



Paw Tails

Paw Tails is a quarterly publication of
Easy Street Animal Shelter

First Quarter 2016 Volume 2 Issue 1

Greetings Paw Pals!

Since Rover is currently on Spring Break, we, the ESAS Board of Directors, are taking the opportunity to update you on the shelter's current status.

As you will recall, the Easy Street Animal Shelter (ESAS) has been a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization since 2005, however, the gates were not officially open for business until just eighteen months ago. The purpose of the shelter, simply stated, is to provide care and safety for homeless animals while seeking to rehome healthy, loving pets.

Since opening for normal shelter operations, we have received 77 guests. Fortunately, 58 canines have found their very own, loving humans! Others had become lost and were claimed by their family. There is nothing more joyful at the shelter than finding loving, caring homes for those wonderful dogs that depend upon humans for their well-being!

The monthly average number of guests hovers around 18 and that number is a full house! Thankfully, because of your loyalty and financial investment, we have not only rescued homeless animals, most suffering from adverse medical conditions and lack of care, we've participated in bringing happiness and joy to these dogs and to their human families.

Financially, we are fortunate to be on sound 'paws' – all because of YOU and your contributions! In 2015, YOU, collectively and individually, and by supporting our fundraising activities, were very generous and our income allowed us to pay all our expenses and have funds for keeping our gates open for the first quarter of 2016 when donations traditionally drop dramatically.

As the year moves forward, we have scheduled at least one funding activity each month. We will appreciate and be grateful for your continued support. And, we never refuse extra help with any event, so come join us when you can!

We are thankful for our volunteers who assist us with daily chores necessary to provide food, water and care for our BFFs (Best Furry Friends Forever) every morning and evening, rain or shine, no matter the weather! We depend upon each of these special humans who are indispensable!

With open arms we would welcome more volunteers, so if you love animals as we do, and you have a couple of morning or evening hours that you could help care for our guests, we'd love to have you join us. If you cannot commit to a regular volunteer assignment, please consider being on a substitute list.

Again, Paw Pals, we THANK YOU for your interest and your commitment to the ESAS! We hope to see you soon at an ESAS event!

A LAMENT OF LIFE BEHIND BARS



Behind bars, forgotten.
Behind bars to live.
Behind bars.
This is now my world,
Seeing everything from the view of bars,
Laying on the cold, hard floor.
Watching.
Waiting.

Who I lived with sent me away,
Didn't want to help me,
Didn't want to have me with them,
Didn't want to care,
Didn't want to love me.

Behind bars.
Waiting,
Watching,
Hoping.
Always hoping.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

GIRL SCOUT TROUP #8577

ESAS directors are pleased to honor Saint Jo's Girl Scout Troop #8577 for their outstanding performance and dedicated service to the shelter. The current Volunteer Spotlight proudly shines on Troop Leader Laurie Martin and four Scouts, Gaby Edwards, Emma Martin, Cielo Sanchez and Kami Taylor.

They began a relationship with the shelter during the spring of 2014, when the troop took a field trip to visit.

The girls were interested in learning more about the local facility and wanted to meet the dogs under the shelter's care. Kristal Nobile explained how the shelter operates and preparatory steps that preceded the initial arrival of animals. She also discussed the duties of volunteers who are responsible for the morning and evening feeding and watering of each animal and for numerous miscellaneous chores that ensure the best care possible for all canines living there.

The girls' favorite part of the field trip was being able to play with and love on the dogs when they were released from their kennels. All of those dogs now know exactly what it is to be loved by Girl Scouts who love and care about them.

Troop #8577 meets twice a month during the school year to learn more about becoming a girl of courage, confidence and character who make a difference in their world and community. They enjoy fun outings such as swimming, camping, and bowling.

Currently the troop has eleven girls who are in fourth through eighth grades. Girls in 4th and 5th grades are Juniors and those in 6th through 8th grades are Cadettes. There are multiple requirements to earn the Journey badge with the final step being a "take action project." The Junior Scouts selected the project of raising funds they could use to purchase dog food and laundry detergent, both items on the shelter's wish list.

Once the Journey badge was earned, the girls worked on the highest award a Junior can receive, the Bronze Award. Working on this award requires a team and each team member is required to accumulate a minimum of 20 hours in serving as a volunteer with an organization that contributes to bettering their community. The ESAS was chosen, and the Scouts immediately began to volunteer at the shelter.

Gaby, Emma, Cielo and Kami were the four Juniors who completed the required hours during the summer of 2015.

During the summer when these girls were assisting at the shelter, ESAS Director Larry Coleman worked closely with each one, teaching them the necessary chores and training them how best to accomplish their duties. They learned how to clean kennels and how to feed and water each dog. In the process of working with the animals and through Larry's teaching, they learned characteristics of individual dogs, which animals could be allowed to run on the grounds together and which ones needed to be by themselves, depending upon how each animal got along with the others.

Another valuable experience was the girls learning to work together as a team and how dividing the duties could make the chores more fun and more easily accomplished. Once again, their favorite part was their time spent loving on and playing with the dogs.

Unfortunately, school resumed in late August and the time to volunteer for the Monday morning shift came to an end. However, another component to earning the Journey badge is to ascertain what can be done next or on an ongoing basis to further help their selected organization. Needless to say, they were eager to be placed on the volunteer substitute list, hoping to be called upon when help is needed.

As sad as the girls were to not be continuing regular shelter duties, the troop has assisted ESAS with bake sales over the last eighteen months and by conducting the Cake Walk at the last two annual Doggie Walks. The most recent outreach to the shelter was to construct and paint a wonderful cardboard dog house for ESAS's "Fill the Dog House" project during the local Santa on the Square activities on December 5th. Anxious to do even more, they selected two names of shelter animals from the Santa Paws Tree and purchased food bowls, flea medications, leashes, and collars to put into the house.

It is evident by their concern and care for our dogs that Girl Scout Troop #8577 loves these homeless animals and enjoys helping them. Fortunately for ESAS, they plan to continue their relationship in the future and we look forward to building this relationship even stronger.

The ESAS deeply appreciates and applauds these dedicated girls, and their leader, who are dedicated to the care and safety of animals at the shelter while we endeavor to find good homes for them. We are dependent upon volunteers to assist us in our mission and working with these Scouts is a real pleasure!

THANK YOU GABY, EMMA, CIELO, KAMI and LAURIE! You're the best!! Our animals love you, and so do we!

FBI TO TRACK ANIMAL ABUSE

For a number of years, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had been pressured to consider animal abuse as much a crime as it does abuse of humans. The FBI did not track such crimes and even the most egregious cases, such as dog fighting, were placed in the category of "other" when local law enforcements reported their statistics to the National Incident Based Reporting System.

The FBI might well have continued that classification of animal abuse crimes had it not been for Mary Lou Randour, a psychologist who switched careers to full-time animal rights advocacy. Randour intensively lobbied the FBI to elevate animal cruelty to its own separate offense category.

Finally, in 2014, the FBI agreed. This year, 2016, they will begin to record animal crimes data the way they collect data for other serious crimes like homicide. The FBI defines cruelty to animals as: "Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly taking on action that mistreats or kills any animal without just cause, such as torturing, tormenting, mutilation, maiming, poisoning, or abandonment."

There are four categories of crimes; simple or gross neglect, intentional abuse and torture, organized abuse such as cock fighting and dog fighting, and animal sexual abuse.

This news is considered a big win for animals. Since animal abuse cases have been categorized under "other" there has been no way to track the number of cases, but most animal advocates believe these kinds of crimes have markedly increased over the past several decades, and even now is continuously rising.

Randour stated, "These are creatures that suffer and we know their capacity to suffer. In most societies, it's recognized that creatures that are dependent on others, whether the elderly or children or animals, need to be protected."

Since the FBI is now counting animal abuse as a serious crime, advocates hope the statistics on the volume and extent of these crimes against animals will evoke emotions of outrage that will ultimately inform the public of the value of dealing with such issues rather than generally ignoring the problem.

All states have some animal rights and abuse laws, although most are inadequate to address the problems. Usually these crimes are, at best, classified as misdemeanors. Thirteen states and Washington, D.C. consider neglecting an animal a felony. In all but two states, so-called affirmative acts of abuse are a felony on the first offense, though that can be subjective.

It appears the FBI is beginning to understand the seriousness of animal cruelty and advocates hope the agency will now crackdown on crimes against all animals. The National Sheriffs Association was a strong backer of the FBI's policy change.

In the past, the agency's policy advisory board considered the issue of animal cruelty as trivial to the FBI. However, convincing research by advocates pointed to the fact that many serial killers foreshadowed their penchant for violence at an early age through abusing animals. Ongoing research has consistently confirmed the evidence that animal abuse can be a precursor to future violent crimes.

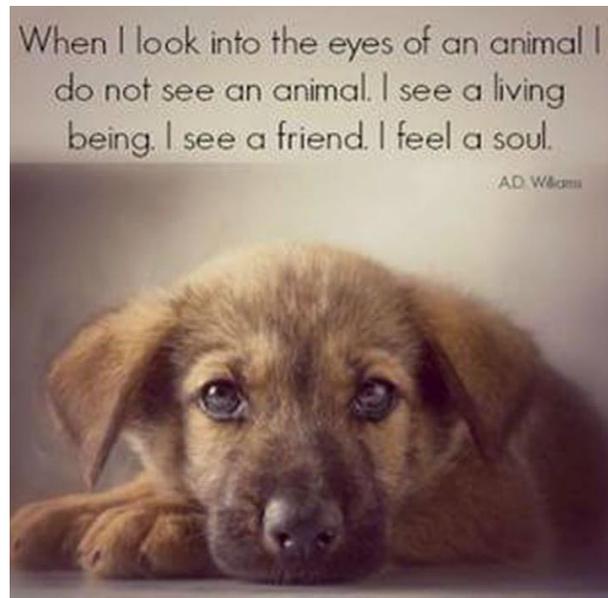
The goal for collecting this data under its own category is that after several years, agencies will be able to see trends that better allow their resources to catch animal abusers. In addition to hopefully seeing a big difference in reducing abuse of animals, it is hoped that this information will undoubtedly be valuable when this type of crime is associated with crimes against humans. The information is expected to assist authorities in profiling those who commit or have the potential to commit heinous crimes.

Reporting data under the new policy is voluntary, but advocates hope concerned citizens will assist in convincing local law enforcement agencies to report statistics; part of that is appealing emotionally – animal abuse is inhumane - and pragmatically – it can help understand crimes.

Randour said "there is overwhelming evidence that animal abuse is linked to crimes against people, including violent crimes and domestic violence. It's not about people or animals, it's protecting them both."

**Editor's note: This article is based on a Washington Post, January 6, 2016, article by Colby Itkowitz and additional information from other sources, including various humane societies.

**An article on Texas laws was published in the Fall 2015, issue of this newsletter.



HELPING CANINES THAT FEAR THUNDERSTORMS

Even though our local weather has been more like springtime than winter, the traditional months of spring, March, April and May, are quickly coming up and with them, the dreaded thunder and lightning that often accompanies much needed rain. Many of our dogs do not like these storms and have such fear that they shake, hide and become anxious, turning into Velcro dogs with fear seen in their eyes.

Canines that are most fearful of thunderstorms have an elevated sense of the change in barometric pressure and often know when a storm is approaching before their humans do. Many are totally terrified, becoming extremely anxious and resort to destructive behaviors like chewing, panting, pacing and excessive barking while trying to hide.

The following six tips may help your pet:

SAFE ROOM

Designate a place where your dog can go when he feels fearful of the weather. A good solution could be a kennel that he is familiar with, placed in an interior room, away from windows. Place a favorite blanket and a toy in the kennel and leave the door open even if your dog is inside it. Covering the top and three sides of the kennel with a large blanket may help, too, as most dogs like that close, tunnel effect. He will know he can go to his own personal storm bunker when he is uncomfortable with the weather and know that he is safe.

KEEP DOORS CLOSED

Dogs can become easily spooked during these storms and have been known to run away in panic after hearing booming thunder and seeing bright lightening, especially if it seems to be right on top of your house. Don't knowingly give your dog a way to escape. Keep all doors and windows closed. As always, make sure your dog has tags on and/or is microchipped in case he does find a way to escape.

TRY A THUNDERSHIRT

Although the name of this special garment suggests it is intended only for use during thunderstorms, it actually helps to calm a number of different anxieties in canines. The Thunderstorm is similar to swaddling an infant as it gently applies pressure that helps them feel secure and usually will calm them, helping reduce anxiety.

DON'T OVERLY CODDLER

This may be hard to do because you want to comfort your furry friend. If you overdo efforts to soothe, cuddle and cuddle your dog, you could do more damage than good. Dogs will quickly pick up on your anxiety and respond accordingly. Try to be calm and strong so they are secure you are their support and you offer comfort. Obviously, never turn away from your pet or punish for his behavior. This is not on-purpose-bad acting up. Be supportive without being obsessive to their needs.

DISTRACTIONS

As with children, dogs are usually fairly easy to distract from the light and sounds outside by providing them with something fun and interesting. Play a game, toss a favorite toy, introduce a new toy or give her a treat she loves – anything that tells her it's a fun time and she has your attention.

CONTROL YOUR OWN ANXIETIES

Just as your beloved pet is attuned to your illnesses, moods and many emotions, if you are anxious or fearful during thunderstorms, your pet will pick up on your nervous energy, sensing that something is troublesome. Try to remain calm and collected and it will help them to relax. Talk in your normal happy and calm voice and laugh, too.

Remember, your furry friends are depending on you not just for their basic need of care and safety, but also for any emotional support needed. In the process of helping them fearlessly endure thunderstorms, you most likely help yourself, too!



Furever Friends



As frequently happens, we humans have a fairly good idea of what we'll do each morning as we awaken and start a new day. On a cool, breezy day last November, the Jamison sisters, Jamie and Tauna, did their usual morning chores, bid the ranch's two longtime canine residents good-bye and drove to Bowie to do normal Saturday errands and shopping. They had no idea that they would be making a major change to their family and life at the ranch.

Meanwhile, at the Easy Street Animal Shelter, volunteers were brushing, clipping nails, generally spiffing up many puppies that were guests there while seeking new homes. These puppies were transported to the parking lot of Tractor Supply, Bowie, where the puppies would meet many new people, hoping to make a connection leading to caring, loving humans and a new place to live.

One stop for Jamie and Tauna was at Tractor Supply. As they walked toward the entrance, they stopped to look at all those puppies and immediately spotted Shelby and Sara, two of the tiny little puppies they had seen when visiting the shelter earlier in the year. Instantly, Shelby and Sara noticed the sisters and turned on every bit of charm they possessed, wagging their tails and using their big, brown eyes to melt those human hearts.

Although the sisters had the two older dogs at the ranch, they were finding it very difficult to turn away from these two happy little creatures that so badly wanted their attention. After some thoughtful consideration concerning the two older dogs, Jamie and Tauna knew they would make it work, and work well. A shopping spree in the store netted all needed supplies for Shelby and Sarah, and they were all off to start the new chapters in their lives.

Fast forward to the end of February when a visit to see how everyone was doing proved that the connection in the parking lot was meant to be. The canine sisters quickly settled into their new home, happily accepting their new canine older sisters, Abby and Sadie, who had lived at the ranch for over ten years. And, to add more satisfaction to providing a home for Shelby and Sara, these two youngsters greatly enriched the lives of these older gals by engaging them in more activity.

The four dogs share a very nice, custom walk-in kennel within a covered building, heat lamps on each of their individual houses and a doggy door to their own large, fenced doggie yard. A great facility for four wonderful canines that all started new lives by being in a parking lot to meet their new humans! (Abby and Sadie were adopted from a Kroeger and a Walmart parking lot!)

During this recent visit to Lil Dove Ranch, Jamie and Tauna had their four pets out, freely running and playing all around the acres of the property. Anyone who knew Shelby and Sara will remember how much they loved to run and play. It was almost impossible to get a picture of both dogs when they weren't zipping all around the ranch. It was easy to see how much these four canines enjoyed the company of each other and their humans.

As much as our directors and volunteers love the animals that end up in the Shelter's care, it is never as good as these wonderful, unconditionally loving dogs having their own humans to love and care for them.

And, it's a wonderful experience for humans to know the joy of loving and caring for the most loyal friend they could ever have! ESAS is proud to be the "matchmaker" and celebrate each new family. It's a good thing!



Meet our Guests!

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Dory is 1 to 2 years old and a mixed wire-haired terrier. She is a sweetheart and is great with the other dogs.

Bobo is a limited edition mix. 2 to 3 years old. Loves to play. Very sweet. Gets along with most of the other dogs..



Dorian is 1 year old and probably a German Shepherd and / or Golden Retriever mix. He is really big, but his heart is just as big. He is a real sweetheart who needs room to run and play and be able to burn off some energy.