

# ANIMAL TALES

News from Stafford Animal Shelter Summer 2020



Reservation Rescue Program Turns 5!

Diabetes in Pets

Take Your Cat for a Walk

Sheltering in the 'New Normal'

and more....





# Shelter Info

Stafford Animal Shelter  
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Livingston, MT 59047  
Phone: (406) 222-2111  
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Website: [www.staffordanimalshelter.org](http://www.staffordanimalshelter.org)  
Follow us on Facebook & Instagram!  
Email address: [info@staffordanimalshelter.org](mailto:info@staffordanimalshelter.org)

The shelter is just east of Livingston off Hwy 89, exit 337  
Regular Hours: Wednesday - Sunday, 12 noon to 5 p.m.  
Covid-19 Hours: By Appointment, see website



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Lisa Lobosco  
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# Letter from the Executive Director

The COVID-19 virus has presented all of us with a myriad of challenges which, in many cases, we are not prepared to overcome. We deeply sympathize with people who are directly affected by the disease and our local businesses, who can usually count on the high-volume summer tourist season to make their year. Shuttered restaurants and bars have a strong negative trickledown effect that hurts the owners, their employees, their suppliers and the community that relies upon the commerce. The Stafford Animal Shelter has not been immune to the catastrophic consequences related to the pandemic. We were forced to cancel our #1 fundraising event, Fur Ball, which has been held every year in May at Chico Hot Springs. Fur Ball typically generates 25% of the annual revenue needed and earmarked for operational expenses. Last week, we were also informed that the City will not allow large gatherings in Sacajawea Park and the City Pool will be closing early this summer, so our annual Bark in the Park fundraising event will also not take place this year (but please support us from a distance by participating in our 'Virtual' Bark in the Park Race - see back cover for details). While our community has responded generously with increased donations, it will be very difficult to recoup the losses related to the cancellation of these annual fundraising events.



The number of animals presented to us, however, has not been affected by the virus. In fact, through the month of July, we had intakes of almost 700 critters, a 10% increase from a year ago—which happened to be our largest number of intakes ever. Unfortunately, 212 of those animals were owner/guardian surrenders that were indirectly related to the virus. Financial, housing and employment issues in some of these cases made keeping a pet extremely difficult. We have therefore been offering an alternative to surrender by providing pet food, medicine, behavioral advice and veterinary services, including vaccines and treatment of injuries. We could not do this without the help of our community. We are all aware of the emotional and psychological benefits a beloved pet provides a family; and in today's world of uncertainty, we need to promote keeping the pet in the home. In turn, doing so helps provide mental stability within our community. Stafford will do everything possible to help those for whom providing the basic needs of their families is a challenge. We must all pull together and look after our neighbors. If we don't, who will?

We are working closely with our fellowship partners at the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine and with our sister shelter members from MAAWP (Montana Association of Animal Welfare providers) to make sure every animal presented to us has a chance for a lifetime home! Long-term stays and animals with a checkered history in one shelter may find a non-biased home in another. Difficult animals' chances have increased exponentially with this active partnership, and it is working! A dog who had been passed up for two years at the Butte shelter found a home in just one week here in Livingston. We are all coming closer to realizing the Best Friends' motto "Save Them All!" At the very least, we will try! - Steve Leach



The shelter has adjusted to the Covid-19 pandemic with safety measures for staff and visitors, including mask requirements, appointment policies, virtual counseling and happy adoptions outside. Despite the changes, the public has been very flexible and understanding of the requirements and the shelter has seen record numbers of adoptions so far this year! Thank you for finding a place in your homes and hearts for our shelter animals!



# Thank You Shelter Supporters!



Supporters allow the Shelter to keep our doors open to all pets in need, serve them without delay, and quickly place them in homes.

A very big THANK YOU to our community of supporters from the past year:

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Thank You!

... and Thank You to the many anonymous donors and those donating through on-line social media fundraisers & Give a Hoot!

Stafford Animal Shelter also thanks these foundations and organizations for contributing grants to the Shelter this past year, for implementation of special projects or for support of our daily operations. Thank you for being there for us when we put out the call for help! We couldn't be here for the animals without you!





## Reservation Rescue Program Turns 5!

We've made several operational changes over the past five years but one of our most rewarding decisions was to extend Stafford's reach to Indian Reservations across Montana. We were invited to partner with rescue groups and tribal authorities to reduce the number of unwanted litters and free roaming dogs while they work on spay/neuter, vaccinations & education clinics. We welcomed this opportunity to help our neighbors and facilitate more animals finding homes in our community.

To date we have taken in over 900 animals from the Crow, Fort Peck, Blackfeet and Northern Cheyenne Reservations. Our two largest rescue partners are Wolf Point Pound Puppies (WPPP) and Help Every Pet of Hardin (HEP) who work on the reservations with residents and Animal Control who recognize and track most of the dogs and know which ones are in need of medical care and rehoming. Since infectious diseases like Parvovirus, Distemper, Giardia, Mange etc. can be in these areas, the rescues and their volunteers also act as foster homes where we quarantine and treat the animals before they come into the shelter. Chris Winterrowd, Vice President of HEP says "Rescue in Big Horn County is challenging." She adds, "With the overpopulation of pets in our area and often no available homes, we have had puppies, kittens, dogs and cats that simply needed a chance. Stafford helps gives them that chance. I view Stafford as the bridge that makes it all possible. The strong relationship we have with them has given all of us so much success."



Alicia Davis and her husband on their happy wedding day, with Eddie and Sammie. Above, the 4 puppies the day they were rescued by HEP.

Our adopters agree that "Rez Dogs" are easy-going, dog social and so grateful for their new families. Many of these dogs have tough beginnings and they survive by running in packs and relying on food from the land and the kindness of strangers. This adversity gives them a spirit of perseverance and adaptability that makes them the most loving and loyal pets.

Our cover models Eddie and Sammie, are an example. Rebecca Shirley, Treasurer of HEP, recalls one of her most difficult rescues when she was called to the Crow Reservation about puppies eating roadkill on a busy highway: "It was not only freezing cold, but we had SO much snow. Upon arrival I found four puppies feasting away. I jumped out and grabbed two of them, (with only a minor bite!)" The other petrified puppies ran from the search crew but eventually, wading through waist deep snow, they caught all four. "Once home, the feral puppies were starving, full of worms and mange and tested positive for Parvo." Later that night, she sent us a photo of those down-on-their-luck puppies and we committed to their care and agreed to take them in after their 3 week treatment and foster quarantine was complete. All the timid & shy puppies survived and are thriving in wonderful homes, with 2 of them staying in the Stafford family. Eddie and Sammie were adopted by our Director of Operations, Alicia Davis and her husband and most recently served as witnesses when their parents officially tied the knot!

Their story is not uncommon and it is just one of the hundreds of success stories we celebrate through partnerships on the Reservations. It inspires us to continue this life saving work with our rescue partners and reinforces one of our best decisions yet. Congratulations and thanks to all of the many members of our community who have adopted a "Rez Dog". Those alumni are in great company. Cheers to 5 years of happy endings and here's to many more!



Plott, getting some love from junior volunteer Lu. Plott is available for adoption. He is a loving cat, full of affection. The shelter is sponsoring 3 months of medicines for him when he finds his new home.

## Diabetes in Animals



If your dog or cat has been diagnosed with diabetes mellitus you are not alone. It has been estimated that 1 out of 100 dogs and 1 in 50 cats that reach the age of 10 will develop diabetes. In dogs, diabetes is common in middle aged to older dogs especially females but can be seen in younger animals of both sexes. In cat's diabetes is more common in middle aged to older animals as well, especially if the cat is overweight. Diabetes is a condition that occurs when the body cannot use glucose normally. The levels of glucose in the blood are controlled by insulin made by the pancreas. When this no longer occurs treatment for the diabetic condition becomes necessary.

In general, diabetes cannot be cured. However, if you establish a healthy lifestyle for your dog or cat including good glycemic management with diet and insulin your pet will be likely to lead a healthy, happy life. Plott, is the 8-year-old cat living in our breakroom. He is diabetic but leads a very normal life with a special diet and our staff monitoring his blood sugar and administering insulin. We test his levels with a blood draw from his ear and give the insulin with a sub Q shot under the skin in the back of his neck. It's a pretty simple management and works very well. Plott is currently available for adoption as he is one of many diabetic animals we've had here at Stafford, with all going on to find their forever homes.

### What are the signs of diabetes in cats or dogs?

- Frequent urination in the house or outside the litter box
- Drinks a lot of water and drinking from unusual places such as sinks and toilet bowls
- Is always hungry and can't get enough food
- Has lost weight
- Eyes appear cloudy
- Coat has deteriorated or in a cat, stops grooming
- Sleeps more and is less active

These signs certainly can suggest diabetes but are also seen in other diseases. The diagnoses can only be confirmed after the animal is thoroughly examined by a veterinarian.



## Release the Hounds



The average length of stay for dogs in the care of Stafford in 11.5 days. That number would be considerably lower but skews higher because some dog's length of stay can be up to three times the average. We have all noticed that our hound dogs fall into the latter category. We have gotten attached to these hounds not only because they are so lovable but because we spend an inordinate amount of time getting to know them because of their longer length of stay (LOS). Sadie was a perfect example of this "hound phenomenon". She looks like pure Blue Tick hound and was found roaming in the Shields Valley. She had a significant discharge draining from her eyes which we thought was a result from being sprayed by a skunk however it was later diagnosed she also had a chronic conjunctivitis condition that could be treated effectively with steroids and eye lubricant.

Sadie had a gentle and affectionate personality and loved other dogs and kids. A great adoption candidate? You would think so, yet shortly she became our longest stay dog and was continually passed over by potential adopters. Days turned into weeks and then even months with no takers. This situation is not unusual for our hound dogs. The longest stay dogs over the last five years have been hound or hound mixes. We can't come to a conclusion as to why this is happening because when these dogs finally get adopted the match seems to be made in heaven and the new owners have raved about their good fortune. Maybe it's an unwarranted stigma with the breed. They are comical and do follow their nose incessantly and are very vocal



Top: Sadie and Mike on happy adoption day! Above left, Sadie feeling pleased to show her sitting skills to Mike; Sadie had to learn the hard way to not always follow her nose when skunks are around!



with their howl but why would that behavior affect their LOS? We probably will never know why but all feel lucky to have them with us so long.

Michael McCluskey felt the same way. He has been looking for a dog for quite a while after he lost his old one last year. He wanted a partner to run and hike with as well as to join him on his couch while watching a baseball game. Sadie filled all Mike's boxes and you can see Mike and Sadie on runs around town as well as hanging her head out of his car window on frequent rides in our valleys on the way to the trail head. Sadie deserved Mike and Mike has the friend he has been missing.



Above: Nala getting comfortable with her harness and feeling the freedom of being outside, safely. Her new home in Gardiner has potential dangers from predators and traffic, but harness walking is safe and provides bonding time in the outdoors with her new family, too! Bottom right: Nala, enjoying the catio while at the shelter.

March. "She has been an awesome addition to our family - she's very energetic and curious." After a bit of time settling in to her new home, Nala went on her first harness walk and "she loved it! She's conquering the backyard and well on her way to becoming our little adventure buddy (with very close supervision of course)." While Nala showed early interest in the outdoors, spending time in the shelter's catio before her adoption, don't force the outdoors on indoor loving cats. Many felines are happy as inside-only pets who enjoy the comfort of a window perch from which to watch the world go by. But for safe outdoor cat adventure, give harness walking a try... We'd love to see your photos and hear your stories!



## Outdoor Safety for Cats

Is your cat a 'door dasher', curious about the outdoors, looking for a chance to walk in the grass or explore the great wide open beyond the window? Do the potential dangers of the outdoors, city streets or predators give you pause to letting your cat out? Caution is good, with indoor-only cats living on average up to 5 times longer than cats who access the outdoors freely. Many outdoor cats have preventable deaths from road accidents, injuries from interaction with other animals, poisonings, or from other threats. But if you'd like to safely satisfy your cat's eagerness for a chance to get out, harness walking can provide an opportunity for you and your cat to be outside together. Harnesses are safe and comfortable upper body restraints, giving you control and your cat the distance from you to feel free and wild for plenty of sniffing, climbing and rolling in the grass. Collar leashes should be avoided, as they may strangle or cause injury to cats.

If you think you and your cat might want to give this a try, it's suggested to start with getting your cat familiar with wearing the harness and a few trial walks inside your home before venturing out the door, into the yard, around the block and eventually on your adventures away from home. YouTube has dozens of training videos with tips for starting out as well as other ideas for safe, outside bonding time with your cat.

Vanessa & Evan Vought adopted Little Bit (now named Nala) from the shelter in







Maverick reporting for duty at the fire station. Right: happy adoption day!

## Maverick the Fire Dog

In June we took in five mixed-breed puppies from our rescue partners on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, Wolf Point Pound Puppies. We named them after Appalachian musical instruments and posted them on Facebook to promote their arrival. The response was overwhelming. Our shelter opens at noon, but when we looked out the window, there was already a line forming in the parking lot at 10:30 for these little cuties. One adopter had his laptop set up passing his time while he waited for us to unlock the doors. Another woman sitting on the sidewalk was no stranger to us at Stafford, it was Halie Burton, a Park County Firefighter. We knew her since we partner with Park County and other local first responders to provide emergency boarding and pet assistance to the community when they are faced with fires, floods, car accidents, domestic violence, etc.

This time Hailey was here on a personal visit, to adopt a little dog we called Banjo. Thankfully she was 3rd in line that day and she was able to adopt her boy whom she named Maverick. He has become the “unofficial” mascot of the fire house.

“He’s my second shelter rescue and I thoroughly enjoy every second with him. He’s an absolute goofball and constantly in motion. The other members of the fire department enjoy seeing him around and Maverick certainly enjoys their attention. I have to thank my Captains and Chief for allowing Maverick to hang out at the station during the day.”



Studies have proven that having animals can reduce stress, anxiety and blood pressure so surely Maverick’s presence brings joy to those with very stressful jobs. Although he won’t be riding the truck to fires anytime soon, a pup can dream! Follow Maverick’s adventures on his Instagram: maverickofmontana.

## K9 Bobi’s Last Ride

Over the years we’ve come to know the Livingston Police officers very well. Most would think it’s on law enforcement cases, but the majority of our relationship is based on outreach and helping community members and their pets. Several of the officers and their families have adopted from us, they are active foster families and volunteers. They assist with Animal Control and come to the need of animals in distress, trying to capture dogs dodging traffic, helping pets when families are in crisis or calling us in the middle of the night to bring animals to the safety of the shelter.

One special officer we will miss seeing is K9 Bobi who retired in May after 10 years of distinguished service to Livingston and Park County. Bobi is an 11-year-old Belgian Malinois/Shepard mix, imported from Europe. He was a dual-purpose police service dog trained in narcotics detection and the patrol areas of obedience, agility, tracking and evidence search. Alongside his handler Sergeant Andrew Emanuel, K9 Bobi responded to more than three hundred canine calls ranging from narcotics detection sniffs to

patrol related duties and outreach events like our very own Bark in the Park where he was one of the most popular “canine celebrities” every year showing off his impressive skill set, the most favorite being the “bite suit”!

K9 Bobi is able to spend his well-deserved retirement with the Emanuel family and according to the Sergeant, “Bobi is loving retired life! Sleeping in, laying on the couch, and hanging out with our house pup.”

His retirement makes way for a new member of the department, K9 Rhino. Sergeant Emanuel spent most of June training with this stunning 95lb Belgian Malinois with a strong drive to serve and protect our community too. Rhino has some large shoes to fill but we know Bobi is rooting for him from the comfort of his Lazy-Boy, just as he should be. Enjoy buddy!



Welcome K9 Rhino!



Above: K9 Bobi on his last ride of service to the Livingston Police Department. K9 Bobi was frequently at Bark in the Park, showing affection to visitors and demonstrating his skills with Sergeant Emanuel.



# Thank You 2020 Business Partners!



Thank you to all of the generous local businesses who choose to support Stafford Animal Shelter! We ask all of our newsletter readers to support these businesses! We couldn't be here for the animals without the generosity of our community's business owners who have a place in their hearts for the 1000+ homeless, unwanted and abandoned animals coming to the shelter each year.

Leader of the Pack (\$10,000+)  
Chico Hot Springs Resort & Day Spa

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The Firehouse Gym, Big Timber  
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Dean Hendrickson State Farm Insurance  
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First West Insurance  
Graybeal's All Service  
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Insty Prints  
Katabatic Brewing  
Logan Auction Service  
Montana Farrier Supply  
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Mustang Catering  
Neptune's Brewery  
Outhouse Heating & Plumbing  
Rick's Refrigeration  
Simkins Hallin  
The Stockman  
Western Glass  
Company  
Yellowstone Physical  
Therapy



## SAVE THE DATE! Online Fur Ball Auction October 30th 2020

Despite having to postpone the big party this year, we plan to have an online version of our Fur Ball fundraising auction on October 30th 2020!

We realize businesses are struggling this year, but if you are fortunate enough to be in a position to donate & would like to contribute, please email for donation form:

[adavis@staffordanimalsshelter.org](mailto:adavis@staffordanimalsshelter.org)

Thank you!



## "What Kind of Dog is That?"

Our answer? We're not sure! Most dogs that turn up at the shelter are of unknown lineage, or what we referred to as "mixed-breed". Our software limits us to 2 category choices, so in the past we'd look at the dog and take our best guess at which two encompasses them. A couple years ago, we conformed to the industry-wide standard and stopped using breed labels after studies proved labeling was inaccurate and caused much longer lengths of stay subjecting dogs to physical and mental stress.

The reasons being: 1. People's preconceived notion of a certain breed prevented them from even getting to know a dog 2. People were choosing dogs based on breed expectations alone and not what was a realistic match for their lifestyle, that resulted in poor matches & returns 3. Breed entries were incorrect most of the time when compared with DNA results.

With this compelling evidence, we now spend more time matching people with the perfect pets. We refer to them all as "mixed breeds" and focus more on their individual characteristics like: high-energy, adventurous, stubborn, goofy, lazy, inquisitive, sensitive, joyful etc.... Each dog is made up of many components (and breeds) that make them unique, just like their DNA. Shelter dogs are way too special to fit into an antiquated 2 category system!

Interested in seeing how well you would guess a dog's breed? Take our Stafford Alumni quiz below and find out!

## Can you match these Stafford alumni dogs with their breed labels?

			-Alaskan Malamute -German Shepherd Dog -American Staffordshire Terrier -Saint Bernard -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>A</b>	-Golden Retriever -Labrador Retriever -Miniature Pinscher -Pekingese -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>B</b>	-Golden Retriever -Austraian Cattle Dog -American Staffordshire Terrier -Border Collie -Chow Chow -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>C</b>
			-White Swiss Shepherd -American Staffordshire Terrier -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>D</b>	-American Eskimo Dog -American Staffordshire Terrier -Boxer -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>E</b>	-Chihuahua -Shiba Inu -Shih Tzu -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>F</b>
			-Labrador Retriever -Siberian Husky -German Shepherd Dog -Mountain Cur -Border Collie -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>G</b>	-Dobermann Pinscher -German Shepherd Dog ANSWER? <b>H</b>	-Labrador Retriever -Akita -German Shepherd Dog -Pekingese -Pomeranian -Various Mixed Breeds ANSWER? <b>I</b>

Answer key on back page! Thanks to all the adopters for sharing their DNA results!



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## 5k Fun Run & Doggie Walk Fundraiser for Stafford Animal Shelter



It's a day to celebrate and benefit the animals of Stafford Animal Shelter in Livingston, Montana sponsored by Small Dog Realty! Due to restrictions, this year's 5K will be virtual, but that just opens up the fun for more people to participate and help raise much-needed funds for our small non-profit, no-kill animal shelter! We take in over 1,200 animals annually with no restriction on length of stay and care for all pets, not just cats & dogs. All are welcome at Stafford regardless of age, breed, species or medical condition. Running a shelter with this broad of a mission takes a lot of money and this "Bark in the Park" Fun Run / Doggie Walk is a fun and interactive way for you to contribute! Every little bit helps and your \$30 entry fee will go a long way in helping save the lives of deserving pets by providing food, shelter, medical care, vaccines, spay & neuter surgeries and so much more!

On August 30th, 2020 we're urging supporters everywhere to get out and walk / run / stroll / hike / bike a 5K in honor of Stafford! Hopefully, you'll be doing it with your very own dog right by your side, it's a great way to have a special day with your best friend while helping those who are less fortunate. Donating and participating in the virtual race is a great way to honor an adopted pet in your life!

Sign up by August 21st so we can mail you your T-shirt and you can participate in our hashtag #sasbarkinthepark and share your photos and location! We excited to see how far & wide our "virtual" race can travel! Sign up on our website and follow Facebook & Instagram for updates.

**DNA Game Answer Key:** A=8 (Rawden's Alf); B=9 (Shier's Danni); C=1 (Janzen's Chaco); D=4 (Nave's Lumpy); E=2 (Anderson's Neil); F=3 (Nave's Minnie); G=7 (Reffitt's Lewie); H=5 (Shier's Dutch); I=6 (Cudmor's Sola)

<p>Leader of the Pack:</p>	<p>Best in Show:</p>	<p>Friend for Life:</p>	
<p>Sponsor and printer of this fundraising newsletter</p>	<p>Legendary Hospitality by Xanterra</p>		