What about the Shy Dogs?

by Lynn Hartsough

Anyone who has ever visited Animal Friends has observed the dogs that are right up at the front of the cage asking, maybe even begging for attention. They can’t wait for someone to get them out and take them for a walk or play fetch with them. They win over potential adopters with their outgoing personalities.

However, these extroverts aren’t the only ones you will see if you visit the adoption kennel.

If you take time to look into each and every kennel you will most likely see a few dogs that are sitting at the back of their kennel looking as if they are hoping that you will keep on walking right past them. So what is the deal with these dogs? Why aren’t they begging for your attention? Could these dogs that appear so shy really make good pets?

There are 2 types of “shy” dogs that come into the shelter. First are the ones that aren’t really shy by nature, but they are just overwhelmed by the shelter environment.

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Who remembers Miss Turnip Green? Well for those of you who don't, or who may need a bit of a refresher, Turnip was Butler County’s #1 dog in 2012. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that this sweet girl has decided to again be the #1 dog in Butler County! While we loved hearing what she has been up to for the past five years (a few new nicknames referencing her plump, yet adorable figure, her fortitude to still be the boss of the house among her feline and canine siblings, and her love of all things edible), Turnip wanted the focus of her interview to be on the hundreds of thousands of homeless animals across the country rather than on herself.

You see, Turnip, a now 9 and a half year old Chihuahua mix, was the first dog Michele DeCresce adopted back in September of 2011. In fact, she was adopted from Animal Friends Humane Society. This wasn't Turnip's first time at Animal Friends though, having been adopted in 2008 and subsequently returned in 2011 due to her adopter moving and not being able to take her with them. Michele instantly fell in love, but during that first month she was worried that Turnip was lonely and needed a friend. In October of 2011 she adopted Bubbie, a now 7 and a half year old Maltipoo, from another local animal shelter, giving Turnip a wonderful friend and starting Michele's journey into animal welfare.

As Michele visited different shelters on her journey to adoption, she was faced with the reality of just how many homeless animals there are in this country. Questions surfaced... “Why are there so many healthy, sweet, loving animals in shelters?” and “Why are adoptable animals being put to sleep?” These questions needed answers and Michele pursued them, doing lots of research and exploration through social media. It was through her pursuit of information that drove her passion into action and her energy into accomplishments for homeless animals.

What Michele found was:

1. The American cultural paradigm is to ‘throw away everything’, and that unfortunately includes pets.
2. Education is critical, emphasizing spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership.
3. Surrender counseling (discussing with a pet owner the alternatives to surrendering their pet) is an invaluable resource for keeping animals out of shelters. Helping pet owners directly helps pets.
4. The only answer, no matter how many people are on the front lines of animal welfare (rescuers, transporters, fosters, volunteers, etc.), is spay/neuter. How fortunate are we to live in a community with two low-cost spay/neuter clinics, UCAN Cincinnati and Ohio Alleycat Resource and Spay/Neuter Clinic (OAR). These make affordable pet sterilization attainable for everyone in the tri-state.

With knowledge and dedication, Michele began networking with other animal rescuers locally and nationwide. She began supporting rescue efforts financially, helping to cover costs associated with medical care and placement. She then began transporting dogs from areas where animal shelters are inundated and euthanasia was imminent to areas where the demand for adoptable animals is greater than the supply. These transports typically involve an overnight stay at Michele’s home, giving the dogs time to stretch their legs and play with Turnip, Bubbie and the others. Turnip takes her role as ‘Official Greeter’ very seriously, making sure all feel welcome and enjoy their stay. Then they’re off again the next morning, most always heading into Canada. Michele’s stretch of the transport has resulted in her driving 4,484 miles in 2016 alone, and she has been transporting for nearly five years! On top of her financial support and transporting, she fosters cats for SNIP, and dogs for Ohio Hound Rescue and Charlie’s Wish out of Westerville. Michele hopes to get more involved on the legal front in the near future, pushing for harsher penalties for animal cruelty and neglect and regulation of animal breeding. She has some help caring for the animals that live in her home, as well as the fosters and visitors she mentors for saving the lives of so many, Michele sees it a bit differently. On the surface, Michele is undoubtedly saving the lives of many, many animals, but it’s the people on the other end that are also being saved. It comes full circle. “We save animals, and animals save us.” She went through a really hard time in her life, and Turnip saved her. That fact, culminated with her experiences and lessons learned, propelled Michele into rescue. When an animal is placed with a family or person, that is the ultimate victory.

We concluded the interview by asking Turnip how it feels to be the #1 dog in Butler County, again! “It feels PAW-some! Five years ago I told readers that my mom thinks that she rescued me but I really rescued her. How true that was, and still continues to be. We are an inseparable team. My mom has dedicated so much of her time and energy to animal welfare, and my hope is that others will read this and feel inspired to help in any way they can.


**Vickie**

We adopted an adorable little cat named Vickie back in October. The staff all seemed to know and love her, so I thought I’d send a little update to you!

Vickie has since been re-named Rogue. She’s quite stealthy and loves to hide and “attack” her two furry brothers, Sherlock and Parker. She absolutely loves the other cats and loves to cuddle with them. She’s super sweet to both of us, and will even follow us around the house and meet us at the door when we get home. And she LOVES getting petted! Her favorite pastime is to run madly through the kitchen/dining room/office and bat at any toy that just happens to be in her path. She’s been such a joy to have and she fits perfectly into our little family. We could not be happier that we chose her/she chose us. Thank you to the wonderful staff who helped us find her!

- Stacy and Eric

**Mazie**

I just wanted to say I can’t thank you enough for allowing me to bring home my sweet Mazie. (You had named her Maxine.) She’s a Saint Bernard. She is such a great dog. We love her dearly and couldn’t imagine life without her! She is such a happy puppy. She literally smiles when I pet her and hugs me every chance she gets! Thank you again. Have a wonderful day!

- Barb

**Cooper**

Cooper has been doing insanely well! We’ve overcome so much already, eating, being afraid of the water dish, we even learned sit! He does well with the cats, and loves playing tag with me in the back yard (he loves eating snow)! Toys are not his thing, but he loves bones and peanut butter! His favorite thing is sleeping. Overall amazing first few days!

- Lauren
The shelter’s largest annual fundraiser is as much a gift for the audience as it is for the animals. Many supporters of AFHS agree that it is the one event they most look forward to. First timers are envied as they discover that it is possible to have too much fun! Held at Receptions in Fairfield, March 18th, the evening flew by between the non-stop entertainment and surprises.

Bob Herzog from Channel 12 News graciously donated his time as the special guest of honor MC. He was lively, personable and funny both on-stage and off.

We were also introduced to 2 other lively guests of honor. One was a 3-legged kitten, Samantha, and the other was a 9 week old puppy named Thunder. Thunder was born at the shelter, explained Executive Director Meg Stephenson. The momma dog gave birth and surprisingly enough, he had no siblings! Meg shared their stories, how sweet Samantha had to undergo a surgical amputation of her hind leg at the clinic. One can imagine the attention these two drew! If only there were a way to bring the rest of the animals to the Bark’n’Purr; each one of them has a story and needs a forever home.

All of the funds raised from the event go towards the care of these wonderful animals until they are adopted. For that reason alone, Animal Friends.

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Humane Society is entirely grateful for the yearly sell-outs and generous bids in the live and silent auctions.

This year’s auctioneer, Scott Arnold, generated enormous excitement as did the items. It was hard to resist a week stay in Costa Rica or a Behind the Scenes tour for five people at the Cincinnati Zoo! Other festivities included live music by Thunder-bay Band, multiple raffles and the increasingly popular game of Heads or Tails.

The Fundraising Committee was called to the stage and gratefully acknowledged by Director Stephenson; were it not for their hard work there would be no Bark’n’Purr Ball. Great appreciation was expressed to the staff, board members, volunteers and all those within the community who help support Animal Friends.

The day after the event Samantha was adopted and 3 days later, Thunder went to his forever home! What better ending? Please join us next year on St. Patrick’s Day!
Carol Hanks............. Kathy Payton
Melvin Hingsbergen

.......................... Deborah Schneider
Rosie Beale .. Robert & Constance Baesel
Amy English ............ Robert Hammond
Elizabeth Matthews

.......................... Sisters of the Transfiguration
Robbie Gilreath......... Kathy Aker
Mildred Habenicht . JoAnn, Tom, Betty,
Bill & Brenda Habenicht
Will Cardine ............ Brown-Dawson-Flick
Funeral Home
Lil Bit .................. Stephanie Miller
Molly .................... Charles Kleine
Honey Pumpkin ....... Dawn Knochennmuss
Ray Risch ............... Joyce Risch
Betty Totten ............ Kay Wilmot
Beloved Lab, Dixie

........................ Michael and Chris Kinser
Shelby and Minnie

........................ Jack and Susan Grove
Lemmy ................. Andrea Stoller
Indie ............... Deb Buring, Debby Garvin,
Sara & Dean Porter
Bentley .............. Barbara Bishop
Shano .............. Rhonda Bohanon
Tucker Deutsch ...... Heather Larnaca
Shatzi ............... Ernestine Winkler
Lilly .................. Don Bear
Happy a cat ........ Donna Stephens
Peppy, Huey, Cody .... Michael Hamann
Mary .................. Joan Crane
Orange tabby, Abraham ... June Cahu
Dear dogs, Alfy & Zoroo

........................ George & Terry Davis
Mindy ............ Ron and Naomi Carr
Black lab, Duke .... Nancy Meeker
Baxter Espinosa.. Marjorie Yocum
Rhiana, “RhiRhi” Blewins .... Lisa Stelhin
Rick Gebing .... Paula Mueller, Mark Schneider,
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Amend,
Jay & Karen Hepp, Daniel Zieger, John
Hoff, Thomas & Claire Cahill
Marjorie Nutt . Carole Fritzsche, Carole
Mckee, Mrs. Marie Goermeter,
Bebe Hales, Mr. Stuart Hales, Mrs.
Maude Hales, Dr. L. Stanton Hales,
Mrs. Kay Hales, the staff of
Underwriting Department at
Cincinnati Insurance Co.
Cathy Janeaway .... William Kidd,
Mr. & Mrs. Ben Browning, Gayle
Debond, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Gold,
Sue Venters, Jeff &
Denetta Reidel, Esther Adams
Robert Rodriguez .. Whitney Rodriguez,
Linda Ringstrom, Judith Winters,
Karen Knowles
Storm ............... Glenn Julian

IN HONOR OF

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Gelwicks

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Gelwicks

Frances Hutcherson

“Granddog” Carly . Sue Sawyer

Tigger and Matti . Derek Conklin

Betty Rhodes .......... Sharon Lawson

Amy Weaver’s birthday . Phyllis Kadle

Philip Poppel’s birthday . Clifford

Joey Day for act of kindness

Debbie Dillingham

Mary Copper’s birthday

Nancy Woodrey

Brent Park’s birthday . Nancy Simkow

Dave & Patricia Hecher

Mary Cooper’s birthday . Sandra Locher

Nancy Bender’s birthday

Shelley Poynter

Joseph & Barb Gelwick’s wedding

Kevin Feldman

Nancy Bender .

Bentley .

Nicola and Tom Lucases

Finnegan, cat with cancer

Abby McMans

Pam Hollingshead’s nursing career

Emily Evans

Oxford Lane Library Staff

Betty & Glenn Julian

Teddi Cole for Christmas

Carol & Larry Parsons

Mr. & Mrs. Jay Dyer for Christmas

Carol & Larry Parsons

Linda Schofield for Christmas

Carol & Larry Parsons

Kathy Munafio for Christmas

Joan Haydock

Eliana Cohen .. Daniel and Bari Marks
Cowper .. Dr. Marc & Barbara Alexander
Cats she feeds .. Kay Clark

Molly and Marvin .. Pati Cruse

Ron Morgan for Christmas

Kathy Morgan

Teagan Hickey for Christmas . Eva Carr

Pam & Dennis Deahl.

Cornelia Browne

Dolly & Jim Thomas . Cornelia Browne

Belle Shaver .............. Susan Kemp

Lois Hunshaw 90th Birthday

Joan Crane

Carol Willer Monson for Christmas

Tracy Monson

The Gaston Family ... Earl McMahon

Snowball. .............. Karen Neal

Koda ................. Pamela Farrish

Winters/Kennedy Wedding

Risa Salat-Kolm

Donald & Julia Frey for Christmas

Anthony Frey

Donna Paolercio’s birthday

Scott Ford & her team at
Cornerstone Wealth Mgmt Group

Tina Proud ............ Terri Proud

Ian Moore for Christmas . Anonymous

Carolyn Kramer

Reva and Dick Dempster

Lisa and Dave Creelman

Mary Sue Wentzel

Dave & Addy Rosenthal for

stained-glass artwork . Jeffrey Eddy

Molly Milliser ............ Gracie

Watson Bedel . Greg and Chris Bedel

Marty Wintemeyer . Chris Ventrola

Ann and Ron Fialko .. Alice Shaaf

Chuck McKinley . Heath St Stephens

Roger Dennis . Anonymous

Paula Hutton . Anonymous

Anonymous

Paula .

Austin McDonough

Geri and Russ . Anonymous

Nancy Ayers .

Christopher Ayers

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Barton . Terry &

Hannah Lehmann

Sally Kocher birthday . Phyllis Kadle

Daniel Paojlercio birthday . Cornerstone

Wealth Management Group

Zoey .

Rosemary Deborde

Jillian Howell .

Daniel Malatesta

Peanut and Buckeye . Jeffrey Thullen

Gretchen. ............ Alice Sizemore

Elizabeth Rechenberg

byrday

Brenda Rechenberg

Miss Paisley Davis .

Nancy Francesk

Leaves a Living Legacy

HOW TO LEAVE A LIVING LEGACY: You can name Animal Friends Humane
Society as a beneficiary in your will, IRA, life insurance policy, or retirement
plan. You can create a Charitable Lead Trust or Charitable Remainder Trust.
Include AFHS in your estate planning or donate a percentage of your as
sets. Encourage pet-loving family members and friends to consider these
giving options. AFHS is a 501(c)(3) donation based organization.

1) Canned Cat & Kitten Food
2) Powdered Laundry Detergent
3) Liquid Laundry Detergent
4) Cardboard Trays
5) Postage Stamps
6) Copy Paper
7) Bleach
8) Gas Cards for PetMobile

...and goodies for our staff!

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Shy Dogs ...Continued from page 1

These dogs could have been surrendered by their owner and may have only known one family and one home their entire lives, so you can imagine how overwhelming it is to find themselves in a loud kennel with many different people trying to feed them, clean their kennel or take them for a walk. Often all it takes for these dogs to come around is time and positive interaction from the shelter staff and volunteers. These dogs may spend a few extra days out of public view while people work with them, before being moved to the adoption floor. Once in adoption they often warm up quickly and sometimes even become like the extroverted, at the front of their kennel, type of dog.

The other type of “shy” dog is the dog that is truly shy by nature. Maybe this is due to their breed, or lack of socialization as a puppy, or maybe they are just genetically shy. These dogs want to trust, but it is really tough for them to do so. Their fears can get the best of them. Staff and volunteers will work with these dogs behind the scenes, helping them to trust those that are taking care of them. This can take days or even weeks in some cases. They usually pick a few people that they trust, and with those people they are very affectionate and get very excited when they see their trusted friends come to get them out. These dogs may never be viewable on the adoption floor, as the many strangers and new routines can quickly overwhelm them. Rather, the internet and social media are tools used to let the public know about these shy adoptable dogs, and staff will bring them out to visit with potential adopters who understand their insecurities and will help them adjust in a new home.

So will these shy dogs make good pets? The answer is yes; if you are willing to be patient with them and give them time to adjust to your home. If you expect to get them home and have them instantly accept everyone and every animal in your home right away, you may be disappointed. The shy dog that I adopted stayed out in the backyard for 1½ hours the first night as I tried my best to get him to trust me enough to come into the house. Once these shy dogs trust you, then you can start to socialize them in the community and with different people that come into your home. They may never be the life of the party, but they can make fantastic dogs. That shy dog that I adopted, that I couldn’t get inside, proved to be one of the best family dogs we ever owned. He loved to play with toys, was fantastic with my young children, and taught the ropes to foster dogs and other dogs we adopted. All it took was being patient and providing him experiences that helped him come a little bit more out of his shell every day. If you are willing to take a chance on a shy dog, chances are you will be rewarded with an amazingly loyal pet.