



Impact Report

2020





Photo by Brynda Ivan

from our Board President **Overcoming Adversity**

Since 1974, Geauga Humane Society's Rescue Village has helped tens of thousands of people and animals in need. From abandoned kittens left out in the cold to large-scale hoarding cases, we have proven that our feet are firmly planted in our mission and our roots run deep and wide.

In a year like no other, our community showed us resilience and humanity in the face of major adversity. This community consists of our donors, adopters, volunteers, local and national businesses, agency partners, our children and seniors, and everyone in between. 2020 showed us that together we are stronger, even in the worst of times.

When we closed our doors in mid-March, along with other shelters nationwide, we decided to clear the shelter. It only took a single day to place over seventy animals into foster homes, and through COVID, our foster base grew from 135 to 201 families! Our community was ready, willing, and able to help, and our staff was laser-focused on devising immediate action plans and implementing necessary changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought an increased demand for adoptable animals as people were spending more time at

home. We responded by offering more foster-to-adopt opportunities which helped us learn more about how individual animals would behave in a home environment. This program allows families to learn if a particular animal is a good fit for their home prior to committing to adoption. In 2020 forty-six foster-to-adopt pairings resulted in permanent adoptions.

Reducing our shelter capacity by 50% enabled our skeleton crew to focus their efforts on sick, injured, and abandoned animals. We were also able to provide assistance to people in dire situations due to economic or health-related issues when they had no other options. Our programs were restructured to allow for socially distanced interactions between our staff and the public. Our adoption program became virtual, our TNR program became contactless, and everything that we did kept the safety of the public and our staff at the top of mind.

Amidst the chaos, Rescue Village became an *animal resource center*, providing people in need with assistance, resources, and advice. Our staff helped those having behavior issues with their pets and provided the tools needed to help keep their pets at

home rather than giving them up.

Our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program that spays and neuters outdoor, community cats achieved a record in 2020, sterilizing over 1,000 community cats, the most since the inception of the program in 2008! We doubled our service capacity, offering TNR two days a week for two months, in response to the overwhelming need for assistance throughout Geauga County and beyond – greatly reducing pet overpopulation and suffering.

This community stepped forward like never before, and together we became part of the solution. Most of all, we were reminded that with teamwork, courage, and dedication, we can weather any storm, no matter what comes.

We are immensely grateful for your support of, and concern for, the animals. We look forward to seeing all that we will accomplish next as we stay focused, practice resilience, and work diligently to carry out our mission to save more lives by acting on behalf of animals and inspiring people to build a more humane community.

Kathy Leavenworth

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Thank you!

Your support is having a positive impact on people and animals in Northeast Ohio.

The Impact of our 656 Volunteers

68,525 
Hours volunteered in 2020

2020 Active Foster Homes

201* 

* This number does not include Foster-to-Adopt (FTA) homes.

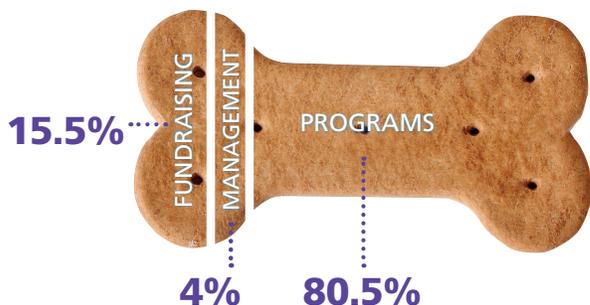
2020 Animal Intake

1,310 
677 Cats
537 Dogs
48 Barn Animals
48 Small Animals

2020 Animal Adoptions

1,211 
617 Cats
524 Dogs
34 Barn Animals
36 Small Animals

2020 Functional Expenses Breakdown*



EXPENSES	
Programs	\$1,996,419
Fundraising	\$ 388,189
Management	\$ 96,827
TOTAL	\$2,481,435

*These financials are unaudited. For our audited financial statements and 990s, please visit: www.rescuevillage.org/financials

Live Release Rate

97.1% 
Dogs & Cats Combined

2020 Humane Law Enforcement

449 

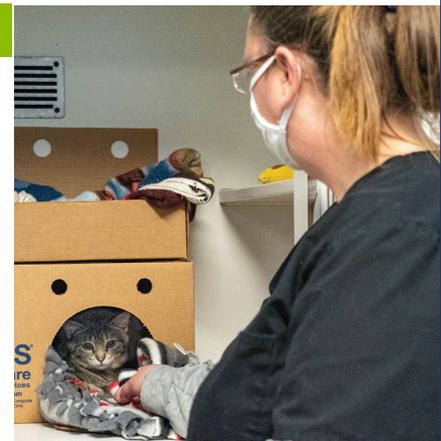
Number of Humane Law Complaints Investigated

2020 Spay/Neuter Surgeries

1,250 
Spay/Neuter Surgeries

2020 Pet Food Pantry

12,000 
Pounds of food provided to families in need



Community + Volunteers and Staff = Teamwork!

We were first made aware of Otto's plight when our humane agent received a call from a concerned citizen who reported a loose dog in Amish country that was stuck in a leg-hold trap. Upon further investigation, our humane agent learned that the dog's owner was aware that Otto was in trouble but had been unable to catch him. The owner stated that Otto had been caught in the trap for about one week and, despite their many attempts to lure Otto to them, he would run off into the fields every time they came near him.

Trained to capture fearful dogs that may be aggressive, especially when injured, our humane agent went to work and was able to successfully catch the frightened little pup. With Otto safe in our humane vehicle, his owner agreed to turn the dog over to Rescue Village, and he was rushed to the shelter for immediate medical treatment.

Otto was fortunate that he didn't sustain life-threatening injuries, however, he did have two toes amputated and had to wear a cone so he couldn't chew at his bandages. During his recovery, staff gave Otto a room of his own in which to relax and to begin to learn to trust people. He had cozy bedding, good food, lots of treat-filled Kongs, and short walks outside. We thought he was settling in quite nicely. He had become very receptive to love from the staff and volunteers . . . until he escaped!

Never in the history of Rescue Village

have we had a dog break out of the shelter. Thanks to our security cameras, we were able to see exactly what happened. After breaking out of his private room, Otto jumped up, put his paws on the handle of one door and then the other, until one opened and off he went!

Worried that he might get caught in the brush while wearing that big cone, we began to post on social media and Rescue Village's Lost and Found page. Soon calls began to pour in with sightings of Otto – he was getting farther and farther away from us. The entire community was on the look-out, and we prayed for a positive outcome to Otto's great getaway. Staff set hidden traps and would drive through neighborhoods where he was spotted, and finally, after about two weeks, Otto was caught.

Knowing the shelter was not an ideal place for Otto, we sent him to a loving foster family that knew all about this little escape artist's special talents. He spent two weeks there, during which time they fell in love and ultimately decided to adopt him. "Everyone loves him," says Pamela, his adoptive mom. "He bounces around the neighborhood like a bunny rabbit and just loves all the attention he gets from our neighbors."

Otto could not have found a better family to spend the rest of his life with, and we could not be happier for him. Otto's story reminds us of the importance of community coming together to help one another.



Otto and his new mom Pamela



Otto — now wearing a Whistle Tracker (GPS)

A Tiny Ambassador for Community Cats

Walter, a four-week-old kitten, was found outdoors with several siblings. They had been abandoned by their mother and were freezing, malnourished, and Walter had an extremely severe eye infection. His eye



Walter—post-surgery and feeling stronger

was swollen and bulging from the socket. Despite our medical team's best effort to save his eye, it had to be removed. Walter and his siblings went to foster care until they were healthy enough to be put up for adoption.

Sadly, one of his siblings did not survive, but Walter was a fighter. Even though he had a long way to go when he first came to Rescue Village, Walter's story serves as a reminder that there are at-risk animals struggling for survival every single day. When he arrived at Rescue Village, Walter had only a matter of days to live. Without receiving the critical, immediate care and attention that he so desperately needed, Walter's story would have ended way too soon.

Unwanted litters of kittens like

Walter and his siblings are born every day. Rescue Village's Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program exists to reduce pet overpopulation and to prevent thousands of unwanted, stray cats from being born each year. The TNR program was modified with COVID protocols to ensure forms and clear instructions were available online and that social-distancing could be guaranteed by staging curb-side drop-off and pick-up. For two months, a second TNR day was scheduled to accommodate the long waiting list and to help other neighboring counties. We are proud to have been able to continue to serve our community animals in the wake of the pandemic and achieve an all-time record high for our TNR program of over 1,000 cats sterilized in 2020!