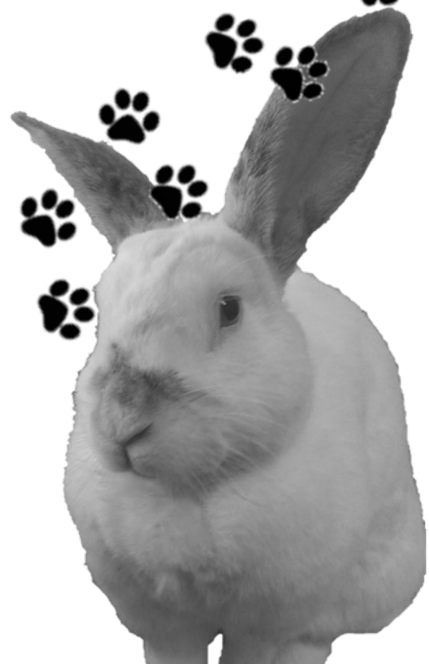


Sauk County Humane Society
2016 Annual Report



SAUK COUNTY
HUMANE
SOCIETY



WHO WE ARE

The Sauk County Humane Society was formed in 1921. The purpose of the organization at that time was “...the prevention of abuse of children or cruelty to animals and for the enforcement of the law relating to said subjects in the County of Sauk.” Since 1921 the purposes and the membership have changed with the times. The Society no longer deals with child abuse but concentrates on Animal Care and Welfare. In 1981, the Society was reorganized into its current form. Today, the Sauk County Humane Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity.

The mission of the Sauk County Humane Society is to encourage responsible treatment of animals through:

- Preventing cruelty to animals,
- Finding homes for animals,
- Promoting spay-neutering efforts, and
- Extending humane education and outreach.

We operate one of approximately 13,600 independent community shelters nationwide. We are an open admission animal shelter where no animal is turned away in its time of need, no matter what its age, condition, extent of injuries, or behavior. It is our belief that no animal, or person turning to us with an animal, should be turned away. “Out of sight, out of mind” is not an option for us.

WHAT WE DO

The Sauk County Humane Society is a full service Humane Society. One of our functions is to operate the Sauk County Animal Shelter, including handle Animal Control duties for the county. Some of these responsibilities include: retrieval of stray, trapped, or injured animals; care of stray animals at the shelter; completing dog and cat bite reports; providing rabies observation services; coordinating rabies control measures with the Department of Public Health; providing a clearing house for the location of lost companion animals; and euthanasia of animals when needed.

Additional programs provided by the Sauk County Humane Society outside the scope of our contract include: serve as an open admissions shelter where no animal is turned away; shelter and care for owner-surrendered animals; education and outreach to include bite prevention, humane animal care, how to be a good companion animal guardian, the importance of spay/neuter programs and proper animal care; low cost spay/neuter open to anyone; Spay/Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP); animals in crisis programs to help people who are experiencing various difficulties keep their pets instead of turning them into the shelter; serve as a resource for wildlife questions; provide volunteer transport of injured or unweaned wildlife to rehabilitators.

The County contract pays less than 50% of the cost of operating the Animal Shelter and providing these services. We must raise the balance each year through fundraising, adoption and return to owner fees, donations, and grants.



WHERE WE ARE AS OF 2016

2016 was another strong year for us. We are helping more animals and citizens than ever and successfully completed our five year transition, transforming the shelter into an organization that puts compassion and empathy for animals first while also serving the pet owners of the community. We take our stewardship of every animal in our care very seriously. "Out of sight, out of mind" is not an option for us. As part of our transition we remain firmly committed to the following:

- 🐾 We will remain an open admissions shelter, where no animal or person needing help with an animal is turned away.
- 🐾 We will not implement impediments for people who need to surrender an animal or who have found an animal: we will not charge surrender fees, we will not limit our intake hours, we will not require appointments or waiting lists for surrenders.
- 🐾 We will continue to provide emergency veterinary care for any animal we take in who is in need.
- 🐾 We will continue to focus on curbing pet overpopulation and the resulting euthanasia at its roots by offering low cost spay/neuter.
- 🐾 We will continue to hold that animals have value and ensure proper adoption criteria are followed while remaining flexible when the situation warrants.
- 🐾 We will not myopically focus on an arbitrary number at the expense of alleviating animal suffering.



IMPORTANT 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

- ❧ For the second consecutive year, after seven years, we ended the year in the black financially. ***We accomplished this without compromising our core values or reducing our care of animals or services to the public.***
- ❧ Twenty-one children participated in our newly expanded Summer Critter Camp.
- ❧ Our largest fundraiser of the year, the PAWS Walk and Fun Festival, brought in over \$26,000 for the animals and people we serve. The event was sponsored by 91 area businesses.
- ❧ Our second annual Fall event, Bark after Dark, raised over \$7,000 for the shelter.
- ❧ Volunteers logged a record number of hours at 15,452.
- ❧ We spayed/neutered 712 cats and 91 dogs in our low cost spay/neuter clinic.

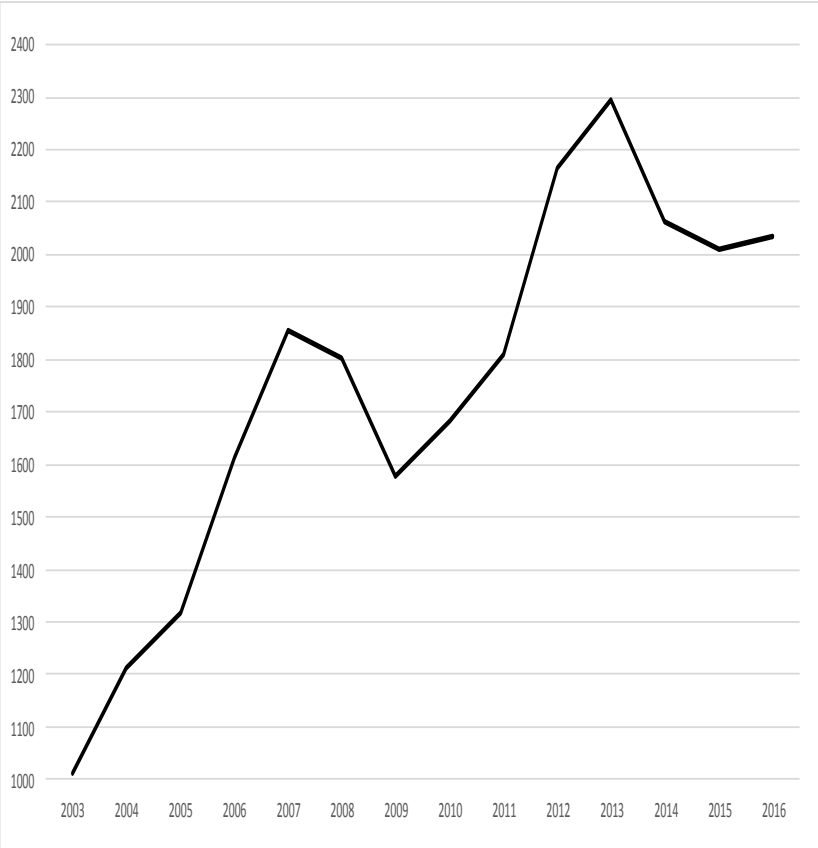


INTAKES THROUGH THE YEARS

The Sauk County Animal Shelter opened on June 1, 1999 after 20+ years of effort—first a dream and then finally a wonderful reality. Every year we rededicate ourselves to continuing to build on the foundation laid by our predecessors.

By all accounts, the shelter was full within days of that opening. Within weeks, more than 500 animals had come into the shelter and within six months over 1,000. Today, we average more than 2,000 animals each year, taking in 2,036 in 2016. Without strong relationships with other shelters and rescue groups and without a cadre of wonderful volunteers, we would be unable to humanely care for these animals waiting for adoption. As the only true open admissions shelter in our area, we recognize that as surrounding shelters become more and more limiting it is unlikely our numbers will decrease.

We are optimistic, however, that our focus on a strong spay/neuter program will eventually result in fewer homeless animals coming through our doors. In the meantime, we will continue our stewardship to ensure the shelter is one of which the community can be proud and to show our children that we as a county value the lives of animals and need to show kindness and respect for all living things.



Animal Intakes Since 2003

2016 ANIMAL STATISTICS

Incoming:

	Dog	Cat	Rabbit (domestic)	Other*	Wildlife*	Total
Surrender	195	761	11	78		1045
Stray	206	519	6	8		739
Return	13	27	3			43
Seized	3	0				3
Bite	21	9				30
Quarantine						
Safekeeping	12	9	1	2		24
Protective Custody	11	1				12
Transfer In	0	2				2
Wildlife					129	129
Cremation Request	5	4				9
TOTAL	466	1332	21	88	129	2036

Outgoing:

	Dog	Cat	Rabbit (domestic)	Other	Wildlife	Total
Adoption	121	244	5	19		389
Return to Owner	169	35		3		207
Transfer Out	6	229	11	56	47	349
Service*	121	229	1	3		354
Died						0
DOA	7	9		1	1	18
Wildlife Release					9	9
Euthanasia	37	598	7	7	66	715
TOTAL	461	1344	24	89	123	2041

*Bite quarantine, safekeeping, owner requests, cremation requests.

Our Animal Control staff is on-call 24/7 365 days a year, including weekends and holidays. In 2016 the AC staff took 461 calls, handled 149 bite cases and impounded 390 animals.

*4 bats, 1 beaver, 1 bluebird, 1 budgie, 1 cardinal, 2 cattle, 3 chickens, 3 chinchillas, 3 cranes, 3 crows, 1 dove, 3 ducks, 1 eagle, 2 ferrets, 46 finches, 1 flicker, 2 fox, 1 grackle, 18 guinea pigs, 2 hamsters, 7 hawks, 1 jay, 1 nighthawk, 1 opossum, 2 orioles, 9 owls, 3 parakeets, 1 parrot, 6 pigeons, 34 wild rabbits, 19 raccoons, 5 domestic rats, 9 robins, 1 skunk, 2 sparrows, 8 squirrels, 4 starlings, 1 swallow, 1 tortoise, 1 vulture, 1 waxwing, 1 woodpecker



EUTHANASIA STATISTICS

The year-end euthanasia rate for all animals was 35.0% (including wildlife). Most important, as in prior years, ***no healthy, adoptable animal was euthanized.***

The number of dogs that need to be euthanized is very low in our community. At only 7.9%, this number is significantly below the national average (reported to be anywhere between 31% and 56% depending on source). Although cats do not fare as well, the 44% is near or well below the national average (anywhere from 41% to 71% depending on source) and significantly lower than in 2013 and 2014 at 71.5% and 53%, respectively.

	Dogs	Cats	Other Domestic
Health	13	243	5
Age	3	100	1
Bite Quarantine	3	5	0
Behavior	24	211	2
Space	0	0	0

Euthanasia Reasons

Because we do not turn our backs on the injured, sick, diseased, and otherwise unadoptable animals as well as the people who have nowhere else to turn, and because we serve as the last refuge for animals that are turned away from other jurisdictions, our euthanasia rate will likely be higher than our neighbors. Furthermore, while we are grateful the need to euthanize has been significantly lower than previous years, until the community begins to take the problem of pet overpopulation seriously, especially for cats, we will continue to see euthanasia rates much higher than any of us would like. What we will not do is myopically focus on an arbitrary number at the expense of alleviating animal suffering.

SCHS believes in helping the greatest number of animals with our available resources. That is why we will accept any animal that comes to our door. We attempt to place healthy, adoptable animals into new homes. We provide rehabilitation for animals who may need extra care and attention before they are adoptable. We use precious donations to provide veterinary care to sick and injured animals. We use rescue groups, other shelters, and foster homes. The reality is that due to the overwhelming volume of animals coming into our shelter, healthy adoptable animals could possibly be euthanized due to resource constraints. Despite that, thankfully, because we move heaven and earth using other resources, we have not had to euthanize a healthy adoptable animal in many years.

We are here for the animals no one else will take and are here for anyone who needs to surrender their animal, no matter where they live or the condition of the animal. We rely 100% on donations to provide this service.



USING OTHER SHELTERS AND RESCUE GROUPS

We couldn't begin to save the number of animals we do without strong relationships with other shelters and reputable rescue groups. When we become perilously close to capacity, we not only reach out to other shelters, but to breed specific rescue groups. We also have relationships with a wide variety of wildlife rehabilitators and non dog and cat rescue groups to whom we transfer wildlife in need. We transferred 349 animals in 2016.

Animals Transferred in 2016

	Dog	Cat	Other	Total
Center for Avian Rehabilitation and Education			28	28
Coulee Region Humane Society	4			4
Dane County Humane Society		226	30	256
Dane County Humane Society Wildlife Center			52	52
Good Shepherd K9 Rescue	1			1
Heartland Farm Sanctuary			2	2
Ballweg-Wildlife Rehabilitator			1	1
Specialty Purebred Cat Rescue		3		3
Wild Instincts Rehabilitation Center			1	1
Wisconsin Rottweiler Rescue	1			1
TOTAL				349



Labowski had a terrible case of mange that required months of specialized treatment.



Eroy was within hours of dying with severe anemia due to a massive flea infestation. He couldn't even stand. After an emergency blood transfusion he slowly recovered.

Midnight had been hit by a car and left with a severely broken femur which was inappropriately bandaged and had become severely infected. He required extensive treatment including amputation of his leg.



Kimmy was found abandoned and had clearly just had puppies, which we could never find. She had a severe case of mastitis and was grieving for her puppies. After months of specialized care she recovered and was adopted.

Joy had a terrible abscessed tooth that had caused infection throughout her entire face. She needed emergency surgery.



GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

We take great pride in the focus and attention each individual animal receives when it comes into our shelter. This attentiveness begins from the moment the animal arrives. We have a two step process in place that ensures, among other things, no injury or illness is overlooked. Step One involves a brief scan of the animal to check for wounds, injuries, or anything that might require immediate medical attention, e.g., extremely high temperature. For strays, it also includes a scan for a microchip. Unless the animal is extremely fractious or dangerous, Step One is completed immediately upon intake.

Step Two, which also must occur on the day an animal arrives, involves a more thorough exam during which overall health is assessed and vaccines given. In cases where an owner is likely (tags, collars) Step Two might be deferred a day or two. Similarly if an animal is particularly frightened, we might wait until it has a chance to relax and calm down.

Because we strongly believe no animal should suffer while on our watch, an animal may be sent for advanced veterinary care that is beyond our capabilities at the shelter, either under emergency circumstances upon examination in Step One, or as a result of findings discovered at check-in. Because this can be extremely cost prohibitive, we have set up a fund for just

this purpose, known as Betsy's Fund. This fund was established in 2002 after a small, stray Cocker Spaniel who came into the shelter with toenails grown into her pads, severely infected gums, flea infestation, and worse, who was being eaten alive by maggots living in her flesh all over her body. This sweet dog was given immediate and intensive veterinary care and badly needed TLC from a foster volunteer. However, after several days, it was clear she was losing her battle...her kidneys began to shut down and the decision was made to humanely euthanize her.



Carolyn had a terrible skin condition and severely infected ears that required months of specialized treatment.



Rambler had a huge, golf ball size hard bulge under her chin. Surgery was required to remove a large bot fly larvae.

Donations to Betsy's Fund provide for acute medical care for homeless animals brought to us in critical condition and allows us to proceed with life-saving health care by taking the animal to a veterinary hospital. This year we were able to save over two dozen animals through the generosity of donors who contribute to this fund, including cats Elroy, Midnight, Bonnie, Rambler, and Tumbleweed; dogs Labowski, Kimmy, Carolyn, and Molly; and bunny Joy among others. While we were not able to save all of the animals who received extraordinary vet care, nonetheless, because of Betsy's Fund, we were able to go the extra mile to ensure every effort was made that could be.



Tumbleweed had a large gaping wound in her neck so badly infected it was teeming with maggots. She needed emergency surgery on a Sunday and weeks of medical treatment.



Molly had an enlarged cherry eye that required several surgeries to repair.



Bonnie was found in the middle of a busy highway with severe trauma to her hip and a badly broken leg. She had no feeling in her tail. Both her leg and her tail had to be amputated after treatment was unsuccessful.

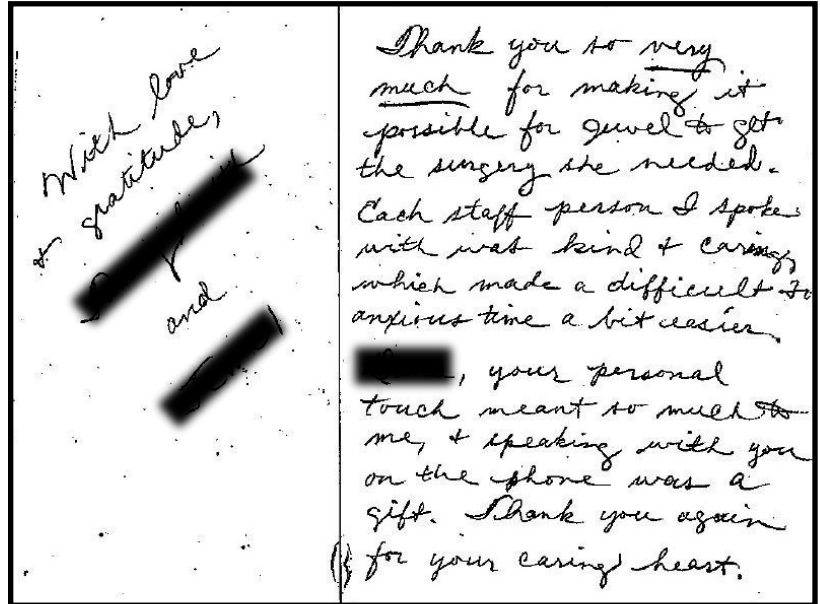
KEEPING PETS WITH THEIR OWNERS

Sauk County Humane Society is dedicated to keeping pets and their families together. We currently have four active programs designed expressly to keep pets with their owners. Together these are referred to as our “Companions in Crisis” programs. The first, the Josh Diehm Memorial Fund, was established in late 1997 in memory of long-time supporter and animal lover, Josh Diehm. This fund helps residents without means who find themselves facing unexpected or large veterinary bills for their pets. Funded entirely of donations, we are able to help people pay for emergency medical care for a pet they might otherwise have to surrender, put to sleep, or let suffer.

In February 2012, we started three additional programs: Pet Partnership, Safekeeping, and the Pet Food Pantry. These programs are designed to help residents keep their pets rather than giving them away or surrendering them to the shelter during difficult times. The Pet Food Pantry supplies low-income individuals with dog and puppy food, cat and kitten food, and kitty litter (when available). People who have suffered financial tragedies, lost their homes from fires and other disasters, fallen victim to sudden illness, or have to flee quickly from domestic abuse, can keep their pets at the shelter or in one of our foster homes through our Safekeeping Program. Through our Pet Partnership Program, volunteers will help individuals with no safety net available care for their pet in-home on a temporary basis if they are unable to due to recovery from surgery, hospitalization, or some other reason.

	Number of people helped	Number of animals helped	Dollars spent	Days spent in shelter
Josh Diehm	55	52	\$7,547	
Pet Food Pantry	85	196	\$0	
Safekeeping	23	27		640
Pet Partnership	1	1	\$0	

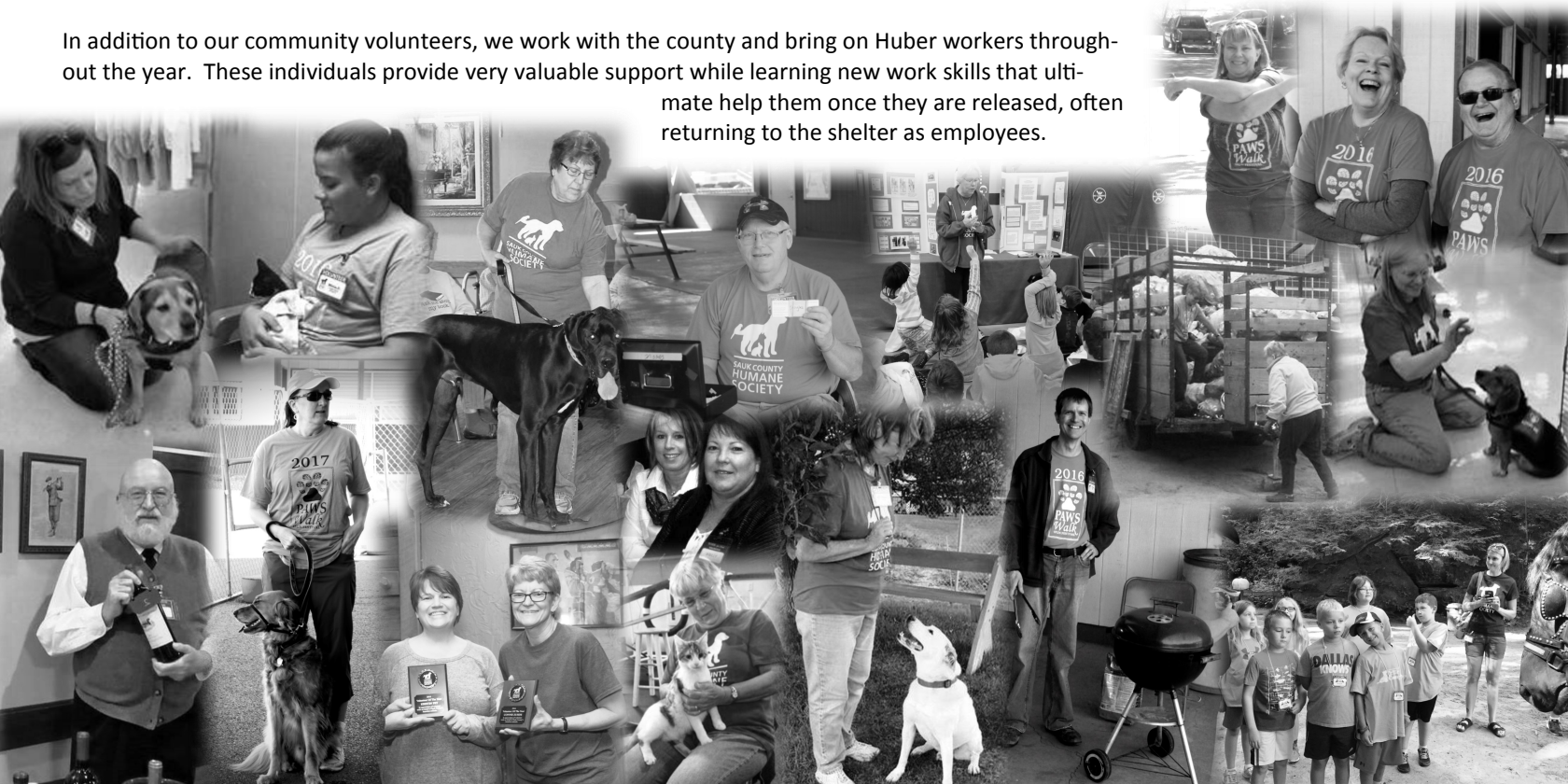
Animals and Individuals Helped in 2016



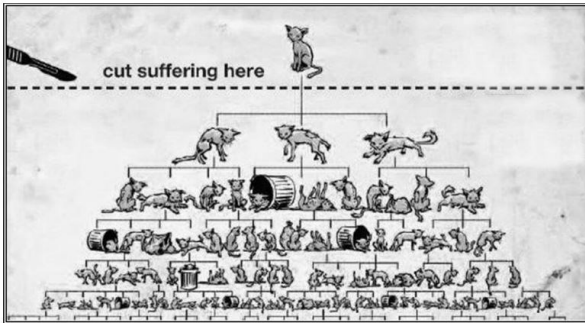
VOLUNTEERS

We could not successfully exist without our volunteers. We are very fortunate to have a dedicated group of individuals who selflessly contribute their time and talent. This year we saw yet another dramatic increase in our volunteer contributions, coming in at 15,452 hours! That's almost 550 hours more than 2015 and equal to seven full-time staff. Their activities include spay/neuter clinic support, animal enrichment, cat socializing, dog walking, photography, front desk support, animal transport, fostering, kennel cleaning, Adopt-A-Thon support, special events help, and outside facility maintenance.

In addition to our community volunteers, we work with the county and bring on Huber workers throughout the year. These individuals provide very valuable support while learning new work skills that ultimately help them once they are released, often returning to the shelter as employees.



SPAYING AND NEUTERING



Addressing the severe pet overpopulation in our area has always been a major part of the Humane Society's mission. In 1986, we began our Spay Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP). Pet owners could obtain vouchers from us for a small discount when they had their dogs or cats neutered or spayed. Every veterinarian in the county honored these vouchers. Over the years, the program was well used. By the mid-1990's we had spent well over \$100,000 in reimbursements to the vets and assisted in the sterilization of approximately 6,000 pets. This program continues to this day, however, we have taken our efforts to the next level.

Phase I of Sauk County's first Low Cost High Volume Spay/Neuter Clinic began in September 2014. After years of seeing the flood of unwanted animals, usually cats and kittens, come through our doors, we took a long hard look at this problem and decided we could no longer accept this as our reality in Sauk County. The single most important thing we can do to reduce the pet overpopulation problem is to spay and neuter--nothing else we do will alleviate as much suffering or prevent the euthanasia of animals as quickly or efficiently. Recognizing that **prevention of the next generation of homeless pets has to be our number one priority**, the idea to offer a low cost spay/neuter option was born in early 2013. Establishing the County's first low cost spay/neuter clinic is a start toward preventing future pet abandonment, homelessness, and neglect by preventing unwanted births. **We are currently the only Humane Society that offers a low cost spay/neuter clinic within at least a hundred mile radius.**

In 2016, we spayed or neutered 712 cats and 91 dogs. At average birth rates for cats, that represents thousands of lives saved merely by preventing unwanted kittens being born in the first place. And those unwanted kittens will not go on to die horrible deaths outside nor, if adopted, will they take the place of cats or kittens already waiting for homes in shelters.



WHERE WE ARE HEADED

Sauk County Humane Society is committed to continuing our growth as a responsible steward of homeless, neglected, and abused animals and as serving as a role model for how animals should be treated. We are also committed to continue to be an open admissions shelter. We will turn no animal away in its time of need, no matter what its age, condition, extent of injuries, or behavior. We cannot imagine watching a rejected person leaving our building, not knowing what to do with the animal they can no longer care for or looking at an innocent face and saying “You’re on your own.” We also do not charge a surrender fee. We have found that animal dumping is a very real and serious problem in our area and has been for decades. We hear stories weekly about animals who have been thrown from cars, dumped by the side of the road, or worse. While we encourage those surrendering animals to make donations to help with animal care, we believe the risk to an animal if an individual cannot or will not pay a surrender fee to be too great to require payment.

	Out of County	%'age of total intake
2012	317	14.6%
2013	408	13.8%
2014	421	20.4%
2015	557	27.7%
2016	641	31.5%

Out of County Intakes

We recognize that by accepting ill, injured, and otherwise unadoptable animals our euthanasia rate will be higher than that of limited admission shelters. We also recognize that the animals brought to us from outside our jurisdiction are likely coming to us because they are, in fact, unadoptable, which also contributes to our euthanasia rate. As a result of being an open admissions shelter, our intake numbers include a high percentage of animals from outside the county. And that number is increasing dramatically as surrounding shelters become more and more limiting whether by turning people and animals away or by making it difficult to surrender by charging surrender fees or forcing people to make surrender appointments.

We are committed to lowering the euthanasia rate at its source, i.e., too many unwanted animals allowed to be born in the first place, rather than by turning our backs on those already born and in need. This commitment involves offering a low cost spay/neuter option as well as an aggressive education initiative that includes requiring any adopter with animals to spay and neuter their existing pets, thereby ensuring they are not part of the problem. ***Community involvement in our efforts to stem the tide of unwanted litters will be essential to that success*** and we are committed to working together toward a goal that reduces unwanted litters and the community euthanasias that result. We all must be committed to a ***total program*** of animal care and control including: an enforceable ordinance placing responsibility for the pet squarely on its owner; a sterilization program; and public information material to inform all pet owners about humane and responsible pet care and control.



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