

How to be glad your Siberian sheds

It collects in the quiet corners of the house, revealing the stagnant areas of air-flow. It floats through the air and onto the counter tops...it is in the very air you breathe. It waxes and it wanes, but it is always there on your clothes and furniture, revealing to all the world that you own a Siberian husky. It is, of course, Siberian husky hair, in particular, that fine soft undercoat that keeps them so warm and our vacuum cleaners so busy. It is like the water of the sorcerer's



apprentice—the faster you brush, the more there is. There *has* to be a way to cope with all of it. Of course, one solution is not to own a Siberian husky. But for those of us that have completely capitulated to the charms of this breed, that is just not an option. So what do we do with it? Well, there is something for which it can be used that also benefits Siberians; it can be donated to the Save Our Siberians-Syberspace Rescue Fund, the SOS-SRF.

SOS-SRF, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity, is a group of Siberian Husky lovers that have banded together to raise money for the purpose of helping with special medical expenses of Siberians currently with rescue groups or shelters. This is done by collecting fur from our own well-fed, pampered dogs, spinning it into yarn and making items from that yarn. Those items, as well as other Siberian-related items, are then offered approximately twice a year on an Internet auction. The items have sold well; the group has raised thousand of dollars since its inception in the fall of 1997, benefitting nearly 650 dogs. The fund-raising has expanded to additional auction items as well as other items for direct sale.



The idea was originated by Pat Tetrault and Janet Whitesell when some particularly heart-rending rescue cases arose. When the idea was mentioned on Sibernet-L (an email list devoted to the Siberian Husky), several others expressed interest in knitting, crocheting, making dream catchers, etc., as well as helping with organization and administration of the fund. The board now comprises eleven members, nine in various parts of the US and two in Canada, and has long been officially non-profit in the USA. The fur is collected and sent to a spinner, who spins the fur into yarn. The yarn is then sent to a board member who distributes the yarn where needed. Other board members, along with some non-board members who just want to help out, knit or crochet hats, mittens, scarves, accessories for plush toys, dream catchers, etc. The items are then sent to the high bidders on the SOS-SRF auction.



If you would like to help out, you can send your fur to us; contact information is on our website. Collect it in paper bags, not plastic; it gets smelly stored in plastic, and it may not be spun right away. It must be thoroughly dry, so unless your dog is very dirty, it is better not to wash the dog. Just comb, collect, and send. Someone will spin it, wash the yarn in hot water to set the twist after spinning, label it with your name and your dog's name (or names if you have several dogs' fur combined) and send it to one of the knitters. One of us will work it into something to sell on the auction site. For more information about the group and its origins and work, the time of the next auction, and what we have for direct sale, visit <http://www.sos-srf.org>.

