

## **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN ADOPTING A PET!**

How much does it cost to have a pet? Sometimes I hear people complain about our very minimal adoption fees at Sammie's Friends. All of our animals have been spayed/neutered and vaccinated. Dogs have also been heart worm tested and micro-chipped. Sammie's Friends puts more in to each animal than we ever get back from the adoption fee. The adoption for a cat is \$55 and for a dog it comes to \$131 with microchip and license fee. Licensing is a legal requirement.

Once you have the pet you will need to put aside somewhere between \$500 and \$1,000 for the annual care of a dog. Your dog will need food, veterinary care, heartworm prevention, flea and tick medication food and water bowls, leashes, collars, annual veterinary care, such as teeth cleaning and vaccines, licensing fees, doggie beds, grooming, training, maybe boarding, toys and shampoo.

If you get a cat the ongoing annual care is between \$300 and \$700 for food, cat litter, routine veterinary care, vaccinations and boarding and grooming. Most cats need ongoing dental care to remain happy and healthy.

The above estimates are for relatively healthy pets. If your pet develops a serious health problem the vet bills will rise rather quickly. It is a good idea to carry health insurance on your pet to cover those exceptional costs.

These are expenses that need to be budgeted for each month. In order to bond with your pet and be motivated to take the proper care of your pet you need to be sure that you have the time and patience and financial resources to take in a pet. Pets are like children they take your time and attention in order to be pets that are a pleasure to have around. A well mannered pet is easier to bond with than an ill mannered, poorly socialized pet.

An adoption of a pet should be done with the same kind of thoughtfulness one would have a child. The pet adoption should be viewed as "forever" until the pet passes away of old age. It's not an "until" kind of thing . . . until I finish school, until I get married, until I have a baby, until I move, until I go to college, until, until, until .

Before adopting a pet it is a good idea to have a family discussion about what you want in a dog or cat, i.e. temperament, size, energy level. It is a good idea to read a bit about the various breeds before you get a pet. When adopting from the shelter let the shelter staff help you select the pet that is right for you and your family. If you get it right pet you will have more fun than you ever dreamed possible.

Pets need discipline (this means boundaries and limits, not abuse), exercise and affection. If you supply this you will be so happy with your furry friend and they with you. There is no greater delight than a wonderful pet or two or . . .

Come on down to Sammie's Friends, 14647 Mc Courtney Road, Grass Valley and meet your new best friend.

*Cheryl Wicks is the Co-Founder and President of Sammie's Friends*