



COMPASSION IN ACTION



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



Working for an essential business like the SPCA Serving Erie County during a worldwide pandemic brought on challenges and opportunities unlike any we could have ever imagined. With the unknown demand of the number of pets who would need to be rehomed because of COVID-19, we had to plan for the worst.

Personal protective equipment in those early days was as scarce as toilet paper, and as elective surgeries in human medicine were postponed, the SPCA's services such as spay and neuter surgeries were also halted temporarily while we came to grasp with the scope of what we were living through.

Fortunately, as always, our team stepped up and rose to the challenge. Animals who were not ready for adoption went into foster homes while the public stepped up and adopted dogs and cats, so our shelter was mostly empty. For people who suddenly found themselves working from home, serving as a supplemental schoolteacher for their kids, or generally avoiding crowds, having a new dog or cat at home made life better.

We soon found ourselves learning about Zoom and the other technology options that allowed us to work effectively whether in the shelter or from home. Our humane education programs for children, including tours of the SPCA, went completely virtual.

During this time, we learned how to adopt out animals and admit new ones safely while socially distancing. Our officers continued to check on the well-being of animals in our community and learned to navigate the changes in the court system during

COVID-19. Our team learned to take on even more with most of our 2,000 volunteers unable to be in the building and some of their co-workers working remotely. We took whatever time we could to attend webinars on COVID-19 and we stayed on top of the changes at the state and county levels for the guidance to give to our staff to keep everyone safe.

As we closed out 2020, we were able to overcome obstacles we could not have foreseen at the year's beginning. We continued to fulfill our mission through these tough times.

Pets were adopted, injured and sick wildlife were helped, farm animals were protected, cruelty cases were investigated, children were educated, pet owners accessed veterinary care in the Lipsey Clinic, and our communications team kept the public informed.

An important reason for why we never stopped is truly because of people like you. Your support did not stop. In fact, many of you made your largest single gift this year. You know the importance of the work we do that you all make possible. I am always humbled and thankful for the support shown by thousands of you who have stood by us year after year. This year you truly made all the work we did possible and we will be forever grateful.

Gary Willoughby II
President & CEO





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Twitter: @YourSPCA
Instagram: @eriecountyspca

HOURS AND LOCATIONS

300 Harlem Road,
West Seneca, NY 14224

Please visit YourSPCA.org
for current adoption hours.

The SPCA Serving Erie County
is proud to be a Purina Shelter
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MISSION

At the SPCA Serving Erie County, our mission is to create a more humane community through education; rescuing, protecting, and enhancing the lives of animals; and nurturing the bond between animals and people.

The SPCA Serving Erie County is not affiliated financially in any way with any other animal agency — including the Niagara County SPCA, the ASPCA, or any other humane society or animal welfare group. Our protocols, policies, and procedures are unique to this organization, a completely independent humane society that does not receive any city, county, state, or federal tax dollars. The important programs and services of the SPCA Serving Erie County are possible only due to the caring people and organizations that support us.



BEHAVIOR AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT HAS **BIG THINGS IN THE WORKS!**

BY DIRECTOR OF BEHAVIOR AND RESEARCH MIRANDA WORKMAN

In August, the SPCA Serving Erie County restructured the behavior team that monitors the behavioral welfare of the animals in our care. I am leading the new Behavior and Research Department! I have exciting plans for this new, all-species department! The team is focused on using evidence-based, progressive animal behavior and sheltering research to improve the lives of all species that find their way to the SPCA!

I hold several behavior and training certifications from multiple certifying organizations, a master's degree in Anthrozoology from Canisius College, and I am months away from completing my PhD in Sociology at SUNY Buffalo with a focus on the human-animal-environment relationship. I am on the Animals and Society Council for the American Sociological Association and I'm the Lead Trainer-Mentor and Program Developer for Cat Pawsitive — a program I spearheaded along with Jackson Galaxy and GreaterGood.org.

Joining me on the team are Danielle Galbraith and Dana Widmer. Danielle is the Behavior Assistant — Canine Lead who is charged with the assessment, enrichment, behavior modification, and adoption matching for the dogs at the SPCA. Danielle recently completed her bachelor's degrees in Animal Behavior, Ecology and Conservation, and Psychology. She did her honor's thesis on dog playgroups in shelters, so we all know she brings a fresh perspective to our dog-focused programs!

More recently, Dana Widmer joined the behavior team as the Behavior Assistant — Feline Lead. Dana brings nearly 25 years' experience in sheltering focused on cats. She has extensive experience with adoption counseling, alternative placement programs, and cat training! She led a team at her former shelter in the implementation of the Cat Pawsitive program. We are excited that she is bringing a career's worth of experience to the SPCA!

This team has already experienced amazing success! Garth, a large, adolescent pitbull mix came to us with poor social skills. Danielle worked on his behavior challenges and found him a wonderful home with dedicated people who loved his youthful enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Danielle worked with Patrick, the blind sheltie mix who loved playgroup with other small dogs. Dana focused on Tigger the cat who disliked handling after having necessary eye surgery but loved treats! She taught him how to "high five" and "sit pretty," he won over his new family with his intelligence. I have focused on the other animals available for adoption and have worked with snakes, iguanas, ferrets, rats, and rabbits in just a few short months here — including a ferret meet and greet that was caught on camera!

THESE LITTLE PIGGIES WENT HOME!

**BY EDUCATIONAL FARM DIRECTOR SHEILA FOSS
AND ASSISTANT FARM MANAGER PATRICIA BURG**

Despite COVID-19, life down on the farm continued to trundle along. One of our upward ticking trends again are Miniature Pigs. In 2020, we admitted several pet pigs needing new homes and counseled current and potential pig owners on an array of topics such as behavior, housing, nutrition, and proper veterinary care. Some of the counseling helped owners to keep their pet pigs and they didn't need to surrender them to us, which was a great outcome! We have been listed on Veterinary Information Network as consultants for assisting veterinarians with their pet pig concerns and questions and we assisted with weight loss programs and some management issues for some of them.

It often takes a lot of care, expenses, and time to get these pigs ready to look for new homes as they are frequently lacking basic care, such as spaying and neutering, dental care, parasite treatments, hoof care, and vaccinations.

In early 2020, we had a chubby pig named Charlotte admitted who couldn't be safely spayed until she had slimmed down a bit, which took about four months. Anesthesia is

tricky in pigs and being overweight can cause complications.

Right after Charlotte was adopted, we admitted an extremely emaciated miniature pig who was left in an abandoned apartment building and we had to carefully put weight on her so we could spay her, in addition to treating her for a host of other maladies. We named her Sophie and she helped teach some fourth-year veterinary students from Lincoln Memorial University a bit about miniature pig medical procedures before she found her new home.

Carlton, now known as Kevin, came to us already neutered, but with no vaccination history and a terrible case of mange. He was living in a town where it's illegal to have pigs as pets, another frequent problem we run into. Kevin, who also turned out to be deaf, was adopted to a farm where he has a variety of new barn-mates to keep him company.

It gives us great satisfaction to help these little pigs, whether it is to try to keep them in their current homes or to find them a new family to love them!



LOOKING FORWARD



*Message from Board
Chairperson, **Julie
Desmond Schechter***

Like everyone else, I'm really looking forward to starting anew in 2021!

That being said, I'm still extremely proud that the SPCA Serving Erie County continued to uphold our mission and accomplished so much throughout this crazy year. That's in large part due to the hard work of our incredible staff, who persevered and pivoted, regardless of the changes that came our way.

Of course, our donors also came through with flying colors in 2020! Even with everything being virtual or different, we can always count on your support.

Thank you all so much.

Julie Desmond Schechter



ADAPTING TO OUR NEW REALITY: HUMANE EDUCATION GOES VIRTUAL!

BY HUMANE EDUCATION DIRECTOR CHRISTINE DAVIS

The 2019 - 2020 school year was a rollercoaster! At the start of the year, we focused on expanding our community engagement efforts with new partners so we could deliver our programs to a wider audience. It wasn't uncommon to have multiple programs happening at least six times a week! We started several new programs, and we began to participate in Saturday Academies in Buffalo Public Schools.

After COVID-19 hit, we had to make quick changes. Between March and June, we cancelled 203 programs and our extremely popular summer camp. We re-invented programs so families and students could participate at home.

With a lot of support from our partners, nearly all the programs we ran prior to the pandemic have continued virtually! Between May and September, we hosted our virtual summer camp and we offered 80 virtual program experiences with more than 1,000 participants.

Who knows how long this stretch of at-home programs will last? What we do know though, is that whatever the future holds, our team will be ready to meet the needs of our partners and provide high quality experiences that foster healthy relationships between people and animals!

ARE YOU FELINE DOGGONE LUCKY?

Take a chance in our Annual Raffle presented by Mercantile Adjustment Bureau.

First prize: \$2,500

Second prize: \$1,000

Third prize: \$500

1 ticket: \$10 | 3 tickets: \$25

Purchase your tickets on YourSPCA.org or call Caitlin at 716-875-7360 ext. 230.

Raffle sales will take place from February 8 to March 22. Winners will be announced on a live Facebook video on March 22!



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2020'S SUPER SENIORS

BY ADOPTIONS SUPERVISOR KRISSI MIRANDA

I am often asked about my favorite adoption stories, but to be honest, any time an animal finds a home is a reason to celebrate! In 2020, the SPCA adopted out more than 4,000 animals!

Some of last year's most heartwarming adoptions were the senior animal adoptions. Seventy-nine dogs who were older than eight and 76 cats who were older than ten were adopted! These numbers include five (yes — FIVE!) 15-year-old dogs and some super senior pairs!

One such pair was Rusty and Rosie. This sweet set of canines didn't have to wait long for a new home to call their own. Rusty and Rosie's new owners say, "Rusty and Rosie have been such a great addition to our family. We know we hit the jackpot with the two of them." They went on to say that they hope seeing how happy Rusty and Rosie are will convince someone else to give senior pets a second chance.

Velvet and Tigger, two cats, were both 16 when they came to us in August and again, it didn't take them long to be adopted! Their new family couldn't be happier that they were chosen by this dynamic duo. Their new owners said, "Adopting them was one of the best things we've done. Since coming home, they have settled in well. When they're not napping on the couch, napping in a window, or napping in a ray of sunshine, it's all about play time and cuddles."

Although last year brought challenges, Rusty, Rosie, Velvet, Tigger, along with the other 4,000 adopted pets, think 2020 was the best year yet!



FOSTER CATS FIND PERFECT NEW HOMES

BY ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR HILARY LEMPERLE

2020 was challenging for everyone. Not only were people tasked with making changes to their daily lives, but the animals that were in shelters at the beginning of the pandemic had to adapt to changes, too. The SPCA had a few cats who posed an even bigger challenge to get into foster homes at the beginning of the pandemic because of their behaviors. Our extraordinary foster parents accepted the challenge and brought these cats into their homes!

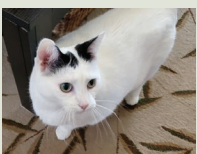
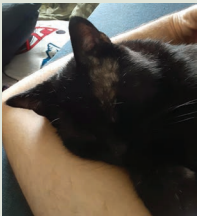
Aussie, a 4-year-old cat was seized from a home in December 2019 after

being abandoned. She did not adapt well to shelter life and would hiss and swat at staff and volunteers. Our volunteers spent time reading, eating, talking, and playing with Aussie; however, her progress was very slow. The call was issued that Aussie needed a foster home, and that call was answered by the married pair of AdvoCATS, Rich and Susan Paulson! Aussie

flourished with the Paulsons and Aussie ended up finding her forever home with them! As Susan said, "We just LOVE her. She makes us laugh every day and she's so sweet and loving!"

Chloe, a 9-year-old cat was losing everything she knew because her owner was sick and was unable to care for her. The heartbreaking decision was made to surrender her, and Chloe came to the SPCA scared and she was unable to be handled in December 2019. Like Aussie, Chloe needed a foster home, and, again, our foster parents reached out to help care for her. Mary Berhalter took Chloe in and showed Chloe the love she desperately needed. After a few months, Chloe was ready for adoption from Mary's home.

Mary Carmichael knew she was looking for a special companion and contacted Mary Berhalter to get information about Chloe. On July 7, 2020, Chloe found her permanent home with Mary Carmichael! Mary says, "The SPCA made one of the best adoptions ever possible and Chloe is truly a blessing in my life. Thank you, SPCA."



2020 BY THE NUMBERS



ADOPTIONS

Total adoptions:
4,177

Total cats:
2,540

Total dogs:
1,030

Total other animals:
607



EDUCATIONAL FARM

Total farm animals adopted: **72**



OUTREACH

The Pet Pantry distributed over **2,800** pounds of dry pet food, more than **900** cans of pet food, and **150+** other pet supplies.



ADMISSIONS

Dogs: **2,021** Cats: **3,940**

Other animals (excludes farm animals):
627



HUMANE EDUCATION

Scout Tours participants

381

Family programs participants

375

School program participants

1,859

Community program participants

1,549



LIPSEY CLINIC

Services provided to owned pets

Spays:

54

Neuters:

89

Other surgeries:

15



FOSTER CARE

Total number of animals who spent time in foster care:

1,677

Foster homes:

368

NEW foster homes:

85



TRANSPORTS

Dogs: **647** Cats: **314**

Other animals: **99**



VETERINARY DEPARTMENT

Services provided to shelter pets

Spays:

1,236

Neuters:

1,317

Yelp for Help patients:

740

Other surgeries:

399



INVESTIGATIONS

Officers responded to **1,254** cruelty calls and **1,634** rescue calls. This resulted in **1,183** domestic animals and **689** wild animals brought to the SPCA by officers!



BEHAVIOR AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Since September 1, the team worked with: Nearly **1,000** cats, **500+** dogs, **30+** rabbits, different species, and **dozens** of small mammals!



WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Animal intake:

3,386

Phone calls:

13,005



VOLUNTEERS

Active volunteers:

348

Hours logged in 2020:

Over 24,000

In March 2020, the SPCA had **1,998** active volunteers logging **4,500+** hours each month. When the pandemic hit, we made the difficult decision to temporarily inactivate our entire volunteer team to keep everyone safe while we adjusted our operations. **This was the first time in the SPCA's history that volunteers were not a part of daily operations.**

SPCA PACK LEADERS

The SPCA Serving Erie County is fortunate to have the support of thousands of compassionate, caring donors ... individuals and organizations who believe in our mission and recognize the SPCA as a valuable community asset. Their gifts sustain our day-to-day efforts on behalf of animals and work to ensure our future success. The SPCA Serving Erie County is grateful to all our supporters for generous contributions in 2020.

This list includes our Pack Leaders — those donors who gave gifts of \$1,000+ between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

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\$10,000+

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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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In loving remembrance of those donors who left a legacy gift to the SPCA during the year 2020:

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THE LIPSEY VETERINARY CLINIC IS OPEN!

BY VICE PRESIDENT OF VETERINARY SERVICES MELANIE RUSHFORTH

The Lipsey Veterinary Clinic reopened to the public in September, rolling out a refreshing approach to affordable and accessible veterinary care. With a motivated and professional team, the clinic is proud to serve the community in innovative and new ways.

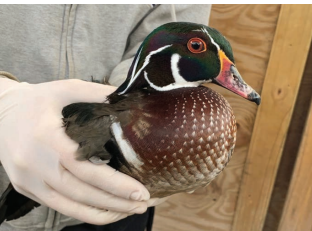
The clinic is focused on client experience as much as we are quality care. In a year where days ran together, and many people had to turn their homes into offices and schools, we recognize that accessibility to information is key and time is precious. New to the client experience are online appointment requests. Customers can request an appointment online and communicate and confirm (and even offer crucial information about the pet in need of care) all electronically.

Another big step is our ability to conduct virtual veterinary appointments. While a virtual appointment may not be right for every situation, it works for many others (follow-up appointments, medication review, etc.). Our clinic veterinarian can communicate with you and use video technology to assess your pet's issue. This was particularly beneficial during times of quarantine and for clients who experience transportation barriers.

Finally, the Lipsey Veterinary Clinic has partnered with Vet Billing to offer payment and savings plans for clients who may need a more costly procedure than a typical wellness visit. This program is created

to be mindful of a household budget, while striving to get the pet the medical care they need.

The team at the Lipsey Veterinary Clinic strongly believes that affordable should never mean substandard care. When high-quality, personalized care can be accessed in several ways that meet the needs of our human clients, we are confident that our furry clients will live longer and healthier lives. We are proud to provide the pets of Western New York with compassionate and professional veterinary services.



WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT HELPED MORE ANIMALS THAN EVER!

BY WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR BARBARA HANEY

It never ceases to amaze me how adaptable and nimble our Wildlife Department is. When COVID-19 hit our world, it was the beginning of spring. Every year our department prepares for an onslaught of calls from the public as they see the explosion of nature that happens as daylight increases and our world gets greener. This spring we did not know how we were going to do it, but we knew that we'd do the best we could.

Although we had to change all the ways in which we ran our hospital, including decreasing our bevy of volunteers from 150 to 0 and then slowly adding up to 35 volunteers, we continued to provide amazing care to our wild patients. In fact, we did more with less. We had less

volunteer help, but we helped more animals than ever before!

There was the pin surgery on the wing of the Harrier Hawk, the pin surgery in the leg of a Green Heron, a Herring Gull with botulism, the Mallard with a broken leg, numerous orphaned wood ducks, an orphaned Merlin that was re-nested with a foster family, and so many more! I can't forget the many orphans including 39 gosling babies, 100 mallard babies, and 765 orphaned cottontails.

Taking care of nature and her wildlife gave our department purpose and pride during a very difficult year. We are honored to care for those animals that in many instances would never get a second chance!