All hands & hearts on board

It’s any given Saturday…welcome to Rescue Village. You’ve decided that this is the day to adopt a new best friend. First stop, town square, the Rescue Village lobby.

Wow, it’s busy; people are everywhere and you’re antsy to see who’s up for adoption. A volunteer greeter gets you started by heading you in the right direction ~ how to fill out adoption questionnaires, where different adoption areas are located, whom to speak with if you want to have a meet-and-greet with an animal.

The Welcome Desk volunteers are answering phones, checking people in and out, answering questions and holding down the fort. There are 25+ people who do this unpaid volunteer labor of love. At times you see their heads are spinning. Yet, they stay focused and even keep their sense of humor. Together with staff, they work to make sure that you have a wonderful experience at “the Village.”

Now and then there’s a sad or tense moment…a story of a lost dog…a woman losing her home and having to give up her cats. Yet, there are more times of joy, like when Holly went home after five months waiting, or when everyone got to hold one of the 12 pups who came to RV after being abandoned in a box.

Our staff anchors daily life at the shelter and makes sure that we stay healthy, safe, clean and make great adoption matches. Volunteer adoption counselor assistants help get our furry friends homes and, often, they can see the greatness of every animal more than anyone else.

Not far from the lobby, volunteers are doing laundry, helping with kids’ camps, sending out event invitations, or folding surgical packs for our spay/neuter programs.

Walking along the dog pavilion to see Max but you might have to wait for just a minute because a volunteer is giving Max his 3rd walk of the day. And in Marino’s Cool Cat Café adoption room, a volunteer knows everything about every single cat, including what their favorite toy is and whether they like to get on your lap or are a diva.

Rescue Village is large enough to make a big impact and small enough that we know every animal’s name and can help you have a meaningful and personalized experience. So many moving pieces and parts, which would come to standstill without staff and an army of volunteers, over 450 strong, whose hearts (and minds) are 100% committed to saving animals.
The other day a dear friend, Gai Russo, stopped by my office to say hello. Gai volunteers at Rescue Village and earned the Humanitarian of the Year Award for 2011. She is a whirlwind of energy and a constant advocate for animals. Her dog, Posey, shares her exuberance. Gai is also a weather vane for what’s happening in our community. I’m sure each of you knows someone who is a “go to” person to find out “what’s up?”

My daily life as director of Rescue Village tells me that a lot is up! And as Gai and I scan what’s happening, we have a strong sense that we are in the midst of some historic changes when it comes to animal welfare. Our community, in Geauga, the Chagrin Valley, Northeast Ohio and beyond is thirsty for change.

In February, Ohio ended breed specific legislation at a state level so that vicious dog laws would be applied to individual dogs versus specific breeds. The movement to stop puppy mills and dog auctions moved forward. Responsible rescue organizations and humane societies are working together more than ever. The winds of change are not stopping there. Many regional leaders, including Rescue Village, the Akron Area Humane Society/Pawsabilities, the Cleveland APL, Lake Humane Society, Portage APL, Friendship APL, PAWS (Public Animal Welfare) of Cleveland, and the Medina SPCA are collaborating to erect a humane vision that will engage the public’s passion for progressive life-saving approaches.

At Rescue Village this means acting together to increase adoptions in a big way. Our adult dog foster network is getting traction. We are expanding and adopting puppies like crazy. With the 2012 kitten season underway, the kitten “assembly line” is in full swing. Friends of the Rescue Village Barn is helping to get horses and farm animals adopted more quickly.

Life at the shelter is forward-looking and fast-paced. The animated discussion I’m having with Gai is not about to slow down. With every step forward, we are figuring out how to go further.

Gai tells me there is a saying she would like to share, “If you suspend disbelief, everything is possible.” Perfect! Without that spirit we would not be on the cusp of change. Without that spirit our community would not have a strong voice. But, with that spirit, we can soar. Here’s what I have in mind: bringing our larger community together to establish Northeast Ohio as a model community for saving animals lives. Possible? I firmly believe it is!
A Community Based Solution for Community Cats: TNR

Community cats are unowned, stray, free-roaming cats. They are often unsocialized (feral) and unadoptable in a shelter setting. But let’s not mistake these cats as homeless. They do have a home….it’s outside.

Perhaps a neighbor is leaving food out for them or providing them with shelter in their garage or barn.

As a humane community we recognize the need to prevent the births of unwanted kittens and to improve the overall health and well-being of these stray, free-roaming cats. Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) programs are an effective and humane way to confront the problem of cat overpopulation.

We offer the CatSmart TNR program for feral and free-roaming community cats. How does it work? Cats are humanely trapped by concerned citizens and brought to the shelter on Wednesdays and Fridays. Then the cats are spayed or neutered, vaccinated against common feline viruses and rabies, and their left ear is tipped as universal identification that they have already been spayed/neutered. The cats are transported by their caregiver back to where they were found and released. TNR days are very hectic, but they are some of the most rewarding. We are making a difference in the lives of these animals and helping our larger community as well.

Kitten Fever
by Erin Hawes

I bet you thought that there were only four seasons in a year. Here at Rescue Village, there are five. April through December is known as “Kitten Season.” We are thankful to have an amazing crew of Foster Families who help us by taking in kittens and giving them love and socialization until they are big enough to go up for adoption.

In 2011, we took in 673 kittens, as opposed to 475 in 2010. As part of our mission, we believe in reducing pet overpopulation. We offer a myriad of spay/neuter programs to help. Among the programs we offer is Catsmart TNR, for free roaming and feral cats in Geauga County. We also have a partnership with PetFix to help provide low cost spay/neuter services to low income families in Northeast Ohio. Another amazing program we offer is Fix it in the Farmland, which takes spay/neuter services to Amish and low income families in rural Geauga County.

Help us end pet overpopulation by telling your family and friends about getting their pets spayed/neutered.
Humane Education

The 2012 Summer Camp Season kicks off on June 11 and will conclude on August 17. The 7 weeks of camps were all filled by February 2 and the waiting list is long! All are looking forward to the Gathering Place Puppy Camp being held from July 30 – August 3.

Education Wish list:
- Large pieces of quality colorful fleece
- 36” wooden dowels (3/16) and (1/4)
- Spools of narrow ribbon
- Wheat Flour
- Dog and Cat Magazines
- Large colored sheets of poster board
- Colorful rolls of duct tape
- Magic markers and pencils
- Sharp Scissors (a couple of left-handed scissors also)

Barn Update

Friends of the Rescue Village Barn is off to a great start. This lively committee is already making a difference by connecting RV to discounted hay and equine care, a growing list of transport helpers and new openings for financial support.

Barn Wish List:

Gift cards to the following feed and tack stores:
- Tractor Supply Company
  (locations in Middlefield and Chardon)
- Western Reserve Farm Cooperative
  (locations in Munson and Middlefield)
- Schneider’s Tack shop in Bainbridge
- Big Dee’s Tack shop in Streetsboro

Larger items that we are looking to have donated, or have monetary donations made towards the purchase of:
- Hay elevator to more easily accommodate large deliveries of hay
- Large round pen for the exercise of horses
- Bulk bedding – wood shavings by the bag or pallet or hay by the bale
- Donation of any high quality hay - second cutting preferred
- A used or new two-horse trailer
The Gadomski Family adopted Ace this summer from Rescue Village. The family really wanted to rescue a dog, and their son, Andrew, had his heart set on a Beagle.

They had heard great things about Rescue Village and stopped by on their way home one day and found a one year old Beagle mix at the shelter. He was a friendly and energetic young dog but still gentle enough to play with their younger daughter, Liz. He was the perfect fit!

They have 5 acres, and installed an Invisible Fence so that Ace could have the freedom to run and enjoy it all, but still stay safe in his yard. He loves to be active and his favorite outdoor activities include playing frisbee and tugging his chew rope. This winter he loved to catch snowballs too!

While this is the first family dog, they also have another pet.

Fix It in the Farmland

Rolling farmland, big bales of hay and Amish horses and buggies mark the landscape of rural Geauga County. Look a little closer and you will see that over 20 times a year Rescue Village and the big white Petfix mobile spay/neuter van set up shop and hold clinics at Amish farms and local businesses. The program is called Fix It in the Farmland and it is the only program of its kind in the United States.

Bringing low-cost spay/neuter services to Amish and low-income residents of rural Geauga was once a dream that many people thought was impossible to achieve.

Now, four years later, our community partners, including Amish farmers, have embraced Fix It as an essential part of their community. Our new friends have helped in many ways — from setting up clinic locations to scheduling clients and solving communications challenges since the Amish rarely have phones.

The 2012 program is well underway and a team of over 20 volunteers led by Fix It Coordinator Kay Rosaletti is checking in clients and making sure all runs well. It never stops amazing us as people arrive with their pets in the early morning by Amish taxi, buggy and even on foot. By the end of this year we will have fixed over 1600 animals since 2008. Suspend disbelief, and everything is possible!

The Gadomski family also has a rabbit that gets along with him surprisingly well! Ace, who will be two years old this summer, is happy in his new home and loves the freedom of being able to play in his big yard with his family.
Lewis

Lewis came to Rescue Village early last year with his “brother” Clark. They were both shy but Clark came out of his shell while Lewis remained very shy and would hide most of the time. So I decided to foster Lewis to help him find his confidence and courage. He’s very sweet and gentle and did well in foster over the summer but he’s naturally a very reserved fellow so I knew he would never be outgoing, especially in a shelter situation. But I brought him back hoping the right person would come in and see him. As expected, he usually hid in his box and was overlooked by potential adopters. In November, I lost one of my older cats. While I wasn’t planning to replace her so quickly, I soon realized that Lewis needed me. I decided that if anyone could fit into my cat family of a 19-year old and another shy Rescue Village alum, it would be unassuming Lewis. He seemed to know right away that, this time, he was home for good and every day he relaxes and becomes a tiny bit bolder. As I write this now, I hear him running up and down my hall, playing!

-Tami Thurman

Bubbles (now Silver)

It was love at first sight when I saw Bubbles on the RV website. I love birds and am very proud to now own Bubbles. Every morning, I feed her a cracker, so she gets very excited when she sees me coming. She absolutely loves to listen to jazz with me, and she even sings along! Years ago I had a whiteface cockatiel and I am so happy to have another one in my life.

-Lawrence

Moochie

When I saw the adorable picture of Moochie (then Mushi) on Facebook and read the plea from Rescue Village to find a family for her that weekend, I knew the cute seven-year-old Shar-pei/Labrador mix belonged in our household. Even though she was timid at first, Moochie soon adjusted to her new surroundings and made friends with her “brothers and sister,” Murphy (Rottweiler/Retriever mix), Milton (Border Collie), and Molly (Black Lab). She is extremely happy and comfortable in our home and enjoys pulling every toy out of her toy box each day! Moochie truly is a sweetie and loves her new family.

-Nicole

“While Mushi was with us, she was sad and withdrawn, so it’s wonderful that a sweet girl like her has found the place she was waiting so patiently for.” - Barnee Woolf, Dog Behavior Coordinator
**Tony C.**

Tony C. couldn’t be doing better. After just a few days we’re discovering his true identity... an affection sponge. He will take as much as we can give and just wants more. After lengthy sessions, he will still come up to us as we pass by his pen and stretch up to us then put his nose down to the ground hopeful of more petting.

Catherine was the first to be able to pick him up without complaint and he likes being in her lap. You can see him taking a rest in this picture. I can pick him up and carry him around now as well, though it takes some comforting. But we’re becoming buddies too. If I get down to his level he enjoys bumping noses with me then puts his head beneath my chin and waits to be petted.

He’s also an explorer and a clever one at that. He knows when we block areas off that he has seen and wants to get to, and he’ll stand at the barrier and stomp at us. And he has a naughty streak a mile wide.

- John & Catherine

---

**Year of the Little Critter**

Rescue Village takes in lots of dogs and cats every year. However, we must not forget about the Little Critters that come through our door. They too have a voice and every day the staff is meeting their specials needs. We have had our fair share of rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, rats, ferrets, and of course hamsters. “Cinderella” was part of “Hamster-palooza,” an event where we featured eight hamsters, all who were surrendered to us at once. Fortunately, Hamster-palooza was a huge success and seven out of eight hamsters were adopted (The eighth hamster, Peanut, currently resides in Program Coordinator, Erin Hawes’ office!). So the next time you come into our shelter, don’t overlook the lovable Little Critters.

*Cinderella, adopted at Hamster-palooza*
events

An Evening by the Falls,
a party to benefit the animals of Rescue Village

Presented by Black Lab Corporation

We had anticipated cold and snowy weather for “An Evening by the Falls.” But this was not an ordinary winter and the 19th was not an ordinary Sunday. Inside Jeykll’s the “weather” was perfect for a night devoted to helping the shelter animals at Rescue Village. The place was packed and what a fine party it was!

Long-time friends and new friends came together to share a great space, great food, great music – all for a great cause. Our presenting sponsor, Black Lab Corp., along with Herschman Architects, Pawsome Pets, and Invisible Fence, made the evening possible. Music was provided by Kerry and Final Touch Entertainment.

“An Evening by the Falls” rounded off a weekend of wonderful adoptions at Rescue Village. And, after all, this was a party with a purpose. We thank every one of our guests, sponsors and volunteers for your generosity and spirit.

Save the Date…

For the fifth annual Doggone Purrrfect Night

Presented by Sylvia Oliver and O’Brien Law Firm LLC

Saturday, June 23, 2012 at Rescue Village

Please join us for one of the Chagrin Valley’s favorite summer parties!

Doggone Purrrfect Night is a truly special evening—a wonderful way to support the animals of Rescue Village while enjoying friends, delicious dinner and drink, silent auction and great music all in the comfortably elegant atmosphere of “The Big White Tent.” This year’s event will have a Carribean flair. Please don’t wait to reserve your tickets—last year’s event sold out early!

440.338.4819 ext. 19/www.geaugahumane.org
Geauga Humane Society’s

**Woofstock 2012**

**Walk. Play. Fundraise.**

**Save the Date**

September 23, 2012 • 9am – 3pm • 10am One-Mile Dog Walk

The Holden Arboretum • Rain or Shine • $5 parking per vehicle

**Who** You, Your Family, Your Friends & Your Dogs.

**What** Dog Walk, Canine Games, Dog Agility, Kids’ Games, Shopping & Live Music.

**Why** To help Geauga Humane Society raise funds so they can continue to care for thousands of homeless animals each year.

**How** Raise pledges between now and event day; win great prizes.

To register & to start collecting, go to [www.geaugahumane.org](http://www.geaugahumane.org).

All proceeds benefit Geauga Humane Society
In Memory of Companion Animals

Abby
Janet Fisher
Abby
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Annie
Patti Becker
Annie
Michael & Joan Henck
Bailey
Neil & Tiffany Mentzer
Lillian & Terry Mushrush
Bailey
Mike & Carol Kelner & Family
Bailey
Joe & Gail Panetta
Bandit
Karen Kelley
Barkley
Daniel & Amy Charney
Barney
Louis & Hela Boswell
Bear
Robert & Jane Garcia
Beardsley Johnson
Marcie Goodman
Bella
Jill Horvath
Benji & Baylee
Dennis & Colleen Dolgan
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Blanchi
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Biscuit
Larry Sennel
Bosun
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Mark & Laura Templar
Bridgett
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Brinkley
Carole Nazar
Buck
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Buddy
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Buddy
Robert & Chen DiCenzo
Caboat
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Cabri
Michael & Kelly Stefanek
Calico Cat
Alisha Noble
Cali
Wendy Lewis
Cali
Callie Ruo
Jeanne Everard
Calvin & Hobbes
Chuck & Diane Lutz
Candy
Don & Jean Lash
Casey
Irene O’Chiro
Casper
Ron & Vera Dombick
Chester
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Cheo Bauck
Sheri Alexander
CoLoa
Daniel & Amy Charney
Coues
Ollie & Sarah Danes
Cousin Ollie
William & Shirley Hamilton
Darcy
Camella Ciel
Dash
Daniel & Amy Charney
DeDe
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Docker
Robert Dubus & Timothy Leiden
Duster Animal
Joan Tadka
Dylan
The Licker Family
Elmo
The Rothchild-Weberg Family
Epic
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Frisco
Debbie & Aunt Do
Furry
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Georgina & Libby
Chuck & Karen Walden
Ghandi
Leann Schutz
Grace
Bob & Sheila Simpson
Gracie
Edward & Barbara Wells
Gracie
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Gus
Patricia Stephens
Harper Lee
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Hendrix
Gary & Nancy Parker
Lora Robintosh
Valerie & Jerry Stefanich
Hilary
Carlos & Roger Newberry
Hobo
Rachel Edwards
Hondo, Pluto, Molly, Casey, & Buddy
Laurey Anambrose
Hugo
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Idgy
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Jasmine Keba
Liz Lattemer
Jasper
Allen & Diane Sika
Jasper
Peter & Barbara Aronar
Jelly
Ros & Karen Embrescia
Jimmy & Sunday
Ken & Irene Kero
Joy
Dennis & Lola Meek
Julie
Robert Cimperman
Katie
Peggy Balbosky
Kendi
Jean & Bob Seljan
Kiki
David & Hedy Kolo
Lester
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Lincoln
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Lucy
The Rothchild-Weberg Family
Lucy
Nancy Kay
Lucy
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Maggie
Candice Cunningham
Michelle & Russell Olson
Max
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Max
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Max
Katharine Andrews
Meadow
Robert & Cathy Bloomfield
Mikey
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Missy
Carole Nazar
Mocha
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Mocha
Lisa Goodman
Molly
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Molly
Gina & Brett Patch
Moose
Linda & Gary Spinos
Muffin, Jenny, Fred & Oscar
Peter & Sue Danford
Murphy
Mary Ward
Neil & Trooper
Arlene & William Roberts
Nugget
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Oreo
Kathy Cordaro
Osa Cugini
Robert Cugini
Otis
Hope Brustein
Pandora
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Pattie
Carole Nazar
Paws
Gino & Amy Charney
Princess
The Herziz Family
Punchy
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Purri
Chip & Pat Kul
Quinncy
Rose Erwin
Rambo
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Riley
Marge Goodwin
Ripley
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Roosevelt
Ellen Ferrone
Rosie
James & Ruth Melluso
Rosie
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Roy
Marcie Goodman
Ruby
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Rusty
Ron & Deanna Cowan
Rusty & Tucker
Alan & Karen Hirth
Sadie
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Salty & Casey
Alan & Trudy Nanya
Samantha
Carole Nazar
Sambo, Kazimir, Babycakes,
& Pops
Ms. Shari Smith-Shemitz
Sarah
Pattie Faller
Scooter
Valerie & Jerry Stefanich
Shamrock
Carole Nazar
Shilo
Carole Nazar
Sierra
Ron & Vera Dombick
Smokey
Valerie & Jerry Stefanich
Smokey
Jim & Anna Kramar
Bill & JoAnne Spellacy
Sugar
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Sydney
Ellen Ferrone
Tahoe
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Tigger
Ellen Davidson
Tigger
Ann Metzner
Toby Alexander
Sharon Jacobs
Toby
Janet Fillmore
Vino
Diana Doner
Willie
Elizabeth Ruzga
Wilma
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Winston
Mary Kay Johnston
Yogi
Dennis & Janet Stephens
Zen
Dr. Sharmyn Clark
Ziggy
Vickie Mooey
Zoom
Dr. Sharmyn Clark

Special thanks to:

Chagrin Valley REACT -Thank you for help with our parking needs
Bob Luczywo of Chagrin Construction Co. LLC for doing maintenance work inside the barn and fixing our doors
Gary Bryant for doing maintenance work in the barn and building our new feeding area
Linda Betzer for generously paying for the printing of the cat pavilion
Timmons Elementary Third graders, for donating $738
John Glasser, Heather Perigoi, Lori Gorrell, Sheila Simpson for making An Evening by the Falls such a success
Amy Sancetta and Jenny Campbell for their fab photographs and art for our new Annual Report and newsletters
Whitney Leffler for animal photography and videos
Paula Aveni for assisting the Volunteer Coordinator and for sage advice
The Pattie Group for landscaping support
Peter Hoyt for providing pea gravel for our outside dog play area
Nancy J. Parker for creating RVs Canine Good Citizenship training program
Itamar Gat for the cover photography for An Evening by the Falls
Stacy Westervelt for graphic design for An Evening by the Falls
The In Kids We Trust Advisory Board for being the program leaders
Jan Glasser for spearheading the Memory Garden
Tami Thurman and Brenda Donahue for help with the first Volunteer Fair
Abbie Leska for her time and commitment to the IKWT program
We have big hopes and dreams here at Rescue Village. Especially when it comes to saving more dogs. This year, we have launched our adult dog foster program. We are networking with rescuers, rescue groups, shelters, and volunteers to give adoptable dogs (who might otherwise be euthanized) a second chance at a happy ending. They will be adopted straight from a foster home. This also helps us save more lives by freeing up kennel space at the shelter for more dogs that need help. “Saving lives is a passion that we all share. We know that we can expand this program with the support of a fantastic community,” said Programs Coordinator Erin Hawes. So please, if you can open your hearts and home, fill out a foster application on our website. Even if you have never fostered before, that’s ok! We will support you every step of the way!