



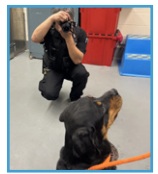
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Animal Tales

Fall/ Winter 2024

Covey's Corner

People! As I learned about the articles being written for this issue of Animal Tales, I was reminded that even though our mission at the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter is centered around animals, it's the people who really drive our success. Staff, volunteers, donors, transfer partners, veterinary professionals and countless others help us provide the services that are needed to care for animals in Washington County.

I often think about how grateful I am for the team I work with at Animal Services. As you read through this issue of Animal Tales, I'm confident you'll see there is good reason for my gratitude. I'm inspired by the kindness of our volunteers who donate so much of their time to help. And I'm impressed and motivated by the skills and expertise of our paid staff, especially as they work together with our partners in the community to provide the best solutions possible for the many different animals and requests for assistance that come to us each day.

I hope as you read this issue and learn about our work at Washington County Animal Services and the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter, you are inspired and motivated to do what you can to help, too!

Warm regards and a happy holiday season,

Randy Covey, Animal Services Manager

Providing comfort to shelter pets

By Megan Luckenbach, Animal Shelter Technician



Animal Shelter Technician Annika Maulit helps Mittens the kitten come out of his shell with some help from a Churu cat treat.

The shelter technicians at Bonnie Hays do a lot more than basic animal care. Many shelter technicians, including myself, entered this field of work because we believe pets deserve the best care possible during their time at a shelter. Being in a new environment with people they've never met is a stressful experience for a pet, and our shelter technicians are usually the first people they start to warm up to. With that said, we regularly go above and beyond our "regular" duties to make each animal's stay in our facility less stressful.

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Adopting from anywhere helps pets everywhere!

In October, the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter participated in Adopt ASAP, a special weekend-long adoption event spanning five local agencies. Along with our Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) partners at Cat Adoption Team, Humane Society for Southwest Washington, Multnomah County Animal Services and Oregon Humane Society, we offered heavily discounted adoptions while promoting the message that adopting a pet from anywhere helps pets everywhere.

As you may know, adoptions have looked a bit different at Bonnie Hays over the past few years. When an animal arrives at our facility, our number one goal is to reunite them with their family. When that isn't possible, we've been working with amazing transfer partners who find homes for adoptable pets. Occasionally we've done adoptions at our shelter, but they have been limited to special circumstances.

So, what's changed and what hasn't? We will continue to do everything we can to reunite lost pets with the people who know and love them. However, we also recognize the need for animal adoption in our community – both for the pets who need new caretakers and the humans who are ready to open their homes and hearts to the joys of animal companionship. We are currently looking at ways to offer pet adoption in Washington County. Keep an eye out for information on what this will look like as we move forward.

Whether your animal companion came from us, another shelter, a foster-based rescue, or through someone who needed to rehome a pet, we thank you for opening your home to an animal in need!



Rocky shows off his ability to "sit pretty" for his adoption photo – much to the thrill of his new family! They came to the shelter after spotting this senior dog's photo in a Facebook post about the adoption event.



Boo was the very first dog to go home from our shelter during Adopt ASAP. There were a total of 549 adoptions across the five participating agencies during the event.

Providing comfort from page 1

We offer personalized enrichment for each pet. For example, if we know a dog loves Kongs and slow feeders, we will create food "popsicles" for them. These can be made in many ways, but one is by putting food and water in a muffin tray and then freezing it. Dogs enjoy it, and we love watching them play with it!

We also spend extra time with shy animals. With dogs, sometimes we spend time just sitting with them in their kennels in hopes they will open up to us. Other times, we take them for a long walk to help build trust and allow their true personalities to shine through. With cats, staff start by spending time outside the cat's kennel talking to them, then move to spending time with them in a secure room we call our "meet and greet" area. There, we use treats and toys like feather wands to get them out of their shell.

There are many other ways our team provides extra care for pets staying with us. We can provide animals with over two dozen different enrichment activities including off-leash play and puzzles. We also spend time with "social eaters" who want affection and the presence of a person nearby to eat their meals. In all these ways and more, we gladly spend extra time with pets who need it to ensure they stay happy and healthy at the shelter.

Remembering Debbie Wood

Debbie Wood was an advocate for the animals in our community and was dedicated to making the Portland metro region a safer place for pets.



When Deborah Wood passed away on July 8, 2024, her loss was deeply felt in the community.

Debbie was the manager of Washington County Animal Services and the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter from December 2008 until her retirement in 2017. She was also a founding member of the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP), which is a coalition of local animal organizations dedicated to making the Portland metro region a safer place for pets. Her work with ASAP was instrumental in eliminating euthanasia for healthy pets and those with manageable conditions in the Portland area.

Debbie was also a newspaper columnist, animal advocate, dog trainer and so much more. She was known for her cheerful demeanor, award-winning writing skills, and sharp sense of humor.

We are grateful for all Debbie did to positively impact the lives of both the people and pets of Washington County. We are also thankful for those who have honored her memory with a donation to the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter. Debbie made a final, lasting impact when she named the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter as a beneficiary of her estate. This holiday season, we and her family invite you to consider donating to the shelter in honor of Debbie's work or in honor of another fierce animal advocate in your life.

Meet OACC's Shelter Employee of the Year: Myndi Petersen

Animal Services Shelter Supervisor Myndi Petersen was recently honored as the Oregon Animal Control Council's Shelter Employee of the Year. In her 17 years with Animal Services, Myndi's work has touched the lives of not only thousands of Washington County pets, but also the humans who care for them. She started with Washington County as a temporary animal shelter technician and now oversees both the administrative and animal care teams.

"Myndi is such a wonderful example of a great leader," said Senior Administrative Specialist Jenna Draggoo, who has worked with Myndi for more than eight years. "She is confident in her position, is willing to listen to understand, and quick to try to find a solution if an answer is not readily available. I am very blessed to have her as my supervisor."

Animal Shelter Technician Alex Sweet adds, "Myndi is very good at making staff feel appreciated and welcomed at work. She leads by example and displays professionalism and knowledge in her position."

The positive feelings are mutual. Myndi notes that one of the best things about working at the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter is seeing staff come together to help animals and community members. Reflecting on her career at the shelter and her recent award, Myndi shared, "I'm proud of this organization and grateful I get to be part of it."



OACC's Shelter Employee of the Year, Myndi Petersen, holds the plaque honoring her for 17 years of work helping the people and pets of Washington County.

Volunteer spotlight: Danielle Wachsmuth

By Chris Hoffman, Volunteer Coordinator

Danielle Wachsmuth has been volunteering as a shelter assistant since September 2023. She recently used her experience, knowledge and skills to land a job at a boarding kennel. In her words, "Not only did volunteering introduce me to the basics of animal care and shelter medicine, but it also helped me get a job as a kennel technician."

Danielle's ability to juggle school, volunteering and a job speaks to her drive and desire to better herself and her community. When asked her favorite thing about volunteering, Danielle answered, "Contributing to the animals and people of Washington County, learning about the inner workings of the shelter and, of course, hanging out with the dogs."

What does the future hold for Danielle? "I'm interested in becoming a veterinarian and Bonnie Hays has been instrumental in shaping my path. When I was younger, my visits to the shelter helped cement my interest in animal care, and my volunteer work helps me gain practical experience and sustains my passion for this field."



Danielle Wachsmuth does laundry during her weekly volunteer shift. Our shelter assistant volunteers help us provide the best care possible for animals temporarily staying in our facility.

My path to working with volunteers

By Chris Hoffman, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer Coordinator Chris Hoffman with shelter dog Bagel.



As a child, my mom would take me to our local animal shelter. Not to adopt, but more like taking a child who loves trains to the train station. My older brother is severely allergic to dogs and cats, so we could not have one.

Working with animals never crossed my mind until later in my career, which began in the corporate world. Along the path, I interviewed for a job I thought I wanted. That hiring manager changed the course of my professional life when at the end of the interview he said, "The only time that I saw true engagement from you was when you spoke about your pets."

My work in animal welfare began at the East Bay SPCA in Oakland, California, where I managed the volunteer and foster programs. From there, I opened a dog day care and boarding facility, which ran for seven years. After closing that and moving our family to Portland, I joined the Oregon Humane Society's (OHS) Second Chance team. Second Chance has a team of dedicated volunteers who do everything from transporting pets to assisting with intake. After seven years at OHS, I joined Washington County Animal Services as the program communication and education specialist (aka volunteer coordinator). I look forward to serving our volunteers and growing the program!

Thank you to our shelter assistants!

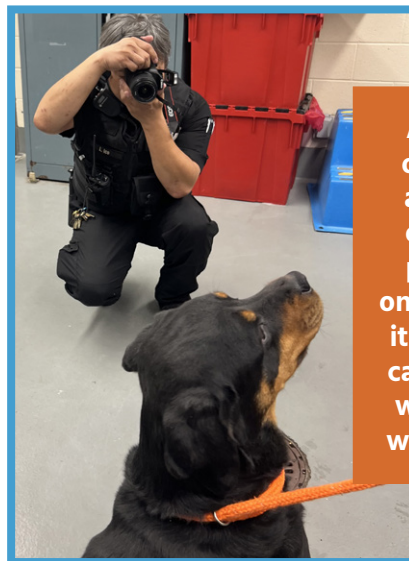
Shelter assistant volunteers keep the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter running smoothly by doing laundry, dishes, cleaning kennels and providing enrichment for pets in our care. As Animal Shelter Technician Alex Sweet put it, "Every person on our animal care team appreciates the hard work, love and dedication these volunteers put toward their role at the shelter. I don't know what we would do without them."



It takes teamwork to get justice for an animal in need

Animal abuse and neglect allegations can be complex. That's why many people and agencies work together to make sure they are handled properly, that the animals receive the care they need, and that a solid case is built to support any related citations or criminal penalties.

The process usually starts with our **administrative specialists**, who answer thousands of calls each year. Oftentimes, the calls come from **community members** who have witnessed something that might be abuse or neglect. These frontline staff members ask in-depth questions to better understand the situation and then dispatch the call to our **Animal Services officers (ASOs)**. Administrative specialists may also be on the receiving end of a call from another agency that needs animal-related expertise with a potential abuse or neglect case.



An Animal Services officer photographs a dog as part of the evidence collection process. This is just one step of many when it comes to building a case against an owner who may be charged with abuse or neglect.

ASOs determine priority level and the appropriate initial response, and contact other local law enforcement agencies if needed. The ASO may first contact the person who filed the complaint for more information. Or they might go to the location provided to try to talk with the owner and see the animals. Their investigation may also include citing (ticketing) people for animal-related violations.

Depending on what the ASO learns, the case can go in several directions. The case could be closed if they don't find evidence of a crime or code violation. Or, the ASO could potentially issue a citation, give the owner a set amount of time to resolve the concern, and/or contact others who may have additional information. If the situation is serious and evidence supports it, animals can be seized and cared for at the shelter until the investigation is complete and an outcome is determined.

When an ASO gives an owner time to resolve an issue, they also talk with them about their responsibilities as an animal owner, why it's important to make changes, and what will happen if the situation hasn't improved when the ASO follows up. ASOs may also refer owners to **partner organizations** for additional animal care resources.

If an animal is brought to our facility during the process, our **animal shelter technicians** care for them during their stay. These skilled animal care professionals clean kennels, feed, walk and provide enrichment for pets. They also keep a detailed record of each animal's time at the shelter and assist our medical team as needed.

Our **veterinarian** and **certified veterinary technicians** gather evidence of neglect or abuse and start the animals on a path to recovery. Veterinary staff, ASOs and animal shelter technicians work together to document the condition of the animals involved in these types of cases. It's extremely important to record evidence in a timely manner. As we provide the animals with care and they begin to heal, evidence of a crime can be lost.

Getting justice for these animals may involve working with other enforcement agencies like the **police** or **Sheriff's Office**, as well as the **Washington County District Attorney's Office**. If a case goes to trial, any Animal Services staff member might be called to testify.

We are grateful to live in one of the safest places for pets in the country. But we are also glad to know we have an entire team ready to respond to serious animal welfare concerns if needed.

Donations: April 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024

Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this donor list. Please accept our sincere apologies for any errors or omissions.

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Many of our generous donors ask that their donations be made in honor or memory of a special person or pet. We list them all here together in recognition of the human-animal bond and our regard for our loved ones who are with us as well as those who have passed. We so appreciate these gifts and the many ways that people and pets touch our lives.

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You make it possible for our staff to continue to provide individualized care and enrichment for pets staying with us.



Bonnie L. Hays

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WASHINGTON COUNTY

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Searching for the purr-fect gift this holiday season?

Honor the special pet or animal lover in your life with a donation to the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter!

Donations help us continue to reunite lost pets with their people, rescue stray and injured animals, investigate animal abuse and neglect, and provide specialized veterinary care for animals temporarily staying with us.

Donate online, in person, over the phone or using the enclosed envelope.

A general donation allows us the flexibility to use your gift where there is the greatest need. However, if you would like your donation used for a specific service, please contact us at Animal_Services@washingtoncountyor.gov to discuss donation options.

Thank you for your generosity and continued support!

Donations allow us to provide specialized care for pets like Phenx, who was brought to the shelter as an injured stray by a concerned community member. We provided care for him until he could be reunited with his owner.



Animal Tales is a publication of Washington County Animal Services & the Bonnie L. Hays Small Animal Shelter

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