



Furry Friends

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A gathering of furry — and human — friends: Louie, a Wire Hair Fox Terrier; Caspar, a West Highland Terrier; Biscuit, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel; and Fin, a Border Terrier. The humans, sisters Angela Corio and Diana Cunningham, are holding the menagerie of dogs at October's Blessing of the Animals, Feast of St. Francis near his statue at St. Raphael's Catholic Church in Rockville.

Animal Services and MCPAW
Working To Make a Difference

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With Animals

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PET ALMANAC

'We Just Have To Be Dedicated and Focused'

County Animal Services and MCPAW work on making a difference in the area.

BY KARA COLEMAN
THE ALMANAC

Allan Cohen has a lofty goal. Cohen, chairman of Montgomery County Partners for Animals Wellbeing (MCPAW), said that his organization would ultimately like to provide free spay and neuter services to every pet in Montgomery County.

"Right now we're in the process of tackling the feral cat population," Cohen said. "The number of feral cats is huge. This is a big problem all over, but especially in Montgomery County."

MCPAW was created as a partner with the county to promote and supplement funding for the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center, which opened March 1. While the center is funded primarily by the county, MCPAW works to help meet the shelter's other financial needs and provide animal education and resources to the community.

The center is the only open admission shelter in Montgomery County now, according to center representative Katherine Zenzano. That means the shelter accepts any type of animal that is dropped off at the shelter or that officers get called out to pick up.

"We have dogs and cats, but we also have ferrets, chickens, and even sugar gilders," Zenzano said.

The Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center took over the contract that was previously held by the Montgomery County Humane Society and is operated by the county Department of Police, Ani-



JEFFREY SAUERS/COMMERCIALPHOTO.COM

The Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center opened its new facility in March.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

During an adoption event earlier this month, Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center and MCPAW placed 16 dogs in homes.



JEFFREY SAUERS/COMMERCIALPHOTO.COM

The Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center's facilities include a barn for farm animals.

mal Services Division. The group has animal control officers on call 24 hours a day. Zenzano said that the officers respond to wildlife calls on a daily basis, and that they sometimes send animals to the Second Chance Wildlife Reserve in Gaithersburg.

The facility contains plenty of room for animals though.

"We're one big facility, so we kind of break it down in two ways," Zenzano said. "We have animal services on the left side of the building, and the adoption center on the right side. In the back, we have a barn, and a walking trail that volunteers can use for walking dogs."

Zenzano said that because the shelter is so new, an exact number of current volunteers is unavailable, but Cohen said that there are upwards of 300 people who have filled out volunteer application forms. There is currently a hold on new volunteer applications until all the received applications have been reviewed and volunteers have been trained.

"It's great to see them come in and want

to work with the animals," Cohen said.

Volunteers at the facility work in all different areas, including working at the store that MCPAW operates at the facility, walking dogs, playing with cats, photographing the animals, assisting trainers, greeting visitors to the center, and helping with the adoption process.

Zenzano said that earlier this month, the shelter placed 16 dogs with families during an adoption event.

MCPAW offers an Explorer Post and Exploring Club, a division of the Boy Scouts of America, to boys and girls who are interested in veterinary science and working with animals. The Explorer Club is for students in grades six through eight, and the Explorer Post is for students between the age of 14 and 20. The program runs throughout the school year, according to Cohen, and participants can receive community service hours for participating.

MCPAW is also working on finalizing plans for Purple Care, a program to help place senior animals in homes and to help

senior citizens adopt and care for animals.

But the number one focus for the group right now is spaying and neutering.

"From what I understand, a minimum of 70 percent of kittens in the shelter right now are from feral colonies," said Ellie Truman, who is spearheading MCPAW's efforts to spay and neuter feral cats. "The problem is solvable, but it takes money, resources, and people dedicated to it."

Truman said that a trap-neuter-release program is prohibited under Montgomery County regulations, so MCPAW is working with Bethesda-based Alley Cat Allies to come up with a solution. Truman said the group has selected a feral colony to spay and neuter as part of a pilot program, and the cats in that colony will be placed in foster homes until they are ready to be adopted out to families.

"We've proceeded cautiously, because we want to be sure we're in the perimeters," Truman said. "We can make a real difference. We just have to be dedicated and focused."

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From left: Jill Phillips with Patagonian cavy, Joe Moore with Tinkerbell, Tyler Phillips with two chickens, Grant Phillips with dwarf horse, Raquel Phillips with baby bunny, Chelsea Phillips with Carmela the goat, John Phillips with Buffy the teacup piggy and Marlena with chicken; River the labradoodle, Sneakers the Aussie whippet mix.

Fun and Education with Animals

Squeals on Wheels: A family-run business.

BY ABBY ALDRIDGE
THE ALMANAC

For the last eight years,™ Squeals on Wheels, a mobile miniature petting zoo and pony rides business, has brought joy and animal education to people of all ages. Started by Jill and John Phillips, with the help of their five children, Squeals on Wheels has become a Washington D.C. Metro Area award-winning business. Through its many events, such as birthday parties, festivals and child education programs, people are able to interact with animals ranging from chickens and bunnies to exotic animals such as the Patagonian cavy — a relatively large rodent indigenous to Argentina — or the very rare miniature llama.

But to the Phillips, the zoo is more than a business, it is a part of the family. All five of the Phillips children have been impacted by Squeals on Wheels. Tyler Phillips and Chelsea Phillips have followed in their parent's footsteps by starting their own animal education businesses.

After working on the administrative side of Squeals on Wheels, Tyler Phillips started Rent-A-Coop with girlfriend Diana Samata in April of 2012. It provides a hands-on educational experience for people of all ages interested in taking care of their own chickens or interested in watching chicks hatch through the "Hatch Your Own Chicks" program. When asked how he came up with Rent-A-Coop, Phillips said, "It was my mom's idea. I was making chicken coops and selling them on Craigslist when we realized it could be turned into a business." Currently Phillips keeps his chickens and coops on his parents' land, but is look-

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- lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way.
2. not appreciated or understood.
3. no longer owned or known



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Remodeling with Pets in Mind

Keep pets safe during construction projects created for man's best friend.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Home remodeling projects often come after considerable planning and expense. One factor that can be overlooked is the family pet. While the end result of a remodel is often a new, updated or enlarged living space, the road to that improvement is often filled with dust, debris and inconvenience — which can be upsetting and even dangerous to dogs and cats.

Homeowners should be aware of the added traffic that comes with a construction project. “The biggest risk during a construction project could be that the pet could escape because workers might not be aware of doors or gates or windows being left open,” said Carol Petit, hospital manager at VCA Old Town Animal Hospital in Alexandria.

“There are many more cars and trucks going back and forth,” said Josh Baker, founder and co-chairman, BOWA in McLean. “The driveway should be off limits to pets.”

Actually, the entire construction zone should be off limits. “Pets, especially dogs, will eat anything,” said Petit. “There are construction materials. They could eat leftover food from construction workers, which could be toxic or contribute to weight issues, depending on the pet.”



PHOTO BY MORGAN HOWARTH

Architect George R. Bott of Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc. was able to create a nook for the dog's food and water bowls, as well as storage space for his supplies and accessories in an Arlington home.

Additionally, “dust can affect eyes and lungs just as it can in humans,” said Petit. “Home improvement project materials like

paint and glue can be toxic. It can be the fumes, or if the dog or cat licks paint, it could be lethal.”

“If any pet owners feel that their pet is acting oddly or like they might have consumed something that they shouldn't have, the best solution is to take them to the vet to make sure that everything is OK,” she said.

Petit added that pets could become fearful because strangers are in the home. That fright, she said, could either increase separation anxiety or trigger a pet's basic protection instinct, leading him to become aggressive.

“There are a lot of things to consider,” said Baker. “It's not unlike thinking about small children.”

AND WHILE THINKING about pets, some builders incorporate features into a home project designed specifically for a pet.

One set of clients “wanted to be able to cordon off the tiled area off the side entrance, to contain the dog when he comes in wet or dirty,” said Danielle Frye of Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc. in Cabin John, Md., referring to a recent kitchen and mudroom renovation. “It also provides a dedicated place where he can eat without damaging the new hardwood floors in the kitchen.”

Architect George R. Bott was able to create a nook for the dog's food and water



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOWA

During a construction project, homeowners should keep pets away from the construction site.

bowls, as well as storage space for his supplies and accessories. In fact, say builders, pet feeding stations can incorporate modern conveniences and high-end materials.

“We can add custom cabinetry,” said Baker. “We can bring in a waterline to supply instead of having to refill the water bowl in the kitchen. There is also potential automation where the bowl is kept full.”

Mudrooms and garages can be designed to include pet bathing spaces as well. “In terms of showers, they're custom built with a hand held sprayer so you can control the temperature,” said Baker. “We can also choose a height so you can reach it without hurting your back while you're bathing the dog.”

Fun and Education with Animals

FROM PAGE 3

ing for his own farm as his business continues to expand. Currently his business has reached as far as Hartford, Conn. When asked about possible plans for the future Phillips says he is looking into expanding further, down to the south and hopefully over to California.

Chelsea Phillips landed back in the family business unexpectedly. After studying political science at the University of Texas, Phillips did not get the idea to start her own mobile petting zoo until her parents came down to her home in Austin for a visit. Phillips said her parents received numerous calls from Austin locals who had seen the Squeals on Wheels advertisement on their car. From this, her business “Tiny Tails to You” was created.

“My parents have definitely helped a lot with the business. It wouldn't have been a concept without them. My mom's expertise helped a lot, definitely with questions about the animals and their health,” she said.

The business grew so much that Phillips' husband Joe Moore quit his job as an elementary school teacher to help out. “I was pretty exciting to be self employed. Running my own business with my wife sounded appealing,” he said.

Daughter Marlena Phillips currently works at the Duke Medical Center as a reg-

istered nurse, but still works petting zoos and helps take care of the animals when she is in town. Son Grant Phillips lives in Chevy Chase and works for Royal Bank of Canada. On the weekends he helps out with the zoos by working events. Youngest daughter Raquel Phillips is a rising senior at University of Maryland, College Park and has worked events for Squeals on Wheels throughout her college experience. As a public health major, working with the animals is a hobby rather than a career path, but she said, “I would be in a lot of debt if it were not for this petting zoo. Paying for my rent and my school was very dependent on petting zoo money.” Working at Squeals on Wheels provided all of the Phillips children with a way to pay for college.

Whether Squeals on Wheels has been a career path or a hobby, each member of the Phillips family has benefited in their own way from the family business.

Raquel Phillips said, “It was nice when my parents went from having a 9-5 to having their own schedules. They were always around and available to talk. Instead of having to wait for dinnertime to tell them something, I could tell them right away.”

John Phillips recalls that his favorite memory in running Squeals on Wheels for the past 8 years was the types of animals he shared his master bathroom with: a baby wild turkey, baby geese and now a baby



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Jill Phillips bottle feeding their new one month old Patagonian cavy.

Patagonian cavy.

For more information on how to become involved in Tyler Phillip's “Rent-A-Coop” visit <http://www.rentacoop.com>. For more information on Chelsea Phillip's “Tiny Tails to You” in Austin, Texas visit www.tinytailstoyou.com. To set up events or parties with Squeals on Wheels, visit <http://www.squealsonwheels.us>.



Louie is a 2-year-old Wire Fox Terrier and recently has shown his special talent riding a bike. Louie lives in Potomac in a neighborhood filled with his best furry friends. He also likes to “borrow” youngsters' tricycles.

— ANGELA CORIO, POTOMAC



Meghan Little, son Brayden (4) and daughter Avery (2) of Potomac are socializing a 3-week-old Golden Retriever puppy.

— LINDA DAVIES, POTOMAC