ROBBIE
THE ROOMBA
WINTER
WILDLIFE
AWARENESS
ASSN9 RANCH
PETS
ABOUT
TOWN
COOL COMBO

All new 2019 Subaru Forester Sport
Hudiburg Subaru | www.HudiburgSubaru.com

Be Kind to Animals Spay/Neuter Assist License Plate
Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Assn. | www.OKVMA.org
Celebrating 36 Years!
1215 E. Lockheed Dr, Midwest City, OK 73110
Store 405-733-4648
Animal Clinic 405-733-4649
Grooming Salon 405-733-2238

Exclusive for OKC Pets Magazine readers
$20 OFF OUR PUPPY PACKAGE!
The Puppy Package includes Vaccinations, Heartworm and Intestinal Worm Prevention, Flea & Tick Treatment, Microchip, Free Nail Trims and Free Merrick Puppy Food!
Use Code OKCPETSPUPPY when making your appointment to take $20 OFF!
Well, now that the ho-ho-ho is over and it’s 2019, let’s usher in this new year with high hopes for all the homeless and abused animals to find comfort and safety from the world’s viciousness. That is my wish for 2019, anyway. I know it’s a big wish, but, hopefully, with more awareness will come positive strides.

And speaking of ho-ho-ho, OKC Pets Magazine turns 5 in March! So, wish us a big, happy birthday and for all of us a great 2019!

Once again, Nancy Gallimore outdoes herself with a humorous tale about her Roomba vacuum Robbie and the shenanigans that ensue in a house full of dogs. I almost spit out my coffee with this one. You gotta read it!

And we’re so excited to have Kim Doner, wildlife expert and rehabber extraordinaire, as a contributing writer. Her work with wildlife is immeasurable, and it’s so good to know there’s someone out there like Kim helping all the creatures.

I love, love, love the feature on MUTTS Club. Kaycee Chance introduces us to a children’s club in Norman whose mission is animal advocacy. These kids are learning compassion and to appreciate animals at a young age; it’s such a win-win situation. Don’t miss this one!

Did you know donkeys are exceptionally smart animals despite the negative stereotypes? I love the segment on AssN9 Ranch in Shawnee, and I think you will, too. This is the other side of the story you probably never knew.

So, we hope you enjoy our January 2019 issue—maybe you’ll even enjoy it curled up somewhere on a chilly afternoon. But no matter where or how you read it, thank you for your support, and we look forward to presenting you with more enjoyable issues this year.

Marilyn and Elmer

From the editor
PUBLISHER’S LETTER pg 4

ASSN9 RANCH
Intelligent, lovable miniature Mediterranean donkeys pg 8

OSU-OKC’S PET HEROES
When rescuers become the rescued pg 12

ROBBIE THE ROOMBA
Technology takes on the dog house pg 15

MUTTS CLUB
Teens helping animals and their community pg 18

ALL ABOUT GUINEA PIGS
The 411 from an owner’s perspective pg 20

GLOBAL RESCUE
Helping animals regardless of their place in the world pg 26

WINTER WILDLIFE AWARENESS
Protecting eagles and raptors pg 34

DIRECTORY
Local products, services and friends of pets pg 36

K9ELITE DOG TRAINING
Educating owners and pets pg 38
The Best Food For Your Best Friend

Present this ad to any of the retailers on this page and receive $5 off any large bag of Fromm, plus receive a free bag of Crunchy Os treats!

Offer expires 3/1/2019

Found at these local retailers:

- allfurrpaaws
  15220 N. Western Ave., Suite E2
  Edmond, OK
  (405) 348-6888

- Britton Feed & Seed
  708 W. Britton Rd.
  Oklahoma City, OK
  (405) 842-5590

- Pawtopia
  335 S. Mustang Rd., Suite E
  Yukon, OK
  (405) 265-2950
  360 24th Ave. NW, Suite 10
  Norman, OK 73069
  (405) 310-2549

- Mango's Best Friend
  10600 S. Pennsylvania, Suite 15
  Oklahoma City, OK 73170
  (405) 703-3838
SMART AS A DONKEY

ASSN9 RANCH’S TITLE-WINNING MINIATURE MEDITERRANEAN DONKEYS PROVE THE STEREOTYPES WRONG

Stubborn, stupid, lazy or slow might just be some of the words that come to mind when you hear the word donkey. From the depiction of donkeys in movies like “Dumbo” and “Shrek” to expressions like “making an ass out of yourself,” donkeys have gotten a bad rap.

“A lot of people think that donkeys are stupid or stubborn, but they have a lot more self-preservation than a horse. They are not a flight animal like a horse,” explains Kim Winton, who, along with her husband Jim Speck, raises miniature Mediterranean donkeys. “They are really very intelligent.”

Winton and Speck, who own AssN9 Ranch in Shawnee, breed, raise and train award-winning miniature Mediterranean donkeys. They currently have about 30 donkeys and operate under the motto “pretty, performance, perfection,” a far cry from the stereotype.

Winton says she has always been around good watching animals and a natural enemy to coyotes or dogs.

“And so we got a standard size donkey. Sure enough, those dogs would run out there, but they would never cross that fence,” Winton said.

Thinking their donkey might like to have a friend, Winton and Speck bought a miniature donkey that incidentally turned out to be pregnant. Winton recalled the day the miniature donkey gave birth. “Oh my gosh, I’m pretty tough for a girl, but that little baby hit the ground, and I just boo-hooed. It was the cutest thing I’d ever seen in my whole life.”

Shortly after, Winton and Speck attended an expo to learn more about donkeys: how to groom, feed and show them.

“We thought it kind of looked like fun, and it was something neither one of us knew much about. So, it was something to learn about together,” Winton said. “Long story short, we got more involved and bought some, really studied a lot, started buying high quality stock, and we are now one of the leading breeders in the business—especially when you talk about performance animals.

We are in it for the performance aspect, not just to breed a pretty donkey.”

Unlike miniature horses that have been bred down, miniature donkeys are naturally occurring and stand between 30 to 36 inches high through the hip. Originating from the Mediterranean area, they were imported to the United States in the 1930s and can live to be up to 40 years old.

The classic colors for the coat are gray and brown, but after years of breeding, miniature donkeys can now also be found in several shades of red or even have spots.

Winton and Speck say they sell their donkeys for anywhere from $1,000 to $6,000, depending on if it is a pet quality animal or a title-holding show animal.

Breeding for Competition

The couple has plenty of title-holding show animals. In 2017, Winton and Speck’s donkeys swept the National Miniature Donkey Association year-end high point awards, taking the top spots for jacks, jennets and geldings.

“They were all animals that we had raised,” Winton added. “Those three were the epitome of what we do try to breed for. With that particular three, I’ve won grand champion jack, grand champion gelding and grand champion halter.”

Winton said it has taken about six to eight years to really see the results of their breeding efforts.

“Ultimately, what we have tried to do is breed nice performance, our high-end performance animal back to a halter donkey,” Winton explained. “We are at a point now; I compete very well in halter as well as performance, but that took quite a while.

“The halter competition is judged by how well the donkey’s body conforms to breed standards. A performance donkey has a little bit longer body; the hips may be a little higher than their shoulders, and their heads are a little bit bigger.

“I have some halter donkeys that can move well, but they have to have a good mind,” Winton continued. “They have to have the willingness; they have to have the disposition. That’s not to say that all halter donkeys aren’t willing to learn. Our particular bloodline, we are not just focusing on the body; we are focusing on building a very trainable, willing animal.”

Depending on the show, there might be anywhere from eight to 15 different classes, ranging from performance driving to in hand races to game classes with names like Hurry Scurry, Scramble and Pleasure Driving.

Obstacle courses can be as straightforward as maneuvering through cones and around barrels or as complicated as jumps of varying heights, backing into a small garage, opening a mailbox and retrieving mail or getting on a teeter totter.

“You might do lead line race, that means just get the donkey in your hand and run as fast as you can. It’s a timed event, down around the cone and back,” Winton said.

“That sounds easy, but frequently it is a drag race. Or you get down halfway, and the donkey says, ‘Hmmm, no, I don’t really want to go around that cone.’ Or the donkey gets going faster than you, and you do a flip in
Originating from the Mediterranean area, they were imported to the United States in the 1930s and can live to be up to 40 years old.
front of everybody. I’ve done all of that,” Winton said with a laugh.

Sometimes, props are used to distract the animals from the task at hand.

“One of the shows we go to, they have a taxidermy wild pig. You don’t have to do anything to the pig, but you have to execute an obstacle by it, and a lot of times the donkeys are afraid of it,” Winton said.

“It really comes down to a lot of the trainability of the animal and the trust that the animal has in you,” Winton said.

Outside of competitions over the last several years, Winton and Speck have also participated in Remington Park’s Extreme Racing Day charity event. Their miniature donkeys race other donkeys to raise money for a variety of charities. Camels, zebras, pigs and ostriches are also included in the event with charities assigned to different animals. The winning animal raises money for its assigned charity.

Golden Retrievers With Hooves

Though the couple focuses on breeding donkeys for competition, a lot of the people who purchase the animals want them for pets, Winton said.

“A lot of people buy them for kids, and they are extremely tolerant of kids,” Winton said. “These are really like a Golden Retriever with hooves. A horse will come up and see if you have anything good to eat and then leave. The donkeys really want to be up in your business: ‘Oh, you’re fixing the fence? Let me help you fix the fence. Oh, you’re moving some hay? Let me help you move that hay.’”

Winton says when she walks out on her property, she looks like the Pied Piper of donkeys: “I’ll have a trail of 30 donkeys walking behind me.”

In addition to wanting to be around people, they also want to be around each other.

“They are herd animals. They interact with each other a lot, they talk to each other, they groom each other, they play and they chase,” Winton said.

That being the case, money is not incentive enough for Winton to sell a donkey if it is going to be by itself. And though the donkeys will acclimate to dogs that belong on the property, a dog is not a substitute for companionship, though the two animals do have their similarities.

“Every one of their brays is different. Just like you have dogs and know which dog is barking,” Winton said. “They make a lot of different noises.”

Winton says training a donkey is extremely similar to training a dog.

“Most of them are pretty food driven, but more than anything, it’s just the praise, scratch on the shoulder, attaboy,” Winton remarked. “And they all have their own personalities. My two favorite jennets, they just know when I get up in the morning, and by the time I get my coffee and sit in the sunroom, they are there waiting for me.”

To learn more about AssN9 Ranch, visit their website at www.AssN9ranch.com.
Join Our Ole’ Timers Club!

Wednesdays 10-1 join us for our Seniors’ Program, the Ole Timers Club! Refreshments provided! Come help groom some horses or donkeys. There are many ways you can help here even if you aren’t a horse person, so don’t let that stop you!

Come socialize with other Ole Timers! T-shirts are available and you can even donate to give a senior their own shirt!

Contact us for details — plainswindrdr@gmail.com
Follow us on Facebook: Horse Feathers OleTimers Club

Now Taking Reservations

K9 CORRAL

Call today!
405-999-5822
info@rubysk9corral.com
www.rubysk9corral.com

Valir Hospice HosPets
Pet Therapy Program

The friendliest pets in Oklahoma

VOLUNTEER for Valir HosPets Program!

To volunteer, call us today!
(405) 609.3636 | valir.com

Come join us, meet new friends, help some horses!

www.horsefeathersequinecenter.org.
(405) 260-7281
EARLY LAST SUMMER, staff at Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City were knee-deep in organizing Paint This Town Orange, the school’s festive biennial scholarship fundraiser. While the fundraising team was busy coordinating myriad details for the event, they also were tasked with highlighting the school’s popular Veterinary Technology program.

Why did Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City leaders want to shine a light on the Veterinary Technology program? First, if you’re a pet owner, you probably know that Americans are in love with their pets. No matter where American pet owners live, their age or ethnicity, or how deeply divided they are on political issues, studies show that they stand united in believing that pets make a positive contribution to their lives.

Second, all that pet love is growing. According to the 2017-18 National Pet Owners Survey, 68 percent of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own a pet. This is up from 56 percent of U.S. households in 1988, the first year of the survey. And, as any devoted pet owner knows, in addition to collars, leashes, carriers, pet beds and food, you want and need professional veterinary care for your beloved furry family member.

Third, licensed veterinary technicians are critical to a veterinary practice and are in demand. In 2017, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development listed veterinary technicians as one of Oklahoma’s critical occupations. The Veterinary Technology program at Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City (OSU-OKC) plays a vital role in filling that need by educating and training veterinary technicians.

Fourth, salaries for veterinary technicians are in the low to moderate range, which makes scholarships for veterinary technician students extremely important. “Students in the Veterinary Technology program at OSU-OKC provide a range of services to the greater Oklahoma City metro community,” said Amber Hefner, head of the Business and Agriculture Technologies Division at OSU-OKC. “As part of their training, the students in our program treat animals from partnership animal shelters and rescue organizations under the supervision of licensed veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians. Our students also learn to work with a variety of animals, including companion animals, large animals and exotic species.”

The challenge OSU-OKC’s fundraising team faced was how to help people connect the need for licensed veterinary technicians to the heart of the cause—those special animal friends that walk, fly and slither into our lives.
OSU-OKC President Brad Williams saw an opportunity to make the connection. “Social media presents countless stories and videos about animals saving people and vice versa,” Williams said. “Our team wanted to find those kinds of stories in our community and share them to highlight people making a difference. Our first Pet Hero contest was the result.”

OSU-OKC’s inaugural Pet Hero contest solicited stories about rescued pets from pet owners who later realized their rescued pet had rescued them. Advertised through OSU-OKC’s social media channels and open to OSU-OKC students and the public, the contest ran June through August of 2018.

“We received so many compelling submissions, it was difficult to narrow the field,” Williams said. “In the end, we selected the two stories we felt illustrated the strong bond between humans and animals and how that relationship was beneficial.”

The two winning stories were submitted by OSU-OKC students Dawn Croteau, of Guthrie, a substance abuse counseling major; and Emily Haastrup, of Oklahoma City, a nursing major.

“The stories of Luke, the dog, and Sphynx, the cat, are great examples of the indelible role animals play in our lives,” Williams said. **COMPASSION SAVES A LIFE, COURAGE AND LOVE RETURN THE FAVOR**

One morning in May of 2011, Dawn Croteau decided to survey the new dock her family recently built on the shoreline of their neighborhood lake. Little did she know she was about to perform a life-saving act of compassion that would profoundly impact her life just two years later. Croteau, 51, recalls that dramatic morning.

“She looked across the lake and, in the distance, saw a man throw a plastic bag into the water. Thinking the man was littering their beautiful lake, Croteau and her daughter, Alisha Cook, used the family’s inflatable boat to quickly row across the water. As they rowed, the bag slipped beneath the surface. Arriving where the bag disappeared, Croteau and her daughter splashed into the murky, waist-deep water and, feeling the floor of the lake with their feet, found and lifted the bag to the surface. Whatever was inside the bag was heavy, moving around and was certainly not trash.

Croteau and her daughter carefully pried the bag open with a stick. Inside were three squirming puppies, approximately 8 weeks old. Croteau took the puppies to her home and later found foster homes for the two female puppies. She kept the lone male to replace their recently deceased farm dog and named him Luke.

Luke was smart and readily took to learning tricks and obedience training. When he outgrew the Croteaus’ house, he revealed in his new position as the family farm dog, faithfully patrolling the Croteaus’ three-acre farm. Some two years later, after working late one night, Croteau returned home as usual, continued on page 32

**Pet Heroes:**

PEOPLE WHO SAVE ANIMALS, ANIMALS WHO SAVE PEOPLE, THEY’RE THE LUCKIEST IN THE WORLD

By Shauna Struby

**13 OKC Pets January/February 2019**
Let people know what your business or organization has planned. Folks can't participate and share the experience if they don't know about your upcoming events.

Submit your group's event information along with a photo and what to expect.

It's easy! Select “Submit Event” straight from the Calendar!
Take advantage of these offers made to you by our advertisers

COUPONS
DISCOUNTS
SALES
SPECIALS

CLICK HERE
Edmond Pet Resort

- Five Star Lodging
- Individualized care to meet your pet’s every need!
- Supervised Doggie Daycare
- Large Play Park with shade trees
- Multiple Pet Discounts
- Catering to all sizes and breeds of dogs
- Web Cam
- Limo Service

1200 S. Kelly Avenue, Suite D Edmond, OK 73003
Mon.-Fri. 7:30am-6:00pm Sat. & Sun. 7:30-9:00am & 4:00-6:00pm
Lodging Desk: 405-285-5040
Spa Desk: 405-285-8650

New Website - EdmondPetResort.com

“Oodles and Doodles of Fun”

Barking in Style
Pet Salon

Experience matters!
April 27+ yrs
Janelle 33+ yrs
Jackie 6+ yrs

9431 N. May Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
(405) 495-5723

Free to Live

Animal Sanctuary

Where Every Animal is Free to Live
ADOPT VOLUNTEER GIVE
405.282.8617 FreetoLiveOK.org

Canna-Vet
Wellness for Dogs & Cats

ENDOCANNABINOID SYSTEM

CB1 & CB2 RECEPTORS

Herban Mother Cannabis Dispensary

The Village | 405-242-2047
10717 N May Ave, STE D, OKC, OK 73120
The Paseo | 405-594-2328
607 NW 28th St, STE A, OKC, OK 73103

405 282-8796
125 W. Harrison
Guthrie, OK 73044
WWW.GUTHRIEPET.NET

Tender Loving Care from the Heart of Historic Guthrie

Guthrie Pet Hospital
Anna M. Coffin, DVM
Now, before you start telling me to make posters and spread the word on every social media avenue available, you should know that Robbie is not our pet. She is our devoted household assistant. Robbie is our iRobot Roomba 695.

I remember when the Roombas first hit the stores. I sat with Jim, my partner in this crazy life, and giggled at the prospect of watching one of the little robots trying to navigate our very dog-centric home. We reasoned that the fine folks at iRobot should probably send us one for free as an extreme product testing experiment. Because trust me, no one can dish out better challenges and obstacles for a Roomba than we can.
By we, I mean me, Jim and the 20-some-odd dogs that are currently residing with us at Tails You Win Farm. No, we are not desti-
tined to be the next episode on A&E’s “Hoarders.” We run a home-based rescue for Dalmatians and other dogs that find them-
sevles in need of a place to stay for a few weeks, months or a lifetime, depending on the situation. Ours is a revolving door filled with wagging tails and muddy paws.

The answer to the question that just popped into your head is yes. They do all live in the house (right where they are supposed to be!). And here’s the answer to the next question you’re about to ask. Yes, it does present a housekeeping challenge to have so many dogs running in, out, and about our home. Dusting, sweeping, vacuuming, mopping—heck, we even own a commercial floor scrubber—are just daily activities around here.

So, the idea that a little robot friend was ready, willing and able to help us keep up with the dirt and hair that combine to carpet our floors seemed too good to be true. And we laughed the idea off repeatedly... until the day I saw Roomba on sale at Target. ON SALE.

I smuggled my little robot into the house and had her sitting on the charger before Jim could tell me I was a crazy person. When Jim did notice my prize purchase, he simply asked how soon it would be charged and then sat nearby, phone on video mode in great anticipation of the hilarity that was sure to ensue. If nothing else, perhaps we could make a fortune with a viral dogs vs. Roomba video, winning the big money on “America’s Funniest Home Videos.”

The moment Robbie’s little battery light clicked to green (and I assumed that meant ready-to-roll because, heaven forbid, I actually read the instructions), I hit the start button, and she made the cutest beep-beep-beep noise like a teeny delivery truck. I found this out by total accident. I was home alone when I heard a woman’s voice in the other room. Yes, I was slightly freaked out. Then I heard the voice again and recog-

I smelled the problem before I found the problem. I’ll spare you the specific details, but let’s just say I am now intimately familiar with all of Robbie’s inner workings and how easily her brushes and wheels come off for thorough cleaning. We’re going to have to put a big red X in the “detects and avoids dog poop” column, but I will put a green checkmark in the “fairly easy to disassemble and clean” column.

For the record, Robbie and I have agreed we shall never speak of this tragedy again.

This was also the moment we learned we cannot take advantage of Robbie’s feature that allows you to program her to run while you are not home. Oh no. We will not subject Robbie or ourselves to the prospect of having her run through this minefield unattended.

Following the event—that shall-not-be-discussed, things went pretty well for our little robot assistant. Oh sure, there’s no way in hell she can possibly keep up with all the floor cleaning needs this house presents, but

I appreciated her willingness to go places that are hard for me to reach without some major furniture shoving.

Robbie scoots willingly under the bed to keep dust bunnies at bay and, bonus, she often shoves long-lost dog toys back into the light of day. There’s a green checkmark I bet the engineers at iRobot didn’t see coming.

She also easily glides under our couches and veers her way through the dining room table and chair legs. She’s extremely good at sweeping along baseboards where dog hair loves to congregate. And when the early morning light causes the little white Dalmatian hairs to glisten on our floor, it’s gratifying to see Robbie’s path cutting to and fro, sucking those little demons away.

Obviously, Robbie does not have a huge collection bin tucked away in there, but I am impressed at just how much dog hair and dust she can compress into her small receptacle. I am equally impressed that she can tell me when she’s full. Holy moly, Robbie talks!

So yeah, despite my best efforts to watch for and prevent this HUGE disaster, I turned my back for a few moments—a few horrifying, oh-dear-dog moments.

This tim e the voice was coming from Robbie, and she was requesting assistance. Once again that user manual I’m pretty sure I threw away would have come in really handy as Robbie repeatedly referred to a specific error code.

Fortunately, it didn’t take a genius to decide to flip Robbie on her back to take a look at her brushes. Or where her brushes were supposed to be. The only thing visible was a giant mat of dog hair. Hey, I bet that isn’t supposed to look like that. Brushes and wheels cleared, dirt receptacle emptied, and Robbie was good to go.

We continued to hear calm messages from Robbie from time to time. Sometimes, it was because she was stuck somewhere and needed a little boost. More often than not

“Robbie moves through our house in a constant state of confusion like the silver ball pingin about in a pinball machine.”
it was because she was clogged. Then, after a few weeks, it seemed as though Robbie’s messages changed. Maybe there was an air of desperation in her tone? At times, it seemed as though she was actually gasping or even screaming.

I guess these robots are intelligent because Robbie seems to be realizing her plight. She is fighting an impossible battle around here. Admittedly, there are days she can’t seem to face reality. Just yesterday, I punched her start button, she spun in one small circle as if to survey the damage, then placed herself right back on her base.

“Not today. I have a migraine,” I imagined the now-tired voice mumbling.

But now she’s just gone. Not a word. No note. No trail of bread crumbs to follow. I think she packed her little iRobot suitcase and moved out.

It’s also possible there is something so unspeakable under my bed that she is trapped and cowering in some dark corner. I’ll try to find her. I’ll apologize. I’ll give her a good cleaning and a few days off. Then maybe I’ll get a couple more Roombas. Maybe she just needs her own little army to tackle this mess we call home.

Stay tuned. It will either be a great idea, or the robots will take over Tails You Win Farm in a revolt that would make George Orwell proud. In that case, Jim, Nancy and 20-some-odd dogs may need a place to stay.
Would you like OKC Pets Magazine delivered to your home or business?

Visit us online now and subscribe!
In January / February 2019
OKC Pets Magazine will deliver
to these 300+ locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agape Pet Clinic - OKC</td>
<td>7401 NW 23rd</td>
<td>(405) 787-2285</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aubyn's Bark 'n Beauty's Dog Grooming</td>
<td>7403 NW 23rd</td>
<td>(405) 651-0223</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany Animal Hospital</td>
<td>4312 N Council Rd</td>
<td>(405) 384-1105</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany Animal Shelter/Animal Control</td>
<td>5100 N. College</td>
<td>(405) 789-3431</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany Country Store</td>
<td>3401 N Rockwell Ave</td>
<td>(405) 789-5645</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canine Clips</td>
<td>6733 NW 50th St</td>
<td>(405) 495-8339</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Veterinary Hospital - OKC</td>
<td>7930 NW 23rd</td>
<td>(405) 787-1001</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion 4 Paws</td>
<td>3219 N. College Ave</td>
<td>(405) 205-4045</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiley Post Airport</td>
<td>5915 Philip J Rhoads Ave</td>
<td>(405) 316-4061</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby's K-9 Corral</td>
<td>902 Pendergraft Road</td>
<td>(405) 999-5822</td>
<td>Blanchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicoma Park Feed</td>
<td>11338 NE 23rd St</td>
<td>(405) 769-2711</td>
<td>Choctaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond Dog Salon - Del City</td>
<td>5529 SE 15th #D</td>
<td></td>
<td>Del City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkin Donuts - Del City</td>
<td>1600 S Sunnylane Rd</td>
<td>(405) 672-4919</td>
<td>Del City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelly's Grooming OKC</td>
<td>4330 SE 29th St, Ste 3003</td>
<td>(405) 672-2883</td>
<td>Del City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abri Animal Clinic - Edmond</td>
<td>3720 E 2nd St</td>
<td>(405) 705-2444</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acre View Pet Hospital &amp; Laser Center</td>
<td>1900 S Bryant Ave</td>
<td>(405) 348-0808</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Fur Paws</td>
<td>15220 N. Western Avenue Suite E2</td>
<td>(405) 348-6888</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Medical Center I-35 - Edmond</td>
<td>3800 E 2nd Suite A</td>
<td>(405) 359-6301</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azani Pro Training and Boarding</td>
<td>14815 Bristol Park Boulevard</td>
<td>(405) 562-8708</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Bow Wow - Edmond</td>
<td>801 Centennial Blvd.</td>
<td>(405) 359-7297</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle E Inc - Edmond</td>
<td>125 W Waterloo Rd</td>
<td>(405) 340-5425</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danforth Animal Hospital - Edmond</td>
<td>800 East Danforth Road</td>
<td>(405) 896-3081</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer Creek Animal Clinic - Edmond</td>
<td>17919 N Portland Ave</td>
<td>(405) 509-6891</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delmar Smith Kennels</td>
<td>3509 E. Memorial Rd</td>
<td>(405) 478-1171</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond Animal Welfare</td>
<td>2424 Old Timbers Dr.</td>
<td>(405) 216-7615</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond East Animal Hospital</td>
<td>5825E Covell Rd.</td>
<td>(405) 701-9000</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond Pet Resort</td>
<td>1200 S. Kelly Ave., Suite D</td>
<td>(405) 285-5040</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Pet Hospital - Edmond</td>
<td>2228 NW 164th</td>
<td>(405) 216-5200</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free to Live</td>
<td>808 S Kelly Ave 73003.</td>
<td>(405) 282-8617</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentle Care Animal Hospital - Edmond</td>
<td>2301 NW 178th Street</td>
<td>(405) 285-9663</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Poodle Grooming</td>
<td>3131 E. Waterloo Road, Suite B</td>
<td>(405) 657-2001</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood Feed - Edmond</td>
<td>1200 W Covell Rd Suite 116</td>
<td>(405) 471-5518</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janice Winchester - Churchill-Brown</td>
<td>1901 W. 33rd. St. Suite 100</td>
<td>(405) 330-2626</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC's Funky Hair Ranch</td>
<td>22 E. 3rd</td>
<td>(405) 340-4140</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy's Egg - Bryant</td>
<td>1715 E. 2nd St.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Edmond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLICK TO SEE COMPLETE LIST
“THE MOST REWARDING IMPACT is that the students take what they learn back to their families, friends and schools and educate others,” explains MUTTS Club Coordinator Kim Fairbanks when asked about the overall impact of the group of students she oversees once a month.

Seemingly, this idea of continued education and sharing learned information is one of the central focuses of the club, which consists of middle school and high school students and adult mentors who truly care about animal welfare and humane education in the state of Oklahoma. The group, which is under the direction of Hands Helping Paws in Norman, Oklahoma, was officially started in 2017 but has roots all the way back to 2014 when the organization began visiting schools.

“In 2014, Hands Helping Paws began visiting schools with our ambassador cat, Weaver,” Fairbanks explains. Weaver is a handsome black and white cat who visits schools and hospitals and promotes pet education and the importance of spaying and neutering as well.

“We use the Mutt-i-grees curriculum developed by Yale University and coordinated through North Shore Animal League,” says Fairbanks. The curriculum is quite innovative and incorporates material for students from Pre-K through high school. The goal of the curriculum is to develop “calm, confident, caring kids” and to “create a more humane future for all through social emotional learning,” Fairbanks explains.

After seeing the impact on students in schools, Hands Helping Paws decided to create the group in February of 2017. “Hands Helping Paws wanted the students to have hands-on activities with shelter pets,” says Fairbanks. “So HHP implemented our MUTTS Club (Motivated, Understanding, Thoughtful Teenage Students), which meets once a month at our local shelter.”

Fairbanks explains the group meets on the first Saturday of each month at Norman Animal Welfare, and there are typically between 10 to 25 students that attend. The group hosts students from surrounding areas of Norman, Moore, Noble, Lexington and Little Axe, and Fairbanks oversee the group with the help of adult mentors who work as animal welfare trainers and social workers, all providing an important perspective for the students.

Fairbanks breaks down the goals of the MUTTS Club to four major areas: 1) for students to learn about animal welfare and how they can impact their community directly by taking what they learn and sharing it with family and friends; 2) to help shelter pets get adopted through creating social media content featuring different animals; 3) to advocate for the importance of spaying and neutering pets; and 4) to encourage pet owners to properly microchip and tag their pets. Each month the group focuses on a different lesson and activity that ties in with these major goals.

The group will usually split their time between classroom time and hands-on time. During classroom time, the group will go over new topics and lessons and review safety procedures before interacting with the animals.

continued on page 22
As per the commercials we’ve all seen, guinea pigs are not from Guinea nor are they pigs. They are actually from Peru, the land of the Incas. They have always been a food source, but when hunters’ children fell for them, some were kept as pets.

Today, as social companion animals, guinea pigs make great pets. They can be kept in same-sex pairs. “Otherwise, keep adult guinea pigs housed separately. Different types of small animals should not be housed together,” cautions Petco.com. It is not advisable to breed them either, as most females die after giving birth.

**Feeding**
The initial cost of purchase is minimal; however, keeping them well fed and healthy is not. First, they need fresh, filtered water daily. I suggest searching online for a quality water bottle that is leak-proof.

A well-balanced diet should contain high-quality guinea pig food (Oxbow is my brand of choice), Timothy hay (available at all times) and limited amounts of vegetables and fruits. They require 30 to 50 mg of vitamin C daily, either from food or supplements. Never feed them chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as those may cause serious medical conditions, along with sugar and high-fat treats, advises Petco’s care sheet.

**Housing**
Get set up before you buy; my favorite cage is the Guinea Pig Habitat Plus. It is easy to clean and maintain (ideally, once a week). It also features a bridge to each side that easily becomes a divider for separating pairs. While mine have never fought, it’s a nice feature to have the built-in option. You want to acclimate them to your lifestyle. Since we bought our pair, Brindles and Peaches, they have had light music playing in their room 24/7. They can be ideal apartment pets after they get accustomed to sounds via the TV or radio. Then they will not be freaked out by noises, such as fire alarm tests, etc.

From experience, I suggest getting a carrier larger than you think you currently need, as our females have doubled in size. Next, you’ll need 1 to 2 inches of bedding in the habitat. Proper bedding includes high-quality paper bedding, crumbled paper bedding or hardwood shavings, according to Petco. Never use cedar chips, which are hard on their respiratory system.

**Behavior & Routine**
With the proper food and housing, your little creatures should be cozy and comfortable, and, in turn, they will be loving and trusting. Note that they prefer routine and will benefit from a structured schedule for playing, feeding and resting each day.

With their teeth as their only defense, they will use them if threatened or if you play too roughly. Teeth, which grow continuously, need to be maintained with chew sticks or mineral chews.

They love to be petted on the head, and the sounds they make are delightful! They may jump or “popcorn” into the air when happy. Out of our pair, one loves to chatter and the other softly coos. Never ever use aggression with these small creatures.

It’s best to keep them somewhat contained when you let them “run.” Do not put them in a hamster rolling ball or wheel. It will damage their spines; instead they like all four feet on the floor and to travel fast. Use common sense and watch them at all times out of the cage, particularly watching for dangers such as electrical cords, carpet to chew, etc. Poo pads also come in handy. Pet beds lined with a poo pad and a towel are great for your lap time. And when you put them to bed for the night, they like to be covered with a security blanket of sorts.

**Choosing your pet**
Have fun picking your babies! All major pet stores have scheduled deliveries, and they come in both female and male varieties. Variations in coat and color add to the fun of choosing your new pet. Watch how they interact with the others, and pick the ones that speak to you.

While the life span of guinea pigs ranges from 4 to 8 years on average, the oldest on record was just under 15 years! My babies are nearly 3, and I don’t regret a minute of having them or caring for them. Every morning when I uncover them, they are ready for love and, of course, a treat!

These creatures of habit will make you so happy to have them.
BRITTON ROAD VETERINARY CLINIC

DOCTORS’ HOURS:
Monday through Friday
8:00am-11:30am, 1:30pm-4:30pm
Saturday 8:00am-10:30am

2826 West Britton Road Oklahoma City, OK 73120
(405) 751-8007
www.brittonroadveterinaryclinic.com

NOW OPEN!

YUKON
(405) 265-3950 - 335 S. Mustang Rd NE - 73099

NORMAN
(405) 310-2549 - 360 24th Ave NW - 73069

Bring Out The Best In Your Pets With Great Nutrition And Treats
Natural, Holistic Dog & Cat Food • Self-Serve Dog Wash
Chew Bar, Treats • Cookies & Cakes • Dog & Cat Toys • Collars,
Training Harnesses & Much More
Now offering curbside pickup, local delivery and shipping.

www.Pawtopia.net • Like us on Pawtopia

Posh Paws
BOARDING & DOG DAY CARE

- Open 365 Days a Year
- Outdoor Play Equipment
- Individual Cots & Blankets
- 24 Hour Security System
- High Speed Cameras
- Indoor & Outdoor Play Yards
- Interactive Play Environment
- Grooming Available

105 Sutton Circle • Moore, OK 73160
(405) 759-7674 (posh)

8533 NW Expressway • OKC, OK 73162
(405) 759-3647 (dogs)

verasposhpaaws.com
“Each month’s learning is different as we follow the animal welfare month themes,” Fairbanks explains. For example, “during Adopt a Senior Cat Month, we would have a lesson on senior pets and then create an adoption video that features a senior shelter cat in need of a home.”

One activity that is beneficial for the students and the animals (and just so happens to be a student favorite) is the Shelter Reading Buddy program, in which students sit and read to the dogs in the shelter.

“Reading to the dogs helps bring comfort to them and reduces anxiety,” says Fairbanks. “Reading to the shelter pets also nurtures empathy in children as well as improves their reading skills. Usually within five minutes of reading, the dogs will settle down in their kennels.”

Other activities that students participate in at the shelter are stuffing Peanut Butter into Kong toys so the dogs have fun enrichment activities or helping to decorate the shelter for events like Home for the Holidays or the Kitten Bowl.

The group has an impressive list of projects under its belt already, and it’s obvious that the intent of the group is not only to help the animals in the shelter but to spread that support to the surrounding community as well. The students have participated in making winter shelters for feral cats in the area, and they assist in Hands Helping Paws’ outreach events such as low-cost spay and neuter clinics and Pets for Life.

“We are also doing something new to help the community, at the shelter for our meet-

ings, we are now offering free engraved pet tags for anyone that may need one,” says Fairbanks.

While the impact on the animals of the Norman Shelter and the surrounding communities is evident, it’s also important to focus on the positive impact on the students involved in the MUTTS Club. Fairbanks explains that one of the most important takeaways for the students is that they continue to share what they’ve learned from the group with their friends and families, but she has also seen students experience change on a more personal level.

“The students are more confident and have developed relationships with others outside of their schools,” Fairbanks says. “I have seen extremely shy kids enter our program, and within the first few hours, they are smiling, talking to others and having fun.” This is a fundamental part of social emotional learning, as students gain more confidence in themselves through the knowledge gained about the animals and the positive impact they are making on the animals as well.

The MUTTS Club has two student ambassadors, Gracie Burnside and Olivia Casey of Curtis Inge Middle School in Noble, Oklahoma; both are serving as ambassadors for their second year. An impressive presentation from Burnside and Casey highlights some of the important activities and lessons from the past year with topics ranging from caring for hospice pets, to the consequences of abandoning an animal, to bite prevention and bottle-feeding kittens. While the list of topics includes some heavy subject matter, the students are able to directly see how the animals are affected and how they can make an impact.

For example, under the direction of Fairbanks, the students were involved in helping rescue an injured cat named Angel by fundraising for her lifesaving care, and they have adopted a senior dog named Harley to be their MUTTS Club mascot.

The MUTTS Club organization is making a big impact on local communities in the area. From directly helping animals in need in the Norman Animal Shelter to helping students learn important life skills and lessons about social emotional learning, there is no doubt that the MUTTS Club is making Oklahoma a safer place for animals for years to come, and it is so encouraging for all animal lovers to know the great work the group is doing. What students learn in the club will be passed on to their families and friends, creating a hub of information about the importance of animal welfare. For students or parents interested in learning more about getting involved in the MUTTS Club, the organization can be contacted through its Facebook page @muttsclub.
Have a photo of your pet that’s too cute not to share? Send it to us, and we’ll include him or her in our next Pets About Town. Simply send a high-res jpeg photo to petpics@okcpetsmagazine.com along with your pet’s name. And don’t forget to look for your photogenic fur baby in the next issue!
Compassion for animals is intimately associated with goodness of character, and it may be confidently asserted that he who is cruel to animals cannot be a good man.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER
The family fled Damascus in Syria at the height of the civil war, leaving not only their livelihood, their home and their way of life but also their beloved dog.

Fleeing as refugees to Montreal, the woman and her two sons had nothing and knew no one. While they led successful lives in business and in university in Syria, now they started from scratch, picking up the pieces of a ruined life.

And all they wanted was their dog. With all they had lost, leaving their pet behind was the most traumatic.

“They turned to SPCA and said they wanted to get their dog out of Damascus,” said SPCA International Executive Director Meredith Ayan. “We said, ‘We don’t know how, but we will try.’”

Working through Syrian Association for Rescuing Animals, a pet rescue organization formed at the height of the Syrian war, SPCA International brought together multiple organizations from Lebanon, Syria, Canada and other countries to bring home a beloved pet.

SARA bought black market gas to take the dog to the border at night, a Lebanese animal rescue took the dog, and another organization flew to Lebanon and arranged to have the dog flown to Montreal.

“This family’s entire lives were uprooted, but they were focused on getting their dog out,” said Ayan. “It took a few months and partners from around the world to help this family, which proves that helping animals despite location is really about helping people.”

In Oklahoma and around the world, pet rescue operations are toiling daily to rescue abandoned, abused or neglected animals. It’s a mission that supersedes political differences, cultural differences and geographical differences, and many organizations work together to accomplish the mission.

On a local, national and global scale, animal rescue and compassion know no borders, no politics and no cultural barriers.

**CLOSE TO HOME**

Most days see Dana Huckabee, founder of Pet Angels Rescue in Logan County, driving to the farthest rural reaches of Oklahoma to take in dogs and cats that are on “death row.” Because of outdated state laws and statutes, many rural shelters do not have the county population to be able to appropriate money to run shelters, thus leaving them in the position of having to euthanize healthy animals.

The mission of Pet Angels Rescue is to save the lives of as many homeless animals as possible while raising awareness of the thousands of dogs and cats killed every day in Oklahoma rural shelters. The mission is largely accomplished by pulling dogs and cats out of kill shelters and placing them into Pet Angels’ no-kill rescue where they are carefully prepared for adoption and placed in devoted homes.

“We worked with 55 rural shelters in 2018 alone, and since our founding in 2000, we’ve rehomed 7,000 animals and spayed and neutered 8,500,” said Tiffany Smith, advocate and volunteer at Pet Angels Rescue. “Only three counties in Oklahoma have the population to appropriate funding for shelters, so the other counties have to come up with their own money. They simply don’t have the funding to keep animals. But a study done by (Oklahoma’s) Kirkpatrick Foundation shows that it costs less to spay and neuter and release an animal than it does to euthanize them.”

Pet Angels Rescue is located just five miles north of Edmond and hosts adoption days every weekend. Oftentimes, the shelter takes in rural animals with medical needs or injuries.

Finn was one of those dogs. He had been chained to a tree for a year and eight months of his life, and when his owner finally surrendered him, the dog was skin and bones and had lost most of his hair.

“We took him in, and in just three months, Finn is so much better. It’s amazing to see his transformation, and he’s going to be such a beautiful dog,” Smith said.

Pet Angels Rescue also reached out to other animal advocate programs throughout the nation for help organizing their first fundraiser this past October, which raised $50,000 for the organization.

“We are a no-kill shelter. No one’s time is ever up,” said Smith. “But we work with rural shelters across Oklahoma and with shelters nationwide to make this happen.”

Visit www.petangelsrescue.org for more information.

**BEYOND OUR STATE**

On a hot Wisconsin day, the dogs came running to the fence in full excited bark mode, and their doggie wheelchairs didn’t slow them down at all.

Goofy, a caramel ball of fluff, bounced up and down on his two front good legs. He lost the use of his back legs when he was crushed inside a truck illegally hauling dogs for meat in Thailand, and the Soi Dog Foundation knew he would never be adopted out.

In the next cage, Raha from Iran was just excited to see visitors. His tongue lolled out the right side of his face as he ran happily in circles, despite the fact that the entire left side of his face was gone, burned away when thugs taped firecrackers in his mouth.

Raha and Goofy are just two of the 235 dogs and cats at Home For Life in Wisconsin, continued on page 30
Academy of Dog Grooming Arts

Your New Career Starts Here

5920 NW 38th, Warr Acres, OK 73122
405-470-5551
OKCDogGroomingSchool.com

Celerity Prosthetics

Prosthetics For People And Pets

8625 S. Walker Ave. • Oklahoma City, OK 73139
(405) 605-3030

Turn to Twister For High Performance Training

Twister Agility & Dog Sports
Agility • Obedience

CALL ABOUT SCHEDULING A WORKSHOP OR CLASSES
405/826-7524
www.twisteragility.com • nancy@twisteragility.com

Time To Move Inside!
Join one of our Agility Classes today!
Globally, Animal Rescue Organizations continued from page 27

a singularly unique sanctuary for unadoptable, terminal or forgotten dogs and cats. The only sanctuary of its kind, Home For Life provides a “forever home” for animals that are disfigured, terminally injured, unadoptable or just overlooked.

“The animals who come to Home For Life could not be helped by any other option but a care for life sanctuary,” said Founder Lisa LaVerdiere. “And once at Home For Life, our animals are not offered for adoption. Once an animal comes to us, it truly has a home for life. Through our example, we hope to discourage an acceptance of euthanasia for animals who can still live a quality life.”

The nonprofit sanctuary has powerful supporters as well, including “The Dog Whisperer” Cesar Millan and Jane Goodall, who spoke in 2017 at the annual fundraiser, urging for support for a place that is among the only one of its kind in the nation. In 2018, actress Ashley Judd spoke at the gala.

Home For Life also partners with the Soi Dog Foundation in Thailand and the Vafa Animal Shelter in Iran to rescue dogs that have been abused or disfigured.

“It’s hard to remember Raha’s desperate condition on the day we met him. Some sadistic people had attempted to blow his head off. They put firecrackers in his mouth, taped his muzzle shut and then lit the fuse,” LaVerdiere said in a post.

“Miraculously, the firecrackers did not explode, but they still did plenty of damage—their intense heat seared away Raha’s gums, cracked his teeth, and even burned into the bones of his face and jaw. His injuries left him unable to open his mouth more than a centimeter. By the time we met him, he was slowly starving to death.”

Disfigured and starving, he wandered around for two weeks. Finally, townspeople who had witnessed the attack called the Vafa Animal Shelter for help, and representatives came to his rescue. Vafa took Raha in, but they knew he would need more medical care and reached out to Home For Life to help with his case.

Today, Raha is a success story for Home For Life. He’s happy, healthy and loved, despite his disfigured face, as are all the animals taken in.

“This is our mission. We partner with organizations throughout the nation and the world to provide a home for animals that would otherwise be euthanized or die,” said LaVerdiere.

Visit www.homeforlife.org for more information.

GLOBALLY

SPCA International works with close to 1,000 partner animal rescue or welfare organizations around the world in places like Asia, Africa, the U.S., South America and Europe. Since 2007, the organization, which also has a chapter in Oklahoma, has given more than $1.6 million in direct grants to shelters worldwide, focusing on educational programs, shelter operations and spay and neutering programs.

“In many of these countries, access to spay and neuter programs is not always possible for some of the populations,” said Ayan. “For instance, in Guatemala, an American expat has been running a shelter for 30 years to help the stray dog population there. In Africa, we did a spay and neuter and rabies project, and people there who love their dogs came with wires around the dogs’ necks as a leash. We are able to give out supplies like bowls or leashes, things we take for granted that other people don’t have.”

Photo courtesy of SPCA International

Photo courtesy of SPCA International
In addition to programming grants, SPCA International also gives out $7 million annually in veterinary supplies and common items like dog beds and leashes. They also have military support with Operation Baghdad Pups, which was formed in 2008 to help bring dogs from Baghdad that soldiers adopted to the U.S.

“We hit our 1,000 dog mark on rescuing animals through that program. We handle the logistics and cost of bringing those dogs back to the U.S. to live with the soldier or their families,” said Ayan.

Despite the global efforts for humane treatment of animals, Ayan knows there’s plenty of work left to be done. In countries like South Korea, where dogs are often used as meat, using diplomacy and communication to change a practice is a test of patience.

“Yes, they eat dogs, but there are good people trying to fight that practice,” she said. “But you have to be respectful of other cultures, too. It takes a lot of diplomacy; you can’t just run in there screaming.”

Visit www.spcai.org for more information on SPCA International.

A SMALLER WORLD
While Pet Angels in Oklahoma takes in rural, abandoned and stray dogs, Soi Dog Foundation in Thailand undergoes operations to intercept illegal black market dog meat trade. In Iran, normal, everyday people are working to end cruelty often shown to stray animals. In Guatemala, an American woman still runs a shelter that takes in hundreds of stray dogs every year.

“Animals don’t know borders, and there is nothing that keeps one animal from being more important than another,” said Ayan. “I think our organizations exist to make the world smaller and help animals regardless of their place in the world. Having more compassion in our world is never a bad thing, and it brings us all together in a very compassionate way.”

GOLDEN POODLE GROOMING
405 657 2001
Aaron Kirkman • Becca Mohr • Danielle Reece
Over 15 years combined experience
AKC Safety-Certified Groomer and Salon
Established September 2017
3131 E. Waterloo Road • Edmond, OK 73034
Tues–Sat 9 am–6 pm • Appointments required
We pride ourselves on our speed and efficiency. Most dogs are out within an hour!
Pet Heroes continued from page 13

and Luke was waiting to greet her in the driveway. But when Croteau tried to exit her car, Luke pushed so hard against the door she couldn’t open it.

“Luke was so big and strong I couldn’t force the door open,” Croteau said. “After about 10 minutes, he finally moved, so I got out. But then he almost knocked me to the ground trying to keep me away from the gate.”

Croteau persevered toward the gate and just before she reached it, saw a 3-foot rattlesnake coiled and ready to strike. She screamed, Luke jumped in between, and the snake lunged forward like lightning, striking Luke twice.

“I was freaking out and crying and remember being terrified Luke would die,” Croteau said.

The Croteaus rushed Luke to an emergency pet hospital in Oklahoma City, where he was treated with anti-venom and, after resting for a few days, recovered fully from his wounds.

“Today, Luke is a 187-pound ball of love, like a big teddy bear,” said Croteau. “He’s a beloved member of our family. Luke literally saved my life that day. I am forever in his debt.”

THE CAT WHO SAVED THE NIGHT

During a record-setting heat wave in the summer of 2012, Emily Haastrup, 18 at the time, wasn’t thinking about black cats or bad luck when she and her mother spied what she thought was just a black lump in the middle of the road in their Tulsa neighborhood.

Haastrup, now 23, and her mother, Earnestine, had gone out for a bite to eat and were returning home, sweating even though the air conditioning was blasting on high. Haastrup saw the black lump in the road tilt over and fall and asked her mother to stop the car. The lump turned out to be a tiny black kitten in obvious distress. The cat hissed weakly when Haastrup approached.

“It was so hot we thought the kitten probably had heat exhaustion,” Haastrup said. “If we’d left him out there, he probably would have died. Since he hissed, I just waited, and in a few seconds, he wobbled toward me and walked right into my hands.”

Haastrup and her mother rushed the kitten home, nursed him back to health, and helped him acclimate to their two dogs, who were very interested in the newest family member.

Sphynx was so tiny, he fit in the palm of your hand and looked like a puff ball with huge eyes,” Haastrup said. “I think my mother fell in love with him first, but the whole family grew to love him.”

About a year later, Haastrup had graduated from high school and was preparing to move to Norman to attend the University of Oklahoma but was worried about leaving her mother. The two were close, and Haastrup’s mother suffered from frequent nightmares that disturbed her sleep and often left her feeling unsettled.

Haastrup had learned the best way to help her mother avoid the worst effects of the nightmares was to wake her mother up as soon as she heard her whimpering in her sleep. Haastrup was concerned other family members wouldn’t hear her mother in time to help her. The day Haastrup left for college, she made a point of saying goodbye to each family member. When she came to Sphynx, Haastrup pulled him close and whispered in his ear, telling him to watch over her mom when she slept.

“About a month and a half later, I was talking with my mom on the phone, and she says Sphynx is waking her up when she has nightmares,” Haastrup said. “He crawled on her chest and put his nose to her face to wake her up.”

Relieved Sphynx was watching over her mother, Haastrup reflected on what she learned.

“Some people don’t understand why we chose to keep a black cat. They think black cats are bad luck,” Haastrup said. “I tell them Sphynx proves that superstition is wrong. I tell them what Sphynx does for mom; I tell them everyone deserves to be loved, and I share the lesson Sphynx gave us: don’t judge anyone by their appearance.”

“We received so many compelling submissions, it was difficult to narrow the field,” Williams said.

---

Luke, showing his playful side, owned by Dawn Croteau, Guthrie, Okla. (Photo provided by Dawn Croteau)

Luke and his human, Dawn Croteau. (Photo provided by Dawn Croteau)

Sphynx and Earnestine Haastrup, Emily’s mother. Emily submitted the story about how Sphynx helped her mother, Earnestine. (Photo provided by Emily Haastrup)
Advertise your pet product or pet service here, and reach over 30,000 pet lovers! OKC Pets Magazine hits your target market, and enjoys a two-month shelf-life.

Don’t forget about our website, www.okcpetsmagazine.com.
Winter has a myriad of meanings to us. For some, it means the holidays; for some, it means time to catch up on good books. Others, however, are excited at the crisp fall weather because it means hunting season.

By Kim Doner
As a wildlife rehabilitator, I’d like to share a personal perspective on hunting. True hunters are responsible and oftentimes conservationists. They take care of their guns, they follow all safety procedures, they maintain proper licensing, and they eat what they kill. It is a sport, but also puts food on their tables.

Those who take out animal lives for the sole purpose of entertainment are killers, and that's an entirely different story. It's also not the story I'm here to discuss. So, back to hunters...

After taking office last year, one of the first changes Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke made was to undo the order for phasing out the use of lead in ammunition and fishing tackle on government lands.

The policy, created to stop the pointless destruction of wildlife caused through hunting and fishing, had led to a 34 percent reduction in primary and secondary lead poisoning in animals. Many may not realize it, but one lead pellet lodged under the skin of a bird will kill it; one lead pellet ingested by a goose, bass or bullfrog will trigger the cascade of brain damage, then organ failure, blindness, intestinal paralysis and, ultimately, death.

When an animal is shot, bullet fragments can lodge in the muscles around the entry. Deer shot with lead bullets can have high lead levels even after professional processing of the meat. Those levels are found in sausage, steaks and ground venison. A warning; there is no safe lead exposure level for humans, not to mention wildlife or pets.

Leaded lures can be ingested by fish, bullfrogs, ducks and geese. Their deaths are painful, but prior to dying, their symptomatic behavior often attracts predators like bobcats or hawks. Secondary poisoning is rampant from lead: opossums, raccoons and many other omnivores eat carrion—another compelling reason to remove lead from hunting and fishing supplies. Affected birds will scrounge for fish and carrion—another compelling reason to remove lead from hunting and fishing supplies. Affected birds will scrounge for fish and carrion—another

Beaks and talons are dangerous, even for the most skilled handler. A peregrine falcon has an eye for the camera.
Directory listings are free of charge for advertisers; non-advertisers may be listed for a $50 fee. For listings, please email directory@okcpetsmagazine.com.
Pet Mortuary and Cremation Services
Pet Memorial Gardens
17560 State Highway 9
Norman, OK 73069
(405) 387-5737

Precious Pets Cemetery
5501 Spencer Road
Spencer, OK 73084
www.preciouspetchemetery.com
(405) 771-5510

Pet Retail
All Fur Paws
15220 N. Western, Suite E2
Edmond, OK 73013
www.allfurpawsok.com
(405) 348-6888

Britton Feed & Seed
708 W. Britton Rd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73114
(405) 842-5590

Edmond Pet Resort
1200 S. Kelly Ave., Suite D
Edmond, OK 73003
(405) 285-5040

Mann’s Best Friend
10600 S. Pennsylvania, Suite 15
Oklahoma City, OK 73170
www.mannsbf.com
(405) 703-3838

Pawtopia
www.pawtopia.net
335 S. Mustang Road, Suite E
Yukon, OK 73099
(405) 265-2950

360 24th Ave. NW, Suite 100
Norman, OK 73069
(405) 310-2549

Pet-Vet Supply
1215 E. Lockheed Dr.
Midwest City, OK 73110
www.pet-vetsupply.com
(405) 733-4649

Three Dog Bakery
1380 W. Covell Rd.
Edmond, OK 73034
www.threedog.com
(405) 697-2868

Pet Sitting, Transportation, and Walking Services
Carey Pet & Home Care
www.careypet.com
(405) 605-3355

Specialty Pet Food and Treats
All Fur Paws
15220 N. Western, Suite E2
Edmond, OK 73013
www.allfurpawsok.com
(405) 348-6888

Britton Feed & Seed
708 W. Britton Rd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73114
(405) 842-5590

Earthborn Holistic Natural Pet Food
www.earthbornholisticpetfood.com

Mann’s Best Friend
10600 S. Pennsylvania, Suite 15
Oklahoma City, OK 73170
www.mannsbf.com
(405) 703-3838

Pawtopia
www.pawtopia.net
335 S. Mustang Road, Suite E
Yukon, OK 73099
(405) 265-2950

360 24th Ave. NW, Suite 100
Norman, OK 73069
(405) 310-2549

Pet-Vet Supply
1215 E. Lockheed Dr.
Midwest City, OK 73110
www.pet-vetsupply.com
(405) 733-4649

Three Dog Bakery
1380 W. Covell Rd.
Edmond, OK 73034
www.threedog.com
(405) 697-2868

Friends of Pets
Celerity Prosthetics
8625 S. Walker Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73139
www.celerityprosthetics.com
(405) 605-3030

Free to Live Animal Sanctuary
P.O. Box 5884
Edmond, OK 73083-5884
www.freetoliveok.org
(405) 282-8617

Fromm
https://frommfamily.com/
https://frommfamily.com/

Horse Feathers Equine Center
6320 W. Highway 74C
Guthrie, OK 73044
www.horsefeathersequinecenter.org
(405) 260-7281

Hudiburg Subaru
210 E. I-240 Service Rd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73149
www.hudiburgsubaru.com
(405) 644-3100

Janice Winchester, Realtor
Churchill-Brown Real Estate
janice@churchillbrown.com
(405) 919-4830

Kennel and Crate
www.kennelandcrate.com
(405) 624-0062

Kirkpatrick Foundation
www.kirkpatrickfoundation.com
(405) 608-0934

Mary Westman Law
1818 W. Lindsey, Suite C-160
Norman, OK 73069
www.marywestmanlaw.com
(405) 237-8737

Moore Funeral and Cremation
400 SE 19th
Moore, OK 73160
www.moorefuneralcremation.com
(405) 794-7600

Sani Sheen System
1226 W. Britton Rd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73144
www.sanisheen.com
(405) 843-9644

Valir Hospice HospPets
www.valir.com
(405) 609-3636
Dogs. They come in different sizes, different breeds, different colors, and yes, different personalities. How many of us love a cute, little puppy that we can call our own? Do you remember when you welcomed your very first little bundle of fur into your home, the little doggie that you begged for? You told your parents you would take care of him, feed him and take him outside when he needed to do his duty. You loved your little puppy, didn’t you?

I am sure we all remember those little incidents that seemed to happen every once in a while. Your little puppy began to get bigger. Then, he became a little aggressive with everyone that came around. Your doggie became a little more active. Uh oh, little Fido just chewed up your dad’s new shoes! For anyone who can currently relate to this scenario, it sounds like it might be time to look for a professional dog trainer to adjust your dog’s behavior.

Allow me to introduce you to Coty Cortez, professional dog trainer of K9Elite Dog Training. His mission is to keep dogs out of shelters and in happy, safe homes. This is achieved by educating owners and teaching puppies to respect their home.

K9Elite Dog Training is a team of canine behavioral specialists. They specialize in aggression, anxiety, fear biting, hyperactivity and many more canine personalities. They bring this specialized training to the comfort of your home, and they don’t leave until the job is done. The reason their training works so well is because they apply the basic psychological factors that derive from any dog’s antecedents, the wolf.

Cortez was born in Bradenton, Florida, but he was raised in Midwest City, Oklahoma. As a child, he would find stray dogs and play with them. Naturally, he began training dogs when he was 9 years old, but at an even younger age, Cortez was able to communicate with canines.

While serving in the Marines, he volunteered as a dog trainer for the Wounded Warriors Project, training service dogs. He immediately fell in love with dog training once again, and he knew that this was what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

After his time in the Marine Corps, he began working as a dog trainer at Petco and soon realized his passion for working with dogs that no one else wanted. In order to save these dogs, he needed more experience, so in January of 2016, he went to work for Lorenzo’s Dog Training Team. Later, he trained dogs for a national dog training company. With new confidence and extensive experience, Cortez decided to open up his own facility to ensure quality training to each dog in his care.

Cortez says he always thought of himself as “a pretty knowledgeable dog trainer,” but later he realized, from his mentor, there is always more one can learn. Through his own training, he learned how to obtain a line of verbal communication and respect from the dogs with which he worked. He also learned how to effectively “train the dog owners as well.” After seven years of training dogs—he trained 70 dogs in 2016 alone—he now understands dog training more than ever and is always learning to improve himself as a trainer and leader.

Cortez says there are basic things every dog owner needs to know: “As the owner, it is your job to learn about your puppy’s psychology. We will teach you everything you need to know about dog training but were afraid to ask. You need to understand your puppy. Once you understand your little four-legged bundle, we can then teach our clients wanted behaviors and which ones are unwanted. Once you establish a line of verbal communication and respect, you can then bond with your puppy on a whole new level,” he says.

There are certain requirements that need to be followed before K9Elite Dog Training will accept a dog to be trained. All canines must have an up-to-date shot record and be 8 weeks of age or older.

They offer Basic Dog Obedience Training, which means your dog will go through the class while trainers help your canine companion get acclimated into your home, developing a verbal line of communication and a level of respect. You will learn to set rules and boundaries. The training also teaches you how to use these methods so you can keep your canine companions safe inside and outside the home, allowing you to enjoy your pet for years to come.

K9Elite also offers various other training: Boarding Elite, Boarding Plus, Boarding Basic, Protection Training, Service Dog Training and Retrieval Training.

Contact Coty Cortez at (405) 314-7926 for more information about K9Elite Dog Training.
Largest Selection of Urns and Keepsake Mementos in the State.

Family Owned and Operated since 1985.

The Only Pet Cemetery in Oklahoma That is a Member of the International Association of Pet Cemeteries and Crematories.

With 2 Locations, You’re Never Too Far Away From Your Beloved Pet.

Precious Pets Cemetery
Spencer, OK
PH: 405.771.5510

Pet Memorial Gardens
Norman, OK
PH: 405.387.5737
WHERE YOUR PET IS NEVER ALONE

OUR SERVICES

- Routine Patient Care, Wellness Exams, Vaccines, Flea / Tick / Heartworm Prevention
- 24 / 7 Emergency Care & Surgery
- Fully Staffed Intensive Care Unit & Isolation
- Internal Medicine Specialist
- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Chamber
- Ultrasound
- Computed Tomography & Fluoroscopy (CT-Vimago Advanced Imaging)
- Endoscopy, Rhinoscopy, Cystoscopy, Gastroscopy, Colonoscopy, Otoscopy
- Digital Radiographs
- In-House Laboratory Testing
- Laparoscopic Spay, Gastropexy & Exploratory Surgery
- Dental and Surgery Suites
- Orthopedic & Arthroscopy Surgery
- TPLO, TTA, Swivel Lock Procedures for Cruciate Repair
- Hemilaminectomy & CT Myelogram Surgery
- Microchipping & Health Certificates
- Exotic Animal Treatment
- Laser Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Rehabilitation with Water Treadmill
- Reproductive Services

OPEN 24/7 • NO EMERGENCY FEE!

2700 N MACARTHUR BLVD | OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73127
405 - 947 - 8387