

L PUPPY Love

The most sophisticated and sober adults among us revert to childlike silliness and bouts of baby talk when it comes to our dogs. We cuddle and coo them and play doggy games. We call them on the phone and leave voice mails like “Mommy will be home soon! I love you my little angel face!” We buy them treats and toys. We even let them watch Animal Planet on TV when we go out so that they’ll be entertained.

It is a scientific fact that pets are soothing and calming. They lower our blood pressure and relax us. They are the steadfast loyal companions that make a house a home and the anchors of family life. No wonder we cherish their warm, fuzzy lives and take the heartfelt honor and responsibility of them so seriously. They are simply furry gifts from God.

For our English springer spaniel “cover dog,” life is certainly good. This highly-coveted breed won best in show in 2007 at the prestigious Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. For the ultimate doggiephiles among us, the life of pedigreed show dogs is something to behold. Yes, they are highly trained, exceptionally well fed and perfectly groomed, which, from the dogs’ perspective, is a life full of playtime! For the owners and handlers, it is hard work. But for the proud pooches with lengthy regal names like “Sir Arthur Spaniel of Devonshire Court,” it is halcyon days of attention, affection, treats and loads of fun.

For our darling featured Pomeranian friend, “Mendie

Foxwell Malone,” life is a lavish whirlwind of travel and luxury. Mendie’s parents, attorney Tom and Debbie Malone take her everywhere, from their island retreat in the Caribbean to the best hotel suites in the premier cities of the world on both vacations and work-related jaunts. Mendie was kind enough to postpone her trip to Mardi Gras this year by one day, so she could pose for Southern Seasons. Debbie explains, “Mendie has never missed a Mardi Gras in New Orleans in her entire life!”

In this issue, we salute the wonderful work of a number of great folks and foundations who are rescuing, adopting and protecting the animals that enrich our lives. The Atlanta Humane Society headlines our champions of puppy love with its record-breaking success in adoptions over the past several months. Ginny Millner has spearheaded “A New Leash on Life,” a foundation to raise awareness of the crucial need to spay and neuter our pets. Ginny’s comrade, David York, has taken charge of the Fulton County Animal Shelter. The entire city is behind these great humanitarians in their tail-wagging crusade for our four-legged friends.



MENDIE FOXWELL MALONE

BY SUSAN GORDY

Animal Advocacy

Atlanta Humane Society Proudly Leads the Pack

Southerners, and in this case Atlantans in particular, have long had a homegrown and heartfelt affection for animals. There's hardly a best seller or cinema with a Southern setting that doesn't offer at least a glimpse of "Old Yellow."

Yes, here you surely find special devotion to four-legged and feathered friends. For many it means sharing their lives with a pet. Just spot the pampered pooches on Peachtree! Simply everyone in the surrounds has met Uga. Incidentally, the second of the famous Georgia mascots was a gift to the University from Atlanta resident C. L. Fain.

Perhaps with less glamorous heritage many pets have run into Atlantans' homes and hearts by way of the Atlanta Humane Society. For 135 years the AHS has been standing guard over the strays and accidental litters. Tenacious terriers, privileged pinchers, "101 Dalmations" and a full count of Benjis, that is the not so breed specific canines and felines, have called the Howell Mill Road shelter home. Note that the shelter's first location was Marietta Street.

Atlanta Humane Society President Carl Leveridge projects this year the AHS will adopt over 5,000 animals into loving homes. He makes clear that there is no time limit, no space issues with the animals. "We love them all, but only want to be a temporary residence until the right match comes along." Temporary it is. Leveridge, along with the knowledgeable Humane Society staff and a host of dedicated volunteers, celebrated a record December with 540 animals scurrying into new homes in the Atlanta community. On the coldest January weekend, 47 animals found permanent residences. They were part of the 446 adoptions made during the month.

In fact, during 2008 Leveridge projects that the Atlanta Humane Society will provide loving care to 20,000 animals in its shelter, foster care program and clinic setting. "We will medically treat animals in need, spay or neuter all animals prior to adoption." The Atlanta Humane Society has the only full service veterinary clinic in Georgia providing services to both public and shelter animals.

In this effort the AHS is most grateful to "New Leash On Life" for generously providing the funding for a new spay/neuter clinic. The clinic provides these services at no cost or low cost.

The AHS is further working to decrease unwanted animal population in Atlanta by teaming with 16 other area shelters in the newly formed AWAG (Animal Welfare Association of Georgia).

A new "bone" soon to be served up to the shelter is close involvement with Fulton County Animal Control, slated to come under the leadership of David York, a well-known animal welfare advocate. York won the Fulton contract in January and will begin operating the agency in July. The AHS expects to assist York with medical care and adoptions for the Fulton County Animal Control population.

The Atlanta Humane Society, the oldest private charitable organization in Atlanta, is still making history. Leveridge reminds, "It requires a lot of money to save the lives of precious, helpless animals and give medical care to those whose families can't afford it. We work every day to save as many lives of animals as we can."



AHS PRESIDENT CARL LEVERIDGE HAS SEEN A RECORD NUMBER OF ADOPTIONS IN RECENT MONTHS.



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New Leash on Life is the heartfelt mission of founder Ginny Millner

Dogs Need Angels, Too!



One person can make a difference, and Ginny Millner is proof positive. Through her work with New Leash on Life, an animal advocacy group in Atlanta, Ginny is helping to change some dismal statistics, including the fact that over 80,000 unwanted animals were euthanized in metro Atlanta alone last year. "These numbers are staggering, and we know we need to create a public awareness about the importance of spaying and neutering pets," said Ginny, who, along with her husband Guy Millner, has hosted the group's past three annual fundraisers at their Tuxedo Road home. Thanks to the support of fellow animal lovers and such companies as The Waffle House, New Leash on Life has been able to assist Lifeline Animal Project, Fulton County Animal Services, Atlanta Humane Society, Small Dog Humane Society, Furrkids and Atlanta Pet Rescue. newleashonlifega.org.

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