

ANIMAL TALES

News from Stafford Animal Shelter Winter 2021

Inside:

- Oscar the Underdog finds a home!
- Taking time to care for cats
- A new way to honor pets
- Who's in the Zoo?
and more...



Stafford Animal Shelter

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Phone: (406) 222-2111
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www.staffordanimalshelter.org

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram!

Email:

info@staffordanimalshelter.org

**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

STAFF

Executive Director

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Evin King
Lolee Nave
Kylee Tjensvold

Facilities Manager

Charles Worth

Veterinarian

Dr. Julie Kappes, DVM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President: Nikki Fox

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Andy Art, Hannah Barney,
Gwen Strachan, Julimarie Wistey

Letter from the Executive Director

Over the past 12 months we have had intakes for 973 animals through October 31, 2021. That represents a 19% decrease from the 1200 animal intakes for the same period last year. All categories of intakes are down including surrenders -8%, strays -26%, and transfers -25%. Surrenders and strays benefit from our Managed Intake initiatives, which include alternatives to surrender, tags and social media posts before bringing to shelter. Covid has also positively impacted intake numbers as people have been home more and keeping a closer eye on their pets. Cat strays are down because of increased spay and neuter activity along with our S/N work in troubled areas like Windmill Trailer Court and the green boxes. Fewer animals ultimately equate to less expense. From payroll to animal care to veterinary costs, all are down year to date!



We have entered into a coveted relationship with Best Friends and their rescue partner, Soul Dog. Best Friends has offered to give us a grant to support our continued transfer of dogs from the Navajo rescue partner in 2022. In fact, Soul Dog is transferring 8 dogs to us today. They are completing the transfer all the way from Denver to Livingston. These rescue partners help us create a network of animal welfare groups throughout the Western states. Jackson/Teton Animal Shelter has reached out to us on several occasions to help them with their chronic long-term stays. Most recently Minnie Pearl was brought from Jackson due to the length of her stay there. We had a very successful outcome within two days (see story inside). We have been developing a positive relationship with the Idaho Falls shelter as well and continue to take animals from them when they are severely overcrowded. This week Yellowstone Valley and Great Falls have initiated a transfer for kittens and cats and a long-term stay dog. All and all the network is getting tighter and SAS is owed some favors!

We were scheduled to hold our annual Fur Ball at Chico on 10/15 and sold out all of our allocation of tickets well before the date approached. All the planning and execution for FB was in place and we were looking forward to a great evening when Dr. Coleman, the head of the hospital, stated that "large in-door events are strongly discouraged as the hospital is full!" The local CDC concurred, and we felt we had no choice but to cancel the live show. So we went to the mattresses and decided to do the whole thing online. We had two very dynamic raffle items in the raft from Dan Bailey's and the Yellowstone trip from Xanterra, along with a handful of live auction items. We conducted a Dutch auction as well. Our expectations were low, so we were pleasantly surprised when we generated significant revenue. The online effort did well yet it only realized one half the total income from a live Fur Ball, but we were in uncharted waters and navigated quite effectively! See you next May for the "Real Deal" at Chico Hot Springs!

We finally ratified the new Park County contract with the Commissioners at last week's meeting. We agreed on a two-year deal that arms the shelter with "new regulatory teeth in terms of how we handle police holds and seizures." "I think it's a good contract," said Steve Caldwell, Commission chairman. The fact that Cost of Care is a core principle of the agreement is a huge step in the right direction. Cost of care is a Montana law that states owners must care for the costs of seized animals or must surrender which cuts the time of seizures significantly and puts animals up for adoption much quicker.

All SAS employees have successfully completed the Fear Free Shelter Program Core Modules and earned a Certificate of Completion. This course provides each employee with gentle handling skills that are designed to reduce stress in the animals, as well as stress for the animal care technicians and management. These techniques have brought down the stress temperature in the shelter and reduced anxiety which promotes adoption! - Steve Leach



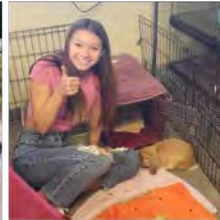
On the cover is Oscar. Read about his story and happy adoption inside!

Above, left to right: Oscar spending time with Nick, the shelter's dog trainer; River and her kittens, just one story highlighting how the shelter handles challenging animal intakes; and a happy adoption day for a bunny from the shelter's Zoo - they are a perfect match! and just one of the recent residents in the shelter's Zoo - read more on all inside!

The Year at a Glance

Nov. 2020 to Oct. 2021	Dogs	Cats	'Zoo'	Total	★	Highlights	★
Intakes	504	325	144	973	→	Intake diversion & alternatives to surrender programs have finally made impacts to reducing the numbers of animals coming into the shelter, allowing the shelter to increase services and assistance efforts focused on keeping loved pets in homes.	
Stray	126	78	12	216	→	Stray intakes are down 25% from the previous year, including a 40% reduction in stray cats brought to the shelter, resulting both from spay/neuter efforts as well as a campaign to remind our community that "not all who wander are lost."	
Owner Surrender	94	197	94	385	→	While total number of owner surrenders have gone down this year, pet surrenders represented 40% of intakes this year, compared to 35% in the previous year with most of these surrenders due to housing issues and a shortage of pet-friendly housing available in our community.	
Transfer In	261	45	33	339	→	The pandemic impacted Reservation Rescues, with these areas closed for long periods. However, rescue transports remain a priority, going the distance for any animal in need.	
Emergency Services	3	3	3	9	→	Thankfully the number of pet owners experiencing emergencies or disasters was fewer this year, but our doors always remain open for this purpose, along with other assistance services available to pet owners during times of crisis.	
Seized/Custody	20	2	2	24	→	The shelter serves the most vulnerable pets, through partnerships with the community and law enforcement. Remember, if you see something, say something...	
Outcomes	511	322	134	967	→	967 successful outcomes means 967 pets are in homes, out of the shelter, and being cared for by families in our pet loving community.	
Return to Owner	141	27	4	172	→	80% of stray animals coming into the shelter this year were reclaimed by their owners, including 35% of stray cats, which is a great improvement from an average of less than 20% reclaim rate seen in previous years.	
Transfer Out	15	3	43	61	→	Many of the shelter's small animals like hamsters, guinea pigs and others are adopted through our partnership with PetSmart in Bozeman, where they are seen by more people and find homes quickly. Signage from Stafford will indicate a shelter animal. Please adopt a shelter pet!	
Adoptions	355	292	87	734	→	734 pets found new homes through our shelter in the past 12 months! Average length of stay for dogs was 11 days and for cats, 25 days. Follow happy adoptions on our Facebook page!	

412
spay/neuters
completed



98%
lifesaving
rate



STAFFORD ANIMAL SHELTER ANNUAL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP 2022

WE SERVE AND ARE SUPPORTED BY A COMMUNITY THAT CARES!



Benefits	1 full color logo newspaper ads, window decal, name in newsletter & on SAS site	Use of SAS "Business Partner" badge for marketing & 2 full color logo newspaper ads	Logo & link to your business on SAS site	*1 outreach event with SAS pets & staff with social media tags (6,000 average view per post) *	Logo on newsletter exterior (circulation 3,000) Bark In The Park Sponsor	Fur Ball Sponsor included on publicity & program at event	1 annual newsletter highlight + 2 Fur Ball tickets	Fur Ball title sponsor on publicity and table of 8 at Fur Ball
Cool Cat \$250-\$499	🐾							
Pet Patron \$500 - \$999	🐾	🐾						
Pick of the Litter \$1,000 - \$1,999	🐾	🐾	🐾					
Top Dog \$2,000 - \$2,999	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾				
Friend for Life \$3,000 - \$4,999	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾			
Best in Show \$5,000 - \$9,999	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	
Leader of the Pack - \$10,000+	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾	🐾

*Highly beneficial partnership to the shelter & to your business!

To be included in promotions, please respond via attached reply card by APRIL 8th 2022
Business Partnerships run annually from April 15th - April 15th. Please contact adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org with questions.



\$25.00 a month 🐾
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from homeless to home!

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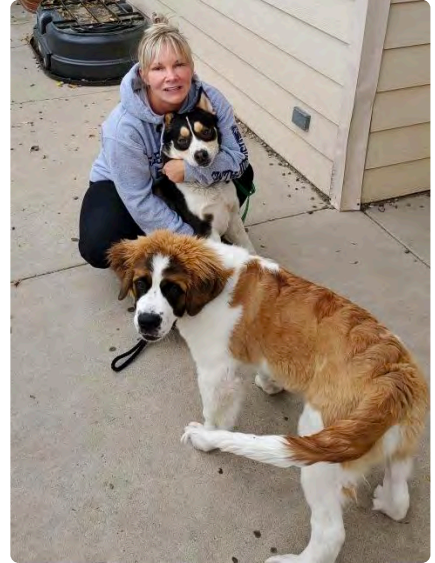
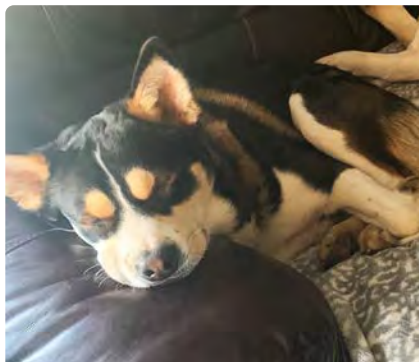
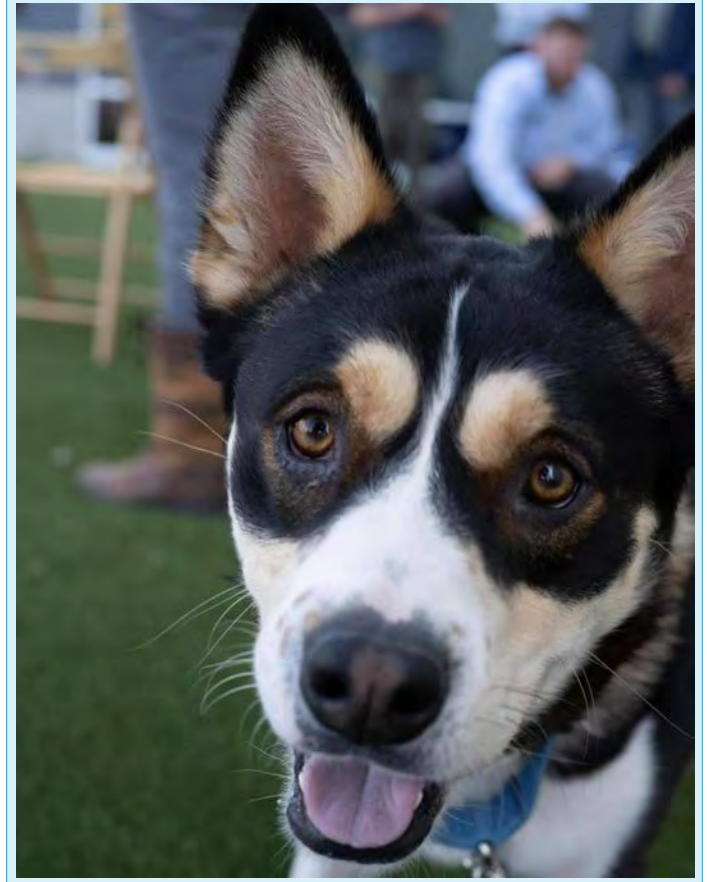
Monthly Automatic Withdraws
staffordanimalshelter.org/donate

Oscar Goes Home!

Our cover boy Oscar's route to the shelter was a circuitous one at best. This young dog, like many of the animals presented to us here, did not have the best previous life. He was on a short chain tethered to a pole by his neck, no harness. Being on that chain 24/7 caused his neck to flare up and become very sore and sensitive. He was surrendered by a neighbor who witnessed the neglect and got the owner to give Oscar up for rehoming by the shelter. During the intake examination we saw he was very protective of his injured neck and would not let us touch him in the head and neck area. We outfitted him with a body harness and respected his pain to the point Oscar became comfortable with our handling methods and began to trust us and responded to training cues and prompts. Not being tethered his pain subsided. He always loved other dogs and jumped for joy when we put him in the play yard with another dog or two.

We chose Oscar to be the face of the shelter in our adoption event with Subaru in October. He was our featured Underdog at the event but went unclaimed even though he was very well behaved with all two and four legged at the function. For some reason Husky and Hounds length of stay is longer than the general population at Stafford so we were not surprised to see this beautiful guy passed over for several weeks, but we were confident the right match would come around.

We had spent enough time with Oscar that we were very sure he would make a wonderful pet for someone and sure enough Amy Grover, from Big Sky, came to meet the big guy with her huge 9-month-old St. Bernard ready for an introduction. Both found him to be delightful and she subsequently filled out the adoption form and took Oscar to their beautiful property up in the mountains. All involved are ultra-happy and this forever home is very solid! Surrenders can and do have happy endings even under difficult circumstances. It shows the resiliency of the dogs and their ability to forgive and forget. Thank goodness!



Oscar highlights: Left, Oscar spent time with the shelter's dog trainer, Nick, to get comfortable with people and socialization and quickly adapted to the affection and support of shelter staff. Top right, Oscar on his happy adoption day, meeting his new mom and canine sister, and bottom right and above, Oscar at home, feeling loved and happy!

A Pearl in the Rough



Sometimes a change of scenery, or mountain range, is all it takes! Miss Minnie Pearl was in the Jackson Teton Animal Shelter since May. Although she was a sweetheart & staff favorite, she was continually looked over for typical hound profiling (aka free spirit with a strong sniffer!). She was a great girl though, good with other dogs & loved humans of all ages so the shelter reached out to Stafford for our help. We partner with the Jackson Shelter and PAWS of Jackson Hole when they have dogs that need a new audience. No dog was more deserving than Minnie who had been in the shelter for almost 7 months. We took her in on Monday and the VERY next day she was adopted by the Connelly family!

In her new home she is surrounded by several children and new mom Mindy reports "she is a fast learner rocking all the commands of come, touch, stay, speak, quiet, leave it, and give. She's proficient in dance, she's standing and she spins in a circle. She loves going on long walks in the forest, walks with a loose 25 ft lead attached to a human, and only pulls when she sees a deer or is onto a strong scent. Overall, she's super trainable and doing awesome! Pearl is so well loved by our family!"



What better outcome could we have asked for? It proves that there is a home out there for every animal, sometimes you just have to look in a different spot! We are grateful for the friendships and networks we have in our shelter community, we really are all in this together!

Business Collaborations that Resonate

We were extremely excited when we were chosen by Gallatin Subaru to be the shelter partner in their national Subaru Loves Pets campaign. The concept called for the shelter and dealer to team up and host an in-person adoption event at the dealer's dog-friendly play yard in Bozeman. The TODAY Show kicked off Subaru Loves Pets Month airing on 9/30 and followed up Celebrating UNDERDOGS which aired on the day of our event. Gallatin Subaru will donate \$100 for every animal adopted from October 1 to October 31. Both Stafford Animal Shelter and Gallatin Subaru organizations used extensive social media to promote Subaru Loves Pets and Make A Dogs Day and invited the public to attend the event. We had a very good turn out and maximized the Subaru contribution. We have been working to develop a relationship with Subaru for years and now, with this successful event behind us, talk of future events are in the works.



Our board member Andy Art partnered with Dan Bailey's, who provided a 14 ft. Tributary raft at a discount, to be raffled off to the first 500 ticket holders. Summit Aviation and Julimarie & Chad Wistey sponsored our costs. The tickets were \$20 each and we sold the allotted 500 tickets in a week's time. In addition, Yellowstone National Park Lodges/ Xanterra provided a wonderful guided trip into Yellowstone next summer. Those 500 tickets also went fast. The winners of both were thrilled, while the businesses got a welcomed lift in exposure from the event.

All in all, partnering with the Animal Shelter is a good business move. 67% of all Montanans have pets, which makes supporting a relationship with Stafford beneficial. After 7 years of monthly adoption events and \$20,000 in donations at RX Coffee, owner Diane Coffman has celebrated all the dogs that were adopted at her store and her "business has thrived and customer feedback is very positive." You see, customers have a choice in whom they choose to do business with and we find they choose the businesses who help animals. Just ask Subaru!

Taking the Time to Care

Stafford Animal Shelter's mission as a no-kill, open-door shelter, means that we take in any animal, no matter age, breed or condition. For some, like many of the stray cats brought into the shelter, time spent away from the safety of a home and daily care can lead to life threatening exposure, injuries, or illness. This past year we've seen cases involving severe dehydration, emaciated conditions, upper respiratory illnesses and other serious but treatable conditions as well as animals who have sustained injuries while roaming stray. These animals are in good hands with the shelter's dedicated animal care and veterinary staff, getting our neediest patients urgent care, with a commitment to giving them all they need for as long as it takes to get them back to good health and eventually ready for adoption into new homes. Often it is just more time they need to feeling good again, other times it requires more intensive treatments, medicines or care outside of the shelter. Thanks to our generous shelter supporters, we have the resources available to attend to these animals, without compromise in quality of care and giving all we can for a second chance. For these lost, abandoned or unwanted pets, the shelter can be their only hope. This page highlights a few stories of cats who have arrived at our doors recently, in need of help but fortunate enough to find their way to the comfort of Stafford Animal Shelter. In addition to our fantastic staff, our community has rallied behind many of these animals, including our incredible fosters, our partner veterinary clinics, and the concerned citizens who find and get these at-risk pets to the shelter. We continue to be inspired by the strength and resilience of these special furry ones! We can only do this work because of the generosity of our shelter supporters like you - thank you!

Thimbles



Thimbles was found on the side of a road just outside of town by a concerned passerby and brought to a local vet. With no apparent owner, she was transferred to the shelter for continued care. She was severely emaciated and dehydrated, so fluids were immediately administered and continued for several days while staff determined if there was hope for recovery. Knowing she needed round-the-clock care, Nick from our staff took Thimbles home with him where he could provide focused attention. Within a few days, Thimbles started to perk up, responding to nutrients and affection. Nick remained her foster, keeping her comfortable through recovery, slowly regaining appetite and some weight and soon her loving and playful spirit came alive. For the ultimate happy ending, Nick made Thimbles a permanent part of his family, and she is now thriving in her new home. Thimbles reminds us why we try as hard as we can, and every animal deserves all we have to give!



River & her kittens

River and her kittens were found stray in Paradise Valley. Mom cat River had an injured eye and was struggling to care for her newly born litter. Soon after they were brought to the shelter, a foster family came to the rescue and took mom and kittens into their home for six weeks and provided a safe, protected space for nursing, development and rest. The four kittens returned to the shelter, healthy, ready for adoption and all quickly found new homes. River had some extra time in the shelter for rebuilding her strength and she has just had successful surgery to remove her eye. She is feeling much better and now seeking a new home of her own. Patience and time, paired with community support, has ensured happy outcomes for all!



Littles

Littles was found roaming stray and brought to the shelter just in time by a concerned citizen. When he arrived, he was not in good shape from lack of food and shelter, but after a few weeks of warmth, comfort and focused care, he quickly came around to snuggles with staff and showing off his huge personality. The staff have been able to take the time necessary to fully understand his needs. Littles is a special 'little' cat, with some manageable health challenges, including congenital knee issues and compromised immunity, but that doesn't stop his giant spirit from connecting with his human buddies. He's still waiting to find his special someone willing to give him the attention and care he needs to keep him happy and feeling good, and he promises big doses of joy and love in return.

This Place is a Zoo!

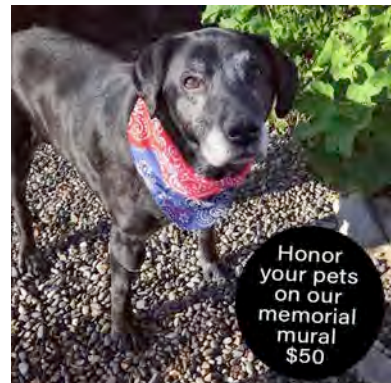
"This place is a zoo!" - you've probably found yourself uttering that phrase in your workplace but here at Stafford, we actually mean it. This year has been bananas in our Zoo, and we don't just mean the ones we feed to the turtles. Our intakes in the Zoo are up 40% from last year and the majority of the animals are surrenders. We are the only shelter in Southwestern Montana that takes in all species of domesticated pets, not just cats and dogs, so we see a wide range of species in this flexible ward from snakes to spiders, hamsters to ferrets, birds to lizards. Although most of these animals are small, they require a large amount knowledge to care for them. Our staff is extremely educated on the care of a wide range of species including dietary needs and enrichment for every pet that comes through the door. Sometimes our kitchen looks like a 5-star restaurant while the Animal Care Technicians prep fruits and vegetables all distinctly appropriate for rats, parakeets, guinea pigs and leopard geckos.

KBZK's Cody Boyer is a Stafford Zoo Adopter (remember Gus the Hedgehog?) and exotic pet rescuer. He often works with us on networking and fostering these more unusual pets. Recently he was informed of an abandoned Argentine Tegu left in a home when the owner moved and brought it to the safety of our shelter. These majestic lizards are described as dog-like in their behavior & loyalty and can grow to 5-feet-long. We currently have him up for adoption, stop in to visit, he is a stunning specimen.

Each day brings a new species and new surprise! Every pet requires an individualized veterinary protocol and behavior enrichment plan. For example, did you know birds are capable of solving dog puzzle toys? And ferrets like to open UPS boxes and play in the cardboard? And rats' favorite treats are Cheerios? Our goal here at Stafford is to provide the highest quality of care to every living being entrusted to us until we can find them a forever home. We ask the community to spread the word about our Zoo and check with us if they are looking for anything unusual, it will inevitably come through our door!



Honoring Faithful Friends



You may notice a familiar friendly face and a beautiful new mural here at Stafford. We are thrilled to announce that Gwen Strachan, after retiring from her position here as our Customer Service Manager to care for her elderly parents, has accepted a position on our Board of Directors. Gwen brings with her 10+ years of experience at Stafford in animal welfare administration as well as deep community ties being raised in Bozeman and eventually returning to Livingston to plant roots with her family after earning her Fine Arts degree at the University of California. She has been a business owner in town for over 20 years with a women-owned art-coop (the B. Hive), an architectural design business and has served on other non-profit Boards. She recently lent her creativity to a new installation here at Stafford, our Rainbow Bridge Memorial Wall.

She beautifully captured the Absaroka Range, the Yellowstone River, Cottonwoods, Poppies, Sunflowers and much more native to our shelter landscape. As a fundraiser for 2022, we will be selling coordinating, engraved pet tags to memorialize a pet you'd like to honor. All pets welcome, not just Stafford alumni. The tag will be incorporated into the mural as leaves on the tree, centers of the flowers etc. Your pet will forever become a part of our work of art. We will be selling tags for \$50 each and some choices on color and placement will be available. A memorial tag is beautiful tribute to a family or friend's pet who passed away and we would be happy to make special arrangements to send them a card on behalf of your donation as well. You may place your orders by emailing adavis@staffordanimalshelter.org, subject: memorial mural.

Thank you Gwen for volunteering your service to our Board and for giving us a special place to reflect on our beloved pets.



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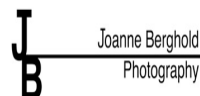


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