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October/November 2025
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FLAGSTAFF-SEDONA DOG MAGAZINE

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Deadline Dates
12/1, 2/1, 4/1, 6/1, 8/1 and 10/1



Beau, Our Cover Dog

Name: My name is Beau. That means handsome in French. Although I do have a plethora of nicknames: Bobo, Beau-ritto, and Bozo, to name a few.

Hometown: I've spent a lot of time in Salt Lake City and Phoenix but I'm glad to call Prescott, Arizona my home. That's where my toys are.

Age: 4 years young.

Favorite brand of kibble: I'm currently trying out Nutra-Nuggets. I've recently discovered that I love it topped with beef broth.

Favorite people food: My parents think I'm weird but I love pieces of plain tortilla. And I will never pass up chicken, beef, or cheese. Well... anything you're eating, I want in on it.

Favorite toy: I couldn't live without my stuffed dinosaur. My Mom calls him Barney. He's about half the size of my body but not a day goes by that I don't drag him around the house.

Favorite outdoor activity: Camping, exploring and running free. I love love love snow and water. I wish I could wake up everyday and swim. My parents think it looks like a controlled drowning, but I know what I'm doing.

Favorite indoor activity: When my parents look like they're busy, I love to grab a tennis ball and roll it under the couch or table so they have to come rescue the ball for me.

Favorite nap spot: I have a nice cozy nook under the bed. Sometimes it feels like a mansion under there.

Fitness regimen: Rain or shine, my Dad takes me on two walks a day—morning and night. If I'm lucky enough, I get to stop for a play date with my girlfriend Roxy.

Describe your perfect canine pal: Shoutout Roxy! She's fun, energetic, and we love to play chase and wrestle. Bonus points when your canine pal's parent feeds you unlimited treats.

Describe your perfect day: I'd love to wake up to lots and lots of snow. My favorite challenge is searching for a tennis ball buried in snow. What's that? My parents are calling me inside? I'll pretend I didn't hear that. More snow!



Tucker's Take

Fall Morning & Failed Launch

Dad stood at the open patio door asking if any of the four in our pack needed to take one more trip outside before the pack-parents moved on to their tasks. Dad shivered a bit as a blast of cold whipped past him and into the living room.

"No takers, Dad," Hazel noted as she walked down the hallway to her musing area, mentally lamenting the slow start to her impending winter coat.

If any of the younger pack forgot to finish their business, they would have to wait and muster up a good pestering session aimed at the most likely of the two-leggeds to relent quickly.

The clouds were thick, low, and menacing. They came in with a north wind that took the habit of sauntering outside right out of our full-belly natures.

If Pru and Keira delayed and played distracting themselves, I have no clue. I uncharacteristically trotted quickly into the house to get away from the wind without gauging the progress of the younger pack members. Even though I possess the thickest coat, (white with apricot highlights), I don't like a brisk intrusion hitting my bloomers.

Since laying out in the sun was out of the question due to the weather, I decided to call a meeting with my Deputy Keira, and include our Conservation Officer Pru.

Keira didn't want to leave Mom's office, having found a warm sun-circle on the carpet.

"Let's get a move on Deputy," I said to Keira. "We haven't had a meeting lately, and it's the perfect day for it."

Keira barely opened her eyes to ask me to round up Pru first, *then* come and get her. She rolled up on her back to expose chest and inner withers, careful to stay inside the drifting circle of warmth on the carpet.

Leaving Mom's office and heading to where I last saw Dad, I could here repeating commands to "Stop it... Quit it... Stop Pru." Spoken softly, which meant two things. One, Pru is being a pill and Dad is trying to concentrate on something.

I turned the corner to find Pru repeatedly doing the following;

- Stand one pace back from Dad.
- Squish (loudly, intensely) tennis ball in mouth with head raised high.



- Flip head upward and release ball to land next to Dad on couch.
- Sit (politely), three quick seconds.
- Lower head.
- Leap forward to jam face into space between couch and cushion.
- Flip head up violently under where the ball is.
- Attempt to flip ball up in the air and to the right, closer to Dads hands on the keyboard.
- Back up, remove head from couch.
- Check progress.
- Repeat as needed.

I sat and watched four cycles of this until Pru achieved a successful launch.

Dad deftly caught the ball in mid-air and issued another, "Would... you... PLEASE... knock it off, Pru!"

He shoved the tennis ball behind the pillow he had behind him.

I took to an alert lay-down position knowing what was obviously about to happen.

Pru stood looking at the place where Dad's hand had placed the ball. Her head tilted from one side and slowly to the other as dog-math calculated distance, proper launch point and—most importantly—amount of thrust to be applied.

I looked up to see Dad deep in thought, tap-tapa'ing on the keyboard, and completely unaware of Pru backing up slowly to a proper launch point. I wondered if she was going to try for retrieval in one swift attack, or torpedo her face behind Dad and jackhammer her way be-

tween pillow and cushion until she found her prize.

Minutes ago, I got to see Dad keep typing even though Pru was lifting his leg (and the laptop to a forty-five degree angle) over and over again. Let's see if he can keep typing with a bucking bronco behind him.

Well, I never got the answer to that. Because just as Pru's left rear paw (the one with the pink toe) twitched slightly to signal an upcoming aerial display, Dad looked around his laptop screen at Pru and said, "Thanks by the way, Pru, in calming down. I appreciate it. Need to get this done."

Pru's countdown stopped instantly, and she turned to me.

I got up, slightly disappointed at missing a humdinger of a display on both their parts. Of course my faithful readers know that, as sheriff of our pack, I would have had to step in if things got out of paw. After the initial impact of course.

While I had Pru's attention, I told her to get the ball later because she couldn't bring it to the meeting we were about to have.

Uncharacteristically, without pouting or grumbling about it, Pru dutifully followed me to Mom's office to get Keira.

I decided last minute to have it in there. If we had it in the bedroom, Hazel might feel obliged to add her two cents a little too often. Last time the three of us had a meeting below the foot of the bed, Hazel got me so flustered with her constant interruptions from up above us that I barked, "AND just what would a hippy philosopher know about law enforcement matters?"

Hazel, thinking hippy was a reference to the shape or mis-shape of her hindquarters, looked back at said hindquarters and decided she wasn't going to be insulted "that way," and left the room.

"Meeting adjourned," I said watching Hazel saunter out into the hallway.

"What's a hippie?" Pru and Keira asked in unison.

"I don't really know," I answered. "Dad said one of his college professors was one."

Anyway, that's how the last meeting ended. I hoped maybe we'd have better luck here in Mom's office.

Just as we settled and I opened my mouth to begin, Pru asked if I was going to end this meeting by calling somebody a name and hurting their feelings like last time.

"No, that was a one-time kind of thing, Pru."

Pru sighed in disappointment and said that she learned what she thought would be a couple of good insults from Dad the other day when he was on the phone with something called a support line.

She went on to describe support as someplace you call and repeat words firmly and repeatedly, then sigh in exasperation and stare at the screen while punching numbers, then hold the phone to your ear in silence and pace around the kitchen island for a long time, then rapidly say the same story over and over in different ways, then stay silent for a while and pace, then tell the story again.

Then comes the best part. Dad says hello over and over again, looks down at the phone in disbelief... and... that's when the insults fly.

"Would you like to hear them, Tuck?"

I looked up at Pru, then down at the now window-sized sun square on the carpet that was almost be big enough for all three of us.

I looked back to Pru and told her, "Not at this time Pru."

I decided to give up and wing it. I told the two girls that the meeting was just to ask one of them to tell about something new that they had learned this week, and Pru had fulfilled that request.

"Meeting adjourned you two. Move over, Keira."

~Tucker Oso





**Events are subject to change.
Please contact the event sponsor
to confirm date and details.**

ONGOING ADOPTIONS & EVENTS

HIGH COUNTRY HUMANE

- Low Cost Vaccination Clinic. 1st Sat every month, 8a-10a. 11665 N US Hwy 89, Flagstaff. No appt necessary; 1st come/1st served; up to 40 cats/dogs total each clinic. Info: tinyurl.com/2wp6yxf4 (click on the calendar event); highcountryhumane.org, 928-526-0742.
- Monthly Dog Adoption Event—1st Sat every month, 11a-2p. Corner of Babbitt's Backcountry Outfitters, 12 E Aspen Ave, Flagstaff. Meet, play, adopt.

- Monthly Dog Adoption Event—2nd Sat every month, 10a-2p., Flagstaff Mall (inside by fireplace), 4650 US-89. Meet, play, adopt.
- Monthly Dog Adoption Event—Check calendar for dates/times: tinyurl.com/2wp6yxf4. Dark Sky Brewing Co., 103 W Birch Ave, Flagstaff. Meet, play, adopt.
- Pints and Poses—Puppy Yoga: monthly dog adoption event. Check calendar for dates, times, info & to register: tinyurl.com/2wp6yxf4. Dark Sky Brewing Co., 103 W Birch Ave, Flagstaff. All ages welcome at relaxing yoga session surrounded by wagging tails and playful energy. All puppies participating are looking for their forever homes. 50% ticket proceeds benefit High Country Humane.

YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY (YHS)
Onsite Adoptions and Lost & Found Department M-F Noon-5:30 by appt. Sat 11:30-4:30. 1625 Sundog Ranch Rd., Prescott. Please call for additional details or info 928-445-2666.

YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY THRIFT STORE
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visit cvequestrianpark.org, and click on **EVENTS** at the top of the page.

- Oct. 4, Open Schooling Show Buckle Series, 8 am start.
- Oct. 11, Open Driving Show for Horses, Minis & Ponies in the Driving Arena.

SUNSET RANCH OBSTACLE CLINIC & OBSTACLE CHALLENGE with Trainer Megan Bennett. Oct 11 & 12 at Horses with Heart. Info: Megan 602-565-1514

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Flagstaff-Sedona Dog magazine





Rescue Resources



For an expanded view of Rescue Resources, visit PrescottDog.com & FlagstaffSedonaDog.com

<p>AARF ANIMAL RESCUE 6639 S. Country Rd., Mayer aarfanimalrescue@gmail.com 928-925-7219, aarfrescue.net</p>	<p>COCONINO HUMANE ASSOCIATION 3501 E Butler Ave, Flagstaff 928-526-1076, coconinohumane.org</p>	<p>HUMANE SOCIETY OF WICKENBURG 4000 Industrial Rd, Wickenburg 928-684-8801 wickenburghumane.com</p>	<p>SAVING PAWS RESCUE SHEPHERDS & MALINOIS Glendale, 480-737-6089 savingpawsrescueaz.org</p>
<p>ARIZONA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE Tempe, 480-422-5366 azbcr.org</p>	<p>DESERT LABRADOR RETRIEVER RESCUE Glendale, 480-899-5227 dlrraz.org</p>	<p>LITTLE ORPHAN ANIMALS Mayer, 678-206-7505 orphananimals@aol.com</p>	<p>TUBA CITY HUMANE SOCIETY 928-793-2364, tubacityhumanesociety.org</p>
<p>ARK CAT SANCTUARY Parks, 928-635-5909 arkcatsanctuary.org</p>	<p>DOGTREE PINES SENIOR DOG SANCTUARY 1525 S Dogtree Lane, Prescott olddogs@dogtreepines.com 667-364-8733, dogtreepines.com</p>	<p>MISS KITTY'S CAT HOUSE 928-445-5411 misskittyscathouse.org</p>	<p>UNITED ANIMAL FRIENDS Prescott, 928-778-2924 unitedanimalfriends.org</p>
<p>BLACKHAT HUMANE SOCIETY Native American Reservation Animals 928-899-3942 blackhathumane@gmail.com</p>	<p>FREEDOM FRENCHIE RESCUE Mesa, (630) 345-0493 freedomfrenchierescue.org</p>	<p>PEOPLE FOR PAWS AZ RESCUE peopleforpawsaz.org info@peopleforpawsaz.org</p>	<p>VERDE VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY 1520 W. Mingus Ave, Cottonwood 928-634-7387 VerdeValleyHumaneSociety.org</p>
<p>BLUE MOON RESCUE & SANCTUARY 1851 E Perkinsville Rd, Chino Valley 928-925-7724, bluemoonrescue.org</p>	<p>HEELING HEELERS HEARTS Surprise, 623-226-2749 azblueheeler.com</p>	<p>PETEY'S PLAYGROUND 22448 State Highway 89, Yarnell peteysplayground@gmail.com 928-713-1375, peteysplayground.org</p>	<p>YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY 1625 Sundog Ranch Rd, Prescott 928-445-2666 yavapaihumane.org</p>
<p>CHINO VALLEY ANIMAL SHELTER 1904 Voss Drive, Chino Valley cvas@chinoaz.net, 928-636-4223 x7 chinoaz.net/164/Dog-Adoption</p>	<p>HIGH COUNTRY HUMANE 11665 N, US-89, Flagstaff 928-526-0742 highcountryhumane.org</p>	<p>RED ROSE INSPIRATION FOR ANIMALS Thriftique: 31 Bell Rock Plaza, Sedona info@redroseinspiration.org 928-282-5278, redroseinspiration.org</p>	<p>YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY EQUINE CENTER (928) 515-4947, Chino Valley yavapaihumane.org</p>
<p>CIRCLE L RANCH ANIMAL RESCUE & SANCTUARY Daytime 928-925-1926, Prescott Valley</p>	<p>HUMANE SOCIETY OF SEDONA 2115 Shelby Dr 928-282-4679 humanesocietyofsedona.org</p>	<p>RESCUE A GOLDEN OF ARIZONA Phoenix, 602-404-9663 golden-retriever.org</p>	<p>YAVAPAI HUMANE TRAPPERS ANIMAL RESCUE Chino Valley yavapaihumanetrappers.org</p>

<p>AREA DOG PARKS</p>	<p>FLAGSTAFF DOG PARKS Thorpe Park – 788 N Thorpe Road, Flagstaff Bushmaster Park – 3150 N Alta Vista Dr, Flagstaff</p>	<p>SEDONA DOG PARK April 1 thru Oct 1: 6am-8pm • Oct. 1 thru April 1: 7am- 7pm Turn north on Soldier's Pass Road off State Route 89A, Sedona.</p>	<p>COTTONWOOD DOG PARK AT RIVERFRONT PARK Dawn to Dusk Riverfront Park Drive & N 10th St, Cottonwood</p>
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Punkin Pie
By Sue Julian

Let me tell you a story about a very special cat named Punkin Pie. And no, I'm not spelling it wrong. He does go by Punkin most of the time. But he totally understands the question, "Who did that?"



Another thing is that Punkin is extremely jealous. Any time Penny or Bailey get some attention, there he is. He also seems to like my hair-clips and various items on my dresser and will hide them under rugs and bed pillows.

As I read that out loud, his ears perked up, and he gave me a look.



To start from the beginning, we go back about twelve years. We always had three cats in our family. At that time, we had Ginger the calico, Penny the grey-and-black tabby, and Bailey, my Siamese.

Just before Christmas, Ginger got sick and passed away. This was so hard on me as we loved her so much. One night, I had a dream that someone gave me an orange-striped kitten named Punkin.

After telling my husband about the dream, I decided to go check the Humane Society to see if they had any kittens for adoption. There were a lot to choose from: a beautiful collection of all colors and all very cute.

I told the woman who was helping me about my dream, and way in the back of the enclosure was a short-haired, striped kitten climbing all over the other kittens. We laughed at his determination, and I thought I should pick him up. I could hardly believe it when I looked at the name on the collar: it was Punkin.

As I held him, he looked right in my eyes as if to say, "We belong together." He snuggled next to me and had the loudest purr ever. You know I took him home. We thought about changing his name, but we realized he could only be Punkin Pie.

As he grew, I started to notice that he could tell if I was feeling sad or blue. Even if I didn't show it outwardly, he would get as close as possible, give me kisses, and comfort me as if he knew what was making me feel sad. I believe he could be my guardian angel.

Now to get to his mischievous side. He gets along well with my Siamese cat, Bailey. Bailey and Punkin have been close from the start. But he really likes to annoy Penny, who wants nothing to do with him.

I look over to my bed from my computer chair, and I see that he's covered himself completely under the top blanket. Only two sweet eyes are peeking out and looking my way. He is my sweet Punkin Pie.



Puppy Love at First Sight

Sedona is a destination for so many travelers from all over the world. Whether you come to hike the red rocks, chase UFOs, or unwind in a luxury spa, the area has something to offer everyone.

But the last souvenir two visitors from New Jersey thought they would find thousands of miles from home was a puppy. Sometimes the site doesn't matter, the connection is all that counts.

Imagine driving between Sedona and Flagstaff for the first time—taking in the views, navigating Oak Creek Canyon's switchbacks—and seeing two bouncing puppies on the side of the road.

A lot of people would keep going, assuming they belonged to a camp-

er or someone nearby, but not these travelers.

Worried for the puppies' safety and well-being, they leapt into action, scooped the pooches up, and continued driving the canyon.

They posted the pups on social media pages in hopes they could find their guardian or someone to take them in, but no one came forward.

After spending a few days with their fluffy companions in tow, their connection became one that distance wouldn't sever.

They brought the puppies to the Humane Society of Sedona in one last attempt to reunite the puppies with their family. There, the puppies would once again be posted as found animals on social media and our website. They'd also have to remain on stray-hold for a few days.

The puppies needed to be spayed/neutered and vaccinated, but other than that, they were hydrated, happy and safe, thanks to these incredible tourists with hearts of gold.

The two travelers had to return home before the puppies' stray-hold was up and their surgeries took place. But once the puppies became adoptable, and their finders were back home in New Jersey, it was decided the puppies would make the journey east to their forever homes.

Our team at HSS organized a remote adoption interview. The adopters in New Jersey hired a transport company to get the three-month-old darlings across the country, and the rest is history.



Cowboy (now Winston) landed with one of his original rescuers, and Montana (now Tana) found a home with a friend who saw the original social media post and fell in love from afar.

Winston and Tana are doing very well in their new homes in New Jersey. Winston is gaining weight and loves to go on long walks and play fetch. Tana spends her days with her new mama while she works from home. They live about 40 minutes

away from each other and had their first playdate since moving east, with many more planned in the future.

Rescue is never linear, and it's always full of surprises. Sometimes you fall right into it when you least expect it, like on vacation.

If you're interested in all the surprising ways you can help rescue animals in our community and beyond, please visit us at humanesocietyofsedona.org or give us a call at 928-282-4679.



Dumpster Diving is defined as the act of retrieving items in waste containers that are used for trash. While it's not usual to find living animals in dumpsters, it is sadly becoming more common. It's even less common when a dog takes it upon themselves to do their own dumpster diving. And that is where our story begins.

On the reservation near Burnside is a shopping center where grease is sometimes tossed into one of the trash dumpsters. A determined stray pup was apparently hungry enough that she figured her way into the bin. A dilemma arose when she realized she could not get out again.

Her urgent barking and crying caught the attention of a Blackhat volunteer who was working in one of the shopping center stores.

As the volunteer and some helpers investigated the situation, they found a chocolate-brown dog covered in grease and frantic to get out. We all know the likelihood of catching a greased pig, and their initial attempts were just that. They finally resorted to stacking cardboard up in a step-like fashion, and the poor pup was able to scramble out.

Catching her was another matter with her slick, matted fur but a trap was quickly retrieved by another dedicated Blackhat volunteer, and she was then safely caught. And it was discovered that she was very pregnant on top of everything else.

This caring volunteer followed through on her discovery and offered to house the pup in a shed at her home to protect mom and her future babies.

The mom—now named Dumpster Diva or DeeDee—took the trash-to-treasure saying to heart when she was rescued and brought to a safe place to have her beautiful babies.

She's still unsure about her new world, as she may not have known a kind hand in a long time. But the compassionate, patient care she is now receiving should bring her around to enjoy a better life.



Her babies are happy and healthy, and they too are looking for a foster who will teach them that life will only get better.

If you'd like to be part of Blackhat's happy endings, please visit blackhathumanesociety.org where you will find information on adopting, fostering or donating to these dogs and cats who desperately need a helping hand.



Thinking About Bringing Home Another Pet?

Bringing a new pet into your home is one of the most rewarding, heart-melting things you can do. But before you let those big eyes or wagging tails completely steal your heart, it's worth taking a moment to make sure you—and your current pet—are truly ready for this next step.

Every animal is different. Some love being around others and can't wait for a new playmate, while others are happiest being the only child. If your dog is the social butterfly at the park, chances are they'd welcome a buddy. But if your cat prefers long naps in peace and gives you the "How dare you" look when company drops by, a new roommate might not be their idea of fun.

And here's the thing: adding another pet doesn't just mean more love—it also means doubling the responsibilities. Two bowls of food, two sets of paws to clean up after, two personalities to train, and yes, double the toys scattered around your living room. It's a beautiful chaos, but it's still chaos.

Ask yourself if you have the time, energy, and patience to give both pets what they need. Do you have the hours in your day for extra walks, training sessions, or cuddle time on the couch when both are vying for attention? If your schedule already feels packed, think about what changes you'd need to make to fit in another furry family member.



Bert

And let's talk about money, because it's an important piece of the puzzle. A second pet means double the food, more trips to the vet, more flea and tick treatments, more grooming, and yes, more emergency "Oops, they swallowed what?!" visits.

Some people like to plan ahead with pet insurance or by setting aside a little savings just for their pets, and that's a smart move. It doesn't take away from the joy, but it does make life less stressful when those surprise costs pop up.

Space is another factor that sometimes gets overlooked. Every pet needs a safe place to retreat to, whether it's a crate, a cozy cat tree, or just a quiet corner of the house. Even the best of friends need time alone now and then.

If you live in a small apartment, can both pets have their own spaces without feeling cramped? Cats usually adapt well to smaller areas, while dogs often need more room to stretch out and play.

When it comes to choosing the right match, think compatibility over cuteness. A laid-back senior dog probably won't appreciate a high-energy puppy bouncing around, while two equally playful pups might keep each other entertained for hours. Sometimes opposites balance each other out, but at the end of the day, what matters most is finding a good fit for your current pet's personality and your lifestyle.

And then comes the most important part: patience. Bringing a new pet home is exciting, but pets don't instantly become best friends. That's where the 3-3-3 rule is so helpful. It usually takes three days for a new pet to start to relax, about three weeks for them to begin settling into your routine, and three months before they truly feel at home. Keeping that in mind can save a lot of stress and remind you that good things take time.

Introductions should always be slow and steady: let them sniff each other's scents before meeting face-to-face, keep the first interactions calm and positive, and celebrate the small wins along the way. Before you know it, those cautious glances turn into wagging tails and maybe even shared nap spots.

Now, let's talk about the best part: choosing your new family member. Across the country, thousands of homeless animals are waiting in shelters for someone to give them a chance at a home of their own. Right here at Yavapai Humane Society, we have so many amazing animals just waiting to meet you.

Some are older, some are younger, some are big, some are small. Some already know their tricks and commands, while others can't wait to learn with you. The beauty is that every one of them has something unique to offer, and with patience and love, you'll see their true personalities shine.

Opt to adopt, because when you adopt, you're not just changing the life of the pet you bring home—you're changing your own, too. The joy, laughter, and unconditional love they bring into your life is worth every bit of effort, every ounce of patience, and every little adjustment along the way.

So, if your heart and your home are ready, open the door to a second (or third or fourth) pet. The adventures, the snuggles, and the love that follow will be nothing short of magical.

Your new best friend is waiting. Are you ready to meet them?



Desert Labrador Retriever Rescue (DLRR) is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to finding loving, lifelong homes for displaced Labrador Retrievers.

We provide medical care and/or rehabilitation for the dogs and then match them with appropriate, permanent homes. We also provide Labrador Retriever breed and training information on request. Through public education, we strive to help eliminate animal overpopulation by requiring the spaying and neutering of pets.

We are a 501(c)(3) organization (EIN 31-1706380), and none of DLRR's Board of Directors or other volunteers are paid: 100% of the proceeds donated go toward helping us rescue, rehabilitate, train and rehome the Labs and Lab mixes that we take in.

Our annual fundraiser is scheduled for November 8 at Hunkapi Farms in Scottsdale. We invite you to attend to see the work we've done in 2025, meet some of our alumni dogs, and learn more about our mission—all while enjoying some nice refreshments and dinner in a wonderful outdoor setting. For tickets and more information, please visit corksandcollars.org.

Since DLRR started over 25 years ago, we've rescued over 5,000 Labs and averaged close to 200 saves each year. We'd love to see you on November 8 and have your help continuing this important work.

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CARTIER: A sweet 1yo female who weighs about 40 pounds. She enjoys the company of both people and other dogs. She is both leash and potty trained. Her adoption fee is \$0! High Country Humane Society/foster 928-326-0918



GYPSY: A 1yo female Australian Shepherd/French Bulldog mix. A sweet, gentle girl w/ stunning blue eyes. She would thrive in a peaceful home with patient adopters. She is loving and loyal. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



AMOS: A 2yo black & tan male, weighs 37lbs. Breed is unknown, but he's largely goofy charm/couch potato. Great adventure buddy. Leash & potty trained. Adoption fee \$0. High Country Humane/foster 928-310-0826



PHIL: A big, golden 2-year-old Shetland Sheepdog mix. He is sweet, gentle, and is learning how to walk well on a leash. He would love a home of his own. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



ROCKO: A sweet & gentle 7yo charmer. Affectionate, playful, smart & loyal. Knows basic commands, is potty trained. Best as an only dog. Walks well on a leash. Adoption fee \$0. High Country Humane Society/foster 909-737-2571



THOR: A 3-year-old male white Great Pyrenees mix. He is a gentle giant who thinks he is a lap dog. Playful. Loves cuddles and belly rubs. Enjoys hikes and couch snuggles. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



PETUNIA: A beautiful 2-year-old female, weight 45 pounds. She is very sweet and playful. She loves kids and gets along with everyone, including farm animals, even chickens. High Country Humane/foster 928-890-4416



STORMY: A 3mo female Labrador Retriever/Australian Cattle Dog mix. A whirlwind of puppy energy, playful & very smart. Learning new tricks every day. She will be right by your side always. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



TIMMY: A 9mo male. Weighs 40lbs. He is super friendly and has silly floppy ears that make people laugh. Loves everyone, including dogs. He is potty trained. High Country Humane/foster **PLEASE TEXT** 907-303-7764



BAGEL: A big, polite male goofball who weighs about 72 pounds. The perfect recipe of fun, sweetness, and play, ready to bounce and bring joy everywhere. He's loyal, eager to please. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



BUTTERSCOTCH: A smallish 7mo male. Weighs 20lbs. Smart, potty trained, walks well on a leash, and is brave. Loves to explore and play. The greatest snuggle buddy. High Country Humane Society/foster **PLEASE TEXT** 928-853-2903



BUDDY: This gorgeous guy is 10 months old and should weigh around 60 pounds full grown. He is energetic and fun. He would be an ideal hiking or jogging buddy, a perfect adventure dog. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



BUTCH: A senior black pug. He is affectionate, and still energetic. He loves short, slow walks. Needs daily eye drops but is otherwise a healthy little guy with a lot of love to give. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



HIRO: Hiro is handsome, young, and ready for adventures. About 1yo & looks like he'll weigh over 60lbs. full grown. He's affectionate, active, and would thrive with active adopters. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



JACKSIE: An adult 15-pound doll. He is an adult, maybe 3 years, and is an active shrimpie. He walks great on a leash. He is sassy, energetic, and loves being around his people. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



GINGER: A 2yo female brindle pit bull. Weighs about 35 lbs. Friendly & loyal. Low energy level. Needs to be the only pet in the house. Housebroken and crate trained. Blackhat Humane Society at blackhathumane@gmail.com



JUDGE: An adult male, gorgeous German Shepherd who will steal your heart. Ready for adventure, hiking & general fun. Affectionate and loyal. A bit overweight, but that's fixable. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



PATTY: A lovely 1yo female Chihuahua mix. Affectionate. Loves to go outside & watch the world go by. Also loves treats. Yavapai Humane Trappers at yavitrapppers@gmail.com or yavapaihumanetrappers.org/preadoption-application



SCRAT: A 1-year-old male blue heeler mix. He is full of love and fun and runs like the wind. Uses doggie door. Chases balls and toys. Good with kids, Would be a good agility prospect. BlackHat Humane Society 4lvdch@gmail



FINN: A male senior mastiff. He is a calm, gentle, BIG dog at 150 pounds. He is great with other dogs and humans alike. Yavapai Humane Trappers yavitrapppers@gmail.com



TANK: A male Chihuahua mix born in early June. Will likely mature at around 20lbs. Lives with dogs of all sizes & some sassy cats. Working on paper training. He is crate-trained. BlackHat Humane Society 4lvdch@gmail



RAVEN: A 12wo female black Labrador Retriever mix. Foster mom calls her a live wire as she's quite active. Housetraining is going very well. She will be a great family dog. Yavapai Humane Trappers yavitrapppers@gmail.com



MEEKO: An 8mo female Australian Cattle Dog/Blue Heeler mix. Affectionate, friendly, playful. Good with other dogs & cats. Is crate-trained. Walks well on a leash. Smart, learns easily. Blackhat Humane Society/foster at littlerita2@gmail.com



PENELOPE: A young female 5mo Beagle mix found w/a seriously broken leg but still wagging at her rescuers. Surgery repaired the leg, so she is sound. Walks well on a leash & is housebroken. Yavapai Humane Trappers at yavitrapppers@gmail.com



POOH BEAR: A large 7yo male Great Pyrenees mix. Gentle, low energy, loves pets, walks or rides in the car. Good w/other dogs and puppies, but not small animals. BlackHat Humane Society/foster at elmorromaynes@gmail.com



JAMISON: A 3yo mix breed, weighs 25lbs. Affectionate, likes to chill, sleep in the bed, or follow you around. He is housebroken. Yavapai Humane Trappers yavitrapppers@gmail.com

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Charlotte's Tail of More Than Four

By Kay Luckett

It's not how many cats a person is blessed with, but how many cats are lucky to be cared for by a real cat person. To be possessed by a cat is truly an honor. It might be a passion, a hobby, or an obsession, but it's always about pure love and service.

In my search to meet cat lovers, I have found one of the most dedicated and committed cat servants yet. Meet Charlotte, who spoke lovingly about her cat Merlin and her enthusiasm about being interviewed for this article.

Almost an hour into our interview, and much talk about Merlin, Charlotte informed me that she has not just one but actually a family of four senior cats. Meet Merlin, Simpson, Shaun, and Maxie, four cats aged 13 to 15. They include three ginger cats and one black (Merlin, of course); three boys and a girl.

Add to that Charlotte's busy schedule as a working professional counselor, former co-owner of Allegra Printers, and driving to Phoenix with her hubby Steve for specialty medical care appointments, and whew! I couldn't resist asking Charlotte what she does in her spare time, and the answer is she spends time with her beloved fur-babies.

Charlotte grew up in Michigan with a family dog. Later, as an adult living in North Carolina, she experienced the sort of loneliness that only a pet can fill. She adopted Samantha, a female black cat who came to her un-neutered.

One day, Samantha bolted out the front door. When she returned home, she surprised Charlotte by giving birth to four black and white kittens.

When Samantha was four years old, a black & white kitten named Hobie arrived to keep her company. Charlotte learned her lesson and immediately



Charlotte, Merlin and Simpson

took Hobie to have him fixed. Hobie and Sam got along famously and were loving companions for years.

Charlotte explained that cats just come to her. Samantha stayed for fourteen happy years. There were many more cats, including a boy named Lucy.

Currently, Merlin (age thirteen) came to Charlotte as a foster kitten from the vet. He was born without a bladder and the amazing vet operated on Merlin when he was three weeks old to construct a bladder.

Poor Merlin was supposed to wear the Cone of Shame for several weeks while he healed, but at five weeks he successfully removed the cone. He continued to grow into a very mischievous cat.

Charlotte says that Merlin is still always into something, which includes wailing at night and stealing snacks. He proudly wears his pumpkin and Santa suits for the holidays.

Charlotte's three ginger tabbies are Simpson and Shaun (both boys), and then Maxie, their little sister. Each has a story, a personality, and a definite cat's way of doing things.

Simpson came as a nine-month-old kitten, was diagnosed with cancer, and had his left hind leg amputated. So he's the proud tripod kitty of the pack.

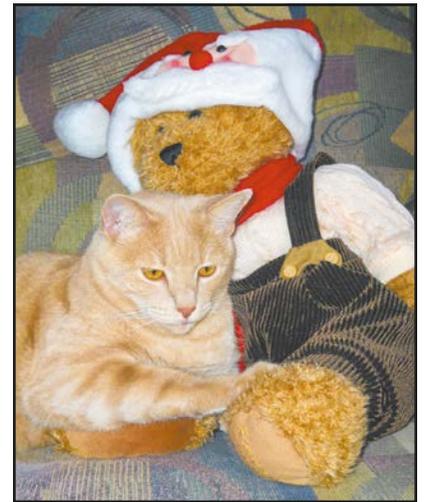
Charlotte says that Simpson purrs so loudly that when the vet tries to listen to his heart, she has to scare him to stop the purring. Then the vet can hear his heart, which beats purrrrfectly. He continues to get a healthy diagnosis every year.

Shaun also arrived 15 years ago as a result of Charlotte's service at Ark Cat Sanctuary in Parks, Arizona. She went there to help with the cats and other duties, and she met Shaun who had a URI infection. She waited until he was healed, and then took him home as a playmate for the other kitties. Ark has over 100 kittens and cats, and once again the cat magic worked: Shaun, the one cat who came forward for Charlotte, stood out among the other 100.

Maxie is the little orange tabby girl of the pack. Charlotte says at eight pounds and 14 years old, her fur is so soft, "When I pick her up, she slides thru my fingers like a mink stole". Also affectionate, she competes with the other cats for an available lap.

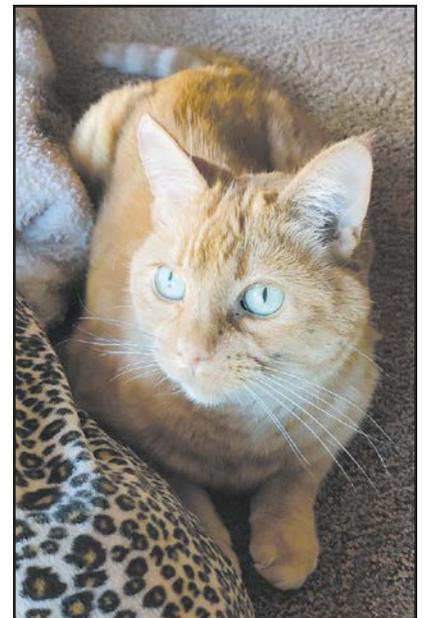
Charlotte and her hubby Steve are true cat people. One summer, they had eleven cats at home while Steve was in the hospital with pneumonia.

Charlotte says it was a hard summer with four of the eleven as fosters, and that they were hard to let go of in spite of her crazy schedule between home and hospital. Love, tolerance, and lots of extra work was the code for that season.



Simpson on Santa's Lap

Charlotte explains that one of the many reasons she adores felines is, "They are affectionate, and so am I." She takes solace and comfort when petting them. For her, this is an automatic calm, no matter what's going on.



Maxie at the Patio Door

Cats continue to seek her out, and she welcomes them with an open heart. She loves caring for them, trying to predict their wants and needs, and gets used to the oddities and demands of each unique cat.

In a world where life is as completely unpredictable as cats, aligning with their emotional and physical needs offers mutual comfort and trust. It been said that one of the highest spiritual frequencies is the purring of a cat.

Charlotte's cat life shows how to keep them purring well into their senior years.

Meow.



Shaun wiggles himself into every empty container



Merlin & Shaun talking



AJA: A beautiful brown tabby female with big green eyes. A quiet cat w/ the sweetest heart. She loves cozy hiding spots, soft blankets, and the peaceful company of an understanding human. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



ISABELL: A 4yo white-with-black female. Very affectionate, playful lady w/no wish to be outside. Loves birdwatching from windows, napping in sunshine, and hanging out with her people. High Country Humane Society 928-526-0742



MERLIN: A 1yo cream male w/ the fluffiest coat. New to human contact, but he has potential. He will thrive in a quiet, patient household with loving people. He is curious and observant. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



JUSTIN: A most handsome 6yo male tabby. His easygoing personality & affectionate nature make him a wonderful companion for anyone looking for a sweet, mellow friend to brighten their days. High Country Humane Society 928-526-0742



RAY: A 4yo orange male cat. Very shy, looking for a patient and loving home. Has a heart full of love once he feels secure. He prefers quiet places, quiet humans. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



SCARLET: A female grey tabby about 12 weeks old. For further information, please contact the Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



PARSEC: A 5yo dark tortoiseshell female. Life hasn't been easy for her, so she's a bit shy. Needs a patient adopter who will give her time to trust. Curious & affectionate when she feels secure. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



CHAT: A 2-year-old silver tabby with the most stunning green eyes. For more information, please contact the Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



DAIZEY: A sweet white with gray, 1yo female. Affectionate, playful, & talkative once she gets to know you. Plays fetch, loves to splash in water, will learn tricks. Great companion for kids. High Country Humane Society 928-526-0742



BENNI: A cute male kitten, brown tabby with white trim and the cutest dark nose. For more information, please contact the Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



PANDORA: A beautiful 4-year-old female tabby who is both sweet and independent. Pandora would thrive in a home where she has safe outdoor access like a catio, and a cozy indoor spot. High Country Humane Society 928-526-0742



CONALI: A charming male black tuxedo kitten with one white leg and white whiskers. For more information please, contact the Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-738

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Flagstaff-Sedona Dog magazine



Prescott Dog magazine

Powered By Passion: Against All Odds

Story by Rita Thompson Tinsley. Photos by Patti Morabito.



Alyssa and Rosie, partners on the run

The equestrian sport of Barrel Racing combines the agility of directing a horse around three barrels in a clover-leaf pattern with as much speed as that horse can muster. As a timed event, the horse and rider with the lowest amount of time wins. Fast horses and daring contenders make this sport super exciting to watch and exhilarating to ride.

Alyssa Tudor, who lives in Fort Mohave, Arizona, sat upon a horse at the age of one and was forever hooked on horses. She began barrel racing at the age of eleven and fell in love with the sport despite unique challenges. Tudor is a childhood cancer survivor, left paralyzed in both legs after a neuroblastoma tumor permanently damaged her spinal cord.

At a very early age, with an invincible spirit encouraged by her mother, Ro-Jeanna, Alyssa made it clear that she was going to manage her life without allowing her life's condition to manage her. Living life on her terms meant

that she would not be deprived of following her dreams.

The wheelchair she uses is abbreviated, so that she can easily slip in and out of it. She climbs the side of her trailer to groom her horse or to administer a supplement when needed. Her arms are strong and able, allowing her to move around easily and quickly.

For the record, good barrel racing demands teamwork, which means that horse and rider work together in sync, partners in performance. Such is the case with Alyssa and Rosie.

A little over six years ago Rosie was discovered at a kill pen in Texas. The red roan was transported to Phoenix, where she and Alyssa met. Rosie's journey was likely scary: she was taken from her home, moved to another state, and thrown together with other horses unfamiliar to her.

When Alyssa got her first glimpse of the mare, she didn't hesitate. She boldly wheeled herself into Rosie's area and got to know her face-to-face. They were instantly attached. There was no doubt that this was the horse for Alyssa, so Rosie went home with Tudor, and the training began.

As unique as Alyssa is, so is her saddle which is customized with a seatbelt for safety and security. Although leg cues are generally used in barrel racing, Rosie is specifically trained to follow Alyssa's

body language. Working as a teammate, she accurately performs the barrel routine.

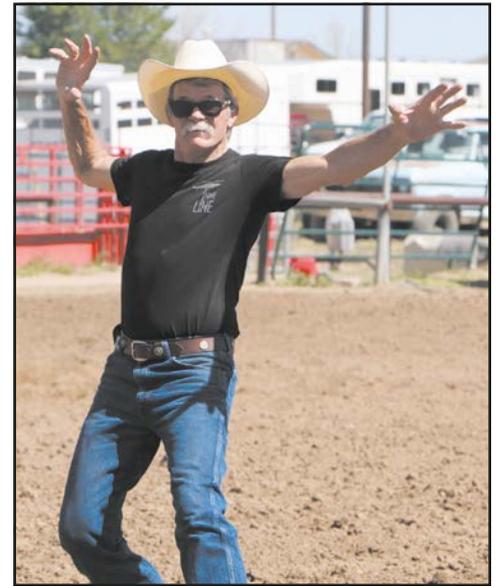
Serving as Alyssa's one-man crew, her grandfather Norman eagerly drives Alyssa, trailering Rosie to the events and assists in all the tasks required. This dynamic duo has taken home championships in pole bending as well as barrel racing, and have celebrated many wins over the years.

Aside from their competitions, Alyssa and Rosie are the best of friends. Rosie is especially protective of Alyssa, and on occasion has proven her devotion. When a dog came after them, Rosie kicked at the varmint until they were safe. When another rider tried to pull Alyssa out of her saddle as a prank, Rosie positioned herself so that Alyssa would be safe.

As royalty goes, Alyssa has been named Rodeo Queen a number of times around her community. In 2022, she was crowned Colorado River Round Up Rodeo Queen in Needles, California, and was 2024 Andy Devine Pro Rodeo Queen.

As all-around sportsters, Alyssa and Rosie enjoy gymkhanas, trail rides, have tried jumping and have participated in a cattle round up.

All in all, this doesn't describe someone whose other ride is a chair on wheels.



Norman, a one-man crew

Alyssa Tudor at twenty is purely no nonsense, a driven force of nature who is not willing to settle for less. At 4'2" and 75 pounds, there is no one I know who sits taller in the saddle. There is no weight or measurement that calculates character. And there is no prouder mare than the one Alyssa calls her own.



Before the race. Alyssa in her lucky hat (L), and the author (R).



Rosie



Focused on the win

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Spaghetti Dogpiles: Symbiotic Sleeping for a Healthy Pack

By Solana Kline: honorary four-legger and staunch supporter of wags everywhere

SPAGHETTI DOGPILES: SYMBIOTIC SLEEPING



Pre-dogpile trail adventures.

Budding sunrises work their way through the piñon shade that's kept us sleeping. Being it's Summer, we're out in the camper in the high country, far from concrete heat, near trails and mountain tops and memories.

"Cuckaroooooooo! Cuckaroooooooo!" I gently chorle the customary wake-up call to the pack from under the covers.

Betts (aka Snuggess) lifts her head perhaps only a micrometer from her down nest, only interested in leaving the snuggle-pile for the breakfast bell.

A head-sized blob rises up under the blankets, reminiscent of a Nessy sighting from afar. It is Mickey (aka Sir Mingsalot). He is minorly inquisitive but not inordinately concerned. Not enough to emerge from the undercover world of the dogpile.

The hounds both stretch all their appendages simultaneously and nestle back into the snug. After all, it's still before 7 a.m., and we are above 9,000 feet where the mornings hold their cool for another couple hours. This is my favorite time of day, that morning stillness you don't find anytime else.

Mickey has wedged his curled back as close as possible into the bend of my knees. Betts maintains her comical use of the human pillow and has nestled into my arm nook. This is a peace I am deliberately savoring these days with these two.

We didn't always sleep together like a giant pile of spaghetti. This is a recent development in our pack dynamics. It's recent to the last few years, anyway. All it took was two months sleeping mashed in a tiny



Cozy stations in full effect.



The pack that snores together stays together.

tent and sardine-sidecar on our back-country motorcycle trip a couple of summers ago.

Before that, I was an antsy sleeper with any tiny noise or movement waking me up. As such, I relegated the pups to their plush pillowy beds under the unusually high bed-frame, their own little beast cave.

I would yell "Dogpile!" as soon as I woke up each morning, and they would come lofting up onto the bed for morning snugs and pets before the busy-ness of the day rushed in. But my goodness, was I missing out. And our pack dynamics were missing out, too.

Maybe it's the wisdom and gratitude that comes with age, or maybe it's the immense pack bonding we did on the motorcycle trip. Either way, the overnight spaghetti dogpile is our new normal, and I can't imagine it any other way.

With this new practice, I have noticed momentous shifts in our pack dynamics, especially in regards to trust and relationships.

The pups held a bit of distance from one another in their younger years due to their pre-adoption traumas. They now flop willy-nilly across and atop one another (and me!) Betty even sleeps directly on top of Mickey—who thoroughly delights in his newfound ability to have comradery, trust, and companionship. It is a daily hoot to see what warped configurations they (and me!) get into during the night.

Betts has no qualms laying across your neck on the pillows like the true pillow princess she is. Mickey used to have a firm aversion to sleeping near a human or another hound until our smooch piles. Now he is the snuggliest of all of us and will joyfully roll onto his back and rub his face around the cozy blankets, nestling in as close as possible to whoever is nearest.

Sleeping together as a pack is an ancient practice, beginning as long ago as when humans and dogs began working together to survive in the wilds. There is cultural and archaeological evidence dating this cross-species co-sleeping back to the earliest dog-human domestication practices, anywhere from 15,000 to 30,000 years ago.

Before all the modern human technologies like central heating, walls, and door locks, smooching in together to sleep meant everyone stayed safer and warmer. "Three dog night" isn't a saying for no reason.



Spaghetti dogpiles.



Do I hear breakfast?



Full Betty squish.

In the colder global climes, there are rich histories of humans adding more dogs under the covers the colder the night got. Dogs on average have a much higher body temperature than humans at about 104 degrees.

It's more than just an effective winter foot-warming strategy; sleeping together quickly and deeply builds pack bonding and health in ways that no other ritual can. Wild dogs and wolves sleep together in dogpiles, backs and/or limbs touching. It builds community, helps everyone sleep better, releases endorphins, and causes everyone to dream more often.

Pack sleeping is natural for canines, and for humans. Early humans slept in groups for the same reasons as dogs: security, bonding, belonging and community, affirming hierarchy, and warmth. Our pups consider we humans as members of their packs, and hopefully we consider them our packmates, too.

Logically, it makes sense that we'd all sleep together and—quite literally—have each other's backs. Sleeping together means pack safety which facilitates better and deeper sleeping for everyone.

Maybe we should call it collaborative sleeping or symbiotic sleeping since, no matter our species, we all experience the physical, psychological, emotional, and communal benefits of sharing the bed.

Sleeping together as a pack allows for bonding and affection that wouldn't otherwise happen. There's even research demonstrating that humans AND dogs release oxytocin (the feel-good hormone) when they sleep together—meaning that symbiotic sleeping contributes greatly to the whole health of all the species in our pack.

As I write this, the slightest snore rumbles out of Betty, wedged between three pillows and the wall. Micks is flicking his paws and tail, sending out a quarter-strength sleep howl, deep in dreamland. It's a delight to know them in these ways; to see us all grow closer and more attuned to one another because we snuggle.

These dogpiles are essential to being a true pack. It means letting our guard down, a necessary step in learning one another as trusted and known individuals living our wonder-filled lives together, not just as generic members of some other species.

I do think that for the whole pack there is a very real healing that takes place when we sleep together. It is heart and brain healing, the ultimate rebuilding of trust, compassion, and companionship. Where we let go of our past and wriggle into the spaghetti dogpiles for just a few more minutes before the alarm goes off....

Until next time, happy trails and happy tails!

No Room at the Inn: The Animal Welfare Crisis Across the Southern U.S.

By Cindy Lamont, Founder/President, Dogtree Pines Senior Dog Sanctuary, Prescott, Arizona

Shelters are full. Rescues are overwhelmed. And our streets—especially across the southern United States—are now home to thousands of abandoned, suffering animals with nowhere to go. In Arizona, California, Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, and beyond, the cries of neglected dogs and cats echo in neighborhoods, rural roads, and alleyways. The scale of the crisis is staggering—and it's only getting worse.

Animals are being abandoned at alarming rates. Some are left behind by individuals lacking compassion, who toss their pets aside like yesterday's trash. Others are given up by people who genuinely tried to find help—calling every shelter, every rescue, and every humane society, only to be told the same thing: "We're full."

It's not because people have stopped caring. The problem is rooted in a deeply inadequate shel-

tering infrastructure. No significant kennel capacity has been added in decades, despite explosive human population growth. In Maricopa County, Arizona alone—home to nearly five million people—there are just two public shelters. The math doesn't add up. And the animals are paying the price.

What's worse, the general public remains largely unaware of the scope of this crisis. Many turn a blind eye, not realizing, or perhaps not wanting to see, that the animal suffering is happening right outside their doors.

In cities like ours, local rescues report receiving five to ten calls or emails every single day from people trying to surrender pets. There's nowhere for them to go. Those in animal rescue described the situation as "emptying the ocean one spoonful at a time."

There are also demographic realities we must face. The aging ba-



Daisy. Now available for adoption at Dogtree Pines.

by-boomer generation is moving into assisted living facilities, many of which don't allow pets. With rising costs and declining health, many seniors can no longer care for their beloved animals. As they pass on, their pets are often left behind—orphans in need of urgent help, but with no one willing or able to step up.

Meanwhile, in the southern states, the situation has reached near third-

world levels. Stray dogs and cats wander the streets, dodging traffic, starving, or suffering from exposure to the extreme elements—burning heat in the summer and freezing temperatures in the winter. Local rescues want to help, but there is simply no room at the inn.

To make matters worse, donations are down. The same rescues being relied upon to manage this crisis are struggling to survive themselves. Without community support, they cannot keep up.

It is time to engage. It is time to act.

We need the community—we need YOU—to step in and step up. Adopt. Foster. Donate. Spay and neuter. Volunteer. Speak up. Be a voice for the voiceless.

We cannot continue to look away. The animals are suffering, and without collective action, this crisis will deepen. The time is now. Your help is critical.

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Fostering a Shelter Dog: Your Nurturing Could Save a Life

Story by Stacey Dexter. Photos courtesy of the Verde Valley Humane Society.

Earlier this year, I made the choice to foster a dog from the Verde Valley Humane Society (VVHS) in Cottonwood, Arizona. I wrote about this dog, this sweetie pie, in this publication a few editions ago.*

Like so many animal shelters in the United States, VVHS is usually full to the brim with animals of all ages and breeds. Since I'm allergic to cats and didn't want to foster puppies, a larger dog was the choice for me.

I fostered Salsa, a three-year-old Staffie/Pittie mix for two months. She had been in the shelter for an entire year. Her spirits were down, and she had consistently dropped weight.

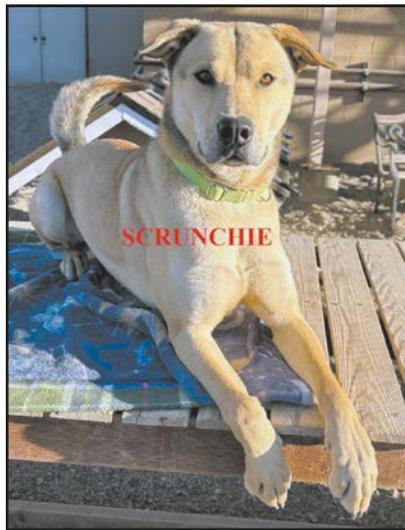
I could choose how long or short a time to house her. To ensure compatibility, it was required that my dog meet Salsa before we took her home. The shelter provided health-care, food, a leash/collar, and support.

After medical testing, it was determined that shelter stress was the cause of Salsa's malaise. This can happen even in the very best of shelters: the noise, limited time with humans, and confusing circumstances can exhaust any domesticated animal. To alleviate the stress, being fostered by loving folks is a balm that goes so much further than we can comprehend.

Dogs and cats who stay at shelters for months (or even years) may bond with the incredibly loving and caring shelter staff and volunteers. However, nothing beats a true home that can provide the most consistent amounts of interaction and affection, overall stability, and precious peace and quiet.

I had always had dogs but had never fostered one, which is weird. But now, with a remote job and a very different lifestyle than in my past, I'm able to lend a hand to dogs in need.

There wasn't anything wrong with Salsa. She was brought into the shelter with eight puppies. After



weaning them, they were all adopted. But Salsa was left behind.

At forty pounds, and though not overly large, she was still considered a big dog. Her size may have been a factor, but she was wary of people, acted shy, and wouldn't open up. Some people want a dog to come bounding towards them with a big, happy grin, and Salsa wasn't performing as expected.

Also, bigger dogs can take the longest to be adopted, especially in a retirement-rich area where folks are older. They are sometimes not a good match for a larger, potentially stronger dog.

My time with Salsa included teaching simple commands, scheduled eating and exercise times, playtime in the yard and—after two weeks of getting to know her—a play date with some of my friends and their dogs.

Through observation, interaction, and video evidence, I was able to provide the staff with valuable information. I reported on Salsa's temperament, her socialization style with other dogs, prey-drive level, any aggressive inclinations (like

food aggression), barking, and any other correctable behaviors.

Was I concerned that I could fall in love, or that she could bond to me? Yes. Did it happen? For me it did, but my own dog has a few significant illnesses to manage, so I came into the experience knowing that I could not permanently take on another dog.

This mindset help-ed, but it was still difficult when she left. Why? Fact: I'm human and love dogs more than most people.

This doesn't mean that you shouldn't become an animal foster parent.

I've heard others say, "Oh, I couldn't do that. I'd get too attached." Let your own feelings go and think about the animal. My sadness or discomfort is and was *nothing* in comparison to the loneliness, fear, and hopelessness that a large dog can experience after being in an animal shelter for too long. It truly was the best experience, and I will do it again.

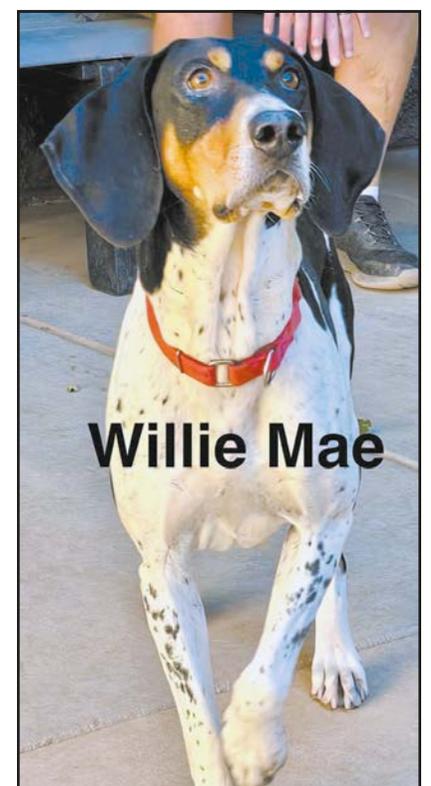
Salsa was a delIght when she came out of her shell. She had a happy, loving personality and just

needed to be shown patience and given some time to be herself and still be loved. It was an honor to be that person for her.

Salsa was adopted shortly after our time together. By all accounts, she's doing well.

Fostering a shelter dog is an experience that I wholeheartedly recommend. The satisfaction you'll feel knowing you helped a dog find a furever home will fill your heart. Truly.

Autumn is here, so make fostering a dog your new volunteer project. Call to inquire at your local animal rescue today.



* Read "A Little Side of Salsa" in *Flagstaff-Sedona Dog's* April/May 2025 edition at: tinyurl.com/3ahnuafn



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Rules for adopting a rescue



THE FIRST 3 DAYS

They may feel overwhelmed

They may not want to eat or drink.

They may be scared and unsure of what is going on around them

They want to curl up in their cage or hide under the table

They are not comfortable enough to be "themselves"

They begin to test their limits

AFTER 3 WEEKS

They begin to settle

They begin to settle into a routine

They feel more comfortable

They let their guard down and can begin to show their true personality

They begin to realize this could be their forever home

Behavior problems may begin to appear

They discover their environment

AFTER 3 MONTHS

They are finally completely comfortable in their new home

They achieve a complete sense of security with their new family

They build trust and true bonds

They establish a routine



Unleashed in Champagne Country

Discover dog-friendly Épernay. From vineyard tours to riverside walks

By Stacey Wittig

Plenty of visitors strolled their furry travel companions along the Avenue de Champagne in Épernay, France, last month. I was there to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the chic boulevard, said to be the richest avenue in the world.

If you love bubbles, the place to be is in France's Champagne region. But why is this wide boulevard with so much pedestrian space considered the richest in the world? The secret lies below.

Since the late 18th century, Avenue de Champagne has attracted renowned houses such as Moët & Chandon, Mercier, Perrier-Jouët, and others. Beyond the grand facades, iron gates, and manicured gardens, these maisons are famous for the chalk cellars stretching beneath the street. Millions of bottles of Champagne rest there, making the avenue the richest in the world.

Your pooch will love the green spaces and casual patio vibe at the Champagne Houses as much as you do. Wander in and out of the maisons for tastings and a peek inside. While dogs are generally welcome in outdoor spaces, most houses don't allow them in underground cellars or tasting rooms.

One exception is Champagne Mercier, which welcomes canine friends on its vineyard-style tour. Their "Stroll by the Vineyards" experience includes a cellar visit, tasting, and a guided walk through the adjacent vineyard. Pets are also welcome in the boutique and tasting areas—though, for hygiene and



Sniffing out Maison de Venoge on Avenue de Champagne. Photo by Stacey Wittig.



Promenading on the richest avenue in the world. Photo by Stacey Wittig.

safety, dogs may only enter the cellars if carried in a bag or carrier.

Dining Out with Your Dog

French restaurants and cafés are generally dog-friendly, often allowing pups inside as well as on terraces. Still, it's polite to ask first. I recommend making reservations and mentioning your furry travel buddy when booking. Some eateries even set out a Toutou Bar (a water bowl for Fido).

Do note: while many spots in Champagne country are welcoming, museums, cathedrals, and historic monuments often have restrictions.

Easy Outdoor Time in Épernay

Take long walks in the surrounding parks, scenic areas, and along the Marne River that flows through town. The Halte Nautique (boat harbor) on the Marne makes a charming starting point for a peaceful riverside stroll or picnic with your four-legged pal.

Pet-Friendly Accommodations

We enjoyed our stay at Le Relais Du Vigneron, a Best Western property in a typical Champagne village. The owners, fifth-generation winemakers, produce Charles Pugeoise Champagne, which you can taste at the hotel's celebrated restaurant or in their maison in the medieval village of Vertus. Their woman-chef crafts inventive dishes with fresh, local produce. Pets are welcome for a supplement of only €15 per night.

La Briqueterie, a Beauvallon Hotel, accepts pets of any size (€50 per pet, per night). We enjoyed din-

ner there: both the service and the magical grounds were impeccable.

For a view of the vineyards, stay at Hôtel-Restaurant Château d'Étoges, a 17th-century castle classified as a Historic Monument. With your pooch on a leash, you can wander the château park together. Cats and dogs are welcome in bedrooms (€30 per night) and in the brasserie.

As in the U.S., let the hotel know at booking that you're bringing a pet.

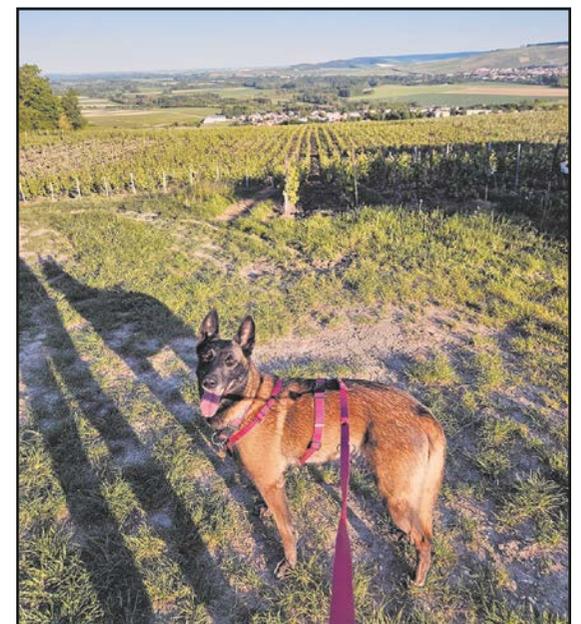
Épernay charmed us with its approachable, casual vibe in the heart of Champagne country. I can't wait to return for the dazzling Habits de Lumière festival (December 12–14, 2025), with its illuminations, festive parades, gourmet delights, and, of course, champagne tastings. It's one of Épernay's most anticipated annual events.

So raise a glass—and a paw—because in Épernay, both you and your pup can savor the sparkle of Champagne country.

Stacey Wittig is a travel writer based outside Flagstaff. Follow her adventures at: UnstoppableStaceyTravel.com.



Tasting in the Maison Perrier-Jouët gardens. Photo by Stacey Wittig.



Neya in the vineyards near Épernay. Photo courtesy Aurélie Mercier.



Outdoor dining at Brasserie De La Banque in Épernay. Photo by Stacey Wittig.

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