



The Sheltie Spin

Newsletter of Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue
"Giving Shelties a New Leash on Life"

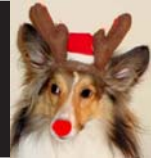
Volume 9

Winter 2010

Issue 2



Happy Holidays from NVSR and all our Shelties!



Celebrating Senior Shelties

Many Shelties that come to NVSR are seniors in need of a forever home, just like the youngsters and "middle-agers". We consider a Sheltie "senior" at about age 9 or older, depending on physical condition. We've had very energetic, sprightly seniors at age 12, 13 or more, as well as dogs that are "old" by age 8 or 9 or even younger. All these dogs have years of life and love left in their hearts for just the right person.

Many adopters will not consider a senior Sheltie. They often say, "It would be too hard on me to lose a dog after only a couple of years." Well, that's about us as humans, and yes, it is hard to lose a dog that means a lot to you. But, taking a lesson from our dear canine friends, "each day is precious and to be celebrated." Seniors know this very well – they are our best teachers.

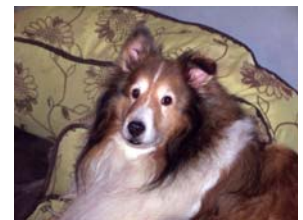
For this holiday issue of *The Sheltie Spin*, we put together stories by our adopters who found it in their hearts to adopt a senior and have never regretted it. We hope you enjoy reading about all these wonderful Shelties and their adopters. Pebbles even wrote her own story - without opposing thumbs! Won't you consider adopting one of our senior Shelties?

TJ

By Suzanne Poorker

Four years ago I was blessed to foster Tee Jay, an older Sheltie, almost 11 at the time, who had lost his happy home because the owners decided to buy a new house and he was not a part of their plan. For days he was lethargic and depressed, lying on the sofa, with his back to our family. When he finally managed to trust us just a little bit, he would sit there with the saddest eyes that you have ever seen.

Well, neutering did wonders for Tee Jay, and gradually he became feisty and playful. He latched on to Christopher, then 17, following him everywhere. He even slept in bed with Chris, curled around his feet like a fuzzy blanket. As though he wanted to "earn his keep," Tee Jay decided to provide assistance with Sophie, another rescue Sheltie who had a hard life before being rescued by NVSR. Whenever we let Sophie out, she runs repeatedly around a tree. When Tee Jay decides it is time for her to come in, he runs after her, "herding" her toward the door. Sometimes she comes in right away; or she keeps him going around in circles. Now it's a game! It's a joy to see my "little guy" out there running around, like he is in his prime, fur blowing in the wind.



Tee Jay is a bit deaf now and doesn't run around quite as energetically, but he is still "The Man"! Some dogs just tug at your heart more than others. As you can guess, Tee Jay, renamed TJ, found his forever home with our family.

To those who are hesitant about adopting an older Sheltie, I always tell them that each Sheltie has his or her own personality. Like people, some are "born old" and some act younger than their years, remaining forever young. Many older Shelties still have plenty of playfulness, life and love in them. Even young dogs sometimes develop unexpected diseases or conditions. Welcoming an older Sheltie into your home does not always mean you will be saddled with medical bills. In fact, TJ has not had any medical problems whatsoever. What it could mean



though, is that not only will you give an older Sheltie joy, but he will enrich your life in ways not thought possible. As I watch TJ bounding around the yard, talking to the squirrels and ordering them out of our yard, I just can't help but smile. TJ really adopted us, we did not adopt him. He has given so much more to us than we could ever give to him. Older dogs ROCK!!

Why I Would Adopt a Senior Sheltie Again

By Geri Piazza

I adopted Cody from NVSR six months after my two 13-year-old beagles died. I think when I adopted a 12-year-old dog it was with the hope that he would live longer than they had. However, my eyes were wide open, and I knew that I had no guarantee that he would live long enough to celebrate his 13th birthday.

I pledged to Cody that my home would be his forever home, whether his remaining time on Earth was one day, one month, one year, or longer.... I'm very, very happy to report that we are approaching our four-year anniversary of his adoption! I continue to make the pledge to him to take care of him forever, no matter how many days or months or years he has remaining. My vet says that Cody is the healthiest 16-year-old dog she has ever known, so I hope we will be celebrating his 17th birthday next summer.

Everyone knows that medium-sized dogs have a longer life expectancy than that of larger breeds. Even for a Sheltie, reaching the age of 16 is something to celebrate. The chart in my vet's office indicates that my 30-pound dog's age is equivalent to that of an 88-year-old man.

When was the last time you saw an 88-year-old man catching a tennis ball in his mouth while wagging his tail passionately? Cody is frisky and really enjoys his toys! (He has far more stuffed animals and balls than any other dog I know.)



Two years after I adopted Cody, I found a small, gentle companion for him. Natasha also is a senior dog, but no one knows her precise age. Last year they both had unexpected surgeries, and they took turns nursing one another back to health. Today they are the best of friends and I sometimes catch them spooning in the bed or kissing.

Will I adopt another senior in the future? Yes, it's very likely that I will adopt other old dogs, especially another fabulous Shetland Sheepdog. Cody is intelligent, obedient, patient, playful, cuddly, calm, quiet, brave,



friendly - and completely devoted to me. When we take our daily walks, people tell me how handsome he is and how young he looks. I am very proud of him, and I am so happy that

I found him four years ago! I'm glad that I didn't let his age prevent me from welcoming him into my home because he has enriched my life.

My Reasons to adopt a senior:

-Potentially little or no training: Cody was delivered to me knowing lots of commands and eager to play by the rules. After having failed at training three exuberant puppies, it was a blessing for me to have a mature dog that someone else had trained.

-More relaxed exercise requirements: An older dog tends to be mellow and sleep more – reducing the risk of destruction and mayhem when you're not around. When you go for a walk, you might have a chance to stop and chat with your neighbors – and admire your handsome Sheltie.

A Message Directly From "Pebbles"

By Linnea Sandstrom

Mom and Dad have a new granddaughter, Makenna, who is almost one year old this month. Here's a picture of her with me. She is a lot of fun, and we visit her often in Richmond as Mom and Dad are thinking about moving to that area to be closer to her and to downsize, also.

I'm doing pretty good for a "senior" and really enjoy my walks with my Dad. We see all kinds of critters: deer, fox, groundhog, and lots of squirrels that I like to bark at. If we move to the Richmond area, I may get to ride in a golf cart with my Dad in a senior citizen community. What's a "senior citizen" – is that me??



Bella

By Bob and Lisa Schlansker

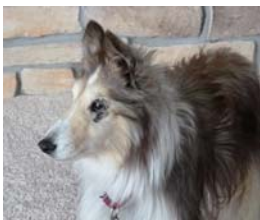
The first senior dog we "adopted" was by accident. A friend told us about someone with 10 year old Sheltie that she didn't want because she had a baby. I called



her, went by to meet Lacey and brought her home with me. She was the most delightful and well behaved dog that I could ever imagine. Our other Shelties accepted her immediately. Two of them were 10 as well! Lacey had a large tumor around her heart and was with us for only a year. Then I learned about NVSR...

Next came 9 year old Sabre. We were supposed to provide foster care for him until he could be placed in a forever home. Little did we know when we went to pick him up he would be 7 pounds, bald, and very fragile. It took a long time to nurse him back to a 20 lb. fuzz ball that played all day long. Needless to say, he had already found his forever home, and he spent several wonderful years with us. We adopted 2 more NVSR dogs in between. We did not know their age and didn't really care, but they required the usual training because they had never been indoors.

Then we decided to foster 9 year old Bella. She came from a loving family that had gone through a divorce. Bella was used to her Dad being at home and was not a happy girl! We had decided before we picked her up that we needed another older dog to join our family. From the moment she walked in the door, she let us know what she knew. She was fully trained, well mannered and very playful. She fell into our routine within a short time and never looked back. She chose our 16 year old daughter as "her person" and slept with her every night.



Adopting a senior dog is such a gift. Bella is now 12. Her hearing is fading, she sleeps a little bit more but never walks away from a game of "fetch".

We all need someone to care for us as we age. We don't want to be changed. We want to be accepted for who we are. It is so much fun to discover who an older dog is. Even if their background is unknown, they may know how to sit, stay, fetch or shake. Give it a try and see what surprises you may discover.

Our Boy Chris

By Libby Reifsnyder

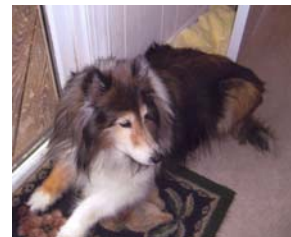
We adopted Chris from NVSR when he was 12 years old and from the first moment we met him, it was love at

first sight. We were not looking for an older Sheltie at all; in fact we originally had our hearts set on a much younger dog. Then - we saw a photo of Chris on the website and we just knew ... this was the dog for us!

Chris went everywhere with us - on walks, rides in the car, vacations, and he and his brother John, also a rescue Sheltie, were inseparable. Chris's fur was wonderful - just like spun cotton, so soft that I loved to nuzzle his neck.

Chris was with us for three years, living to the ripe old age of 16 1/2 before he finally went to Rainbow Bridge. He was truly a joy to our entire family. He and John were like our grandkids, and we made sure we spoiled them accordingly.

Some people are hesitant to adopt a senior dog, but



would I do it again? You bet I would! While I miss Chris desperately - the way his eyes would meet mine, the little ways we had of communicating when his hearing went (we even had a

type of sign language all our own), I would not have missed it or traded the experience of knowing and loving this beautiful, caring, wonderful Sheltie, who was truly my friend, for anything in the world. The love Chris gave us was infinite, and we were able to make a difference in his life too.

When the time comes for us to adopt again, I know I will come to NVSR and adopt another senior. They have so much love to give, and I will have another opportunity to make a difference.

Jazzy Girl

By Joy Sheppard

Jasmine came into my life when her original owner of 8 years moved, and decided not to take her with them. Lucky for me, they turned her in to NVSR. At her checkup, Jasmine was diagnosed with Cushings Disease, but because her symptoms were in the early stages, the vet decided not to put her on any medications. She remained in foster care for almost



a year and then was adopted but promptly returned because the adopter could not cope with the Cushings.



In March 2007, I joined the ranks of NVSR volunteers and, because I had recently put my American Eskimo of 16 1/2 years to sleep, I planned only on fostering. I had always wanted a Sheltie, but didn't think my heart was ready to love another dog so soon.

After the NVSR home visit was completed, the volunteer mentioned a foster mom who was taking care of a beautiful senior Sheltie girl. New volunteering, I thought



she meant I'd get to foster this dog so I made arrangements to go see her. I met Jasmine probably within a week of joining and spent 4 hours admiring

Jasmine and talking with her foster provider. Jasmine was an absolutely beautiful girl who looked exactly like what I wanted in a Sheltie! Before I knew it, I had signed papers to adopt gorgeous Jasmine and brought her home with me the same day.

It took Jazzy a little while to warm up to me, and in the beginning and I had my doubts as to whether we would ever make a connection. Her age wasn't really ever an issue nor was her disease. I knew from the beginning that my time with her would be shorter than with my previous furbaby, but with the kind of hours I work, I also didn't have the time to spend training a younger dog.

As an older dog, though, Jaz didn't need the big fenced yard, and she slept most of the day while I was at work. She was my walking buddy, and around the neighborhood she was a hit with everyone, young and old, but especially the children. Even little ones who were afraid of other dogs loved my sweet and gentle Jasmine. I had hoped to get her certified to be a therapy dog — she did receive her Good Citizen Award — but I found out she was deaf.

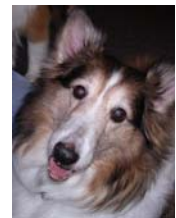
Now at 13 1/2, Jaz has been with me for almost 4 years and these days, her eyesight is not so good on our long walks, but that's okay. There are so many positive things I have experienced from having Jasmine in my life that I just can't imagine what it would have been like without her. I couldn't be happier with my decision to adopt a senior dog, and if/when I find the right one, I would do it again in a heartbeat.

Adopting a Senior Dog Brings You Satisfaction and Love beyond Expectation

By Darcy Tannehill

[Darcy Tannehill is a very special NVSR adopter. Though she lives in the Pittsburgh area, she has adopted many of our special needs Shelties - dogs that others might deem "unadoptable" and would have spent the rest of their lives in foster care, unable to find a forever home. Here is Darcy's story about how they found each other and the enrichment they both received.]

There has always been at least one dog in my home, usually puppies or younger dogs that needed a home. In 2000, our poodle and our husky each died at 14, six months apart and we were left without a dog. My husband had always wanted a Sheltie and so we got Snuggles. She was 7 months old and from a breeder. After a few weeks, we found that she needed company so a call to the breeder brought us five year old Zephyr—a retired show dog. Several years later, the local shelter had two Shelties turned into them. One was 12 and, although older, she was healthy and thus adopted by someone else. But, 10 year old Perky was in terrible physical condition—tumor, hernia, heart dysfunction, and infected skin from flea bites—an oozy mess. The shelter was not a no-kill shelter, and they were certain no one would adopt Perky. There was no way I could allow her to be put down, so my husband and I ran to the shelter and adopted her. She had to have



Perky

several surgeries and needed heart medication as well as daily bathing to heal her infected skin, but, she thrived with us. She was so sweet and loving, and she needed us more than any other dog ever had. Three dogs were fine, and Perky lived for more than two years before her heart gave out in December of 2005. While we cried as we had to put her down, we knew that we had done the right thing. We gave love and care to a dog that most others would not want. And, so began our mission to adopt older or ill shelties.

We found NVSR on the web and saw a number of older dogs that needed homes. We filled out the application telling our story of Perky and our desire for an older or sick dog. Martha phoned us to say they had three dogs that were a fit. In March 2006, we drove from Pittsburgh to Virginia and found Bailey (9), Prudy (13), and Hannah



(14) waiting to meet us. One look at those three dogs and I decided that I had to give them all a home. So, our two dogs became five dogs. Hannah and Prudy were healthy except for being older and Bailey had joint and thyroid issues. What a joy it was to add these three girls to our two!



clockwise from top:
Hannah, Zephye,
Prudy, Bailey, Snuggles

We had Hannah for a little more than a year when she grew too frail to continue—she passed away in June of 2007. Again, though we had her just a short time, we loved her very deeply. And, since she was old when we got her, we found that protecting her and taking care of her was a completely loving experience, just like with Perky.

After five dogs, four did not seem like many and so we contacted NVSR about Cassidy. You see, I watch the NVSR website every day and celebrate when I see a dog has been adopted. We now had room for another, and I could not resist the sweet face of Cassidy. Cassidy was 10 and had bladder cancer and her life expectancy was quite short. But, I knew I had to have that dog! While she was safe in the NVSR foster system, she deserved to have a permanent home and a family who wanted her to join them, even if only for a few months. My husband insisted that if we were to lose Cassidy soon, we needed to adopt two at once.

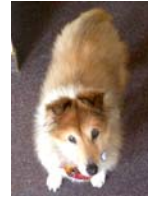
So, in September of 2008, we again drove to Virginia and picked up that dear Cassidy and the beautiful Billie who was nine and actually healthy. We now had six dogs—Prudy was the oldest at 15, then Zephye (13), Bailey (11), and Snuggles the baby at 9 just a few months younger than Billie.

We thought that we would lose Cassidy first but one never knows what life brings. In January 2009, my husband died suddenly of a heart attack, and I was left with my six girls to keep me going and give me company. Cassidy did pass away in June 2009 after nine months in my home, Prudy in October 2009 at almost 16 years of age, and Zephye in



Billie and Cassidy in the center; Prudy, Zephye, Bailey, Snuggles around them

April of 2010 at the age of 15. Though, as always, my heart broke and I cried for days over each one of them, I knew that taking care of them and providing them with a loving and safe home for whatever time I could was one of the best things I have ever done in my life.



Princess



Miss Bea

In September 2010, I drove to Virginia, this time without my wonderful dog-loving husband, to adopt Princess who is 14 and Miss B who is 10. I knew the moment I saw them on the website that they were meant for me and I for them.

You see, though I have a great career: it is the caring of these pups that gives me the most satisfaction at this point in my life. My daughter is grown and married, so these girls have become like children. They love me, keep me company, and need me to take care of them. While a puppy or younger dog is a wonderful addition to a family, adopting an older dog that few people want provides you with a much greater satisfaction. And, if you lead a busy life, they are the perfect addition to a home. They have a little less energy and are content to keep you company and lie by your feet in the evening or just cuddle with you at night. They don't get into things like a younger dog or require the constant attention—they are just more settled. And, though you may not have them for a long time, we truly never know how long we will have anything in our lives. You love them deeply and completely for however long you have them, just like the people in your life.

I know that Princess and Miss B won't be my last NVSR dogs. I know that one day I will again grieve the loss of one of my girls. And, I will look at the NVSR website and see another dog that needs me to love her and bring her to my home for whatever time she has left. And, once again, I will drive to Virginia and bring another sweet, furry baby home with me.



Featuring ... our current senior Shelties, three of them ready for a loving home, one on hold, and two of them in our hospice program until they leave us. Check our website for more information about our adoptable seniors.



Maxwell

A big boy with a gorgeous coat and a love for long walks, Maxwell is one of those “take anywhere” dogs. He is friendly to everyone and interested in new places and people. He’s nearly deaf, but he’s very good at watching where you are - he doesn’t want to miss anything. Maxwell is between 8 and 10 years old, in perfect health and looking for a new home.

Shelley Hope

She is a sweet girl with simple needs: leisurely walks, sitting at your feet, and all the belly rubs you can spare. She always greets you in the morning and evening with a big smile, a wagging tail and, of course, that infamous Sheltie conversation. Shelley Hope is nearly 13 and in good health. She’d love a new home where she can relax for the rest of her life.



Topper.

Although he’s 12, Topper is a very enthusiastic jumper. He loves everybody and everything, and his outlook on life is so optimistic. He had seizures before coming to NVSR, but these are controlled with inexpensive medication. We’re glad to announce that Topper has an adoption pending. He selected a great new home!

Digby

At age 10, Digby has a wonderful, playful attitude toward life. We discovered that he has heartworms, a parasite that is life-threatening if not treated soon enough. He has begun his treatment in foster care, and we expect that, with his optimistic outlook, he’ll come through it just fine. In the meantime, he loves his toy animals and his big fenced foster home yard.

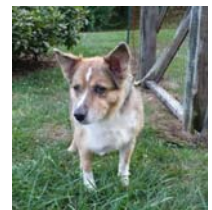


Cody

In our hospice program after coming to NVSR at age 17, Cody has numerous physical complaints due to his old age, but his attitude is still very “up”. Between naps, he loves to poke around the house and yard, looking for something interesting. We don’t know how much longer he’ll be with us, and every day is precious.

Rosie

Also in our hospice program at age 14, Rosie has a large tumor on her chest which makes it difficult for her to walk normally. Although not a “real Sheltie”, she came to us needing special love and care, and we could not turn her down. Rosie’s time is limited, but she enjoys every day with a delightful, life-affirming attitude.



Your donations to NVSR help us maintain the good health of our seniors, even though many of them are not adopted, and our adoption fee is much reduced for our older dogs. Please help us help these wonderful older dogs.



Holiday Music for the Shelties

Jessica Frost-Ballas, a long-time NVSR volunteer and supporter AND adopter(!), will play her harp at Black Shutter Antique Center (www.blackshutterantiques.com) in Leesburg VA from 2-4 on Saturday afternoon, December 18. Jessica, accompanied by her adopted Sheltie boys, Merlin (8) and Archimedes (7), will play holiday favorites for shoppers and to collect donations for NVSR. Her music is beautiful, and her CDs (see below) will be for sale at the shop. If you haven't heard Jessica play, you're in for a real treat! If you identify yourself as an NVSR adopter or volunteer, you can enter a drawing at the store to win a \$25 gift certificate.



Jessica also has a wonderful new CD of holiday harp music, and part of the proceeds goes to NVSR! CDs are \$15.00/each and include shipping within the contiguous United States. (10% discount for orders of 4 CDs or more.) She is taking orders at jessicaafrost@gmail.com or by phone at 540-550-7955. Thank you Jessica for your generosity and assistance with everything you do for our Shelties!

The Robertsons celebrate a Sheltie Christmas. How many Shelties can you count?



GAM Printers of Sterling, Virginia, where Cady, Tigger and Spirit's family work, is pleased to support Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue by designing, printing & mailing their newsletter.

Sheltie Shop

Available from NVSR through Ebay
Our Seller ID is NVSR 99 or search "Sheltie"

Back by popular demand – and supplies are limited - 2011 NVSR Sheltie Calendars! Get a full year of beautiful Shelties posing on our 15 month calendar. Each month of this great



calendar has a several photos of rescued Shelties. The back page commemorates our beloved Shelties that went to the Rainbow Bridge and wait there for us.

For only \$18 plus shipping, you get a calendar full of Shelties AND that warm feeling of helping Shelties in need. What could be better? Packing and shipping is \$1.50 each for the first 3 calendars ordered. Please contact shop@nvsr.org to order and for shipping discounts on larger orders.

What better way to honor your Sheltie than with an Incolay Sheltie Angel Christmas Ornament in your choice of Onyx, Rose, Garnet, Blue, Sardonyx, or Green. Each collectible Ornament comes with gift box and pouch. All proceeds go towards rescuing, rehabilitating and finding forever homes for the many Shelties that we are asked to help. \$25 each plus \$5.00 shipping and handling.



AND, we have Tervis tumblers with a lovely Sheltie on them! (\$20, which includes the lid AND shipping costs).

Don't forget our large assortment of Sheltie shirts, hats, scarves, and totes also on our website at www.nvsr.org, or just write to shop@nvsr.org.

Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue Directors and Coordinators

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**Thanks also to the many volunteers who help transport,
foster, and take time to help the Shelties
who are brought to or found by NVSR.**

Newsletter submissions to sheltiespin@nvsr.org

Web site www.nvsr.org • shelties@nvsr.org

Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue

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Graphic from www.kennelcity.com



Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue

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Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue, Inc., is a nonprofit, 501(c)3, tax-exempt corporation. A financial statement is available upon request from the Commonwealth of Virginia Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218-1163.

NVSR MISSION STATEMENT

NVSR will take in any Sheltie in need regardless of age, except those with histories of repeated, unprovoked biting. Dogs accepted into rescue will be evaluated in foster homes, receive veterinary care and necessary resocialization, and ultimately be placed in homes where they will be loved, protected, and well cared for. Also, we support efforts to reduce pet overpopulation; all of our Shelties will be spayed or neutered prior to adoption or, if not yet at a safe age to be neutered, placed on a spay/neuter contract at the time of adoption. NVSR is a 501(c)3 organization.