



Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc.'s Friends' Connection

October 2014 through January 2015

Editors: Judy Goodwin and Anne Greene

Happy Tails

New Shelter Manager Takes Different Approach

Our mission...

...is to act on behalf of unwanted and abandoned pets in order to achieve the following:
provide a safe clean environment,
provide needed medical treatment, and give healthy pets the opportunity to be adopted.
We also encourage sterilization by providing a portion of the cost when possible to low-income, current pet owners, and we educate young people about the satisfaction associated with responsible pet treatment.

It is a new day at the Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc. Shonna Harvey started as shelter manager Aug. 5. She brings to our shelter years of experience and training in the animal welfare field, a strong work ethic, and an extraordinary compassion for the abandoned pets of Madison County.

In just a few short weeks, Shonna has made a huge difference at our shelter, though she probably didn't think of those weeks as "short." They were pretty chaotic weeks.

In the June issue of this newsletter, we told you that our kill rate was reported at 74 percent and that we had started working to move dogs out of our shelter through transport to places that wanted them. Shonna has embraced the challenge to reduce our shelter's kill rate so wholeheartedly that we are proud to tell you that we have killed no animals since August 5, the day Shonna started. That's right, a 0 percent kill rate.

No one likes to talk about killing thrown-away dogs and cats, but ignoring any problem does not make it go away. Shonna brought expertise, contacts, and passion for the task to Madison County at just the right moment. This effort is not cheap in either money or time, but we are proceeding in faith. (Please see related article on page 3.)

As you know, our shelter is small compared to the number of abandoned animals in the county. We were full up when Shonna started, and she had to say "No" to some people who brought pets to the shelter. But her approach is to work with people. She asks them to help by giving her some time to move animals and make room, and she offers pet food for the time they keep the dog or cat. As animals are adopted, fostered, or transported to places that want them, she calls the folks on the waiting list. This has meant that the in-shelter population is not overcrowded, animals are healthier and less anxious, and dog fights have ceased.

We are working hard to find our animals homes. All the dogs and cats at our shelter are the beneficiaries in this story of happy tails. Thank you for helping to make this happen.



Shonna Harvey with her dog Kado

Friends' Connection is published each February, June, and October.

Contact us through the pet shelter at **479-738-1505**,

OR at mcpsfriends@gmail.com,

OR at Friends of the Shelter, Madison County Pet Shelter, 2075 Madison 6555, PO Box 364, Huntsville 72740

Pets in Prose and Poems

Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat



Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, published in 1866, introduced some long-lived characters to the world, one of which was

the Cheshire Cat.

Alice and the reader first meet the Cheshire Cat in the Dutchess's kitchen—the scene where the cook is hurling pots and pans and saucers and pepper around the place and the Dutchess is tossing her howling baby into the air. The power to disappear from a scene like that would be lovely. And that power, along with his grin, is what makes the Cheshire Cat so endearing. Wouldn't we all love to be able to fade from some scenes?

Wikipedidia offers us this tidbit about the cat's origin: "A *classical dictionary of the vulgar tongue* (1788) by Francis Grose (Second Edition, Corrected and Enlarged, London) contains the following entry: 'CHESHIRE CAT. He grins like a Cheshire cat; said of anyone who shows his teeth and gums in laughing.' "

How we behave toward cats here below determines our status in heaven.

Robert A. Heinlein,
To Sail Beyond the Sunset (1987)

Pets as Christmas Gifts

The Gift That Keeps on Giving

Opinions vary on this topic, but Judy and I strongly discourage people from giving living creatures as Christmas gifts. Think about it. A pet is a most personal addition to someone's life. A pet has needs that do not stop on Dec. 26 but are, rather, ongoing for years. A pet has to work well with a whole household, not just with whoever receives this "gift." It can be wonderful, but think first.

If you want to give an animal to someone for Christmas, do that person a big favor and ask if he or she wants one. Ask if the household is prepared to reap the benefits and joy that a pet will give by assuming the attendant long-term responsibility. Because each dog and cat will give love and loyalty back to its humans manyfold.

And if your giftee says Yes, come by our shelter. We have the best dogs and cats!

Keep Spreading the Word



Please keep spreading the word about our region's wonderful low-cost spay and neuter clinic, Spay Arkansas, 1909 Huntsville Ave. in Springdale.

These are Spay Arkansas's normal costs (add \$5 if your pet does not have proof of a rabies shot):

Cats	\$30
Dogs under 50 lbs.	\$50
Dogs over 50 lbs.	\$1 per pound

Most, but not all, services are income-sensitive. To learn if you qualify or to learn of special programs, go to spayarkansas.org and click on Clinic or call 479-756-1100. Income limits start at \$33,350 for a household of one person.

If you do not receive this newsletter via email and are willing to do so, please let us know. Tell us at mcpsfriends@gmail.com. We keep everyone's email confidential. Thanks.

Forging ahead with gratitude and a prayer

You and I know that it is hard to make big changes. People get comfortable with the familiar, even if the familiar isn't optimal. Change can be risky and scary. Hoped-for improvements can seem impossible. The board of the Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc. decided earlier this year to bring our facility into line with the standards laid out by the Animal Shelter Veterinarians Association. The board also decided to explore the option of transporting animals out of our shelter rather than killing them. Your support is helping us meet these goals.

For decades, shelters across the nation, ours included, acquiesced to the idea that over-crowding in a facility could be addressed only by killing excess animals. Shelter managers across the nation said, "It's the most humane way." Not necessarily. It is true, though, that killing those hapless creatures is easier and cheaper than finding another way for them.

Knowing that, the board agreed to proceed with our experiment in transporting. A personnel change occurred coincidentally, and the board was lucky that a person with hands-on, relevant experience and training was available just at that moment.

On Aug. 5, the day our new manager started, a \$10,000 check arrived in the mail from an anonymous donor who'd received an inheritance, with which the donor could have done anything. What did the donor do with it? Decided to give it to the Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc. "I know you do so much good. ... Maybe my gift will inspire another anonymous gift," the donor said.

The timing was eerie. It just could not have been better, because we had begun improving the building to meet higher standards, feeding and cleaning twice a day and incurring higher personnel costs, and finding each animal a place rather than resorting to "euthanasia" – all of which challenge us financially.

Our generous anonymous donor has been joined in the past few months by many other benefactors, by many volunteers, and by our Friends of the Shelter. We have room to cite only a few below, but are deeply grateful to all.

We extend a heartfelt thanks to the following and to every one of our supporters.

Charlie and Giesla Kone bought cat towers, a power washer, more spay/neuter surgeries for low-income Madison County residents, and raised cat beds that allow us to meet licensing standards. They also paid a major portion of our recent fencing project.

Donna Carter bought most of the raised dog beds that both improve our standards and make the dogs much more comfortable.

Lowe's donated a labor-saving dishwasher.

Spay Arkansas paid a major part of the fence project cost.

The **Humane Society of the Ozarks** let us use their van and paid the cost of transporting our dogs to awaiting rescues in Colorado. They continue to help us find foster homes and permanent homes for our animals.

The **Lighting Emporium** in Springdale donated two beautiful rugs for use in our thrift store.

Pets Alive of Northwest Arkansas provides volunteers who help at public adoption events in both Huntsville and cities west.

We added a new section of fence in late June



A new section of 6-foot-high, 9-gauge chain link fencing on the east side of our building allows our staff to separate dogs when necessary, thereby keeping all our dogs safe.

Great Gifts for the shelter –

Amazon.com has a **Wish List Registry** and Shonna has set one up for the shelter. Visit at <http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist>

In the *Find a Wish List or Registry* box, type either Shonna Harvey OR mcpshelter1@gmail.com. Or check this out:

For general shelter operations

Trifectant
Puppy training pads
Stainless steel litter pans
Dark tinted spray bottles
Febreeze plugin's and spray
Weight scales for dogs and cats
Paper Towels
Garbage bags, 30 gal. and 13 gal.
Bleach
High-efficiency laundry detergent
Drier Sheets
Collars (dog/cat)
Nail clippers (cat/dog)
Sandwich and Gallon sized ziplock baggies
Snuggle Safe heating discs for animals
Batteries (all sizes)
Baby food (meat varieties)
E-collars (all sizes)

For adoption events

Collapsible Metal Crates (1 Large, 4 Medium)
2 Fold-up tables
Cat Hammocks
Clip boards
Folding chairs
Van for transporting animals (We're optimistic!)

For dog kennel and cat room

Paint for the walls
Paint for the fencing
Sealer for concrete

For the play yard

Dog Tunnel
Dog Walk Ramp
New Top Soil

For the front office

Ink cartridges for Canon 210-211
Letter-sized paper for printer
All sizes of binder clips

Paws and Claws Thrift Cottage Re-opens!



We are pleased to announce that after several weeks of hard work, the new location for our Paws and Claws Thrift Cottage is open for business. We moved only about 200 feet from our original site, but what a difference!

Come by our great location at **104B West War Eagle on the north side of Polk Square** in Huntsville. We have more room on the sales floor, and we have in-house storage that allows us to re-stock quickly. We have room now to sell more items of furniture. All of these features will make shopping in our store more appealing to you.

Paws and Claws Thrift Cottage is a major funding source for the Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc. The store's founders, Polly Potter and Carol Horton, transferred more than \$14,000 from the store to shelter operations in 2013 and were on their way to surpassing that amount this year when we moved.

We are fortunate to have several very generous donors of high-quality items who, together with all our store-volunteers, supporters, and customers are helping us pursue the goal of finding a good home for each dog and cat in our care.

We're grateful to Randy Coger, the owner of our first location, for his support and encouragement in the first two years of the store's operations.

Interested in volunteering or fostering an animal?
Give Shonna a call at 479-738-1505. We can find
an enjoyable way for you to help!