

Speaking of Animals

Rising Above a Challenging Year

Annual Report

Winter 2023



**HUMANE
SOCIETY
OF UTAH**

Summary



4: Rising Above

We faced many challenges in 2022, including a veterinarian shortage, rising supply costs, and a significant increase in owner-surrendered pets. Yet, throughout it all, we kept our doors open and helped thousands of animals and the community members who love them.



5: The Tiny Kitten That Could

Pebbles didn't have a family to look after her - she was a junkyard kitten who had grown up with a large feral cat colony that lived in a dumping ground littered with broken-down car parts and decaying trash.



8: A Long Road to Recovery

Lady, a five-year-old large bully breed mix, came into our care requiring not one but three surgeries! With a long road to recovery, Lady would spend nearly six months in our care before being granted one last holiday wish.

Our Mission

We are dedicated to the elimination of pain, fear, and suffering in all animals.

Our Vision

Our goal is to keep pets and people together, bring them together, and help move each animal to their most appropriate outcome as quickly as possible.



11: Goals Achieved in 2022

Your continued support allowed us to carry on with our positive impact on the lives of thousands of companion animals in our community. Here is everything we achieved together in 2022.



15: Rabbit Hoarding in 2022

Cats and dogs are the most common victims of animal hoarding cases. Yet, HSU saw a significant increase in rabbit hoarding in 2022. Hoarding typically begins with just a few unsterilized animals.



18: Cost of Care

Preparing animals for adoption involves the time of skilled employees, equipment, and truckloads of supplies. In addition, we provide healthy food, safe shelter, lifesaving medical care, behavioral training, exercise and enrichment, and foster care for pets during their stay with us.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Craig S. Cook – Interim Executive Director, President and General Counsel, Attorney, private practice, Christina Sears - Co-Vice President, Co-Founder, Connexion Point, Dr. John Ziegler - Co-Vice President, Physician, Premier Healthcare Partners, Dr. Cathy Nelson - Secretary, Professor Emeritus, University of Utah, Randy John - Treasurer, Credit Officer, Bank of the West, Timothy Pack, Attorney, Clyde Snow & Sessions Law Firm, Steven Starley Retired, Tim J. Williams President, !Ignition! Consulting Group, ULCT, Molly Spain Attorney.



Rising Above A Challenging Year

It seems as if once January comes, we're so focused on goals for the coming year that it's hard to remember what happened last year. Reviewing the previous year is a welcome opportunity to appreciate the people and animals that make our work worthwhile and learn from all we experienced. We'd love to stop talking about the impact of COVID-19 on our operations (maybe next year...), but we experienced the same boomerang effect on our organization in 2022 as seemingly the rest of the world. Economic pressures of inflation and the housing market left many people unable to care for their pets without assistance, and the Humane Society of Utah was able to provide that service thanks to our supportive and caring community.

Our mission is the elimination of pain, fear, and suffering in all animals, and our vision is to bring people and pets together and KEEP them together. To this end, much of our focus is on our pet retention and community services to support pets and their current caregivers to preserve the human-animal bond. Our community clinics in Murray and St George were jam-packed with vaccination and spay/neuter services for dogs and cats, and we expanded those services to pet rabbits last year. In addition, we provided pet retention medical services to 592 pets and returned them to their caregivers. We also offered behavioral consults to 538 caregivers who needed support to avoid surrendering their pets to a shelter.

Sheltering will always be a necessity for some pets, but others can go directly from their current homes to a new home with assistance from our Pet Rehoming service. This is a simple way to help healthy pets not in need of shelter services and preserve shelter kennels for those whom our help is essential. Helping as many animals outside our shelter walls as possible

increases our impact, is more humane for both people and pets, and is more cost-effective.

We are well aware of the importance of being good stewards of our resources and the public trust to care for the most vulnerable. Our shelter continues to be the heart of our organization, and caring for shelter animals is our privilege. While the number of adoptions is no longer our primary measure of effectiveness as an organization, it's a number that reflects each dog, cat, rabbit, and small animal that enters our doors and finds a place in the heart of each staff member and volunteer. 5,097 adoptions seems like an overwhelming number, so we focus on Keisha the Lab/Weimaraner mix, Arthur the orange tabby cat, and Jerome the bunny rather than the hard work it took to get all those animals ready for adoption and to place them in a new home.

We're looking forward to a new year to proactively help community animals with new veterinary services to combat the difficulty in accessing veterinary care, such as adding additional off-site vaccination clinics and expanding wellness services in our clinics. The number of spay/neuter surgeries needing to be caught up from pandemic closures is estimated at 2.7 million animals nationwide, according to a Frontiers in Veterinary Science study dated September 13, 2022. Our work is cut out for us. Additionally, our intake data show an alarming 86% increase in animals surrendered due to homelessness and housing issues from 2020 to 2022.

Building a safety net services to keep pets with their people while simultaneously sheltering animals in need are two separate but equally important areas of focus. The Humane Society of Utah is ready, as we have been for over 60 years, to do this work for our community with the support of our community.

Pebbles

The Tiny Kitten That Could



“Performing eye removal surgery for her was critical to saving her life.”

Pebbles, an itty bitty kitten weighing less than two pounds, arrived at the Humane Society of Utah’s St. George Clinic in the Summer of 2021 with a painfully swollen eye. Her eye was simmering with infection making it completely unusable. Pebbles didn’t have a family to look after her - she was a junkyard kitten who had grown up with a large feral cat colony that lived in

a dumping ground littered with broken-down car parts and decaying trash.

Fortunately for Pebbles, she’d been trapped and brought to our clinic by Kris Neal, who volunteers for a local rescue called The Jackson Day Foundation. This rescue took Pebbles in after she had been trapped for our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) pro-

“For our staff, it doesn’t matter if the animal has a paying owner or is feral and without a home; we treat them all with the highest standard of care possible.”

gram. TNR involves fixing, vaccinating, and ear-tipping feral and stray cats, then returning them to their territory. TNR is a humane way to control the community cat population and stop the spread of fatal viruses, such as rabies and distemper.

After assessing Pebbles, our veterinarian, Dr. Gray, was deeply concerned. She’d discovered Pebbles had a severe upper respiratory infection that had moved up into her eye and was causing so much pressure that her eye would need to be removed immediately. Dr. Gray explained, “I was concerned because putting animals as small as Pebbles under anesthesia is incredibly risky. Most veterinarians won’t do it because of the risks involved, but Pebbles’ infection was so bad that if it continued to go untreated, it would most likely move into her lungs and other areas of her body, and she would die. So, performing eye removal surgery for her was critical to saving her life.”

Kelsie Watters, HSU’s St. George Clinic Manager, also knew that only a few veterinarian clinics in St. George have the capacity to help out the feral cat population, HSU being one of them. She shared, “For our staff, it doesn’t matter if the animal has a paying owner or is feral and without a home; we treat them all with the highest standard of care possible. Every pet’s health matters to us, even pets like Pebbles, who are not a priority to most.”

The surgery went well, but not without a hitch. Pebbles’ eye had so much built-up pressure that it ruptured as Dr. Gray removed it. But thankfully, Dr. Gray was able to stabilize her, and Pebbles’ recovery went very smoothly. She went



Pebbles

home with Kris, who looked after her and gave her antibiotics so her little body could heal.

While at Kris' home, she found that Pebbles didn't like touching or cuddling, which is not uncommon for feral cats. But to Kris' surprise, Pebbles began to bond with another kitten, Daisy. Eventually, the two became buddies. One day, two women named Belinda and Beth came to adopt Daisy, but Kris told them that Pebbles and Daisy were now a bonded pair and that if they wanted one, she'd have to adopt the other.

Kelsie shared, "Belinda and Beth recognized that this was a special pair and decided to adopt both Daisy and Pebbles so they could stay together. Kris periodically sends updates on Pebbles, who has completely transformed in her new home. She now loves being cuddled and sung to by her caring adopter. It's nice knowing that this junkyard kitten who had suffered so much now

has a loving, happy life, thanks to our and Kris' team. Everyone went the extra mile for Pebbles because we knew we were her last resort, and her transformation is what makes our work worthwhile."

Over a year later, Kris brought a sweet and affectionate kitten named Polly into HSU's St. George Clinic, who was in the same situation as Pebbles. She was a tiny feral kitten with a very infected eye who had been trapped for TNR and needed medical care. Dr. Gray performed the same eye removal surgery on Polly, who was up and ready to play again the next day. Kris is caring for Polly and keeping her from being too active while she recovers. When Kris shared Polly's story with Belinda and Beth, they knew Polly was meant to be in their family, too. Once Polly is healed from surgery, she will join her new sisters Pebbles and Daisy in their home.



Lady

A Long Road to Recovery



Lady, a five-year-old bully mix, was surrendered to our Pet Resource Center in Murray because her guardian worked longer hours and could no longer give her the time and attention she needed. Before leaving Lady in our care, her guardian described her as “playful and friendly” and said her favorite things were “watermelon and sleeping on the bed.” Lady was so sweet with our staff that we thought she’d be adopted immediately without any problems, but unfortunately for Lady, this wasn’t the case.

After an assessment, our medical team discovered that Lady’s skin and ears were infected, and she had a handful of broken teeth. She also had a pretty severe limp. Upon further discovery, it became apparent that the ligaments in Lady’s knees had ruptured in both legs. If she were ever going to run or jump again, she’d need to undergo TPLO surgery, short for Tibial

Plateau Leveling Osteotomy, to have these ligaments repaired. The problem was that Lady weighed 90 pounds, so our team decided it would be best to conduct these surgeries two months apart, so Lady wasn’t totally incapacitated.

After her first surgery, Lady went into our Foster Program under the care of Caitlin Lisle, our Humane Education Director. Caitlin put Lady on ‘bed rest’ and helped her pass the time with food puzzles and yummy frozen treats. Caitlin explained, “Lady was such a joy to rehab. She had the best disposition of any dog I’ve ever cared for. She was just so cheerful all the time about everything. She even loved it when I iced her leg!”

While waiting for her second TPLO surgery, our medical team found that Lady was also suffer-

Lady

ing from entropion in both eyes. Entropion is a condition in which the eyelid rolls inward, causing the eyelashes and surrounding hair to rub against the dog's sensitive cornea, which results in eye irritation, and, if not remedied quickly, can lead to corneal ulceration.

Caitlin shared, "I felt so bad for her. Poor Lady couldn't catch a break! She eventually had three surgeries within 16 weeks. Regardless, she never cried once and always gave her full attention while doing her physical rehabilitation therapy activities. She was the best girl ever!"

Over the four months they shared, Caitlin and Lady became very attached. When Lady was all healed and ready for adoption, Caitlin was happy for her but also teary-eyed. "It was bittersweet because I was so in love with her. But since I already have four dogs of my own, I knew I couldn't keep her."

Caitlin screened potential adopters to ensure Lady went to the perfect home. A few weeks

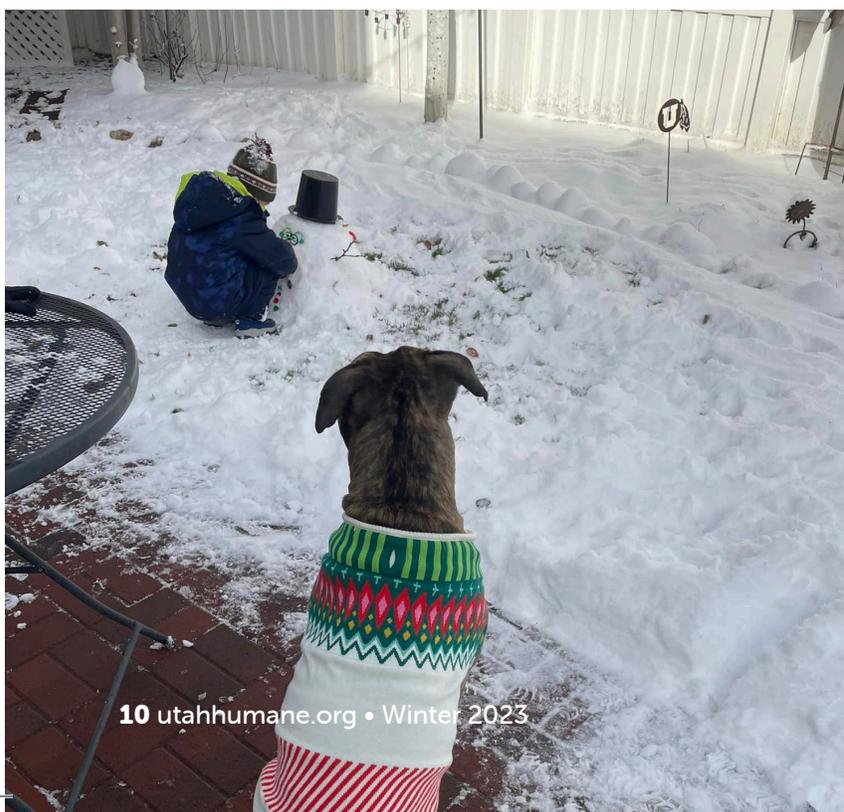
passed, but Caitlin didn't find the right fit until a woman named Katie reached out after seeing Lady's story on our Instagram account.

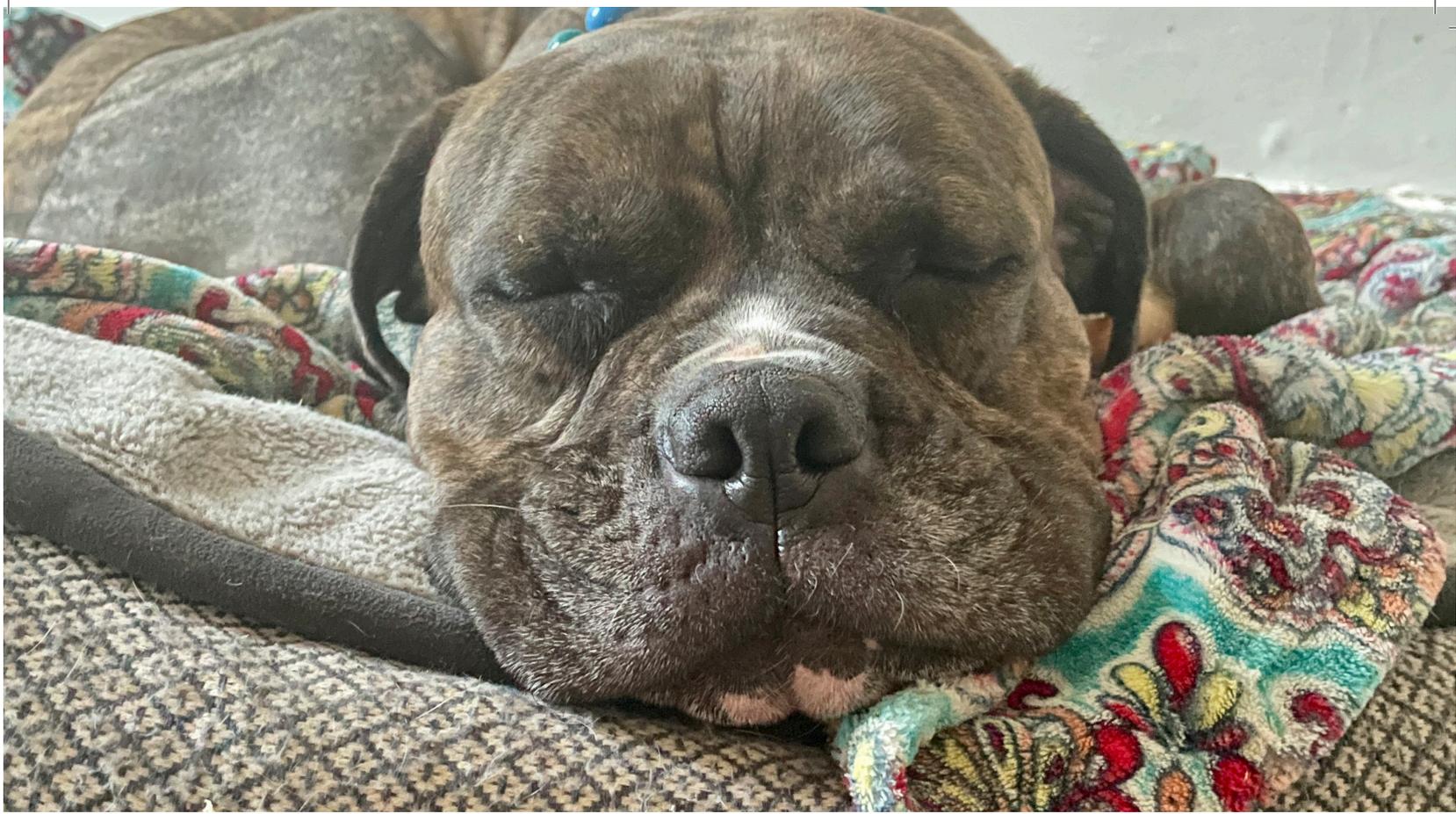
Katie shared, "The day I saw Lady's post was the first anniversary of when our beloved labrador, Ryder, passed away. We'd had Ryder for almost 11 years, and our family was heartbroken when he passed. I didn't know if we were ready for a new dog, but I reached out to Caitlin on a whim."

Caitlin invited Katie, her husband, Dan, and their two young kids, Liam and Lucas, to meet Lady. But Dan was resistant. He told Katie, "Unless this dog gives me a sign by jumping into my lap or something, I don't think I'm ready for a new dog." Lady must have superman hearing because as soon as Dan walked in to meet her, that's exactly what she did.

Katie recalled, "Lady ran directly over to Dan and jumped in his lap. We were all stunned. Not only this, but she was very gentle and tolerant with our kids. We fell in love with her immediately, and she's been a member of our family ever since."

These days you can find Lady riding shotgun alongside Katie to pick up the kids from school or glued to Dan's hip. "The loss of Ryder was so hard on my husband, but now, he's Lady's biggest fan. They're like little comfort buddies. She always seems to know when we're having a bad day, and if she senses we are, she's at our side to offer comfort. She is exactly what our family needs."





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Programs



ADOPTIONS

Interest in adoptions started to slow in 2022, but HSU was proud to keep our length of stay low for both **cats (3 days)** and **dogs (7 days)**. We cared for more pets with complex behavioral and medical needs, but we were able to find homes for the vast majority. We are proud to end the year with **5,097 companion animals adopted**.



PET RETENTION

As the need in our community grows for pet owners requiring assistance, HSU continues to invest in keeping families together and animals out of the shelter through our Pet Retention Program. In 2022 HSU distributed over **150,000 pounds of pet food to community pet food pantries**, rescue groups, and reservations. Additionally, **499 families were given the resources to keep their beloved pets**.



CLINICS

The medical teams at HSU continued to work through the challenges of the veterinary shortage that plagued our state. In addition, we experienced increased requests for medical assistance from other shelters and community members. However, we are proud to announce our two preventative care clinics **spayed/neutered 10,746 pets** in our community and **vaccinated 142,529 companion animals**. We also performed an additional 1,117 special surgeries and expanded our services to include rabbits.

Year i



VOLUNTEERS

We relied on our volunteers more than ever in 2022. From walking dogs, to emptying litter boxes and washing dishes, there wasn't a job our volunteers wouldn't do to better the lives of the animals in our care. We couldn't provide the services and programs that we offer without the assistance of our Volunteer program. Our dedicated volunteers gave our organization a total of **20,579 hours of service in 2022 – with a value of \$267,527.**



FOSTER

We believe the young, sick, and stressed animals that enter our shelter deserve all the time they need to recover. Foster homes give these animals all the time and comfort they need to recoup until they're ready for adoption. That's why we were proud to see our foster program grow in 2022 by onboarding **260 new foster families.** Allowing our foster department to place **1,189 animals in need** in loving foster homes.



EDUCATION

We believe educating younger generations is the key to ensuring better lives for animals in the future. Our proactive approach to ending animal cruelty and neglect is through our Humane Education program. The Humane Education Team at HSU serves children of all ages by providing various unique learning opportunities in and out of the classroom. In 2022 our team visited 148 schools across Utah. Teaching 8,251 children in-person and 3,588 virtually, **reaching 11,839 children total.**

Annual Review

Upcoming Events



Day Of Giving: March 22rd

An extraordinary day of generosity to support HSU -the private shelter that saves the most lives in Utah. New in 2023: join us for a Day of Giving celebration party at a local SLC bar.



H.E.R.O. Spring Camp March 27th - 31st

During a typical day at H.E.R.O. (Humane Educators Reaching Out) Camp, children will participate in age-appropriate humane education workshops, presentations, games, and more.



Bark at the Moon: May 20th

Part doggie date night, part doggie festival, this is one of the local dog lovers' favorite events of the year! So bring your pup for a night of furry fun at the Gateway Plaza.

COMMUNITY SPONSORS



These are preliminary figures pending an independent audit of fiscal year 2022. Detailed audited financial statements are available at UtahHumane.org.

Humane Society of Utah's fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

FINANCIALS

Our lifesaving work is made possible by many sources including, but not limited to: generous contributions from our community; grants; corporate giving; bequests; planned giving; adoption fees, clinic fees, and humane education camps.

We believe in being good stewards of our financial assets and rely on the community to support our mission. We are committed to efficiency and transparency and are proud that \$0.81 of every dollar goes directly to our programs and services

37.9%

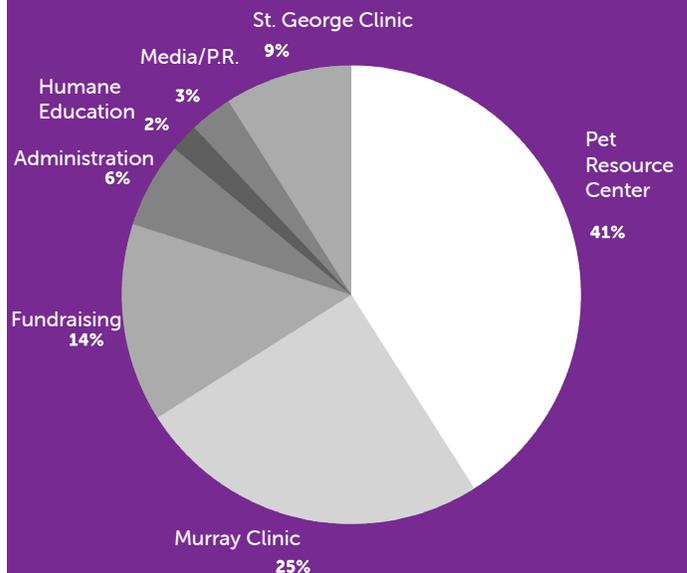
Contributions

62.1%

Programs & Services

Total Support from all Sources
\$8,975,406

Total Expenses
\$7,728,790



Rabbit

Increased in 2022



“We often have mothers and babies looking for a loving home to raise their young.”

The Humane Society of Utah has seen an increase in rabbit hoarding cases, and the community is struggling to keep up. HSU has taken in 783 since 2020. The average family surrenders 4 rabbits at a time, but some are surrendering up to 20 animals. Animal hoarding is a complex issue that encompasses mental health, animal welfare, and public safety. Most people do not intend to hoard or neglect animals, but with rabbits doing what rabbits are known to do, intentional and unintentional breeding quickly leads to hoarding conditions.

Cats and dogs are the most common victims of animal hoarding cases. Yet, HSU has seen a significant increase in rabbit hoarding in 2022. Hoarding typically begins with just a few unsterilized animals. However, breeding can become unmanageable when kept in close quarters, not accurately sexed, and separated. For example, rabbits can start reproducing as young as 4-5 months of age, gestate for 31 days, and have anywhere from 1-12 offspring.

When dealing with these numbers, animal hoarders cannot provide

Hoarding

minimal standards of care, including nutrition, sanitation, shelter, and veterinary care. Hoarding often leads to the over-breeding of animals, animal starvation, illness, and even death.

Some of the families HSU has worked with stated they wanted their children to experience the joys of raising baby animals, and then the breeding got out of hand. HSU encourages families to consider fostering instead. "We often have mothers and babies in all species looking for a loving home to raise their young. Fostering is incredibly rewarding as well as life-saving for these companion animals," according to Jolie Gordon, foster/volunteer manager at the Humane Society of Utah.

"The Humane Society of Utah discourages the public from purchasing unaltered rabbits from pet stores or fairs. Rabbits in pet stores are often separated too young from their mother, which puts them at a greater risk for health issues, said Juli Ulvestad, pet resource center director at HSU. In addition, they are frequently not sexed

accurately and do not come spayed, neutered, microchipped, or vaccinated like the adoptable rabbits at HSU. We have even had members of the public unknowingly purchase single pregnant rabbits from pet stores."

The Humane Society of Utah Admissions team works with pet owners who choose to surrender some of their animals and helps them adequately care for their remaining pets. We offer assistance through spay and neutering and sharing information about community resources. HSU has 9 rabbit kennels, and rabbits currently have an average on-site length of stay of 18 days. Rabbits make great pets. However, they take considerably longer than cats and dogs to get adopted. If you are interested in adopting a rabbit, visit www.utahhumane.org/adopt.

In severe cases that require police intervention, HSU will work with law enforcement to help get justice for the animals.

"Rabbits in pet stores are often separated too young from their mother, which puts them at a greater risk for health issues."



Cost of Care



\$30 a day

The cost per day to care for an animal at our Pet Resource Center. This includes, food, bedding, collars, walks and enrichment.



\$80 Dog Spay

The Humane Society of Utah spays and neuters every dog, cat, and rabbit that comes through our doors.



\$350 Disease Treatment

Many animals arrive needing treatment for contagious diseases, like parvo, panleuk, calici, or ringworm. While this can range from hundreds or thousands, the average cost is \$350 per sick animal.



\$800 for 8 weeks

Many puppies and kittens come into our care too young to be adopted. They are all given the appropriate time with mothers or foster homes until they are ready for adoption.



Lend a Paw
TO HELP
Pets in Need

Join our membership program!
Gain exclusive access to our print
newsletter, discounts on merch,
event tickets, and more!

There's no better way to help
animals in need than providing a
consistent and reliable
source of funding.

You'll feel great as a member of a
community dedicated to saving
lives.

Contact margaret@utahhumane.org
to become a member to help
the animals today.



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www.utahhumane.org

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Donate

Your donation helps provide shelter, medical care, and most importantly, the love animals deserve while they await happy new homes. utahhumane.org/donate

Become a Member

As a member of the Utah Humane Society, you will play a crucial role in helping every animal that comes into our care. Sustaining gifts are an easy and convenient way to change lives every month. utahhumane.org/membership-program

Match your gift

Many companies match their employees' charitable donations. Double your contribution through a matching gift from your employer. doublethedonation.com/utahhumane

Make a memorial or tribute gift

Honor a loved one or pet with a memorial or tribute donation. utahhumane.org/ways-give/memorial-bricks. Leave a legacy and make a lasting impact on animals by including the Humane Society of Utah in your will or estate plan. legacy.utahhumane.org

Contribute to our wish list

With more than 7,000 animals to care for every year, the Humane Society of Utah needs a substantial amount of supplies. You can donate needed items at any time. utahhumane.org/how-to-help/ways-to-give/wish-list

Donate a vehicle

Donate your car to care for animals in need. Your vehicle will be towed free of charge, and you'll be eligible for a tax deduction. utahhumane.org/donate/vehicle

Volunteer

Help make the world a more humane place for animals by volunteering with us. From walking dogs to assisting with adoptions, volunteers are integral to the work that happens every day at the Humane Society of Utah. utahhumane.org/volunteer

Foster

From the comfort of their own homes, our foster volunteers provide essential care for animals that aren't yet ready for adoption. utahhumane.org/foster

