

November 2014

Dear Friends:

What a year this has been for Animal's Best Friend and the cats and dogs of our community! Thanks to your donations (whether they be monetary, time or donated goods) and the support of our two new ambitious board members, Animal's Best Friend has been neutering lots of animals! Our involvement with these animals has changed their lives for the better as their owners were unable to properly care for them.

We are now coordinating our efforts with two local rescue groups so many of these needy cats and dogs are combo tested and neutered by Animal's Best Friend then transferred to Animal Rescue Project or Kalamazoo Animal Rescue who then find homes for them. These partnerships are providing many happy endings (actually new beginnings) for animals that previously had no hope for better lives.



So far this year we have spayed or neutered 1,142 cats and dogs. This total includes the 522 feral or free-roaming cats that our volunteers spent many hours trapping and transporting the cats to their spay/neuter appointments. Our feral cat program was expanded this year to also help free roaming cats and dogs that their owners would not be able to provide the neuter surgeries. In some of these cases we had to provide food, flea treatments and some medical care so the animals would be healthy enough to be neutered.

As you start your holiday shopping this year please consider making a year-end donation to help Animals Best Friend. Because we have no paid staff we are able to use at least 90% of your donation toward spay/neuter surgeries. We contract out our neutering surgeries with ten local veterinary clinics and the Kalamazoo Humane Society, several of which have agreed to match KHS's Operation Fix It's neutering prices of \$40.00 for cats and \$80.00 for dogs. This has enabled us to have more cats and dogs spayed or neutered and makes your donation dollars go farther. Help us be there when we hear of situations where there are cats and dogs that need our help by sending a tax-deductible donation to Animals Best Friend today. We recently heard that the number of animals taken in at Animal Services has dropped dramatically which means less animals being destroyed due to cat and dog overpopulation. Spay/neuter does work! Your donation to Animals Best Friend helps us save lives!

Wishing you and your family a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Karen King

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

November 22- We will be participating in Antwerp township's Holiday Extravaganza sale at the Antwerp Township Hall in Mattawan, MI from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. We will have our dichroic glass necklaces, catnip toys & catnip mats, and t-shirts available for sale. Come see us and start your Christmas shopping at our booth!

November 29- We will be having a bake sale at MVPets Small Business Saturday event from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. We will also be selling our dichroic glass necklaces, t-shirts and catnip mats and toys. We will also be offering \$5 pet nail trims!

December 12- We will be having a Christmas bake sale at Old National Bank in Oshtemo, MI from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Our cat and dog themed dichroic glass necklaces and t-shirts would make excellent Christmas gifts for your animal loving friends. Stop by and see us and support our spay/neuter programs. Animal Rescue Project will be joining us at this event. They will have cats and dogs available for adoption.

December 13- Our Christmas bake sale at Pet Supplies Plus on Westnedge will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. We need lots of bakers and buyers for this event. If you are interested in baking for this event please label your items as to what they are and whether or not they have nuts in them due to food allergies. Please put cookies on a paper plate covered with a plastic baggie or clear plastic wrap. Items that are wrapped in colored plastic bags or plastic wrap do not sell well. We will also be offering \$5 pet nail trims at this event.

December 20- Christmas bake sale at MVPets in Portage, MI from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. We will also be selling our dichroic glass necklaces, t-shirts and catnip toys & mats at this event. Do your last minute Christmas shopping at our booth and help us raise money for our spay/neuter programs. We will also be having Santa Paws photos and \$5 nail trims.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Thanks to Joe Kiser and his staff at Old National Bank in Oshtemo for hosting a bake sale for us on August 22. Thanks to the people who baked for this event: April & Giovanna Nolasio de Carvalho; Linda Marquart; Kendall Dingwall; Joe & Nina Kiser & Kate Thompson for baking for this event. To Sarah Gerstner & Susan Chapman for working at this sale. We made \$1,115.85.

Thanks to Logan Bullard for sponsoring Violet's spay surgery. To Marcy Kime for donating cat food for the trailer park cats and sponsoring Ivy's combo test and spay surgery. To Vonda Wall; Kaitlyn Soderstrom and Sandy Ormanovich for donating crafts. To Sarah Gerstner for designing our new website. To Sue Burlew; Jennifer Cohen and John & Phyllis Martens for donating garage sale items. To Ben & Claudia Johnson; Jennifer Cohen and Sally Morris for donating postage stamps. To Laurie White and Sherry Quinn for donating cookie tins. To Beth Burdo for designing and donating ABF envelopes. Thanks to Suzanne Alexander for the donation of leashes & collars. To Gary Stewart for monitoring our donation cans.

Thanks to Mike Williams, Michele Mullen, Sandy Ormanovich & Sarah Gerstner for working at our September bake sale at Pet Supplies Plus. To Allie Thompson; Ginnie Bowling; Tina Spencer; Faith Haley-Caro; Sandy Ormanovich; Sarah Gerstner; Phyllis Martens; Nina Kiser; Karen Macklom; Teresa Rakowsky; Gene & Vivian Wood; Rebecca Stuurwold for donating baked goods. We made \$2,027.20 at this bake sale.

To Pet Supplies Plus for selling "pumpkin puppy" donation slips for us during the month of October. We received \$3670.63 worth of PSP gift cards from this project.

To MVPets for hosting Round Up the Change to benefit Animal's Best Friend during the month of October. They collected \$644.52 for us.

Thanks to Michele Mullen; Mike Williams; Linda Marquart; Sandy Ormanovich; Sarah Gerster; and Pat Adams for working at our Halloween bake sales. To Sandy Ormanovich; Ginny Bowling; Betsy & Melinda Ryba; Kelly Ross; Tina Spencer; Sarah Gerstner; Karen Macklom; Teresa Rakowsky; Cherie Robinson; Faith Haley-Caro; Lorraine Haring; Rebecca Stuurwold; Linda Marquart; Kathy Slocum; Nina Kiser; and Amber Nantz for baking for these sales. To Pet Supplies Plus Westnedge and MVPets for providing the location for these sales. We made \$1,293.24 at the Pet Supplies sale and \$203.00 at MVPets. Thanks to Bill King for working the flea market and making \$193 at this sale.

The following people donated to our “donate \$30.00 to help spay or neuter one cat or dog” program: Peggy Spencer; Jim & Dorothy Shillito; Christine Wilkins; Debra Baird; Barb Loney; Diane Skiba; Wilma Heerlyn; Vivian Spiech; Gail Ross.

The following people donated to our feral cat programs: Barb Himebaugh; Ben & Claudia Johnson; Jennifer Cohen; Fetzer Institute; Margaret Arthur; Kim Dimock; Gene & Vivian Wood; Wanda Eichaker; Carolyn Woodward; Roberts Steel Erection, Inc.; Jerre Beattie Ihrcke; Theresa Noppen; Karen Imus; Donna Ramesh; Barbara; Steve Jako & Brandy Green; Sarah Payne; Jack Frost; Jim DiLoreto.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS RECEIVED

<u>From</u>	<u>In Memory Of</u>
Linda Marquart	John Marquart
Elizabeth Morison	Bongo Kitty
Barb Wynn	Bob Hall
Marilyn Longjohn	Don Webster

We received a donation in honor of Phyllis Marten’s birthday from Marilyn Longjohn. We received a donation in honor of Gail Ross’s birthday from Kelly Ross. We received a donation from Katherine Segal in honor of Jackie Odza’s birthday. We received a donation from Irene Kallio “for Kirby”. We received a donation from Gene & Vivian Wood in honor of Karen King’s birthday.

HOW YOU CAN HELP ANIMALS

We recently set up an account with Sanford Financial and we are now eligible to accept donations of stocks and equity from mutual funds. If you are interested in making this type of year end donation to Animal’s Best Friend contact Karen at 269/808-0064.

The transfer of valuable stocks to a 501c3 organization provides financial benefit to help support our spay/neuter programs, as well as providing a tax deduction to the donor, in that it does not require the donor to pay taxes on those amounts in excess of the cost of the stocks (capital gains).

As we near the end of the year and you find yourself in a position of having to declare capital gains on stocks on your income taxes, and if you would like to help us provide our spay/neuter services to needy cats and dogs, please contact your financial planner and/or your CPA as to how you can make a donation that benefits animals and you can make that a deductible amount on your income taxes. It is a win-win opportunity for both of us.

Other ways you can support our mission include monthly gifts that are charged automatically to your credit or debit card, honorary/memorial gifts or a commitment to an annual giving program. A donation to Animal’s Best Friend in honor or in memory of an animal loving friend in lieu of Christmas or birthday gifts is a wonderful way to recognize your loved one. A donation of \$40.00 will spay or neuter one cat, and an \$80.00 donation will spay or neuter one dog. You can also sponsor one month’s worth of spay/neuter surgeries at an area veterinary clinic by making a \$500.00 donation to Animal’s Best Friend.

WHO YOUR DONATIONS HELP

Throughout the year, a couple of the animals that we help really stand out to us. Here are the stories of two that especially touched our hearts:



Meet Mercedes, she is a 1 ½ year old pit bull. She spent all of her life chained to a tree in a back yard of an abandoned house. Her owners had moved away but came back occasionally to feed her. She never knew what it was like to be inside, warm and loved. One day she escaped from the chain and made her way to a neighbors house. They called Animal Services and were advised that the dog was in fact legally chained and owned because it had “adequate shelter and access to food/water.” They were told to return the dog or face legal action. This was not good enough for the animal loving advocate that Mercedes had wandered to! Over the next several weeks, the advocate worked with Mercedes owner to relinquish her. This sweet dog deserved more than a chain in an abandon house and someone who came back once a week to feed her. Eventually, he surrendered his rights. That is when Animal’s Best Friend was contacted. Your donations helped pay for Mercedes’s spay surgery. She is now putting on weight and getting healthy enough to be put up for adoption and find her forever home where she will never have to be chained outside in the Michigan weather elements again!



Tigger is a cat that has used up about 8 of his 9 lives. He is a true survivor. Tigger was part of the Kalamazoo Kitty and K-9 Project. When we initially started the project, we were told that there were 70+ cats involved, now we believe that may have been an over-estimate but it was still a large outdoor cat population. Poor Tigger had been beaten up by humans, the large male tom cats, the resident raccoons and had also been hit by a school bus! When he went in for his neuter, it was discovered that his tail had been broken in too many places to even count. Initially we

thought that he would be ok since it had appeared to heal but the infection kept coming back and he would soon be septic if it was not amputated. Through a serious group fundraising effort, we were able to raise enough money to have his tail amputated. He is now fully recovered with a cute little bunny nub of a tail left and is a mostly indoor cat. We get frequent updates from the colony caretakers and he is doing great!

NEW WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Make sure you stop by our new website at www.animalsbestfriendfund.org to see all of our current projects, events, photos and even ABF merchandise! Animal’s Best Friend Fund is also on facebook, stop by and “like” us at www.facebook.com/animalsbestfriendfund . You can donate online with one simple click on both!

This newsletter was written by Karen King and Sarah Gerstner.

Animals Best Friend is an all volunteer animal welfare group dedicated to reducing animal overpopulation in Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties. Spay/neuter is our only function. Donations to Animals Best Friend are tax deductible and can be sent to us at P.O. Box 443, Oshtemo, MI 49077. Our policy is to spend 10% or less of donations we receive on administrative expenses, which means that at least 90% of your donation funds spay/neuter surgeries for cats and dogs. Since Animals Best Friend was founded in 1981 we have helped to spay/neuter over 44,477 cats and dogs.