



Four Corners Pet Expo

In mid-June, HSPS attended the two-day Four Corners Pet Expo in Durango, Colorado. It was a great opportunity to network with other animal welfare groups in the Four Corners area, and to introduce our shelter and our programs to some new supporters. We also got some valuable exposure for some of our shelter dogs who made the trip. The event's entertainment was provided by Dock Dogs. It truly was entertaining to watch some tremendous four-legged athletes jump for distance and swim for speed in the competition. A special thank-you to all the volunteers and staff(!) who helped to make our presence at the Expo worthwhile.



CFAWA Conference Collaboration

by Kim Dilione

Last month I attended my first Colorado Federation of Animal Welfare Agencies (CFAWA) conference in Blackhawk, Colorado. This year's conference focused on canine behavior, something that I am involved with at our shelter.

I attended courses geared toward helping animal shelters create an environment to enhance the behavioral, emotional and mental health of dogs during the time they spend in a shelter environment. We were given great information on how to help keep stress at a minimum for the animals in our care, starting at intake and continuing through finding their forever adoptive home.

The classes also focused on ways of lowering the length of stay for shelter dogs, which can include behavior training. Our enrichment program at HSPS not only helps our dogs with training and enrichment that staves off boredom and reduces stress behaviors, it also helps the animals get adopted more quickly by modifying undesirable behaviors and helping them become calmer when interacting with prospective adopters.

We are fortunate in Colorado to have so many shelters working together to help dogs and cats find their forever homes. This conference offered our shelter the opportunity to network with other Colorado shelters to learn more about the programs they use for shelter enrichment. We also attended a session to meet potential shelter transfer partners who could receive and help transport some of our animals if our shelter gets too crowded.

Because we live in a small town we don't always have the number of adopters needed to keep the animals moving quickly into their forever homes. This is



where transfers are so helpful. Believe it or not, some of our transfer partners don't have enough animals in their shelters to provide adoptable pets in their communities. We work with them by sending them some of our dogs and cats, which gets the animals out of our shelter and adopted more quickly. By creating room in our shelter we have also been able to take in dogs from other areas that might be euthanized because they don't have the space or facilities to care for more animals.

There was also a conference session on volunteers and how important they are to socializing the animals in the shelter, and how volunteers can help take some of the pressure off of shelter staff.

At HSPS we are fortunate to have wonderful, committed volunteers who come every week to thoroughly exercise our shelter dogs and work with the dogs on socialization skills. We also have schools that bring student groups to volunteer at the shelter to help with clean-up duties, laundry and socializing the animals in our care. While they are there, the students learn that there are many responsibilities involved when adopting and properly caring for a pet. We have residents from a local nursing home who visit the shelter once a month to give a little TLC to our animals and receive a bit of TLC in return.

HSPS not only works to make our shelter a safe haven for all of the animals in our care, but also to create a positive environment for our animals' health. Our goal is to have animals leave our shelter mentally and physically better off than when they arrived. Attending the CFAWA conference introduced us to some new ideas and partners to help us accomplish that goal, and confirmed that we are definitely headed in the right direction.



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Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack jump over... the agility equipment?!!

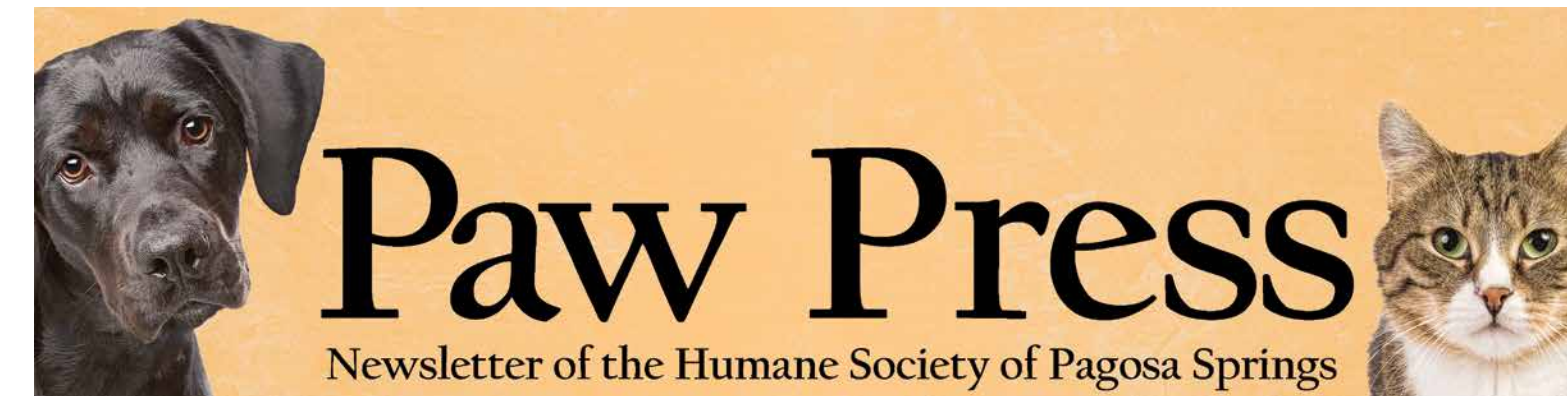


With apologies to the Mother Goose nursery rhyme, both the nimble and quick dogs and the slow and less sure-footed dogs in our shelter will soon have an opportunity to try their hand (paws?) on the shelter's new agility equipment.

Thanks to the generosity of Auction for the Animals attendees who donated to this year's "Gift of a Lifetime," the animal shelter has been able to purchase several key pieces of agility equipment that will become a permanent part of our shelter dog enrichment training program. The enrichment program uses various methods to keep our shelter dogs mentally and physically active during their shelter stay: teaching positive behaviors, modifying less desirable behaviors, and, now, learning agility! Mental and physical stimulation helps prevent kennel breakdown that can result from prolonged confinement and boredom. Keeping shelter animals healthy is an important part of providing quality care. Beyond the health benefits, the enrichment training program also helps rambunctious dogs learn better manners and shy dogs develop more confidence, all of which can enhance their chances for adoption when they interact with members of the public.

Again, a big Thank-You to the "Gift of a Lifetime" donors who helped to make the purchase of the agility equipment possible, and another giant Thank-You to the volunteers and shelter staff who help make the enrichment training program work. With your help, the shelter dogs are healthier, happier and soon to be more agile!

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Fall 2015

They Were Far from Home

Every animal that enters the shelter is lost, abandoned or unwanted, and their eventual adoption is always a cause for celebration. Whether their new home is down the road, across town or out-of-state doesn't make a difference because it's the caring and commitment, more than the location, that really matters. We are fortunate to live in a community where so many of our neighbors have opened their hearts and homes to give shelter animals another chance at a good life. Witnessing that spirit of caring is one of the great rewards of shelter-work.

We have many wonderful stories of local folks who have gone the extra mile to bring animals in need into their homes. Sometimes, however, it's the stories that start locally and end up globally that really help put the exclamation point on the caring and commitment that goes into adopting a shelter animal. Here are three stories of many people who *went the distance* to make good things happen.

Ratchet was a handful when he came to the shelter. First of all, he was a high energy and rambunctious four-month old Red Heeler pup. Second, he was deaf and unable to hear his owner's verbal cues and commands. After numerous escapes from home, his frustrated owner decided to surrender Ratchet to the shelter. Shelter staff know that extra-needs animals require more work and effort, but they are hardly daunted by that prospect. It may take longer, but time and again we have witnessed people open their homes to special-needs pets. Patience became the watchword with Ratchet.



Patience pays. Ratchet appeared on the HSPS adoption-available website with the caveat that he should go to a home experienced with deaf dogs. Cheryl from Arizona contacted the shelter. Her deaf Red Heeler had recently passed. She was experienced in teaching hand signals and was looking for a new deaf dog, preferably a Red Heeler, to share her home. Bingo! But how to get Ratchet to Arizona? Enter Sharon and Marlene, sisters from Arizona visiting their friend, an HSPS volunteer, in Pagosa. So almost two months after entering the shelter, Ratchet was loaded into the sisters' RV with their four-legged crew and headed for an Arizona rendezvous with Cheryl. Volunteers willing to go the distance are a blessing! As Sharon later said, "This was my first transport.



Learned a lot and I would definitely do it again!"

Ratchet, now known as Redman, has been home in Arizona for three months now. Cheryl has been in touch with the shelter as part of our adoption follow-up program. She had this to report shortly after his adoption: "He not only thinks at the speed of light but moves as quickly...He's learning [hand] language very fast." And more recently she shared this update: "Redman is doing better every day. Last night he laid in my lap, on his back, and I rocked him to sleep...at one point he opened his eyes and studied me deeply for the longest time... he has finally chosen me (completely) as his human. I broke into a million pieces, tears and laughter at the same time...he let me hug him tight without a wiggle. It's quite an honor and it's priceless." Home is where the heart is, and Redman is finally home!

Continued on next page...

A woman travelling through Colorado in early summer stopped to investigate a box on the side of the road. Inside she found a single small puppy covered in fleas. She brought the pup to our shelter for care. Libby, as she was named, was young enough that the shelter believed a foster home would give her the best opportunity to socialize and receive the level of extra care she needed to recover and grow. She stayed in foster care until she was fully recovered and old enough to spay, then she returned to the shelter to begin the search for an adoptive home and a second chance at life outside a box.



A family from California who had recently lost their dog to cancer was searching the internet looking for a pup to adopt. Libby was the breed and age they were looking for, so Kelly called the shelter and informed the staff that Libby was “the one.” California is a bit more than just down the road, so the shelter began working on finding transport from here to there. When it became apparent that it would be at least a couple weeks before volunteer transportation could be arranged, Kelly’s husband made the commitment to fly to Durango, rent a car and drive Libby back to her new home. Another HSPS volunteer drove Libby to Durango to meet her new dad and she was on her way!

Libby, now known as Sadie, shares a home with mom, dad and two young boys. Kelly recently updated the shelter to say that Sadie is super smart and doing well. They are taking puppy classes so she will get the care and training needed for a great life. She is loved by the entire family. Kelly says Sadie has *adopted* a couple of the boys’ stuffed animals and takes care of them just

like they were her own babies. Maybe she’s expressing her gratitude to the woman who rescued her and the family who has given her a real and loving home far from the box on the side of the road.

What’s in a name? Ask Houdini, a four-legged wandering escape artist that eluded capture for several months this past winter. The staff at San Juan Veterinary Hospital were finally able to coax Houdini inside with the tempting offer of nourishment. Skinny and very timid, Houdini was brought to the shelter in late March. As the shelter made inquiries, it became apparent that many people had seen a scared, gray shadow of a dog wandering for quite some time. Nobody had been able to capture him until that day in late March.

A special-needs dog does not refer just to medical conditions. It can also apply to extremely timid animals that would rather be invisible than interact with people. Timid animals can experience prolonged and potentially debilitating shelter stays. Next to the exuberant animals that say, “Oooh, oooh pick me!” whenever prospective adopters appear, a timid animal disappears in the background. Houdini’s shelter persona and experience fit that description to a T. His big break came when he met Fiona, a summer shelter volunteer who was heading west in the fall. Houdini and Fiona had their first bonding moments when she took care of him during the Pet Expo in Durango this past June, a nearly overwhelming people experience for Houdini. She began to take a particular interest in, as she calls him, “this goofy, spastic dog.” The



interest proved to be mutual, and Houdini’s invisibility-cloak started to disappear whenever Fiona came to the shelter.

Today “Houdi” is home with Fiona in Oregon, many miles from his old wandering grounds. He has begun to relish his new environment. Fiona reports that he even plays with her and other dogs now, and is happiest when he is bolting around the beach...with no thoughts of escape. And with each day that passes, his tail wags more and more. Thanks to a special person who saw the mighty heart in a scared and skinny dog, Houdi has found a new lease on a good life!

Special thanks to all the supporters, volunteers and adopters who figuratively and literally go the distance for animals in need!



Auction Action Helps the Shelter

The 21st annual HSPS Auction for the Animals this past August 21st proved to be both an entertaining evening and a very successful fundraising event for the animal shelter. Over 250 attendees were treated to a sumptuous dinner catered by the Alley House Grille. Live music was provided by renowned singer/songwriter, Tim Sullivan. Everyone had an opportunity to bid on a variety of items in both the silent and live auctions. Live auction proceedings were, again, capably handled by professional auctioneer, Ken Kincaid.

Auction items included a 1986 CJ-7 Jeep, lodging and travel to Port au Prince, a stunning gold and diamond pendant, canoes and kayaks, original fine art and sculptures from noted artists and a wide array of jewelry, art, home décor, sporting goods and wonderful gift items from local and out-of-town businesses and individual donors. The generosity of our many donors is one of the truly wonderful aspects of the auction, and our heartfelt thanks go out to one and all for their contributions.

Special thank-yous are also owed to all the financial sponsors whose support contributed significantly to the success of this year’s auction. Platinum sponsors included the Poenisch Foundation, Joan Ward, Evelyn and Mike Tennyson, Becky and Gary Anderson, Kay and Gene Lunceford, Fort Lawrie and the Lawrie Dogs, and Two Old Crows Décor. Silver sponsors included Pagosa Motorsports, Belvedere Art Tile, and an anonymous donation in memory of Thomas Torrey. Our bronze sponsors were Brown Insurance Agency and Summer Phillips Goldsmith.

Many, many thanks, too, to all the attendees and volunteers whose efforts and generosity made the auction a very special evening. Caring for the numerous dogs and cats that pass through the shelter and providing for our many community service programs creates a significant financial deficit every year. The Auction for the Animals is essential for bridging the financial gap.



Colorado Gives Day – Dec 8th



Incentive Fund Increases Your Donation

By Sandy Cepone

Give where you live! Tuesday, December 8th, will be HSPS’s second Colorado Gives Day. Please mark your calendar and participate to support HSPS shelter programs and to help pay for the costs of vaccines and veterinary care for our shelter animals.

Million Dollar Incentive Fund! Colorado Gives Day was created in 2010 by Community First Foundation. With the financial support of Colorado-based FirstBank, a \$1 Million Incentive Fund was created. When you donate to HSPS through the ColoradoGives.org website on Colorado Gives Day, *we receive a portion of the incentive fund*, which increases the value of every dollar donated! Our shelter dogs and cats will benefit tremendously!

ColoradoGives.org also lets you create your own fundraising page on their website which is linked to HSPS. If you have a passion for one of our programs, you can create a fundraising effort just for that specific program. For example, you can help raise funds for shelter animal enrichment, emergency medical care, community spay/neuter, free-roaming cat TNR, or you can create a general fundraising page to apply donations where they are needed most! This is a great way for your family, friends and others to support HSPS.

For giving made easy, donate online! Select Humane Society of Pagosa Springs on ColoradoGives.org, a year-round online-giving website that features more than 1,500 Colorado charities. Learn about our programs and how we are helping the community. You can also visit our website, www.humanesociety.biz, and scroll down to the Colorado Gives Day box. Click and it will take you right to our Colorado Gives page.

Can’t wait until Colorado Gives Day? Starting November 1, 2015, donations for Colorado Gives Day can be scheduled in advance!

Recurring Donations: Gifts our shelter dogs and cats can count on! Your recurring donation to HSPS is support we can count on. When you use this option you are making a commitment to donate a particular amount over a specific period of time. You can give as little as \$10 per week, month, quarter or year. Simply set up your donation schedule and your deductions will happen automatically from your credit card, debit card or bank account. To learn more about recurring donations, visit www.ColoradoGives.org FAQs or contact our Administration office at 970-264-5549.



IN HONOR OF...

Amos from Duane Haley
Maisie Casias from Irvin and Andrea Casias
Bob Crowe from Larry Crowe
John Duvall: Happy Fathers Day, Dad! from Nicole Fry
Bella, Bonnie, Boomer, Miss Sunny from Barbara Moore

IN MEMORY OF...

Buffy, my dog (adopted from HSPS in October 2003)
from Mary G. McCalister
Apollo from Donald and Alice Stidham
Bailey from Louise Bailey
Our dog, Belle from John and Rebecca Campbell
Little Bit from Janet Spaulding
Domino from Larry Crowe
Maggie, beloved dog of the Stroll Family from Linda and Duncan Lawrie
Magee and Holly from Laurel Todd
Lily Isaacson, dog of Ross and Laura Isaacson from Nita Niece
Jack, beloved dog of Deb Jennings from Laren and Terry Traver
Hollis, beloved cat of Coye and Priscilla Jones from Coye and Priscilla Jones
Dear Special Lily from Laura and Ross Isaacson
Our dog, Lula from Robert and Betty Clouse
Gracie Lumbattis from Nita Niece
My Sweet Dog, Maggie Mae from Joan Ward
Kay Kay, beloved dog of Tierney McCaughrin from John and Alice Farley
Madede One from Clarence and Ella Vaughn
Our cat, Penny from Brenda and Carroll Rion
Harley, the cat; pet of Professor Betty Richardson from John and Alice Farley
James Springer from Tina Jennings
Spud, dog of Dr. and Mrs. Thornell from Susan Crane
Maggie Mae, beloved dog of Joan Ward from Laren and Terry Traver
Maggie, beloved dog of Joan Ward from Linda and Duncan Lawrie
Casey, beloved dog of Tom & Lynne Winterton from Kathie Taggart
Bill Goddard from Hawk and Cathy Rothell
Milo, beloved cat of Fred and Norma Harman from Linda and Duncan Lawrie
Thomas Torrey from Anonymous
Aura Truax from Stephanie G Webster
Wayne Logan from Cher Logsdon

MEMORIAL GARDEN BRICKS

In Memory Of Casey, Best Dog Ever! from Kathie Taggart
Dear Special Lily, 4/24/02-5/27/15, Always in Our Hearts from Laura and Ross Isaacson
Nicholas Borzoi, 2007-2015, G’Night Sweet Prince from Tom and Lynne Stroud
In Memory of Hollis Jones from Coye and Priscilla Jones
For My Sweet Dog, Maggie Mae, From Joan Ward