

ANIMAL TALES

News from Stafford Animal Shelter

Spring 2025



Stafford
Animal Shelter
Livingston, Montana



INSIDE

- Some Bunny to Love
- Fur-bulous Transformations
- The Great Catsby - Fur Ball 2025

3 Business Park Road
Livingston, MT 59047
(406) 222-2111



www.staffordanimalshelter.org

Follow us on socials

Email address:

info@staffordanimalshelter.org

The shelter is open 24/7 for safe stray drop offs. We are open by appointment 7 days a week. Walk-Ins, Adoptions & Volunteering
Tuesday - Sunday from Noon - 5:00.



STAFF

Carissa Walsh - Executive Director

CWalsh@staffordanimalshelter.org

Alicia Davis - Director of Administration

ADavis@staffordanimalshelter.org

Kadie Smith - Veterinary Assistant

vetcare@staffordanimalshelter.org

Nick Radovich - Canine Specialist

dogtrainer@staffordanimalshelter.org

Amanda Garant

Community Engagement Coordinator

outreach@staffordanimalshelter.org

Veterinarians

Dr. Jamie White & Dr. Tarek Isham

Facilities Assistant

Dale Fowler

Animal Care Supervisor

Daisy Castro

Animal Care Coordinators

-Monica Diaz

-Faith Peterson



Cover by: Beargrass Mobile Pet Photography



Executive Director Letter Carissa Walsh

Spring is upon us here in Montana, bringing a season of renewal, reflection, and gratitude. As the days grow longer and the world around us begins to bloom, I find myself reflecting on the incredible impact we have made together and the exciting growth still ahead.

This past year, our shelter reached a remarkable milestone, taking almost 1,400 animals, the highest number to date. Even more heartening, we achieved an over 80% return rate of stray pets to their owners. These numbers are not just statistics; they represent countless lives saved, families reunited, and a community that values and protects its animals.

As I continue settling into my role at The Stafford Animal Shelter, I have been deeply moved by our mission and the responsibility we carry. Our community is the heart of this shelter, and without you, none of what we do would be possible. As we move forward, I invite you to continue standing with us. Your support makes our shelter a place of hope, compassion, and second chances. Together, we can build a future where every animal receives the love and care they deserve.

One of the most impactful contributions this year came from Greater Good Charities, which donated an astonishing 44,526 pounds of pet food. Thanks to the donors who support this effort, we organized & distributed food across the state, ensuring that our partner organizations and community members received much-needed support in a time that may seem so uncertain.

Additionally with the generous support of the ASPCA, which granted us \$20,000 for our Canine Behavior Enrichment Program, we can better serve the public by offering educational classes, raising awareness about responsible pet care and training, therefore reducing surrenders to the shelter.

Together, with your continued support, we can create a brighter future for the animals in our care and the community we serve, thank you for being a vital part of our mission.

Board of Directors

Gwen Strachan - President

Darcy Cook - Vice President

Chris Raley - Treasurer

Andy Art

Stephanie Cunningham

Hannah Pauli

Vicki Regula

Thank you to our Board for volunteering their time & expertise!



2024 AT A GLANCE

THIS YEAR, OUR SHELTER ACHIEVED INCREDIBLE MILESTONES, SAVING MORE LIVES THAN EVER BEFORE. THANKS TO OUR DEDICATED TEAM, GENEROUS SUPPORTERS, AND COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY, WE PROVIDED LOVE, CARE, AND SECOND CHANCES TO HUNDREDS OF ANIMALS IN NEED. TOGETHER, WE'RE BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR PETS AND PEOPLE. THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS SUCCESS POSSIBLE!

1399 ANIMAL INTAKES

1133 PETS ADOPTED

222 RETURNED TO OWNER

99% LIFESAVING RATE

538 SURGERIES COMPLETED



Found kittens?

If you've found kittens here's what to do:

START HERE: Are the kittens injured or critically sick?

YES →

CALL STAFFORD
or take to your local vet ASAP!

↓ NO

ESTIMATE THE AGE OF THE KITTENS



0-2 WEEKS OLD

Eyes closed or barely open



2-4 WEEKS OLD

Eyes open and alert; becoming mobile



4-6 WEEKS OLD

Very mobile and often talkative; can eat food



6-8 WEEKS OLD

Very active and playful; around 1-2 pounds



8+ WEEKS OLD

Very active and playful; 2 pounds or more

STOP! Can you see the mom cat OR a nest?

YES ↓

DON'T KIT-NAP!

A kitten's best chance of survival is with mom. **Leave the kittens where they are.**

If you want to help, make sure mom has access to shelter, food, and water and contact Stafford Animal Shelter for further support.

NO ↓

ARE YOU SURE?

Mom may be off hunting or not want to come around if people are present. Watch for her to come back for a few hours.

PRO TIP: Leave a ring of flour around the kittens. Check in a few hours if you see mom's foot prints in the flour!

Reach out to **Stafford** to connect regarding spay/neuter resources. We can provide information on affordable and accessible services to help keep pets healthy and prevent overpopulation.

CALL STAFFORD

to report confirmed orphaned kittens.
(406) 222-2111

↑ **MOM CAME BACK**

↑ **STILL NO MOM**

Stafford Animal Shelter

3 Business Park Rd. Livingston, MT 59047



STAFFORD 101

- Stafford Animal Shelter is the only nonprofit, animal care facility that serves the pets and people of Park, Sweet Grass, Meagher and surrounding Southwestern Montana counties including Mammoth WY, Yellowstone National Park and Reservation Partners.
- All pets are accepted here regardless of age, medical condition, breed & species. They are welcome with us for as long as it takes to find their forever home. We do not euthanize for lack of space or resources.
- We practice a “managed intake” approach which refers to a thoughtful process where our animal intakes are scheduled based on the shelter’s capacity to provide humane care for each animal.
- SAS is here to help reunite lost pets with their families with 24/7 access to safe drop-off kennels, microchip scanner & ID tag machine.
- SAS provides free pet food, veterinarian care, and supplies to community members through our “Friends for Life” & Community Pet Food Pantry programs.
- SAS offers free emergency pet boarding for victims of car accidents, wildfires, floods, domestic abuse, temporary homelessness etc.
- Every cat, dog & rabbit adopted from our shelter is vetted, spayed/ neutered, vaccinated, dewormed and microchipped.
- SAS welcomes volunteers for animal socialization, dog walking, fostering, advocacy and outreach events.
- SAS is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization that relies on the generosity of the community & donors to continue to keep our doors open!



Some Bunny To Love



Cover girl Bunny's journey hasn't been easy. This sweet 1-year-old girl was found as a stray along with her littermates (Fish was adopted & Goose is still here). They were by the river, alone and scared, on a freezing cold January day. No one ever came in to claim them. It was evident that she had recently given birth at her young age. Rightfully so, she was scared, timid and afraid of her new surroundings. Days turned into months as Bunny was continually passed over for adoption because the confident, outgoing dogs are always quick to be adopted. But Bunny never lost faith!

Thanks to the unwavering dedication of our animal care staff, Bunny made huge strides while she was in the shelter. They developed a hearty socialization plan, complete with positive reinforcement training, play groups, food puzzles, and lots of love! She started to trust people slowly and made encouraging improvements when volunteers came to see her. Starting out by trepidatiously crawling over to them, she would then light up realizing "strangers" equated to snuggles and treats. She was really coming into her own!

Thankfully, after over 2 months in the shelter, a wonderful family took a chance on her. The Holdorf Family were her angels. Bunny now lives with her Labrador sisters, Bibby and Breezly - the Three Bs! She was a little apprehensive of this new home life, but her canine sisters and loving humans showed her the ropes and made her feel secure. It didn't take long until she learned to jump in bed to cuddle and enjoy car rides. All her months in the shelter were worth the wait, she will never be abandoned again and has the family she deserves!



ADOPT
ME

...And now it's Goose's Time to find her family

Help spread the word about Goose and help find her a forever family just like Bunny did! Much like her sister, Goose is 1.5 years old and was initially timid and scared but has made huge strides while at Stafford! Our Canine Specialist Nick thinks she'd be great in a home with other dogs and active owners who would invest in play time to help her thrive. She is social, intelligent and will be glued to your side once you bond with her! 3 months in a shelter is too long, let's find this girl a home!

Fur-bulous Transformations!

At the heart of our mission, Stafford serves as a lifeline for animals in need providing them with safety, care, and—most importantly—an opportunity for healing. Many arrive in distressing conditions, often requiring medical attention that can transform not only their health but also their lives. Here's a glimpse into the inspiring medical transformations of cats we've had recently along with their heartwarming happy endings. This lifesaving work is only possible through generous gifts from our supporters to fund our inhouse Veterinary team! If not for these vital donations, it's uncertain where these cats would turn when they need help the most. Thank you!



Sweet Barney was only a couple of months old when he was found alone on a country road, lethargic and with a limp. After initial treatments, it was clear an amputation would allow him to lead a pain-free, carefree kitten life! Our medical team removed his leg, and he recovered with our foster Angel Stark (who also adopted him!). Being a tripod doesn't stop this beautiful boy one bit!

Pinky Boy, a 5-year-old black cat, was surrendered with no appetite; he was vomiting and jaundice. Our team suspected he had hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver syndrome), but they had to move quickly. He was lethargic, weak, and in need of a blood transfusion immediately. Another sturdy, (hero) cat named Cricket was used as the donor. Just like human blood banks, shelters also need help from healthy donors! After an all-night procedure and 48 hours of touch-and-go monitoring, Pinky Boy recovered and was given a second chance at life. He was adopted shortly after. And so was Cricket!



Our team members at Stafford tend to be adopters of harder-to-place animals or ones with medical issues; our Executive Director is no exception. On her first day at the office, a tiny Tabby named Sonny arrived as an abandoned stray kitten with a broken leg. It was love at first sight! Our medical team applied a hot pink splint, placed her on activity restriction and her leg & heart eventually healed at home with Carissa!



Meet the Board
Out tireless
group of
-volunteers
-adopters
-fosters
-donors &
-advocates!

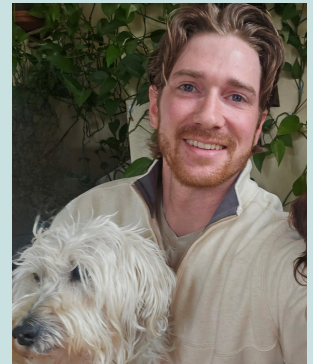
Thank You!



Gwen Strachan
Board President



Darcy Cook
Vice President



Chris Raley
Treasurer



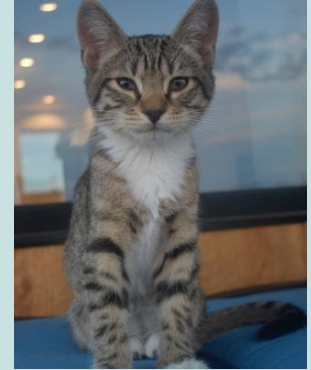
Andy Art
Director



Vicki Regula
Director



Hannah Pauli
Director



Stephanie Cunningham
Director

A Decade of Dedication

This year marks a remarkable milestone for two members of the team. It is with immense gratitude that we pay tribute to Alicia Davis & Nick Radovich, who have dedicated an incredible 10 years to our animal shelter. Both have taken on numerous roles at Stafford over the years, always going above and beyond for our small organization. Their positive spirit and willingness to tackle challenges head-on is a reminder of the importance of patience, resilience, and love in our work.



Alicia started with the shelter as a volunteer in 2011 and then was hired as the Development Director. Over the years, she has nurtured a sense of community among our volunteers, rescue partners, and supporters. She has been a go-to foster for the most vulnerable residents, taking home countless cats and dogs in need. Currently serving as the Director of Administration, Alicia oversees the financial well-being of the shelter, along with assisting in strategic planning, fundraising and programming. We are grateful for her institutional knowledge, commitment, and passion for animal welfare.



Nick also started out as a volunteer before being hired as an Animal Care Coordinator ten years ago. His dedication to our mission was evident, and he quickly rose the ranks, serving as an Animal Care Supervisor and then taking a special interest in our behavior cases, leading him to his current role as our Canine Specialist. After several years of certifications and degrees, Nick is a Knowledge Assessed Certified Professional Dog Trainer. He is currently working to become an AKC Canine Good Citizen Evaluator and Certified Fear Free Animal Trainer. His education and expertise are invaluable to our community and staff. His gentle spirit and unwavering commitment have improved the lives of thousands dogs and helped them find their forever homes.

In the past decade, over 10,500 animals have passed through our doors, Alicia and Nick have made a profound, lifesaving, impact. Cheers to many more years of making a difference for pets & people alike!

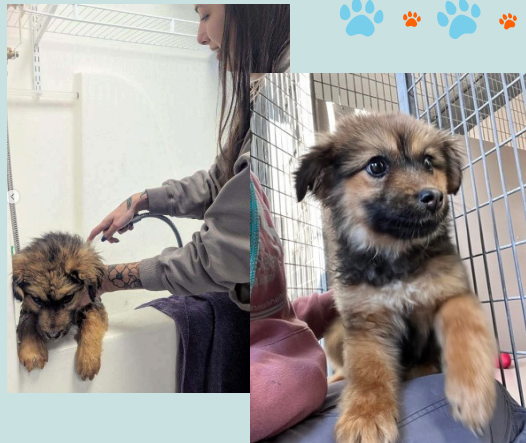
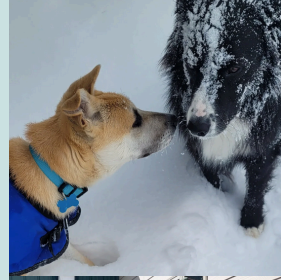


Helping Our Neighbors

In January, record wildfires ravaged the city of Los Angeles. The already overcrowded shelters there were bombarded with stray and lost pets who had been separated from their owners or who were left behind in the swift evacuations. Their teams were called upon to set up impromptu food and supply banks, treat the wounded, and reunite the lost.

In a heartfelt display of compassion and solidarity for our California colleagues, Stafford Animal Shelter joined with several other Montana shelters, Wings of Rescue, Paws for Life, and Best Friends to arrange a lifesaving flight and open our doors to help. We took in pets that had been in the shelter system long before the tragedy, freeing up kennel space for those in most dire need.

Upon arrival, the dogs were assessed by veterinarians and provided with the necessary medical care, grooming, and a cozy place to relax. Our staff worked to ensure the animals felt safe and loved while with us and worked quickly to find them homes. It was clear that some of the dogs had never seen snow and had been held in small kennels, and they loved romping and playing!



Although we have a long list of animals that need our help in our own state, we felt we had to extend our hand to California for this unprecedented tragedy. We called on fosters to help us make space, and the response was overwhelming. We were inspired to help by the many shelters and supporters who stepped up for Stafford in our time of need after the devastating flood destruction in 2022. No one can do this work alone. The joint effort of so many organizations showcased that together we can make a difference in the lives of animals who need it the most. We are happy to report that all the dogs have now found their forever homes right here in Montana!

Helping Our Community

Part of our mission is to provide safety net services to pet owners in need. Not only does this keep pets with the people who love them, but it also avoids heartbreaking surrenders. Additionally, it alleviates the financial burden of taking in animals to the shelter who are already facing medical challenges and will most likely require long-term care from us. We help through our donor-funded "Friends For Life" program. Applicants can apply for veterinary assistance, pet food, and supplies when they fall on hard times.



A recent recipient was Nory, the elderly Lab owned by Will B. Will is a hardworking Montanan hit with the rising cost of housing and supplies and could not afford emergency care. F4L was able to pay for a veterinary visit and assists with ongoing medication costs to keep her comfortable and happy. Will says of the program: *"Nory is my best friend, I can't imagine life without her. Thank you for helping us in our time of need! I'm so glad caring people still exist."* Us too. Thank you to all who donate to F4L!



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Livingston, MT 59047
Phone: (406) 222-2111
Fax: (406) 222-4938
www.staffordanimalshelter.org



Non-Profit
Organization

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Livingston, MT

FOLLOW US ON:



Supporter (or current resident)



After reading, please pass along to a fellow animal advocate or recycle

THE GREAT CATSBY
2025 STAFFORD ANIMAL SHELTER FUR BALL
MAY 16, 2025 • 5:30 PM
 HOSTED BY CHICO HOT SPRINGS
JOIN US FOR COCKTAILS, LIVE MUSIC,
DINNER AND SILENT & LIVE AUCTIONS
TO BENEFIT ANIMALS IN NEED
SOLD OUT



Even though Fur Ball 2025 is already sold out, you can still contribute to our most significant fundraising event of the year!

We are seeking donations from businesses and individuals in the community who wish to support our animals!

Stafford Animal Shelter is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that does not receive sustainable funding from the government or national animal welfare groups. We can only continue to care for the animals with your support!

If you're interested contributing an auction item, please reach out to Carissa Walsh, at CWalsh@staffordanimalshelter.org!

Leaders of the Pack (\$10,000+)



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