We at Stafford were becoming resigned to the fact that Jacob may live out his life as our resident dog. This handsome, Northern Breed specimen, had been returned three times after short stays with potential adopters. He had behavioral idiosyncrasies that people who were used to Labs and Collies couldn’t understand. Jacob, simply put, was misunderstood. In the 16 months the staff and volunteers at the shelter who had the privilege to care and play with the big boy discovered a personality unlike any other dog we knew. He loved attention and had fun playing with the ball, but he wouldn’t retrieve. Worse yet, after chasing and securing the big ball in his play yard, he would play keep away with its pitcher. He would run up to you when greeted, only to turn and bang his side and back into your legs in a demonstration of affection. He didn’t really know how to play with other dogs. He was not aggressive, but the play would end with Jacob standing over his playmate in a show of dominance. Stafford does not have length-of-stay limits, as we will keep healthy animals indefinitely, until a suitable home is found. We were having our doubts that day would ever come for Jacob.

Enter Kim Kahl from the Northern Breed rescue group. Her mission is to help find tough-to-place dogs homes with folks who understand the breed. For six months, Kim posted Jacob’s picture on her social media site in hope a match could be found. Finally, in early October, Charlie and Margaret from WY called Kim to enquire about Jacob. You see, Charlie and Margaret had just lost their 14-year old Northern Breed and were anxious to fill the huge void left. They had the perfect set up, lots of acreage and a river running through their property. They contacted me and we agreed to meet the next day at the shelter. I was encouraged when their motor home pulled into our parking lot. Charlie showed the staff a picture of his old dog and it could have been Jacob’s brother. After the introduction, it was evident—the connection was undeniable, as if they had all been waiting for each other.

In Charlie and Margaret’s adoption interview the match became iron clad. Question: Why do you want a Northern Breed dog at this time? Answer: “We just had to put our 14 year old hybrid to sleep. We loved her; raised her from a puppy. We are lonely without her. We are extremely diligent, careful, loving and protective dog owners, retired and very capable of being full-time caretakers, exercisers and loving owners.” Bingo! They had no other dogs and the time & desire to work with Jacob around the clock. Jacob eagerly jumped into the motor home for the trip back to Wyoming. Sitting on Margaret’s lap on the couch, you could see the trust that was quickly established. Now all of us here at Stafford look forward to the weekly reports from WY on Jacobs’s progress. He is working with a trainer to help make him comfortable with other dogs. He loves his new house and sleeps on the bed with Charlie and Margaret. He has a doggie door and can go to the river any time he wants. The regimented life Jacob was used to at the shelter has given way to ultimate freedom. He howls at the moon and resembles a dog artifact one might find in the desert southwest.

Curious about Jacob’s heritage, Charlie ordered a DNA test on our boy. The results recently came back: Jacob, it turns out, is a German Shepherd, Alaskan Malamute and wolf cross. Acreage, a river, mountains, incredibly devoted humans. What more could we have hoped for? “The call of the wild, the cry of the wolf.”
Stafford Animal Shelter has opened its doors to over 900 animals in 2015, through November. The communities we service have responded, providing loving homes (or owners reunited with pets) for over 800 of these animals. Our boundaries have expanded—we have facilitated adoptions from all over the state, with people from Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Arizona heeding the call to adopt from Stafford.

The Arizona connection is a particularly heartwarming story. A woman from Phoenix saw our Dalmatians on our web page. Sammy and Davis were surrendered when their owner was hospitalized and could no longer care for them. This Dalmatian lover in Arizona had recently lost her beloved Dal. Once she saw pictures and heard of their sweet disposition, she decided to adopt both! Before we transferred Sammy and Davis, their new “mom” signed up for three weeks of board and train at Know Thy Dog, a much respected training facility owned by Kelly Engle, our board member. After the training, we had to figure out how to get them to Phoenix. The woman was happy to pay to fly them, but we all felt that they had been through enough. When we discovered they love car rides, we knew the answer, I love car rides too. Off we went through Southern Utah, the Grand Canyon and Sedona. Two days later we arrived in Phoenix, where the connection between Sammy, Davis and their new family was instantaneous, and a huge success!

Another connection was established last spring, when we were approached by a rescue organization in Wolf Point, MT. Pound Puppies is a group of foster families that take in homeless dogs from the Fort Peck Reservation. Stafford’s network for potential adopters is much larger than theirs so we agreed to take a group of dogs. This partnership has been so successful that we’ve also started taking in dogs from foster groups on the Crow and Blackfeet reservations. We have placed over 30 dogs through this new program. The dogs have been great with wonderful temperaments and are very social and exuberant. The feedback from the families who have given these dogs safe and loving homes has been very positive.

While we’ve been able to find great homes for almost all the dogs that end up walking through our doors, right now our kitty population is at capacity. We have exhausted our foster network for kitten duty and need your help, if possible. The litters are adorable and hilarious. They need socialization with people so come on in and play with them. They are a riot! We received a generous donation to purchase new stainless steel kennels for our kittens. These kennels are larger and more secure and will provide more comfort for these little ones, but we still need more help and homes.

It’s hard to adequately thank everyone in the community for the support we’ve seen this past year. When an animal gets adopted I always say to them as they leave Stafford, “Welcome to the first day of the rest of your life.” We can be there for them because you are there for us. This mission and common goal helps bring our community together, which is a hugely gratifying thing to be part of. So thank you, Livingston and surrounding communities. And a special thank you to our dedicated staff and volunteers here at Stafford Animal Shelter.
**Stafford Animal Shelter Annual Report**

<table>
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<th>Animals Served</th>
<th>Dogs</th>
<th>Cats</th>
<th>Small Mammals, Birds, Reptiles and Others</th>
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<td>265</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**2015 Business Partners**

*Our Pet Patrons provide crucial funds and receive multimedia publicity exposure year round. There are support levels to accommodate all business budgets. You can also offer donations or in-kind services for events or shelter operations. Show your support of the animals and reach the thousands of followers who loyally read our Pet of the Week ads in the Enterprise, website, Facebook, social media and attend our events. Contact Development Director, Alicia Davis for more information on becoming a business partner for 2016.*

**Leader of the Pack**
- Chico Hot Springs

**Best Friends**
- Battle Ridge Construction
- Spectec Thunderbird Intl.
- Livingston Self Storage

**Patron Sponsors**
- Printingforless.com
- Security Solutions
- Small Dog Realty
- Yellowstone Country Motors

**Guardian Sponsors**
- Black Dog Rehab
- Bridger Feeds Animal Nutrition
- Helpdeskmt.com
- MLV Enterprises
- Murdoch’s Ranch & Home Supply
- Yard Guard Inc.
- Yellowstone Imports
- Yellowstone Turf, Home & Agriculture

**Companion Sponsors**
- All Wags & Whiskers
- Arrowhead Electric Inc.
- Crown Creations Cabinetmakers
- CTA Engineering
- First Choice Accounting
- ERA Landmark Western Land
- First Interstate Bank
- Jon Ellen Snyder, ERA Western Landmark
- Knife River Corporation
- Miller Architects
- Montana Farrier Supplies
- Native Landscapes & Reclamation
- Nevin’s Glass
- Quesenberry Insurance
- Total Electric

**Advocate Sponsors**
- Mark’s In & Out
- Montana Party Rentals
- Select Stone
- Sky Federal Credit Union
- Tri County Heating & Cooling
- Yellowstone Physical Therapy

**Veterinary Business Sponsors**
- 360 Pet Medical
- All West Veterinary Hospital
- Animal Care Clinic
- Colmey Veterinary Hospital
- Cottonwood Veterinary Hospital
- Double Diamond Veterinary Hospital
- Hardaway Veterinary Hospital
- Livingston Veterinary Hospital
- Pet Emergency Trauma Services

**Pet of the Week Sponsors**
- At Home on the Range Pet Cemetery
- Huppert, Swindlehurst & Woodruff PC
- Kenyon Noble
- Livingston’s Ace Hardware
- WomenRidersNow.com
Many dog owners have heard of the condition commonly referred to as “cherry eye,” and here at the shelter, we recently took in a little Dachshund who had been dealing with this issue for a while.

Cherry eye results from a prolapse of the gland of the third eyelid that is present in many mammals, including our dogs and cats. Smaller breed dogs, like Boston Terriers, Cocker Spaniels, and Bulldogs can lack the ability to hold this gland in place, so that it may protrude, or prolapse, out to a reddened mass which owners usually notice at the inside corner of the dog’s eye. When the gland is out of place, blood flow becomes restricted, causing it to swell further, usually requiring surgery to repair.

Because the gland provides lubrication via tear production, when we surgically repair a cherry eye, our goal is to replace it and maintain function, not remove it. This is done by creating a small pocket in the membranes that surround the gland so that it can be tucked back into its original position, and sutures are placed over top of the incision to hold the gland in place while the tissues heal. Since the gland originally prolapsed due to an inherent lack of strength in the surrounding tissues, about 1 in 10 surgeries will require a second or even third repair. However, most animals recover well, and are back in action about a week after surgery.

Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers and staff, our Dachshund shelter resident, Gir, was able to have his surgery in Stafford’s surgical suite and has been recovering comfortably in foster care until he’s ready for adoption.

Gir is currently in foster care with our wonderful volunteer Jeanne Knox. She is serving as his adoption ambassador (see below). According to his foster mom: “Gir is sweet and easy going. He has done well with the two chocolate labs in the house. He is comfortable in his skin, as a result, he does not present as needy – like many small dogs do. He will park himself on the sofa and settle in. He is not bothered by everyday sounds and will gladly nap through most activity. He does sleep through the night in his crate but prefers not to be alone. He is smart, responsive and a fantastic snuggler-prefering to wedge himself alongside you than be a lap dog. He is quick to learn what is and is not acceptable, and does not push the envelope. He is eager to go for leash walks and has the stamina to walk several miles. Once home, he is quick to settle. He does well in the car too and curls up on the seat”. Great boy!

Adoption Ambassador Program Begins at Stafford

The Shelter is a recipient of a grant from the ASPCA for the “Ambassador Adoption Program”. The program helps facilitate animal adoptions by giving fosters and other volunteers the resources needed to take the lead on select shelter animal adoptions, with particular focus on hard to adopt animals because of breed, behavior problems from shelter life, pre-existing injuries or other factors. The program gives dogs and cats a better chance at finding homes by engaging volunteers as adoption counselors and foster parents. Further, it lets adopters get more detailed information about an animal’s behavior in a home environment and improved quality of life for the animal while awaiting adoption. Adoption Ambassadors will be selected from referrals, our current network of fosters and additional volunteers looking to engage in this rewarding and hands-on opportunity. All Ambassadors will be required to complete training sessions and will be given resources as needed to assist in the process. Ambassadors are not required to foster animals, and could instead focus on outreach efforts, for example, using word of mouth, e-mails to friends and family, or simply by hitting the streets and making the animal known to the public. If you are interested in becoming an Adoption Ambassador, please contact Alicia Davis: pr@staffordanimalshelter.org.
Calla Lilly’s Healthy and Happy Retirement

Calla Lilly was another senior cat with a sad story who was surrendered here at the Shelter. Her lifelong owner took ill and could no longer care for her at 14 years old, the lifestyle change was detrimental to her well-being, she was depressed and stopped eating, her liver and kidneys were failing. She was deemed a hospice case and we were honored to give her the best life we could and keep her comfortable here with us. We moved her into the administrative office where she spent her days on a heating pad napping, she was not very interested in anything else. The more interaction she had with people, the more alive she became. She would even get up and drink out of a water fountain and lift her head when she heard the shake of the treat jar. Eventually we brought in another cat to keep her company and they even cuddled while they slept. Over the weeks, Calla Lilly started exploring our office, getting up to greet visitors and started eating again. We felt it was time to find her a home. Enter Marie Stordahl the Research and Development Manager for our local ASPCA, she saw Calla Lilly’s post on Facebook and was immediately drawn to her as she has a soft spot for senior and special needs pets. She came to meet her and adopted her on the spot. Lilly’s soft energy level, very low maintenance lifestyle, and lap-warming skills are all a perfect match for Marie’s home as she will be retiring from the ASPCA in late November. This loving home has obviously agreed with Lilly, at her recent vet appointment her liver and kidney blood work came back nearly normal for a cat of her age. She is on a prescribed renal diet of cooked chicken which Marie happily prepares for her. She still sits on her heating pad and drinks from a fancy fountain, but this time she’s healthy and happy - love has rejuvenated her, and inspired us. Best wishes sweet girl!

25 Cats of Christmas!

In early November generous Shelter supporter Bonnie Allchin came in to deliver a large donation and visit our kitten room. Bonnie, a resident of Paradise Valley, is a lifetime dog and cat owner. She likes to come in and fawn over the furry little babies and give them the much needed human interaction and socialization. We came to talking about the currently overcrowded cat wing, having to put cats in our offices, in play cages in the hallways and having to ask people to postpone their surrenders until kennels open up. She said “if I could pay to find them homes, I would” and out of her statement, a creative fundraiser was born! For each of the first 25 cats adopted between now and Christmas, she will donate $200 to the Shelter. If there every was a time to open your heart and home, it’s now. Lets help raise $5,000 for our Shelter and find homes for these fabulous feline. Follow the fun on Facebook at #sas25cats.

Spay and Neuter Project

Did you know that the Spay and Neuter Project is a separate non-profit from the shelter? We are so lucky to have them operate in our community! They began in 2003 setting out to provide our community with low-cost ways to get both owned pets and community cats spayed or neutered and vaccinated. Their mission is to improve the wellbeing of people and animals through overpopulation control and low-cost, donation-based vaccinations. Since 2012, they have spayed and neutered over 6,000 animals through their voucher program with local veterinarians, donation-based clinics, and “Big Kitty Fixes” for rural communities. They have done this amazing work with an all volunteer staff and through donations, grants, and support from the City of Livingston and Park County. They continue to combat overpopulation and homelessness among animals in Park, Sweetgrass and Meagher Counties. They also help those who need financial assistance to get the vet care that their animals need to remain healthy. Please contact them for additional information on upcoming clinics, vouchers or to make a donation. (406) 223-2134 or spayneuterlivingston@gmail.com.

Bonnie, Isabella & Jamaica
Live to Tell... Surviving a Grizzly Attack

A beautiful October day walk along the Yellowstone River in Paradise Valley turned into hell as Kate Cholewa and her senior shelter dog Carmen were attacked by a grizzly bear. Thankfully both survived the attack and we had the pleasure of meeting and caring for Carmen while Kate was being treated at a nearby hospital. Many people don’t know that Stafford Animal Shelter’s resources and services extend well beyond surrenders, adoptions and stray reclaims. We provide valuable services to the community through our special funds such as the “Guardian Angel Fund” which allowed us to help “hero dog” Carmen when they were faced with this emergency situation. We also offer safe haven and care for animals in domestic violence households, emergency evacuations (such as wildfires and floods) and cruelty/hoarding situations. We could not offer these resources to our community without the help of individual and business donors. Please consider donating in honor of Carmen and all the other dogs who are helped by Stafford Animal Shelter in their time of need! Here is the account of the day in Kate’s own words. We are so grateful for their recovery and for Kate’s lifelong support of shelter dogs.

“Carmen is my third shelter dog. I got each as a small black puppy and was blessed with 14 years with the first, 8 (not enough!) with the second, and Carmen is now twelve. My animal companions have been profound and important relationships in my life from which I’ve learned much - from the time one puts in teaching a pup the ropes in life so we could move through the world together safely and with ease as a team; through the adult years of companionship where my dogs also offered safety and protection; to the senior years when once again the roles shift and I feel protective of my older dog whose moving more slowly, perhaps, with achy limbs and hips. That’s where I thought I was at with my 12-yr old Carmen. But I was wrong. While hiking at Point of Rocks on October 12, when I saw her hackles rise, I stepped past her, not wanting her to lunge at something that might aggravate a tricky knee. Two steps past her, I turned to the left and was face-to-face with a grizzly. Then, I was flat on the ground. Carmen had been right behind me. She barked and I don’t know what else but she got that bear off me and managed also to escape herself. Even without being saved from a bear, my dogs have shaped my life and provided me with love and security. When one’s dog becomes a senior, most dog people know, the love between you just deepens all the more. I thought we were in the era of me stepping forward again to protect her, just like when she was a pup. But I was wrong. We’re in it together, to the end.”

Kate (K.M.) Cholewa is a writer and author of the novel Shaking Out the Dead. She lives in Emigrant, MT.
Rx Coffee has joined Stafford Animal Shelter for a warm winter fundraiser. The local coffee shop has declared the first Thursday of every month as “Shelter Day”. They will be offering double punches on your frequent customer card, adoptable animals will be visiting in the cafe and they will be donating a portion of the day’s proceeds to the shelter. They will also be selling stainless steel coffee mugs with 100% of the proceeds going to the animals. The extra bonus, every time you use your travel mug at Rx, you will receive a $.50 discount on your coffee. Be sure to grab one of their homemade pastries too. Rx Coffee is located at the east end of Park Street right before the bridge. Be sure to stop in (or drive thru) when you’re heading down to the Shelter.

Photo: Rx Coffee owner, Diane Coffman visits with Steve and shelter dog Honey
Even if it’s not running, you can donate your old vehicle, get a tax deduction, and we can use the funds to care for the many animals we welcome. Everyone wins! It’s easy to schedule a pick up and they accept many types of vehicles, not just cars. To learn more call the Car Donation Wizard directly at 877-957-2277. As for your new car, how about some stylish Stafford Animal Shelter license plates? These raise a significant amount of funds to feed our animals every year and can be purchased at any time, regardless of your license plate renewal date, and are available statewide. Share your Shelter love with our new bumper stickers. $2.00 at the Shelter, or call and we’ll mail them for $3.00!