



## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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## **SQSPCA celebrates February miracle**

### *Mom, puppies doing fine after unexpected arrival*

*March 1, 2022* – Just before midnight on February 10, a 6-year-old Siberian husky named Candy arrived at the Susquehanna Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SQSPCA). Her journey to Cooperstown was a long one, beginning more than 500 miles and some seven hours away in Ohio, with a brief stopover in Buffalo for a bathroom break and to change vehicles. Candy traveled with 10 other dogs, all retired breeders deemed by puppy mill owners to have outlived their usefulness.

“We have developed a relationship with Furever Friends Dog Rescue of WNY, a nonprofit group that saves retired dogs from puppy mills in Ohio that would otherwise be killed,” said Executive Director Stacie Haynes.

“Furever Friends does not have a brick-and-mortar shelter. These are dogs they were unable to place. We can usually adopt them out in a matter of days,” Haynes explained.

Before they can be sent to a new home, however, these dogs must be spayed or neutered. On February 18, one week after her medical intake, Candy was sedated, prepped for surgery, and on the operating table. That is where this story takes an unexpected turn.

“Medical Coordinator Sara Haddad rushed into my office to report there was an issue. Upon opening Candy up for her spay, the veterinarian had found a tiny puppy. We were shocked to learn that Candy was pregnant,” Haynes said.

Puppies and kittens, unlike human babies, develop in their own amniotic sacs. Each placenta is anchored to the mother’s uterus, providing nutrition and removing waste. Returning to the surgical suite, Haddad learned that the puppy had never fully developed and had died in the womb. Not long after, three more puppies – larger than the first – were discovered.

Haddad reported back to Haynes that, upon initial examination, it was thought these puppies had died in utero as well.

“We were very sad, of course, and the discovery came as quite a surprise,” Haynes said. “Puppy mills do not release dogs if they are pregnant, and Candy was very skinny when she arrived, showing no signs whatsoever that she was carrying a litter.”

Then, in what Haynes describes as “a complete rollercoaster ride,” a member of the medical team detected slight movement in the amniotic sacs. The three, larger puppies were still clinging to life.

“It was all hands on deck,” said Haynes.

The SQSPCA team immediately went to work on the pups, freeing them from the amniotic sacs, administering oxygen and stimulating their tiny bodies to help them recover from the effects of the anesthesia. Staff spent hours keeping the puppies alive and warm, bottle feeding them when they were finally fully awake. Because mom Candy was recovering from surgery, a member of the animal care staff took the litter home for the night in an incubator, continuing with bottle feeding every two hours and checking on their condition regularly.

“Wonderful mother that she is, Candy accepted the puppies the next day,” Haynes said. “All three survived and are thriving with their mom in a quiet, comfortable foster home,” she added.

The puppies – two males and a female – appear to be a cross between a Siberian husky (mom) and an Australian shepherd (dad). This Friday, they will be two weeks old.

“When I shared our experience with friends and family, they insisted this is a story that needs to be told,” said Haynes. “Our work at the shelter has many ups and downs of which the public is largely unaware, running the gamut from rehoming cats and dogs, to saving livestock in distress, to providing hospice care to animals too sick or badly injured to survive.

“This is a big win for our staff that helps make the losses more bearable,” Haynes added.

As for Candy – retirement may have been delayed a bit but she is taking it all in stride, enjoying a life finally free of confinement as she raises her last litter, Antonio, Bruno and Luisa.

*In operation since 1917, the Susquehanna SPCA is a 501c3 nonprofit organization committed to caring for homeless, surrendered, and seized companion animals and finding them loving, forever homes. For more information or to donate, visit [www.sqspca.org](http://www.sqspca.org)*