

FOREVER FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2009



MARION COUNTY DOG SHELTER, 3550 AUMSVILLE HWY SE, SALEM, OR 97317

SHELTER MANAGER'S UPDATE by Allison Barrows

I'm sure most people have heard of microchipping their pets. With an increase in the number of pets that are microchipped, we are also seeing an increase in confusion among the pet owners.

A microchip is a tiny transponder the size of a grain of uncooked rice. This is a permanent radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip implanted under the dog's skin and read by a chip scanner or wand. (This is sort of like the scanner at the grocery store). Implantation is done with an injector that places the chip under the loose skin over the pet's shoulders. Chips are always implanted in this location so all shelters and veterinarians know where to look. We have seen the chips migrate under the skin, and they can be found low on a pet's shoulder or even closer to the rib cage.

The chip does not actually contain information in it. When a chip is found with a scanner, a number appears on the scanner screen. The finder then must call the chip company to tell them the chip number that was found. The company has a database with owner information linked to the number on the microchip. It is sort of like a Social Security number for your pet.

Lately at the Marion County Dog Shelter, we have seen many problems with the microchip process. When you have a microchip implanted in your pet, you need to register your information with the microchip company. You don't want to leave the registration in the hands of the veterinarian or clinic that has done the implant because it will not be your information. Shelters find it near impossible to locate pet owners if the chip is not registered to the owner. If you are spending the money to microchip your pet be sure to complete the process and register the information. This is a legal form of identification so it is very important that you keep your address and phone information up to date if you move. If the pet changes owners, you must make sure to update the chip company with the new owner information.

All pets should wear identification tags at all times. Tags should include a local contact number, as well as a number for a friend or out-of-town relative if you are visiting. Proper identification tags are your pet's first ticket home if he becomes lost. Microchips provide an important extra level of protection in the event your pet becomes separated from his collar and tags. Providing your pet with both tags and a microchip can help ensure a happy reunion if the unthinkable happens: your beloved pet gets lost.

A microchip is just a form of identification; it does not give us access to your pet's medical records or vaccination history. A microchip does not replace the need for a county license, nor does it mean you will be exempt from paying any fees if your dog does get away from you. A microchip is purely a form of identification intended to reunite pets with their owners as fast as possible. If you choose to microchip, your pet you must register the chip with the microchip company with your information as the owner of the pet.

There are several microchip companies. Different vet clinics may use different microchip companies. At the Marion County Dog Shelter, we scan every dog with two different universal scanners to make sure we find your dog's microchip. For more information on microchipping, please talk to your veterinarian. Below are some websites for microchip information:



Shelter Manager Allison Barrows scans a new arrival



← Microchips aren't much bigger than a grain of rice

Microchip Websites:

<http://www.microchipsystems.com>

<http://public.homeagain.com>

<http://www.24petwatch.com>

VET'S CLINIC by Dr. Terry Gerros, DVM

FLEAS: MYTHS, FACTS, AND POINTS OF INTEREST*

Fleas are a common problem in our area. Besides causing pets itching and allergies, fleas can also transmit tapeworms to dogs and cats. Don't think your pet is free of fleas just because you don't see any. We tend to focus on the adult pest and don't consider the flea eggs, larvae and pupae stages. Treating our pets for fleas requires constant year round application of the flea medicine. Once we stop treating for fleas, we invite the fleas back into our homes and onto our pets.

As scary as it sounds, dogs and cats are permanent hosts for fleas and are necessary for flea propagation. Urban wildlife such as opossums and raccoons are also an important source of fleas, and they, along with dogs and cats, are a source of flea egg contamination in our yards and parks.

Dogs can pick up fleas from dog parks and other common areas, even when there are no other dogs around. Those fleas may have come from eggs laid on other animals 6-8 weeks ago. Shady, protected outdoor areas are ideal spots for flea development. Although you treat your entire yard, except where your dog sleeps, the area you don't treat may be the hot bed and source of re-infestation. What can I do to minimize the problems associated with fleas?



- Be sure to treat ALL of your pets with flea medication.
- Be vigilant in treating your pets and the environment in which they live, year round.
- Don't wait to treat your pet until he or she is completely miserable from flea infestation.
- It can take several weeks for all development stages of fleas to be exhausted, again be vigilant.

What is the best product to use on my pet? There are many products available and all have their good points. I would suggest you discuss this with your veterinarian and be vigilant. As for me, I am a Frontline Plus and Siphotrol guy. Don't ask me to change. *Editing was necessary to fit our limited space—see www.mcdogs.net for the full text.



Felicia (L), Dr. Gerros, Roxann, and Dr. Myers caring for our patients

We're excited to welcome **Dr. Terry Gerros** and **Dr. Sara Myers** as our part-time veterinarians. They both enjoy serving our community through spaying and neutering pets for our shelter and the Humane Society, and providing excellent medical care for our shelter animals. Dr. Gerros graduated from Auburn U. School of Veterinary Medicine in 1981. He's board certified to practice large-animal medicine, and has taught at OSU. He opened Santiam Equine-Cordon Rd. Veterinary clinic in January, 2000, specializing in treatment of horses, dogs, and cats. Santiam Equine offers the latest technology, laboratory, and dental suite, plus a full-service pharmacy and Science Diet foods. Dr. Myers grew up in Scio and has known and worked with Dr. Gerros for many years. She graduated from OSU Vet School in 2007, when she started with the clinic full time. She practices general medicine, dental care, and surgery for dogs and cats, as well as equine dentistry.

SHELTER DOG WINS LOTTERY **ADOPTION "HAPPY-EVER-AFTERS"** *By Jolene Bray*

Hank was brought into the Marion County Dog Shelter after he was found running down Abiqua Road near Scotts Mills. He had abraded paw pads and was thought to be a Yellow Lab / Golden Retriever mix. I went to the shelter to do some reconnaissance for my folks and found him to be energetic, beautiful, and extremely loving. He weighed 53 lbs. and was thought to be a full-grown adult dog. (That proved to be a slight miscalculation.) My parents took an hour to think about it and Hank became theirs the weekend of Father's Day.

Both staff and volunteers are happy when one of our shelter dogs find a forever home, but Hank won the lottery with my parents. They live on acreage at the end of a 7-mile dead-end road on the Umpqua River in Douglas County. Every day, Hank goes fishing, on long walks, or ATV rides with my dad, Carlo. He swims in the river and plays with the cat. He eats turnips out of the garden and apples off the trees, and when he comes home he shares green peppers



Hank (L) & Carlo on the ATV for a ride along the Umpqua River

and popcorn with my mother. When their skittish cat, Boots, decided to try and make friends, Hank laid down and let Boots set the pace, rubbing noses and napping together. Despite a few naughty episodes (escaping out the sun roof of a parked car and eating all the seat belts in my grandmother's car when left alone for a minute), my mom now calls Hank her "boy" and my "brother." Hank also has big heart and spent time with my dying grandmother, laying his head on her mattress while she stroked his head. Hank was the only dog who let Oscar, my son's 8-week-old pug, crawl all over him, chewing his ears. When I ask about Hank, Dad says he loves him more every day. At night, the now-86-lb "puppy" sleeps between my parents, where he and Dad snore in stereo.

Send adoption stories to roslynworcester@hotmail.com

Did you know?... The Shelter gladly accepts donations for our **Emergency Medical Fund**, which supports surgery and other special care for sick and injured dogs. Please ask our staff for more information, and ask your tax advisor if your contribution is deductible.

DOG CONTROL OFFICERS' BEAT

WHEN DOGS GET INTO LIVESTOCK

Dog Control Officer **Karen Hilfiker** has dealt with numerous cases of dogs getting into livestock during her 15 years with Marion County Dog Control. Karen sees the most cases involving dogs chasing or harassing livestock during the winter-spring lambing season, and sheep seem to be particularly vulnerable to such attacks.

Karen would like to remind us that all dogs, large or small, are natural predators capable of chasing and/or attacking livestock (a tiny Yorkshire terrier was a recent accomplice in a fatal llama attack). Dogs will attack farm animals alone or in packs. Farmers can usually distinguish a dog attack from one by a wild animal, such as a coyote, since a coyote will kill only what it needs to eat. In contrast, dogs will kill multitudes of animals for sport, and they typically don't eat their kill. If the livestock owner suspects a coyote is the attacker, they will call a trapper employed by the state to try to catch and relocate the animal. If they believe the attack is dog related, they can call Marion County Dog Control and request an officer to investigate.

Karen warns dog owners that livestock owners may legally kill dogs that threaten or harm their animals. If an officer picks up a dog suspected of chasing or attacking livestock, Dog Control has several options, depending on the circumstances of each case. 1) If the dog owner cannot be found, or agrees to surrender the dog, the County can relocate the dog where it can't be a danger to livestock, or may euthanize the dog. 2) If the owner is found and decides not to surrender the dog, the County will hold a hearing on the alleged incident, which the dog owner may attend. The hearings officer, an attorney retained by Legal Counsel, may terminate the right of ownership, and may order dog to be euthanized. The dog could also be relocated to a rescue (the Yorkie), or may be returned to the owner with restrictions. Owners will be fined a minimum mandatory amount if found responsible for the incident.

Karen strongly advises people who live in the country with exposure to livestock to keep their dogs safely secured on their own property. She emphasizes that one of the reasons we have dog control laws in the first place is that some people have the mistaken notion that fencing isn't needed to contain their dogs if they live outside a city. She points out that dog control laws and dog licensing were originally created for rural settings, and then expanded to the cities. Ignoring the risks of dogs with unrestrained access to livestock can result in sad outcomes for the dogs and their owners.



Officer Karen Hilfiker with Newly (L), Freddie, and Percy off-duty at the beach

WEDDING VOWS BENEFIT SHELTER



On November 12, 2008, our dedicated MCDS volunteer, **Sheila Twist**, and her fiancé, Greg Hart, were married on a beautiful beach on Maui. The week before the wedding, some of Sheila's neighbors and co-volunteers gathered to celebrate her upcoming nuptials. Sheila would only consent to the bridal celebration if we promised the only gifts would be donations to MCDS. We tried to argue the merits of a Pottery Barn or Macy's gift certificate, but Sheila insisted on contributions to benefit the shelter dogs she loves so much. Sheila was delighted to learn that \$180.00 had been collected for the Shelter at her bridal celebration.

We thank Sheila and Greg for their continued support and generosity to MCDS. Sheila continues to be one of the Shelter's most enthusiastic volunteers, and spends many hours at adoption outreaches, walking dogs, and pruning the shelter rose bushes. Sheila and Greg also own "Fetch," a dog sitting business.

We'd like to remind our readers that donations can be made to the MCDS in memory of a loved one, and in honor of any special occasion (birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, holidays, etc.) Donations help fund advertising and special medical needs. We advise anyone making a donation to MCDS to check with their tax advisor regarding tax deductions.

A SPECIAL THANKS. . .

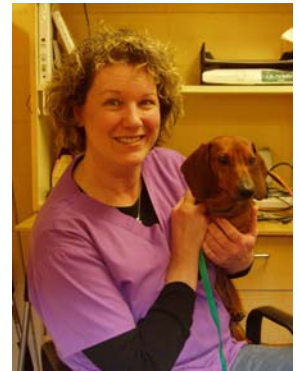
To **SOAPY PAWS** Pet Groomers in Salem for the many expert groomings they've donated to our shelter. Here's Jasper as he came in, and after his visit to Soapy Paws. He was adopted soon after his fantastic makeover. We and Jasper really appreciate their great work and support!



SHELTER STAFF UPDATE

Shelter Technician **Laurie Lea Dickerson** has been with MCDS almost since we opened in October, 2006. Laurie Lea started out as a shelter volunteer, and then was hired as a full-time employee in January, 2007. As a Shelter Technician, Laurie Lea supervises the work crew from the Marion County Jail, helps check in newly-arrived strays in Receiving, conducts behavioral screening tests to determine if dogs are suitable for adoption, helps place dogs with rescues, and provides extensive adoption counseling for prospective adoptive families.

Adoption counseling is Laurie Lea's favorite activity since she enjoys sharing her considerable knowledge about the adoptable dogs, and how to make the transition from a stray to a happy family dog. Laurie Lea has special criteria that she follows to make sure the adoption is a good fit, and not all potential adopters meet the criteria of the dog they may be considering. Some dogs may not be suitable for homes with small children or other pets. Sometimes she's able to listen to the needs of the adoptive family, and has successfully suggested dogs they may not have originally have considered. Occasionally, people will become angry when she denies an adoption, but Laurie Lea's ultimate goal is to have a happy, permanent adoption outcome for the dog and the adoptive family. Laurie Lea's own family includes two grown children, and a Doberman Pinscher, a Dachshund, and a Chihuahua.



Shelter Tech Laurie Lea Dickerson & friend



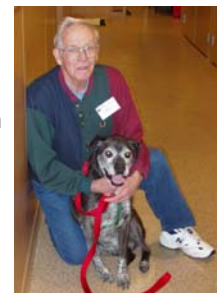
Jolene Bray, Shelter Volunteer Coordinator

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS by Jolene Bray

New Volunteers: Welcome to Mark Flagg, Megan Haner, Josh Hibler, Heather Hoppman, Debra Oliver, Ray Sedano, Megan Thomas, and Larry Watson. Our December orientation was canceled due to the snowstorm, but we have another scheduled for January 24th and already have people signed up to attend. **Shopping Extravaganza:** This event was a huge success for the shelter. We sold 162 tickets (\$2,025) and received \$1,796 in raffle proceeds, for a grand total of \$3,821! Our participation in this event was the brainchild of Debbie West, and thanks to everyone who helped and bought tickets! **Holiday Market & Quilt Raffle:** Volunteers and shelter dogs attended the Holiday Market on December 13th and 14th, which was another big success. Working with Salem Friends of Felines, we sold \$476 in quilt raffle tickets and \$250 in crafts, with each group receiving \$363. Carol Reams was the winner of the gorgeous quilt donated by Debbie West's sister-in-law. We also received \$65.28 in cash donations. Most importantly, our shelter dog, Echo, found her forever home. Thank you everyone! **Outreach Events:** Our outreach calendar is full for the coming months. Our winter schedule has adoption outreaches scheduled for each Saturday at PetSense, PetSmart, Pet Etc., and PETCO. Please contact Debbie West at 503-409-2543 or at dewdropw@aol.com if you can work at an outreach.

Staffing & Volunteer Role Changes: Our management has made some changes to better distribute the work load. I will continue as Volunteer Coordinator, and take on some of the duties previously performed by Debbie West and Lynnette Graves. This frees them up to do the things they love and excel at. Debbie's new title is Outreach Coordinator. All our outreach events will be scheduled and organized by Debbie. This includes recruiting volunteers to participate at our outreaches. She also plans to keep her dog-walking duties, which is really her first love. Lynnette is now our Rescue and Foster Care Coordinator. When we have a dog that is not adoptable, Lynnette works with the shelter manager and staff to find a rescue that will take the dog, giving it a second chance. **Help Wanted:** We still need outreach event and adoption counseling volunteers. These positions have flexible schedules to fit your availability--one outreach every two months, or three hours every other Saturday for adoption counseling, would help us greatly. You can set your schedule and we will work with you. To sign up, please contact Debbie at the number/email above, or me at 503-365-3177 or jbray@co.marion.or.us. Thanks to each of you for all your great work!

Volunteer Spotlight: Meet MCDS volunteer **Duane Doyle**, a 20-year retired technician with a chain of newspapers. Duane started volunteering at MCDS after being recruited by adoption outreach volunteers at an event held at Everything Pawsible in the summer of 2007. Since then, Duane has been one of the shelter's most active volunteers. Duane especially enjoys participating in the adoption outreach events (Pet Sense, Pet Co., Pet Smart), special events (Holiday Market, Marion County Fair, Open Houses), and Saturday Market. Duane enjoys volunteering at the shelter because he likes socializing with all the nice people he meets (staff, volunteers, storeowners, public), and he loves working to find the dogs happy homes. Duane is pleased to report the benefits to him from volunteering at MCDS include much needed weight loss, lowered blood pressure, and many new friends. Duane is married and owns a Sheltie. Thanks Duane for all your time and dedication!!!



Volunteer Duane Doyle & client

Our next licensing amnesty event is Mar. 21, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Shelter