



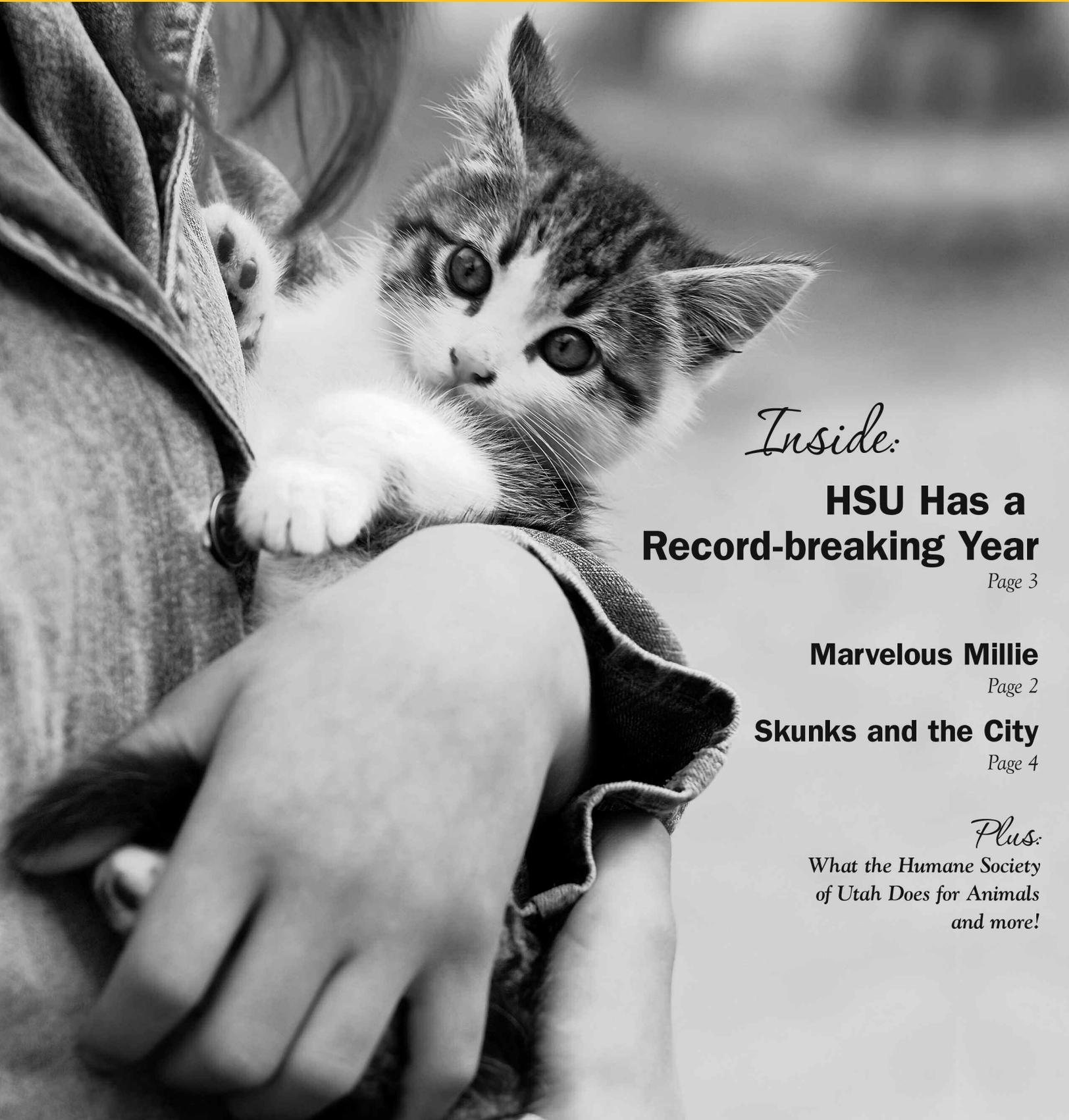
**HUMANE
SOCIETY
OF UTAH**

4242 South 300 West
Murray, UT 84107
Phone: (801) 261-2919
www.utahhumane.org

Spring 2009

Speaking of **Animals**

The Humane Society of Utah is dedicated to the elimination of fear, pain, and suffering in all animals.



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of Utah Does for Animals
and more!



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SERVICES PROVIDED

- ❖ Adoption of animals to qualified homes
- ❖ Low-cost sterilization surgeries
- ❖ Receiving of unwanted animals
- ❖ Preventive immunizations
- ❖ Investigation of animal abuse and neglect
- ❖ Animal rescues
- ❖ Humane education and pet-facilitated therapy

For further information on services provided by HSU, call 261-2919 during business hours.

Remember, HSU is *your* shelter.
We are here to help the animals of Utah.
Please help maintain and support our programs with your contributions.

The Humane Society of Utah is an independent 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization that is not affiliated with any other group, nationally or locally. We receive no funding from taxes or any source other than your contributions.

Incorporated 1961

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Thoroughly Marvelous Millie – another HSU Foster Program **SUCCESS!**

One of the Humane Society of Utah's most important and productive departments is its dedicated foster parent program. Its primary value, as defined by Foster Coordinator Barbara Conrad, is that *"when animals who are in less than perfect condition are brought to us, we're willing to do whatever we can to make those animals adoptable."* We've already featured some of these amazing rehabilitation stories in the past, but we recently had such an adorable little "miracle" animal go through the program that we couldn't resist sharing her experience with readers of *Speaking of Animals*. Please allow us at this time to introduce to you the one and only Millie.

"Found" – or Just Not Wanted?

Millie was a tiny ball of patchy blond fluff who was brought to our shelter by a couple who said they had found her in Texas and had considered possibly keeping her, but, as they drove through Utah on I-15 and saw our eye-catching electronic message board, they decided to drop her off here instead to be put up for adoption. At first it was hard to understand how anyone could give up such an appealing chow chow puppy, but as we gave her her initial physical exam, we noticed that large chunks of fur were missing from her hind paws and tail. Our veterinarians ran some tests and determined that she was suffering from a fungal skin infection. It was a treatable problem, but, if left unattended, it could spread and cause her a great deal of discomfort and disfiguration; it would also require a very dedicated regime of medication, bathing, and brushing. Not everyone would want to take on such a responsibility with a new dog — so she immediately went to one of our foster homes, where she was given the round-the-clock care and attention she would need to become ready for permanent adoption to a good new home of her own.

What a Change!

Millie's before and after photos tell the whole story of the wonderful transformation that medicine and loving care worked for her. The little two-month-old chow chow pup is now glossy, healthy, happy, and overflowing with playfulness and affection, another of the heartwarming success stories of our foster program. ❖



Photo: Oliver Schmidt

Even though Millie had to wear a cumbersome collar to keep her from scratching the irritated spots on her skin until they were healed by her foster parents' regular applications of medicine and love, nothing could dim her million-dollar smile. This dog became everybody's darling while she was with us.



Photo: Oliver Schmidt

All better, and every inch the pampered princess! Millie strikes a regal pose for her "after" photo, proudly showing off her healthy, thick coat and sweet disposition. Without the one-on-one care she received from her foster family, her story might not have ended so happily.

Humane Society has a Record-breaking Year!

2008 may have been a disastrous year for many businesses and organizations, but it was statistically the very best one ever for the Humane Society of Utah. We think that proves one of the most important principles of a forward-thinking community: there's never a recession in the caring and responsibility departments. Even in last year's shaky economy, more and more people opened their homes and their hearts to animals who needed them, and our clinic's sterilization and vaccination numbers went through the roof. Specifically, we found good new homes for an impressive 7,755, or 94%, of our adoptable shelter animals, a 21% increase over the number adopted in 2007 (which was itself a record-breaking year). We consider this an even more remarkable figure in light of the fact that the shelter took in almost 10% more homeless animals than it did in 2007, largely because so many people lost their homes to foreclosure and could no longer keep their pets. Also, our clinic surgically sterilized an astonishing number of animals — 11,092, or 9.4% more than in 2007.



Photo: Oliver Schmidt

Last year the Humane Society of Utah found good new homes for 7,755 cats, dogs, rabbits, gerbils, hamsters, mice, and more — 94% of the adoptable animals in our clean, bright shelter. This was the largest number of adoptions from any single facility in the state, and the most that HSU has ever done.

Why Adoptions are Up

"We attribute a great deal of our increased adoption rate to our new Animal Transfer program," says HSU Executive Director Gene Baierschmidt. "Through this innovative system, we take dogs who are not in great demand at our shelter — large breeds, for the most part — to other animal-welfare



Photo: Oliver Schmidt

Part of the credit for our record breaking adoption rate in 2008 belongs to our dedicated Foster Parent and Animal Transfer programs. Through these innovative systems, "problem" animals are rehabilitated and given another chance at life and love, and we also make sure that the right kinds of animals are in the right places at the right time. The result is more lives saved, more love and happiness for everyone. (This is Foster Coordinator Barbara Conrad hugging "Ferris," a Weimaraner who came in as a stray with a badly injured hind leg, and was nursed back to health by foster parents.)

organizations where those dogs are highly popular, and then follow up to make sure they've been successfully adopted. Simultaneously, we acquire a lot of small dogs from Los Angeles and place them for adoption at our shelter, where they're the kind that people most often ask for. It's been a tremendous win-win situation on all sides."

He further gives credit for the high adoption rates to the shelter's Outreach Adoption program, in which shelter animals are taken to off-site locations like malls and pet-supply stores, where they can be viewed by larger numbers of the public. He also attributes a great deal of the high adoption rate to the Society's highly successful Foster Parent system, *"which allows us to keep animals who are not immediately adoptable — because of illness, injury, behavioral problems, or being too young, for example — with dedicated volunteer caregivers until they're able to be returned to the shelter for adoption to good homes of their own."*

Finally, the Society owes much of its success to the utilization of technological advances, such as showcasing its animals on its website as well as the electronic message center on I-15. The shelter is also open for adoptions seven days a week and has in the past few years revised its adoption policies to make it easier for people to adopt pets there. *"With the general economy in such poor shape all over the country, we're very grateful to have been able to find homes for so many animals that needed them, and also to prevent so many unwanted animals from being born in the first place,"* says Mr. Baierschmidt.

Stopping Problems at the Source

He also stressed the fact that more and more of the public is getting the message to adopt pets from a shelter rather than purchasing from breeders and puppy mills, as well as surgically sterilizing their pets. *"The only way to end the problem of homeless and unwanted animals is through spaying and neutering, and through finding good homes for the ones already in shelters,"* he says. *"This year's figures represent a milestone for us, and we hope to be able to eliminate the need to euthanize adoptable animals altogether within the next few years."*



Photos: Pauline Edwards

Our veterinarians also provide preventive inoculations to keep animals healthy. These services are available at low cost to the general public.

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Skunks *and the City*

Last August a young man performed a simple act of kindness for a suffering animal and, as a result, found himself facing grave difficulties of his own. Partly because the Humane Society of Utah not only publicized his story but also showed its strong support for what he had done, he was eventually cleared of all charges of wrongdoing and was also later lauded by some citizens as “a hero,” “an example to all of us,” and “deserving of a medal.” Here’s what happened:

When Wildlife and the Suburbs Collide

One typically sizzling-hot day last summer, a skunk from the nearby foothills happened to wander into the South Salt Lake City yard of Ryan Turner, a 30-year-old audio technician. Mr. Turner, who keeps a feline companion, had provided an in-and-out entrance at the bottom of his back door for his cat, and it was through this passage that the skunk entered the home. Problems almost immediately ensued, including a fight between the cat and the skunk, the skunk’s ransacking of the kitchen, and — inevitably — the release of the animal’s well-known defensive spray in one of the rooms. Wishing to rid himself of his unwelcome visitor as quickly and humanely as possible, Turner contacted city employees and asked them to set a live trap for the skunk, who had by now left the house but still remained in the neighborhood. The next day, a Friday, public works employee Robert Bean placed a trap along the fence in Turner’s back yard but did not return to check on the device the next day because, as he later testified, “*My experience with trapping animals is that you don’t get them the first day.*”

However, Ryan Turner *did* check the trap the next morning and found that the skunk had indeed gone inside it during the night and was now imprisoned in the dark metal cage. Turner assumed that authorities would soon arrive to retrieve the trap, but as the day passed no one showed up, and by late afternoon the sun had turned the trap, exposed as it was in the open light,

into “an oven.” He tried to call the city to ask them to send someone out to collect the animal, but found that all public offices were closed for the weekend. At this point, Turner realized that the skunk was in an extremely unfavorable position: Already severely stressed by heat, thirst, and the trauma of being caged, if she had to remain in those circumstances for the entire weekend, a slow and agonizing death would be the only possible outcome.

Using Both Head and Heart

He therefore decided that any intervention on the skunk’s behalf would have to come from himself. For no reason other than the fact that he considered it to be “simply the right thing to do,” he carefully lifted the trap over the fence and tucked it underneath a cool, shady rosebush, gave the overheated animal water to drink, left a supply of fresh water and some food, and then went back to his ordinary activities, expecting that she would at least be safe and comfortable until city officials came at the beginning of the week to get the trap.

On the following Monday morning he was awakened by a police officer inquiring about the whereabouts of the trap. Mr. Turner explained what had happened, led the official to the protected place where he had relocated it, and it was removed (the skunk was subsequently euthanized). He assumed that the incident was a closed chapter; however, to his intense shock, in late September he received a municipal summons charging him with “criminal trespass” and “wrongful appropriation of city property.” At first he had no idea what the charges were about, but soon learned that the problem arose from his having moved the trap — which was owned by South Salt Lake City — without having first obtained official permission.

Turner refused to view his actions as having been wrong in any way. On October 2nd he pleaded not guilty, saying that he would not have left the skunk to suffer under any circumstances. “*I would rather be in the situation I’m in now [i.e., facing a \$652 fine and criminal charges] than not to have done anything,*” he said at that time.

Case Goes to Court

On January 8th, Ryan Turner faced a judge, a jury, a prosecutor, and a crowd of reporters who had been alerted to the situation by the Humane Society. In a press release, HSU Executive Director Gene Baierschmidt said, *“We encourage the court to show maximum sympathy for the defendant in this case. The judge and jurors should take into account Mr. Turner’s motives and intent in moving the trap to an environment less stressful to the animal. No harm was done to either the skunk or the trap as a consequence of his action, and no inconvenience or hardship was created for anyone. The Humane Society believes that the entire situation should be resolved immediately and amicably.”* Mr. Baierschmidt was also prepared to testify as a witness for the defense regarding legal requirements involving live-animal trap maintenance and local ramifications of the law.

Mercy and Common Sense Triumph

As it turned out, neither he nor any other defense witness had to be called to the stand. After 90 minutes of testimony from Mr. Turner, Mr. Bean, and others directly involved in the event, South Salt Lake City Attorney Paul Roberts abruptly called off the case, saying that he did not believe Turner had acted with any motive other than concern for the skunk’s suffering. *“I don’t see any crime in helping an animal,”* he concluded in asking for dismissal of the case. Turner said that he was relieved at the outcome, but also *“baffled that things moved so far.”* His attorney, Susanne Gustin, also indicated that she felt the charges should have been dropped long before. *“We just wish we hadn’t had to go through a 90-minute trial over this thing,”* she said. Nevertheless, everyone concerned was gratified that one man’s random act of kindness had been both validated and vindicated.

All Life is Precious

Under any circumstances, Humane Society officials have chosen to look upon the episode as an opportunity to speak up for a much-maligned animal. For example, not one single media outlet was able to refrain from referring to this case as *“raising a stink,”* which is by now a lame and totally predictable platitude that imparted a distinctly frivolous tone to the whole story. As a simple point

of fact, the skunk’s ability to spray a foul-smelling fluid when it feels frightened or threatened is nothing but a natural defense response that is no more comedic than a lion’s baring its teeth or an opossum’s rolling over and *“playing dead,”* or, for that matter, a human being’s breaking into a cold sweat under extreme stress.

Certainly skunks — or any other wildlife — inevitably present a problem when they interact with human civilization. They can carry diseases, fight with domestic animals, cause traffic accidents, and in general create significant trouble for themselves and the people whose paths they cross. Still, HSU feels that it’s time to stop treating this particular species as a joke, something that is nothing but fodder for a slightly leering kind of humor even when a representative of that species has been subjected to a terrible ordeal.



The common striped skunk, Mephitis mephitis. At least one very special young man, Ryan Turner, realized the inherent right of every animal — even a skunk — to be spared a prolonged and horrible death when he moved a live trap containing one of these frequently-maligned creatures from its original place in the broiling sun to the shady shelter of a rosebush, and gave her water and food. Even though Mr. Turner’s compassionate act resulted in his being charged with municipal crimes and having to face a court trial, he never wavered in his belief that he had done the right thing.

In a letter sent to Mr. Turner at the time of his initial summons to court, HSU officials said, *“What you did represented the most admirable qualities a person can possess — empathy for another’s pain, a willingness to help a creature incapable of defending itself against forces much more powerful than its own, and recognition of the inherent worth of all sentient beings.”*

That continues to be the Humane Society’s stand. We congratulate Ryan Turner for his courageous resolution in doing the morally correct thing, and on the satisfactory ending to his own personal ordeal. ❖

What the Humane Society of Utah Does for Animals and Why We Do It Best Because of *You!*

by Gene Baierschmidt, HSU Executive Director

From time to time, we feel that it's a good idea to remind people exactly what the Humane Society of Utah is, what we do, and why our efforts to help animals are the most effective force acting on their behalf throughout the entire state. Not only do we gain new supporters all the time who may not be familiar with the entire scope of our programs, but lifelong members may also want their knowledge of our activities refreshed and updated as well. So, for everyone who cares about the welfare and well-being of all animals, here's a rundown of why HSU is the single most influential animal organization in the state. Simply put, we do more good things for more animals than any other organization, and the reason for that is because of people like you — people who stand behind us with the financial assistance that makes it possible to maintain our many programs, people who are willing to speak out on legislative and other public issues, people who let the rest of the community know that animals are living beings who deserve respect, compassion, and understanding from all of us.

Here's who we are, and what we do that you make possible. THANK YOU to each and every one of you.

Quick Facts

Location: 4242 S. 300 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84107

Full-time staff: 43

Part-time staff: 8

Volunteers: 300 (+/-)

Foster families: 100 (+/-)

Animals handled per year
(as of December 31, 2008): 12,465

Total animals adopted
(as of December 31, 2008): 7,755

Years in operation: 48

Yearly operating budget
(fiscal year 2008): \$2,134,348.00
(NOTE: Only 12% of this figure
is spent on administrative costs.

The great majority of our funding —
88% — is spent directly on the animals!



Services Provided:

- ✓ Intake of owner-relinquished pets
- ✓ On-site and mobile adoptions
- ✓ Comprehensive medical services for shelter animals
- ✓ In-house clinic for low-cost sterilizations and vaccinations
- ✓ Foster parent program

- ✓ Transfer adoptions
- ✓ Owner-requested euthanasia services
- ✓ Pet-facilitated therapy
- ✓ Statewide investigation of animal cruelty and neglect
- ✓ Behavior and training classes
- ✓ Educational programs for children and adults
- ✓ Facility tours
- ✓ Volunteer program
- ✓ Regular Pet Adopt-a-Thons

More Details About the Humane Society of Utah

Who are we?

Founded in 1961, the Humane Society of Utah is “dedicated to the elimination of pain, fear, and suffering in all animals.” To that end we provide the following services:

- Shelter, care, and adoption for lost and unwanted animals
- Low-cost sterilization surgeries and vaccinations at our own fully-staffed in-house clinic
- A full-time certified cruelty investigator who responds to reports of neglect and abuse and checks animal facilities throughout the state
- Professional humane education programs for tens of thousands of school children
- In-house pet obedience classes
- A full-time foster parent program to help young, ill, or special-needs animals become adoptable
- Outreach adoptions through our Animobile and off-site adoptions staff
- An Animal Transfer program that brings animal breeds that are highly adoptable in Utah to our shelter from areas where they are overcrowding facilities, and also take animals that are not in great demand in our own area to accredited and screened shelters in other parts of the Southwest that adopt out such breeds in high numbers
- Pet-facilitated therapy programs for hospitals and adult-care centers
- Support for animal-friendly legislation
- Publications, special events, and community activities to heighten awareness of animal issues and problems

We do all this with a total of 43 full-time employees, 8 part-time staff members, and a constantly varying number of volunteers.

continued on next page

The Humane Society of Utah is an “Open-Admissions” Shelter

We welcome every animal in need that we can legally accept. (We do, however, encourage people to take stray animals to the Animal Control shelter nearest to where the stray was found. This is so lost pets and their owners can be more quickly and easily reunited, since the local shelter is the logical place that most people will go first in looking for an animal.) Because we turn no animals away, we are defined as an “Open-Admissions” shelter.

There are other organizations that refer to themselves as being “no-kill” facilities, but we believe that this term is misleading. We feel it is more appropriate to call such groups “limited-access” shelters, because they generally must restrict the numbers of animals they take in, accepting only animals that are highly adoptable in order to ensure a quick turnover in their shelter population. Otherwise they would soon be filled with animals and would be unable to continue operating.

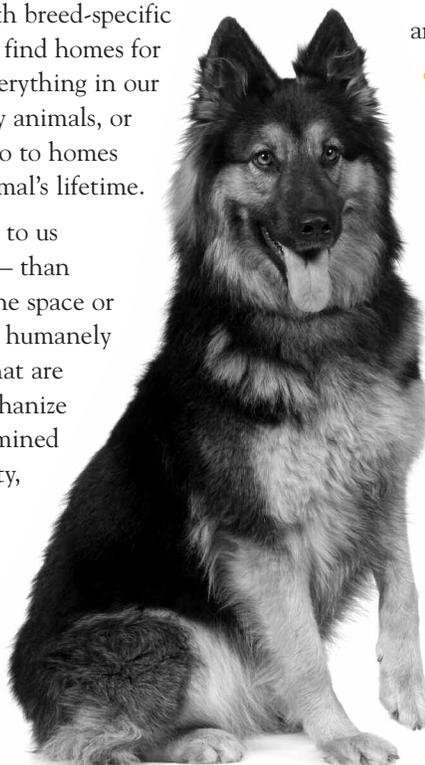
As an Open-Admission shelter, we take in many animals who are not immediate candidates for adoption. Whenever possible, our foster parents work with these animals to rehabilitate them and qualify them for adoption to good homes.

There is no set limit to the length of time an animal can remain in our adoptions program. As long as we have room, and the animal appears to be able to maintain general good physical and emotional health in a kennel environment, he or she is kept here. Every animal, however long his or her stay, is guaranteed on a daily basis a clean, safe, comfortable space, nutritious food and fresh water, medical supervision and, when needed, care and supplies, and interaction with volunteers who groom, exercise, and socialize with them.

We move very young puppies and kittens and other special-needs animals into foster care, where they remain until they are ready for adoption. We also work with breed-specific groups and other rescue organizations to find homes for some harder-to-place animals. We do everything in our power to avoid the euthanasia of healthy animals, or of animals who can be rehabilitated or go to homes that will provide special care for the animal’s lifetime.

The reality is that more animals come to us all the time — around 10,000 per year — than we can adopt out, and we do not have the space or money to accommodate all of them. We humanely euthanize, by injection, those animals that are not chosen by new families. We also euthanize aggressive animals that have been determined to be a potential threat to the community, as well as those sick or injured animals that cannot be rehabilitated.

We are able to find new homes for the great majority of our animals, however; as of December 31, 2008, our overall success rate for adoptable animals was 94%.



Our Ultimate Goal is

to eliminate the need for euthanasia of all healthy or rehabilitatable dogs and cats in our community.

To reach this goal, we are working to create not a “no-kill” shelter, but a “no-birth” society, insofar as homeless and unwanted animals are concerned. These are the steps we are taking to achieve that effect:

- ✓ Maintain a widespread effort to promote spaying and neutering of all companion animals
- ✓ Continually increase the number of shelter animals that are adopted to new homes through our programs of Outreach Adoptions, Transfer Adoptions, special events, and foster parenting
- ✓ Encourage responsible pet ownership through public-awareness campaigns, humane education programs, and efforts to legally eliminate puppy mills and backyard breeders
- ✓ Supporting pet owners through training classes, counseling, and referrals to national information sources

What are Our Other Goals for the future?

We are committed to achieving the following goals for the welfare of animals throughout Utah:

- Maintain high adoption rates, and in 2009 place at least 7,500 shelter animals in good new homes
- Continue to spay and neuter more companion animals than any other organization in the state, and consistently perform more than 10,000 of these procedures per year
- Introduce and support necessary animal-friendly legislation
- Continue and expand our education efforts
- Expand our Foster and Outreach Adoptions programs and extend their influence in the state
- Continue our Cruelty Investigation programs throughout the state, always using new techniques and materials as they are developed

You Can Help Us.

The Humane Society of Utah is a private, charitable 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We are not affiliated with any other animal-welfare organization, locally or nationally. We are not supported by taxes or any other government funding, and rely entirely on the income from our clinic and shelter, and on donations from the public, to keep our doors open.

You can donate to us through our website at www.utahhumane.org, by sending your gift to us at P.O. Box 573659, Salt Lake City, UT 84157-3659, or by visiting our shelter at 4242 South 300 West in Murray. Membership in the Society is automatic with a donation

The Humane Society of Utah is an “open-access” facility, which means it will accept virtually every animal brought there. In light of that fact, says Mr. Baierschmidt, the organization had a very good year and did a great



Photos: Pauline Edwards



Because of the hard work and highly trained skills of our full-time staff veterinarians, Dr. Paul Chapin and his wife, Dr. Shama Chapin, we were able to surgically sterilize an astonishing 11,092 animals at our in-house, low-cost clinic in a single year. Reducing the number of unwanted dogs and cats being born in the first place is the single most important key to ending the pet overpopulation problem. Here Dr. Paul performs a spay surgery (top), and then carefully closes the incision when the operation is complete.

deal to help ameliorate the pet overpopulation problem. “Everyone needs to take a hard, sobering look at the statistics.

Consider the fact that in six short years, one female dog and her offspring can give birth to hundreds of puppies, and a cat reproduces even more prolifically,” he says. “If each of us makes a commitment to prevent our own animals from breeding indiscriminately, we can get a handle on pet overpopulation. The bottom line is education — every citizen needs to realize how huge the problem is, how enormous is the amount of needless suffering and loss of life, and how easy it would be to reduce those figures drastically by simply doing the enlightened, responsible thing.”

If more people would have their pets “fixed,” there would be fewer animals turned in to shelters and there would be less necessity for euthanizing healthy dogs and cats. “We will continue to sterilize as many animals as possible in our own clinic to reduce the number of these unwanted creatures that are being born each year,” says Mr. Baierschmidt. “We are committed to ending the problem of pet overpopulation, and I believe our record for 2008 is ample proof of that commitment.” The Society is looking forward to even better statistics in 2009, he said. ❖



NOTICE: Annual Membership Meeting – April 13, 2009

All members of the Humane Society of Utah are invited and encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting of the Society, which is to be held **April 13, 2009**, at 6:00 P.M. in the auditorium of the Society’s facility at 4242 South 300 West in Murray.

Included in this year’s Meeting agenda will be presentation of candidates for the Board of Directors; an

update of the Society’s progress, events, and future plans; and the transaction of any other authorized business.

We invite you to join us at our beautiful facility; we welcome your participation and would appreciate your attendance. The staff, Board, and of course the animals of the Humane Society of Utah wish to thank you for your continued support. ❖



A Workplace Giving Opportunity

In each issue of *Speaking of Animals*, you will see the logo of Community Shares Utah. This is a workplace giving federation that allows employees to donate any specified amount through payroll options to a range of non-profit agencies, including the Humane Society of Utah, that work to benefit the environment, deliver critical services, improve the community, protect human rights and promote animal welfare.

The Humane Society of Utah has been a member of Community Shares for several years. Look over the list of other member organizations at www.communitysharesutah.org to see what good company we keep. HSU would love to benefit from your workplace giving program — if you don’t have the opportunity to contribute at work and would like to, please contact Carlene Wall at the *Humane Society of Utah* (801) 261-2919, ext. 209 or Lynne Bradley at *Community Shares* (801) 486-9224.

You Can Help Us... continued from page 7

of \$10 or more, and entitles you to a 10% discount on all clinic and shelter services.

We respect your privacy and do not sell or share any member information with other groups or individuals.

You can become a volunteer or a foster parent. See the “Programs” section on our website for information.

For the first time, the Humane Society of Utah is accepting donated cars. We will arrange for the pick-up and disposal of all contributed vehicles. ❖

We are here for the animals of Utah. They are counting on us – and on you – to make their world a better place for all of them.