since 1989. In 2003, Spain's region of Catalonia raised fines for cruelty to up to \$24,200. They also completely banned the killing of homeless cats and dogs in their animal shelters. And other animals are benefiting from this new awareness as well. Austria's new law also outlaws the use of lions and other wild animals in circuses, and Italy is considering a law that forbids sending horses to the slaughterhouse after they retire from competition. The tide is changing.

The evidence all points to a win within our lifetime. Some will look to international news for inspiration on the Animal Welfare Movement, others to state and local successes. I choose to take my inspiration from the happy lives so many of our animals go on to live and from this volunteer list on my desk. Ninety-two people volunteering 513 hours a week...shock and awe. In the words of Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Eileen



Caring is the quarterly newsletter of Animal Compassion Network, the largest no-kill, non-profit animal rescue organization in Western North Carolina. Through the hard work of its volunteers and foster homes, ACN has found loving, permanent homes for almost 2,500 cats and dogs since 1999.

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Happy Tails! *rescue and adoption success stories*



Suzy Q

Happy endings all around for **Suzy Q** and her family. Suzy Q and her six puppies, plus six other dogs, were living in a small backyard kennel with little shelter when a concerned neighbor notified ACN. In a joint effort, Buncombe Co. Animal Services, the Asheville Humane Society, and ACN rescued the dogs, provided them with medical attention, and set them up in foster care. Two of the puppies had been born blind, due to poor nutrition during Suzy Q's pregnancy (the neighbor reported that the dogs were only fed about once a week). In the following months, all of the puppies, including the blind ones, were adopted. **Cordelia** and her sightless sister **Lulu** were adopted together. **Lucy** (formerly Batgirl) and **Winston** were also adopted together. Their family reports they are coming along beautifully. Winston has even taught his sister



Lucy and Winston



Cordelia and Lulu

to walk down stairs by grabbing her collar and tugging her along. Now Lucy does it on her own. P.S. Mom **Suzy Q** was adopted in June.



Valentino found he was the missing piece in the lives and hearts of a couple in Hendersonville. He joins an eight-year-old Chow and a 13-year-old Himalayan in their home. Also a Himalayan, one year old, Valentino had been abandoned at a conference center in Black Mountain and had to fend for himself, eating out of trash cans. Despite this hardship, he maintained a loving attitude toward people, and was more than ready to put his vagabond days behind him for a comfortable life indoors.



Valentino



In another example of collaboration to save a pet's life, staff at the Asheville Humane Society shelter called ACN about **Mila**. A Pomeranian, she had been dropped off at the shelter by an owner who was about to have surgery. Very frightened in her new surroundings, the shelter staff thought her not suited for the shelter's adoption room. ACN accepted Mila into the network. Initially fearful and shy, Mila quickly came to trust her foster family and began to show her sweet, loving personality. Adopted in April, Mila is now happily sharing her affection and getting it in return. Her new "mom" says she can't imagine life without her.



Mila



Legs found the perfect home. Legs was a stray cat rescued by ACN's veterinarian, Margee Moncure DVM, who also had to perform a life-saving amputation of one of his legs. He recovered quickly, and was quite affectionate with humans, but proved to be incompatible with other cats, which made placement difficult (so many cat lovers can't stop at just one!). An ACN volunteer shared Legs' history with her stepfather, who was touched by the story and agreed to adopt Legs. He reports that Legs is now "three-legged king of the condo."



Sometimes ACN turns to other rescue groups to help find the perfect forever home. **Domino**, a gorgeous white collie stray, managed to find the house of the neighborhood's dog lovers. The family called ACN, and agreed to foster Domino until he was adopted. A volunteer from Collie Rescue of the Carolinas was trolling PetFinder for purebred collies, and came across Domino. Collie Rescue contacted ACN, and agreed to temporarily adopt Domino (under all of ACN's guidelines) while they searched for a home through their organization. So, while not yet in his forever home, Domino is well on his way.



Domino

continued on page 4

The Hand That Feeds You...

ACN's Pet Food Assistance Program provides food to ACN foster pets and temporary assistance to pet owners who cannot feed their pets due to job loss, illness, or temporary financial difficulty.

The Pet Food Assistance Program got a big boost when National Public Radio's WCQS (88.1 FM) selected ACN to be the beneficiary of their FunDrive on April 29. Eileen Bouressa and Sue Barnett participated in the one-hour show, informing the public about ACN's mission and the importance of spaying and neutering pets. Our sponsor, Hills Pet Nutrition Company (Science Diet), agreed to donate pet food equivalent to the dollar amount raised by the station during that hour.

Together, ACN and WCQS beat the previous record of \$10,000, raising \$14,750! Thank you to David Hurand and Michelle Keenan of WCQS, and to Hills Pet Nutrition Company.

More support came from a surprise source: three local girls—Kaitlin Jencks of Enka and Darby Cox and Anzehela Denardis-Bozerman of Asheville—generously arranged for their birthday party guests to bring pet food in lieu of presents. This food was donated to ACN. Thanks, girls!

Pet food donations are always welcome. Currently, kitten food is desperately needed. If you can help, please drop food off at At Play With Sparky on Short McDowell Road in Asheville.

by Kate Rheney

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There are many benefits to adopting a mature dog (for instance, they are most likely housebroken), but they may be at greater risk for separation anxiety than puppies, probably because it is harder for them to accept a change in routine. The anxiety is often worst in the first hour. De-stress your leave-taking by:

- *exercising the dog right after you wake up.*
- *scaling back your attention during the last 15 minutes before you leave.*
- *leaving quickly with a brief goodbye.*

Happy Tails!

continued



Benny, Peaches, Budrow, and Tiffany



Abby

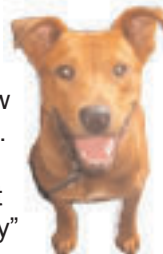
Cat lovers didn't allow **Abby's** babies to linger long without homes. A litter of five, **Lucy, Benny, Tiffany, Peaches, and Budrow** were one-week-old kittens turned in to the shelter, then over to ACN for fostering. At the June adoption fair, four of the kittens went home with new families. Peaches and mom Abby are still available. Come and see them at the next adoption event.



Bruno and Luca with Mom and Dad

Bruno and Luca were rescued dodging traffic on the Smoky Mountain Parkway. The Pitt bull and Catahoula leopard dog were thin and exhausted, but responded well to foster care. After their ordeal, they were extremely attached to each other—sharing a dog bed and food bowl, even though two were available. A wonderful couple saw Bruno on PetFinder and called ACN.

When told of his bond with Luca, the couple agreed that they could not separate them. Now a happy family of four, Mom reports that Bruno brings "a smile and such happiness into our home every day" and Luca loves being brushed "and, of course, bossing Bruno."



Bruno

When **Ginger** was turned over to ACN, she had been badly neglected. Initially, she seemed aggressive and unapproachable, but a survey of her condition explained why. Her toenails had grown so long that they curled under and back into her paws. She had lost large amounts of hair and her skin was red and enflamed. Her eyes were runny; her ears were gooey and full of unwanted hair. She was in pain from all the different kinds of infection her poor body was fighting. The vet and assistants put drops



Ginger

in her eyes, removed the hair from her ears, and scraped her skin. Now no longer combative, but still scared, Ginger cowered in her crate until the patient persistence of a foster volunteer convinced her that at least this human could be trusted. As Ginger healed, the trust grew, and she began to play and smile. After interviewing several interested parties, she picked her forever home. She is now spoiled rotten and much loved.

ACN's Most Wanted

Bailey: Brave Bailey was rescued during a sleet storm; someone had tied him to a tree and left him alone for two weeks. Today, this young Bassett mix is well-mannered, very enthusiastic, and enjoys active play. Can you offer Bailey happier days and a loving home to call his own?



Kip: This handsome fellow has been with ACN for over a year, and would love to find his forever home. Kip is playful and likes to have his belly rubbed. He bonds well with men and will adjust to women, but is not crazy about kids.



These pets are in urgent need of loving homes and hearts.

Pickle: Pickle is a one-year-old Staffordshire Bull Terrier. He's a very sociable guy—he loves people. He also gets along with other dogs, with cats, and with children.



If you are interested in Pickle, Bailey, or Kip, please call 828-258-4820 right away and leave a message or go to www.a-cnet.org.

Pet Cetera *notes and announcements*

The two-day **May Adopt-a-thon** was a huge success, netting 28 ACN dogs and 11 ACN cats their new forever homes. Re-homed pets for the event from all participating groups totaled 47 dogs and 23 cats—70 pets. ACN has an adoption fair the first Saturday of every month. Check our web site for locations.

Foster homes are desperately needed to provide a safe haven for pets rescued by ACN. ACN has no shelter and relies on a network of foster homes to socialize and care for pets in a loving environment until they are adopted. Food and medical care are provided for foster animals by ACN. If you would like to open your heart and home to a dog, puppy, cat, or kitten, please call 258-4820.



Generous donors have already set up 21 **Pet Sponsorships**—creating slots for 21 extra pets to be accepted into the network. A tax-deductible donation of \$75 will pay for the medical and foster care expenses of a needy cat or dog. Without your assistance, we may not be able to say **Yes** to someone like Aqua, right, a happy, healthy, and loving dog who was just two days away from euthanasia. If you would like to sponsor a pet, please fill out the form on the right, call 258-4820, or visit www.a-cnet.org.



Do you have a **Happy Tail** to share about an ACN pet you rescued, fostered, or adopted? E-mail the editor of *Caring* at acn_editor@charter.net.

Would you prefer to receive this newsletter by **e-mail**? Send your request (include your name, mailing address, and e-mail address) to the editor of *Caring* at acn_editor@charter.net.

•a.c.n.f.y.i.

Cats need their claws for playing, climbing, communicating, and self-defense. Instead of declawing your cat for the sake of your furniture, try the following:

- Provide suitable scratching and climbing surfaces. Corrugated cardboard scratch boxes with catnip can provide an incentive to leave the furniture behind.
- Temporarily cover chair and sofa arms with industrial strength plastic sheeting, making those spots less appealing.
- Trim your cat's nails every two to three weeks. With a resistant cat, you may want to wrap her in a towel, bringing out only one paw at a time. (Source: ASPCA)

Sponsor-a-Pet

Fill out the form below, make your check or money order payable to ACN, and mail to ACN, PO Box 1704, Skyland, NC 28776. You will receive a certificate with your animal's picture, name, and story for you to proudly display.

Yes, I will be a hero to a homeless pet. Please open another spot in your foster care network to rescue:

- a cat
- a dog
- any animal in need

Enclosed is my tax-deductible sponsorship of \$75.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

(Optional) Please make this a gift and send the Sponsor-a-Pet certificate to:

Name _____

Address _____

Animal Compassion Network
PO Box 1704
Skyland, North Carolina 28776
828-258-4820 (Hotline)



**Find your new best friend
at our Web site:**

www.a-cnet.org

Thank you to these ACN sponsors ...

Asheville Pet Supply • At Play With Sparky • Best Bites for Pets • *Critter* Magazine • Dog Gone Gorgeous • Earth Fare • A Good Dog's Life • Hills Pet Nutrition Company • Humane Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic • Image Arts, Etc. • Pepsi • Pet Supplies Plus • REACH Animal Hospital • SuperPetz • The Soapy Dog

How Can You Help?

Become a Member: Animal Compassion Network is the largest non-profit, no-kill animal rescue organization in Western North Carolina. ACN finds loving, permanent homes for unwanted cats and dogs, helps to reduce unwanted litters through low- and no-cost spay/neuter programs, promotes animal health by offering low-cost vaccination clinics, and feeds hungry pets through our Pet Food Assistance Program. When you join ACN, your tax-deductible dues go toward food, shelter, medical attention, and vaccinations for our animals, as well as to fund our life-saving and life-improving programs. As a member, you will receive this quarterly newsletter and a membership package that includes discounts and offers from local businesses.

Already a Member?: Volunteers are needed to provide foster care; to staff adoption fairs, vaccination clinics, and fundraising events; to assist with marketing, public education, and community outreach; and to assist with clerical, office, and phone duties. If you have a special talent or service that you would like to offer, please let us know.

Membership dues are tax-deductible. Fill out the form below, make your check or money order payable to ACN, and mail to Animal Compassion Network, PO Box 1704, Skyland, NC 28776. Or, go to www.a-cnet.org to complete this form online.

Join ACN:

Saving Lives Four Paws at a Time

Yes, I would like to join ACN.

Circle type of membership:

Individual: \$15 • Family: \$25
Sponsor: \$50 • Benefactor: \$100
Corporate: \$250 • Patron: \$1,000
Founder: \$2,500

I would also like to volunteer.

Circle areas you are interested in:

Foster care • Adoption events
Vaccination clinics • Fundraising
Marketing/advertising
Public education • Clerical/office work
Phone team • Outreach
Pickup/distribution of donations

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Please correspond with me via e-mail.

Send my quarterly newsletter via email.

Membership dues (see types, left): \$ _____

Additional donation (optional): \$ _____

Total enclosed: \$ _____

Please make this

a gift for _____

in memory of _____

and send an acknowledgement card to:

Name _____

Address _____