

# VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

HELP US. HELP THEM.



**SPCA**  
southwest michigan

April 2020 | Issue 258

**SPCA of Southwest Michigan**  
Pet Rescue & Adoption Center  
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*The SPCA is a non-profit animal rescue group based in SW Michigan. Thanks to volunteers like you, we have rescued over 16,000 dogs, cats, puppies & kittens since we started in 2002!*

## OUR MISSION

SPCA of Southwest Michigan is dedicated to working for the well-being of animals and creating an adoption-focused community in Southwest Michigan. Our goal is to end senseless animal euthanasia in SW Michigan, and provide all animals with a loving, caring home.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**  
**AMAZON WISH LIST**  
**SPCA MERCHANDISE**



## COVID-19: HOW SPCA IS DEALING

What a crazy year 2020 has been! This week Michigan's governor issued a "Stay at Home" order, affecting the entire state's workforce (not to mention social lives) in differing ways. Unfortunately, that meant that the SPCA of Southwest Michigan also had to close the doors to the public - and to all of our wonderful volunteers - until further notice.

Caring for the animals is still our highest priority. We're so proud that our dedicated foster base jumped into action, and we were able to place many of our animals directly into foster care so they can wait out the quarantine in a home environment.

SPCA is still running with kennel staff, who have been taking extra time in their workdays to supply leash walks and yard time that volunteers would normally provide. We all know how important it is that our cats and dogs are still given affection, exercise, and enrichment during this time, and we're grateful to our staff for stepping up and doing all they can. Rest assured, vets are still available and caring for the medical needs of our animals.

We are itching to get back to our routine - placing our wonderful adoptable pets in forever homes - and we can't wait to reopen to our devoted volunteers. Please monitor our **Facebook** page and **website** for updates.

You, as our community members and volunteers, are the heart of our organization, and we hope everyone stays safe, healthy, and happy during this time.



## CAGES TO CAREFREE

In November of 2019, we were excited to launch our newest program, Cages to Carefree. Inspired by the SPCA of Southwest Michigan's acquisition of three retired research beagles - Luke, Stilts, and Manny - the program now has fifteen graduates as of February!

Snow, Winter, Frost, Crystal, and Blizzard, great pyrenees dogs rescued from a hoarding situation, were next to join the program, followed by First Lady Hamhock, Rocky Porkchop, Senator Chunky, and Congressman Meatloaf, bulldog mixes who were used for breeding and were left alone in crates (or outside in the cold) for 18 hours a day. Finally, Peepers, Dasher, and Brownie, 3 senior persian cats rescued from a hoarding situation, found their forever placement.

The purpose of Cages to Carefree is to find ideal homes for animals from unusually difficult backgrounds. These animals may be harder to place due to potential behavior issues, a lack of training, fear and neglect, or health.

Cages to Carefree is the only application process for adoptions at the SPCA of Southwest Michigan.

By choosing applicants based on their willingness and ability to handle more complex behavioral issues in pets, as well as meet their potentially higher medical needs, we are optimistic this program will increase retention rates for these adopted animals and give them the happy ending after they deserve.

We're proud of the opportunity to provide fitting homes for these animals and to bring awareness to the hard, but necessary work that we do here every day. You can find out more on our [website](#).

## ADOPTION WRAP-UP FOR 2019

1,307 total adoptions!

**Cats 587 • Dogs 720**





## **TAILS OF JOY SPCA SWMI PARTNERS WITH HALLMARK**



Stay tuned! You'll soon see the SPCA of Southwest Michigan on the Hallmark Channel!

In a partnership between Cathy Bissell of Bissell Pet Foundation, the Hallmark Channel, and several shelters including the SPCA, Hallmark will be airing "Tails of Joy."

We're excited to be featured as "Tails of Joy" documents Katie Timber's trip down to our sister shelter St. Landry's Parish, an outdoor shelter in Louisiana overwhelmed with animals. St. Landry's is an impoverished area of the country where spaying and neutering services are expensive and difficult to acquire, and overpopulation of companion animals is an extremely serious issue.

Hallmark will follow us, as well as multiple rescues - Paw Works, Harbor Humane Society, Muskegon Humane Society, Detroit Dog Rescue, Hearts of Hope Dog Rescue, Alaqua Animal Refuge, Humane Society of West Michigan, and Animal Rescue

Corps - during a shelter pull of over 100 dogs from St. Landry's Parish.

"Tails of Joy" will focus on the important role partner shelters play in the transport, care, and adoption of animals by following these dogs as they make their trips to their new locations. They'll also feature footage of the animals as staff and volunteers work to provide medical care, socialization, and, finally, match rescued dogs with adopters and send them off to happy homes.

We're thrilled to be part of this opportunity to shine some light on the hard work shelters do, and to help show the care and love that staff and volunteers pour into each and every animal to get them ready for their forever home. Footage will be collected through Labor Day. Watch our [Facebook](#) page for an announcement when we have an airing date!

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Partner veterinarian Dr. Gary Ryder recently welcomed son Roman to the family. Congratulations to the Ryder family!



## NEW FACES



***Shannon Keirnan***

In July we welcomed Shannon Keirnan as our new Office Manager. Shannon is a graduate of Michigan State University with a Bachelor's Degree in English and a Cognate in Zoology. Shannon has been involved in animal care since 16 (over half her life), when her first job was a kennel assistant in a veterinary office evolved into a passion for rescue. An avid foster provider, she has fostered roughly 200 animals in her time, and especially loves hospice or harder behavior cases. A mom to four rescue cats - Rory, Oliver, Sigrid, and Binx - and two rescue dogs - Piper and Lucy - Shannon also owns and runs Peppermill Candle Co. from her home.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



***Shawn McDonnell***

"When I stopped at the Anti-Cruelty Society of Chicago in July of 2019, I realized that I needed to somehow help dogs that had been neglected, abused and/or abandoned. The day I got home from Chicago, I looked to see how I could help locally. That is how I joined the SPCA team as a volunteer! It has been a very rewarding experience to help care and interact with the animals. To see these wonderful dogs find furever families that will give them the attention and love that they so deserve is such a great feeling.

I am married and have a wonderful son who is in his 2nd year (Pre-Med) at Loyola University Chicago. I also have 2 dogs: a Toy Fox Terrier-Hunter and a Mini Dachshund-Diesel. Outside of helping SPCA, I am a CPA with my own small practice. I enjoy riding my bike and traveling, especially to Montana!"



# Happy Tails

submit your happy tail to [happytails@spcaswmich.org](mailto:happytails@spcaswmich.org)

## SNOW ANGEL

Submitted by: Elizabeth Jane

We adopted "Snow Angel" about a month ago. Her name is now Nova and her and Asher have become best friends ♥



## RUSSELL

Submitted by: Ellie Klemm



My best buddy Sparky (formerly known as Russell) and I went to South Haven Sunday. Check out the wind action on his ears! Gonna be 2 years since we met at the SPCA.



## HOMER

**Submitted by: Kristy Warstler-Greis**

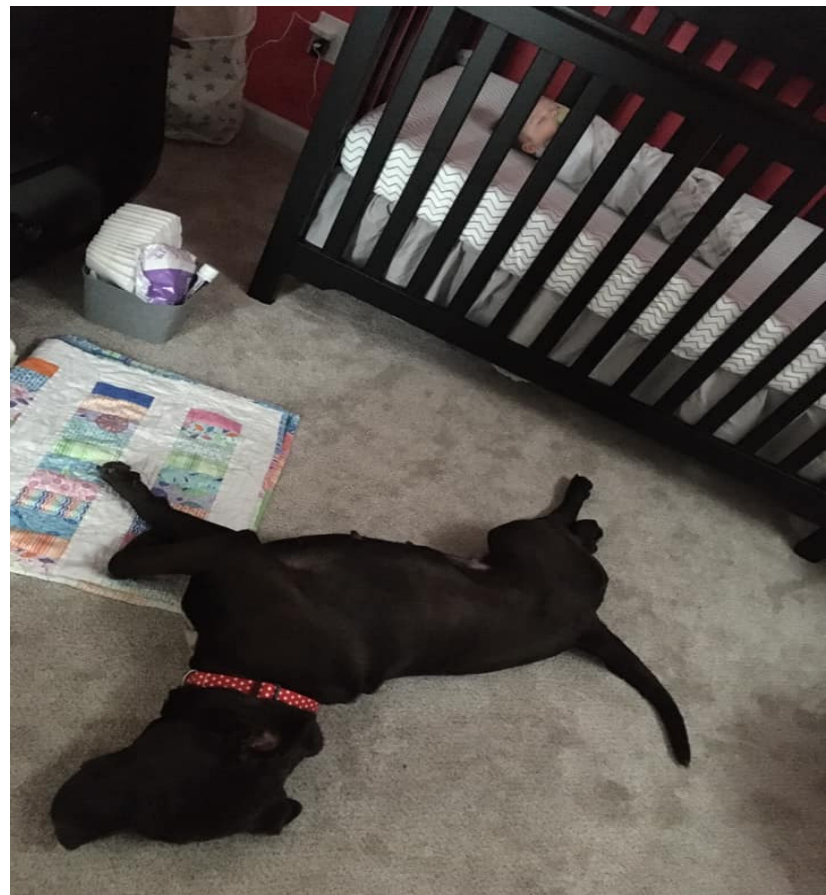
Thank you SPCA, our new kitten is amazing! Loving, feisty, happy and enjoying his new home right away! We are so in love!! As for his new siblings, everyone is in the fence but we will get through it. I want to thank Bissell as well for the help with the adoption fee!!



## RAVEN

**Submitted by: Erin McDermid Bolin**

Pepper (formerly known as Raven) is living her best life. We are so happy to have her in our lives!







## ADOPTIONS - THANKS TO YOU!

**CATS:** Guada, Landon, Punky, Sherbert, Skeeter, Tres

**DOGS:** Barnum, Earl, Mipsy, Patty, Penelope, Prissy, Sadie, Sarah, Twinkle, Winston

Thank you for opening your hearts and your homes to these animals! See all our adoptable dogs, cats, puppies & kittens at [www.spcaswmich.org](http://www.spcaswmich.org).

Please send Volunteer Newsletter submissions to Jess Duncan @ [newsletter@spcaswmich.org](mailto:newsletter@spcaswmich.org).