



Paw Prints

Issue 6

The Delaware Office of Animal Welfare Newsletter

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QUOTE OF NOTE

Clearly, animals know more than we think, and think a great deal more than we know."

— Irene M. Pepperberg

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A Moment's Paws ...

By Hetti Brown

Executive Director

"Animal control" is a term that may bring to mind an array of images. When I was young, the term made me think of an ominous man with a big net, stuffing dogs into a truck to take them to the local pound, itself a place of damp despair. Have you ever seen the dog catcher in "Lady and the Tramp"? Exactly like that – someone employed to rid the streets of stray animals in an effort to reduce disease or to keep the public safe from packs of wild dogs. This might be because the stray dog or cat hasn't always been perceived of something with inherent value and, in many ways, may have been regarded as disposable.

But society's relationship to animals has changed significantly over time. This change is reflected in our views on how stray animals should be treated, the



structure and mission of our animal shelters, our level of investment in welfare services, and our animal control techniques. For example, it's not just about giving stray animals a second chance; it is about recognizing that animal control can be a different kind of public service – one that reunites people to lost pets, offers food and resources to those in need, protects the vulnerable through strong law enforcement, and provides emergency housing and care.

In this issue, you will read how the Office of Animal Welfare is at the forefront of this evolution. You'll also learn about the numerous direct response services we offer. It's our hope that when you hear the term "animal control" in the future, it isn't an outdated cartoon that comes to mind. Instead, we hope you think of people who are pet care ambassadors, protectors of the vulnerable, and champions of a humane community.

Save the Date:

Delaware Animal Rescue Summit

The Office of Animal Welfare will host an Animal Rescue Summit on Thursday, May 19, 2016, in Dover. The summit is designed for those who work or volunteer for an animal rescue, or who wish to learn more about animal rescue. Stay tuned for registration details.



OAW launches Delaware Animal Services



Pictured are Delaware Animal Services (DAS) staff: (from left, back row) Officer John Shultz, Officer Devon Streett, Officer Phillip Cane, Capt. Jeffrey Phillips, Officer Ervin Smith, Lt. Rebecca Stratton, Officer Matthew Barba, Chief Mark Tobin, Capt. Reed Jones, (front row) Officer Andrea Scurti, Officer Katharine Griffith, Officer Jessica Vitela, Officer Melissa Cloud, Lt. Mari Grehofsky, Dispatcher Rebecca Schuman, and Officer MaryBeth Hutchins.

Earlier this fall, the Office of Animal Welfare (OAW) announced the launch of a new enforcement unit, Delaware Animal Services (DAS). DAS handles animal protection services, including animal cruelty enforcement and rabies control. In January, DAS will expand to offer animal control services for stray dogs and injured or endangered cats.

Formation of the new unit began after the Delaware General Assembly passed enabling legislation in June 2015 to centralize animal control responsibilities within the state, an action that the Delaware Animal Welfare Task Force recommended in 2013. After those recommendations were published, the OAW worked closely with county, city, and state representatives, local animal shelters, animal welfare organizations, and members of the public to draft two sets of recommendations calling for the establishment of a state-run animal control function.

“After hearing the concerns of the counties and members of the public, we felt this was the best path forward,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of the

Division of Public Health. “By consolidating services, we can ensure that the services we offer are consistent and aligned with public expectations.”

A team of 20 animal welfare officers will respond to complaints of animal cruelty, incidents of human rabies exposure, and, after Jan. 1, stray animal assistance in all three counties of Delaware, including stray dogs, livestock, and injured, ill, or endangered stray cats.

“We will offer more comprehensive animal control services than were previously offered in Delaware,” said Hetti Brown, OAW executive director. “It is important that we provide services that are dependent on the situation and the type of animal in need.”

For the sheltering aspect related to animal control and cruelty enforcement, OAW solicited animal sheltering bids to find a partner with experience in providing humane sheltering and adoption services for homeless animals, and rehabilitative services for abused animals. Chester County SPCA (CCSPCA) was selected to provide these services starting Jan. 1, 2016,

in support of the state animal control enforcement unit.

The agreement with CCSPCA is a three-year agreement that may be renewed for up to two additional years. CCSPCA will provide services at a permanent facility located in New Castle County and satellite facilities in Kent and Sussex counties.

DAS will focus on preventing pet relinquishment and cruelty through public education and the launch of a compassionate resources program. This program, set to launch in early 2016, will offer resources such as pet food and litter, dog houses, and other animal care items to pet owners in need.

Chief Mark Tobin, DAS supervisor, knows what a difference this will make.

“The majority of people we encounter want to be good pet caretakers, but sometimes they struggle to provide for their companions,” Tobin said. “That is where we can help.”

To report animal cruelty or suspected rabies, call 302-255-4646 or email DelawareAnimalServices@state.de.us.

Canine training program gives adjudicated youth and shelter dogs a ‘Second Chance’

On a cloudy day in early November, 10 youth canine trainers and their five canine students gathered in a field at the Delaware Children’s Department’s Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) to show off some new skills.

The kids and dogs demonstrated skills learned as the second graduating class of the Second Chance Canine program, a collaborative partnership among OAW, DYRS, and the Faithful Friends Animal Society.

The program, created earlier in the year, teaches adjudicated youth in the care of DYRS basic care and training skills for dogs. The canines then become more adoptable as their behaviors improve.

During the Nov. 5 graduation ceremony, each youth trainer received a participation certificate from special guest Robert L. Listenbee, administrator of the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

Chief Mark Tobin, DAS supervisor, laid the groundwork for the program and conducted the training sessions. Chief Tobin worked directly with the youth



Pictured is Chief Mark Tobin, Delaware Animal Services supervisor (right), with the second graduating class of the Second Chance Canine program.

to teach them how to train the dogs to respond to basic commands and to improve the animals’ social interactions with humans.

Faithful Friends Executive Director Jane Pierantozzi sees the difference the program makes to dogs in their care.

“Several of our dogs in the first class made so much progress in the program that they were adopted before they could graduate,” she said. “This is

truly a win-win for everyone involved.”

Added Jennifer Ranji, former secretary of the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families: “Many of the youth involved in this program have suffered from abuse, neglect, or abandonment, just like their canine students. To witness both our kids and the dogs they are caring for becoming more confident and loving is truly heartwarming.”



Chief Mark Tobin (left), assisted by a student in the Second Chance Canine program, demonstrates dog handling techniques during the graduation ceremony.



Members of the Second Chance Canine program show off the skills they learned from the program. Photos by Joe Smack.

Grant will help reduce free-roaming cat populations in Newark, New Castle, and Bear

Cat owners and caretakers in the Newark, New Castle, and Bear areas now have an opportunity to receive free spay/neuter and vaccination services for their beloved companions. The project is funded by PetSmart Charities™, which awarded a \$200,000 grant to the non-profit organization [Forgotten Cats](#) to reduce the number of free-roaming cats in the 19701, 19702, 19711, 19713, and 19720 ZIP codes. The grant was secured in collaboration with the Office of Animal Welfare.

The grant provides free spay or neuter and rabies vaccinations to 4,000 free-roaming cats. It is estimated that between 8,000 and 12,000 free-roaming cats live in the targeted ZIP codes. Forgotten Cats specializes in a trap-neuter-vaccinate-return (TNVR) process, which ends the breeding cycle. By sterilizing a substantial percentage of community cats in a targeted area, TNVR prevents the birth of more unwanted cats, and cat populations gradually decline.

Cats to be sterilized through this grant will be humanely trapped and taken to



Delaware Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf, DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay, and OAW Executive Director Hetti Brown were joined by representatives from the City of Newark, Delaware legislature, PetSmart Charities and Forgotten Cats, Inc. during a press conference to announce the project. Photo by Jennifer Brestel.

the Forgotten Cats clinic in Trainer, Pa., to be spayed or neutered. All cats will be scanned for owner microchips so owners can be contacted prior to sterilization. While under anesthesia, a small portion of the cats' left ears will be tipped for identification. The cats will receive rabies vaccinations by a licensed veterinarian and be returned to where they were found to live out their lives without future litters. Un-

owned kittens and cats that are friendly and socialized to people will be evaluated for adoption when possible, which will provide immediate reduction in free-roaming cat numbers.

Persons who can identify areas of feral, stray, or unconfined pet cats in the qualifying ZIP codes are asked to call Forgotten Cats at 302-429-0124 to sign up for this free program.



Adoptable Pet Spotlight

Name: Paulie **Rescue:** Pit Bull Pride of Delaware, Newark

Handsome Paulie is a sweet, funny 3-year-old Pit Bull-type dog with a lot of love to give. He walks nicely on a leash, enjoys the company of other friendly dogs, and doesn't seem to mind cats. He's looking for a structured, active forever home. Paulie is neutered, microchipped, and up to date on his vaccinations.

Paulie's holiday wish is to have a family of his own. If you are interested in learning more about Paulie, email adoption@pitbullprideofdelaware.org.

State Animal Response Team receives training on emergency sheltering for companion animals

When severe weather forces people to leave their homes, no one wants to leave their pets behind. Before Hurricane Katrina, people were urged to take their pets with them. However, emergency shelters would not accommodate companion animals. After Katrina, emergency agencies began to include pets in evacuation and emergency shelter plans.

To ensure that Delaware shelters can accommodate pets, the OAW's Delaware Animal Response (DAR) program hosted an interactive, two-day training on how to set up emergency shelters for companion animals. Approximately 30 volunteers for the State Animal Response Team (SART) attended the training. Participants included animal rescuers, veterinarians or veterinary technicians, animal control officers, and members of the public who have an interest in disaster preparedness and response.

The American Humane Association (AHA) provided the training through a federal grant. The AHA hosts disaster preparedness trainings nationwide for animal welfare professionals.

Attendees learned skills to plan for and implement emergency shelters for companion animals during and after a disaster, whether at the local or national levels. Topics included the identification, design, and set-up of emergen-



The Office of Animal Welfare teamed up with the American Humane Association to train the State Animal Response Team on how to properly shelter pets during emergencies. Photos by P. Jane Walmsley.

cy animal shelters; differences between temporary and co-location shelters; public information officer and media relations skills and duties; daily routines in the care of animals; creating a volunteer plan and managing volunteers during a disaster; and decontamination and demobilization of shelters.

For more information or to apply to become a SART volunteer, call 302-255-4628 or email p.jane.walmsley@state.de.us.



American Humane Association Trainor Jeff Eyre and his companion Dually lead classroom discussion on day one of the training.

‘Dude the Cat’ works for food, affection at museum

By Shauna McVey
Program Coordinator

Visitors to the [Delaware Museum of Natural History](#) can often find a more “lively” animal among the displayed exhibits – a slightly overweight orange Tabby who is missing a piece of his tail.

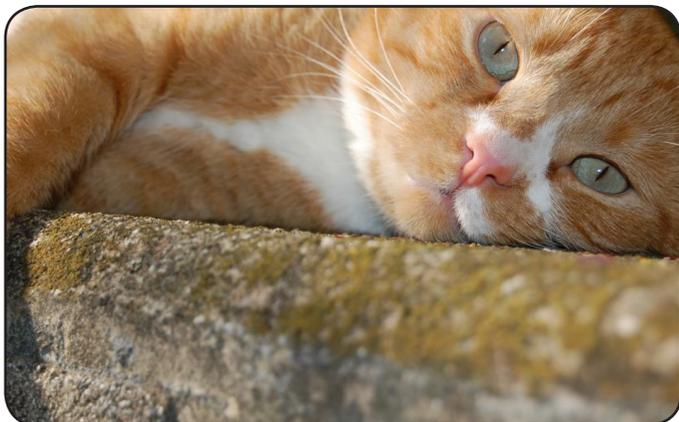
“Dude the Cat” doesn’t really like to leave his house when it’s cold and rainy, but he musters up the energy no matter the weather because he knows he has a few jobs to do. And he can take as many breaks as he wants.

Chris Hayden, the museum’s director of facilities and Dude’s “buddy,” heads off to work with his furry friend after the two eat breakfast. Once on the job, Dude picks whichever hat he wants to wear – goodwill ambassador, guest greeter, foreman, supervisor of exhibit installations, or director of rodent control.

“He tries to have a pretty good schedule of morning activities,” Hayden said. “After he eats his lunch, he likes to nap until 3:00 or 4:00 p.m.”

Hayden spotted the Tabby cat by the museum’s dumpster in March 2009, and immediately called him “Dude,” a name he uses for most people. Dude was officially adopted by Hayden, but he wasn’t a stay-at-home kind of cat; Dude was destined to become one of the museum’s most valuable employees.

Museum Director Halsey Spruance said “absolutely” when asked if Dude could be added to the museum staff.



Dude, the Delaware Museum of Natural History’s working cat, takes one of his many breaks.



“Dude the Cat” inspects the exhibit of one of his ancestors – the saber toothed tiger, at the Delaware Museum of Natural History.” Photos courtesy of the Delaware Museum of Natural History

“Dude is an exemplary employee at the Delaware Museum of Natural History, except that he naps on the job pretty much every day,” Spruance said. “He’s punctual, takes initiative (when he wants to), adheres to the dress code, and consistently meets his main annual performance goal; no rodent would dare enter our building knowing that Dude’s on patrol.”

His payment? Food, and affection on demand.

“He’s been known to hang out in the picnic area and bother the kids at lunchtime,” Hayden said.

Museum visitors can often find Dude lounging around. His favorite exhibit is the African Watering Hole, which includes Dude’s cousin, the lion.

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He quickly rose to fame inside the museum with his friendly presence and museum activities like the game “Find Dude” and “Dude’s Museum Tour,” where paw prints lead visitors to displays of Dude’s big cat cousins and ancestors.

The museum’s store even has a Dude display with orange Tabby puppets and two Dude books – “Dude the Museum Cat” and “Dude’s Mystery at the Museum,” written by Hayden’s father, Bill, and illustrated by artist Alan Peoples. A carved wooden Dude ornament is available for the holidays.

Earlier this year, the museum threw Dude a seventh birthday party that drew more than 200 people. Employees and visitors wore orange and white cat ears to celebrate the day.

He’s popular online too, with more than 1,000 friends on Facebook. Find him at www.facebook.com/DudetheCatDMNH

“I sure am glad he showed up at the museum,” Hayden said. “I don’t know where anywhere else where I get to have a cat. And the cat is pretty celebrated.”

Visit Dude at the Delaware Museum of Natural History

LOCATION

4840 Kennett Pike (Route 52), Wilmington, DE

HOURS

Monday-Saturday: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sunday: Noon to 4:30 p.m.

COST

Adults: \$9
Children (3 to 17): \$7
Seniors (60 or older): \$8
Under 3: Free
Members: Free



Adoptable Pet Spotlight

Name: Snickers **Rescue:** Cats Around Town Society, Ocean View

Snickers was trapped as a baby in the freezing cold winter in south Bethany Beach, but was always overlooked, as many black adoptable animals are. He is a very sweet boy and gets along well in a family environment. He loves kids and is good with other cats and dogs. Snickers is neutered and up-to-date on all his vaccinations.



If you are interested in learning more about Snickers, contact Terri Nicholson at mygirl0324@gmail.com or call 302-236-5184.

Donations needed to help animals this winter

DAS' animal welfare officers strive to promote the bond between pet owners and their companions to reduce pet relinquishment, enhance an animal's quality of life, and reduce the number of homeless pets. To accomplish these goals, officers educate owners and provide compassionate resources to help them better care for their pets. Below is a list of items that enable our officers to fulfill critical pet care needs.

Those who wish to donate items should contact 302-255-4620 to coordinate drop-off or pick-up of items. As always, your support is truly appreciated.

Dog Care Items:

- 🐾 Dog food (puppy and adult)
- 🐾 Dog houses (small, medium, and large)
- 🐾 Straw
- 🐾 Flea control medicine (for all sizes)

Cat Care Items:

- 🐾 Cat food (kitten and adult)
- 🐾 Litter
- 🐾 Outdoor cat houses
- 🐾 Flea control medicine (for all sizes)



Other Animal Items: Hay and horse feed

🐾 Did You Know?

The Division of Public Health (DPH) investigates more than 2,300 incidents each year involving people who have been exposed to rabies through an animal bite or scratch. A large number of exposures were from family pets that were not vaccinated against the disease. Dogs, cats, or ferrets 6 months or older are required to be vaccinated against rabies. Vaccinating your pet can prevent costly fines and veterinary bills if your pet must be quarantined due to a human exposure. Plus, it helps prevent the spread of rabies. Visit <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/oaw/findavet.html> to find a veterinarian or a vaccine clinic near you.



This holiday season, give a gift that helps animals. Purchase the Animal Welfare license plate today!

Available at any Delaware DMV location or online at de.gov/pawplate

**Must have driver's license number, license plate number and title date at time of purchase*



DELAWARE
ANIMAL FRIENDLY

DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health
Office of Animal Welfare