

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.

Polly – a Most Productive Participant

Polly Potter, long-time and highly valued board member for the Madison County Pet Shelter, Inc., resigned from the board in December 2014 to focus her energies more on the Paws and Claws Thrift Cottage and on her home and family. Polly has been synonymous with the pet shelter from its very early days. She, Dr. Jim MacLean, and several others worked hard to raise enough money to build the shelter located at 2075 Madison 6555. It was Polly's vision and energy that got the Paws and Claws Race going at Withrow Springs State Park in 1998, and the race raised enough money to help make the dream of a building become a reality—along with lots of local support and blood-sweat-and-tears.

Once the shelter opened in 2002, Polly's race continued to be its main fundraiser, and Polly, who'd promised to continue the race for 15 years, held true to her word. Each year folks from a wide radius converged on Withrow for the Paws and Claws race until its last event in March 2013. (But see page 4 for race-revival information.)

Polly was central to setting up the shelter's bingo games, another fundraiser, and to the success of many other events over the past 14 years. She also secured grant money from various sources.

But never one to stop with Very Good, she, along with board member Carol Horton, embarked on a fundraiser that has earned the claim to Excellent—the Paws and Claws Thrift Cottage at 104B War Eagle on the north side of the Huntsville square. The Cottage, run by volunteer labor, sent \$24,700 to the shelter's operations account in 2014. Truly excellent!

Polly served on the pet shelter board for many years while working full time at the University of Arkansas and working with her husband to maintain a farm near Combs in Madison County. She exemplifies the spirit of community engagement. Thank you, Polly, for a job well done!



New Spirit, New Name, New Hours, New Website

The underlying philosophy at our shelter has changed, thanks to the hard work of the board over the past year and to the positive attitude of our staff. The entire staff is dedicated to the mission of finding a home for each dog and cat that comes through our doors. We've adopted the doing-business-as name of Paws and Claws Pet Shelter. We've changed our hours so more people can get to the shelter to visit our canine and feline guests. And we've created a website (www.thepetshelter.org) as a companion to our Facebook page to keep the public informed about our work.

Come by and visit! We're open Tuesday through Friday noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We're closed Sunday and Monday.

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

Contact us at **479-738-1505** OR at **thepetshelter.org**,

OR at mcpsfriends@gmail.com

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

Pets in Prose and Poems

Lassie=Loyalty

Years ago, I read *Lassie Come Home* by Eric Knight, published in 1940. That book, along with *Black Beauty*, gave me a real sense that we have an obligation to behave decently toward our companion animals.

Do you remember the basic story? Lassie was the beloved rough collie of the Carraclough family who lived in the village Greenall Bridge in Yorkshire, England. When the father Sam was laid off from the mine and could find no other employment, the family cut back until Sam concluded he had to do the one thing he most hated to do—sell Lassie. The Duke of Rudling, a local man who had been trying to buy her from Carraclough for years, bought her only too gladly.

Lassie was boarded on the duke's marvelous estate and had all the best of things, but that didn't suit her. Three times she broke out to make her 4 o'clock rendezvous with Sam's son Joe as Joe left school. Three times Sam took her back. The third time, he swore he'd keep her the next time she came home. The duke said Sam would be welcome to her, but nearly promised that would *not* happen. The duke moved the beautiful rough collie to the Scottish Highlands, 400 man-miles from home, but 1,000 dog-miles.

This is where, if readers pay attention, they can get a good geography lesson from Knight. He describes wild land, rich farm land, high cliffs near the North Sea, the grime of industrial centers, and great shipping centers. He shows us the difference in landscape once we cross the Tweed River from England into Scotland. Through Knight we see the blue Scottish mountains and green-bordered lakes.

Of course Lassie escaped from the duke's northern estate, too, and headed south, pushed by an urge to meet Joe each afternoon at 4 o'clock. It was one rough trip on which she encountered kindness and cruelty. Stone-throwing boys drove her across a rock-strewn river crossing that left her badly battered and with a broken rib. She found a concealing bush near a field wall and there she stayed for six days without water. She made it to a stream then for a drink but stayed put for two more days. Nine days without food.

Yes, Lassie made it home to Joe and, yes, the book had a happy ending. The book became a movie, then the movie became a TV series in which our stalwart female was portrayed by a male.

The stories of Lassie resonate with us because many of us have experienced a bit of the intense loyalty given by dogs. We owe them some respect for that.

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Shelter News

Passing with Flying Colors

Since June, our shelter has passed inspections by the Missouri Department of Agriculture and PetSmart Charities.

The Missouri inspection resulted in licensing that permits us to transport dogs to certain places in Missouri. Though we try hard to find our dogs local homes, transporting trumps termination every time. The Missouri license gives the shelter a transport option that we can use if we must, and it shows that the standards of cleanliness and creature comforts for our dogs are high.

The PetSmart inspection was part of our application



to become a PetSmart Charities partner. This allows us to take cats to PetSmart's in-store cat adoption areas, which greatly increases our cats' chances of finding their permanent home. We will also be allowed to hold PetSmart parking-lot adoption events for dogs and cats. A PetSmart representative toured the shelter to assess cleanliness, and reviewed vaccination protocols to ensure that they meet PetSmart's requirements.

We are proud of Shonna, Jeannie, Brittany, and Gin for keeping our shelter in tip-top shape and opening more avenues toward Home for our 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.

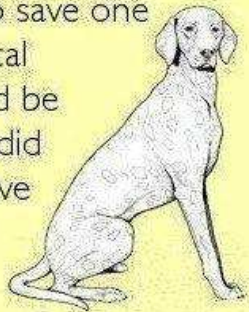
If you do not receive this newsletter via email and are willing to do so, please let us know. Tell us at mcpsfriends@gmail.com. We keep everyone's email confidential. Thanks.

Fostering Pets for the Shelter *by Abby Burnett*

Though Kristie Pillow and her children had fostered puppies for the Paws and Claws Pet Shelter, Pillow was hesitant to take in a mother cat and her new-born kitten. But after Pillow couldn't stop thinking about the pair, she returned to get them. It was a good decision. Though the kitten will soon be adopted elsewhere, it provides endless entertainment for her family, and they've decided to keep the mama cat. "She is the sweetest, nicest thing," Pillow says, "and she's so much at home at this point."

Few animals entering the shelter immediately find a "forever home" so, until they do, many are housed with foster families. ("Family" is used here to mean any person fostering an animal.) This involves caring for the animal in the home until it is either adopted by others or relocated to another shelter or rescue. The foster family also has the option of adopting.

Fostering isn't a life-time commitment, it's a commitment to save one life. Contact your local shelter/rescue. Could be best thing you ever did with your life - to save theirs.



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Pillow says friends warned her, "You're just going to adopt most of them," but she says this hasn't been the case. Giving them up can be hard, but she and her children love knowing they are caring for these animals until they find permanent owners. "If I didn't feel good about the situation, I wouldn't do it," she says.

Shelter Manager Shonna Harvey says that fostering is not open-ended, and families are never given animals and then forgotten about or pressured to adopt. Because each animal's needs and each foster family's situation is different, Harvey starts by asking, "What kind of dog would be best in your home?"

"We'll find a match," she says. "If an issue arises, they can always bring the animal back."

"We kept four Catahoula Leopard dogs, until they went to a shelter in Colorado," Pillow reminisces of dogs that were high-energy and fun to foster, but not difficult to give up. The Chihuahua puppies they fostered were another matter. "I have three kids, and each one

wanted to keep a different puppy," she says. "I told them, 'No, this way we can help someone else.'" The experience has been a positive one for their whole family. "It's a blessing," she says, "and our way of giving back."

If interested in becoming a foster family, please contact the shelter at (479) 738-1505.

Questions for potential foster families

- Are there small children in the family?
- Are there other pets? If so, could the family pet visit the shelter, to ensure that it will get along with the fostered animal?
- What would be the best match: a large or small breed dog, puppies, cats or kittens?
- Does the animal need to be housetrained, or will the foster family train it?
- Is the family able to take a dog suffering from anxiety, in order to help it become adoptable?
- Does the family have a fenced yard?
- If the family lives in the country, with an unfenced yard, are they willing to walk the dog on a leash for several days, until it gets used to its surroundings?

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 and ship to the shelter at 2075 Madison 6555, Huntsville AR 72740. Or check this out:

For general shelter operations

- Trifectant
- Puppy training pads
- Stainless steel litter pans
- Dark tinted spray bottles
- Febreze 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 Ziplocs
- 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

For the front office

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

Come to the Fun Run, Romp in the Sun, and, of course, Get a T-shirt



The long-running Paws and Claws race finished its course in March 2013. But who can resist the opportunity to get outside in the spring? We are reviving the spirit of the race, but in a different place and a different form.

In May, when everything is freshening and coming to life again, join us at Mitchusson Park to enjoy frolicking and fun for our furry friends. We're planning a fun run for Saturday, May 9, with a backup date of Saturday, May 16, in case it rains on the 9th. (But it won't.)

As the date gets closer, watch the Paws and Claws Facebook page and our website (www.thepetshelter.org) for more information about the run. Your participation in this family fun will help us find just the right home for each dog and cat in our care. Oh yeah, and it'll be fun, too! Join us!

Renovations at our place

Institutional green is gone from our main front room and from the southwest room that is destined to become the cat display room. The new colors of blue and yellow are brighter, warmer, and more welcoming in the office area. The lavender in the future cat room is mellow and soothing.

Staff and volunteers have also re-painted the middle room blue and yellow, for a much more appealing look.

We have received a window for the wall between the office and future cat room, but it might not work with our wiring and space constraints. We're working to adapt as we move along in our remodeling and refreshing of the shelter.

We are very grateful for the time, materials, and donations you have given over the past several months. This is truly your shelter. Thank you, and come by to see us!

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