



# The Sheltie Spin

Newsletter of Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue  
 “Giving Shelties a New Leash on Life”  
 Summer 2020

## Having Fun While We “Sheltie-in-Place”

The last few months have been challenging for everyone while we move through the pandemic, but your Sheltie is probably enjoying having you around a lot more. We wondered if you have enough to keep your Buddy or Lassie busy. Here are some interesting suggestions from our volunteers ...



**Get a snuffle mat.** Mary Mounts is still tying fleece strips to plastic mats so that Shelties can dig around in there to find treats or kibble. Here’s Mary’s Patches having fun. Try one! \$25 including shipping. Write to [shop@nvsr.org](mailto:shop@nvsr.org).

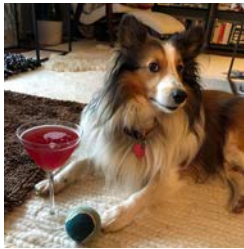
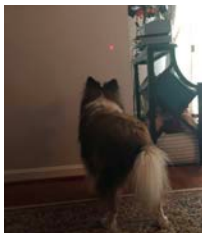
**Learn about training and dog care with webinars and online training.** Don’t waste this time! YourDogsFriend.org offers free information webinars on behavior and nutrition as well as online training classes. Take a look at Kikopup on YouTube and watch with your Sheltie by your side. If you prefer reading, look at the wide range of books about canines on Dogwise.com. This is also a good time to practice your dog photography skills and submit the best ones to our 2021 calendar!



**Mary Ellen Jones taught her Savvy tricks:** “This is a chance to teach some neat tricks. Just be patient and break them down into steps. Reward each step. To close the bedroom door, I started with the ‘touch it’ command using a post-it note, then put the post-it note on the ‘almost closed’ door, pushing with my own hand after she touched it until we heard the click before giving the reward. Gradually we started with the door opened wider until she had to go



around behind it to start it moving. Now she knows the task is not complete unless she hears the latch click—even if the door appears closed, she pushes until it clicks. We also play the ‘seek’ game.”



**Robin Bennett found a fun toy:** “I found my old cat laser toy, and I swear Ginger is part cat. She hurries to do her ‘business’ so she can run home to play chase. AND I enjoy a cocktail every now and then.”

**Keavy submitted her own report:** “In the Knotts/ Mason household, our world has also changed radically. I used to have just Mom all day with my siblings, Killian and Oscar. Now I have to share her with Dad and Shalim. Truth be told, not so bad... We stay sane playing games. I am pretty savvy at the table and win most of the time. Between games, I get a lot of attention from Shalim—I am clearly his favorite. Hope you are all safe and healthy. Lick lick ... Keavy”

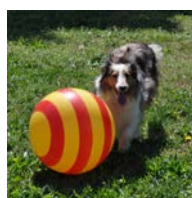


**Janie Robertson got a Fitbit surprise:** “I had put off grooming our eight Shelties to remove winter coats. Gracie, with the heaviest undercoat, drew the short straw. I worked on her for an hour+ then gave us a break. (I had enough fur to build another dog.) After lunch, she gave me the stink eye when she saw me reorganizing the tools of torture. We continued until





we both cried ‘uncle.’ Later, I thought I had spent most of the day sitting while torturing my dog so my Fitbit daily steps total would be pitiful. It read 7,250 steps! Huh?? So, I moved my arm back and forth pretending I was grooming, and the numbers went up. I know that was cheating but I am keeping those steps. Just think what my cumulative step total will be by the time I finish grooming Gracie and the other seven. You go, girl!!!” To which Mary Ellen added: “I don’t need a Fitbit. I can tell which days I haven’t gotten out of bed by reading Savvy’s FitBARK points.”



### Set up indoor and/or outdoor agility obstacles.

Just a few obstacles can be lots of fun—jumps, a “tunnel” made of a big cardboard box, a ladder laid on the ground, chairs to weave through. The video on GreaterGood.org has some ideas, and there are lots more on YouTube. Don’t expect your dog to do more than she can, especially if she’s young or older. You can jump over the hurdles, too, to keep yourself in shape! Another idea is to teach your Sheltie to push a big ball around.

**Those are just a few of our ideas.** We’d like to hear about YOUR Sheltie-in-place ideas and experiences for our next Sheltie Spin. Write to: [sheltiespin@nvsr.org](mailto:sheltiespin@nvsr.org).

We hope all our Sheltie friends will stay safe and healthy as we move on through this pandemic.



**GAM Printers of Sterling, Virginia, and the Grant Family dedicate the printing of the Sheltie Spin in memory of their Shelties and Honorary Shelties**

**Cody, Cookie, D.O.G., Dutchess, Duncan, Heidi, Hunny, Lynus, Rocky, Sassy, Spirit and Tigger  
and in honor of Cady, Joe, Rose and Ace.**

*In May, NVSR learned that Jason Arnold, a young man who loved Shelties, had died and his family requested that donations be sent to NVSR. Our members were touched at the news. We are honored to be the recipient of the donations which will be used to provide veterinary care to our foster dogs and to support NVSR to continue to help Shelties in need. We extend our warmest condolences to Jason’s family.*



**Jason Scott Arnold**

**May 14, 1983 -  
May 11, 2020**

There was never a time in Jason’s life when there wasn’t a Sheltie in his life. He “inherited” his first Sheltie, Oliver, when he was born. He and “Ah-wa” grew up together. Their interaction was normal toddler-dog playing, both enjoying every second of it. Of course, that progressed to fetch and tug-o-war. By the time we got “Cody boy” it was game-on for playing Frisbee, chase and all the things you do with active dogs like Shelties.

When Jason went off to James Madison University, Cody always rode with him and his dad to and from school, usually on his lap. The Sheltie bond solidified. When Mischa (“Mischa Princess Girl”) and Milo (“Bubba”) arrived a month apart, the mutual affection grew x2. Jason had a “Dog Whisperer” aura, a calming effect when things got intense, and always wanted to play the dogs’ favorite game, Frisbee. They attached themselves to him like no other. He loved them so. He had canvas pictures of Mischa and Milo on the walls of his apartment to keep them close. For the most part, none of the things he did with all the dogs in his life stands out as different from the norm, but one thing is for sure ... he loved his Shelties and they loved him.

Jason was loved by everyone who knew him. He had a wicked sense of humor that made family and friends laugh easily. He was a loving and devoted son and loved his family more than anything else. Jason is survived by his large family and a gazillion friends.

Note: Mischa died last year. Milo is 12.5 years old now.







## Is Your Perfect Lawn Shortening Your Sheltie's Life?

By Lisa Fox



Cancer is the leading cause of natural death in dogs. Oncologist Dr. Beth Overley of the Cancer Center at Cares, states that about 50% of dogs will be affected by cancer at some point in their lives and 50% of dogs over age 10 die of cancer. Several factors may be important contributors to canine cancers, including the recent explosion in dog obesity. Many scientists also ask: could the pervasive use of lawn chemicals be an important factor canine cancer?

Unfortunately, the answer may be yes. A 2012 study published in *Environmental Research* found that exposure to certain lawn care products, such as the nearly ubiquitous herbicide 2,4-D, increases by 70% dogs' chances of developing Canine Malignant Lymphoma (CML).

A 2013 study in *Science of the Total Environment* found that "exposure to herbicide-treated lawns has been associated with significantly higher bladder cancer risk in dogs." Certain breeds of dogs (terriers, beagles, sheepdogs) are at greater risk, but 2, 4-D or other synthetic lawn chemicals like glyphosate (the active ingredient in RoundUp) aren't good for dogs of any breed. A study currently underway at NC State Veterinary School (in which several NVSR dogs participated) is designed to test rigorously the association between lawn chemicals and bladder cancer in Shelties. Results will be available in late 2020.

What can you do to protect your Sheltie from these chemicals? Experts recommend:

1. Consider saying goodbye to your professional lawn care company. These companies may dramatically increase the hazards of lawn chemicals, both because they use more dangerous chemicals and because they apply much larger quantities than homeowners themselves would do. ("Pet friendly"?)
2. Get rid of your lawn altogether and replace it with regionally adapted native plants that don't need fertilizers or pesticides to thrive. Mowed frequently, even weeds and clover provide a nice green carpet, but mow in the evening after the bees have departed.
3. If you must have a beautiful grass lawn, consider spreading a thin layer of organic compost across it, which will nourish it better than commercial fertilizers.
4. An application of lime can neutralize the acidic quality of many Virginia soils and do wonders for the looks of your lawn without using lawn chemicals.
5. If you absolutely can't tolerate weeds and aren't willing to pull them out, try an all-natural alternative like BurnOut, which uses food-grade vinegar and clove oil instead of glyphosate.
6. Finally, keep your dog off neighbors' lawns and grass strips unless you know that they are not treated. If you can't prevent your dog from walking on treated grass, wash dog's paws when you get home.

Hazardous lawn chemicals are not poisoning just dogs. Insects and bird populations that depend on them are also declining precipitously. The decline in pollinator bee populations threatens our food supply. This problem is often blamed on farmers. But, according to the EPA, homeowners typically use 10 times the amount of pesticide and fertilizers per acre on their lawns as farmers do on crops. Help the environment and protect your dog's health—review use of lawn chemicals and carefully research any you choose to use.





## Bernard and His Next Door Friends

by *Cindy Foreso*



Introducing children to a dog is not always easy, particularly if they have already been knocked down and scared by one. This was the situation with my new neighbors. The kids, ages 3 and 5, had a bad experience and were terrified of all dogs, especially when it barked! Imagine the problem when they bought a house next door to a very barky Sheltie!

Meet Bernard, an NVSR Sheltie I adopted five years ago. He has been an ambassador for the group ever since. Bernard is your typical Sheltie—beautiful and good-natured, loves to play, and especially barking! He has never met a stranger, only friends—dog friends (no cat friends—one scratched his nose!), grown up friends, and his favorites, kid friends. He is gentle, sweet and loving.

When Bernard realized that there were kids next door, he assumed they would love him as my granddaughters do. Upon meeting them, he barked and showed them his tricks. But he did not get the reaction he expected ... they freaked out!

Each day, when Bernard and I left for our walk, he saw the kids, barked and wagged his tail, but they ran into their house. I told their parents that given time, the kids would see that Bernard was a sweetie and perhaps they could get over their fear. So, every evening for months, as Bernard and I headed out on our walk, the parents approached and petted Bernard. He sat, shook hands, and rolled over but the kids wouldn't come out.

One day they saw my granddaughters walking with Bernard and me, and the little boy, Dominic, asked me to hold tight to Bernard so he could pet him. I did and Dominic touched Bernard quickly then ran behind his dad. Eventually, he got closer and closer and spent more time petting. After about a year (!) the little girl, Anya, moved closer and closer to Bernard until she too began to pet him. No pressure, no pushing the kids to pet the dog. We let them come to Bernard at their own pace.

Dominc and Anya are now Bernard's buddies! They sometimes come on walks with us and often ring my doorbell to ask if "Bernard can play" with them. They love throwing the ball in my back yard and Bernard barks and barks and brings them the ball, dropping it at their feet. The kids don't even mind when Bernard licks them (he is a kisser!). Just goes to show you that fear of dogs can be overcome with time and patience. Bernard ... NVSR ambassador!







## Sadie and Lacey

by Alicia Leslie



My Sheltie, Sadie, was adopted from NVSR in 2011. She is now 10 years old and our daughter, Lacey, is 20 months old. We also have a black Lab mix, Brody, who is four. We are excited to share tips on how we have fostered the relationship between Lacey and the dogs.

The best tip to a home with a Sheltie and child is to let the dog and child interact at their own pace. In preparation for bringing our new daughter home, we limited Sadie's time on the furniture with us and instead provided new spaces that were hers and just as comfortable. Then when we had our daughter with us on the furniture, we could ensure Sadie wouldn't jump up until we allowed it. We also tried to control Sadie's barking, but realized that training a Sheltie not to bark isn't easy!



We decided on the commands and routines we would use in our home for ensuring consistency for the dogs and to teach to our daughter. We asked our family and friends to use the same commands and practices to provide repetition for Lacey and the dogs.

While Lacey was a baby, several times a day we held her sitting on the floor and invited Sadie to the other side, showing them both attention and affection. Over time Sadie grew more interested in Lacey and wanted to lick and sniff her. Lacey got used to the smell of a dog's breath and loud random barking. (Sadie loves to bark.) We are lucky that my daughter doesn't react to Sadie's barking. Now as a toddler she either barks back at her or tells her "shhh."

As my daughter grew into a busy toddler and showed more interest in the dogs, we brought them into her learning but kept it at Sadie's pace. When we taught Lacey to locate body parts, we incorporated learning dog parts, like tail, paw, fur. If we asked her to find Sadie's paw, she went to find Sadie and point to that part. As we continued to do this, Sadie got more comfortable with our daughter approaching her by herself. Over time Sadie sat up and sniffed or licked Lacey. When teaching Lacey "gentle hands/gentle touch," we asked her to go find Sadie's nose or ear and she went to Sadie and touched her gently. Sadie was fine with it, either showing no concern or deciding it was time to play and then proceeding to lick and follow Lacey trying to sniff her.

Last, I recommend purchasing additional balls or squeaky toys that can be shared between child and dog. As Lacey learned to throw a ball, we made sure to have that play be with Sadie. We were careful to teach Sadie that our daughter can provide playtime for her and also to teach our daughter never to grab a toy from a dog's mouth but to use the command "drop."





### Sassy and Her "Pack" by Cathy Santiago

Our story with Sassy begins in August 2011. Melinda, Sassy's foster mom, came for a home visit and brought Sassy. When my daughter came in and sat on the floor, Sassy walked over and sat in her lap. We all decided Sassy would fit in well with our family.

From the beginning of our relationship with Sassy, she let us know she was not leaving any of her pack behind! If we were preparing to get in our car to set off on an adventure, she would not leave the house to get in the car with her dad until I was ready as well. If we were on a walk and the person who had Sassy's leash got too far ahead of the others, she put on her brakes and refused to take another step!

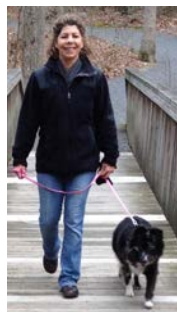


Sassy enjoyed earning her Canine Good Citizenship award and participating in several agility classes. She is still always happy to train with me. Her favorite things (in this order) are FOOD, her family, and outings. That food motivation comes in handy with training.

Through Sassy and Cooper, her wrestling buddy, we met our best friend with whom we get together regularly.

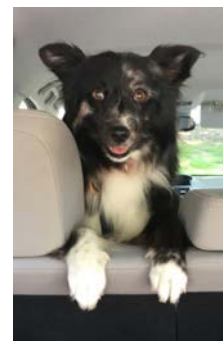


In our quest to reward Sassy for being the awesome dog that she is, our days off are spent hiking and exploring. My favorite picture of husband Moe and Sassy was taken during a hike in Shenandoah National Park. On a vacation we took to the Outer Banks, our Sassy girl enjoyed



running on the beach while chasing birds, but she wants nothing to do with the water! Moe and I are bird enthusiasts and whenever we stop during a hike to scope out a bird she waits patiently. On any walk, she is an excited participant and she absolutely loves windy days. Of course I have to mention the yearly Sheltie picnic which is a favorite activity for the whole family.

At the end of the day, my favorite moments are the ones when she stares into my eyes and I feel her love. We cannot imagine what life would be like without our Sassy! We thank all of you at NVSR for bringing her into our lives. I encourage all the people I talk with about her to adopt through rescue organizations.



#### Collecting Sheltie photos for the 2021 calendar!

Is your Sheltie photogenic? For our next calendar, we're looking for great photos of rescued Shelties doing what they do best: posing for the camera, chasing a ball, jumping, running across the lawn, sitting quietly in the garden. Those are just some ideas. Photos must be clear and able to retain clarity when enlarged. (No humans in the photos, please, and at least one rescued Sheltie.)

Send your photo submissions and descriptions to [calendar@nvsr.org](mailto:calendar@nvsr.org) by **July 31**. Earlier is better, of course, so our calendar team can get started on the 2021 edition. Our beautiful calendar is a big money-maker for us, and folks wait for it to come out each September.



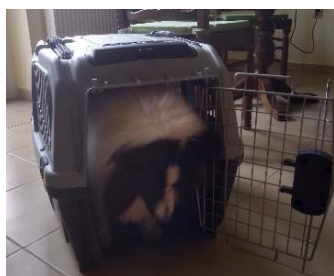
## A Sheltie's Trip from Poland to the USA

by Magdalena Kowalewska

Sheckla, my beloved Sheltie, was born and raised in Poland. A real city-girl, she was used to trains and streets, and she treated my parents' home as her own. In 2018 my husband took a job in the USA and Sheckla stayed behind with my family. I spent most of 2019 in Europe, working and looking after my parents, but by December, I was ready to fly to the USA, this time with Sheckla. With her EU pet passport, microchip and current shots, she met all official requirements to travel from the EU to the USA.



Too big to travel in the cabin, Sheckla had to fly in a carrier. Finding a flight was difficult. Lufthansa through Germany—too expensive. The Istanbul route could take only a small dog. A promising SAS flight through Copenhagen had a short break and a special quiet place for animals. However, the leg to Copenhagen could take only a #3 carrier, and she needed a #4 carrier by IATA standards.



Desperate, my travel agent and I found an option through Lisbon—with an 8-hour layover. I was told I could take Sheckla for a walk. How little did I know! I arrived at the airport with two big suitcases, backpack, laptop, carrier and Sheckla. She had enjoyed treats in her carrier so she didn't balk at going in, so I left her in the special baggage office.

At Lisbon, a sixth airport official took me to the transit zone so I could walk Sheckla, but she had to stay in her carrier. This meant she would spend 20 hours in there. I could pet her only through the carrier door. I was assured she would travel in the climate-controlled section of the hold for the flight to Washington, but I was still nervous. Arriving in DC, it took an hour and a half to get through immigration. Waiting in line, I was so envious of those able to travel with their little dogs in the cabin; they had their pets in their arms.

Finally, in the luggage claim area, I found the TAP Air officer with a carrier and inside a very spooked but safe Sheltie. An airport police officer with a huge knife cut through the carrier door seal—on the condition that she could pet Sheckla. Of course!

My happy dog and I met my husband who awaited us with a bowl of water and we found some grass. Sheckla hadn't eliminated for 20 hours! She spent the last three hours of the long journey to her new home asleep on my feet. As the door opened to our apartment in the middle of the night, she sniffed once and went straight to my son's bedroom.



Now that we're settled, I never dreamt my indoor, sleeping-in-the-bed Sheltie, who knows more about intercity travel than she knows about wolf-ways, would be so interested in nature. It is a pleasure to watch her enjoying the wildlife in the woods and through the windows.







### Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue Directors and Coordinators

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Treasurer .....Wes Marks  
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Lisa Fox

Shepherd Team .....Donna Martin, Barb Gardner,  
Marta Miranda, Anne Burke, Jessica Baggarley

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Vet Committee ..... Sharon Daussin,  
Dana Greenwood, Mary Ellen Jones, Nancy Tisdale

Website ..... Martha Heisel

Special thanks to the many volunteers who foster, transport,  
and contribute their time and talents to help the Shelties  
who are brought to or found by NVSR.

Newsletter submissions to sheltiespin@nvsr.org

Website www.nvsr.org • E-Mail: shelties@nvsr.org

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#### I would like to make a donation to the Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue

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#### Donation Amount:

\$25     \$50     \$75     \$100    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue. Mail to Treasurer, NVSR, 977 Seminole Trail, PMB 314, Charlottesville VA 22901

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. 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.