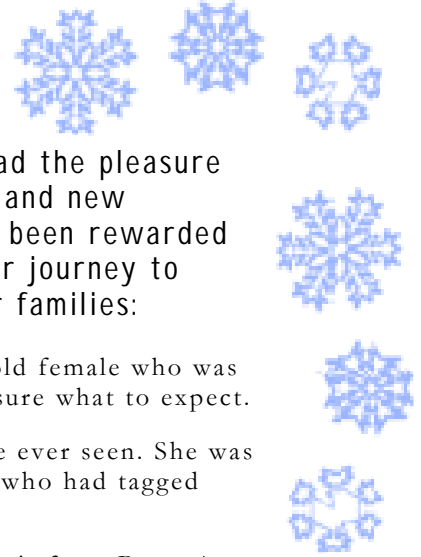




tundra Tales

December 2001

A Tail s of the Tundra Siberian Husky Rescue Newsletter



It's been another exciting year in rescue here at Tails of the Tundra Siberian Husky Rescue (TOTTSHR). We have had the pleasure of making new canine and human friends through adoptions and new volunteers, as well as seeing some of our old friends too. We've been rewarded countless times with the progress our dogs have made along their journey to their new families, as captured in the words of one of our foster families:

"We drove to the shelter to pick up a potential foster dog, a four-year-old female who was running out of time. When we arrived at the shelter, we were not quite sure what to expect.

We met a gray-and-white girl with the saddest deep brown eyes you have ever seen. She was scared of people, especially men. However, she and Shadow, our Husky who had tagged along for the ride, hit it off immediately.

The dog—whom we subsequently named Impala—finally accepted a biscuit from Betty Ann, although we had the distinct impression that she expected to be hit immediately afterward. Shadow, however, reassured her that she was in no danger, and she actually allowed Betty Ann to scratch her ears. That did it. She was coming home with us.

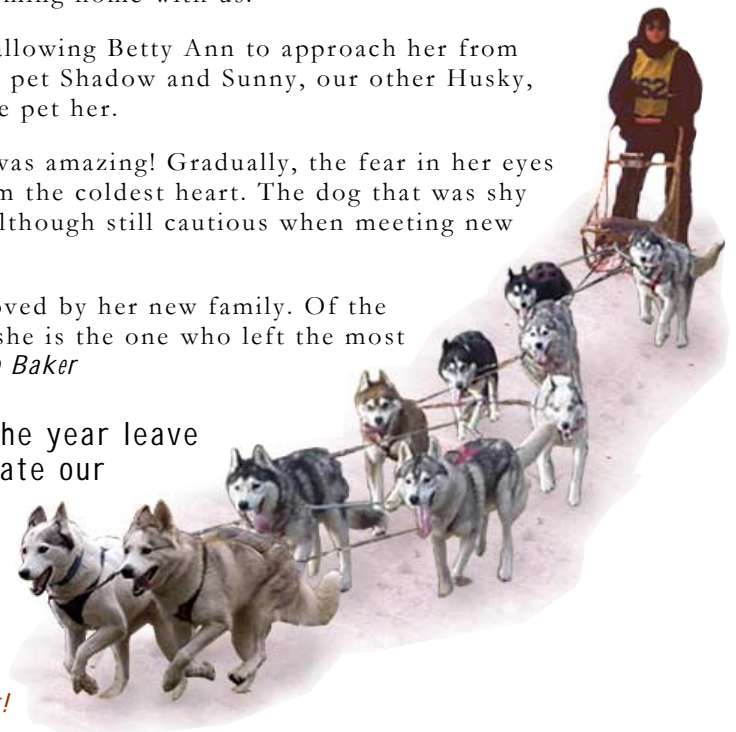
The first day, she cowered in the corner, allowing Betty Ann to approach her from time to time. Finally, after watching me pet Shadow and Sunny, our other Husky, she decided to take a chance and let me pet her.

From that day on, the transformation was amazing! Gradually, the fear in her eyes was replaced by a twinkle that could warm the coldest heart. The dog that was shy and afraid became warm and affectionate. Although still cautious when meeting new people, she quickly warmed up to them.

Today, Impala is very happy and much loved by her new family. Of the eight dogs that we have fostered so far, she is the one who left the most indelible paw prints on my heart." —*Bob Baker*

All of the dogs we help throughout the year leave paw prints on our hearts. We celebrate our successes this year and warmly thank all the people who help us in our work—donors, adoptive families, shelters, veterinarians, foster families, and volunteers.

*We wish you all a wonderful holiday season...
Best wishes to you and your families for a great new year!*





Volunteers Make Our Husky World Go 'Round

by Sandy Lee

Tails of the Tundra would not have been able to help so many dogs in 2001 without all of the dedication, hard work, countless hours (and senses of humor) of the group's 57 volunteers.

Although we are still compiling volunteer hours, preliminary numbers show that our members spent over 6,000 hours going to events, making phone calls, performing adoptions, and so many other valuable jobs to run this rescue in a professional and efficient manner.

That's only part of the story. For 2001, volunteers opened their homes to 78 dogs and spent an estimated total of 2,427 foster care days.

For the year, which isn't over, our volunteers spent over 1,300 hours keeping Tails of the Tundra going—via phone calls, e-mails, and other administrative duties. Our committees and board spent a total of 461 hours holding meetings to move our group forward.

We also spent a lot of time getting the word out about our group. Time spent coordinating and attending the numer-

ous events this year totaled 1,017 hours. Volunteers also spent 785 hours improving and maintaining our main web site (www.siberescue.com) as well as posting our available Siberians on other sites including Petfinder (www.petfinder.org).

And we wouldn't be able to boast 78 adoptions for 2001 without help from the Adoption and Transport committees who spent 724 hours and 378 hours, respectively.



Teamwork is the name of the game!

Volunteers were active with our other committees as well. Initial estimates show that the Applications Committee spent 370 hours; the Sunshine Committee, 24; the Volunteer Committee, 25; the Intake Committee, 126; and the Publicity Committee, 58.

These preliminary figures are very impressive for our first full calendar year of operation and we have a lot to be proud of. So the next time you look at your foster dog, visit our web site, or volunteer at an event, remember that you are an important part of Tails of the Tundra and that you have helped us find homeless huskies new, loving homes.

For more information about TOTTSHR committees and volunteer opportunities, see "Job Fair" on page 7. 🐾



The Big Day

When those first few days with your new adopted dog are not what you were expecting...

by Scott Bluhm

Today is the big day—the day you are welcoming your newest family member into your home. Today is going to be one of the greatest days of your life, right? Wrong!

Don't misunderstand me. One day, you will look back on this event with fond memories. That day, however, is in the future. As for the here and now, your new addition has been home for two hours and has already gotten into the trash, peed on the floor (twice!), and shown that he's only hungry for paper towels and dirty laundry. "Oh, no!" you shout. "This is the WORST day of my life! What do I do now?"

Many people do not recognize the enormity of a dog's stress that accompanies a wholesale change of environment. Keep in mind that your new dog has experienced many changes over the last couple of months, shifting from a shelter environment to a foster home and now to your home, where he must learn as much about you as you are learning about him.

(Continued on page 6)



Snow Dogs

by Jennifer Dow

We have all seen the beauty of Siberian Huskies running through the snow, their crystal blue eyes shining, the gleam of their sleek grey coats, their howling at the pulling of a sled to victory. Unfortunately, this beauty distorts the responsibilities of ownership and may lead to the abandonment of newly owned dogs by people who are not properly prepared to handle them.

This January a film titled *Snow Dogs* will be released about the Iditarod, the famous Alaskan dogsled race. The movie tells the story of a big-city writer who follows in his father's footsteps by becoming a dog sledder.

Quite often when a movie is released about a particular breed of dog, the demand for that breed dramatically increases.



Brian Sabin

People will purchase a dog on a whim because of the image projected on the screen, then discover they are ill prepared to handle the energy of a puppy or the characteristics of the breed they chose.

When Disney's *101 Dalmations* was released, the demand for Dalmations skyrocketed. According to The Humane Society of the United States, shelters and rescue groups throughout the country who handled 4–10 Dalmations per year handled that many per *month* after the movie was released.

It is quite possible that after seeing *Snow Dogs*, someone you know will have thoughts about owning a Siberian Husky. You can help prevent a problem by encouraging them to enjoy Huskies in other ways before they buy. Suggest they buy stuffed Huskies for their children or articles of clothing with Huskies pictured on them. Perhaps reading a book about the Iditarod may satisfy their urge to race without having to leave home. Buy them a breed book on Huskies. Most importantly, explain to them what dog rescue is and suggest they volunteer; this will enable them to learn more about the breed and make an educated decision before they get a dog.

By educating people on the pros and cons of Husky ownership, we can help prevent Huskies from becoming the latest statistic for The Humane Society. ❁



The

Internet is a valuable tool in our work. Through our main site (www.siberescue.com) and other adoption-related sites (for example, Petfinder.org), we are able to reach the greatest number of potential adopters and volunteers.

This year, we added Husky merchandise to our main site. Stop

by and browse through our pages of Husky-related goodies such as t-shirts, mugs, umbrellas, stuffed Huskies, and lots of other neat gift items. In the coming months, we hope to enhance the shopping cart to accept credit card purchases.

We also added some very cool items on eBay, including some autographed items from Philadelphia pro sports teams. All proceeds will help our dogs. At eBay's site (www.ebay.com), search for seller *tundratails* to see the goodies we currently have for auction.

The Internet committee has been learning new tricks throughout the year—ways to make the pages on our site load faster, look sharper, and navigate more easily. Stay tuned for a major design change in the coming year!



Mark Your Calendars!

We are already planning events for the new year; see our web site for more information. We hope to see you there!



Upcoming Events	Dates
Pet Expo, Timonium, MD	February 2 and 3
Pet Expo, Raritan, NJ	February 9 and 10
Horse and Pet Expo, Fort Washington, PA	March 8, 9, and 10

❁ Tundra Tales ❁

EDITOR AND LAYOUT DESIGN: Nancy Derrico (newsletter@siberescue.com)

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Fleas, Ticks, Dog Breath,

by Deb Knapp

Creepy Crawlies—Fleas and ticks in your home and on your pet are much more than just an annoyance. In addition to being carriers for some diseases, a dog with fleas or ticks will scratch and bite their skin raw, possibly leading to flea allergy dermatitis or anemia in some pets. Fleas and ticks love to hide in the beautiful double coats of huskies, so regular treatment is essential.

TOTTSHR recommends treatment with Frontline every month. Simply apply a few drops between the dog's shoulder blades. 100% of fleas are dead within 18 hours, and 100% of ticks are dead within 48 hours. (i)

Whatever treatment you decide to use, be sure that it does not contain the pesticide Phosmet. Phosmet is found in several kinds of flea collars, and in some flea dips and shampoos. This pesticide has been linked to nerve damage, especially in toddlers, whose hand-to-mouth tendencies make them more at risk. (ii)

What Did You Say?—Another routine hygiene concern is ear cleaning. Since Huskies' ears stand up and their hair does not grow long over their ears, this task is easier. To prevent wax build-up and the possibility of infection, moisten cotton with ear cleaner. If you see dark stuff or your dog's ears have a bad smell, this may indicate ear infection which should be treated by a vet.

Remember Those Pearly Whites—The most common health problem in dogs is periodontal disease—and it is preventable. When plaque is allowed to build up on a dog's teeth, it hardens and accumulates, eventually infecting the gums and entering the bloodstream, causing potential liver, kidney, heart, and lung problems. Signs to look for are bad breath, discolored teeth, red or swollen gums, loss of teeth, difficulty chewing, weight loss, broken or missing teeth nasal discharge, blood in the saliva, drooling, and tearing or swelling below an eye. (iii) (See "Recognizing Periodontal Disease" on the following page.)

There are some things we can do to prevent plaque from building up. First, feed your dog a nutritionally balanced

diet containing a hard crunchy food. Second, provide your dog with dental chew toys and chew items. This is especially easy for husky owners. We know how our

huskies love to chew, and these items provide a safe and appropriate

...and Other Appetizing Things

outlet for their natural chewing instinct. Third, brush your dog's teeth on a regular basis. You can

use a pet toothbrush, a soft child's toothbrush, or a gauze pad around your finger. If you use toothpaste, avoid human toothpaste or baking soda. Most dogs don't like the foaming action of our toothpaste, and baking soda can upset their digestion. Finally, have your vet check your dog's teeth at regular check-up time.

Did You Say Chew Toys?—One more thing: As we know, our huskies will chew on just about anything they can get their mouths on. When they are outside, this can include sticks. Sticks can break and become lodged in the roof of your dog's mouth (we know this from personal experience!). Besides being just annoying, the stick could lead to an infection. If your dog seems to be shaking his or her head, pawing at the face, has trouble eating, or has especially bad breath, check the roof of the mouth for anything that may have become lodged.

All of our foster dogs are thoroughly examined by a veterinarian and treated for fleas, ticks, and worms and are given a healthy diet, along with a large dose of love and time. The investment of time and money husky owners put into regular healthcare is returned many times over in years of love and enjoyment we receive from our dogs.

If you have any questions about any of the concerns expressed in this article, please don't hesitate to contact your vet, or TOTTSHR. If we don't know the answer, we will be happy to guide you to a vet we know and trust. 🐾

i www.frontline.com

ii The Post Gazette, Nov. 28, 2000, May Elian, "Ban urged on some flea and tick control products"

iii PetsMart, article 95, "Do I really need to brush my dog's teeth?" (staff reporter)



Recognizing



Periodontal Disease

A healthy mouth should boast white teeth, pink gums, and no bad breath.

Healthy Mouth



When teeth and gums are neglected, two conditions typically result:

- ⌘ **Gingivitis:** Gingivitis is the inflammation of the gums around the teeth.
- ⌘ **Periodontitis:** When gingivitis goes untreated and you do not improve your methods of cleaning your dog's teeth, gingivitis can progress into periodontitis, where the infection spreads beyond the gums to the underlying tissue and bone.

These nasty diseases look like this:

Gingivitis



Symptoms of gingivitis include swollen and bleeding gums and unpleasant breath (more so than, say, after chewing a pig's ear).

Early Periodontitis



Early periodontitis is apparent when the gum begins to detach from the tooth. Breath odor becomes worse.

Advanced Periodontitis



With advanced periodontitis, the gums begin to recede and bleed easily. Food and pus become trapped, and breath odor is repulsive.



Be kind to your dog's teeth!



Photo credits go to Pharmacia & Upjohn Company

Job Fair *(Continued from page 7)*

Publicity

sandykl@siberescue.com

Help us get the word out! Publicity activities include writing press releases and advertisements for newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet.

Sunshine

ruths@siberescue.com

There are many special people who help us throughout the year to continue our rescue efforts by donating supplies and money. The Sunshine committee acknowledges these contributions by sending thank-you notes. This is a great job to do from home.



Toby Fund Update

The Toby Fund—named after the dog who came to us with hip dysplasia and inevitable, expensive hip surgery—was continued this year to help care for nine dogs who came to us with health conditions that resulted in extraordinary vet care.

We thank all of our generous friends who contributed over \$1,880 since the fund began to help us maintain our high standard of vet care for these special-needs dogs.

The Big Day

(Continued from page 2)

While you are lamenting your decision about this new arrival, inside he may be saying “Oh, no! This is the worst day of MY life! What do I do now?” Sound familiar?

The first step in helping your new dog cope is empathy. Put yourself in his paws for just a moment and try to remember a time when you were the new kid on the block, the scared kid on the first day of summer camp, the first day at your new job. Certainly not your finest hours. Why should your dog’s first days be any different? Understanding the motivating factors behind your dog’s behavior will help you determine what course of action to take to help ease his anxieties and pave the way for that wonderful relationship that is to come.

So what are some of the more typical signs of a dog’s stress? Everyone has seen them and may not have recognized them. We all know that dogs from time to time will whine or whimper and have chalked it up to them “just being a baby.” This can be one of the clearest indicators of stress as this is one way for the dog to DIRECTLY communicate to you his anxiety. Some of the more subtle signs include—but are not limited to—incessant pacing without settling down, drinking unusually large amounts of water, heavy panting for no good reason, and poor appetite.

When you see these behaviors, it is important to be understanding (remember empathy?) without babying him.

Here are some tips to try for a smoother transition:

- * Give him an option to do something fun, something as simple as a short walk or a quick treat.
- * Limit his water supply to prevent drinking too much.
- * If he doesn’t want to eat for a day or two, don’t push food or try to tempt him with “people food.”
- * Buy a crate so he can have his own “room” in your house—a place to “get away from it all.”
- * Establish a routine. Dogs are creatures of habit; they will invariably feel more comfortable in a structured environment and will adapt to your own particular routine.

Above all, do everything with confidence. Reaffirm to him through your actions that everything is ok and just as it should be. You will be surprised at how he will draw from your strength. Begin the bonding experience with your new friend by leading by example and redirecting him to these fun activities rather than coddling him, which will only lead to him becoming “just a baby.” It is at that moment that you will cease being the trainer and become the trainee.

Remember that while we have been talking about your dog’s adjustment period over his first few days, these signals will appear at various times throughout your relationship. It is just as important to begin to recognize these signals now, even if your friend is not “a new arrival.” By being aware of the signals, you will have a better understanding of his comfort level within the framework of your family. You will then be prepared to help raise that level and ultimately have a healthier and happier friend. 🌸



OK, so these jobs don't pay very well, but what they lack in \$\$ they make up for in fun and other intangible rewards. —Join us!

dogs on our main site and prioritize them so that, as foster space becomes available, we can assess which dog is in the greatest need and bring them into rescue. We need people to call the shelters and report that week's status to the committee chairperson.

Meet and Greets events@siberescue.com

Like to talk about Huskies? Like to meet new people? If so, then Meet and Greets would be perfect for you! We need people to help with the dogs, educate the public about rescue, sell merchandise, and help set up the booth.

Transport gerryh@siberescue.com

Like to drive? How about some Husky company? We always need volunteers to help transport our foster dogs from shelters to their foster homes. If you have some time and a vehicle in which you can transport a dog, let us know!

Educational Events events@siberescue.com

Children represent the next generation of dog owners. To help them develop a respect and understanding for dogs, we travel to local schools and camps to teach young people about dog care and about the history of the Siberian Husky. To make things fun, we bring a few dogs to meet and, room permitting, demonstrate dogsledding techniques.

Foster Homes scottb@siberescue.com

Foster homes are the core of rescue. We always need more foster spaces. The more foster spaces, the more dogs we can save from uncertain futures. Our foster families say that each dog they foster takes a little piece of their hearts when the dogs leave for their forever homes, but there are a great many rewards in return. It is rewarding to watch a dog develop from the shy, untrusting soul who first walked into their home into the confident, happy dog who is ready to go home to a new family for keeps.

QUALIFICATIONS: Must Love Huskies!

Internet nancyd@siberescue.com

In addition to our main site (www.siberescue.com), we post dogs that are available for adoption on a number of other sites. We are always looking for people to help us maintain these sites. Some of our projects require a little knowledge of HTML, but many do not require you to be a computer whiz at all!

Application Screening audreyb@siberescue.com

We can always use some help screening adoption applications. All you need is a phone, a little extra time, and the desire to play matchmaker between our dogs and their potential new families. An average application takes about four phone calls and one to two hours to complete. You can take as many or as few as you have time for and you make your own schedule.

Fundraising kimm@siberescue.com

As with any non-profit volunteer organization, we always need funds and volunteers to help raise them. Creative and resourceful minds will excel at this opportunity.

Adoptions audreyb@siberescue.com

Watching a rescue dog get selected and leaving them in their forever home will bring tears of joy to your eyes. We always need an extra pair of hands on adoptions. Most adoptions take place on the weekends and all you need to do is go along with one of our experienced volunteers.

Intake—Owner Surrenders judyc@siberescue.com

Unfortunately, we are contacted almost every week by people who want us to take their dog, for various reasons. Where feasible, we try to help the families work through issues so the dogs can stay in their current home. In the extreme cases where families absolutely must rehome their dogs, we gather information to post the dogs on our site. This job requires making one or two phone calls a week.

Newsletter nancyd@siberescue.com

Like to write? Create graphics? Exercise your creativity? We could use your help in developing newsletters such as this one. We have all sorts of jobs to do related to our newsletters, including their creation and publication, coordination, and distribution.

Intake—Shelters paigeb@siberescue.com

Once a week, we check with our local shelters to see if Huskies or Husky mixes have come to the shelter that week. We post these

(Continued on page 5)



We Work Hard So Our Dogs Can Rest Easy



At Tails of the Tundra, a lot goes on behind the scenes to free our dogs from worrying about anything other than what dogs understand best—playing, eating, sleeping, and enjoying life. We'd like to share some numbers with you to show how busy we've been this year.

- * Volunteers: 57, donating over 6,000 hours of their time to rescue activities
- * Foster homes: 10, providing temporary homes for an average of 2 dogs at a time
- * Shelters we work with: 32, from which we take dogs or to which we refer potential adopters
- * Events we attended: 32, with most events occurring over multiple days
- * Expenses: \$30,000, including vet bills, behavioral assessments, and supplies
- * Funds raised: \$35,000, from donations, merchandise sales, and fund-raising events
- * Adoption applications screened: 330
- * Dogs saved: 88, including adoptions, referrals, and families who—with our help—decided to work things out with their current furry friend

Tails of the Tundra



Siberian Husky Rescue, Inc.

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