Teddy, who knew he was a superstar? There is always that element of surprise as we get to know dogs coming into RV. The smallest Chihuahua can be the feistiest and least friendly pooch in the place. The largest Rottie might be scared of his own shadow.

Each dog has a back-story. When Teddy, a handsome 8-month-old Pitbull mix arrived, he was very frightened. Somewhere along the line he decided that men were not to be trusted. He had moved in with his family 6 months earlier.

All we know for sure is that the man who brought him to the shelter that day didn’t seem to like Teddy very much, and, judging Teddy’s reaction, the feeling was mutual. Out in the world, Teddy’s fear of men and many other things was a problem.

The RV staff, especially Barnee Woolf, RV’s Dog Behavior Coordinator, saw the potential in Teddy to shine and become a superstar. If only we could build his confidence and help him learn to deal with the things that scared him in appropriate ways.

He was enrolled in an intensive training program using a clicker-based reward system, daily play groups with other dogs, hiking field trips to public parks, meeting with retired K-9 handlers, and tons of love at the shelter. Our Teddy adored the playgroups, loving the rough and tumble dogs as much as the timid ones. With all of this attention and the gift of time, Teddy blossomed. This gentle boy, with a missing toe, became a favorite among dogs and people too.

Six months after arriving at Rescue Village, Teddy had his special day. A wonderful family came to the shelter and met him. The family came back several times to work with and get to know Teddy. After the adoption was finalized, we did home visits to help build a healthy relationship.

Often it takes extra help, lots more time, and a deep belief that a dog with a “so-so resume,” so-to-speak, can become a superstar. We believed in Teddy and would not give up. Now, his new family sends pictures of Teddy playing with the kids and sitting in their father’s lap. What a change and what a champ!
from the executive director

Sharing a dream

Have you experienced the feeling of wanting to know just around the bend? Have you yearned to look into the future and stay up nights erecting a pathway to that vision? I cannot imagine life without a passionate cause, without dreaming about what is next.

This past year has been about statistics and stories. Animals enter Rescue Village through these doors and, with time and care, love, exit through these same doors to go home to your house, or to someone else’s, or to a sanctuary, or to a withholding situation embraced by companions.

We seized 52 dogs from neglect, 94 cats from a hoarder. The pure numbers filled hallways and every square inch of free space. They moved through our veterinary clinic. Almost all had to be spayed or neutered. They needed vaccines and medicines. They all had names and, believe me, we knew every single one.

With each rescue come dreams: That we will save more; that we will learn something new about fixing broken souls; that we will help more people; that we will prevent more unwanted litters; that we will take more animals out of conditions of abuse; that we will educate more children.

I came here in August, 2007, wowed by the quality and quantity of life-saving that fills this building. Our team pushed to the limits, turning a windowless utility room into kitten housing. We lined hallways with humane traps and built a 2x7 weekly low-cost spay/neuter program for strays. We worked around our lack of puppy isolation by keeping these little ones in foster care. We turned a room meant to be focused on dog adoption into a kitten adoption space.

The dedication of everyone working and volunteering at Rescue Village was matched only by their resourcefulness and insistence that we would take on even the hardest challenges and save lives. Yet, through it all, we had this dream that someday we would expand this building.

The Board of Trustees share this dream. The volunteers share this dream. The donors share this dream. The animals, well, they share it through their ability to rebuild trust and their capacity to bring companionship and love. But, now it is time to go around that bend to see how much more we can do and to act on it.

I am thrilled to share with all of you the news that Rescue Village has embarked on a $3 Million capital campaign to expand and remodel the shelter. We are calling it the “Raise the Roof to Save More Lives” campaign. Imagine building on the foundation we have and based on standards on which we are based. Imagine a 35% increase in lives saved. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. It is the best time of year to imagine and to pursue our dreams.
Meet our "Spokes Critters." With the help of Duke and all of his friends, and with the support of our friends like you, we are going to take Rescue Village to an even higher level.

To make your gift, visit campaignassociate@geaugahumane.org or by phone at 440.338.4819, ext. 50.
Cats! Cats! Cats! Did you know that we take in two cats for every dog? Those numbers can rise even higher when we are faced with a hoarding case. Last summer, a call to our Humane Officer triggered an investigation and visit to a home in rural Geauga County. The conditions inside this house were horrible. Even more shocking was finding that 94 cats had been living in filth for at least a year.

All 94 of them were rescued and brought to the shelter. When this many animals come to R.V. all at once, you can only imagine the challenge. Cats were housed everywhere.

Watching the staff and volunteers go into action was amazing. Every cat needed vet care and socialization. We had the people to take on this size seizure. We had the skills to ensure that all of the cats would get excellent care and a second chance.

Walking down the hall you could hear much-needed laughter as we realized that most of these cats looked alike. The majority were black cats, who are the hardest to adopt. But our community came through in every way!

Volunteers signed on for extra shifts to help with cleaning and socializing. The moment the cats were available for adoption, family after family arrived to adopt them and provide a real home! We were overwhelmed by the generosity of spirit.

Hoarding is a mental illness with destructive consequences for animals and people. The work I do with staff and volunteers saved these cat’s lives and brought much-needed help to a woman who had become a hoarder. To all of the adopters, we say thank you for 94 new beginnings.

- Christian Courtwright
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

Dogs! Dogs! Dogs! Shelter staff were getting phone calls from our Humane Agent that there was going to be a large number of dogs coming in. The numbers kept growing - first 6, then revised to 20, then a final count of 30. A year earlier we had handled the white Shepherd case. This latest case, at a property in Huntsburg, involved small dogs. The first sign of trouble at the Huntsville property was an anonymous caller citing lots of "dirty-looking" dogs outside.

Oh how we wish these situations were not a common occurrence. Pet owners with a few unaltered animals and without means... and the situation can go quickly out of control. At the beginning, the owners were well-intentioned. Yet, they lost control of their lives as their whole existence and identity was tied to caring for the dogs.

When the Humane Society arrived, we found the most difficult thing to breach was the social isolation the owners built around themselves. We needed to establish trust that we weren’t there to hurt their animals or to hurt them. With fewer reasons to isolate themselves, they could begin cleaning up the house. They could bring their family back into their lives and act in the best interest of the animals.

The owners from Huntsburg agreed to give up 30 of their dogs. They also agreed to allow their family in to clean the house. They began to open up their lives again to friends and family.

This case gave freedom to over 30 dogs. At the end of the day it wasn’t about statistics, or another case to log and close. It wasn’t about a bad guy to be punished or a sensational story for the newspaper. This case was about doing what we do best: helping animals and helping people, sometimes out of a desperate situation.
On a brisk October Day, they came from near and far. Over 50 feral and free roaming cats were brought to Rescue Village by their caretakers to be spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and ear tipped through our CatSmart TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return) program. But today wasn’t just any TNR surgery day, it was our first ever Feline Fixin’ Frenzy, in honor of National Feral Cat Day on October 16th. This was more cats than we’ve ever spayed/neutered in a single day through the TNR program. On top of this we dropped the price for our clients to only $5 per cat! And boy, did the people and cats arrive!

As our CatSmart TNR program grows, we are bursting at the seams in our current clinic area. There are cats lining the halls of the building, both awaiting surgery and recovering in their traps. There are staff and volunteers in the clinic squeezing by each other prepping cats for surgery, as well as scrubbing instruments and administering vaccines. We are looking forward to the clinic expanding when we start our building expansion!

The numbers prove how badly we need more space! In 2012, from January-September, we spayed/neutered 398 cats through the program. In that same time frame in 2013, we’ve already spayed/neutered 623 cats! That’s 225 more cats! MEO-WOW!

Gaitway students at Rescue Village

What a partnership! Gaitway School is a collaborative effort of Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center and the Geauga County Educational Service Center (GCESC). At Gaitway, students receive a comprehensive educational program along with vocational education. Rescue Village became a job-site for GCESC students in February of 2012, and it’s a wonderfully successful partnership that we hope to continue for many years to come.

“These students are a pure joy to work with,” said Lisa Isher, Volunteer Coordinator. “They are hard workers and always have a great attitude. We really miss them when they’re not here during the summer months because they do so much! I am really proud of all of them and their accomplishments here at Rescue Village.”

“It’s not just busy work, it’s making a difference,” said one student. “Animals teach us patience,” said another. This partnership is motivational for everyone. “Doing work for a real job and being at a real job gives us experience in the real world and teaches us responsibility. You can’t just give up, they are counting on you and you learn a lot.” It’s win-win and what could be better than that?
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It’s no secret that even the best animals at shelters are often overlooked by prospective pet owners. Unfortunately that was the case for our lovely Fern. Even though Fern is the sweetest of dogs, people were passing her by.

One of RV’s volunteers saw how great Fern really was. She recognized her amazing personality and kind demeanor. Elaine adopted Fern in June and has been giving her all the love and attention she deserves.

James

James is a 1 year old tiger cat who was brought to us in June with severe head trauma, likely from being hit by a car. The clinic staff quickly went to work, giving James the immediate medical care he needed. Because of the head trauma James endured, he lost his eye, but did not lose his fighting spirit.

A family came to Rescue Village and not only fell in love with James, but decided to take home Craig also! James and Craig are now loving their forever home and thankful that their new family has given them a second chance.
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

Thank you to our sponsors: Eureka! A dry Woofstock 2013! Even though the day was cloudy, the atmosphere at Woofstock was shining. On this beautiful fall Sunday over 1,600 people and hundreds of dogs enjoyed the music, food, games, contests and vendors during the all-day event. Dogs of every shape, size, breed and personality graced the beautiful ground at Holden Arboretum and enjoyed the mile-long walk along the well-groomed trails. The festive sounds of Watkins Glen provided harmony as Food for Thought gave us delicious goodies, and the yummy smell of kettle corn filled the air. There were smiles all around as animal lovers came to celebrate the life-saving work of Rescue Village.

Our annual Blessing of the Animals was led by the Venerable Shi Ying-Fa. It was a memorable start to a day that revolves around celebrating love and companionship between people and their dogs... a day when we gather to help the homeless animals at Rescue Village... a day when we, as a community, come in peace. This year the Blessing touched three small, black puppies in need of new homes. The Blessing must have been a powerful one because before the clock struck noon, all three puppies were adopted.

We deeply appreciate your support this year by making sure thousands of animals get the shelter, medical care and forever homes they deserve. Over $60,000 was raised at Woofstock, and we are already making plans for 2014. See you next year!

Thank you! On to Woofstock 2014!

Can Save People's Lives Too

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Please report any case of suspected neglect or cruelty to your local humane society. Cases like the recent dog rescue never would have happened if not for a brave individual to come forward and speak for the voiceless. Their act of compassion gave a fresh start to over 30 dogs.

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Meet our mascot. He is our ambassador and storyteller. He will be the face and voice of RV’s dog programs.

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Wendy the cat will provide facts and figures about cat care and adoptable cats.

Petra, a wily feline, will represent RV’s programs supporting “Community cats.”
from the executive director

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remembrances

June 1, 2013 - September 30, 2013

Carole M. Nazar
Jesse

Special thanks to:

Carlotta Michelleson for being flexible and jumping in to help whenever we needed her.

Jakprints for being a valuable supporter and sponsor.

Carole Nazar with Pawsome Pets for her valuable time for EIT groups.

Larry Bennett, Linda Betzar, Jane Geissle, and Jan Glasier for volunteering on the Capital Campaign Steering Committee.

Kay Rasoleit for Feigning it in the Fairfield.

Rebecca Bendikoff, Faith Pescatore, and Peggy Carter for barn hay help.

Larry Callihan and John Papik for your marvelous music.

Patrick Farm Truck and Betty Groling for helping at Volunteer Appreciation Night.

Bruce Hartmann, Mark Lee, and the rest of the Woofstock committee for an amazing event.

Lowes and Patterson Fruit Farm for their fall donation.

Connie and Jim Vassell for helping with the rescue horses.

Buckeye Veterinary Services for the vet care and rehab of the horses.

Orange High School Animal Service Club

Hiram Alumnae Association

Ursuline Alumnae Association

Linda Betzar for our new washing machine.

Oldie World Stone for barn stones.

Pattie Group for help moving the stones.

Information in this Report is believed accurate.
Geauga Humane Society does not accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Consult your veterinarian for animal related concerns. It is our general policy not to sell or give away our trading logo. We, however, reserve the right to shared our list with other sites or to work with others whom we work with to advance our mission. If you do not want to be shared as our list, please send written notification to: P.O. Box 116, Novelty, 44072-0116.

Illustrations: Jenny Campbell, Campbell & Co. Cartooning, jenny@campbellcocoming.com

Special thanks to Whitney Leffler for her photography contributions.
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