

Flagstaff-Sedona Dog magazine

Also Serving Camp Verde, Cottonwood, Jerome, & NAZ

October/November 2026

FlagstaffSedonaDog.com



**Introducing
Our Cover Dog
Bella Luna**

Angels & Adoptions

Paws & Policies

Big Sky, Big Adventures

Pet Safety Tips

TO A GOOD HOME
FREE
ALWAYS



Highlighting Our Local Rescue Community For 15 Years ♦ CANINE • FELINE • EQUINE



Bolt
 4 years 5 months old
 At YHS since 3/25



**Yavapai
 Humane
 Society**



Hoon
 6 years old
 At YHS since 8/25



Panther
 8 years old
 At YHS since 6/26



Maverick
 8 years old
 At YHS since 8/26



Hermes
 8 years old
 At YHS since 7/25



Sandy
 7 years 6 months old
 At YHS since 2/26



Tiny
 7 years 7 months old
 At YHS since 1/26



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Flagstaff-Sedona Dog

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FLAGSTAFF-SEDONA DOG MAGAZINE

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It's easy to enter your furry best friend!

- 1) Choose a backdrop for your picture. Set your camera on large or high and capture a quality shot of your canine pal.
- 2) Send your picture to:

INFO@REDDOGPUBLISHING.NET

Please include your name, dog's name, address and phone with your entry. Entries without owners info will not be accepted.

Winner receives:



- 1) 50 copies of Flagstaff Sedona Dog
- 2) A \$50. donation made to the rescue of your choice, in your name.
- 3) A personalized social media post congratulating your dog as the winner and an electronic copy of the printed cover



Deadline Dates - 1/1, 3/1, 5/1, 7/1, 9/1 and 11/1

All entries are judged for the edition submitted..
You can enter for EVERY edition! One entry per dog, per edition.

Bella Luna, Our Cover Dog

Name: Bella Luna

Hometown: Santa Clarita, California

Age: Three

Who took your winning photo:
My mom Carly

Favorite brand of kibble: Dinner and breakfast, it's The Farmer's Dog—fresh food for me.

Favorite people food: Definitely cheese and fruit—except for blueberries

Favorite toy: My fishbone! I will sit for hours chewing it.

Favorite outdoor activity: I love to run and I love playing fetch even though I don't bring the ball back and I make my mom chase me.

Favorite indoor activity: Playing with my brother, Fenway, and stealing people-shoes.

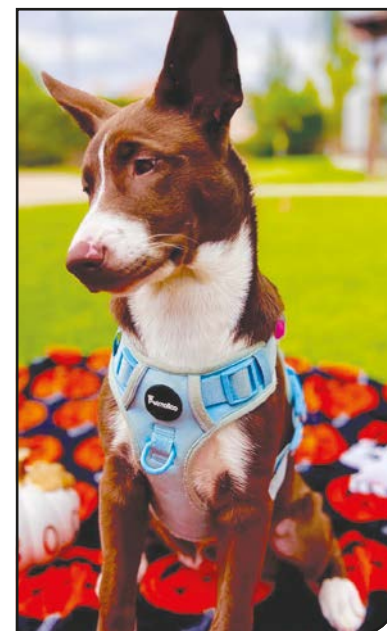
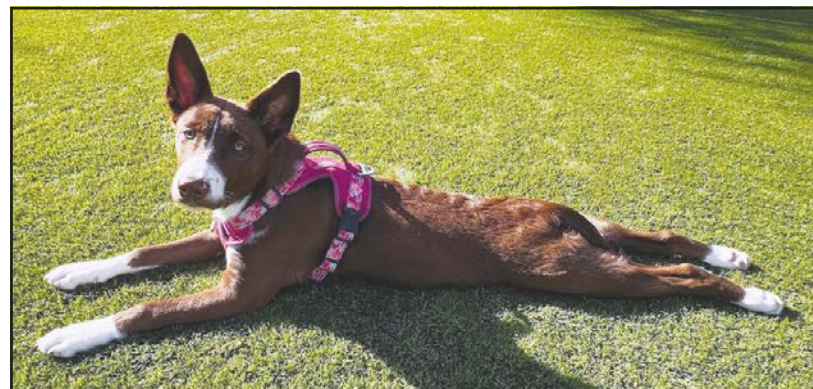
Favorite nap spot: On the couch or in my mom's bed curled up in a little ball.

Fitness regimen: I love to run after all types of animals and scream, which is how I stay so lean.



Describe your perfect canine pal:
My brother, Fenway, who's a Lab. I love getting mad at him when he's getting petted and I'm not. I start snapping, and then he plays with me.

Describe your perfect day: Wake up, get my morning biscuit, eat breakfast, go on a walk, chase some birds, play some fetch, take a LONG nap until dinner, eat dinner, steal my mom's shoes.



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NEVER MISS ANOTHER DOG!



Keira's Korner



Book 'Em, Doggo

"No, no, no, just your muzzle, just use your muzzle like on the patio door and be quiet, I want to surprise Dad."

I was anxious watching Pru trying to apply pressure at the proper angle to open the glass-door bookcase in the hall. Pack Mom was in the shower, and I wanted to surprise Dad after she left to go to the store.

After concentrated effort, Pru snorted in satisfaction as the door surrendered and the newly discovered world inside was within reach. So many scents and different textures.

I picked the nearest one and gently pulled it away from its shelf, but it was wedged in tight, and two others came out also and landed at my front paws on the floor. One of the books I didn't mean to pull fell open, and its scent was much more interesting. Excitement built in my imagination, and my tail wagged a couple times, striking the glass in the open bookcase door.

Pru panicked when three books hit the floor. She trotted off, leaving me alone in the hallway. I heard the water shut off in the shower and quickly dragged the books, one at a time, to the middle of the floor of the guest bathroom.

My thinking was that Dad would probably wake soon with Mom getting ready in the main bathroom, and he would head to the guest bathroom first thing. Then, he would discover what I had laid out for him, and he would be excited and elated and gath-

er up the pack while Mom was out shopping, and he'd read to us until she got back.

I didn't have to wait very long for Dad to stir, yawn, stretch and raise up to see the light under the main bathroom door and hear Mom's hair dryer roar-

ing away. Right on cue, Dad swung his legs out, and just like I planned he trotted to the guest bathroom with a bit of urgency.

What happened next wasn't part of my plan.

First was an odd thunk, followed by the prolonged sound of a struggle with the shower curtain and a final thump. Next came two questions directed at no one in particular.

"What the...?!!" And "Who on earth put these books...?"

While my hopes for a morning of the pack curling up around Dad while he read to us faded, Pru appeared behind me to insist her name would not be mentioned in assisting me in my grand plan.

Just as Mom came out of the bedroom, Dad came out of the bathroom with books under one arm and a shower curtain dragging behind him.

"Don't ask," was all Dad said.

Mom shrugged as she got her purse, keys, and kissed Dad goodbye.

Dad looked down at me. I demurely wagged a couple times.

Dropping the shower curtain, he returned the books to their shelf, then turned to look at me. "Let me pick the books from now on."

He then got the key from the top shelf, closed the glass door... and locked it shut.

My heart sank.

He patted my head as he passed me to get coffee, still dragging the shower curtain behind him.

I felt pretty blue the rest of the

morning. The day turned cooler after our noon snack and thick gray clouds brought the first scent of Fall to the back door. Dad had to give up working outside when heavy rain started, and we all collected together in the living room.

Even though I love the cooler weather, and I love to inspect every bag Mom brings back from shopping, it wasn't enough to cheer me up.

You see, recently Dad read an article about reading to the pack, and he gave it a try one night in the bedroom. Tucker and Hazel fell asleep pretty quickly, but Pru and I cuddled up close and were swept away by the way Dad was reading to us. He would show us a picture once in a while and let Pru sniff certain ones, and if Dad stopped showing her the book, she would insist by pawing at it.

That night was one of my most favorites ever, and I just wanted to do it again.

After some time passed lounging around, I couldn't stand it anymore and decided to disobey Dad and try to find an errant book laying around the house. I

checked high and low but to no avail.

I knew enough not to pull any "portant" papers from Mom's desk, but I was becoming desperate. Then, suddenly, I had an inspiration.

I knew where there are round books.

I headed down to the guest bathroom and freed one of them from the wall and proudly brought my prize directly to Dad.

He looked puzzled, so I carefully laid it on the couch to unroll a bit of it with my muzzle. I looked up at Dad, back to the pages of the round book, then back at Dad, then back down at the book.

Dad chuckled and gently picked book.

He looked down at the unrolled part and began, "Once upon a time there was a beautiful Golden named..."

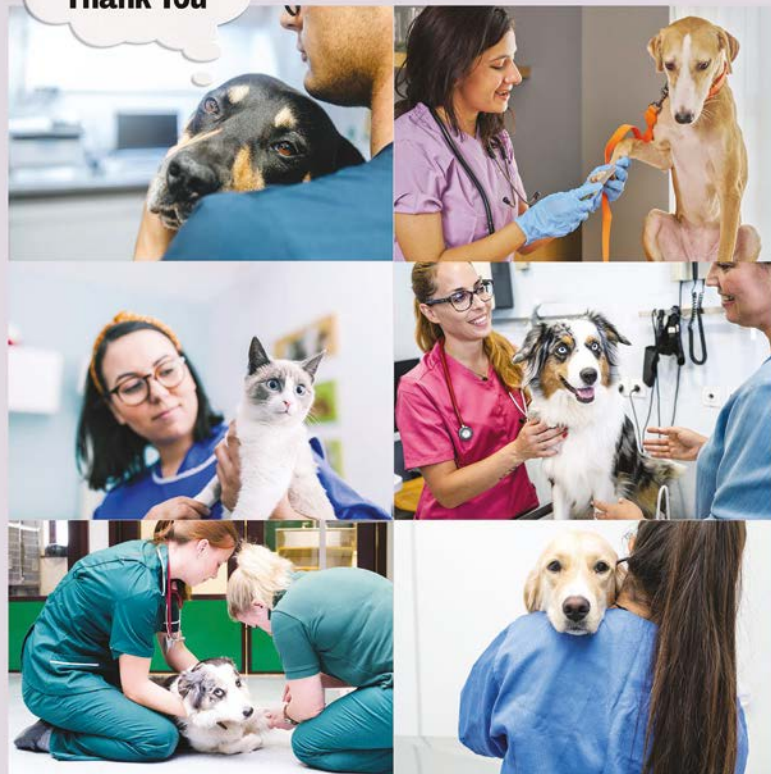
"Wait Dad. Gosh, move over Pru. Dad's reading to me... Go ahead, Dad."

"Once upon a time there was a beautiful Golden named Keira..."

~Keira Bear

National Veterinary Technician Week October 18-24, 2026

Thank You



Paws for Youth

By Jessica Gonzalez

So Excited!

Hello, Prescott Dog Paw-rusers!

I am beside myself (look... There I am, and there I am next to me) since Mom told me about an article that could open a whole new world to our pack family. This could be just as nifty as a shared conversation or the occasional song sung to us four-leggeds. Maybe even niftier, or super-duper nifty.

I don't want to give away too much, so read the article below by Jessica Gonzalez, and I promise I'll be back later with the results of our new endeavor. Well, after I convince Dad to be excited too.

I'll be here with plenty to say, next Pru Time, same Pru Channel.

~Promise Prudence Pepper

Read. Wag. Repeat.

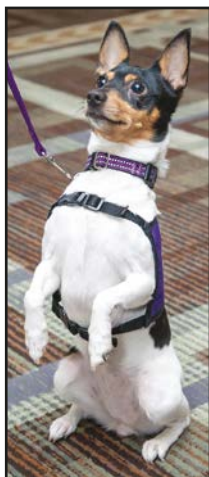
Meet Ellie, the Therapy Dog helping children fall in love with reading. Ellie weighs just seven pounds. But every week, the little toy fox terrier with an important job to do trots confidently into a school.

Long before she arrives at school, Ellie already knows where she's going. She eagerly waits for the car ride and, once they arrive, her owner, Barb Kelley, slips on Ellie's canine partner's therapy vest. That's Ellie's cue. She immediately starts pulling toward the school entrance to see her kids.

"She knows," Kelley says with a laugh. "She can't wait to get in there."

Inside, excited children wave at Ellie in the hallway, hoping for a chance to say hello. But while Ellie enjoys the attention, the most important part of her day happens quietly, one child at a time.

Ellie and Kelley volunteer for the Animals, Books & Children (ABC) program through the Arizona nonprofit Paws for Youth. The organization helps children who have experienced trauma build con-



Ellie Sits Pretty

fidence, resilience, and trust through the human-animal bond.

A Listener Who Never Interrupts

Kelley has loved dogs for most of her life. Before retiring, she spent years working in an animal hospital, bred toy fox terriers for two decades, and dreamed of becoming a therapy-dog volunteer. As soon as Ellie was old enough to earn her certification as a therapy animal, the pair joined Paws for Youth.

For Kelley, combining children and dogs felt like the perfect fit.

"My dogs were my secret keepers," she says, reflecting on her own childhood. "They brought me a lot of comfort."

Now she watches Ellie provide the same comfort to children who need it. One visit stands out.

A young student sat quietly apart from the group, showing little interest in participating. Ellie wandered over, gently climbed into the child's lap, and settled in. As the student stroked her soft fur, a smile slowly appeared. Before long, the child was talking and joining the activity.

Moments like that remind Kelley why she volunteers. "It's fun to know my little dog is bringing such joy," Kelley says.

Small Dog. Big Impact.

The reading sessions are designed to build far more than literacy skills.

In the ABC program, therapy dog teams meet one-on-one with first- through third-grade students each week for twelve to fourteen weeks. As children read aloud, an adult volunteer offers gentle encouragement while their therapy dog provides a calm, judgment-free audience.

Throughout the course of the semester, Kelley watches children who were once unsure of themselves begin to look forward to their time with Ellie, smiling more and speaking more confidently.

Those transformations are reflected across the ABC program, where children consistently show gains in reading confidence, motivation, resilience, comfort and classroom engagement.

One social worker shared that a young student only wanted to come to school on Tuesdays because that was the day Ellie visited.

Another child never spoke in class but loved getting to read to Ellie each week. He gradually built enough confidence to introduce the tiny dog in front of all of his classmates. It was a significant breakthrough for the boy, whose teachers were amazed by his transformation.

For Kelley, those moments are unforgettable. "They never remember my name," she says, "but they always remember Ellie."



The tiny canine isn't just a patient listener. She also knows how to make children laugh. Her signature trick is 'sit pretty', though she also spins on command and squeezes into a box that seems much too small for her.

Those playful moments help break the ice, and before long even nervous children are laughing, talking and reaching for a book.

Why Dogs Make Such Wonderful Reading Partners

Dogs have a remarkable ability to help children feel safe. Unlike adults, they don't correct mistakes or rush through difficult words. Their quiet presence reduces anxiety, which lets children focus on the story instead of their mistakes.



Therapy dog Angus and child's hand

As trust grows over weeks and months, many children begin associating books with positive experiences instead of frustration, failure or fear.

Ellie is just one of nearly 150 registered therapy pets volunteering with their handlers through Paws for Youth. Together, these teams served more than 16,700 children statewide last year.

Five Ways Your Dog Can Become Your Child's Reading Buddy

Not every dog will become a certified therapy dog like Ellie, but almost any family pet can help make reading feel more enjoyable at home.

- **Let your child choose the book.** Whether it's a picture book, graphic novel or chapter book, children are more engaged when they pick the story.
- **Create a cozy reading routine.** Find a comfortable place where your child and your dog can settle in together without distractions.
- **Read with expression.** Encourage your child to show the pictures, use different voices, and talk to the dog about what's happening in the story. If your dog wanders off, ask your child to read a little louder so their four-legged friend doesn't miss the story.

(To read the rest of the story and learn how you and your dog can get involved in Paws for Youth, please visit PrescottDog.com.)



Therapy Dog Coco



Barb and Ellie



**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. Info & register: tinyurl.com/2wp6yxf4. Dark Sky Brewing Co., 103 W Birch Ave, Flagstaff. All ages. Relaxed yoga session w/wagging tails. All puppies 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.



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Every Wed is 25% OFF for Seniors (55 & over). 1601 Iron Springs Road, Prescott 928-445-5668

**OCTOBER & NOVEMBER EVENTS
HERITAGE PARK ZOO**

- OCT 3 Behind the Scenes Photo Tour
- OCT 10 Breakfast with Wolves
- OCT 12-16 Fall ZooCamp
- OCT 24-25 Fall ZooFest
- OCT 31 Boo at the Zoo
- NOV 7 Dollar Day
- NOV 11 Veterans Day
- NOV 26 Thanksgiving with the Lemurs
- NOV 27 WildLights Opening/ Cheers Night
- NOV 28 WildLights Opening/ Cheers Night
- NOV 29 Members Only WildLights/ Cheers Night



**CHINO VALLEY EQUESTRIAN
PARK EVENTS**

For further info & to register online, visit cvequestrianpark.org/upcoming-clinics

- Equestrian Park Driving Schooling Show, Oct. 3.
- Prescott Saddle Club Playday, Oct. 3.
- Equestrian Park Special Presentation Driving Event, Oct. 4.
- Equestrian Park Open Horse Schooling Show, Oct. 17.

HORSES WITH HEART

**11th ANNUAL HAVE A HEART
BARREL RACE & POLES**

Oct 10, Olsen's Grain in Chino Valley. Info/register: Bonnie 928-53-9178

**TEE UP FOR TAILS: VERDE VALLEY
HUMANE SOCIETY'S 4TH ANNUAL
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Oct 18, Sedona Golf Resort, 35 Ridge Trail Dr, Sedona. Scramble format. Register 7:30am; Start 9am. Mulligans, raffles, 50./50 putting game. \$160/ golfer includes 18 holes, cart & lunch, complimentary golf balls & tees. Info: verdevalleyhumane.org/golf-outing/



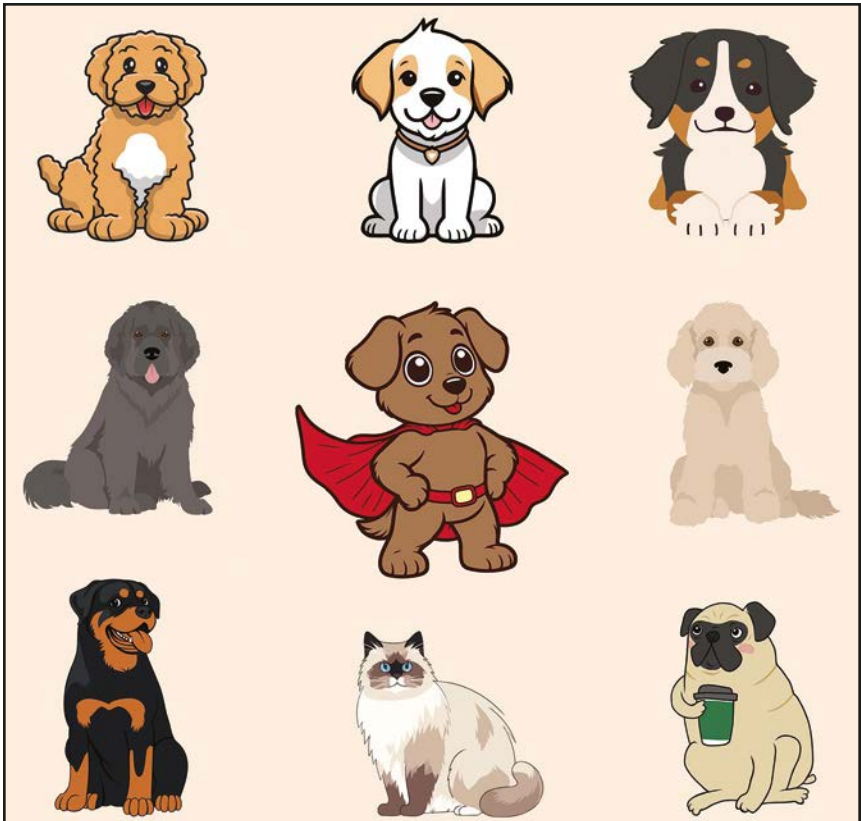
Rescue Resources

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



AARF ANIMAL RESCUE 6639 S. Country Rd., Mayer aarfanimalrescue@gmail.com 928-925-7219, aarfrescue.net	CIRCLE L RANCH ANIMAL RESCUE & SANCTUARY Daytime 928-925-1926, Prescott Valley	HUMANE SOCIETY OF WICKENBURG 4000 Industrial Rd, Wickenburg 928-684-8801 wickenburghumane.com	SUNRISE SANCTUARY & RESCUE Prescott, sunrisesanctuaryrescue.org sunrisesanctuaryrescue@gmail.com
ARIZONA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE Tempe, 480-422-5366 azbcr.org	COCONINO HUMANE ASSOCIATION 3501 E Butler Ave, Flagstaff 928-526-1076, coconinohumane.org	LITTLE ORPHAN ANIMALS Mayer, 678-206-7505 orphananimals@aol.com	TUBA CITY HUMANE SOCIETY 928-793-2364, tubacityhumanesociety.org
ARK CAT SANCTUARY Parks, 928-635-5909 arkcatsanctuary.org	DESERT LABRADOR RETRIEVER RESCUE Glendale, 480-899-5227 dlrraz.org	MISS KITTY'S CAT HOUSE 928-445-5411 misskittyscathouse.org	UNDERDOG ANIMAL RESCUE & REHAB Moab, 435-260-8033 underdogrescuemoab.org info@underdogrescuemoab.org
BARB'S DOG RESCUE Puerto Penasco, MX barbsdogrescue.org , 928-899-1426 barbsdogrescue@gmail.com	DOGTREE PINES SENIOR DOG SANCTUARY 1525 S Dogtree Lane, Prescott olddogs@dogtreepines.com 667-364-8733, dogtreepines.com	PEOPLE FOR PAWS AZ RESCUE peopleforpawsaz.org Info@peopleforpawsaz.org	UNITED ANIMAL FRIENDS Prescott, 928-778-2924 unitedanimalfriends.org
BLACKHAT HUMANE SOCIETY Native American Reservation Animals 928-899-3942 blackathumane@gmail.com	FREEDOM FRENCHIE RESCUE Mesa, (630) 345-0493 freedomfrenchierescue.org	PETEY'S PLAYGROUND 22448 State Highway 89, Yarnell peteysplayground@gmail.com 928-713-1375, peteysplayground.org	VERDE VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY 1520 W. Mingus Ave, Cottonwood 928-634-7387 VerdeValleyHumaneSociety.org
BLUE MOON RESCUE & SANCTUARY 1851 E Perkinsville Rd, Chino Valley 928-925-7724, bluemoonrescue.org	HEELING HEELERS HEARTS Surprise, 623-226-2749 azblueheeler.com	RED ROSE INSPIRATION FOR ANIMALS Thriftique: 31 Bell Rock Plaza, Sedona info@redroseinspiration.org 928-282-5278, redroseinspiration.org	YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY 1625 Sundog Ranch Rd, Prescott 928-445-2666 yavapaihumane.org
CATTY SHACK RESCUE Prescott, (928) 778-6951 cattysackrescue.org	HIGH COUNTRY HUMANE 11665 N, US-89, Flagstaff 928-526-0742 highcountryhumane.org	RESCUE A GOLDEN OF ARIZONA Phoenix, 602-404-9663 golden-retriever.org	YAVAPAI HUMANE SOCIETY EQUINE CENTER (928) 515-4947, Chino Valley yavapaihumane.org
CHINO VALLEY ANIMAL SHELTER 1904 Voss Drive, Chino Valley cvas@chinoaz.net , 928-636-4223 x7 chinoaz.net/164/Dog-Adoption	HUMANE SOCIETY OF SEDONA 2115 Shelby Dr 928-282-4679 humanesocietyofsedona.org	SAVING PAWS RESCUE SHEPHERDS & MALINOIS Glendale, 480-737-6089 savingpawsrescueaz.org	YAVAPAI HUMANE TRAPPERS ANIMAL RESCUE Chino Valley yavapaihumanetrappers.org

 AREA DOG PARKS	FLAGSTAFF DOG PARKS Thorpe Park – 788 N Thorpe Road, Flagstaff Bushmaster Park – 3150 N Alta Vista Dr, Flagstaff	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.	COTTONWOOD DOG PARK AT RIVERFRONT PARK Dawn to Dusk Riverfront Park Drive & N 10th St, Cottonwood
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Teela's Second Chance

Four years ago, Teela left the Humane Society of Sedona as a tiny, two-month-old puppy. Like every young animal heading out the shelter doors with a new family, our hope was that she was beginning the rest of her life. This year, Teela came back.

After spending nearly her entire life in a home, she was surrendered to the shelter as an adult. Suddenly, everything familiar was gone—the people, routines, and place she had known for years—and she was back in the kennels where her life began.

As our staff helped Teela adjust to this unexpected change, they noticed something else. She was limping.

A veterinary examination soon revealed the cause: Teela had suffered a cranial cruciate ligament (CCL) rupture—a painful injury similar to a torn ACL in humans. She would need surgery and an extended recovery before she could comfortably return to the active life she deserved.

Fortunately, Teela had a community behind her. Through donations to the Humane Society of Sedona's Emergency Medical Fund, Teela was able to receive the surgery she needed. Afterward, she was moved into a foster home, where she could recover away from the noise and activity of the shelter.

For nearly two months, Teela's world became one of rest, healing, and slowly rebuilding her strength, which is not what a bubbly 5-year-old dog wants to do. Even when she was feeling better and ready to go, her activity had to be carefully limited. For a happy, affectionate dog eager to be part of everything, taking life slowly wasn't always easy, but her incredible foster family found ways to keep her spirits up, and she kept moving forward.

Now, Teela may have another hurdle ahead of her.

As she has recovered, her veterinary team has begun seeing signs that her other leg may also need surgical intervention. Additional imaging and evaluation will help determine the best course of treatment, which may



include another TPLO procedure. Her care team is working with the veterinarian who performed her first surgery to make sure Teela receives exactly the care she needs.

It's another unexpected chapter in a journey that has already asked so much of her. But if Teela knows this, she certainly doesn't show it.

Despite losing the only home she remembered, enduring a painful injury, and undergoing major surgery, she has never lost the joyful spirit that makes her special. She greets mornings with a smile and is always happy to roll over for a belly rub. She sleeps soundly through the night, is crate and potty trained, and has been working hard on her leash skills. She is intelligent and eager to learn. As her recovery allows, she enjoys short walks and absolutely loves a car ride. But what she loves most of all is affection. She has so much love to give and is looking for unconditional love in return.

She loves people wholeheartedly. Her big paws and wagging tail don't always realize their own strength, so a home with older children would likely be the best match. She has lived with other dogs but may be happiest as the center of her family's attention. A calm, friendly canine companion could also be a possibility with the right introduction.

Teela's medical journey may not be over yet, but neither is her search for a family. We will continue advocating for her and make sure she receives the care she needs while she waits for the person who's willing to see beyond what she has been through to the extraordinary dog she is.

After everything Teela has endured, she is still trusting, still loving, and still greeting the world with a wag-

ging tail. She's more than ready for her second chance, and for a home and family that will be there for all the chapters still to come.

If you or someone you know might be the right fit to either foster or adopt Teela, please get in touch with us at the Humane Society of Sedona at 928-282-4679.



October is Adopt a Shelter Dog Month, and November is Adopt a Senior Pet Month. Both are wonderful opportunities to shine a light on animals waiting in shelters for someone to choose them.

But in our world at Yavapai Humane Society, every month is Adopt a Shelter Dog Month. And every month is Adopt a Senior Pet Month. Because the need doesn't disappear when the calendar changes.

There is something incredibly special about adopting a shelter dog. You may be giving that dog a home, a warm bed, a place to feel safe and someone to love, but anyone who has adopted knows the truth: they give you just as much in return.

They give you companionship, laughter, loyalty. A reason to get up and take a walk. Someone who is always happy to see you when you walk through the door. And sometimes, without even realizing it, they fill a space in your heart you didn't know was empty.

Senior dogs have an especially wonderful way of doing that. There is something about looking into the eyes of an older dog and knowing that you have given them a new beginning for the rest of their life. They may have a little gray around their muzzle and they might move a little slower, but they still have so much love left to give.

And somehow, it feels like they know. They know they've been given another chance. A soft place to land. A family to call their own. And the gratitude, trust and unconditional love they give in return are impossible to measure. The gifts an adopted shelter animal brings into a family are infinite and priceless.

If you look at the Yavapai Humane Society ad in this issue on page two, you'll see some of our amazing senior dogs who have been waiting a long time for families of their own. They aren't asking for much. They simply want someone to see them,



Panther

choose them, and give them the chance to be part of a family again.

Maybe October and November will inspire more people to adopt. But we hope that long after these special months have passed, people will continue opening their hearts and homes to shelter animals of every age.

Your new best friend may already be waiting. See all of our available animals at yavapaihumane.org/adopt, visit Yavapai Humane Society at 1625 Sundog Ranch Road in Prescott, or call us at 928-445-2666.



When Maxine found herself all alone and in a family way, she had no choice but to figure out how to keep her pending babies safe and alive.

We don't know her back story, but Maxine was found near a reservation high school where she had found a tunnel to hide in and care for her young. Being close to a highway with speeding cars and trucks had to have added to her stress and fear. Luckily, some dedicated animal lovers working at the high school spotted her and saw that she was nursing babies somewhere. They managed to follow her to her dig-out and then alerted a dedicated Blackhat (BH) foster who agreed to take them into safety.

Thinking there were seven babies, Winnie got mama Maxine and the roughly four-week-old babies set up in a secure pen for the night in mid-May. But then the conscientious security guard found one lone scared baby late that night, and they were able to reunite the puppy with the rest of the pack.

Airpark Animal Hospital



Dr. Celeste Flannery

515 Airpark Rd., Suite #103

Cottonwood, AZ 86326

(928) 649-8387 • www.AirparkAnimalHospital.com



The babies grew healthy, spunky and happy in the month that Winnie had them under her care, and Mama Maxine could finally let down her guard a bit. Soon the babies were weaned and found another placement so they could be further socialized and adopted. Another BH foster, Danielle, stepped up to take over Mama Maxine's care. After Maxine's milk dried up, Danielle got the mom vetted and ready for her adopter's home.

Danielle can't say enough good things about this young, 40 pound, tri-colored Australian Cattle dog. Maxine is nice with Danielle's other dog and kids, eager and happy to learn, and Danielle has observed no aggression issues. Maxine has lots of play energy, being a youngster herself, but she's well past the goofy puppy stage.

A lot of people lament that rescues take the more adoptable babies and leave the mothers behind on the reservation because they can seemingly be a harder sell. But this story shows that many rescues—including BH—try very hard to get the moms too, and hope that their charm will win over someone who doesn't want the work of a puppy.

Maxine is now spayed and learning the ropes in a foster home, so this girl will never again have to dig out a tunnel near a busy road and try to keep her babies alive. If you can be the final step in this charming dog's life, please consider giving her a home. You can find the form to start the process on blackhathumanesociety.org, and Maxine is ready to

make sure you are delighted if you add her to your family.

It often takes a lot of hands to help make a success story, but it always starts with one person who is determined to change the life of a homeless companion animal. In the end and together, we all create a better future for so many. Can you help be that change?

Go to blackhathumanesociety.org and learn how you can be a positive change for an abandoned companion animal in need.



Golf Outing & Dog Walkers

Join us on Sunday, October 18th, at our annual golf outing, Tee Up for Tails, to raise funds for shelter animals while enjoying a day out on the course! For the fourth year in a row, play for prizes, participate in the raffle, and try your shot at the \$25,000 hole-in-one prize.

Your fun day of golf will help animals like Chairy, who was found tied at a trailhead, abandoned and underweight. Shortly after her arrival at VVHS, Chairy injured her hind leg and required surgery. We started a fundraiser and reached out to the community to cover Chairy's medical expenses. She was placed into foster care to recover, and we're happy to share that she was recently adopted. But we have many more animals to help. Know that you're not just signing up for a game of golf, you're giving a chance at life.

Sign up to reserve your spot today or become a sponsor at verdevalleyhumane.org/golf-outing. This year's event, sponsored by Oxendale Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Cottonwood, is located at Sedona Golf Resort.

We Need Dog Walkers



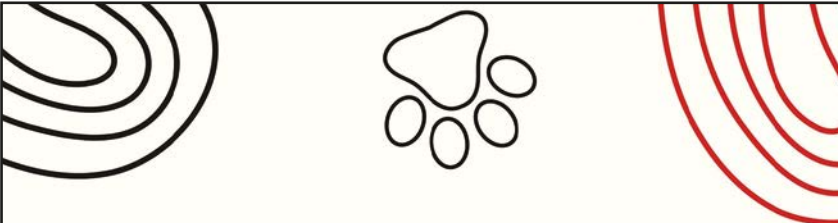
We are always in need of volunteer dog walkers. Our dog walkers are a crucial part of getting dogs exercise, socialization, and mental stimulation to take away from the stress of the shelter environment.

The shelter is constantly at capacity with dogs, most of which need to be walked by volunteers every single day. If we had more volunteers on a regular basis, our dogs could spend more time outdoors on longer walks, providing much needed time out of the kennel to unwind. Their daily walks also help give dogs the best possible chance of adoption.

Exposure to different volunteers allows dogs to become more comfortable around the various personalities they will encounter beyond the shelter's walls.

Dog walking is a stress reliever for humans, too. It's a fantastic form of exercise and a great way to meet others with a similar passion for animal welfare.

To apply to be a volunteer, visit verdevalleyhumane.org/volunteer.



OPEN YOUR HEART, RESCUE A DOG!

Open your heart and home to a dog in need.
Adoption saves lives
and gives dogs a second chance.





**LET'S GIVE
THEM THE
LIFE THEY
DESERVE.**

Flagstaff-Sedona  **Dog**
magazine





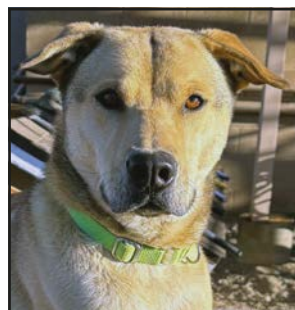
PANTHER is an 8yo Shepherd mix. Needs someone who will give him the time he needs to adjust to new surroundings. Good w/other dogs & loves play time, followed by treats & cuddle time. Yavapai Humane Society 928-445-2666



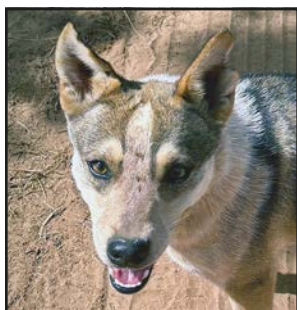
BUTCH is playful & loves toys, sunbathing, & chasing lizards. He'd do best as the only dog in the home. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



MILLIE MAE is a young adult dog; great if you'd rather not house-train a puppy. Crate, house & leash trained; loves to play w/humans & other dogs. blackhathumanesociety.org, ddenetsosie@gmail.com or 928-899-3942



SCRUNCHIE is active, affectionate, & would love a fenced yard for zoomies. He'd also like to meet potential dog siblings & is good with children over 12. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



ROSALINA is a beautiful young medium-sized Cattle Dog/Shepherd mix w/medium energy & a calm temperament. Vetted, house-, leash- and car-trained. Good w/cats & kids. blackhathumanesociety.org or 505-862-206



HERCULES is a well-tempered, energetic dog who's happy to play & adventure before cuddling on the couch. Good on a lead & travels well in the car. He's Pets for Patriots eligible. Verde Valley Humane Society 928-634-7387



PRINCE is a Shepherd mix, approximately 5-years old. Good on a leash, treat motivated, fully vetted. Needs a large, secure yard. blackhathumanesociety.org or 607-267-1333



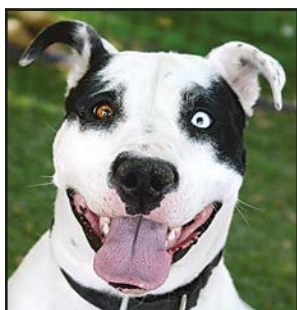
PEPPER is a handsome, 1yo short-haired male tabby. Doesn't mew; he croons w/a rich, deep tone & has a melodious way of expressing himself. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com



MINIKIN is a medium-sized, full-grown 1yo. Vetted, great w/ dogs, loves human interaction. Has a striking coat that may include Plott Hound & Cattle Dog genes. blackhathumanesociety.org or elmorromaynes@gmail.com



CHARMING SPENCER is 4yo, charismatic & talkative. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com



MILLIE is a 5yo terrier mix. Smart, eager to please. Loves toys, walks & spending time with her people. Needs to be the only dog. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



LORELAI is a 1.5yo female. From one angle her coat is shimmery silver; from another, it's dusty rose brown. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com



HANK is a handsome 1yo mixed-breed pup w/plenty of joy, curiosity & puppy charm. Loves walks, playtime, playing w/other dogs, being brushed & soaking up attention. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



PEACHES is a 2yo short-haired orange tabby. Affectionate & welcomes as much attention as you're willing to give. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com



BONDED PAIR – BOSS & FREYA

BOSS (L) is a handsome 1.5yo, friendly & talkative, playful, energetic & lively. Enjoys meeting people & headbutting when shown affection. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com

FREYA (R) is a 2yo female, a friendly lap cat, curious & playful. Miss Kitty's Cat House 928-445-5411 or misskittyscathouse.com



OREO is a shy, semi-feral needing a calm, patient home where he can feel safe. Will come close but petting is still too scary. Needs an indoor/outdoor home w/space to explore. Humane Society of Sedona 928-282-4679



ZEVVERS is a 6yo male past the kitten stage and ready to settle into his forever home.

Verde Valley Humane Society
928-634-7387



NIGEL is a gentle 14yo boy who needs a quiet, patient home where he can feel safe & come out of his shell. Needs comfort, stability & love.
Humane Society of Sedona
928-282-4679



FINA is a 1yo female waiting for a home where she can be spoiled and loved.

Verde Valley Humane Society
928-634-738



Thank you to the Sponsors of the 19th Annual DOGtoberfest!



CATS FOR ADOPTION

True or False? Holiday Tips and Trix

By Kay & Shadow Luckett

True or False:

- I am a 76-year-old black cat.
- I am an elder in the cat world.

Both are true if you calculate cat years versus human years. And for today, we will share essential feline holiday trix for 2026.

Every One of the Trix Below Are True

Halloween and Thanksgiving are joyful for humans but potentially deadly for kitties.

True again, but do you know why? We'll review below so we remember why it's true in time for the upcoming holiday season.

Cats look more adorable than anyone else in their Halloween costumes.

You guessed it... so beware! We get hot, parched, thirsty and feel cramped (imprisoned, actually) in these getups, our muscles get sore, and we have to pee. We lose much of our cat mobility and some of our vision while we are stuffed in these wretched things.

Worse, we lose our ability to groom and to breathe easily. So please, don't keep us in them for very long at a time.

We felines like to breathe (it's necessary), we love to move and stretch, and we count on you to help maintain our feline lives. Our self-preservation does require you to keep constant watch on us while we parade our exquisiteness.

Candy papers are dangerous for kittens and toddlers who love to get into absolutely everything.

These wrappers can choke us if we swallow them, and they can also cause intestinal blockages. Chocolate and xylitol are toxic and deadly if we eat them. Keep us safe by protecting us from holiday dangers, and also by providing an appropriate quiet place for us to hide when we want to. We'd rather take the day off than elevate to another of our nine lives.

Decorations are not as innocent as they look. Flames burn whiskers, fur, and children.

This means live candles are a no-no without exception. You can create harmless ambiance by using battery-operated lights in Jack-o-lanterns and elsewhere. Halloween cobwebs, plastic spiders and such—along with electrical cords—must be out of our reach.

Cats are sneaky door-darters who will run for freedom when we get the chance.

Some will, some won't. You'd probably rather not find out which one your kitty is, so keep us safely in our quiet room when you open doors for trick-or-treaters.

Incidentally, black cats are the most spiritual of all beings. Black cats bring good luck. I should know, because I'm one.



True or false? This is me, Shadow.

Thanksgiving promises fun for you with hazards hidden in plain sight.

These hazards are disguised as tempting left-over foods, small bones, stuffing with onions (a no-no for cats), and more toxic chocolate stuff with crumbs on the floor and dirty dishes. Yikes!

Glad we don't have all those dishes to wash, but watch out. We will gladly lick and eat any and all bites that are on the cat-do-not-eat list. So please make it a priority to put us safely away in our quiet room before you start cleaning up after dinner.

Cats are mischievous and Curious.

Caution advised. Your laughing at what we get up to is inevitable—but please laugh *with* us, not *at* us, please.

Cats have the uncanny ability to know what's going on.

Many of you don't know that we have no need for entertainment when you are gone. We DO NOT want you to wave bye-bye while leaving any media (TV or radio) on for us.

We easily hear all naturally occurring sounds including neighborhood noise, birds, and dogs. Let the cats decide what's unpleasant when we're alone; we entertain ourselves by being vigilant, ever-watchful, and aware.

It's an animal thing, so please leave us to ourselves and take your guilt with you when you go out. However, do know that we love it when you say goodbye because that lets us know you love us and that our private time has begun.

Cats love to nibble on kibble.

You have to understand that this is akin to toddlers munching junk food all day. Our kibble includes organic and grain-free. Water is essential to our

health, so wet food must be our staple, along with two or three water stations placed around the house.

Kibble should be available only for short periods as snacks. Throw all uneaten kibble out—don't you dare give us stale food tomorrow. We will eat it but it's humans, not we cats, who love old stale food.

Some plants are deadly and poisonous.

We love plants but some are poisonous to us, including poinsettias, holly, amaryllis, and mistletoe. So are tropicals. You need to be carefully creative and place these things out of our reach—or even better, don't have them inside the house at all.

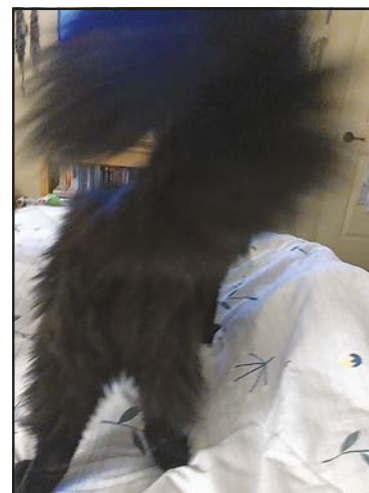
We appreciate your vigilance, and we love your affection so thanks for putting us first.

Cheers for a furry, fun holiday and... Be Aware While You're There!

Meow.



True or false? This is me, Shadow.



True or false? This is me, Shadow.

MISS KITTY'S ADOPTION CENTER

Who We Are

Since 2002, Miss Kitty's Cat House (MKCH) has been a temporary home for cats and kittens waiting to find their forever homes. More than two decades later, that work continues because of an incredible community volunteers, fosters, adopters, donors and supporters.

Whether you spend time caring for cats at MKCH, open your home to a foster, make a donation, attend an event, or simply help spread the word, you are part of Miss Kitty's story. Thank you for helping us give cats the care, comfort and second chance they deserve.

Your Donation Makes a Difference

Each year, homeless and abandoned cats come through our doors in need of food, shelter, medical care and,

ultimately, a new home. MKCH is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit rescue organization with a simple mission: to rescue kittens and cats and find them loving forever homes.

Our work is made possible by the generosity of our community. Donations of any size help us continue providing a safe place for cats while they wait for their next chapter. Please visit misskittyscathouse.com to discover ways to give.

Get Involved

MKCH is an all-volunteer organization, and there are always more paws that could use an extra set of hands. We're looking for volunteers to help at the Cat House as well as foster homes for kittens and adult cats. Fostering provides cats with a safe, comfortable environment while they prepare for adoption and helps us make room for more cats in need.

Interested in volunteering or fostering? Visit misskittyscathouse.com to learn more and sign up.



True or false? This is me, Shadow.

Honor your companion Submit a Celebration of Life

It's not about the end. It's about the life you shared.



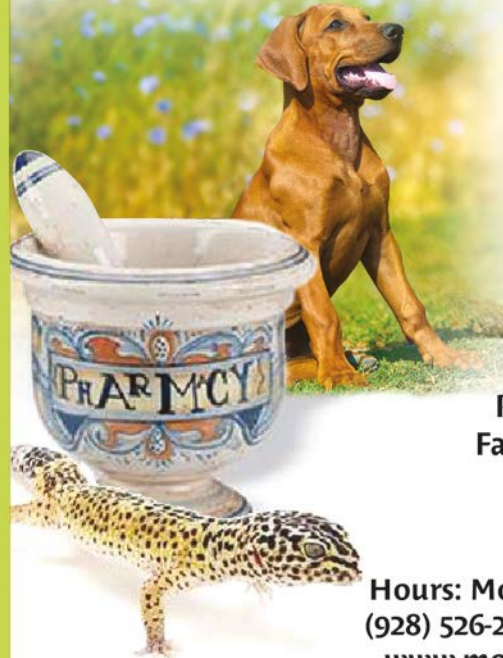
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Flagstaff-Sedona Dog
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Paws and Policies: Balancing Pet-Owner Needs with Workplace Realities

By Njeri Dean



In the majority of work places, animals are not welcome. Many employees who have animals need to find pet-friendly places to take care of their furry friends while they are on the clock.

For the most part, animals like fish and birds can pretty much occupy themselves while their owners are away. For animals like dogs and cats it's a different story, because for these types of animals, human companionship is vital for their survival and well being. Being alone for long periods of time can cause depression and destructive behavior.

It's often a pet owner's best interest to find someone like a neighbor or trusted friend to watch their animals. Even having an animal facility that has a day camp is a viable option for pet owners. But keep in mind that anything can happen while your pet is in the hands of somebody else.

Even though pet owners are grateful to have someone looking after their animals, a lot of things can go wrong. For example, the people who care for your animal might mismanage your pet's medication and food intake.

Not providing the right amount of food when your animal is being fed can lead to results like obesity and drastic weight loss. Even worse, mismanaging medication for your pet can lead to your animal becoming sick and can potentially lead to death.

Another risk of leaving your animal in the care of somebody else is that your pet can get hurt. Their interacting with other pets is one way your pet can sustain an injury.



Pets have different personalities just like human beings. Some are shy, aggressive, or excitable. With a mix of personalities, some pets are bound to clash.

When your pet gets hurt, it's not a fun experience for the people who are watching your pet or for

you. That being said, there are lots of risks involved when it comes to leaving your pet behind.

Many people would love for their pets to come to work. Your job is not trying to punish you. In the long run, your employer is looking out for you and themselves, and there are a lot of risk factors when it comes to having pets in the workplace. These include sanitation, phobias of animals, and allergies.

In most workplaces, cleanliness is not negotiable. You have to look presentable and care about how you present yourself to the world.

Most workplaces have rules against pets because it contradicts their policy on cleanliness. Many animals can't control when or where they relieve themselves. Knowing this, most workplaces know that pet waste can cause sickness and disease.

Having everybody in a workplace bringing their animals in can cause a sanitation hazard and a lot of sick employees.

The people working, and the customers encountered, also have different personalities and ways of thinking. Some people might be fond of pets, while others might be scared of pets.



Companies want their employees and clientele to be comfortable, but bringing in pets might make someone uncomfortable to the point where an employee is scared or unable to do their job, and a customer might not want to do business with that company.

Knowing this, companies cater to the needs of the employee and their customers for a better workplace with less complications. Lastly, most workplaces have to be aware of people with certain types of allergies. Just like peanut allergies, pet allergies can be fatal and make people sick.

For these specific reasons and others, most companies don't allow pets in the workplace. If a company defied the rules, they could be sued by employees or customers, and nobody wants that to happen.

Don't worry, though. The rules of animals in the workplace have lightened up over the years. Now that newer generations are entering the workforce, companies have eased the restrictions on people bringing in their pets to work.

With many young employees suffering from mental illness and stressors from everyday life, companies are relaxing the rules a bit for people to bring their pets into the workplace environment. What companies are discovering is that people are more productive and last longer while having their animals at the office.

More companies are also finding out that if they include health benefits and accommodations for pets in the workplace, the results are higher retention rates of employees and job satisfaction overall.

If you're curious where your pet stands in the workplace, check with your boss and human resources. Every workplace environment is different. With more companies changing their tune to pets entering the workplace, more pet owners won't have to worry about leaving their pets behind.



Leland Gamson Crafts Award-Winning Children's Books with Life Lessons

By Heidi Dahms Foster

Leland Gamson has the knack for creating delightful, entertaining children's books with lovable animal characters, creatively weaving in life lessons. His books are written primarily for ages 3-7.

Retired from the Veterans Administration and the U.S. Army, Gamson had previously written for the Wesleyan Church Sunday School curriculum, and is currently writing children's books, devotionals, and several church newsletters. He lives in Indiana with his wife Bonnie Lou.

Gamson's newest three books, *Malgrim Joins A Gang*, *Malgrim's Gang is Rescued*, and *Sweetums Gets a Sister*, are beautifully illustrated by Karna Peck and Karen Camdem Welsh, adding colorful touches that young children will love.

In *Malgrim Joins a Gang* and *Malgrim's Gang is Rescued*, Gamson tells the story of two pampered dogs, Malgrim and Gracey, who one day meet a pack of five stray dogs over the back fence. The stray dogs lead Malgrim astray, though Gracey tries to bring a doggie voice of reason.



Leland and Bonnie Gamson. Photo courtesy lelandpgamson.com.

Malgrim leaves home to live with the stray pack, and meets a dog friend who got lost and couldn't find his way home, though he wanted to.

Through a near tragedy, Malgrim and his dog buddy happily find their way home. In the sequel, the stray pack also finds families and good homes.

Sweetums Gets a Sister is the story of a spoiled cat whose owner rescues a kitten named Butternut and adds her to the family. Sweetums is not thrilled, and renames the kitten Squash.

The story is a gentle lesson in learning to get along with a happy ending. All three books will delight young readers.

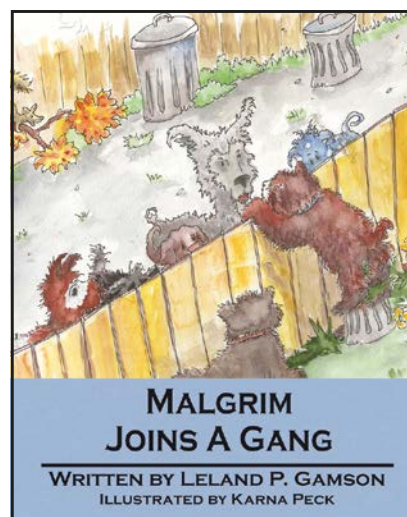
Leland also has written five activity books for specific historical locations that are sold in those areas—activity

workbooks about Clarkdale, Arizona, and a Wabash & Erie Canal activity book, among them. These activity books and Gamson's paperback books are great birthday gifts or stocking stuffers for youngsters.

Sixteen of Gamson's books have been accepted to the Indiana State Library's Young Readers Center. He has received numerous awards of excellence for his books, and he is a member of the American Academy of Poets.

All of Leland's books are available on eBooks and in paperback at Amazon. Children may also watch Leland read his children's books on YouTube at tinyurl.com/3fpzzbs9. Some of his books are also available for purchase in Spanish.

Parents can get three PDF eBooks (*The Pony Who Wanted to be a Unicorn*, *If Your Dog Were a Human*, and *If Your Cat Were a Human*) and notifications on upcoming book releases by signing up for Gamson's newsletter at lelandpgamson.com.



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Angels and Adoptions: Mickey's Origin Tail and the Volunteer Who Made All the Difference

By Solana Kline, lifelong animal adoption advocate and honorary four-legger

This morning is crisp, we've been waiting for this, Betts and me. It is early November of 2018, and the oppressive Reno Summer broil is coming to a close (but they say it's a dry heat, right?). We gallop out the door for our usual morning jog straight from the house into U.S. Forest Service land, through the ponderosa and high alpine planty-communities, snagging a newly ripe apple from the yard on our way out.

The trail carries us up into the South side of Slide Mountain, decomposed granite shifts under our feet and the vanilla perfume of the Summer Jeffries Pines is winding down. Betts sprints off ahead squirreling and I smile. Here we are, running in the Sierra Nevadas, not a human in sight.

Me and Betts have been on our own as a pack for the past three years, I never thought to add to the pack, we were both super content beast-ing around as gal pals. But, for some reason, just this morning, I can't shake the pull to go to Reno Humane Society, one of those little bolts from the universe that you just can't ignore.

And I did try to ignore it, mid-PhD and recovering from adrenal failure, this seemed like the absolute worst time to get a new pup. And I'm not much of a window shopper when it comes to adopted hounds, I'd bring them all home if I could.

One day I'll have 100 acres to bring them all home to, like that South American dog rescue, Territorio de Zaguates (territoriodezaguates.com). Let 'em all roam free with adopted tortoises and wild horses and donkeys, and any other non-humans who deserve to be wild and belong to a weirdo diverse pack filled with joy, love, and delicious snackies!

But today, trotting through the forest with Betty, I knew I had to go to Reno Humane Society, I didn't know why and I didn't need to, it was intuition.

Me and Betts walked into the doggie kennels, all concrete and metal, no windows, pups nervously shifting around and whining, tense energy filling the space between these wonderful wagglers waiting for homes. The second me and Mickey made eye contact I knew exactly why we were there.

Each pup had a good-sized indoor run with a barrier to retreat behind. And that is precisely where Mick-



Mickey (aka Bowser) keeping his top knot warm in Cedar City, Utah

ey's big boxer eyes and squished wrinkly forehead were peeking out from. He couldn't handle the ruckus of the collective rebellion of his fellow block-mates and wouldn't emerge from behind the wall.

I asked the volunteer on staff if I could meet with him. They brought Mickey in to meet me in a tiny psych-ward-esque room. I offered him toys and snacks, sat on the floor, and he wouldn't come near me.

Even from across the room, he felt familiar, like his soul and mine and Ms. B's had lived many lifetimes together, had many intergalactic adventures.

I asked if we could go outside. The volunteer helping us hesitated but finally agreed to yard time. As soon as we stepped into the sunshine, little terrier Betts ran up to Mickey, jumped and spun around near his haunches

to get him to play.

His ears and body posture were relaxed now that we were outside. He dipped to play, looked around for assurance, but was afraid to engage. Play was new to Mickey's world. Little did he know it would become his daily existence. I knew he was our pack-mate, and I adopted him right then and there.

The desk volunteer filled me in: Mickey's conditions had been reported to the City of Reno, he was an abandoned junkyard dog, starved and chained, triggered by guns and fire and smoke. I knew that he was soon to be healed by nature and love and play.

As I was filling out his adoption paperwork, a woman walked over to me.

"Hi, I'm Cathy. Are you here to adopt Bowser?" Hope and relief filled her eyes. Bowser was Mickey's name back then in his jailhouse days.

"I am. I just knew immediately, and so did Betty." I looked down at Betts, her gaze transfixed on the door that Mickey would come through to join us, tail wagging in anticipation.

"Oh, thank goodness you're here, I'm so happy. Bowser has been here for over a year. I'm a volunteer here and have been coming everyday to sit with him outside on the bench, and give him hamburgers and bacon. I kept telling him to be brave, to show his face, to let the people see him so he can be adopted." She had been terrified of his possible fate if he didn't get adopted soon. She stood with us as we waited for Mickey to be discharged.

I will never forget my first impression of him as he tentatively poked his head out following the volunteer's lead—that fat pit noggin and endless smile, all the boxer wrinkles, and a wiggle butt just waiting to bust out the joy. He climbed right up into the back seat of the Tacoma and rested his head above my left shoulder, sniffing the Fall air and his newfound freedom.

We headed straight for the mountains. Mickey's angel-volunteer auntie, Cathy, came along too, after picking up her own adopted hounds of course. Out there under the towering ponderosas, sprinting along the chortling Brown's Creek, Mickey eased into nature, into himself. He filled with life and possibility and shine.



Mickey leading the pack in the Mosquito Range, Colorado

I think of Cathy often, how big of a difference she made for Mickey's time in lock up, how his fate may have been different without her, how her loving presence brought him peace and calmed his nervous system, how she gave him a chance when everyone else had written him off.

A couple times a year, we text and send photos back and forth. I share Mickey's progress and adventures with her, she sends her lab-mix rescues rolling around in her backyard fields. I am forever grateful for the time and love and energy and snackies that she shared with my boy, I am fully convinced that she saved his life.

There is a special place in the stars for humans who volunteer in the rescues, who foster the shelter animals, who donate to keep the lights on and tummies full in these four-legger halfway houses. Every single one of us can make a difference for the four-leggers in this world, every single day. We can all change the world for even just one four-legger, and that, is the beauty and magic of the unconditional kindness, compassion, and comradery that they offer us every day of their lives.

Until next time, adopt, volunteer, donate!

And, as always, happy tails and happy trails.



Mickey taking Betty on a Sunday drive in Camp Verde, Arizona



Soaking up January sunshine in Hanksville, Utah



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Big Sky, Big Adventures: Traveling Montana with Your Dog

By Stacey Wittig



Cheff Guest Ranch horse drive north of Missoula.
Courtesy Montana Department of Commerce.

Montana was made for road trips, and if your favorite traveling companion happens to have a wagging tail, even better. Wide-open highways, mountain views, prairie sunsets and plenty of places to stretch your legs make Big Sky Country a natural fit for traveling with your pooch.

At Glacier, leashed dogs can join you in developed areas such as campgrounds, picnic areas and parking lots, but they aren't allowed on most hiking trails or in the backcountry. But don't leave Glacier off your itinerary. Just plan ahead for your pup, then look beyond the national park for the Montana adventures you can enjoy together.

The Bighorn River

The Bighorn River is renowned for flyfishing, but even if you're not a fisherperson, the river is a fantastic place to recreate and birdwatch. We saw plenty of Sandhill cranes, osprey, and more.

Bighorn River View Lodge and Cabins make a convenient base for exploring this beautiful stretch of Montana. If you're traveling with your pup, check with the property directly about its current pet policy before

The key is knowing where your pup is welcome—and where those paws need to stay off the trail.

Look Beyond the National Parks

Of course, Glacier National Park is probably already on your Montana bucket list.

But here's something you need to know when traveling with your pup: this famous national park isn't necessarily the best place for four-legged exploring.



English setters on Bighorn River.
Photo by Stacey Wittig.



Courtesy Judy Beth Morris,
Unsplash.

booking. Find out more at flyfishingthebighorn.com.

Dinosaurs, Hoodoos and Your Sweet Pup

Sift for dinosaur bones with paleontologists at Carter County Museum in Ekalaka, then head out to Medicine Rocks State Park for a magical sunset with your sweet pup.

You can't help but feel the spirit of this place as you wander among the strangely shaped hoodoos rising from the expansive prairie.

The remarkable Carter County Museum is part of Montana's Dinosaur Trail, making this an especially fun stop if you like mixing a little history and science into your road trip. Learn more at cartercountymuseum.org.

Bowser on the Billings Brew Trail

You and your pooch can trot from your downtown hotel to breweries, distilleries and a cider house along the Billings Brew Trail. Simply print a map or download it to your phone and start exploring.

Not all welcome furry patrons, so call ahead to check for pet-friendly patios. Get the scoop at visitbillings.com/billings-brew-trail.

Dog-Friendly Red Lodge

A special expedition to Lewis and Bark's Outpost in Red Lodge is worth the trip. Knowledgeable owners offer advice, high-quality pet foods and delightful West Paw products, among others.

Then get outside and let your pup enjoy Red Lodge, too. Double Ditch Dog Park offers dedicated dog-friendly open space, while nearby trails give you plenty of choices for a walk or hike.

Willow Creek Trail welcomes dogs year-round, but always check seasonal restrictions before heading out—nearby Palisades Trail, for example, closes to dogs during part of the year to protect wintering moose habitat.

Find more parks and trails at redlodge.com.

Plan Big for Big Sky Country

One thing you quickly learn in Montana is that distances are BIG. A place that looks close on the map may still be several hours down the road. That's part of Montana's charm, but it also means you need to plan a little differently when your dog is along for the ride.

Dog-travel tip: Montana distances are BIG. Carry more dog water than you think you'll need, download maps before losing cell service, and always check the individual park or lodging property's current pet rules before arriving.

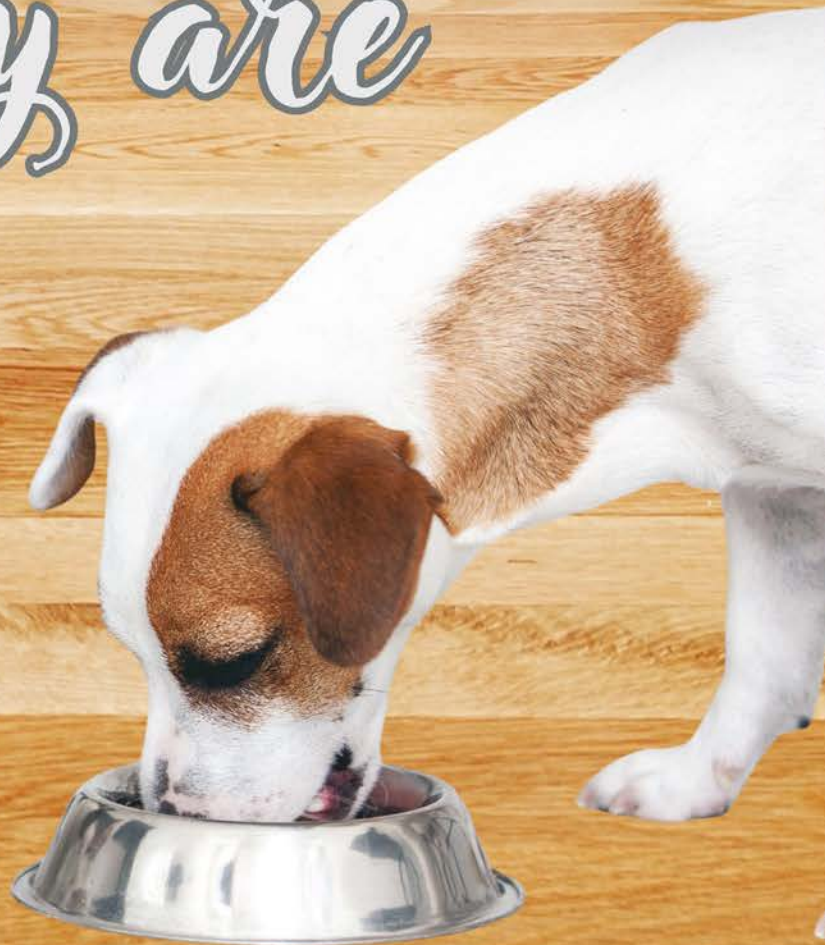


Sunset hike at Medicine Rocks State Park.
Photo by Stacey Wittig.

Give yourself plenty of time for walks, water breaks and spontaneous stops along the way. After all, isn't that what a great road trip with your best friend is all about?

Stacey Wittig is a travel writer based in Flagstaff. Get more travel tips and inspiration at UnstoppableStaceyTravel.com.

We should all
be as thankful
as they are



Flagstaff-Sedona  Dog
magazine

Prescott  Dog
magazine



A Victory for the Salt River Horses, Earned by the People Who Would Not Give Up

Story by Craig C. Downer. Photos by Susie Bell Photography.



For everyone who wrote an email, made a phone call, signed a petition, attended a rally or shared a photograph of the Salt River wild horses, August brought news worth celebrating. Arizona has paused scheduled removals and is moving forward with the independent genetic research advocates had been asking the state to undertake.

For the horses, that decision means more time in their home along the lower Salt River. For the people who have spent months worrying about their future, it offers something they have been waiting for: relief.

On August 18, Governor Katie Hobbs announced that removals for adoption to sanctuaries and refuges outside the management area would be suspended for 2026 and 2027. The pause allows a genetic viability study to proceed to assist future management decisions. The announcement also committed to independent review of the research before its release. (Governor's announcement: tinyurl.com/5azvsk5s)

On August 27, the Arizona Board of Regents approved funding. Four days later, the Governor's Office confirmed the \$325,000 grant and the board's unanimous support. Researchers at Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona will conduct the study, with assistance from wild horse experts at the U.S. Geological Survey. (Grant announcement: tinyurl.com/bdfbutbt)

Those decisions deserve recognition. Governor Hobbs acted to give the herd breathing room, and the Regents committed public research resources to understanding its future. At a time when the debate had become increasingly contentious, Arizona made room for additional evidence before proceeding with scheduled removals.



But the greatest thanks belong to the people who have been there for these horses through every uncertainty, especially the dedicated volunteers of the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group.

Under the leadership of Simone Netherlands, the organization has carried the daily responsibility of watching over the herd. Its work includes monitoring individual horses, responding to emergencies, maintaining fences, educating visitors, and providing supplemental feed during droughts. The organization says its management programs are funded by public donations. (For information on SRWHMG programs, visit saltriverwildhorsemanagementgroup.org)

For those volunteers, the horses have names, histories and familiar family relationships. They have watched them grow, cared for them when needed and mourned their losses. The prospect of removing healthy horses from their home carries a weight that cannot be captured in a population chart.

The broader community deserves thanks, too. Friends of the Salt River Wild Horses and other supporters kept the issue in public view through letters, public comments, opinion pieces, petitions and direct appeals to elected officials. People gave their time, their voices and their determination to a cause that often seemed to require explaining all over again.

The request was reasonable: before Arizona deliberately removes more healthy horses, it should better understand the genetic consequences for the herd that remains.

The newly funded study will examine the horses' genetic makeup, levels of inbreeding and population viability through non-invasive DNA sampling and genomic analysis, according to the Regents. That research can help replace assumptions about this particular herd with evidence drawn from the horses themselves.

It will not answer every question about managing the lower Salt River. Habitat conditions, water, forage and the needs of other wildlife remain important. Decisions about the horses must account for the environment they share. Recognizing those responsibilities also requires recognizing that genetic health deserves careful examination.

Advocates should welcome the research with the same openness they have asked of state officials. The value of an independent study rests on allowing researchers to follow the evidence, explain their methods and identify the limits of their conclusions. Its findings should inform decisions about both removals and future fertility management.

For Arizonans who love these horses, their value extends beyond the management debate. A glimpse of horses moving through the river can become the memory a visitor carries home. For a local family, watching them may be part of a treasured weekend tradition. For photographers and artists, they are a continuing source of inspiration.

That is why this victory deserves to be celebrated fully, even with work ahead. A reprieve is meaningful. Research funding is meaningful. The decision to pause and ask further questions represents progress that supporters worked hard to achieve.

The next responsibility is to make that progress last. The public should receive clear updates about the research and understandable explanations of how its findings will influence management. Volunteers need



continued support. The organizations caring for and advocating for the horses still need donations, participation and people willing to speak up.

Gratitude and vigilance can exist together. We can thank the Governor and the Regents for these decisions while remaining engaged in what comes next. We can celebrate the horses staying in their home while continuing to work toward lasting protection.

The volunteers will keep watching over the herd. The researchers will carry out their study. And along the Salt River, the horses will continue their lives in the place so many people fought to keep them.

We should respect these horses and the natural ecosystem they inhabit, and allow sound science to guide decisions about their future. Rather than impose arbitrary population limits, we should also consider what compromises people can make to allow the horses to continue living on the land in a healthy, sustainable population.

I believe a closer examination may show that the Salt River horses play an important ecological role in the river corridor and surrounding desert, much as their ancestors did for generations. That possibility deserves further scientific study and could complement the genetic research now underway.

Craig C. Downer is a wildlife ecologist, author and longtime advocate for wild horses and burros. He has conducted ecological studies of the Salt River wild horse herd and its habitat and has worked for decades to promote fair, equitable and humane conservation plans for wild horse and burro populations based on sound science.

For those interested in his study focusing on the ecological relations of the Salt River wild horses, here is a brief review: tinyurl.com/9y62zd8u. Please contact him for further information at ccdowner@aol.com.



Tips for Pet Safe Holidays

Travel

- Transport pets in carriers or utilizing canine seatbelts
- Pack their health/vaccination record, medication, food, bed, bowls & toys
- Verify that your accommodations are pet friendly
- Inspect your dog's collar for fit and leash condition before hitting the trail or city sidewalk



Guests

- As your guests come and go, make it deliberate – don't stand in the doorway, door wide open, exchanging pleasantries.
This is #1 in escape prevention
- If your guests are staying with you, remind them to stow medications and souvenirs where prying muzzles can't find them
- Before leaving your guests with your pets, be sure that both parties are comfortable in your absence



Decorations

- Avoid glass tree ornaments
- Secure large trees
- Keep candles, light strands & tinsel out of reach
- Watch gifts, cookie trays and candy dishes. They are very tempting, even for good dogs
- Decorations that make sudden movements or noise should be avoided if your canine is skittish



Noise

- Parties, noisemakers and fireworks can be scary.
- Anxiousness could cause pets to act erratic or bolt.
- Give them their own secure, quiet place to chill.
- A closed bedroom with an open closet door works well.
- It gives them confinement and separation from the noise and activity



Hazardous Foods

- Chocolate
- Grapes, Raisins & Fruit Cakes
- Rich fatty foods
- Cooked Bones & Poultry Skin
- Stuffing & Uncooked Dough
- Onions or Garlic
- Nutmeg & Macadamia Nuts
- Processed Meats
- Foods high in salt
- Cranberry Sauce or Relish
- Candy & Baked Goods
- Xylitol – Birch Sugar



Hazardous Plants

- Mistletoe
- Christmas Cactus
- Poinsettia
- Holly
- Christmas Rose
- Rosemary
- Camellia
- Moth Orchids
- Winter Jasmine
- Lilies
- Christmas Trees, needles and water



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