



Paw Prints

Issue 8

The Delaware Office of Animal Welfare Newsletter

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QUOTE OF NOTE

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."
— Anatole France

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A Moment's Paws ...

By Hetti Brown

Executive Director

As I read over recent testimonials from people who have been assisted by officers of Delaware Animal Services (DAS) – the state animal control and cruelty enforcement unit – I couldn't help but feel that we've reached



a huge milestone in the effort to elevate the field of animal control to be a more compassionate, community-centered service. A couple in Wilmington expressed how "courteous, professional, and nonjudgmental" our officers were. Sandra of Dover said she was "impressed by the quick response, friendly nature, and efficient resolution" of an issue. Lisa in Sussex County praised the new dog house and straw an officer provided to a dog living outdoors.

These comments are the result of a clearly defined mission to help both people and animals. We recognize enforcement must be balanced with an interest for understanding the root causes of animal neglect and home-

lessness, and a desire to provide long-term solutions. This has been our goal from the beginning.

While we are off to a great start, we won't rest until Delaware is recognized as a leader in animal welfare services. In the next year, our DAS team will work to build and leverage business and community partnerships to increase the number of people who have access to quality pet care education and services. We will launch a campaign to grow the number of dogs licensed, which will increase the number of stray animals returned safely to their owners without ever entering a shelter.

Customer feedback is very important to us and that is why we will build a mechanism to gather real-time feedback from residents who have interacted with our officers, and apply that feedback in officer training curriculum.

Please keep the feedback coming in. We really do listen. To view more customer testimonials, visit <https://animalservices.delaware.gov/about/customer-testimonials>.

Finally, we will continuously evaluate program policies, procedures, and data to improve operational efficiency.

**You Can Help Animals Get Back Home
with Delaware's Lost & Found Pet Registry**

Visit animalservices.delaware.gov



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

Delaware Animal Response takes part in disaster shelter exercise

The Office of Animal Welfare's Delaware Animal Response (DAR) staff and volunteers participated in an Aug. 6 disaster shelter exercise at Dover High School. Hosted by the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), the exercise tested and evaluated the components of emergency sheltering for Delawareans and their companion animals in the event residents are evacuated during a hurricane due to flooding.

DAR set up an animal emergency shelter co-located near the shelter for humans. Members of DAR's State Animal Response Team (SART) and Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (VMRC) practiced management and staffing for intake and care of animals that could be brought to such a shelter

alongside their owners. During the exercise, the animal shelter received volunteer evacuees with real and stuffed animals that required sheltering and, in some cases, veterinary care.

"Animal emergency sheltering is one of DAR's most important missions," said DAR Coordinator Jane Walmsley. "This exercise was a highly worthwhile opportunity to practice and assess this vital function."

SART volunteers responsible for setting up and operating the animal emergency shelter were Karen Clark, Alyssa Domorod, Beatrice Gale, and Ellen Roe. Veterinary medical services were handled by Dr. Kathryn Stoltzfus, OAW chief veterinary advisor and VMRC medical director, and VMRC volunteer Dr. Danielle Downs. VMRC volunteer Elizabeth Lasswell served as an evacuee shelter patron with her Belgian Shepherd, Poe. OAW Executive Director Hetti Brown assisted with set up.

DAR staff and volunteers were joined by those responsible for the human sheltering component, including the American Red Cross, the DPH Emergency Medical Services and Preparedness Section, and the Delaware National Guard.



Elizabeth Lasswell, Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps volunteer, leads her Belgian Shepherd, Poe, into a kennel during the disaster shelter exercise held Aug. 6 at Dover High School. Photo by Jane Walmsley

How DAR animal emergency shelters work

1. Shelter patrons who arrive at the main human shelter with their pets are sent for intake at DAR's co-located animal shelter.
2. At the DAR animal shelter intake, animal identification cards are created for all animals and their owners, and their pets are given ID bands and relevant documentation.
3. Animal owners are given shelter hours and policies, which include providing care for their pets – feeding, walking, and cleaning.
4. A veterinary technician examines each animal at intake. Animals in need of veterinary care are sent to the VMRC veterinarians.
5. Animals are placed in crates equipped with blankets, towels, and bowls in designated areas based on species and medical status.

Dogs must be brought inside during hazardous weather

In accordance with a new Delaware law, dogs cannot be left outdoors during a hazardous weather warning issued by the National Weather Service for the local area. [Senate Bill 217](#), sponsored by Sen. Patricia Blevins, was passed in May and includes a provision to protect outdoor dogs from severe cold or hazardous weather.

The American Veterinary Medical Association states on its website, www.avma.org, it's untrue that dogs can tolerate cold weather better than humans. The AVMA states both cats and dogs are "susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia and should be kept inside" in extreme weather, regardless of the length or thickness of their fur.

"Our pets are truly a part of our families, and they deserve the same unconditional love and care from us that we receive from them," Sen. Blevins said. "This policy reaffirms that if it's too cold outside for you, it's too cold for your dog. I'm proud to have been the prime sponsor of this legislation — but, more than that, I'm proud to be part of a community that believes in it."



OAW participates in U.S. Department of Justice roundtable

OAW joined more than 100 federal and state agency representatives, researchers, scientists and other leaders in the animal welfare field in July for a roundtable meeting to discuss animal cruelty data collection and sharing, innovative state strategies, and federal-state enforcement relationships.

OAW Executive Director Hetti Brown and Chief Mark Tobin, Delaware Animal Services (DAS) supervisor, were guest panelists at the roundtable, which was hosted by the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) and Office of Justice Programs at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.

“The Office of Animal Welfare was

proud to participate in such a valuable event,” Brown said. “Our office is committed to continuing the collaboration with other states and the federal government in our collective effort to end cruelty in our community.”

The event encouraged dialogue about how state and federal agencies can more effectively work together and learn from each other to combat animal cruelty.

A representative from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) kicked off the session with an outline of recent upgrades to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which collects detailed data across the country on acts of animal cruelty.

While Delaware already reported animal cruelty incidents to NIBRS, many states have not. The FBI encouraged all states to report such information so abuse crimes can be tracked and analyzed.

The OAW presented during a panel that explored how states and municipalities have organized to better address animal cruelty in their communities.

Chief Tobin presented information on Delaware Animal Services, the first statewide, state-run animal cruelty unit in Delaware, and the benefits of creating such a unit.

Federal and state agencies later shared stories about how collaborative partnerships across state lines resulted in successful prosecution and stiff penalties for animal abusers.

Free spay/neuter for cats in Bear, Newark, New Castle

One thousand cats in northern Delaware can still be spayed or neutered for free by Forgotten Cats, thanks to the second leg of a \$200,000 grant from PetSmart Charities™.

Residents in Newark, New Castle, and Bear can take advantage of the grant, which was secured in 2015 in collaboration with OAW to reduce the free-roaming cat population. The grant is available to those who care for or own cats in the 19701, 19702, 19711, 19713, and 19720 ZIP codes.

To have cats in these areas spayed or neutered by Forgotten Cats at no charge, call 302-429-0124.

‘Neuter Scooter’ offers low-cost cat spay/neuter downstate

A new low-cost spay and neuter service is now available for cats in Kent and Sussex counties.

The Brandywine Valley SPCA (BVSPCA) launched its Neuter Scooter transportation service this summer to provide low-cost cat sterilization to downstate residents.

Once an appointment with the Neuter Scooter is scheduled, cats will be transported to the BVSPCA New Castle shelter to be spayed or neutered. Vaccines and flea prevention services are also available.

Surgeries through the Neuter Scooter cost \$75 for female cats



and \$45 for male cats. If needed, complementary rabies vaccinations are given at the time of surgery.

To schedule an appointment with the Neuter Scooter, call 302-516-1004.

Local company sees benefits of dog-friendly days

By Shauna McVey
Program Coordinator

Smiles come easy when a person passes a dog on the street or feels a cat nudge their leg. Animals are therapeutic, and one place where their presence results in benefits for everyone is the workplace. Pet-friendly workplaces can improve productivity, increase morale, and lower employee stress. In turn, the employer, the employee, and the pet are better off.

New Castle-based Mishimoto Automotive has embraced the pet-friendly culture. The rapidly growing company with a laid-back, silicon-valley type office setting provides cooling system upgrades for daily drivers, track cars, trucks, and bikes.

Ricky Nietubicz, Mishimoto senior public relations coordinator, said the company allows dogs in its office for “Fido Fridays” and “Woof Wednesdays.” The dog days have worked out so well, the company hopes to add another day or two each week, such as “Mutt Mondays.”

“We’ve had nothing but positive experiences with dogs in the office – ranging from a Shih Tzu to a St. Bernard – and all sizes in between,” he said. “Having Fido Friday and Woof Wednesday really contributes to our relaxed culture and definitely improves morale.”

Julie Nosal runs the schedule of whose dogs get to come into the office and when. She said Mishimoto first started to allow dogs earlier this year because the CEO Michael Sullivan loved bringing his dogs to work and wanted to extend the opportunity to his employees. Now, about 15 to 20 regulars fill up the schedule.

“It’s always great. If you have a bad day, you know you can take a break and pet a dog, and it resets your mood. It’s an instant stress reliever,”

she said. “It’s hands down one of my favorite things about working here.”

According to AnimalSmart.org, “playing with or petting an animal can increase levels of the stress-reducing hormone oxytocin and decrease production of the stress hormone cortisol.”

The experience can also have a positive impact on the dogs. Mika Hope brings her roommate’s dog, Rocky, into the office and said being around her coworkers has helped him socialize with humans.

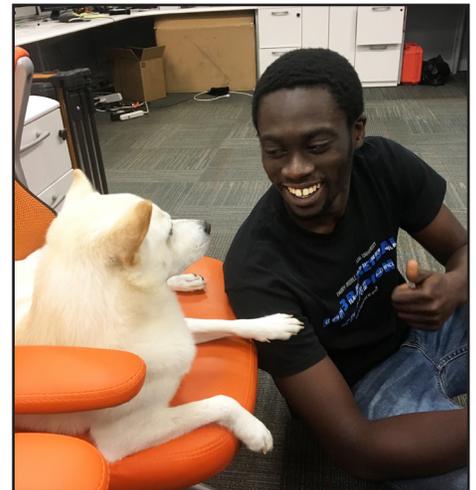
“I brought him in one day and he had a blast,” she said. “He’s become a lot more friendly with other people in our apartment complex. He’s not as nervous around people anymore.”

The socialization benefits were extended to Hope, too. She was relatively new at Mishimoto when she first brought Rocky to work, and said his presence helped her connect with some of her coworkers.

Jimi, a Shiba Inu owned by Alex Bartolomei, is in the doggie day rotation.

“He just chills, which is great for the company because we’re all about cooling,” he said. “When he first gets here he has a great time.”

Nietubicz said employees who don’t



Diamaan Gueye hangs out with Jimi, a Shiba Inu owned by fellow-employee Alex Bartolomei. Gueye does not have a dog at home, but enjoys those who visit the office. Photos courtesy of Mishimoto Automotive

have dogs also enjoy furry, happy companions in the office.

“Several dogs are frequently requested by employees whose lives just aren’t conducive to having a pet for the time being,” he said.

Rob McAllister is one employee who gets to reap the benefits of dogs at work.

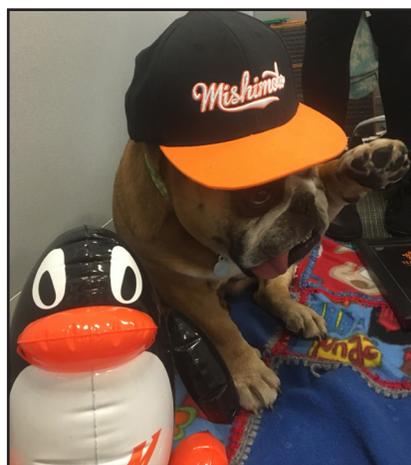
“Fido Fridays are the best,” McAllister said. “I really like dogs, but I can’t have one where I live, so I get to come in here and live vicariously through other people’s dogs”

Nietubicz said the office does have some basic ground rules.

“We expect employees to be respectful of the workplace and bring in those dogs that are well adjusted to being around a variety of new people, and who are well trained,” he said.

Employees take the time to walk their dogs, which is an added benefit to the employee.

“Bringing in your dog is an excuse to get up and walk around a little bit throughout the day,” Nietubicz said.



Ursula shows her Mishimoto Automotive pride during one of the company’s dog-friendly days. Submitted photo

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This can lead to more productive employees. It's well known that walking results in better health, which results in reduced sick time.

Additionally, employees who can bring pets to work have one less thing to worry about at home. Dog owners know all too well that sometimes an extended work day, dog walker absence, or veterinary appointment can be problematic. Mishimoto takes those days in stride.

"We have had employees that need to bring their dogs to work for unplanned reasons, and that so far hasn't presented a problem," Nietubicz said.

Mishimoto was bound to become a pet-friendly workplace. The company was even named partly after Mishi, a cat owned by Kristin Valis, vice president of marketing and sister of the CEO.

"We'll try to push for a Feline Friday one day," Nosal said.

How to create a pet-friendly workplace

Courtesy of Purina and the Humane Society of the United States

- 1.** Get approval from both management and other employees. Survey coworkers and find how to make a pet-friendly workplace work for all involved. Discuss the benefits, such as improved job satisfaction and reduced stress. Address any negative concerns, too.
- 2.** Work with management to decide what types of pets can come to work and when, and rules while those pets are present. Have a committee of employees draft rules in advance and address complaints once pets are allowed.
- 3.** Create an authorization and release form for employees with guidelines for the employee and a clause that waives any liability of the company.
- 4.** Let the cleaning crew know in advance and acquire cleaning materials to address accidents or other pet-related messes so the burden isn't placed on those who clean your workplace.
- 5.** Make sure the facility is adequate for pets. Define areas where dogs can be walked and provide encourage employees to bring waste bags. Also keep safety in mind. A factory setting or construction site may have off-limits areas or not be suitable for pets.

For more information, visit www.purina.com/better-with-pets/pets-at-work/faq

Locations in Kent, Sussex counties now sell dog licenses

It's now easier than ever for dog owners in Delaware to license their furry family members. OAW recently added four retail locations to the list of places where residents can purchase dog licenses.

Dog licenses are required for all dogs, 6 months of age and older. Those who fail to license their dogs face fines of \$50 or more.

The recently added retail locations are in Kent and Sussex counties: Yarn and Bone Pet Supply Store in Camden, Fur Baby Boutique in Milford, and Pet Stop locations in Millville and Fenwick Island. They join existing locations in New Castle County: Brandywine Valley SPCA in New Castle, New London Veterinary Hospital in Newark, Delaware Humane Association in Wilmington, and New Castle County Government Center in New Castle.

"We are working hard to make the process as easy as possible," OAW Deputy Director Christina Motoyoshi said. "We're very excited to expand the opportunity to purchase licenses at retail establishments, making it even more convenient for residents statewide."

An annual dog license is \$10 if the animal is spayed or neutered, and is \$15 for unaltered dogs. Proof of current rabies vaccination, which is mandatory for dogs, cats, and ferrets 6 months of age and older, is required to obtain a license.

Two- or three-year licenses are available as long as the rabies vaccination is valid during that second or third year as well. Fees are waived for seeing-eye, guide or lead dogs, or dogs with U.S. military service.

Dog owners may also purchase licenses online through petdata.com/Delaware or through the mail by calling 877-730-6347 to request an application.

"Licensing your dog ensures that if they become lost and are picked up by our officers, they will immediately be brought home," said DAS Supervisor Chief Mark Tobin. "It is also much easier and cheaper than paying fines if you're caught without one."



How to find and recover your lost cat

By Kathy “Kat” Albrecht
Pet Detective

This is the last article in a three-part series of articles about missing pets written by Kathy Albrecht, a former police bloodhound handler, crime scene investigator, search-and-rescue manager, police-officer-turned-investigative pet detective, and national leader in the missing pets field. The first two articles in this series can be found in the OAW Spring and Summer 2016 newsletters.

One of the most important things to understand about lost pet recovery is that dogs and cats behave very different when they are lost. This means the search and recovery methods that should be used for lost dogs are very different than what should be used with lost cats. Before I explain specific recovery methods, I first need to explain lost cat behaviors.

Missing outdoor-access cats

When an outdoor-access cat vanishes, it means that something has happened to that cat to interrupt its behavior of coming home. Cats are territorial and they do not just run away from home like dogs do. Thus, the tactics and techniques used to search for a missing cat should be different than those used to search for a missing dog.

Lost cat posters will not always help find a lost cat, especially if it has crawled under your neighbor’s deck and is injured and silent. Lost cat posters should be a supplement to a primary search, which most often involves an aggressive, physical search of a cat’s territory. That means looking under and in every conceivable hiding place in your yard and in your neighbors’ yards.

When an outdoor-access cat vanishes, the investigative question and mystery

to solve is: what happened to the cat? There are eight things that could have happened to a missing cat – we call these “Probability Categories.”

1. The cat is trapped.
2. The cat is displaced into an unfamiliar area.
3. The cat was unintentionally transported out of the area.
4. The cat was intentionally transported out of the area.
5. The cat is injured, sick or deceased.
6. The cat was rescued.
7. The cat was stolen.
8. The cat was killed by a predator.

Unless the missing cat was transported – intentionally or unintentionally – out of the area, a missing outdoor-access cat could very likely be somewhere within a five-house radius of your home. The next farthest to travel are displaced cats who might have been chased several houses or a few blocks from home. On rare occasions, some cats will travel up to a mile or more from their territory. The cats who end up the farthest – many miles – from home, and that are the most difficult to recover, are those that were transported out of their territory.

Displaced Cats

A cat that is transplanted into an unfamiliar territory is a “displaced cat.” The majority of these cases involve indoor-only cats that accidentally escape outdoors; however, outdoor-access cats become displaced when they escape from their carrier while at the veterinarian’s office, escape from a recreational vehicle while traveling on vacation, or escape from a vehicle during a car accident.

Many outdoor cats become displaced when they are chased from their territory, ending up hiding 10 houses down in a neighbor’s yard, yet they become



Kat Albrecht, a former police officer and bloodhound handler, is the founder of Missing Pet Partnership, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization dedicated to reuniting lost companion animals with their families. Photo courtesy of Kat Albrecht

too disoriented and afraid to come home. In these circumstances, even though the cat is technically an “outdoor-access cat,” it is displaced and it could very well be hiding in fear inside someone’s garage or yard.

When a cat is displaced into an unfamiliar area, it is likely hiding – usually near the escape point, in fear. That is because cats are territorial and your cat’s territory was the inside of your home. Once a cat is transplanted into unfamiliar territory, it seeks shelter because it is afraid. Cats who are afraid, and cats who are injured, will seek areas of concealment, such as under a deck, under a house, under a porch, or in heavy brush. They will not meow because meowing could give up their location to a predator. Their behavior has nothing to do with whether the cat loves you, whether it recognizes your voice, or whether it can smell you; it has everything to do with the fact that a frightened cat will hide in silence. We call this behavior “The Silence Factor.”

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The Silence Factor

This is a term that Missing Pet Partnership (MPP) coined to describe the consistent pattern of behavior that we've seen where a sick, injured, or panicked cat will hide in silence. It is a natural form of protection for a cat to find a place to hide under a house, a deck, a porch, bushes, or any place they can crawl. The Silence Factor kills many cats because while the cat is sick or injured and hiding under a neighbor's deck, cat owners are typically busy "looking" for their cat down at the local shelter or posting flyers on telephone poles.

The proper method to find cats in most situations is to conduct an aggressive, physical search of the immediate area while understanding that the cat might be close by, but hiding in silence. Cats that are truly at risk are outdoor cats that suddenly vanish due to illness or injury. It is critical that cat owners obtain permission to conduct a physical search of a neighbor's yard.

Simply asking your neighbor to "look" for your cat is not sufficient because your neighbor is not going to crawl around on their belly to look under their deck or under their house for your missing cat, and yet these hiding places are the highest probable locations where a missing cat could be.

The Threshold Factor

Many displaced cats initially hide in silence, but eventually break cover and meow, return to their home or the escape point – window or door – or finally enter a baited humane trap.

While some cats take only hours or a few days to reach their threshold, many others take several days – typically 10 to 12 days – before they break cover. We suspect the threshold is reached due to their thirst.

Wildlife cameras and humane traps

Sadly, cat owners are told to post flyers and to drive 20 miles to check the animal shelter cages, but they are not instructed to set humane traps in

their yard or in their neighbor's yard where their indoor-only cat is likely to hide in fear.

Animal shelters do not provide this information because they are not trained in this new information. MPP is working to provide training in lost pet behavior to animal shelter staff and volunteers.

House as trap

In cases where an indoor-only cat has escaped outside and is known to be hiding near the escape, a technique known as "House as Trap" might prove to help make a quick and easy recovery. This works well for cats who are either trap shy or have been seen near the door of the escape point and act as if they want to come inside, yet run as soon as the owner comes to the door. We instruct the owner to prop open their door and smear a trail of wet cat food from outside leading into the house or a garage.

The owner should also set up a driveway alarm six feet in front of the door so it will beep and alert the owner that the cat is approaching the house. The owner hides behind the door, and once the cat has entered the house or a garage that has an electric garage door opener, the owner kicks the door or pushes the garage door opener and "catches" the cat inside of their house or garage. This technique can be tricky, especially if there are many other cats in the area, but it has helped to recover many displaced cats.

Lost cat recovery team

The use of lost cat recovery teams using cat detection dogs trained to



Cats that go missing don't travel far on their own. Many displaced cats will silently hide within a few houses or blocks from their home and won't respond to any human, including those they are familiar with, due to fear. If a cat goes missing, make sure to check under houses, decks, porches, bushes, and any other place they could crawl.

search for missing cats happens to be my passion. Very few groups have been formed to specifically search for missing cats. Existing trap-neuter-return (TNR) groups could offer their trapping expertise and their love for cats to help reunite lost cats with their owners, and prevent many cats from ending up in shelters and community cat colonies.

The advantage of a lost cat recovery team is they respond and make certain a proper, physical search of a missing cat's territory is conducted. A bonus is if that team trained and used a "cat detection dogs," which help recover physical evidence and actually locate the missing cat. Although this is a great service, it has been the slowest concept to catch on in communities. MPP is working to change that and plans to help shelters and lost cat recovery teams evaluate and train shelter dogs to find missing cats through their Missing Animal Response (MAR) training program. In addition, "target cats" are needed to train the cat detection dogs. MPP is working to help get cats rescued from shelters and given jobs working to help train dogs to find missing cats.

The Missing Pet Partnership offers a wealth of lost pet recovery resources at www.missingpetpartnership.org.

Adoptable Pet Spotlights



Name: Caya

Shelter: Brandywine Valley SPCA, New Castle

Caya is a gorgeous green-eyed Tabby cat who would love a lap to call her own. She is very sweet and a big cuddle bug. She loves to lounge around and relax on humans for hours on end. Caya enjoys windows, where she can observe creatures outside. She would prefer to be the only pet in her new home so she can spoil and be spoiled.

Caya is spayed, microchipped and up to date on vaccinations. To adopt this pretty kitty, contact BVSPCA at office@bvspca.org or 302-516-1000.

Name: Bruno

Shelter: Brandywine Valley SPCA, New Castle

Bruno has a baby face and sweet personality. He is as friendly and nice as can be. His scrunchy snout will make his future human best friend want to give him plenty of kisses, which he won't refuse. Bruno is 2 years old and came to the Brandywine Valley SPCA as a stray.



Bruno is neutered, microchipped, and up-to-date on vaccinations. To adopt him, contact BVSPCA at office@bvspca.org or 302-516-1000.



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*



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