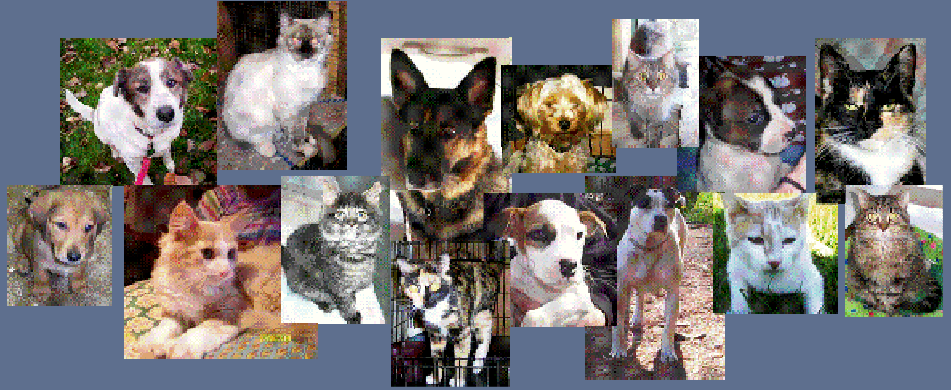




Where Happy Endings Begin!



## Thank you!

**H**appy Holidays to everyone! We just wanted to include a quick note to say we're so sorry we haven't been in touch through newsletters until now. It's been such a busy year with our PetsMart Charities grant for spay/neuter of cats in Belding and Ionia zip codes for \$10. Then with the help of Bissell Pet Foundation we created the "Family Plan" to fix feline moms and their litters for free. Along the way we helped lots of pit bulls with \$20 spay/neuter surgery. Since we're always short-handed and with the busier than usual schedule, we just couldn't get a newsletter out. But we did mail and email a lot of vouchers to help people get their pets fixed, so that's a pretty good excuse, right?

And of course we never, ever stop finding homes for abandoned pets. We're including a few fur faces here for your viewing pleasure. You just might spot your own four-footed friend in the bunch.

So please forgive our lack of communication and have a great holiday season. Eat, laugh and hug your fur kids!



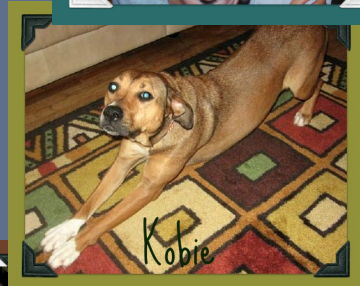
Damien and his Boy



Evan, Billy Bumbler & Sarah



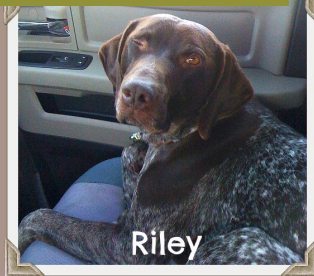
Pixie



Kobie



Paige



Riley



Olive



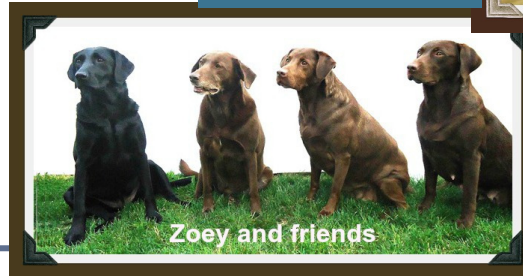
Christopher



Bugzy Boy & Emma Lou



Molly and Max with their mom



Zoey and friends

Holiday 2012 Newsletter

## “Family Plan” is a HUGE success!

All during the spring and summer, we see signs and ads for “free kittens.” It’s always fun to get a new kitten, but we know from past experience that many of these kittens are not and will not be spayed or neutered, and what started as a litter from one mom turns into litters from many in just a few short months; or the entire litter is delivered to a local animal shelter where they may or may not survive due to competition for space or illness common in large populations.

With the help of funding from Bissell Pet Foundation, Safe Haven created “The Family Plan.” Our thinking was that if we could get people to keep the kittens until



they weighed at least two pounds (about two months old in most cases) when they could be spayed or neutered, we would pay to fix the mom and all the kittens for free. That would greatly increase the chances of finding homes for the kittens and stop the reproduction cycle all those kittens created. How many people would want this help? How many would keep the kittens until they were big enough for surgery? If we could get just 15-20 people to take us up on the offer, we calculated that we could get about 100 moms and kittens fixed, and we based our funding request on that assumption. Boy, did we underestimate the response! During the first week after the program was announced in local press, we had supplied vouchers for over 100 moms and kittens! To date we’re looking at totals over 300. Our vet’s spay/neuter clinic was booked so full that many of these moms became pregnant again before they could be fixed. And yes, moms can become pregnant again

while nursing a litter of kittens. This was news to many people, but we see it happen all the time.

We feel as enlightened with this project as Newton discovering gravity. We’ve discovered that the most common time people don’t spay/neuter their cats is when a litter is involved. Setting aside money to have one cat fixed is one thing, but multiply that cost by four, five or six! Then it’s a daunting cost. This has to be a huge factor in the cat overpopulation problem so knowing that, we hope to continue this type of plan whenever we can secure funding. Kittens, kittens, kittens! We believe fixing them is the key to reducing the high numbers of cats being dumped at shelters or just being dumped, period. We will continue to seek funding for this large but very satisfying task.



## Holiday Happenings

If you missed our Annual Wreath Sale, take a peek at these photos by Gayle Thompson for a preview and be sure to order a wreath next year. Tom Snyder built the great display rack to showcase the wreaths at the recent Mrs. Claus Craft Bazaar. The hits for the day were wreaths, of course, by Anee Trechter at Mathisen Tree Farms, catnip beds and toys made by Eileen Burr, and homemade dog treats made by Mary Ellen Kemp. This is how Safe Haven succeeds . . . through hard work of volunteers and generous supporters. Thank you all!



## Doggie dental work: cosmetic only?

If we told you rescued dogs required dental work after being pulled from local shelters, you might think we’re going overboard regarding the expense because dental work is mostly cosmetic, right? It’s really not that important from a medical standpoint, right? Wrong!

Here are a couple of things you might not know about these small breed dogs:

1. Small dogs’ teeth are more compacted than large dogs, and they accumulate tartar and thus decay more readily. In addition, many people who own small breed dogs treat them differently than if they were large dogs. They are often fed canned food and “human” food, and the dogs very quickly learn to be picky eaters...and that just continues the cycle. A few years ago a vet told me that almost every Chihuahua that she sees starts having teeth

*continued on next page*





What did you like best about this issue? What topics would you like to see in an upcoming issue? Put your comments below.

Here are some ways you can help Safe Haven animals:

- Donate: My check made payable to Safe Haven Humane Society is enclosed for
  - \$20     \$30     \$50     \$100     Other \_\_\_\_\_
  - (you can also donate online at [www.shhspets.com](http://www.shhspets.com))
- Foster. Please send me information about fostering cats or dogs
- Become a member of Safe Haven: \$10 individual or \$18 family
- Other:
  - Help transport animals
  - Hold or help with fundraiser
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_



Thank you for helping us

cut out and mail this form to:  
Safe Haven Humane Society  
P.O. Box 55  
Ionia, MI 48846

Your Comments. Thank you. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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pulled by the time they're middle aged because of the way they're fed.

2. Many of these small breed dogs have been used for breeding purposes. Because of the demand for small breed pups, the moms are sometimes bred far more often than is good for them physically, but after all, it's all about money, right? The interest in the

moms is often limited to how many pups they can produce and how fast. Spending money on making sure mom stays healthy isn't a priority. Consequently, ignoring the nutrition and health of the mom

while forcing her to constantly have puppies eventually takes a huge toll on her teeth as the puppies drain valuable calcium and other nutrients from her. When the mom is no longer valuable for breeding because of age or health, they are frequently dumped at the shelter, with a mouth full of abscesses and infection and just plain rotten teeth. It's painful, interferes with their ability to eat and can have serious health consequenc-



es if oral bacteria migrates to the heart or liver as it's often prone to do.

So you see, these dogs are either used up for someone else's

benefit or they're the unwitting victims of an owner treating them like spoiled children. Teeth extractions for these dogs can be expensive but wouldn't it be sad if they couldn't be rescued just because of their teeth? These dogs are friendly, lovable and just want a forever home. Helping to save these small dogs with dental problems is just one of the many ways we use your donations so we hope you'll remember these faces when you have an extra \$5 or \$10 you can spare.



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"Where Happy Endings Begin!"

If you would prefer not to receive future copies of our newsletter, please call or email us and let us know.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## Six years and 70 pounds later

Tank was one of a litter of four-month-old pups taken in by Safe Haven in 2005. His foster "parents" found him to be fun and lovable and oh so busy.

On a lucky day when Tank was at the vet for a routine checkup, he and his foster "mom" met a very nice lady named Sandy, who just happened to be looking for a "fur kid" to adopt, and Tank did his very best to win her over. Of course, she couldn't resist his puppy



She says "he's the gentlest, sweetest dog—although he thinks he's a person."

Thank you, Sandy, for giving Tank such a great life and for sharing with us.

## HOW TO CATCH A CAT

1. Bring an empty box
2. Wait...



charms, and a wonderful match was made when she decided to take him home.

Sandy has kept in touch over the years and a few months ago, she sent us this photo of Tank, which shows this alumnus six years and 70 pounds later. Sandy tells us he's now "85 pounds of muscle and love."