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Jackson County.
Send Donations to:

Humane Society of Jackson County
PO Box 298, Sylva, NC 28779

Or make a one-time or monthly donation through Paypal at arfhumane.org/donation/

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ EMAIL _____

City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

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FALL/WINTER 2023 ISSUE

T H E
HUMANE
society of
jackson county
ART



CUTENESS
WITHIN

MORE ON
FOSTERING
ADOPTING
RESCUING
DONATING



Table of Contents

ANXIOUS DOGS!



15

03

Annual Update:

Or, What we did with your money, & Why we need more

04

Spay Neuter Team

By Kaleb Lynch

05

A Tale of Two Dogs

Janet James's tribute to two ARF dogs

07

Adoption Collage

Look at all the pretty faces!

09

Preparing for the Unthinkable:

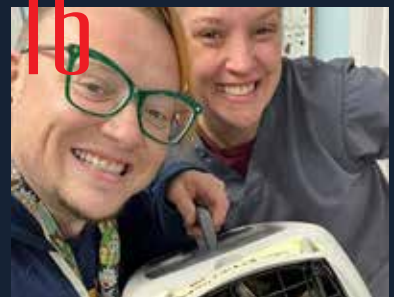
Your will, your pets, and ARF

13

A time of transition:

Changes at ARF

ARF AND SYLVA
ANIMAL!



16

17

FOSTERING



HEALING HANDS

19



BABY!

www.arfhumane.org



2 PAGE

23



Vet's
Corner

26

FAREWELLS



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EDITING & VET
PHOTOS

ANNUAL REPORT AND PLEA!

Welcome to the end of another year. ARF abides, and we've overcome a new set of difficulties as we struggle to help the pets of Jackson County. Here are some highlights of our activities.

We took 161 dogs into foster care, including 100 at-risk shelter dogs, and we placed 93 dogs through adoption and 73 through transport.

We moved from our downtown Sylva location of many years to an office in the new animal shelter building at 84 Green Energy Park Rd outside of Dillsboro (near the dump). The animal shelter, too, is under new direction, with an almost entirely new staff.

We reinvented our spay neuter procedures for our new location.

We sent several litters of puppies out of state to no-kill shelters in other states.

We began the process of hiring a full-time executive director so we can fill the gap left by several aging volunteers, some of whom plan to retire in 2024. We hope to expand our sphere of activities, which has been hampered since Covid by higher vet costs, overfilled shelters all over the country, high housing costs, an uptick of surrenders, and decreased adoptions.

Despite our curtailed activities, we continue to work hard for the pets of this county, as our bottom line reveals:

- ARF spent \$6,168.84 on spay neuter for community pets at the ASPCA Spay Neuter Alliance, spaying hundreds of community-owned pets, and we facilitated the spaying and neutering of most shelter pets.

- We spent over \$8,000 on emergency spay neuter procedures at other vets, including VEG and MedVet in Asheville.
- We spent over \$10,000 on emergency procedures at Upstate Vet in Asheville.
- We spent approximately \$22,651 on emergency vet care and thousands of dollars on routine vet care.
- We spent thousands of dollars on fostering expenses, especially food, vaccines, wormer, and other supplies.
- ARF spent approximately \$5,000 on caring for and transporting homeless animals to out-of-state shelters.

In the new year, ARF hopes to increase community participation by planning more events and fundraisers and expanding our social media presence. We need to identify safe "receiving shelters" for our homeless animal population, and we need your help to get our animals to safety. Please help us by volunteering, fostering, donating, and more!



THE SPAY **Neuter** Team

by Kaleb
Lynch



We're winding down another successful year of serving our community via low-cost spay/neuter services. While we've had many challenges, including moving to a new facility, we have managed to persevere through it all with a smile. I'd like to highlight the dedicated volunteers who help make each trip a success.

Ann-Marie staffs the loading zone and tracks what animals have been loaded onto the spay/neuter bus and whose arrivals are still pending. She also creates surgical collars for all the dogs and directs volunteers to the appropriate owners upon pick-up.

Sam and Nick (aka The Kid) are responsible for matching dogs with appropriate-sized dog crates, lining them, labeling them properly, and assisting clients with loading often reluctant dogs into crates. They do a lot of the heavy lifting.

John and Deborah are a power couple who volunteer together.

er. John helps with lifting and assists Sam with clean-up duty after the animals return. Deborah helps ensure all cats are properly crated, always carrying safety vest pockets full of newspaper, tape, and zip ties to guarantee every kitty's safety and comfort. She gets to see happy pet owners when she brings their cats back to them. She's a ray of sunshine for all.

Nory directs the flow of traffic by arriving early to put up directional signage and assigning a number to each vehicle as clients arrive for drop-off and pick-up. Without Nory at her post, things would devolve into madness! She also types up a spreadsheet before each trip to simplify our check-in process.

In addition to all her duties as President of ARF, Mary also volunteers with the spay/neuter clinic and assists wherever she can help. She coordinates all spay/neuter appointments for ARF foster dogs, particularly the surgeries done locally at Sylva Animal Hospital and Junaluska Animal Hospital. She's a superwoman!

As for me, I juggle the appointment schedule, coordinate with our stellar volunteer team and the ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance team, and I maintain our online registration system. I rely on our team to bring all the details together and provide our clients and their pets with a safe and positive experience every trip. Together, we have created an efficient process to provide low-cost spay/neuter services to the tri-county area.

A Tale of Two Dogs

By Janet James

It was just over ten years ago that I first saw Lily's smiling happy face on the pages of the Sylva Herald, posted as an advertisement by ARF aka Humane Society of Jackson County. Back in those days ARF brought their dogs to the Sylva Park on Saturdays, and so this is where I first saw her in action. Lily was a Whippet, Sheltie, and Jack Russel mix (we did the DNA testing), and a ball of frisk and fun, all of 21 lbs. Miss Lily, as I often called her, had had some unfortunate experiences that made it difficult for her to find a home that fit her temperament and her fears. ARF gave her a safe place to calm down and fatten up so she would be ready to run straight to her forever home when the time was right. She was the best little dog ever, and I thank ARF for taking the time to work with her, so she could become the amazingly sweet girl that she was.

Lily was a therapy dog at the office where I worked. She spent her day going from room to room comforting patients and oh, how they loved her and looked forward to seeing her. Lily had many miles of hiking and traveling under her feet; once we went all the way to Switzerland, then to Canada and Colorado too, and on to so many hiking trails, just a few of our many adventures. Miss Lily crossed over the rainbow bridge a few months ago, and she took a piece of my heart with her. Before she crossed over that rainbow bridge we had a plan, a secret about sending her canine replacement when she thought the time would be right. A few months after Miss Lily passed, I got a call from ARF. They wanted me to meet Ben. I didn't know that I was ready, but when I met Ben, I knew I had to be, because he was a dear boy from the day we met, and I knew he had a story to tell, just as Miss Lily did. ARF took Ben under their care to avoid euthanasia at a shelter. Ben also had



unfortunate experiences that made him fearful and timid. He had traveled all the way from Washington state and Montana! ARF spent over six weeks with Ben to restore his health both physically and mentally, and to get him ready for that forever home.

Ben and I have been buddies now for only two months, and already we are like old friends, taking long hikes together and dozing off on the couch. Already he is doing a great job with his training and with seeing my patients at work. He is a beautiful spirit, and I am so grateful to have him under my wing. I am also very grateful for all the time, effort, and hard work that ARF has given to rehabilitate these amazing dogs. These are dogs with a story to tell, and they will tell you their story with all the love they have to give—and that's a lot of love. I'm looking forward to watching Ben grow and to sharing our many adventures and travels to come. And I know Lily will be right there with us. Thank you ARF for giving Lily and Ben a second chance. My life wouldn't be the same without them.

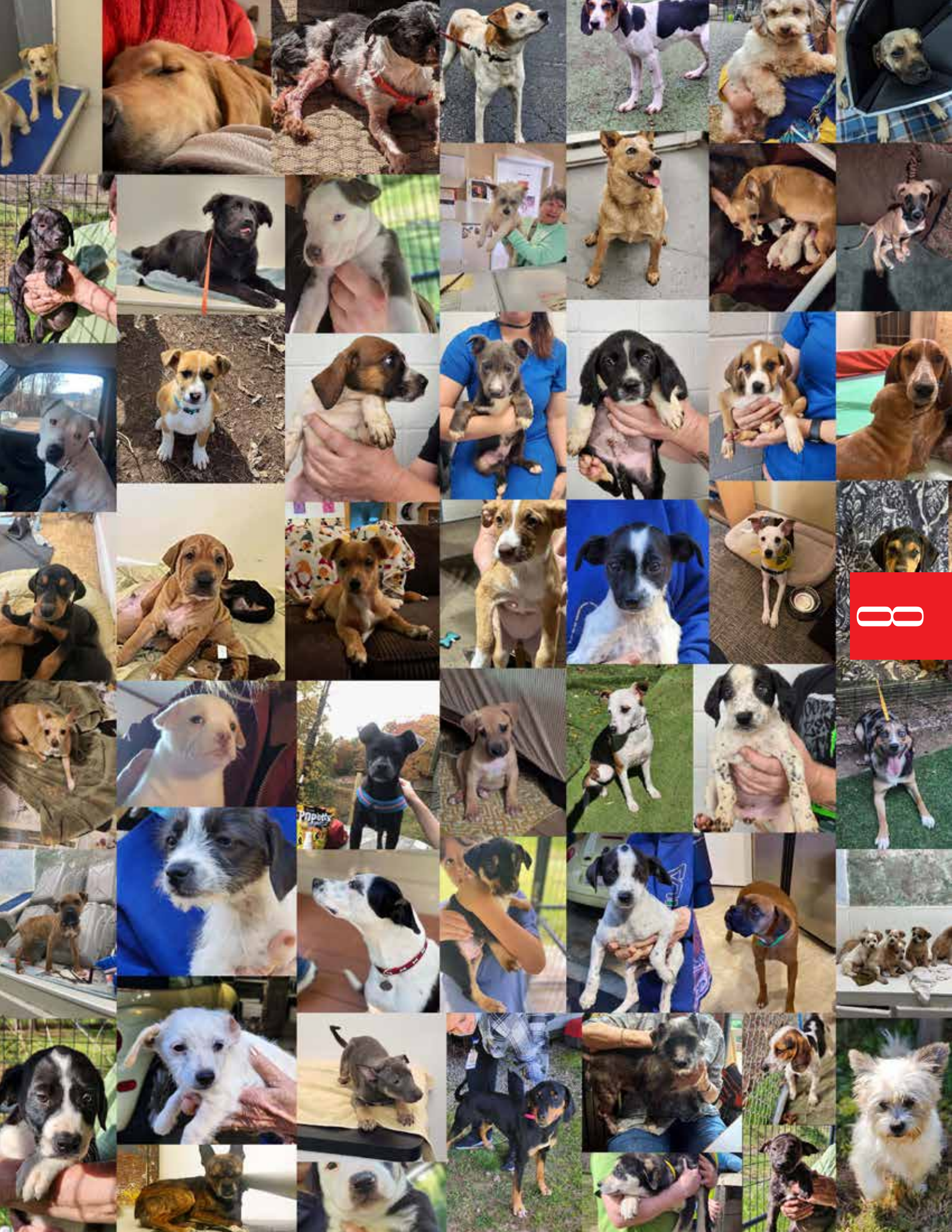
Happy
Tails





We're
Adopted!

1



PREPARING FOR THE UNTHINKABLE

by Kaleb Xander Lynch and Lorna Barnett

Please think about us in your estate planning. There are two ways that you can add the Humane Society of Jackson County in your will. You can simply name an amount or you can name a percentage of your estate. Many people provide support in this way to protect and support the organizations they have cared about throughout their lives. When a good donor dies, it can leave a big hole in the finances of a small organization.

The first thing to consider is to be sure you have the legal name written correctly in your document. Our legal name is The Humane Society of Jackson County, Inc., in North Carolina and our address is PO Box 298, Sylva NC 28779.

Then, you should decide if you prefer to give a percentage of your estate or if you prefer to designate a definite amount as your bequest. That is a decision you might want to make with your loved ones or your attorney.

If you already have a will prepared by an attorney, it's easy to make an alteration. If you choose to add us in your giving, simply call your attorney's office and give them the information you want added.

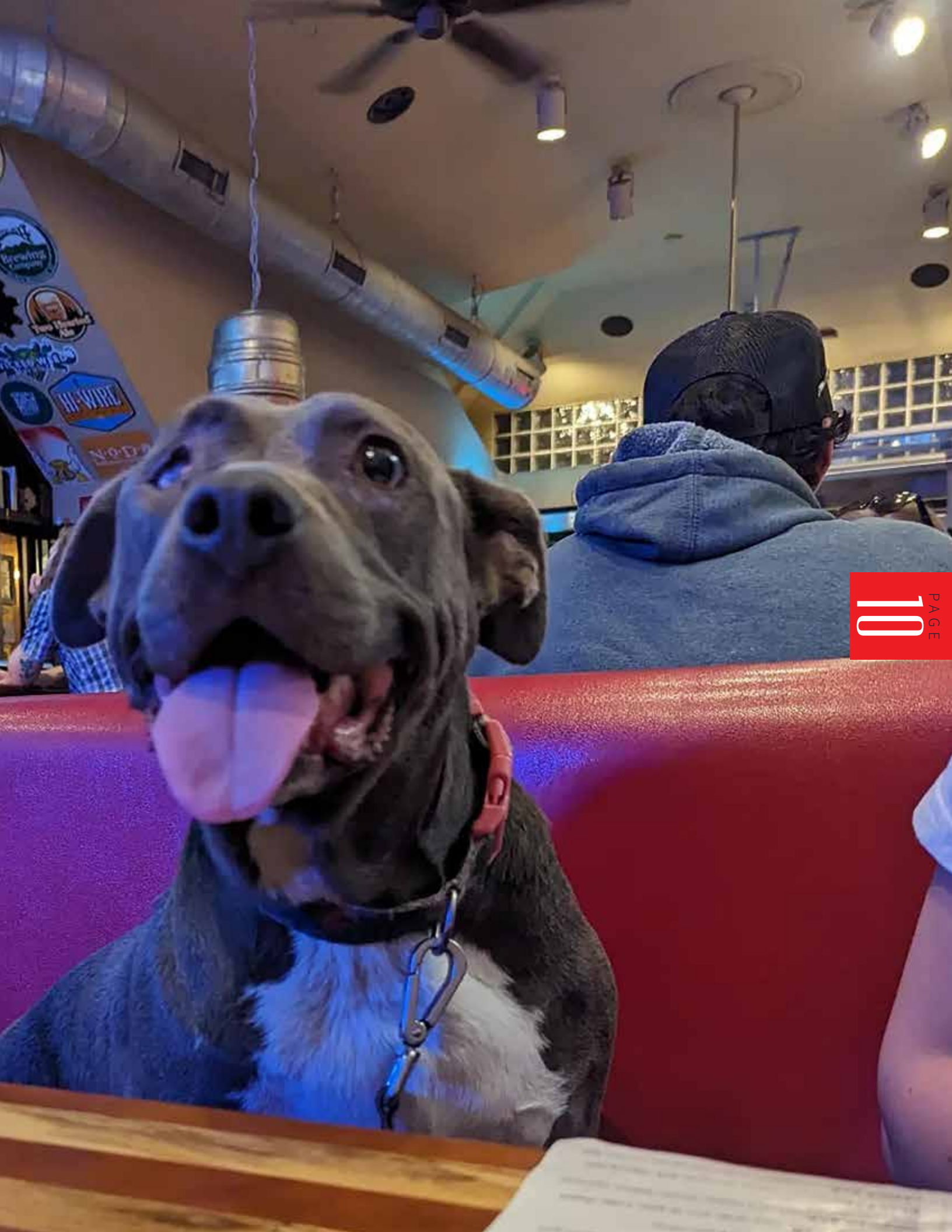
If you haven't written a will, many online sites can help you do it legally and safely. One site is Freewill.com where you simply fill in the blanks with the details of your estate, the people who will depend on you, and the organizations you wish to support. You can find other sites like this one.

The main reason people don't leave a gift to their favorite charities is because they have never been asked. We are asking you now! The first bequest we ever received was from Veronica Nicholas, one of the founders and beloved friend of the Humane Society for decades before her untimely death. That gift enabled us to continue providing care to the animals of Jackson County during a difficult transition to new leadership.

Also, as a reminder, please make provisions in your will for your pet. Many assume friends or family will step in, but they may not be able to when the time comes. Discuss this with your friends and relatives now, and make sure people close to you know how many pets you have and what their names are. Keep their vet records with this list. Put a card in your wallet with the names of your emergency pet care-givers.

Taking this simple action today will give the animals you love a better tomorrow.





Transition

A TIME OF

Lorna Barnett

The Humane Society of Jackson County, better known as ARF, is in a period of great transition. Since 1990, ARF has been an all-volunteer organization. Many of the wonderful individuals who started it are still working hard to keep everything running.

During those 34 years, Jackson County has seen many changes, and so have our hard-working volunteers. First, Jackson County has grown a lot. In 1990, the population of the county was 26,835 people. Now, it's approximately 43,107, or more than 16,000 extra people. Most of those extra people bring with them pets, many needing our care. Veterinary care is in short supply. And housing prices have increased the number of people struggling to choose between their homes and their pets.

Another major change is the technology that ARF must keep up with to work with the county. ARF uses multiple digital systems to track all the dogs we have. We track the medical care of every animal we touch, including identification chips, shots, illnesses, injuries, where they came from, and where they go. We track all that and more for the animals that we take to other states to find their forever homes. Our newest technology will help us find our supporters through more regular mailings and an expanded social media presence.

Naturally, since 1990, many of our volunteers have become 34 years older than when they started. For some, that means they can't do all they used to do. Maybe they can't foster now, or maybe they can't help with the spay & neuter trips twice a month. Some have passed away. Some struggle with their health and morale. Our need for volunteers is growing exponentially.

About three years ago, we were invited to be part of the new Jackson County Animal Shelter, which has finally opened. We have been given an office and a large storage area at the Green Energy Park. The spay/neuter team is already operating the spay/neuter trips from the new site, and the ARF sheds in Bridge Park are gone.

We have never had an office before, and so the time has come to hire a director to take on many of the tasks previously done by volunteers. This will be a huge change for ARF and will redefine

many of our roles and responsibilities. We are now seeking a person to staff the office and keep it open all week, take on several different computer systems, track and recruit volunteers, track dog medical care and foster parents, and help with running fundraisers and discovering more donors. This person will provide a place and face for ARF, and the community will always know where we are.

We hope these changes will allow us to help more dogs, provide more low-cost spays and neuters, conduct more volunteer training and community events, and continue to provide life-saving medical care to the many injured animals that wouldn't have a chance without us.

So, we're asking the community to help in several ways.

1. Come see us at ARF. In 2024, we plan to staff our ARF office in the new shelter at 84 Green Energy Park during regular work hours, every day that the shelter is open.
2. Please volunteer. We need more foster families now to take in dogs while we seek transportation to another state for them to find forever homes. We can help with improving your yard area to keep a dog safe. We will also need office volunteers to get the office open and to work with our director.
3. Donate! We will have to increase our income considerably to pay for the cost of an employee and all that goes with that. We are confident that we can, but not without your generous donations. All our income comes from donations from the people of Jackson County.

Some things have not changed. First, the laws that allow so many dogs to roam free and overpopulate the county are just the same and are not likely to change. Second, we continue to work closely with the Animal Shelter and the county administration to be able to pull out lovable dogs for fostering when the shelter is full and to coordinate spay-neuter for all their adoptable animals. And lastly, we are forever grateful to the County Commissioners for this opportunity to grow and do the work we love from a lovely office in the new Jackson County Animal Shelter.

Pinta



Eight years ago, Pinto was rescued from the Jackson County Animal Shelter by a kind gentleman. Pinto was two years old. The plan was for him to get fixed and adopted, but since he was positive for heartworms, he needed to be treated first. Pinto's rescuer was older and a bit unsteady on his feet, so Pinto lived outdoors during his recovery. Months turned into years, and Pinto's rescuer started to worry that Pinto would outlive him. Pinto had been aggressive to a neighbor dog once, so placing him was difficult.

Finally, this year, when Pinto turned ten years old, ARF was able to connect the rescuer with a wonderful woman in Georgia who only adopted elderly dogs. "I love giving them the best last years. My last five have died in my arms," Mari explained. She told the rescuer, "You have given him the best first years of his life to make him the wonderful boy he is. Glad we found each other!"

In the weeks that followed, Mari brought Pinto home and filled the rescuer in on

his progress. "He's going to be running this house in no time," Mari wrote. "I've have taken him out 4x already, he asks very plainly. However, he's playing me. He doesn't have to go pee, he wants to explore. So many good smells here!"

By day three, she wrote, "He is doing just great! He wags his tail all the time, nudges us for petting, and he slept in the bed with me last night. He loved it. Made cute little snorting noises, and bonus! He's a cuddle bug." By day four, she wrote that they were learning a common language. "He stole a sock out of the laundry basket. I'm trying to teach him the 'no' head shake but it's going to be awhile.... LOL. He knows 'yes' head nod with a big grin, and he smiles back."

Maybe it was worth the eight-year wait for Pinto's forever home to come along after all. We were so inspired by this story that we wanted to tell you about it. Consider rescuing a senior dog like Pinto. Dogs are so full of joy. It's never too late to give them a little happiness.

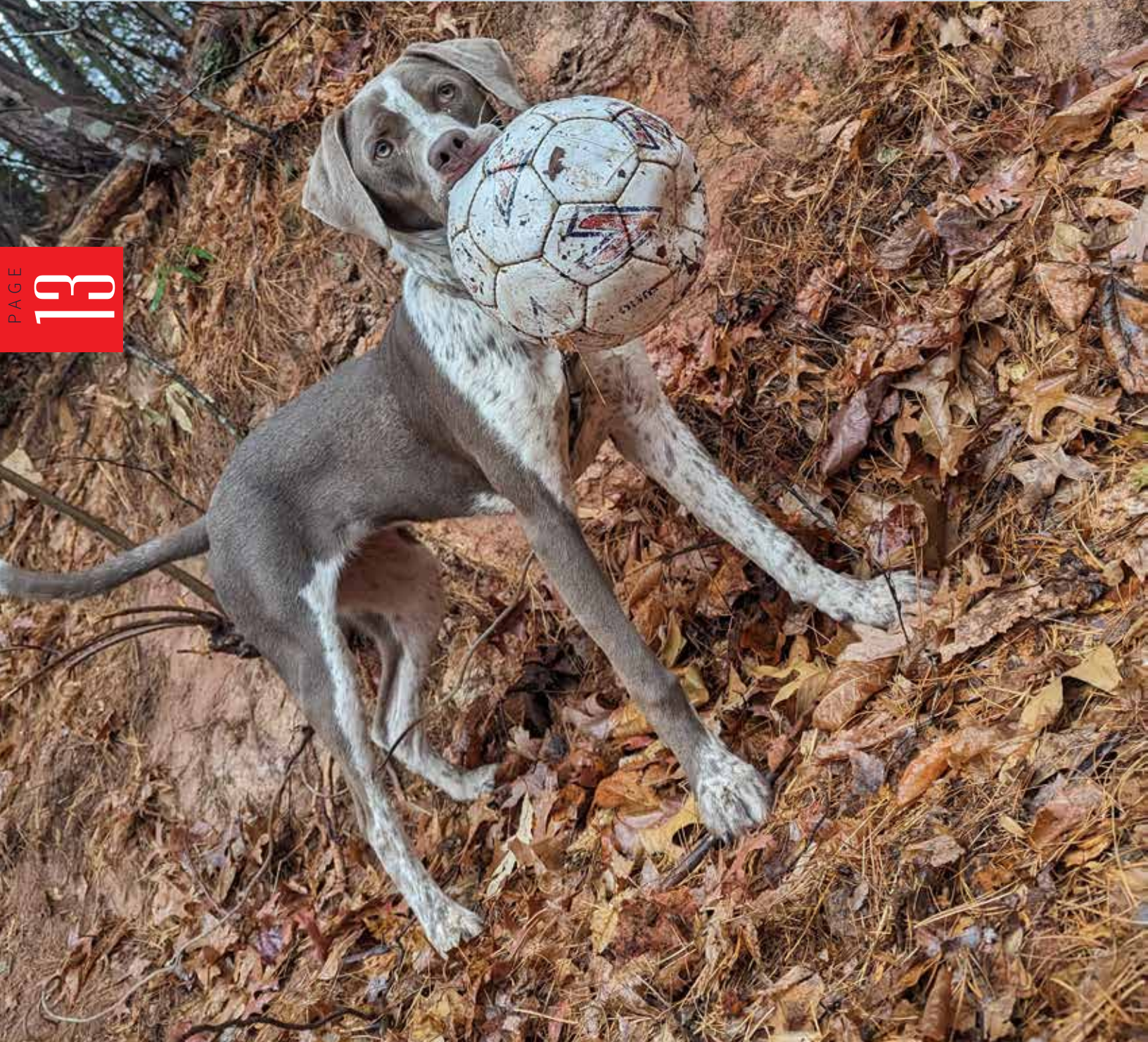
Spay/Neuter Stats 2023 (through Oct 30)

TOTAL DOGS NEUTERED THROUGH ASPCA
SPAY/NEUTER ALLIANCE:

Spays: 82
Neuters: 122
Rabies vaccines: 98
Parvo-distemper vaccines: 69
Bordetella vaccines: 25
Microchips: 140
ARF foster dogs (at ASNA only): 46

TOTAL CATS:
(not including Animal Shelter cats or dogs)

Spays: 196
Neuters: 158
Rabies vaccines: 265
Feline distemper vaccines: 182
Microchips: 49
Trap/Neuter/Return: 110
(including 79 Catman2 cats)



Nick the hound is scared of everyone except his people and his wonderful daycare teacher, Sarah Little. He's been with us almost six years and we wouldn't trade him for anything in spite of his wild man ways.

Spunky, the little Shih tzu, was so matted when found that the loves who cared for him couldn't even tell his sex. It was feared that he would lose a leg due to tendon damage, but the miraculous Dr. Black saved it and the Mighty Mary Adams fostered him back to health. Today he is fearless and opinionated and loving. Thank you ARF team for our precious boys.

Jenifer Montsinger



Happy Tails
from ARF



anxious dogs

Dr. Karen Becker had a recent Facebook post about anxious dogs. While reading it, I thought about how many I encounter through the shelter, rescue organizations, including ARF, and clients' dogs with uncertain beginnings. Why would these dogs not be anxious? Many did not have an ideal puppyhood; some have been abandoned (maybe more than once), dropped off as "strays" at the shelter or the side of a road. With most, we will never know what happened to them.

Dr. Becker cited a recent study at the University of Ghent (March 2023). The researchers looked at MRIs of both healthy and anxious dogs at rest. The anxious dogs have stronger connections with the amygdala (the portion of the brain that processes emotions and links them to memory, learning, and the senses). So it is no surprise that an anxious dog would have more difficulty learning. The dog is not giving you a hard time; the dog is having a hard time!

Once we think of the problems that the dog is having adjusting to a new environment, perhaps we can be more empathetic and try to imagine how dogs perceive their new world. Dogs do not come into this world knowing about houses, cars, and TVs. Even a ceiling fan can be mind-blowing to an unsuspecting dog. We need to introduce these things slowly and with patience.

Dogs crave routine. They

want to know what to expect and when to expect it. Setting up a routine for your dog can go a long way toward helping him or her relax. Avoid large, sudden changes in the established routine.

Reward-based training and avoiding punishment are important. Sudden movements and sudden loud noises are scary to these dogs. Dr. Becker also points out that unwanted attention is anxiety-provoking. Being awakened from a nap, receiving sudden hugs, and being picked up or held without consent can all lead to an instant rise in the fight/flight response and levels of cortisol. I have had clients complain when their dog growls or snaps when they approach the dog when he or she is napping. Think how unfair this is to the dog. There's a reason for the expression, "let sleeping dogs lie." We should also let them alone when they are eating or chewing on a bone.

Dogs need exercise and an opportunity for normal behavior. Sniffing is very relaxing. Long "Snifaris" are excellent for anxious dogs. Let them find treats in the yard or house; make it easy at first and then gradually more difficult, to keep the challenge new and engaging.

The average dog needs 16+ hours of sleep per day. So the dog that is tied out or on constant patrol in the yard on a busy street is not getting the relaxation needed to decrease anxiety. Cortisol levels remain high.

Teaching a dog to relax is an excel-



lent exercise for an anxious pup. The site Dogtrust.org suggests beginning by re-ward4ding your dog for any behavior that doesn't involve staring at you, pulling, leaping, or barking. You can sit quietly on a chair with your dog on a lead and a blanket on the floor. Drop tiny treats as a reward for settling down on the blanket. Don't speak; speaking excites your dog. Make sure your dog is having a good time; let them associate toys and dog-safe chews with the blanket and quiet time. Gradually increase the time they must be settled before you reward them. You can even associate a command like "settle" with quiet time, and have a helper create distractions while only rewarding once the dog is quiet.

Finally, separation can be difficult for these dogs. Giving them a place of their own and teaching them to relax in it is important, whether that place is a crate, a quiet room, or a corner.

Be patient, make training fun and rewarding, and go at the dog's pace.

ARF and Sylva Animal Hospital

Dr. Sandra Black,
DVM

The relationship between ARF and Sylva Animal Hospital began in 1988, several years before I came to town. Dr. Zemel agreed to help Veronica Nicholas and her co-founders with the veterinary needs of their rescues and fosters. Our relationship continues to this day, some 35 years later. I have always admired all the work ARF members and foster parents do. Our part is easy (examine, diagnose), and their part is hard (treating, cleaning, socializing). Yes, we gave them a discount on our services, but it was never about money when helping them help dogs and cats. They have given so many abandoned and injured animals third and fourth chances and succeeded! Please consider helping them in their mission to help as many homeless pets in Jackson County as possible, either with your time or your money.



By Deborah Turman Lank

Are you an empty nester? A grandparent whose children and grandchildren live far away? New to the area? Young or old, do I have a deal for you!

Volunteer for an animal rescue like ARF. We've got puppies! We've got dogs! Come on down!

Does it tug on your heart strings?

Yes.

Is there heartbreak?

Sometimes.

Do you sometimes think you just can't?

Of course.

But volunteering for spay/neuter trips only takes a couple of hours per trip. You get to meet all sorts of people hoping to make a better, safer life for their pet, a friend's pet, or even feral cats. It's a chance to comfort someone during their first overnight separation from their pet and to see the relief and joy on their faces on the next day's return. Some are sweet. Some are cranky. But you do it anyway for the animals, despite the behavior of certain humans (wink).

Next year, once we have hired an executive director, we hope to have more volunteering opportunities—dog walking, cleaning, promotion, social media, fundraising, photography, office management, and more.

If you have a little more time and space in your home (and heart), there's always the opportu-

nity to foster a homeless dog in your home, the opportunity to teach it what it needs to know to find a place in someone else's heart and home. There will be pee. There will be poop—just like children or grandchildren only on a smaller scale, hopefully.

Sometimes fostering is short-term. My shortest was only forty hours.

Sometimes it's a little longer if animals need more time to decompress and learn the ropes of home life. If you don't have much time to commit, volunteering as a vacation foster might be right for you. Our fosters can always use some time away.

Are you worried you might do something wrong? Don't worry. You will.

Failure is a fact, and the world doesn't stop revolving. You will learn what works and what doesn't. Each foster animal is different. Speaking of failures, two still live with us!

Try it! You might just like it! Email mary@arfhumane.org if you're interested in fostering or volunteering. It may take a little while for someone to respond, but we will get back to you.






Willow



I adopted Willow from Mary and ARF and she has become the light of my life. She's ridiculously happy and energetic, loving and cuddly. I am down a few shoes but I'm so lucky to have her. Thank you ARF!

- Susan Davis 



Cloud

An ARF adoptee 9 years ago, Cloud is living her best life having traded the Smoky Mountains for the Rockies.

Rebecca Berggren

Happy Tails

Healing

One of ARF's greatest expenses involves road rescues. These dogs frequently need a middle-of-the-night trip to an emergency vet, thousands of dollars in expenses, and months of ongoing care. ARF takes on all emergency vet cases for dogs that come into the shelter. If we can help, we will. Here are a couple of this year's high-dollar cases that we're grateful to say turned out well for all concerned.

- Stanley had a "male plumbing" problem. ARF tried several minor surgeries while his foster parents did what they could do make him comfortable. We had high expectations for each procedure, but none was successful, and so the vets finally decided to change his plumbing to female. Even with their generous donations of time and supplies, Stanley cost ARF more than



g Hands

\$10,000 in total surgeries. Every time we tried to cut our losses, we looked at his little face, and we couldn't walk away! Stanley was adopted by a wonderful local couple.

- Emerald turned up at the shelter, we suspect, after being brought to Cullowhee by her family's neighbor. Emerald was very pregnant and we learned she had lost most of her previous litter. This pregnancy made her so large so early that it put her in danger, so we decided to try to save her with a gravid spay. A few weeks into her recovery, Emerald suddenly began to hemorrhage, and her anxious foster mom spent several sleepless days and nights with her at the emergency vet. Though Emerald recovered and found a wonderful home, she cost ARF close to \$4,000.
- General was found on the four-lane. He had a limp that turned out to be an old injury, so he needed FHO (Femoral Head Ostectomy) surgery, which cost ARF \$2,500, even after a generous discount from the surgeon. General was later adopted to a wonderful home.
- Patrick was found on the four-lane and was described to us as having been dragged behind a car. Despite some angry wounds and road rash, Patrick was relatively

intact and later found a wonderful home with ARF's Vice President.

- When our president was traveling in Maine, she got a frantic call from a person in Whittier. Her dog had delivered Autum, Winter, and Ice, but the mom was now crashing. A rapid trip to the emergency vet in Asheville revealed that four of the pups had not been expelled and were decomposing inside, and the mom was septic. Despite ARF's payment of the more than \$5,000 bill for an emergency spay, the owner didn't bring ARF the puppies, so we had to rescue them when they were brought to the shelter, suffering from hair loss and abrasions to their feet.
- Ginny was found by a member of the Jackson County health department. When ARF was asked to take her in, we were unaware that she had infected ears, a skin infection, and a severe luxating patella (similar to a knee joint that won't stay in place) on each back leg, each of which is estimated to cost between \$1,000 and \$5,000 to repair. As of publication, we are waiting for an estimate from the surgeon.
- Fergie, Blu, and Roxy all came to us with heartworms, the treatment for which costs about \$600 each. All are progressing well, and Fergie and Blu are now looking for homes.

Funding ARF doesn't just pay for these procedures. It pays for months and months of wound care, physical therapy, food, and medicines while these pets are recovering. Please help us do our vital work.





TALES AND TRIBUTES



We received "happy tails" and tributes from many of our adopters, and couldn't find room for all the stories. These are Cody, Jethro, Jack, Dax, Sadie, Oliver, Gunner, Annie, Lizzie, and Chief. Some are still living happily with their owners, and some have moved on over the rainbow bridge. Thank you, adopters, for over 30 years of love and care for these wonderful pets.

Our fosters Debbie and John sent this tribute to Chief, which we wanted to include here:

"Chief was our first adoption from ARF. We went to the shelter to adopt him but due to health issues, he was going into rescue with ARF. Because we knew Mary through the spay/neuter program, she allowed us to be his foster and then foster fail.

Chief was loving and kind. He was silly and wise, the gentlest of doggie souls. We adopted him at 13 years old. We crammed 14 ½ years of love into 16 months, when we lost him to lung cancer.

We are so grateful to have had the time we did have with him."



Lepto... what?

Leptospirosis or "lepto." It is a disease that can affect humans, dogs, and many other mammals; cases in cats are extremely rare. Raccoons, skunks, opossums, rats, cows and pigs are all known carriers. Considered the most common zoonotic infection in the world, it is endemic mainly in tropical and subtropical climates. Estimates of annual human cases worldwide are 500,000–850,000 (mortality 5–10%), and in the US 100–200 cases (mostly in Hawaii). Canine cases in the US averaged 24 per year from 2017 to 2021 (mortality 10-15%).

So, let's go into how dogs contract it, what their symptoms can be, how to diagnose it, how to treat it, and how to prevent your dog (and you) from getting it in the first place.

Dogs become infected when their mucous membranes (nose, mouth) or a wound come into contact with infected urine, urine-contaminated soil or water, or even through a bite from an infected animal. Around here, the most common culprits would be raccoons and opossums. In humans, it generally takes 1-2 weeks from contact before symptoms begin. The time is likely the same in dogs.

Symptoms of an infection are nonspecific: lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, reluctance to move, changes in urination, jaundice, or no signs at all. The spirochetes can settle into the kidneys and/or the liver, resulting in kidney failure with or without liver failure. Dogs can also develop lung disease or bleeding disorders.

Now that I have you totally panicked and convinced your dog AND you are going to catch this nasty bug, remember this: it is not so common here! Plus, there is a pretty effective treatment and a good vaccination (for dogs only; sorry humans!) to prevent infection.

To correctly diagnose leptospirosis, you need to do baseline bloodwork, x-rays, and a urinalysis, plus a separate test

specifically for lepto. As to treatment, milder cases will need only some oral antibiotics; sicker dogs will need hospitalization for IV fluid support, antibiotics, and monitoring.

Prevention of leptospirosis involves a two-pronged approach. The first is vaccination (again, dogs only). The dog receives an initial series of two injections which should be boosted annually. The second is to limit exposure to sources. The most common sources are the wading pool or empty container outside that raccoons like to wash or urinate in. Dogs like to play in or drink from any water source. If your dog is diagnosed with lepto and is being treated, avoid contact with their urine, and wash your hands after handling them. They are likely shedding the bug for six weeks after starting treatment. If you're concerned over possible infection, contact your local health department.

Scared? Don't be. More informed? I hope so. Consider a leptospirosis vaccination for your dog. You'll minimize your dog's and your chances of getting this disease.

Sources: CDC, NIH, AVMA, PAHO, Merck



One of ARF's Leptospirosis survivors.

Spay Neuter Challenges

Like many rescues in our region and around the nation, ARF overcame many challenges to continue our spay neuter program this year. After Covid, when many vets were closed for extended periods, we saw a pet population boom. At the same time, many vet practices closed or struggled with veterinarian and staff shortages. Our friends at the ASPCA Spay Neuter Alliance, where we send many of our community's animals for low-cost spay and neuter, saw vet shortages due to high housing costs. Pet surrenders are on the rise due to housing pressures, and ARF also lost its main out-of-state pet transport partner.

ARF and Catman2 offer our community low-cost spay neuter, subsidizing all but \$20 of the surgery costs. Demand has outpaced supply for these services, and since sign-up moved online (<https://arf-humane.org/why-spay-neuter/>) clients desperate to take advantage of these services often reach a web page telling them all spots are full. We only receive surgery dates a month or two in advance, and as soon as we release those dates, they fill. We are begging those who need our help to keep trying. We also reserve a few spots for pregnant animals, as we know that gravid spay is often a better option than dangerous pregnancies, ovarian cancer, and pet overpopulation. This year alone, ARF had to pay over \$5,000 to save dogs who had retained some pups and could not deliver them. (Retained pups die, become septic, and can kill a mother quickly). So please reach out by email (mary@arfhumane.org) if you have an animal needing gravid spay.

ARF also lost its downtown location, so we've had to adjust to conditions at our new office in the new Jackson County



Animal Shelter at 84 Green Energy Park Rd, where we have a great space and great parking but as yet no access to water or indoor places to keep ourselves or our animals warm. We've adjusted, with the help of the ASPCA, by loading our animals straight from clients' cars onto the transport vehicles. The county has also provided an awning for shade. We don't have public restroom access, since the shelter is closed during our trips, so our clients should plan accordingly!

Despite our challenges, we had great successes. The statistics on page 13 represent those animals spayed through us by the ASPCA and through our collaboration with Catman2. They do not count surgeries arranged and paid for through other veterinarians.

Please help us extend our reach by donating to help community spay neuter.



Farewells



I foster a lot of dogs. When they don't get adopted, they often live out their lives with me, so it's hard to see them pass on.

This year I lost three former ARF fosters named Lois, Elmer, and Gladly. Lois was a sweet chihuahua who was hard to housebreak. Elmer was in so much pain at the shelter that they thought he would die of starvation. No one could touch him but me. Gladly was cross-eyed, so I named her Gladly the cross-eyed bear. She died of mammary cancer, which can happen if a dog has too many litters. I hope I made up for a little of their former lives, and I'm going to miss them.

One of the things I admire about rescuers is the grace and generosity with which they take in animals, show them all the love in their hearts, and let them go. We all make mistakes, but rescuers are trying as hard as they can to care for so many unwanted pets. Thank you to my fellow rescuers for their sacrifices. We all know how hard it is to say good-bye.

I also want to thank our veterinarians for keeping our animal friends alive and then, when they must, easing them out of their pain. Veterinary work is full of stress and heartbreak. Every day, vets and their staff are merciful and comforting. I've been on the receiving end of their kindness for a long time. They amaze me.

Mary Adams