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Animal Tales

Fall/ Winter 2022

Covey's Corner

In this issue of Animal Tales, we are sharing stories that highlight the many ways our team at Washington County Animal Services and the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter keep people and their pets together. From routinely returning stray pets to their families to stocking emergency shelters with pet supplies so evacuees can keep their animals with them in a disaster, our team is ready to serve the community!

As you read about those efforts, I want to make a special request of you in my corner of our publication. Please consider donating to the Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter to help us cover the costs of the services we provide that don't fall into the "normal" or "routine" categories.

We often help pets that need expensive, specialized veterinary care or extensive boarding at our facility while they recover from neglect or abuse. We are fortunate to have some of the best animal care staff in the country working in our shelter. Your donation helps ensure they have the financial resources to continue their lifesaving work.

Our team recently rescued a dog that was being denied emergency veterinary care by his owner, who was charged with neglect. The special veterinary care needed to save his life cost several thousand dollars. Thanks to generous donors like you, we were able to pay those bills.

Many of the routine services we provide are funded by your tax dollars, and I want to thank you for that support. We also receive substantial support from dog license fees, and I want to thank our community's dog owners for recognizing the value of keeping dogs



Mary's reunion with her dog Danny at the shelter. We are proud of the work our staff does to get pets back home.

licensed and up to date on their rabies vaccinations. A dog license, an up-to-date microchip and current information about your pet in our system often means the difference between a swift phone call or ride home from us when "Rover" decides to roam, and a few frantic days for you while your pet waits at the shelter for you to find them.

I know times are tough for many, but I hope that if you are able, you'll consider donating generously this year to help us continue to provide the extra care some animals need. We can't predict when pets might need more resources than we have budgeted, but with your help we'll be able to meet their every need! You can donate online, in person, over the phone or by using the enclosed envelope. Happy reading, and thank you for your continued support!

Warm regards,

Randy Covey, Animal Services Manager

Collaborating for cats

Just one unspayed female cat can have up to 180 kittens in her lifetime. This makes spay/neuter surgery a necessary tool in preventing more cats than can be cared for in our community.

Access to spay and neuter services across the country has been limited during the pandemic and the need for these services continues to grow. Seeing the struggle pet owners face when trying to secure affordable veterinary care for their animals, we wanted to find a way to help cats stay with their owners by supporting spay/neuter surgeries locally.

In fall 2021, we began collaborating with Cat Adoption Team (CAT) in Sherwood to increase the number of Spay & Save surgeries taking place in Washington County.

Established by the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland in 2010, Spay & Save aims to reduce the number of cats and kittens coming into shelters by offering affordable spay/neuter options for cats. The program also has the additional, equally important goal of keeping families and their pets together by providing necessary vaccines and basic veterinary services.

As their waitlist for Spay & Save appointments grew, CAT was limited in the number of surgeries they could perform utilizing only their staff. Washington County saw an opportunity for our shelter veterinarian, certified veterinary technician and other staff to help local pet owners by joining CAT in their efforts. After a year since the start of the collaboration, our organizations continue to pool resources to provide high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter services for pet cats on a regular basis.

A surgeon from CAT works alongside our very own shelter veterinarian, Dr. Allison Lamb to spay cats. A veterinary student from Oregon State assists with monitoring vitals. Truly a collaborative effort!



Teamwork gets Teddy home By Megan Luckenbach, Shelter Technician

Losing your dog can happen to anyone. Imagine being a dog on a nice, sunny day when you notice an opportunity to slip outside and enjoy some sunshine. What would you do? Well, a 10-year-old Yorkie Maltese named “Teddy” took advantage of that opportunity and snuck out without his owner knowing!

A Good Samaritan found Teddy and took him to Bethany Family Pet Clinic where they scanned him for a microchip. No microchip was detected, but since local vet clinics work closely with Animal Services, they knew to call us. Contacting the shelter resulted in the dispatch of an Animal Services officer who scanned the dog again, and began to provide safe transport back to the shelter when they were unable to immediately locate the owner.

Back at the shelter, our staff began searching for the dog’s family by looking through lost reports. Our team works very hard to get lost pets back home—even before the animals arrive at the shelter!

Teddy from page 2



Teddy is happy to be back with his family.

When an owner realizes their dog is missing, oftentimes the first thing they do is post on social media, sometimes on a Facebook lost and found pets page. In Teddy's case, shelter technicians searched through various lost and found websites and online groups attempting to locate a posting for this particular dog. Finally, a shelter technician found a post that included the phone number of the owner. When staff searched our database for more information, we were thrilled to find out they were up to date on their dog license and that we had current contact information!

A shelter technician immediately called Animal Services Officer Teresa Rush, who had been dispatched to help Teddy. Officer Rush was thankful to be able to give the owner a call and reunite Teddy with his family without a trip to the shelter.

Teddy has some health issues, and his family was very worried about him. His owner shared with us that he's always been babied and had never had a journey quite like this one!

Thanks to the teamwork between Officer Rush, our shelter staff and our partners in the community, Teddy got to finish his little adventure by getting a safe ride home.

Finding a fence for Liberty

When Animal Services Officer Kelly Bowie met Liberty's owner Richard, she could tell that he cared about his dog; he just needed a little help.

Animal Services was called out to the property where Richard and Liberty live because neighbors were concerned about the dog being tethered to the RV Richard calls home. Upon arrival, Officer Bowie saw a chance for education and finding a long-term solution that would satisfy the County's code, keep Liberty safe and keep the duo together.

Officer Bowie explored options for a suitable shelter for Liberty that would keep her on the property. Would a temporary shelter using a tarped kennel work? Not quite. What about having Liberty stay in the RV full-time? Not a great option for this large husky that enjoys spending time outdoors. What this sweet girl needed was a fenced place of her own with a doghouse to shield her from the elements.

Building a fence and buying a doghouse can be costly, and these are not items Animal Services can provide. Richard did not have easy access to the internet or a phone, making any search for solutions on his own even more challenging. After discussion with her supervisors, Officer Bowie reached out to Fences For Fido on behalf of Liberty and Richard.

Fences For Fido improves the quality of life for dogs living outdoors by building fences and providing doghouses free of charge for families with dogs currently living on chains, tethers or in small enclosures. Knowing that new people make Richard nervous, Officer Bowie stayed in contact with Richard to help facilitate things with Fences For Fido.

Thanks to Officer Bowie's tenacity and willingness to search for a solution to keep Richard and Liberty together, Fences For Fido built a fence. Not only did Fences For Fido "unchain" Liberty, but they also provided a doghouse, treats, food and plenty of toys for this big, playful pup.

We are so grateful Officer Bowie had an organization like Fences For Fido to reach out to when she met Richard and Liberty. We want to keep pets at home with the people who know and love them whenever possible!



Liberty plays with Richard while Officer Bowie and Fences For Fido volunteers pose with the new fence.

Keeping people and pets together during an emergency

Animal Services' role in emergency preparedness and response

Extreme heat, winter weather, wildfires and earthquakes are just a few emergencies those living in the Pacific Northwest face now and in the future. We know the importance of keeping people and pets together during an emergency because experience has shown us people would rather risk injury or death than leave their pets behind.

The strength of this human-animal bond was most visible during Hurricane Katrina. A lack of resources and support for those evacuating with pets left some families with the tough choice of abandoning their animals or not evacuating at all. Animal welfare professionals acted on what they saw and urged lawmakers to sign the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act. This bill, signed into law in 2006, requires states seeking FEMA assistance to accommodate pets in their plans for evacuating residents facing disaster.

Washington County's Emergency Management Team understands the importance of including pets in emergency planning and Animal Services staff are active participants in the County's Emergency Operations Center. Washington County also works with the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization, which is a partnership among agencies that collaborate to increase the Portland metro area's resilience to disasters.

Additionally, we are part of the area's Animal Multi-Agency Coordination Group. This group of animal organizations from across the region meets quarterly and assists each other when an emergency happens. For example, when Clackamas County needed help during the September 2020 wildfires, we worked together to move displaced animals to the Washington County Fairgrounds.

Animal Services advocates for human shelters to be pet friendly. We know how hard it is to separate families from their animal companions and for pets to be apart from their humans. We support human shelters in welcoming pets by providing expert guidance as well as supplies if needed.

If human shelters cannot accept pets and there is a

Animal Services staff load our dedicated emergency response trailer with crates and other supplies.



need, we can create a "pop up" animal shelter next to a human shelter. This allows owners who know their animals best to provide care for them. Encouraging owners to care for their animals and provide their own supplies during a disaster not only reduces stress on both the pets and the people who love them, but it also allows Animal Services to provide more resources to pets that have been separated from their owners and brought to our shelter.

There are several ways you can prepare now to help keep people and pets together when catastrophe strikes:

- Make a list of places you and your animals can stay together if you evacuate. Many emergency shelters for humans do not accept pets. If you must separate from them, do you have someone who could house and care for your animals temporarily?
- Make a plan for your animals if you can't get home during an emergency. Do you have a neighbor who can care for or evacuate your pets?
- Practice getting ready to go! Teach pets to come when called, practice having them get into (and spend time in) their carriers, and practice loading your vehicle or livestock trailer. Use lots of treats and positive reinforcement to make it fun!
- Advocate for pet-friendly human shelters.

Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Help us keep pets and people together no matter what happens next!

By Karrie Johnson, Program Communication & Education Specialist

Lost cat gets home just in time!

When her 14-year-old indoor cat Linus went missing on June 17, Tammy was worried. Linus had recently been diagnosed with diabetes and had only been on insulin for about a month.

After realizing Linus had escaped out the back door, Tammy updated the information connected to the cat's microchip, filed a lost report, posted on social media, alerted her veterinarian, and scoured the neighborhood.

When Animal Services Officer Les Ico and Field Supervisor Stacy Smejkal responded to a call about a stray cat on August 3, six weeks after Linus' disappearance, they were greeted by a young boy holding a very sick cat. Before taking the cat anywhere, they scanned him to see if he had a microchip. He did, and it was registered to a family just two blocks away! Since the cat was in such poor condition, they needed to talk with the owner and make sure he received veterinary care as soon as possible.

Tammy was outside when Animal Services pulled up. She couldn't believe they had Linus! He was in bad shape and had lost over half his body weight, but he was alive. Linus was immediately taken to the vet by his owners.

She later posted an update on Nextdoor to let neighbors know that her cat had been found and to share her gratitude for our team. "They checked his chip and drove him straight to me. THEY ARE AMAZING OFFICERS!"

Thanks to everyone's quick actions, Linus received treatment and is back with his family. A couple of months after Linus' return home Tammy reflected, "It was a total miracle! I don't know how he survived."



Linus back at home safe and sound.

Whether pets roll or ride in, we're here to help!

When a stray animal arrives at our shelter, we work very hard to get them back home. Over the past decade, our staff have reunited over 10,000 pets with their people. Throughout the years, we've learned that both the arrival of an animal to the shelter and the reunion with their family can be equally memorable.

Tranq the tortoise attempts to roll in

While on their way to a skatepark, two community members came across a 42-pound sulcata tortoise. After loading him into the backseat of their car and driving the tortoise to the shelter, they attempted to put the heavy tortoise on a skateboard to roll him across the parking lot and into the building. They admit to being at least partially inspired by an online video of a turtle riding a skateboard. The tortoise was having none of it though and got right off, forcing the Good Samaritans to carry him.

Community members and the media helped us get the word out about the tortoise. We knew that someone had to be missing him!



Tranq looks pretty pleased with himself as he waits to be picked up at the shelter.

Two days after the tortoise arrived, his family came to the shelter to pick him up after a neighbor alerted them to his location after seeing a post online. The family shared that it was their young son who named the tortoise Tranquil Tank, or "Tranq" for short. We hope Tranq has learned his lesson about roaming the perimeter of his owner's yard looking for ways to escape.

However they get to us, we're here for the animals of Washington County and work hard to get them back home as fast as possible.

Donations: Friends of the Animals

April 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022

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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We would like to extend a special thank you to everyone who donated toys, treats and other goodies to our shelter animals through our Amazon Wish List! You make it possible for our staff to continue to provide individualized care and enrichment for pets staying with us.

Donations made in honor or memory of special people and pets:

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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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. We will send an acknowledgment letter letting the honoree know that a donation to help the animals was made in their name.

Thank you for helping us care for the pets of Washington County. We are so grateful to be part of such a generous community!

Sugar and Cookie were seriously injured after being abandoned near a busy road and railroad tracks. Donors helped us provide the specialized veterinary care they needed.



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

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