

THE CONNECTION

July 17, 2020 — Issue 55

‘SEEING THROUGH’ TO OUR DONORS By Director of Administration, Greg Harris

As they handle power interruptions, ear-splitting jackhammering and a light coating of drywall dust on EVERYTHING, the team at our Livingston Center for Animal Care certainly can’t ignore the construction work happening there over the last several weeks. The rest of you, however, may not have been aware that we are in the process of installing a new x-ray suite at Livingston to expand our services within that community.

Work began just after the 4th of July holiday and consists of the demolition of some existing space to create a dedicated suite to support a brand-new x-ray machine and associated diagnostic tools. With lead-lined walls and a heavy-duty power supply, this project is no small feat. It comes with all the costs associated with a major construction project, not to mention the x-ray machine’s purchase, which costs about \$17K, and the imaging hardware and software, which is \$43K.



Knowing money doesn’t grow on trees, where does the money come from for a project like this? The answer is a group of truly generous donors who want to ensure that we as an organization can provide the very best medical support to the animals in our care. These donors specifically earmark the financial support they give us to be used toward expanding and upgrading our medical equipment and capacity, helping us change the futures of so many animals in our care and the animals our clients entrust us to look after. In turn, we are obligated to honor their generosity and “see through” with the work that’s required to fulfill their support.

In fact, according to Dr. Robert Fisher, senior VP of compliance and regulatory affairs, a large majority of the specialized or “big-ticket” medical equipment we use in all our locations have been the result of the generosity of donors. Items ranging from a new pneumatic orthopedic saw at Westland to an anesthetic machine at Rochester, an autoclave at Detroit and the x-ray machine at Livingston have been just a few of the gifts we’ve received. In all, we’ve seen almost \$160K in donations for medical equipment and necessary support in the past year.

To say that these gifts are truly transformative is probably an understatement. As anyone who works in our vet clinics or shelter medicine operations could tell you, seeing an animal benefit from our skilled team using our advanced equipment is what we are all about. Our donors’ care and generosity frees shown by our donors frees up the money that we would have spent on this equipment to support many other programs and initiatives in our organization.

I know how easy it is to forget where the support comes from for so much of the work we do and the tools we use. If we put a plaque with the sticker price and a name to every single thing donated to us by philanthropic folks with big hearts, I think we’d all be amazed at how much people in the community care about us and the work we do (besides spending a fortune on small brass plates and engraving). So while that may not be feasible, just remember there is a really good chance that the transport vehicle you drive, the walk-on pet scale in the clinic lobby, the centrifuge you use for blood work or even the fluorescent lights that light your workspace were donated to us by some great folks who care about us and our mission. Thanks to them, we can continue to be us.

STEPPING UP By Field Services Manager, Elise Ramsey

Twenty-three days ago, I was notified that one of my teammates had tested positive for COVID-19. Although bound to happen, it was still a surprise as we felt we had been on top of our game – wearing masks, distancing and cleaning constantly. Our department quickly went from 11 people to three, and we began our two-week quarantine. As I expected, the remaining few moved right into action, changing their schedules and jumping into roles they have never filled. They perfected the brand-new PetPoint system on the fly, all while working through Michigan’s hottest weather in years. Yet no one skipped a beat. Shelter management provided daily support while the skeleton crew maintained Field Services operations, bringing in 91 animals over those two weeks! Investigator Sarah Schertel dispatched and fielded a tremendously high volume of calls, while Investigator Chris Ouwerkerk and Field Agent Pam spent nearly the entire day, each day, on the road. I know it was a huge challenge and hard work, but also a great reminder of why we matter, as an agency. It was hard to be remote and unable to help the team. I watched the dispatch board from home as URI kittens and Parvo puppies, geriatric dogs, more URI kittens, injured wildlife, abandoned animals and even more URI kittens - oh my gosh, so many URI kittens! - made their way into the shelter. And they just kept going. Everyone did. They kept showing up. Hitting the pavement. Saving lives. And the shelter kept setting up cages, checking in with my people and asking how else they could help. Everyone was there and making a difference.



We had just one agreement: no search warrants, no hoarders, no large-scale seizures — just do your best and get through each day. And what did we do? We found 13 animals in terribly unsanitary conditions, just asking to be removed. So then, for a second, we stopped.

Because we just, quite literally, did not have the resources. 1 truck, 2 cages. Rescue far East with a van full of animals and several more awaiting rescue. It would take hours to empty the house with just those two cages. But as they say, teamwork makes the dream work! In came Animal Transporter Sharon Bigham with her 12-cage chariot. Within just 30 minutes, each of those animals were loaded up, safe and sound, and on their way to the shelter. Waiting for them at the shelter were clean blankets in cages set up by Mary Brinker. Dr. Cece was ready to help the next broken mess. Go-to evaluators were running here, there and everywhere, mostly back to triage every time we returned with animals. OB-6 techs were providing comfort and peace for those who had reached the end of their story. Everyone was working together for the animals and the people. We simply couldn't have done it alone, without this Michigan Humane team.



For me, the icing on the cake came at our morning meeting last week, on the first day we were back together as a team. Sarah brought up that over the two weeks, at least one pet owner had called to inquire about each individual who was home on quarantine, just calling to say they hadn't heard from someone who was helping them reduce their number of pets. Or that they were worried that the agent who had been assisting with food hadn't come by recently. Or that they just wanted to check in and make sure their friend hadn't gotten sick because they had left a few messages that went unanswered. The community came back and checked on us. That means something: how impactful we are to this city and how much we truly are a part of this community. I am so thankful for Michigan Humane and the incredible human beings that make it what it is.



ONE PRIDE MICHIGAN HUMANE MUTT MARCH TEAM

By Director of Special Events, Becky Hanel

There is less than 10 days to join the One Pride MHS team. Registration is free with code MHS25STAFF, and anyone who raises \$250 now through July 8 will receive a pet feature in the MHS 365 Days of Pets desk calendar. For ideas on how to raise money, check out the [Fundraising Toolkit](#).

2020 MICHIGAN HUMANE PET PHOTO CONTEST

Has your pet taken over your camera roll during quarantine? Well, now is your chance to show off your photography skills while helping to change the lives of homeless animals by entering your favorite pet photo in the 2020 Michigan Humane Pet Photo Contest.

Now through July 26, you can visit michiganhumane.org/photocontest to enter the contest. Contest participants can email friends and family to support their campaign by voting with a donation; each dollar will represent one vote. When the contest ends, the top entries on the leaderboard – those with the most votes by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 26, 2020 – will win a spot in the MHS 2021 calendar!

MICHIGAN HUMANE IN THE NEWS

[Click here](#) to see Michigan Humane in the news this week.

**Please note this link is not viewable on a mobile device.*

TRIVIA

Q. What was the name of the webinar Behavior Director, Katelin Thomas, taught yesterday?

Send your answers to theconnection@michiganhumane.org, and the first person to answer correctly will receive a prize!

Congrats to last week's trivia winner, Katie Haynes. The answer to last week's trivia question was cheetah.

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