

ANIMAL TALES

News from Stafford Animal Shelter Winter 2019

Helping stray cats

The rule of 3's &
the 5 freedoms

A new home for Klaus!

and more....

Stafford
Animal Shelter
Livingston, Montana



Shelter Info

Stafford Animal Shelter

3 Business Park Road
Livingston, MT 59047
Phone: (406) 222-2111
Fax: (406) 222-4938



Website: www.staffordanimalshelter.org

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram!

Email address: info@staffordanimalshelter.org

The shelter is just east of Livingston off Hwy 89, exit 337

Hours: Wednesday – Sunday from 12 noon to 5 p.m.



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Lisa Lobosco
Lolee Nave
Nicholas Radovich

Facilities Manager

Charles Worth

Veterinarian

Dr. Julie Kappes, DVM

BOARD

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On the cover:

Beauregard
enjoying the shelter's
catio. Read more
about Beauregard and
other stray cats
on page 6.

Letter from the Executive Director

Traveller, pictured below, was one of the first kitties that came to us from a hoarding case that presented itself in town over the past year. You may recall, we took in over 60 cats and kittens from this situation. Many of them had a serious gastrointestinal disorder that was untreatable but for dozens of these neglected animals the outcomes were very successful. Traveller was one of these happy ending tails! It appears the hoarding situation is under control and the city is working with a local veterinarian to treat the challenges from neglect and inbreeding for the animals that have come from that home. It is wonderful that our community rose to the occasion and became advocates for these unwanted kitties. Earlier this year you may remember, the 17 little pugs that were left in a trailer when the owner was airlifted to Great Falls with a serious medical condition. The White Sulphur Springs police asked us to come up and get them which we did. They too were in poor health however within a couple weeks we had homes for all of them. These situations are tough on the staff and tough on our expenses. We want to thank all of you who pitched in and helped rescue these animals!

The goal of Managed Intake, which was our project for the University of Wisconsin fellowship we participated in, was intended to ultimately reduce the length of stay of all animals in our care. Reducing the length of stay is one of the biggest contributors to improving our bottom line. In 2018 the 742 animals we cared for thru September had an average length of stay of 28.9 days which equaled 22,100 animal days. In 2019 the average length of stay for the 858 animals for the same time period was 16.0 days equaling 13,695 animal days which is a 44% improvement. The improvement resulted from Stafford changing many of the intake policies we previously adhered to. This included scheduling surrenders, eliminating quarantine periods for healthy animals and creating a successful foster to adopt program. This helps all involved, the animals especially but the staff, volunteers and potential adoptees as stress levels for all go down and Stafford is a happier place! - Steve Leach

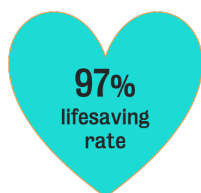


Adopters Carrie Holder & Bethanie MacLean say
"Traveller, named this to reflect the arduous journey from a desperate situation to her forever home with us. She seems grateful, but we are more grateful for the happiness and love she has brought into our lives."



The Year at a Glance

| November 2018 to October 2019 | Dogs | Cats | 'Zoo' | Total | ★ Highlights ★ |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|--|
| Intakes | 595 | 460 | 136 | 1191 | → 1191 total animals served is a record for the shelter |
| Stray | 239 | 135 | 17 | 391 | → Stray rates have been decreasing, but more can be done. See page 6 for related story. |
| Owner Surrender | 124 | 246 | 113 | 483 | → Cat surrenders spiked due to on-going hoarding case. Other surrenders have decreased thanks to some alternatives available |
| Transfer In | 203 | 71 | 6 | 280 | → With managed admissions and resulting shortened length of stay, we have more room to save more animals like Reservation dogs |
| Emergency services | 29 | 8 | 0 | 37 | → Did you know that Stafford helps our community's most vulnerable pet owners with temporary boarding services? |
| Outcomes | 584 | 409 | 151 | 1144 | → 1144 successful outcomes in 12 months is also a record! |
| Return to Owner | 222 | 32 | 5 | 259 | → Thanks to tagging and microchipping, dogs are reclaimed within 1 day, on average. Stray cat reclaims are infrequent. |
| Transfer Out | 13 | 12 | 82 | 107 | → Many of our 'Zoo' animals are transferred to PetSmart for quicker adoptions. Stafford pets are adopted, not purchased, you'll see them identified with our signs and applications. |
| Adoptions | 349 | 365 | 64 | 778 | → 778 adoptions means 778 pets with new families! Length of stay is down for all animals, limiting their stress while in the shelter |



Become a Business Partner!

STAFFORD ANIMAL SHELTER

ANNUAL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP 2020

WE SERVE AND ARE SUPPORTED BY A COMMUNITY THAT CARES!

| Benefits | 2 full color logo newspaper ads, window decal, name in newsletter & on SAS site | Use of SAS "Business Partner" badge for marketing & 2 digital ads with logo in shelter lobby | Logo & link to your business on SAS site, 1 Facebook tag (6,000 average view per post) | 1 annual adoption event at your business with SAS pets & staff | Logo on newsletter exterior (circulation 3,000) | Fur Ball Sponsor included on publicity & program at event | 1 annual newsletter feature story + 2 Fur Ball tickets | Fur Ball title sponsor on publicity and table of 8 at Fur Ball |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| <i>Cool Cat</i> \$250-\$499 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Pet Patron</i> \$500 - \$999 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Pick of the Litter</i> \$1,000 - \$1,999 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Top Dog</i> \$2,000 - \$2,999 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Friend for Life</i> \$3,000 - \$4,999 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Best in Show</i> \$5,000 - \$9,999 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Leader of the Pack</i> - \$10,000+ | | | | | | | | |

promotions, please respond via attached reply card by **MARCH 20, 2020**.
Business Partnerships run annually from April 1st - April 1st. Please contact Alicia Davis at adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org with questions.

Thank you for following us!

We have one of the most heavily traveled FB pages in Park County with 6,000 average hits daily, several viral posts & a loyal audience that helps share our mission!

"Help find JJ a Home"
230,252 people reached
37,605 engagements
2,876 shares

"Pug Rescue"
132,732 people reached
52,704 engagements
1,055 shares

"Cat Hoarding Case"
68,086 people reached
33,398 engagements
559 shares

"Dog Population=Zero!"
51,922 people reached
14,260 engagements
367 shares

"Winter Rez Pup Rescue"
47,936 people reached
8,858 engagements
383 shares

Shelters Helping Shelters

The one thing we all have in common is our love for the critters. We take them all here at Stafford and have no length of stay requirements until we find each one a good home. With our management practices we are lucky not to experience overcrowding and we generally have room to help other shelters and rescues with transfers when they are up against it. Take Dillon for example. The Beaverhead shelter there has been critically overcrowded for years. They have recently hired a new Executive Director and have had a complete Board of Directors turnover. That's the good news. The bad news is they have over 100 cats and 90 dogs housed in group kennels in a very chaotic situation. Dr. Erica Schumacher, the Northern Tier Veterinarian from U of Wisconsin has moved to Dillon and is spearheading an operational change that will limit intakes. We are helping Beaverhead get to more manageable numbers. This past month we have transferred over 20 dogs and cats from their facility and will continue to do so as long as they don't let the situation get out of hand again. We believe the new board and new ED are committed to this change in philosophy.



Photos: above, Nibits is an 8 year old cat who has lived in the Dillon shelter for 5 years and is currently available for adoption at Stafford; left (top) two puppies rescued from eating roadkill on Crow Reservation & adopted in our community; below, Ajax was saved from the pound in Wolf Point and found a family at our shelter

We are continuing to work with our rescue partners on the Montana Indian Reservations. We have transferred in over 200 animals from 3 Reservations this year alone. That number is up 38% from a year ago. We of course spay & neuter all these guys so they will not have any more unwanted litters. This "Rez Dog" program is very important as the suffering on the Crow and Ft. Peck reservations is acute. Our challenge is we are limited to the number we can transport. Our transfer vehicle can only hold 4 crates which is much fewer than is needed. The shelter is seeking support for purchase of a larger transport vehicle in 2020. This will be a critical resource for our lifesaving work.

The Five Freedoms

The Five Freedoms are internationally accepted standards of care that affirm every living being's right to humane treatment. These standards were developed by Britain's Farm Animal Welfare Council in 1965 and adapted by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians for companion animals in shelters. The Freedoms ensure that we meet the physical, and just as importantly, the mental needs of the animals in our care. Stafford accepts all pets in need regardless of their age, medical condition, breed or species. We do not have a length of stay restriction so as long as the animals are not suffering physically, mentally or a threat to our community, they are allowed to stay with us as long as needed until they find a family. While in our care, we proudly endorse these humane principles of animal welfare and we strive to provide them through socially responsible sheltering.

- 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst.** This includes access to fresh water and proper nutrition to maintain health. This must be specific to the animal. For example: puppies, adult dogs, newborns, nursing cats, and senior cats all need different types of food provided on different schedules.
- 2. Freedom from discomfort.** We provide an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area. This includes soft bedding and an area with appropriate temperature, noise levels, and access to natural light. If an animal is outside it is only for their temporary enjoyment, not for housing, and it has shelter from the elements.
- 3. Freedom from pain, injury, or disease.** We prevent this with rapid diagnosis and treatment. This includes vaccinating animals, monitoring animal's physical & mental health, treating any injuries, providing appropriate medications and not allowing animals to suffer with untreatable conditions.
- 4. Freedom to express normal behavior.** We provide sufficient space, proper facilities, and company of the animal's own kind (dog play groups and community cat housing). Animals need to be able to interact with — or avoid — others as desired and we respect their choices. They must be able to stretch every part of their body and run, jump, and play.
- 5. Freedom from fear and distress.** We provide conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering. Psychological stress can quickly transition into physical illness especially in a shelter environment. These conditions can be achieved by preventing overcrowding through managed intake, providing sufficient enrichment, socialization, exercise, a safe hiding space and medication as needed.



A Home for Klaus

Our amazing rescue partners on the Crow Reservation, Help Every Pet, of Hardin, answered the late-night call to save this pup from his owners that no longer wanted him. The owners had asked the Bureau of Indian Affairs to remove the dog and thankfully HEP was called to step in. They found him with an infection on his neck from the embedded shoelace that was used as a collar. He spent his life on a short rope. We fundraised for emergency surgery to be performed in Hardin and Klaus was healing nicely. It never ceases to amaze us when a dog is mistreated yet still so loving, gentle and forgiving to humans. Klaus was very sweet even after suffering



so much pain. Stafford wants to give our community a huge thank you for all

the outpouring of help for Klaus's care. We even had a little girl bring in her piggy bank to help with the surgical costs. Klaus is now in a great family and lives with another Rez Dog named Pumpkin. He is so happy. Dawn, Klaus' new mom says "He has been a great addition to our family. The cats play with him now and even take naps with him sometimes. He is full of love and energy. Pumpkin and Klaus are the best of friends and he really learns from her more than us." She adds, "He is doing GREAT! We love him tons!" We love it when these unwanted, neglected animals catch a break. They so deserve it!



Photos: above, Klaus after rescue and prior to surgery on his neck wounds; Left, happy adoption day for Klaus and his new family; below, Klaus and Pumpkin, also a Reservation dog, now new best friends forever.

Fur Ball is our most important fund-raising event of the year. It also happens to be the most fun with fabulous silent and live auction items, great gourmet food & wine and the company of other VIP shelter donors. If you cannot attend but would like to help, please consider donating an auction item from your business or a family heirloom, antique, vacation home, unique experience, jewelry, etc.


Please contact Alicia Davis for details, adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org



SAVE THE DATE, BOOK YOUR ROOM!
MAY 15th 2020
TICKETS ON SALE IN MARCH

FUR BALL


3D



In the first 3 days,

- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed
- ☐ May be scared and unsure of what is going on
- ☐ Not comfortable enough to be "himself"
- ☐ May not want to eat or drink
- ☐ Shut down and want to curl up in his crate or hide under a table
- ☐ Testing the boundaries

3W



After 3 weeks,


- ☐ Starting to settle in
- ☐ Feeling more comfortable
- ☐ Realizing this could possibly be his forever home
- ☐ Figured out his environment
- ☐ Getting into a routine
- ☐ Lets his guard down and may start showing his true personality

3M



After 3 months,

- ☐ Finally completely comfortable in his home.
- ☐ Building trust and a true bond
- ☐ Gained a complete sense of security with his new family





3-3-3 Rule

The 3-3-3 rule is an animal welfare guideline which we think offers great advice as to what to expect when you bring home a newly adopted shelter dog. The key to helping your dog make a successful adjustment is to be prepared and to be patient. In addition to the basic supplies a dog needs, be prepared for his emotional needs too. He will be overwhelmed from all the environmental changes and being moved yet again to new location with new people. He may sleep a lot for the first 3 days and appear fearful or shut down. Good advice is to adopt a dog before a weekend or when you can be home with him for long periods of time so the bonding begins immediately. Keep them on leash, avoid dog parks and chaotic environments until you have complete trust of each other. Take resident pet introductions slowly and keep the home calm. Establish a daily routine the dog can count on. After the initial decompression time, usually by 3 weeks, you will start to see your new buddy settle in and let his true personality shine. By 3 months he will be comfortable and realize you chose him as family, and be so grateful you did!



Photos: above, reunited and it feels so good! Beau on his happy reclaim day. Below, an example of an attention getting found cat sign

Finding Beau



Beauregard is our handsome 10-year-old cover boy who came into the shelter as a stray in early June. His finder checked with all the neighbors, observed his behavior and determined he was lost and needed shelter. He had a big presence with an old curmudgeon "catitude" that made him an endearing favorite of staff but a slight turn-off for adopters. He had been with us for over 3 months when a woman came in looking to adopt a kitten. She picked out a spunky little tortoiseshell kitten from our kitten room, but decided to take a lap around and visit the adult cats too before she left. She saw Beau and swore it was her partner's missing cat. We checked the paperwork though and they lived in Clyde Park, Beau was found in Livingston city limits, could it be that Beau traveled (or was transported) on a 20 mile journey? She went home and talked to her husband about this cat she saw and urged him to check it out the next day. He came into the shelter and immediately Beauregard recognized his dad! The cranky cat who would swat and nip at others, lovingly jumped into his owner's arms and was carried right out to the car. We were so happy for Beau, and his newly adopted little "sister", it was a wonderful family reunion.

Sadly these reunions are not common at our shelter, in the past year we only had an 18% return to owner rate on cats yet an 88% return to owner rate on dogs. It's clear people are not thinking to look for their cats in the shelter. When we ask people why not, most commonly they

assume their cat had met its demise or someone else started feeding it and lured it away. We are trying to educate the public with our "All Cats Who Wander Are Not Lost" campaign and urge people to let the cat be, observe the behavior first, check with neighbors, hang up signs, use social media, do not feed it & do not take it inside or to the shelter right away. In our rural area, it is common for people to have inside/outside pet cats and friendly barn cats. Sometimes they go on a walk-a-bout and are not lost at all. Research shows that healthy cats, being cared for and fed, usually don't roam more than .25 miles from their home (it's less for females and neutered males).

There are always exceptions to the norm and cats can truly be lost sometimes. They end up in the wrong place at the wrong time, they can be snoozing in a car engine and take an unexpected ride out of town, they can be trapped in their neighbor's sheds or basements, newly adopted/recently moved cats can be disoriented and not know their homes yet. These are the cats we are here to help. The homeless, hurt or neglected cats who need our love and care.

We always post photos of stray animals on our Facebook page and website, we hold them for 5 days before we make them available for adoption by the public. We spay/neuter, deworm, vaccinate and microchip every cat who comes through our doors so not only are we helping maintain a healthy community cat population but the microchip is an essential tool in helping reunite families. We urge everyone who has lost a cat to post flyers in your neighborhood, check social media, visit the shelter often to look at the cats in person and never give up hope that your cat is still out there. We were happy that we could be here for Beauregard in his time of need, but even happier when his family came in and found him!

DO YOU KNOW THIS CAT?

She's trying to move in our house, asking for dinner, lounging on our deck...
pretty demanding actually!

REWARD OFFERED TO OWNER

IF YOU TAKE HER BACK HOME!



Call your cat: 406-222-****

Brewery Cat 🐾

Trinity was a two-year-old tabby who came in as a stray when she was found at an abandoned trailer home. Upon arriving at the shelter she was scared & aggressive in her kennel, the staff couldn't even feed her without a swat on the wrist & a hiss. We sent her to our "1/2 way house" for troubled cats, which doubles as our Director of Operations, Alicia Davis' office. She worked slowly with her and gave her time to adjust. Trinity learned to be around noise, people and was coaxed out of her shell being hand fed tuna and treats. She became an affectionate cat with amazing mousing skills proudly displaying her accomplishments on the office chair. It was time for her to find a home, not a traditional home though, her destiny was to be an official "brewery cat". She hit the jackpot when our friends at Neptune's Brewery adopted her. They appropriately renamed her "Puss-eidon" to match their tagline "Drink Like a God". Pusseidon is one of the crew now and helps keep the brewers and customers company. You can find her on the taproom couch, patrolling the warehouse or running on the wall tracks & perches they installed for her. She's a great example of how patience, trust & compassion can change a shelter pet's life for the best. "Cheers" to a very happy adoption!



Photos: Left to right, Trinity initially was angry & withdrawn in the shelter; Neptune's Owner Jon Berens on adoption day; SAS volunteer & Neptune's Brewer, Chad Wistey with his quality control assistant



Invest in Your Community

Why do you invest? For many people, here's the answer: "I invest because I want to enjoy a comfortable retirement." And that's certainly a great reason, because all of us should regularly put money away for our needs in the future. But you can also benefit by investing in your community.

You may want to invest in the social fabric of your community by contributing to local charitable, civic, educational or cultural groups. Of course, now that we're in the holiday season, it's the perfect time for such gifts. Furthermore, your gift will be more appreciated than in years past because one of the chief incentives for charitable giving – a tax deduction – was lost for many people due to tax law changes, which raised the standard deduction so significantly that far fewer people chose to itemize deductions. However, you might still be able to gain some tax benefits from your charitable gifts. To name one possibility, you could donate financial assets, such as stocks that have risen in value, freeing you of potential capital gains taxes. Also, if the your gift is not in the form of investment securities, you may want to consider looking into the Montana En-



Contributor,
Stephanie Cunningham
Financial Advisor with
Edward Jones in Livingston.
Stephanie is both a
Business Partner and
Volunteer for the shelter.
Thank you Stephanie!

dowment Tax Credit. For more information you can visit www.mtcf.org/Giving/Giving-at-MCF/Montana-Endowment-Tax-Credit. In any case, contact your tax advisor if you're considering sizable charitable gifts.

Saving for your retirement will always be important. But don't forget about investing in your community – because these investments can provide satisfying returns.



Invest in the shelter for the generations to come

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Current Resident or:



Holiday Ideas for Family, Friends & Shelter Pets! Gift cards: Town & Country, Costco, Ace Hardware, Spur Line, Murdoch's, Chewy, Amazon for shelter supplies. Gas cards for transport & rescue trips. Credit at Sleeping Giant Animal Clinic for emergency veterinary care. Large cargo van for animal transports (Business / Naming Opportunities available for large donations). Large stock tanks to be used as swimming pools, cat trees and scratching posts (we can only accept brand new cat trees due to disease exposure), plastic cat play toys that can be sanitized, cat nip spray, Cat Dancer fleece toys, cat brushes, Friskies canned food (shreds or fillets only), stainless

steel feeding buckets with prongs for kennels, West Paw or Kong fillable treat toys (large size), 6ft English style dog slip leads, medium & large snap buckle collars, dog enrichment toys and feeders, snuffle mats, Zukes training treats, pet safe ice melt, zip ties, dry erase markers, magnetic dry erase boards, magnets with clips, Sharpie markers (fine and regular tip black and colored), colored removable masking tape, white copy / printer paper, lamination pockets, hand sanitizer, Simple Green, disinfectant wipes, hand soap & paper towels.



Leader of the Pack:



Best in Show:



Friend for Life:

