



Newsletter of Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue "Giving Shelties a New Leash on Life" Winter 2020



Duke Dakota

Bernard



Here we are (finally!) at the end of a very strange year. Despite everything, we hope that you've enjoyed more time at home with your Shelties. We're sure that they enjoyed it even more.

As we move into 2021, we hope it will be a year in which we'll see many of you and your Shelties in person (and "in dog") once again. We plan to attend some events and hold an autumn picnic if possible. In the meantime, remember that we will always accept any needy Sheltie, young or old or in-between, healthy or ill, well-behaved or with challenges. We start our 22nd year having rescued nearly 1400 Shelties and ready to help any that need us. Please remember us in your year-end donations. Everything we receive goes toward caring for our Shelties.

In this issue of *The Sheltie Spin*, we've included several stories about Shelties that made a difference to their adopters and to their foster homes. We've also included many photos of Shelties enjoying winter and the holidays. Don't miss the article on doggie toys! We hope that you and all your pets have a wonderful holiday season. - *NVSR Volunteers* 





Drew and Bella, Maggie and Happy

# **Drew Roadarmel**

We are very sad to remember Drew Roadarmel, daughter of adopters Kathy and Mark Roadarmel. Drew tragically died in a car accident in the fall. Her family adopted Happy from us in July 2005, much to the delight of young Drew. The Roadarmels very kindly directed donations in memory of Drew to NVSR, and we gratefully acknowledge them and will use them to cover vet care for our foster dogs. The following tribute tells you more about Drew.

Since she was a little girl, Drew had always longed for a dog. Like most families, the responsibility of caring for an animal delayed this desire. However, while at the county fair, Drew met with a challenge. Her dad said, "Drew, if you can climb that rock wall you can get a puppy." Without hesitation or struggle, Drew climbed to the top of that rock wall as if no obstacles were in her way. A few days later, Happy was adopted from the Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue and instantly was part of the family. Drew loved all animals, especially dogs. It would have made her very happy to know that animals were being rescued and cared for in her name.



#### Sammy and the Alpacas by Donna Martin

Sammy is one of several reactive dogs that came into NVSR in 2019. He had been held in an animal shelter for several months during a court case on hoarding. Then the shelter adopted him to a single young woman. Very quickly it became apparent that he had reactions to many things in the outside world. His new mom checked out his health and took him to training classes. However, Sammy started nipping as an outlet for his reactivity. He was put on Prozac and with continued training he made some improvement. A new boyfriend came into the picture, and Sammy's reactivity was renewed. His owner contacted NVSR and we stepped in to help.

Sammy's wonderful NVSR foster mom worked with him and had a trainer help reinforce positive behavior changes. But it was obvious that a home in the suburbs or city was not the place for Sammy. So NVSR found a new foster home (ours) out in the country where most of his reactive triggers were not a daily occurrence.

Dave and I were happy to see if Sammy could thrive and enjoy life on a farm. It was promising from the beginning: he didn't charge the fence when our alpacas became curious about the new arrival. Also, Sammy was not reactive to the barn cat or the practice shooting that goes on out here in West Virginia. After a week we tried Sammy on barn chores. He was slowly allowed to get close to the alpacas and did quite well. He spent a lot of time sniffing their feet and going nose-to-nose with them.

Sammy has taken it upon himself to make the alpacas "barn up" so we can give them their home-grown fodder. Before we even enter the barnyard Sammy runs the fence yard yelling at them to barn up. And they DO—they all run in the direction of the barn. Once we open the gate, if they're not on their way, Sammy gives them a piece of his mind.

After several weeks we realized Sammy fit in pretty well here and our type of home was what he needed to be at his best. There were no other applicant homes that he would fit into as happily. He was very easy to love, even with his quirks, so he became part of our family. Sammy looks forward to his barn chores twice a day. In between chores, he walks the fence with that Sheltie swagger and fixed eye to remind the alpacas just who is in charge now.



Sammy meets Toby, the deaf alpaca



Sammy checks out interesting alpaca feet



Herding alpacas is thirsty work!



### A "Tail" of Two Jeters by Theresa Jackson

I confess. I like to foster. It is hard to say goodbye but rewarding to see each ward leave with a wonderful family. Some leavings are harder than others, and some fosters need more work than others. Jeter-1 was just such a foster.

Jeter arrived February 2020 at the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis. I was warned that he was reactive and had a history of biting. His back story was a sad one. He had been found in an empty house with no food or water. He was underweight and full of



parasites. A loving couple adopted him and invested much time and effort in working with Jeter. He learned basic commands. He was food aggressive, but who could blame him. So they taught him to sit and wait for his food dish until he was released to eat. As much as he improved, he was still

reactive with strangers, spinning, growling and lunging, especially at men. After a new baby arrived in the family, Jeter bit someone. As much as they loved Jeter, they felt it best to find a new family for him, so he came to NVSR.

In our foster home, Jeter settled in fairly well unless he saw a neighbor, car or other dog, then he started the spinning, growling and lunging. With my husband and me, he was a love bug. At the vet clinic, he behaved fairly well unless a man wearing a hat walked in. After a couple months of working with Jeter, I worried about him improving enough to be adopted. Although a love bug, he was not a good match for our home. Then came a breakthrough from an unexpected place.

The neighbors behind us watch two pre-school girls who love to play fetch with my Sheltie, Pepper Man. The first time they ran up to our fence to meet Jeter, he immediately reacted. They were so frightened they stayed away from the fence, but Jeter ran up to it every day spinning and spinning. The older girl asked why Jeter was like that. I explained that he was scared and wasn't treated well when he was a young dog.

I watched her and Jeter for the next six weeks. Jeter spun and she sat, patiently and softly talking to him. Jeter's spins slowed down. The growls and lunges disappeared. Then one day, she got up and twirled around in a circle. Jeter stopped spinning and wagged his tail. She stopped. Jeter then did a few spins and barked. Takashi then did her spins and told Jeter it was his turn. They repeated this every day. Whenever Jeter went out, he went to where he played with his friend. If she wasn't there, he would bark for her. Takashi spoke to Jeter in his own language and he felt safe and comfortable.

I truly believe she made the difference in his life. In June he met his new family. The boy who spun and lunged, walked straight up to them and asked to be petted. He never looked back! I miss Jeter but I am so happy to see him blossom.

And the second one, Jeter-2? A year and a half ago I lost my dear sweet Sheltie, Jilly. Each time I fostered, I heard, "You are going to be a foster failure," and I said, "No." I knew what I wanted—the most requested Sheltie, a small female!

My husband and I sell at antique shows. Our Shelties travel with us. If they are not welcome at the shows, neither are we. On the other side of the equation, we make sure that they are well-trained, safe and not

barky. I saw one new Sheltie that I thought looked just like the dog I wanted but she was too shy to be happy traveling and meeting people. Then I was asked to foster another Jeter.



continue p.5



I was doubtful—a bigger male, not a smaller female. I said, "no way" but met him anyway. He was selfassured, quiet and smart, and he had the perfect personality for us. As he spent more time with us, his quirkiness came out. He started to bark. I told him "shush, quiet voice" and from then on he talks non-stop, very quietly.

He loves to play with Pepper Man and Pepper has started to play with Jeter. Now, that is a big deal. With all the Shelties and other dogs we have had visit, the only other one that Pepper actively engaged with is our Lab mix, Bubba. It is a joy to watch the two of them chasing each other around the yard. Lastly, Jeter does not run, he leaps like a deer or a bunny. It makes me laugh every time I see him. Things happen for a reason. Jeter-2 is the right match.



Save Money Purchasing Vet Meds by Nancy Tisdale

You're at the vet late Friday with your fur-friend after seeing blood in her urine. She has been diagnosed with a urinary tract infection caused by a resistant bacteria, and your veterinarian prescribes a two-week course of Cefpoxidime which will cost over \$200 in addition to the cost for the emergency visit, urine collection and analysis. The holidays are approaching and your work hours have been reduced because of the pandemic. What are you going to do? You have options. Read on ...

Vet clinics used to dispense most pet medications, but this is no longer the case. Several factors (pharmacy competition, veterinary office pharmacy costs, and decreased medication monopolies) have led to the availability of pet medications at online pharmacies, discount pharmacies, neighborhood drug and grocery stores, and big box stores such as Costco and WalMart. Where to start?

First, talk to your veterinarian. Are there less expensive medications that can be used? Can you buy a larger size of the medication that could safely be cut in half to save money? If these are not options, ask to recommend an online pharmacy that they trust. This may prompt your vet to price match what you find online. If they don't offer – ASK!

Second, investigate Good Rx or RxSaver. These companies gather current prices and discounts to help you find the lowest price available for the medication you need. Their services are free. They provide prices on medications at several pharmacies in your area. Their database includes medications that can be used in both humans and pets, some non-prescription medications and products, and in some cases, medications that are strictly prescribed by veterinarians such as Prion, used for urinary incontinence. GoodRx will show that the same milligram and amount of Cefpodoxime that you need for your dog is available in your local area at prices ranging from \$63 to \$100.

Urgency may determine the options available so you may not have time to check prices at online pharmacies. But this is a good option for chronic medications and supplements such as heartworm preventative, many cardiac and thyroid medications, joint health and allergy medications. Online pharmacies purchase items in bulk and can offer these at lower prices. But not all online pharmacies are the same. Don't purchase from online pharmacies located outside the U.S. or from companies that don't require a prescription. Check for the following with an online pharmacy:

- Always require a prescription - helps to ensure your pets safety

– Approval by a Veterinary Verified Internet Pharmacy

Secure website and will accept several methods of payment



- Do they guarantee their products?
- Does a licensed pharmacist supervise all orders?
- Do they offer specialty shipping like refrigeration?

A few of the online pharmacies that meet these criteria are: Allivet, Amazon Pharmacy, Chewy, Heartline Vet Supply and 1800Petmeds.

Purchasing veterinary medications online and in places other than your veterinarian's office may not

be the right decision for everyone. But options are now available that allow for cheaper prices and the convenience of home delivery. If you do choose to purchase at places other than your veterinary office, follow the same procedures you would for any medication. Upon receiving the medication, check the expiration date and make sure the dosing instructions match those you were given verbally, and avoid any medications with broken or damaged seals.

#### Keep Your Sheltie Safe During the Holidays by Lisa Fox

Keep the following list of possible hazards in mind as you enjoy the holidays with your Sheltie:

1. Chocolate, Macadamia nuts, and Walnuts can all be toxic for dogs

2. Xylitol—a VERY TOXIC TO DOGS artificial sweetener found in gum, candies, toothpaste, many baked goods and in many vegan alternatives like BBQ sauce.

3. Fat Trimmings can cause Pancreatitis; Bones can splinter and damage digestive system.

4. Implore guests NOT to slip Table Scraps to your Sheltie.

5. Grapes and Raisins can be toxic for dogs.

6. Don't add Gravy to dog's food—contains lots of salt, garlic, and onions that may sicken dog.

7. Guard against Trash Trollers among your canine crew.

8. Pine Needles, Holly, and Mistletoe should never be consumed by dogs.

9. Don't allow your Sheltie to drink from Christmas Tree Stand Water and don't add anything to the water in case dog drinks from stand when you're not around.

10. Poinsettia is not deadly as once thought; but can cause vomiting and stomach irritation.

11. Discarded Ribbons, Bows, and Tinsel can be choking hazards and cause twisted intestines if swallowed.

12. Candles can be knocked over by dogs, causing fires; melted wax can burn paws. Place Menorahs out of dog's reach.

13. Chewers may chomp down on Electrical Cords connected to tree lights and wreathes.

14. Broken Tree Ornaments can slice paws and mouths.

15. Snow Globes and lights contain poisonous chemicals such as ethylene glycol; keep dogs away from broken ones.

16. Secure your Sheltie in a safe place before any Fireworks are used.

17. Make sure your Sheltie can't run out the door when guests come and go.

18. Keep Antifreeze wiped up and stored in covered containers to prevent irreversible kidney damage in dogs.

# "Officer Charley, Reporting for Duty" by Cindy Foreso



Charley came to NVSR in the early spring of 2019. Charley was my third foster dog and I was very tempted to flunk (for a second time!). He was sweet, well-trained, beautiful, and a joy to have around. But instead, Charley met his perfect Dad ... Bill—two single fellas each looking for a best friend and companion. Bill had waited a long time to get a Sheltie from us.

These two guys hit it off the moment they met. According to Bill, Charley is smart, alert and a great companion. They love their walks around the Oak Mar park area and Difficult Run nature preserve. Charley has slimmed down with all the walking and nutritious food, and Bill reports that the vet says he's the perfect weight and healthy!

When Bill asks for a "doggie hug," Charley puts his paws up on Bill's shoulders and gives him

that hug. But even when invited, Charley refuses to jump up on the furniture ... if during a game of "inside the house catch," a toy lands on the furniture and Charley can't reach it, it's Bill's job to do the fetching! That even applies to the doggie bed—Charley just looks at it and then lies on the floor instead.

Bill, a retired Air Force Colonel, volunteers with the Fairfax County Police Department and is their Lead Auxiliary Police Officer. When not working at HQ, Bill works out of the McLean District Station and Charley is often right there beside him. Despite Covid-19 having curtailed many police auxiliary events, Bill and Charley have logged nearly 1,000 hours volunteering during 2020 ... often working from home. When they go to HQ or the Station, everyone loves to see





Charley. He also attends the Safety Team meetings and is considered the Safety Mascot. Charley enjoys the attention from his fellow officers. And of course, Charley is always in uniform!

Charley and Bill are a perfect pairing—such a match is the reason that NVSR exists. I have often been asked, "How can you give up a foster dog after you have had them with you for a few weeks or longer?" My answer is always the same ... "When I see my former foster dog happy and healthy in their forever home, it warms my heart."



# Desi's New Life by Andrea Dalton

Desi was 18 months old and 26 pounds when he came to our home as a play buddy for our 85-pound, 2-year old, active, social and loving Old English Sheepdog (OES), Monty. Monty wanted a "friend" to run with, but we knew that "friend" had to fit in our car and 16-foot camper for our frequent trips to national and state parks across the country.



Monty & Desi at the Beach

Desi had spent the first 18 months of his life in a small enclosure with several much larger dogs. As a result of minimal interaction with humans, he did not learn to respond to the human voice. Living in a confined pack, anything important to him had to be defended or he'd lose it. He also had kennel and leash aggression and a strong prey drive. All of this information was extremely relevant. Desi was also described as very affectionate with "more energy than three dogs." Melinda Hall, his awesome main foster mom, said he would probably do better with a large dog. We decided to take a chance and meet Desi.

Our first meeting with Desi showed him to be a little skittish but sweet. He obviously LOVED to run. Desi's first meeting with Monty epitomized my definition of joy: two dogs running around, no cares, ears back, one chasing the other full-out, then reversing the order. We adopted Desi and this continues joyfully to this day. They love to play tag with each other. It is also precious to see one dog bring the other a toy to play with. Desi can really get into a game of tug with us or Monty with plenty of shaking and pulling.



Nothing like a good game of tug

The first time we took Desi and Monty to the "big city" 2.5 hours from our home to shop, he was fine during the trip. When we got home eight hours later, Desi stoically got out of the car and looked around. All of a sudden, he realized he was back home. He jumped up and down, barking and running in circles. He didn't know he was coming back! It broke my heart.

Watching Desi develop trust and independence is an incredible process. He is very much a Velcro dog. This dog who would not sit still will spend hours lying on our laps or beside us. Although Desi found new things scary, he is improving and trusting us more and more. He often looks to his brother; if Monty will do it, he will.



Mr. August

Both dogs love to hike, one of our favorite activities. Desi learned he loves to swim and ride in the kayaks. His "Mr. August" picture in the 2021 NVSR calendar shows Desi looking back at me in the kayak with his gorgeous ears and loving expression. He pays more attention to speech and recently seemed to understand the word "walk." We had our deck replaced recently and he no longer hides under



the bed when he hears hammering and became more comfortable approaching the workers. He is adjusting to gunshots he hears across the river.



Of course, there are still challenges. Desi was a difficult dog to reliably housetrain, but I think he's finally got it. He now won't go out when he doesn't need to do his business but insistently paws us when he does need to. He seems to take this control as a mark of pride.

Tackling leash aggression was challenging. The only obedience class we could find was 1.5 hours away with five big dogs—two German Shepherds, a Great Dane and two Malinois. It was very scary for Desi, but we worked through it. At the end of the session he could confidently walk up to one of the instructor's German Shepherds and sniff. We take both Desi and Monty to parks to meet other dogs on-leash and also took both to outdoor church at the park before it got too cold. Desi is still not 100%, but maybe 80% appropriate meeting new dogs onleash. Off-leash he is fine.

It has been wonderful watching Desi learn that life can be a lot of fun. He has brought such joy to his brother Monty and to my husband and me. I hate that he had such a hard early life; but it has been incredible watching him learn to try new things and enjoy our wonderful world. Thanks, NVSR, for such a great pup and giving us the guidance when needed!

needed!



#### Put One of These Under the Tree for Your Favorite Sheltie by Lisa Fox

Wondering what to get your Sheltie for Christmas? If you haven't discovered food dispensing toys, your dog is missing lots of fun and mental stimulation. Shelties, young and old, enjoy working for their food. Here are a few that my three Shelties (ages 6, 12 and 13) all like:

(1) **Outward Hound Challenge Slider**. Exploring

25 compartments by sliding the tiles around is a mini nosework game. Put wet or dry food in all or a few compartments and watch your dog gradually figure out the fastest way to access the goodies.



**Orbee-Tuff Snoop.** More fun than it looks. Pull out neck, place kibble, popcorn, veggies and tiny biscuits in the bowl, push neck back in, and shake. My dogs like the squishy, soft feel of this toy. Makes a good indoor soccer ball, too.

(3) **IQ Treat Ball.** A classic. Easily adjusts to change difficulty level or accommodate large or small kibble. Provides lots of exercise on a rainy day.



(4) J.W. Pet Megalast Megabone. Our collection of



(2)

these hard rubber, nontoxic bones gets daily use, but all have lasted for years. 12 slots on each bone accommodate kibble, tiny pieces of cheese, plain popcorn, peanut butter or frozen peas and carrots. A good beginner puzzle since dogs can

see and smell the goodies. Generates lots of chewing, even for elderly dogs, and helps keep teeth free of plaque. 3 sizes.

(5) **Ethical Contempo Tessa.** One of the best kibble dispensers. Sturdy, easy to wash, adjustable for any size kibble or difficulty level.



(6) **Slow Bowls.** Designed to slow down dogs that

DOG SLOW FEEDER



gulp their food. But also a fun toy. Mealtimes will move from 20 seconds to 20 minutes or more, depending on your creativity. Distribute bites of baked turkey, cut up green beans, and ¼ cup or more of kibble around the curves. Dab a bit of canned pumpkin inside the bends. Top with ¼ cup of unsalted broth or water to make everything slippery and harder to

extract. Many different designs available.



And don't forget that NVSR has snuffle mats available, made by our hardworking volunteers. Fun for a Sheltie! Inquire at <u>shop@nvsr.org</u>.



#### Mia Performs Perfectly as "Best Dog" by Lisa Fox

The one-year-old Sheltie mix assigned to experienced foster mom Melinda McKenzie Hall four years



Mia in foster home

ago exhibited several serious problems. With a very strange gait, Mia could not maintain her balance on bare floors, and she was highly reactive to many things especially other dogs. Mia was diagnosed with a neurological problem called Cerebellar Hypoplasia. She could not manage stairs and was terrified of floors, so Melinda carried her up and down steps and made rug paths so she could move safely. Because of her aggressive behavior, she was kept away from the other Sheltie at Melinda's home. She was not leash trained, knew no commands, and lunged at humans or dogs she encountered on walks. Who, we wondered, would adopt this poor dog and deal with all her challenges?

poor dog and deal with all her challenges?

Using her training skills and those of a hired trainer, Melinda developed a training strategy. Over many weeks, Mia's behavior improved. When little Mia began to limp badly and show more pain playing ball games she loved, we had her re-evaluated. Two specialists, x-rays of her legs and hips, and a brain scan revealed that the initial diagnosis was not correct. The brain scan showed a normal brain, but the x-rays showed floating kneecap issues that were very serious. In spite of the large expense, we had surgery performed on both knees to give this youngster a good chance at normal walking and running.



Mia post surgery

After Mia recovered from the successful surgery, it was time at last to look for an adopter. When a young couple who were graduate students in North Carolina applied to adopt Mia, we decided to take a chance. We didn't realize what a perfect match it was. Over the next four years, we received glowing reports and numerous photos of Mia. It was clear the young couple adored her and were very proud of her continuing progress. Mia adjusted seamlessly to their move to Texas.



The happy couple with Mia

Last summer, we received news that the Olivia and Mark had married and Mia was "Best Dog" in their wedding. Here's the report Melinda received of the wedding day, guaranteed to make you smile:

"Hi Melinda! I just HAD to tell you! Mark and I got married this past Saturday, we had a small social-distancing ceremony with just our parents and siblings ... And Mia did AWESOME!!!! She barked just a little bit, but she walked around and let people pet her and give her treats!! Mark and I fully expected to try to get a couple of pictures of her (in her "Best

Dog" bandanna!) and put her back in our bedroom with some music on. We were shocked and so very very happy!!! She was just the cherry on top of our day!!"



"Best Dog"





# Another Reason to Be Careful About Using Dog Parks by Nancy Tisdale

NVSR recommends that dog owners be extremely careful using dog parks. Some Shelties are just fine there and love them. Others may be very frightened of the other dogs, especially if there are large boisterous dogs there. Shelties love to play chase, but many larger dogs insist on rough and tumble play. Your Sheltie may get hurt or frightened by this. If you want to use a dog park, go early in the morning when there are very few dogs there. Better yet, go for a long walk with your Sheltie – best for you, too. Here is more information about another negative concerning dog parks.

The University of Oklahoma conducted the DoGPaRCS (Detection of Gastrointestinal Parasitisim at Recreational Canine Sites) study. Ten veterinarians were sent to 288 dog parks in 30 metropolitan areas in summer and data was collected for 6 weeks. Ten dogs in each park (one dog per household) were tested for a total of 3006 samples. Owners provided information about parasite control and diagnosis in their dogs.

85% of dog parks studied have at least one infected dog and this number rises to 90% in the south and midwest. They tested only for whipworms, hookworms, roundworms and giardia. In the south, 15% of dogs had hookworms and 2.7% had whipworms. Roundworms were seen less frequently, because they are seen more often in pups and young dogs and there were fewer of these in the study.

Here is important information to remember. First,

some of these parasites can infect humans. A child throws a ball to his dog and it rolls through the grass and a puddle and picks up hookworm eggs. The dog picks up the ball up in his mouth and eggs are transferred to the dog. The dog then takes the ball back to the child and the eggs are transferred to his hands which he puts in his mouth. Gross, yes, but it happens. If you take your dog to a dog park, don't go barefoot and flip flops aren't a good idea either.

Second, the parasite preventative in HW medication treats parasites only on the day it is given, not for 30 days like the HW preventative. So, your dog can still get intestinal parasites on the other 29 days. Third, your dog should have an annual fecal check that includes both a fecal flotation and antigen test. In the dog park study, the antigen test significantly increased the numbers of positive results. The flotation test shows only nematode eggs (hooks, whips and rounds), but there are a lot of other parasites dogs can contract.

Parkscore (tpl.org/parkscore) rates parks for access and quality and Barkscore (tpl.org/dogparks) does the same for dog parks.



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 Ace, Cady, Joe, Maddie and Rose.



# Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue Directors and Coordinators

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Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue

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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

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#### 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.