



Paw Prints

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QUOTE OF NOTE

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

- Mahatma Gandhi



THE DELAWARE OFFICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE

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A Moment's Paws ...

By Hetti Brown

Executive Director

When the Office of Animal Welfare was established in late 2013, the

expectations were high and the mission clear. The Animal Welfare Task Force had just published detailed recommendations to the Governor earlier that year, and the General Assembly had passed legislation tasking our office with carrying out those recommendations.



I am very proud of our accomplishments over the past year and a half. While working to establish a new office and overcoming everyday challenges associated with any new start-up organization, our team has helped to pass several animal protection laws and regulations, secure new funding for cruelty enforcement and spay/neuter programs, and reform critical state programs for better response to community needs.

One of our most notable achievements was the publication of recommendations to reform statewide animal control and cruelty enforcement. Animal control restructuring was necessary for many years, starting with an attempt in 2010 when the state handed over responsibilities to the counties, believing that localized focus would allow for improved community service. Since that time, there has been much public debate over service delivery and demand for change.

Challenges with the current structure, which were outlined in the December 2014 issue of *Paw Prints*, included service gaps, a shrinking marketplace of providers, increasing costs, and little government control over quality. We sought to solve these issues by outlining a clear plan for reform.

Intensive conversations are now underway to determine an updated transition plan in this fast moving environment. As the animal control restructuring plan unfolds, we will provide more details in upcoming issues of *Paw Prints*, as well as in press releases and social media. As always, thank you for your support.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Division of Public Health

Office of Animal Welfare

New regulations strengthen animal shelter standards

In May, new state [regulations](#) were adopted by the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services governing animals held in shelters. The new regulations are to ensure the protection and care of companion animals and increase opportunities for their placement and adoption. The Office of Animal Welfare was given authority over the [shelter standards law](#) in 2014, which required the promulgation of regulations that define and provide detail for areas within the law.

A key mandate of the shelter standards law is that anyone other than a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician who performs euthanasia on shelter animals must be trained and certified. The regulations specify the required training and certification process. To help shelters meet the new requirements, the Office of Animal Welfare hosted training for animal shelter personnel seeking certification as euthanasia technicians on May 13-14, 2015 in Dover. Animal care staff from five Delaware animal shelters attended the workshop, which was presented by nationally recognized instructors.



According to state law, anyone other than a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician who performs euthanasia on shelter animals must be trained and certified.

To view the entire regulation:
See [16 DE Admin Code 4501](#)

Other components of the regulations include:

- Clarifying minimum expectations for care that must be given to shelter animals, including requirements for examination and vaccinations, and medical attention for sick and injured animals.
- Improved opportunities for reuniting lost pets with owners by requiring shelters to post found/stray animals on their websites.
- Increased record keeping and reporting requirements, resulting in more accurate records and data which are essential for monitoring the health of the animals, ensuring basic standards of care, reuniting lost pets with owners, and to verify adherence to the law.



Adoptable Pet Spotlight

NAME: Benny **RESCUE:** Senior Dog Haven and Hospice, Wilmington

Benny is 35 pounds of winning personality! He would be a perfect companion for an active person or couple. He loves to cuddle up on the couch and keep you warm. Benny is good with most dogs and has made a canine play friend in his foster home. They like to run around the yard and chase each other. He also loves to go for walks to sniff out rabbits and other critters in the yard. Benny is house-trained and has a great appetite.

This boy is such a love bug – please consider sharing your couch with him!

For more information on Benny, email info@seniordoghaven.org or fill out our adoption application online at www.seniordoghaven.org under the Adoption Process tab.

New campaign aims to get pets “Fixed and Fabulous”

Connecting pet owners to spay, neuter, and vaccination services is a priority for the Office of Animal Welfare (OAW). The OAW’s “Fixed and Fabulous” campaign promotes the Spay & Neuter Program to eligible pet owners who have not had their animals sterilized.



The campaign offers a simple online application and user-friendly website, www.fixedandfab.com, as well as flexible payment methods. Through the website, interested Delawareans can apply online, find a surgery provider, and learn more about the program. Call 302-255-4620 to request a paper application.

Program participants may now pay the \$20 per-pet co-pay directly to the veterinary clinic or hospital when their pet is dropped off for surgery. Previously, pet owners had to submit the co-pay upon application to the OAW in the form of a money order or a bank certified check. Requiring prepayment of co-pays presented challenges for people who had difficulty affording the fees associated with the purchase of money orders or securing transportation to a bank.

“The previous payment process was a barrier to many potential applicants to the program,” said Program Coordinator Shauna McVey. “Allowing the co-pay to be paid directly to veterinary clinics or hospitals makes the application process easier and pet owners can use a variety of payment methods.”

The OAW worked with a team of marketing experts who gathered feedback through focus groups throughout Delaware about how to best promote the Spay & Neuter Program. New campaign materials will be distributed to State Service Centers, the OAW’s veterinary partners and eventually via direct mail to Delawareans who receive State assistance.

“By increasing program utilization, we can decrease the number of unwanted animals who face homelessness or euthanasia in Delaware,” McVey said.



Having cats and dogs spayed or neutered is good for their health and prevents unwanted litters.

New partner spotlight

We want to thank the following organizations for joining the effort to expand access to spay and neuter surgeries throughout the state. These rescues and veterinary clinics/hospitals are now part of the ever-growing list of partners for the Delaware Spay & Neuter Program. To find a veterinary clinic or hospital near you, visit www.fixedandfab.com.

Baywood Community Cats

Forgotten Cats

Pit Bull Pride of Delaware

Proud Dreams Farm

Purring Pals, Inc.

Animal Veterinary Center

Haven Lake Animal Hospital

Just Us Cat Rescue

A. Little Veterinary Clinic

Wilmington Animal Hospital

Delaware Animal Response launches State Animal Response Team



The Delaware Animal Response (DAR) program hosted June and July orientation sessions in each county for almost 200 volunteers wishing to join the State Animal Response Team (SART) and Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (VMRC). DAR, a program within the Office of Animal Welfare, is responsible for developing emergency preparedness plans and responding during natural and man-made disasters to help citizens and their pets.

“People with a variety of interests and experiences joined the sessions to learn more about DAR and the requirements for

becoming an emergency responder,” said DAR Coordinator Jane Walmsley. The SART and VMRC volunteer teams will assist in community preparedness education, emergency pet shelter management, emergency veterinary care, and animal rescue.

SART and VMRC recruitment is ongoing, and additional DAR Orientations will be held this fall. If you are interested in learning more about DAR or volunteer opportunities, contact Jane Walmsley at P.Jane.Walmsley@state.de.us or 302-255-4620.

A Reminder From Delaware Animal Response

Pets are family, too! *ARE YOU PREPARED?*

Before emergencies and disasters,

Make a pet emergency plan and supply kit!

Your pet preparedness kit should include:

- ✓ Collar with ID tag and leash or harness
- ✓ Pet food and water (a week's supply)
- ✓ Medications (a week's supply) and first-aid kit
- ✓ Important documents in a plastic bag, including: medical and vaccination records; license and microchip numbers; and any special instructions for your pet
- ✓ Current photos of you with your pet
- ✓ Transport crate or carrier
- ✓ Bedding and toys
- ✓ Sanitation supplies, such as waste bags, litter and box, paper towels, and cleaner

Plan for evacuations.

Hurricane season lasts from June to November (peaking from mid-August to late October)

Where would your pets go if you had to evacuate?

Identify options for your pets in advance, such as:

- Family or friends outside your area who are willing to take in you and your pets
- Pet-friendly hotels in the region
- Boarding or veterinary facilities for your pets

For more information, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website, www.ready.gov.

Meet our chief veterinary advisor

Dr. Kathryn Stoltzfus, Chief Veterinary Advisor for the Office of Animal Welfare, joined the team earlier this year to assist in policy development, the application of shelter standards regulations, lead the Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps in the Delaware Animal Response program, and assist with training for animal control officers. Dr. Stoltzfus will also serve as liaison with the Delaware Veter-



Dr. Kathryn Stoltzfus

inary Medical Association, the Board of Veterinary Medicine, and animal shelter veterinarians.

Dr. Stoltzfus, who also has a Master's in business administration, has served the Delaware community as the Chief of Staff at Talleyville Veterinary Hospital and as Associate Veterinarian at Windcrest Animal Hospital. She spent time volunteering with local shelters, assisting the Delaware Valley Academy of Veterinary Medicine with developing high quality local continuing education programs for veterinarians, and offering consultancy on animal medicine and veterinary business to bring new veterinary products to market.

Dr. Stoltzfus shares her home with her husband, Dave, and their three rescued pets. Dr. Stoltzfus is accessible at

Kathryn.Stoltzfus@state.de.us.



Adoptable Pet Spotlight

NAME: Foxie **SHELTER:** Homeless Cat Helpers, Seaford

Foxie is a fun-loving guy who wants a one-on-one home to call his very own. He is a beautiful domestic long hair cat with striking gold eyes. This young kitty is very playful and his antics will entertain you. Foxy has a chronically watery eye which requires daily wiping, the result of a corneal injury he received as an abandoned kitten before being rescued. His care is very minimal and you'll be rewarded with unconditional love in return.

For more information about adopting Foxy, please contact Homeless Cat Helpers through their petfinder page, <http://members.petfinder.com/~DE29/>.



How to cope with the cost of veterinary care

If you take on pet ownership, it is wise and advisable to plan for your pet's health care needs. Over their lifetime, a pet will need annual exams and vaccines and will likely suffer from one illness or another that will require medical care. However, sometimes even the most conscientious pet owner can find themselves in the position of being unable to afford their pet's care.

Perhaps they are the victim of an unforeseen financial crisis, such as job loss or an illness that has kept them out of work. Or perhaps they are faced with a substantial veterinary bill that is simply beyond their reach. Whatever the case, it can happen to anyone – and it does every day.

If you find yourself in this predicament, what can you do?

Talk to Your Vet

Be honest with your veterinarian about your situation. See if they will work with you on the price or negotiate a payment plan. If you're a client in good standing, he or she may be happy



to work out an arrangement so that you don't have to pay the entire cost of veterinary care up front.

Shop Around

Fees can vary widely for the same service from one provider to another. If you are willing to drive a bit, it may be worth your while. You may also get a second opinion. You'll pay a consultation fee, but another vet may have other, less expensive ways to treat your pet.

Check Out Veterinary Schools

Veterinary schools sometimes have less expensive services as a teaching hospital. The University of Pennsylvania's Ryan Veterinary Hospital in Philadelphia is a local option.

Look for Low-Cost Alternatives

Many local animal shelters and animal welfare organizations offer lower cost services for routine care, such as vaccines, for spaying and neutering, and for treating medical illnesses and injuries. Some offer sliding scale fees based on income. Check out Delaware organizations and those in bordering states.

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Compare Treatments

If your pet has a serious medical condition, the most expensive treatment may not be the best course for your pet, or not something you can afford. Ask your vet what treatment options are available and the costs for each, the prognosis for recovery, and what your pet's quality of life will be following treatment.

Care Credit

Care Credit is a credit card option for veterinary expenses that offers no-interest if you pay off the balance within a specified time period. Visit www.Carecredit.com.

Pet Health Insurance

While it may not help in a current crisis, pet health insurance can be a life-saver for future health needs. There are many different types of pet insurance for all income levels and coverage needs. A simple online search can bring these options to your fingertips.

Prescriptions

Prescriptions can often be purchased cheaper at local or online pharmacies. Be careful, however, that you deal

with reputable online sites. Again, cost varies, so call around for the best price. Try Saveway Compounding Pharmacy, Costco, Target, and others. Also ask about generic pet medicines, and see if your veterinarian is willing to match low prices.

Be Proactive

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Spaying and neutering prevents certain kinds of cancers and other health conditions. Routine vaccinations and heartworm prevention keep pets healthy. And annual exams help identify and take care of problems before they become too costly or less treatable. If you receive government assistance, you may qualify for the state Spay & Neuter Program, which provides low-cost sterilization and free rabies vaccination for pets. Learn more at www.fixedandfab.com.

Charities

Some charities will assist pet owners with the expense of life-saving veterinary care. However, there is likely more demand than funds. The Humane Society of the United States has a great [webpage](#) with information.

When we help people, we help their pets

By Shauna McVey
Program Manager

Earlier this year I was able to attend the annual Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) Animal Care Expo on a scholarship from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

The HSUS Expo was full of animal welfare professionals with a central goal: to better help animals. Many of the workshops I attended during the conference were presented by the HSUS Pets For Life program, which provides animal services, resources and information to areas where access to such services is limited. As the program coordinator for the Delaware Spay & Neuter Program, which provides spay and neuter services for people with

low incomes, learning about the Pets For Life principles, strategies and success stories was eye opening.

The most valuable lesson I took away from the conference was that we need to engage pet owners better, or pets will continue to suffer. Owning cats and dogs can greatly enhance the quality of life for people who live below or near the poverty line, but veterinary care is often unobtainable and many may not know what care is needed. Programs like Pets For Life works in underserved communities to build relationships and reduce the barriers that prevent pet owners from obtaining the services their cats or dogs need.

Most pet owners will choose to help their pets if given the opportunity to

do so. When animal advocates lead with empathy, we can break down barriers for people who are, most likely, doing the best they can for the animals in their care. Not every owner of a cat or dog will show their love for their pets the same, but a cat or dog that is cared for and safe is probably a content pet. One kind animal advocate with information and time can make a huge difference in the life a cat or dog.

Citizen animal advocates and animal welfare professionals alike can extend a hand to the pet owners throughout Delaware. The next time you see a cat or dog in your area who could use a little help, connect with its owner and ask: "How would you help your pet if you could?" Then listen.



New law prohibits pet owners from leaving animals in cars under dangerous conditions

The temperature inside a vehicle can become dangerously hot in a matter of minutes, even with the windows cracked. Pets left unattended in vehicles in these conditions can suffer from heat stroke and death very quickly. A new initiative helps to prevent these tragedies.

This new law, sponsored by Sen. Karen Peterson and supported by the Office of Animal Welfare, prohibits owners from leaving animals unattended in a vehicle when temperatures are either too hot or too cold for their safety.

Senate Bill 22, which passed both houses of the General Assembly and is expected to be signed into law by the Governor in August, also allows first responders to rescue an animal in danger and provides direction for owner notification and potential penalties.



PURCHASE THE NEW DELAWARE ANIMAL WELFARE LICENSE PLATE AND YOU'LL HELP DOGS AND CATS IN NEED.

Owning the new, redesigned Delaware Animal Welfare license plate is as easy as loving animals. You don't even have to wait until you renew your license plate to buy one. Just visit de.gov/pawplate to get your new tag and a replacement registration sticker. You will be helping to provide low-cost spaying, neutering, immunizations and other services to dogs and cats in need.

Purchase your new license plate for \$50 now at de.gov/pawplate.



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