

ANIMAL TALES

News from Stafford Animal Shelter Summer 2021



Inside:

- Going the distance for animals in need
- Summer safety for your pets
- Partnering for Rez Rescue success
- Happy cat tales!
- and more...





Stafford Animal Shelter

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www.staffordanimalshelter.org

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram!

Email:

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

Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday, 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Adoptions are by Appointment, see website

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Letter from the Executive Director

Through the month of July 2021, we have had intakes of 493 animals. This number represents a 27% decrease from a year ago for the same time period. The average length of stay (LOS) in the shelter through July for all animals was 14.5 days, which represents a 10% drop from a year ago. It will take some time to step back and evaluate how Covid affected all aspects of our business. The epidemic was uncharted territory, but the good news is we are caring for fewer animals with quicker outcomes than in past years. One indicator to be aware of is we transported in 25% fewer animals than a year ago. Our medical staff feels the aggressive spay and neuter clinic activity on our Montana Indian Reservations is beginning to show results, which may explain why we transferred fewer in. We also showed a 30% decrease in owner surrenders from the previous years. Our "Alternative to Surrender" campaign, which provides owners assistance with food, veterinary costs and behavior modification training, may well have been, in part, responsible. The question remains: do these numbers indicate an anomaly due to Covid or a trend that we can expect to continue? Stay tuned!



Most of you are aware of the fact that over the past 14 months, our traditional fundraising events were cancelled. Not only has this had a huge financial impact on us, it also affects our ability to cultivate lifelong relationships with donors and volunteers alike. We are keeping an eye on the Delta variant but feel the worst is behind us. As a result, we will have the opportunity to have an abbreviated Bark in the Park and Fur Ball this summer and fall. We hope to rekindle old friendships and establish new ones yet this year, at FB and BP! We also hope to get our volunteers back in the shelter, doing their thing to improve and enrich the lives of our critters on a daily basis. So, dog walkers and cat cuddlers alike, come on home! Just call and we will schedule.

Over the past few months, we have been fortunate to finally be able to travel to our sister shelters throughout Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana. We have taken in dogs, cats, birds and pocket pets from shelters suffering from overcrowding and high length of stay. The University of Wisconsin's Shelter Mentor program has put together a large network of like-minded shelters to work together for the ultimate benefit of the animals and people who need the services we provide. UW would like to see this network share best practices and resources to create a more effective operational network throughout the region. We take our "mentor" responsibility very seriously and welcome the interactions with all the shelters in our area. With each visit, I have found procedural and operational ideas we could incorporate here at Stafford. As a result of the network, we are a stronger, smarter and more effective shelter!

I want to sincerely thank all the supporters who have contributed to this shelter in one way or another in this time of need! Of course, the financial assistance is critical to our well-being, but we are also privileged to witness the random acts of kindness we see every day, which keep us going. Recently, when the brutally hot weather descended upon us, we put air conditioners on our Facebook wish list. The outpouring of AC units that followed overwhelmed us! Our Facebook page has consistently been one of the most heavily trafficked pages in Park County. In fact, we have posts that generate over 100,000 views regularly. It demonstrates this community's love of animals and acknowledges the benefits we humans receive from our pets every single day. The staff feels honored that you care as much as you do. It makes our mission that much more important and our execution of that mission that much more critical. We all love working toward the goal of being the advocate for the unwanted. We thank you and, of course, the animals thank you!

- Steve Leach



Volunteers are always needed for dog walking and cat cuddling! If you haven't attended one of our volunteer trainings, not to worry, just come on down to the shelter with some comfortable shoes and your ID, and you can get started with walking and cuddling right away! The shelter's animals will be so happy for time with you!

On the cover: Lark, adopted from SAS in 2018, enjoying a day on the Yellowstone River. Photo credit: Justine Larson

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.

We gratefully acknowledge and give a very big THANK YOU to our community of supporters from the past year:

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THANK YOU to these foundations and organizations for contributing grants to the shelter this past year, for implementation of special programs or for support of our daily operations. Thank you for being there for us when we put out the call for help! We could not be here for the animals without you!

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



Thank You to All!

Going the Distance for Animals in Need

On countless occasions, we have been approached with pleas to take animals from difficult situations throughout central and eastern Montana. Last February, a lady who lived 20 miles east of Miles City called to ask for our help. Her neighbor's dogs kept showing up at her house. After driving up the dirt 3-mile double track road to the neighbor's house to check on him, she found that he had passed away some time earlier. She was horrified to see several deceased animals in the home and up to a dozen cats and 8 dogs begging for food. The Miles City Animal Control department and other shelters in the area could not help and Stafford was mentioned as a possibility. She called us and we decided to mobilize a crew and go East to see what we could do. The logistical issue was how could we transport that many animals from that far away? Our team decided to use our Animal Care Technician Liz's large horse trailer and her ¾ ton pickup to attempt the rescue. They left early the next morning and made the arduous trip to the property. The neighbor lady led them up the double track to the abandoned house and they began trapping and crating the loose critters, who were so hungry the capture went relatively quickly. Eight dogs and twelve cats were loaded into the open horse trailer. The challenge became to secure the live crates for the long, twisty and exposed ride back to Livingston. With the mission accomplished and the animals safe, we proceeded to do intake exams to assess the medical condition and administer the vaccines. Fortunately, the animals' conditions were mostly treatable. Malnutrition and mange were the most acute problems, but over time, all of the seized animals were cleared for adoption and successful outcomes became real for all. Lando was the poster boy for this mission.

We all felt a sense of relief and accomplishment associated with saving those animals. After sitting down with the staff and recapping the rescue, we all agreed that if we were to continue to seize and rescue large groups of dogs and cats, we had to have a suitable vehicle. We posted the need for a state-of-the-art transport van on our Facebook wish list.

A van had always been a crucial component of a successful transport operation. Montana is a big state and the geography we need to traverse requires a reliable and effective mode of transportation. It had never occurred to us that a donor might be compelled to launch a campaign to buy a brand new van. But Sandi and Jody Marler had other ideas. They personally seeded the campaign with \$20,000, challenging others to match their gift. Over the next two months, \$6,000, in small increments, came in. We were well on the way! Subsequently, Kendra and Don Hilton stepped up to the Marlers' challenge with \$10,000. We were able to purchase the new Dodge Pro Master van that will be the cornerstone for large transports and food deliveries for years to come! Thank you all from Stafford. Lando thanks you too!



Lando arrived at Stafford still healing from his eye and nose injuries resulting from being pepper sprayed while left alone and seeking help on the property he was rescued from. After some time to relax at the shelter and feel safe again, Lando found his new family and new doggie sibling, and is HAPPY!

Stafford Animal Shelter's Rescue Ride in Action...



Top: As a start to expanding the shelter's rescue reach, Stafford transported 10 dogs from Soul Dog Rescue in Colorado, who work with the Navajo Reservation, and found new homes for them in our dog friendly community; Bottom: Overcrowded shelters in the Northern Tier will be a focus for transport, with a trip to Idaho to take 14 kittens, to help find them homes – all have been adopted!; the shelter remains committed to Reservation Rescue in Montana, transporting in dogs from communities with limited resources for care; the shelter's new Rescue Ride, ready to hit the road for animals in need!



Happy Cat Tales!

Spirit



Originally found in a house where he didn't belong and too afraid to be handled, Spirit was adopted out to a ranch as a barn cat. He soon roamed and a few months later he was found in the City and brought to the shelter again. After a decompression period and some focused attention from our animal care staff, he showed signs that he was ready for love, starting with some chin rubs and eventually finding his way out of his cubby. After 2 months in the shelter, Spirit was adopted by Lily who was prepared to give him the time and space he needed to feel at home. Spirit moved with Lily and her sister to New York. "It's been so nice having a fluffy friend to keep us company. He's been so sweet and goofy and I'm so happy I adopted him!"

Rosemary



Surrendered to the shelter after 10 years in a home, our sassy senior Rosemary was looking for a nice place to retire. She spent time in a few homes over the course of two years and stayed in our staff breakroom for a few months before finding a new forever home with Katrin & Danny. "She is doing great and seems quite happy here. She is such a smart and funny gal, and so tender hearted. We are tickled that we can provide a home for Rosemary. She's our gal, a great addition to the family. - Rosemary's Mom & Dad"

Tapioca



Brought to the shelter as a stray, frequenting a neighborhood with no apparent owner but friendly and affectionate, Tapioca was found with wounds on her back, possibly burns from a hot car engine. She received care and treatment at the shelter, and with her energetic personality, she found a home within a few weeks. Tapioca now lives with Abigail, getting the care she needs, setting in and hanging out with her new mom in the kitchen. She wears a t-shirt to prevent irritation of her still-healing wounds. We think the pictures say it all - Tapioca is happy, thriving and loving home life!

Safe Montana Summers



With the unseasonably high temperatures this summer, our pet's comfort is in the forefront of our mind. This is the first year we had to install several portable air conditioning units in the shelter and we are looking into a HVAC upgrade for future operations. We like to get our dogs outdoor exercise and enrichment every day, but with the temperatures so hot, we only recommend volunteers and adopters have the dogs out in the early mornings and late evening for walks when it's cool.

Most of you have probably seen common "Summer Safety Tips" for pets and it's a great reminder for all of us, but living in Southwestern Montana, we also have additional factors that we should consider to keep our pets safe this summer.

River & Water Safety: Like our cover girl, SAS Alumni Lark, have your dog fitted for a life jacket when floating the waterways. Although your dog may know how to swim, swift currents and changing conditions can quickly overpower them. Watch for collars getting caught on downed trees and be sure your dog does not ingest too much water from lakes and river. It is important to provide them clean drinking water to avoid disease and toxic algae.

Traps: Trapping is legal in Montana land and poses a threat to pets when recreating on private and public land. Education is key in recognizing where traps are prevalent near trails or waterways. It is recommended that you attend a trap release workshop in your area or watch a video online to learn how to free your pet should they be caught. Carry a first aid kit and a wire cutting tool while hiking, swimming (or skiing).

Wildlife & Raptors: We are lucky to share our state with exceptional wildlife! For the safety of all, domestic and wild, it is highly recommended to keep pets on a leash, in fenced yards or in a catio but when that is not an option it is best not to leave them unattended from dusk to dawn when chances of attacks are higher. Feed pets inside and keep your garbage tidy as not to attract wild critters. You can use flags, shiny steamers or sun shades to detract raptors and wildlife from entering your property.

Wildfires: Keep informed of all active wildfires in our state so you can be prepared for an impending evacuation. Make a plan now including a copy of your pets medical records, photo, keep microchip information current, an up-to-date ID tag and collar (available for only \$5 each at Stafford!), a "go bag" packed with a couple days supplies (food, medications, bowls, sealed water, bedding), keep crates and leashes easily accessible during fire season. Research pet friendly hotels and family, friends & neighbors that would be willing to take in your pets or pick them up in case of an evacuation. Most human evacuations centers cannot take pets in too. Stafford Animal Shelter offers free natural disaster boarding for the community but our space is limited, so a good contingency plan is key.

We've encountered all these scenarios at the shelter before, but hopefully you never will. With awareness and preparation, you can just enjoy the beautiful Montana summers safely with your furry friends!



TOP 5 Summer Safety Tips for Pet Parents

PROVIDED BY: ASPCA

- 1

Fireworks & Thunderstorms

Loud noises like fireworks are one of the top reasons pets go missing, so secure your pet in an escape-proof place. If your pet does go missing, download the ASPCA app for a free step-by-step digital toolkit to help find your pet: www.ASPCAapp.org.
- 2

Sun & Heat

High summer temperatures and bright days can mean dehydration, overheating, and scorched paws. Know the signs of overheating (excessive panting, increased heart rate, and weakness) and bring your pup indoors or to a cool, shady place.
- 3

Toxic Chemicals

Insecticides, citronella products, and glow sticks are toxic to pets. Keep your pet away from areas where chemicals have been sprayed and ensure dangerous products are out of reach.
- 4

Parties & Barbecues

If your pet's joining the party, make sure guests don't feed your pet human food (especially grapes, onions, avocado, and chocolate) and ensure alcoholic drinks are kept out of your pet's reach.
- 5

Hot Cars

Even with the windows open an inch, a car's temperature can reach over 100° in 10 minutes on an 85° day. One quick errand can turn dangerous in minutes, so leave your pet safely at home. Sign our Hot Car Pledge to help save lives this summer and all year long.

Many Hands Make Light Work

For 6 plus years we have been partnering with several rescue groups on Indian Reservations in Montana to help when they have an overpopulation of animals and not enough resources to care for them all. We offer to take them into our shelter, vet them and eventually find them families here in our area. To date almost 2,000 cats and dogs have been placed through our popular "Rez Dog Program" and adopters will agree, they are very grateful we have the opportunity to help these special animals!

The rescue groups and tribes are working hard to get their populations under control with offering free/low cost spay, neuter & vaccination clinics. We are also working with them to find out how we can best provide supplies and keep healthy pets with their caretakers. We work with amazing volunteers who live in the communities, know the dogs and people personally and work tirelessly to keep the pets safe and traditions respected.

Our friends at Wolf Point Pound Puppies on the Fort Peck Reservation have several clinics a year and are making a great impact in their area. On the Crow Reservation, we partner with Help Every Pet of Hardin. They also have several clinics a year as well as a voucher program through a local veterinarian. Our Stafford Veterinarian, Dr. Julie Kappes, has dedicated decades of her life to the non-profit Spay Montana and spends many of her weekends working on this worthy mission as well. Earlier this month in Lodge Grass, Sara our Veterinary Assistant, assisted Dr. Julie and the Spay Montana, HEP & the Rez Dog Rescue team with 150 spay & neuters! They also were able to vaccinate many additional owned animals. Through our granting relationships, Stafford was able to provide vaccines, flea & tick preventive and mange treatment for the clinic. Also as the designated distributor for Southwestern Montana for the organization of Greater Good, we were able to deliver several pallets of food for the clinic (and throughout the year). The goal is shared with many organizations pitching in, but we are seeing a reduction in intakes and infectious diseases and an increase in health and happiness. We are proud to be a part of this collaboration!

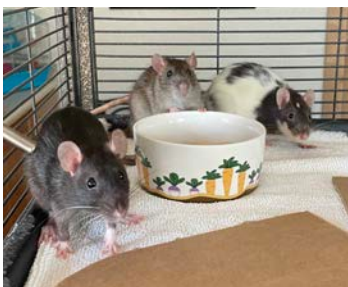


From left: Rebecca Shirley, HEP President and one of our biggest rescue partners, happily greets patients; Stafford van transports pet food supplies; Dr. Julie Kappes and Vet Assistant Sara Shier alter a puppy; "Time to wake up puppy!" (Photo credits: HEP)

Catch, But Don't Release

At our shelter we don't just take in cats and dogs, we accept all domestic pets in need. That opens the door for an interesting mix of critters in our "Zoo". It's not uncommon to find rabbits, reptiles, snakes, spiders, birds, ferrets, rats, guinea pigs, hamsters, turtles, hedgehogs, fish and so much more in need of our rescue and care. Take little bunny Blueberry, thankfully she was scooped up and brought to Stafford after she was found in the middle of a busy 4 lane intersection in Bozeman. When she arrived she had a very badly injured eye that required an immediate exam and emergency removal surgery. Thankfully the quick actions of our staff, and the good samaritan who stopped to help her, saved her life! We tried to find her owner, but no one stepped forward, we found her a new one though - a wonderful family with another rabbit and a little girl to grow up with!

We've been called to help domesticated pocket pets that have been turned loose in the wild as well - a tortoise, a rat, birds and several rabbits to name some in just the last few months. It's a good reminder to let everyone know we're here to help. For the safety of the animal, other pets and our native Montana wildlife, it's never acceptable to release animals. Sadly most pets will not survive as they are unable to find food, shelter and lack the defense skills to thrive in the wild. If it does manage to survive, the released pet becomes an invasive species to our native wildlife, it may spread or catch disease and will completely disrupt our delicate greater Yellowstone ecosystem. Maybe people release animals because they think no one will want them but we can assure you, we have 100s of happy "Zoo" adoptions every year! There is a home for every pet - feathers or fins, silky or scales!



(Left) The shelter's Zoo has been a temporary home to a variety of critters including parrots and rats; Adopters post celebratory photos of their beloved exotics, like for Waffles the Bearded Dragon's birthday!; (Right) Blueberry arrived injured, rescued from a busy Bozeman intersection by a concerned passerby, but soon after found a new home, where she is safe and loved!

2021 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

Best in Show (\$5000 - \$9999)

Joanne Berghold Photography
(Joanne & Billy Berghold)
Printing for Less.com, Inc.
Spectec Thunderbird International
Yellowstone National Park Lodges by Xanterra

Friend for Life (\$3000 - \$4999)

Rx Coffee
Small Dog Realty, Pam McCutcheon

Top Dog (\$2,000 - \$2999)

Nevin's Glass

Pick of the Litter (\$1000 - \$1999)

49er Diner, Bar & Casino
American Bank, Livingston
Bridger Animal Nutrition
Eyecare Professionals & Mountain Eyewear
Hill's Science Diet
John Mabie, CPA, P.C.
Jon Ellen Snyder - ERA Western Landmark
Mark's In & Out
The Obsidian Collection
Raich Montana Properties
Raney & Raney, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
Shane Lalani Center for the Arts
Sibanye Stillwater
Yellowstone Appliance

Pet Patron (\$500 - \$999)

A.E. Noble & Associates
Allied Storage
Amazing Acres Pet Resort
Arrowhead Electric
Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices, Bozeman
CEM Bookkeeping & Tax Services, Cat Moody
Cilla Mae's Old Fashioned Fudge
City of Livingston
Cottonwood Veterinary Hospital
Crown Creation Cabinetmakers
Double T River Ranch
East Main Liquor
The Firehouse Gym - Big Timber
First Interstate Bank, Livingston
Gardiner Market
Help Desk Montana
Livingston Home Outfitters
Livingston Tree, Lawn & Snow Removal
Sky Federal Credit Union
The Spur Line
Tech Electric

Veterinary Business Partners

All Creatures Veterinary Service
Alpenglow Animal Hospital
Animal Care Clinic
Colmey Veterinary Hospital
Cottonwood Veterinary Hospital
Hardaway Veterinary Hospital
Sleeping Giant Animal Clinic
WellHaven Bozeman Pet Hospital

Cool Cat (\$250 - \$499)

At Home on the Range Pet Cemetary
B Bar Ranch
Black Dog Rehab
Coffee Crossing
CN, LLC Bookkeeping
Colmey Veterinary Hospital
Copper Moose Oil & Vinegar
Dee-O-Gee
Edward Jones, Stephanie Cunningham
Elk River Art
First West Insurance
Graybeal's All Service
High Country Wildlife
Insty Prints
Livingston's Ace Hardware
Logan Auction Service
Montana Farrier Supply
Murdoch's Home & Ranch Supply
Neptune's Brewery
Oie Motor Company
Outhouse Heating & Plumbing
PetCo
PetSmart
Simkins Hallin
The Stockman
Western Glass Company
Wilson Hotel Big Sky
Windy Way Rock Shop
Yellowstone Physical Therapy
Yellowstone Wolf Tracker



Fur Ball 2021!

Our biggest fundraiser of the year, Fur Ball, hosted & sponsored by Chico Hot Springs, will be held October 15th! The pandemic of 2020, and 2021, has really put a damper on our events and we will continue to be patient. We hope to have our regularly scheduled gala in May of 2022, but for this year, we're grateful we can have a ball at all! It will look slightly different than everyone is used to, we will have a smaller seating capacity for spacing requirements. This means our event is sure to sell out quickly as many guests have already pre-ordered tables after our last Fur Ball was cancelled. We do have several tables available though at \$800 each for 8 seats or individual tickets for \$125. Please email Alicia Davis at adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org to purchase tickets as soon as possible.

We will be relying on attendees for their support and enthusiasm this year since we missed the last two planned Fur Balls. The money we raise at this event is critical for our operations and all the funds from the night go directly for the care of our shelter animals. Although we will not be able to have the large outdoor silent auction due to the weather, we will have items in our Live Auction and Luxury Raffle and we hope to tempt you to bid on fabulous weekend get-a-ways, a Yellowstone Park trip, dining experiences, guided fishing trips, jewelry, fine art and more! Most importantly, we are excited to see everyone in person again and be celebrating in a room full of animal advocates and shelter supporters!



Fur Ball 2021

October 15th

tickets on sale now

Est. 1900


CHICO
HOT SPRINGS RESORT & DAY SPA

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Current Resident or:



It's the dog days of summer and we're going to celebrate it by welcoming back "Bark in the Park" after a yearlong hiatus of gatherings. 100% of the money raised from the day's events are donated to our small open-door, non-profit animal shelter that takes in over 1,000 animals annually. We have no length of stay restriction and care for pets of all ages, breeds and medical condition. Running a shelter with this mission takes a tremendous amount of funding, staffing and community support so we hope to have you all join us for our family-friendly fundraiser on Sunday August 22nd!

The fun begins with a 5K Fun Run / Doggie Walk. The course rounds the Yellowstone River, Sacajawea Park and through the streets of Livingston. Friendly, vaccinated dogs on leashes

Sunday August 22nd 2021!

EVENTS

and children under 13 are welcome to join for free. (We allow strollers, wagons & bikes but please just in the back of the "pack"!)

Pre-registration is \$25.00; day of event \$30.00. The first 60 paid **online** registrants receive an event t-shirt **thanks to sponsor Small Dog Realty**. Link is on our website and Facebook page. Check-in starts at 8:00am, race begins at 9:00. Meet at Miles Bandshell Park near the Civic Center to receive your bib number and familiarize yourself with the course map.

The fun continues at 10:30 with the events in Miles Bandshell Park and the City Pool **thanks to the sponsorship of The City of Livingston and the Parks & Recreation Department**. We start the day off with a demonstration from Livingston Police Department K9 Officer Rhino and Park County Sheriff Department K9 Officer Briggs. Plan on having lunch with us as Stafford will host a "Hot Dogs for Shelter Dogs" (Veggie too!), "Frosty Paws Ice Cream Stand" and "Brats and Beer Booth"! Dog contests this year will include 1. Best Dressed Duo 2. Best Trick 3. Fastest Obstacle Course 4. Speed Swimming 5. Longest Dock Jump & 6. Fastest Dog in Livingston. Events are only \$5.00. We'll round out the day with fun raffle prize drawing. Bring your appetite, dogs, kids & shade umbrella and help raise money for a great cause! Visit www.staffordanimalshelter.org for more updates.

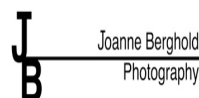
If you are interested in exhibiting, donating a raffle item, being a swag bag sponsor or volunteering for BITP, please email our Director of Operations, Alicia Davis at adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org.

Leader of the Pack:



Sponsor and printer of this fundraising newsletter

Best in Show:



Friend for Life:

