

# THE CONNECTION

July 12, 2019 - Issue 15

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER MENTOR PLAN

*By Medical Director, Shirene Cece*

In early May, Michigan Humane was contacted by Humane Society of the United States and given the privilege to explore a possible mentorship with Montgomery County Animal Shelter, a large municipal shelter in Texas just north of Houston. The partnership is part of the Shelter Ally Project, which focuses on partnering shelters to provide resources for transport and shelter operations to shelters in need. Being chosen to assist another shelter is an honor and consistent with our outreach to help other communities and organizations.



On June 17, Dr. Meyers, Dr. Cece and Jeremy Colburn traveled to the Houston area to tour the Montgomery County Animal Shelter and determine how best to assist them. The management of the shelter has made significant changes but still faces population challenges mainly due to barriers from being a municipal shelter overseen by a board of commissioners. While there, we were also able to witness their [Dogs Playing for Life](#), which is a program that uses shelter dogs playing in groups to provide enrichment, socialization and behavior evaluation.

We will be sharing our observations with leadership to determine how best to help them.

After visiting Montgomery County, we had a tour of the Houston SPCA that is located about 25 miles away right in the city of Houston. The SPCA has a 14-acre complex with a state-of-the-art adoption center, an education center that has summer camp for children, a horse rescue facility with cruelty cases and horses up for adoption along with an awe-inspiring wildlife rehabilitation center. In the wildlife area, they rehab everything from hawks and bald eagles to waterfowl and sparrows. There is a room dedicated to turtles and a kitten nursery. They are renovating a building on their campus to house 12-13 Texas A&M veterinary students who attend a required two-week rotation at the shelter. Visiting their campus may assist us in developing any plans for a wildlife or barn sanctuary if we consider doing that in the future.



## STOEPEL PARK VACCINATION CLINIC

*By Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Robert Fisher*

Last Sunday was a hot and humid day with temperatures approaching 90 degrees. It was also a day where Michigan Humane was conducting a vaccination clinic. This meant a LONG wait for both the clients and their pets in the hot sun. One of the dogs in the back of the line began to be overcome by the heat. The dog's temperature rose to over 106 degrees, and he collapsed and became cyanotic. The dog could have easily perished if the situation continued to deteriorate. Fortunately, Christina Mexicotte was working the line assisting clients and their animals and noted the dog in obvious distress. She quickly identified the dog's condition to the medical staff where treatment could be started. The dog did fine and was happy to jump into the owner's air-conditioned truck after his temperature returned to a more normal point. Christina has been a volunteer for the Michigan Humane since 2012. We are all grateful for her dedication and participation and for quite likely saving this dog's life. Like Christina, all our volunteers are highly valued and essential to the success of Michigan Humane programs. Well done!



## IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A ... FLOCK??

*By Cruelty Investigator and Field Services Manager, Elise Ramsey*

On Thursday, June 27, 2019, Field Services resumed operations after a five-day training hiatus. We were all very much ready to return to the streets and start saving animals again. Little did we know, we would be stepping into much more than we had planned.

At about 11a.m., we received a call from DACC, asking for assistance on a bird call. Allegedly, there were about 50 birds in varying states of neglect. Surely, we would arrive and assist with a few hens, maybe a peacock and some ducks - nothing we couldn't knock out quickly in the 90-degree heat. It's not like we had 140 messages to respond to when we returned that morning. We arrived on scene to what appeared to be a half-block property with birds everywhere. We met with the owner, who loved these birds like his children, of course. He agreed to let us remove everyone and get them to safety. There was one bucket of greenish black water for the entire group and very little food, mostly rotting fruit and vegetables. Many of the birds were mouth breathing and visibly very underweight. We knew we had to move quickly to get these guys saved.

We briefed, DACC included, and developed a plan to start plucking birds off the yard. In less than two hours, the Field Services team had knocked it out and removed 82 birds from the deplorable conditions. We flew back to the shelter where they were welcomed with open arms by our incredible shelter medicine team. They examined and banded every single bird we had. The Shelter jumped to get humane housing, food and water for these guys. This team (special shout out to Angela Hemminger, Diane Edwards, Dr. Deborah Land, Nicole Fernandez, Amy Tunney and Jenny Brenckle) began to function like a well-oiled machine. By end of day, we had turned Rows 1 and 2 into a makeshift aviary. The ducks were bathing and preening for the first time in who knows how long. The hens were chatting and chowing down on their scratch. The mama and ducklings cozied up for a nap in their clean, safe space. These animals had provision for the first time in weeks. And the best part was, nobody even squawked!

It always amazes me how quickly we can transform into a fast-moving, productive unit on the fly. There was minimal verbal communication once we got into it — everyone just worked. I've never seen a group of people as capable and hard working as all of you reading this. I am so thankful to be a part of a team able to produce such valuable, professional and sacred work. Thank you to everyone who assisted with this rescue. Please know how appreciative we all are for you constantly making it happen when we continually challenge our best.



## GETTING TO KNOW OUR LEAD VETERINARIAN AT LIVINGSTON



**Name:** Dr. Brandon Berkshire

**New Role:** Lead veterinarian, Livingston shelter and clinic

**Education:** Ball State University and Texas Tech University graduate with a Ph.D in organic chemistry, Michigan State University School of Veterinary Medicine

**Hobbies:** Watching sports (loves the Indianapolis Colts, the Chicago Cubs, and Liverpool soccer), hiking, sitting on the beach, playing golf, spending time with his family

**Fun Fact:** "I think cats are the greatest! I have two of them at home (Toby the old grump and Tang the feisty one-year-old)"

## ANNIVERSARIES

*Thank you for your service!*

**Samantha Blackwell, 1 year**  
**Mary Brinker, 1 year**  
**Nicol Fernandez, 3 years**  
**Bridget Garrity, 9 years**  
**Stephanie Garza, 1 year**  
**Rosemarie Kay, 2 year**

**Chastin Kornegay, 2 years**  
**Magdalena Loreti, 2 years**  
**Matthew Matusiak, 2 years**  
**Ashley N. Maynard, 5 years**  
**Delawrence D. Payton, 4 years**  
**Stephanye Quinn, 1 year**

**Janice Ramos, 33 years**  
**Nicole Schulte, 1 year**  
**Janell Vinci, 19 years**  
**Jacquelyn Wesley, 2 years**

## NEW HIRES

*Welcome to the Michigan Humane Team!*

**Alyssa Allen, Customer Service Representative**  
**Debbie Anderson, Relief Veterinarian**  
**Emily Boccia, Veterinary Intern**  
**Brooke Boger, Veterinary Intern**  
**Shelby Boschma, Veterinary Intern**  
**Margaret Campbell, Veterinary Intern**  
**Reanna Cantrall, Veterinary Intern**  
**Lauren Cominotto, Customer Service Representative**  
**Riley Druia, Veterinary Intern**  
**Storee Garner, Veterinary Call Center Representative**  
**Diamond Garrett, Veterinary Intern**  
**Jonathan Goosby, Customer Service Representative**  
**Kelsey Hardy, Customer Service Representative**  
**Ashley Hunt, Animal Care and Enrichment Associate**  
**Dana Isard, Veterinary Intern**

**Kacey Joseph, Veterinary Intern**  
**Samantha Kehren, Veterinary Intern**  
**Sara Lindo, Veterinary Intern**  
**Autumn Martin, Veterinary Intern**  
**Cree Moore, Customer Service Representative**  
**Jennie Nguyen, Veterinary Intern**  
**Anthony Phillips, Custodian**  
**Katherine Rigby, Veterinary Intern**  
**Alyssa Roberts, Animal Care and Enrichment Associate**  
**Sarah Shackleford, Mission Support Coordinator**  
**Nicole Vargas, Custodian**  
**Monica Vernier, Volunteer Programs Coordinator**  
**Katy Whitehill, Veterinary Intern**  
**Kim Williams, Customer Service Representative**  
**Sara Ybarra, Customer Service Representative**

## NEW ROLES

*Congratulations!*

**Brandon Berkshire, Supervising Veterinarian**  
**Samantha Blackwell, Veterinary Technician**  
**Jerme Colborn, Behavioral Health Services Supervisor**

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY ROADSHOW REMINDER

Hey everyone--the 2019 MHS Employee Engagement Survey Roadshow is that much closer! If you haven't already, make plans to attend one of the survey review sessions featuring Matt Pepper, Tom Varitek, and Andrea Buchanan. If you have a planned vacation or are otherwise unable to make it—we get it—but please make every effort to be there. If you are off that day, we will pay for your time to be there for the presentation. Here are those dates:

- July 15 - Mackey Center for Animal Care: 11:15 & 12:15 (you get lunch!)**
- July 16 - Petco: 8:30 (you get breakfast!)**
- July 16 - Rochester Hills: 11:45 & 12:45 (you get lunch!)**
- July 26 - Berman Center for Animal Care: 11:45 & 12:45 (you get lunch!)**
- July 29 - Bingham Farms: 12:30 (you get lunch!)**
- Aug. 5 - Livingston: 9:00 (you get breakfast!)**

Talk with your supervisor or manager or director or whoever schedules you, to make sure you can make one of these sessions. Looking forward to seeing you soon!



## TRIVIA

**Q. In honor of all of our new bird friends, what type of bird flies the fastest?**

Send your answers to [theconnection@michiganhumane.org](mailto:theconnection@michiganhumane.org), and the first person to answer correctly gets a free Michigan Humane t-shirt!

*Issue 14 Trivia Answer: The Beast or Hercules. Congrats to last weeks winner, Elise Ramsey.*

## JOB BOARD

Know someone who would be a great fit for the Michigan Humane team? Check out our job openings at [michiganhumane.org/careers](http://michiganhumane.org/careers)

**Animal Transport Evaluator/Driver**  
**Behavioral Health Services Director**  
**Clinic Veterinarian**

**Clinic Veterinary Tech**  
**Customer Service Representative**  
**Licensed Veterinary Tech**

**Shelter Licensed Veterinary Tech**  
**Shelter Veterinary Tech**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Meet Your Best Friend at the Market

- When: Sunday, July 14
- Where: Eastern Market - Detroit, MI

### Mutt March

- When: Sunday, July 28
- Where: Edsel & Eleanor Ford House - Grosse Pointe Shores, MI

### Canine to Five's Drinking with Dogs

- When: Tuesday, July 30
- Where: Rosie O'Grady's - Ferndale, MI

### Pups in the Plaza

- When: Friday, August 9
- Where: Little Caesars Arena Chevy Plaza - Detroit, MI

### Meet Your Best Friend at the DIA

- When: Sunday, August 25
- Where: Detroit Institute of Arts - Detroit, MI

### Giddy Up Pup

- When: Sunday, September 22
- Where: Eastern Market - Detroit, MI

**INTERESTED IN SUBMITTING CONTENT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE CONNECTION? SEND YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO [THECONNECTION@MICHIGANHUMANE.ORG](mailto:THECONNECTION@MICHIGANHUMANE.ORG)**