



Paw Press

Newsletter of the Humane Society of Pagosa Springs



Spring 2020

Celebrating Good Companions and Quarantine Buddies

By Mike Stoll

Strange and stressful times we're living in.

It's early April and we're living in a mandated stay-at-home order. We closed our thrift store on March 17 and shut the shelter to public access shortly after. Pagosa Springs, which would normally have been crowded with spring break visitors the last three weeks of March, more closely resembled a ghost town than a bustling tourist destination. That's a good thing given the current state of the world.

Coronavirus has definitely disrupted animal shelters around the country, and HSPS is no different. Many shelters are closed to the public and working with limited services. Calls for more foster homes have gone out in anticipation of an influx of abandoned and surrendered animals when the full impact of lost jobs and diminished wages hits. And it all coincides with the coming of spring when the arrival of litters of unwanted kittens and puppies at animal shelters tends to increase anyway.

But it's not all bleak. Even with restricted access and the limits of sheltering in place and social distancing, HSPS adoption numbers are actually up, for now, and applications for fostering have increased. Maybe it's the realization that the best possible quarantine buddy imaginable is just down the road at the animal shelter. But whatever it is, the response and concern shown for shelter animals has been very real and very gratifying.

With businesses closed and social gatherings prohibited, the parameters of our daily routines have shrunk to the size of one's home and its inhabitants. And



while some people unfortunately have to ride this distancing journey in isolation, others of us are fortunate to have loved ones – including the fur and feather variety – to share our home and ease the strain of uncertainty. Quarantine buddies are indeed good companions.

My human kids have been out of the home for years now, one a few hours away in Colorado and the other thousands of miles away in Australia. We stay in touch through technology, but it's not the same as sharing a living space. Thank goodness my wife and I have five furry adopted shelter kids – three dogs and two cats – to brighten our days, especially in uncertain times. Their presence in the home adds a unique layer of richness to what otherwise might seem repetitive and restrictive as the days tick by. Daily explorations in the national forest with my wife and the dogs and couch cuddles with the cats are essential for mental maintenance right now.

In animal sheltering we often discuss the many benefits our efforts have for the animals in our care. But the relationship between a shelter animal and an adopter is definitely a two-way street, and our pets can truly be a source of solace and comfort in challenging times. Tail wags and purrs are especially meaningful under current circumstances and even a bit more magical than usual.

With life as we've known it on hold for a while, it might be good, maybe even illuminating, to appreciate anew the simple and multiple joys that adopted pets bring to our daily lives. What better way to do that than to share just a few of the email, phone, and Facebook messages we've received from adopters over the past year or two. The messages can be short or long, literary or humorous, but always heartfelt.

Let's start with a post from Jennifer P:



"We love our Monkey (aka Antoinette)! My chest grew another heart the day she came into my life to hold all the extra love I have for her!"

From Bob J, who adopted Jax after the death of his much-loved previous dog:

It's National Best Friend's day. Bob likes Jax and vice versa." And on Jax's birthday Bob exclaimed, "Jax turns 5 today! Jax, the Wonder Dog! Sidekick, Wingman, Bestest Buddy.



Rick is a single senior and he plays with the kitties every day. Even though they are barn cats, they interact daily and surely do liven up his routine and make him laugh and bring joy to a person living alone.

Amanda O posted about Mila to say she was the most scared and skittish cat you guys had. Now she is the most loving, loyal and sweet kitty I've ever met and loves to greet my daughter with wet sandpaper kisses!



Kathy S emailed to share her thoughts and feelings about Avalanche:

Our big beautiful Great Pyrenees boy... Avalanche joined our family last July, and he has been a huge gift to us all...his sweet demeanor won our hearts, and he sleeps with my granddaughter Riley every night, providing her with a great sense of peace. Avalanche is a priceless family member...a big, goofy, fluffy, fun dog that makes all our days happier.

On the wilder kitty side, Susan M wrote to us about her two adopted barn cats, Mozart and Beethoven. Susan and Bob are staying home due to the coronavirus outbreak but shared the following about Rick, their friend and tenant at the barn property where the kitties reside:



Pam F emailed to tell us about her adopted shelter kitty, noting:

We fell in love with Gucci's sweet face and expressive eyes from the moment we saw her! She is such a sweet girl who exudes love and brings so much joy to our family.

An email from Ashley T said ...just wanted to let you know how Ozzy is doing. He is a super happy dog! He sleeps with one of the kids every night and is really connecting with our four-year-old daughter... thanks so much for letting us adopt him! He seems to fill a hole in the family, exactly what we've been searching for and needed!



Punkin was adopted by DC and Jaye two years ago.

Jaye recently called the shelter to update staff on "the little princess." Jaye said that Punkin is like a daughter to us...she has an affinity for DC's



92-year-old mother living in Pine Ridge Care Center...she is like a service dog to everyone there when she visits.

Joyce W shared her thoughts about Shadow: *We can't have dogs now, at our ages, but we adopted the perfect cat! He follows me around the house like a loyal dog, and as soon as I sit down, he's in my lap. I feel sorry for anyone who loves animals and doesn't have a pet.*

Here's a sampling of some other common sentiments frequently expressed by adopters: *She is a great companion and makes me smile every day...a great addition to the family...he is super happy and such a sweet goofy guy...we are so thankful for our two little furballs...we are forever grateful we made the decision to stop by the shelter and found our sweet boy.*

We're all in this big boat together as we do our best to navigate some uncertain and uncharted waters. Thank you for keeping the shelter animals in your thoughts, and be assured that we will continue to do our very best to provide the quality care they need and deserve. And special thanks to all the adopted pets for the unconditional love and comfort they are bringing to their families throughout these challenging times. Be safe, be well.



A Letter From the Desk of Mike Stoll's Work-at-Home Office

Now More Than Ever, We Need Your Support

Dear Friend,

Here at the Humane Society of Pagosa Springs, we share everyone's concern about the safety, health and well-being of our wonderful community, which includes our stray, abandoned and homeless cats and dogs.

I want to assure you that over the last few weeks, the staff at our animal shelter has continued our essential lifesaving work, tirelessly caring for the animals in our community who need help.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, and to keep our staff, volunteers and community members healthy and safe, we have had to close our thrift store and drastically limit public services at our animal shelter. Both facilities provide the critical funds necessary to sustain our organization.

To make matters more challenging, spring is one of our busiest seasons as every year we see a tsunami of kittens and puppies brought to our shelter. Even with restricted shelter access, we are continuing to take in stray and abandoned cats and dogs, and staff is still working with qualified adopters, by appointment only, to keep finding forever homes for these deserving animals. **We are in urgent need of your support now more than ever!**

We can't do this alone, but we also understand that many of you may be financially burdened at this difficult time. That's why we are not asking for much...

If you have the financial means, please consider making a special COVID-19 resiliency donation to help us overcome the financial loss we will endure during this unprecedented challenge.

The long-term impact of COVID-19 on our ability to serve the community and its pets is unknown at this time. What we do know is that we will not waiver in our commitment to provide what every animal in our community needs and deserves – shelter, food, love and quality care.

Thank you for your continued support and compassion for animals!

Gratefully,

Mike Stoll
Executive Director
Humane Society of Pagosa Springs



We have great news! Marty just got adopted into a loving home after spending more than a year at our shelter.



Jameson also found his forever home this month! Jameson is a 6-month old pup that will get lots of love and care with his new family.



Another success story! Indi was adopted a couple weeks ago. We are so grateful that families continue to give our animals forever homes during these uncertain times!

Temporary Changes in HSPS Operations

Thrift Store Closure. As the looming impact of the spreading coronavirus became very apparent in mid-March, HSPS administration made the decision to close the thrift store on March 17 to ensure the safety and health of our store employees. This move predated the governor's stay-at-home mandate and closure of non-essential business in the state by approximately a week.

We closed the store just as the influx of out of town spring break visitors was about to peak, sacrificing a considerable amount of potential revenue but sparing our employees from interacting with numerous customers from locations where the virus was already establishing itself. We'd rather be "safe than sorry."

Our thrift store is the major revenue

generator for HSPS. Store revenues support all facets of animal shelter operations. The store will remain closed while restrictions are in place. The economic hardship of being closed

is real, but the social reality is that being closed protects the health of our staff and contributes to stemming the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

With all the dogs and cats in residence closing the animal shelter was neither desirable nor feasible. Nevertheless, it was paramount that we take immediate steps to protect the safety of our shelter staff so that they could remain healthy and continue to deliver daily care to the animals.

Revised Adoption Services. We've adopted limited services and closed the shelter to public access. People can no longer tour the shelter and browse the animals. **Adoptions continue, but they are by appointment only for pre-approved adopters. All adoptable animals are**

available for preview online, and we frequently feature adoptable animals in Instagram and Facebook posts to keep the public aware.

Emergency Foster Care. We also put out a call for emergency foster homes in the event we need to drastically reduce the shelter population due to staff illness or to address a large influx of new animals as a consequence of COVID-19. The response to our foster home request was immediate and significant, and it is reassuring to know that we have people and homes available if the need arises.

Revised Shelter Staff Scheduling. Shelter staff schedules have also been restructured. Because the shelter is staffed every day of the year, staff schedules typically overlap, and virtually all staff



members work with every other shelter employee at some point during the week. To avoid cross contaminating all the staff if one employee contracts COVID-19, shelter staff have been divided into two discrete teams that never overlap. One team works four

consecutive days and the other works three consecutive days, with a lot of cleaning, disinfecting and sterilization at the beginning and end of each shift.

This temporary schedule necessitated some reduction in hours for our full-time employees, but because the reduction was approved through the Colorado Work-Share program the economic impact for each employee is much less than it otherwise would be. We are sincerely grateful for the willingness of our shelter staff to do what is necessary to ensure that we can continue to deliver quality care to the entire shelter animal population.

How long these changes will continue is hard to predict. Our hope is that we can ease some restrictions in the not-too-

distant future. This is uncharted territory and the challenges are unprecedented so decision-making must remain fluid. Our job is to process the information coming our way and make the decisions ultimately deemed best for the animals in our care.



We're loving our likes!

By Robson Reyes



If you are on Facebook or Instagram, you'll notice we're taking our social media efforts to the next level! At the Humane Society of Pagosa Springs, we know how important social media is for spreading the word about lost and found dogs, puppies, cats and kittens. It's also a great tool for sharing photos and stories of adoptable shelter animals.

With the help of some of our talented and creative staff, we recently amped up our shelter Instagram and Facebook presence by showcasing beautiful photos and compelling stories about animals available for adoption, as well as sharing success stories of people with newly-adopted furry family members.

On our thrift store Facebook and Instagram pages, we are now posting photos and information highlighting unique donations and really great items available for purchase at the store, along with sharing all of our great weekly sales and deals! We are looking forward to reopening the thrift store as soon as it's advised as safe to do so, and we have some awesome inventory waiting for the return of our shoppers!

We're very excited about staying in touch through social media and spreading the word to our followers about all that's happening at both our shelter and thrift store. After all, when people support us by adopting, shopping, and donating, it all goes toward helping our community's animals in need. **Thanks for following us!**



/hspagosa and /hspagosathrift



@hspagosa and @hspagosathrift

IN HONOR OF...

Gracie (dog) from Robert & Linda Burke
Joanne Fager for Christmas and Birthday from Sue Fager
Renee Burch from Julie Fox
Merilyn Moorhead from Ann Graves
Athena, beloved dog from Linda and Jay Hoffman
Maise Casias from Irvin and Andrea Casias
Rusty & Berry Jones from Coye and Priscilla Jones
Christine & Jaiet Young from Eowana Jordan
Shatzie from Elizabeth and Vossa Leach
Joey & Schreider/Stoll from Rosalie Martin
The North Cove Condo Neighbors from David and LuAnn Martinez
Kristen and Tyler Albers from Thomas and Mary McConnell
Tas the Cat from Ben and Nora Mendenhall
Honey Girl Meyers from Victoria and Kerby Meyers
Kimberly Kett & Family from Robert and Marilyn Mumby
Benny Lohman – 100 years old from David and Carolyn Piirto
Cameron Olson for Christmas Ceil and Fred Reese
Rags and Zach Davis from Richard Ress
Frank DiCicco from Rick and Janet Santopietro
Maurine Marshall for Christmas from Phyllis Smallwood
Mary Ann Sayre from Jim and Beverly Smith
Jackie McGuire from Ronald and Judith Taufen
Mrs. Gale Kohlhagen from Jocelyne Tufts
Jean Zirnhelt, and Pat Bremmer from Kristin and Lee Vorhies
Newt from Clayton and Ruth Watson
Our children's love for animals from Susan and Lynn Weiland
Bennie, best buddy ever (HSPS Hurricane Katrina) from Scott and Daphne White
Marry Carson from Kelly and Jerry Evans
Jim & Jean Carson from Kelly and Jerry Evans
Clare Skaggs from Christina Easterling
Laurie Orzel from Ann Harrison
Cecile Helvey from Mountain Spirit Staff

MEMORIAL BRICKS

"In Memory of Mixie. You brought Joy to us. We miss you!"
from Laura Quimby
"Dear Sweet Ginger Always full of Love 7/2002 – 8/2019"
from Laura and Ross Isaacson



IN LOVING MEMORY OF...

Jim Stembridge from Nancy Alexander
Cheyenne (dog) from Ventura and Sharon Armenta
Woogy, beloved dog from Julie August
Ruckus, Little Girl, Tyek, Newt, Broadway & Chicci from LuAnn Baker
Tango & Blue from Lark Beaugureau
Olive Cardwell from Joanne Bridges
Cooper, beloved dog from Sandra Brundage
Greta, the dancing dog from Toni Carter
Sheila, beloved dog from Rose and Robert Chacon
Bella, Emma, and Hemi from Betty Clouse
Amy Stone, Pet Lover from Loretta Conder
Cassie from William and Patricia Curtiss
Nancy Cusack from Anna Cusack
T.J. Weidner (dog) beloved dog of Jacki and Russ Weidner from Connie Davidson
Carole Shewbridge from Tim Dippel
Laura, Chloe, and Scruffy from Andrew Dudzinski
Sophie and Jessie, beloved dogs from Will Dunbar and Nancy Cole
Sophie, beloved dog from Jaye Duncan
Casey and Tumbler from Sue Ford
Fuzzy, the Shiba Inu Nieto from Janet Furukawa
Beth Springer, Director of Good Samaritan Pet Center from Carol Vogel
Ginger, beloved dog from Ann Graves
Guy, Rollie, and Morgan from Michael and Cindy Halverson
Orion, beloved companion of Catherine Rosul and Dillon from Jeff and Jan Hester
Quinn, beloved companion of Karen Bartholomew from Jeff and Jan Hester
Oscar, beloved dog from Anne Hickman
Sunny, beloved dog from Mary Lou Hudson
Jim Stembridge from Judith and John Jordan
Ed and Ginny Kaumeyer from Linda Kaumeyer
Edward & Virginia Kaumeyer from Cheryl Kaumeyer-Wethey
Jim Kelley from VeAnn Kelley
Mr. Bo, beloved dog from Stephanie King & Chris Mills
Dreamer Kostin from Mike and Pamela Kostin
Missy (cat) from Victoria Lazzell
Bonnie & Lilly, beloved cats from Marie Leathers
Walker (dog) and Buffett (cat) from Paula Liermann
Bella (dog) from Aubrie Limebrook
Ozzie Heber, beloved dog from Deloros and Charles Livingston
Duke Lemmo, beloved dog of Jeanie and Joe Lemmo from Cher Logsdon
Bob Chamberlain from Cher Logsdon
Larry Ocho, beloved cat from Gary and Sharron Magrun
Roger, beloved dog from Patrick and Ann Malloy
Ginger and Brandy from Jane and Gerald Manzanares
"Zeke" Margiotta (Dog) from Maureen Margiotta
Mac, beloved dog from Rod and Lou Ann Marler
Jake, Rambo and Peejay; beloved cats from Mark and Debra May
Buffy (dog) from Mary G. McCalister
Catarina, beloved cat from Robert Mikenas
Mickey, beloved dog from Julia Miller
Gus from Deborah Moberg
Sienna, Scruffy, and Clare Skaggs (sister), beloved cats from Winifred Plager
Chaco from Warren and Sheryl Rich
Ashley (dog) & Oscar (cat) from John and Helen Richardson
Ken Youker from Patricia and Jerry Roads
Jake and Zeke from Jari Sage
Barbara S. Holmes from Rick and Janet Santopietro
Lois Norris from Connie Schanzenbaker
Cooper from Becky and Rodney Slade
Viola, Stazzie, Ian, beloved cats from Beverly Sondag
Lily, precious dog of Carolyn Halls from Marilyn M. Smith
Peter Van Hercke from Joan Stanfield
Lois Norris from Laura Stewart
Cocoa, beloved dog from Joann Stockwill
Sugar from Steve and Beverly Sutterfield
Gibson (dog) from Suzan Swavely
Carol Travis from Paul N. Travis
Kerby, beloved dog of Logan VanDerBerg from Susan K. VanDenberg
Angus & Scout, beloved dogs from Melinda & Tom Waldrop
All my pets from Joyce and John Webb
Bob Aschenbeck from Terry and Andrea Wyatt



Humane Society of Pagosa Springs

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Humane Society Thrift Store

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Robson Reyes - Administrative Assistant



Major Date Changes to Fundraising Events: Auction Moves to September

Best laid plans and all that...it's about staying smart and flexible in the time of COVID-19. We had planned to kick off the new decade with a new wrinkle to our two biggest fundraising events in 2020 by moving the Auction for the Animals from its traditional late August time frame to late June and bumping the Chocolate and Decadent Delights Auction from mid-March to early October. Our new wrinkle just got crinkled!

It's hard to predict, let alone know, how the next several months will play out, but in response to the serious nature of the coronavirus we've rescheduled

this year's fundraising events. **Our annual Auction for the Animals has been moved from June 27 to Saturday, September 12, still at the Ross Aragon Community Center in Pagosa Springs.** It remains to be seen if social gatherings will be permitted or practical, so stay tuned for further auction updates as the year unfolds. Because the Chocolate and Decadent Delights Auction would then occur only three weeks later, it has been postponed for now and might be on hiatus until 2021. Time will tell.

The Auction for the Animals is our major fundraiser each year, and while the Chocolate and Decadent Delights

auction plays country cousin to the big auction it still contributes significantly to our fundraising bottom line. The revenues normally generated by these two events are truly the difference makers in our ability to operate the shelter at full capacity and support our many service programs to the extent the community is accustomed. If your circumstances permit, we would sincerely appreciate whatever support you can send to help us care for the shelter animals and provide the safe haven so many community animals need.