



WINTER 2011

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STRAY RESCUE OF SAINT LOUIS
RESCUE NEWS
 Devoted to the welfare of animals everywhere

STRAY RESCUE OF SAINT LOUIS



Hi again – and as always, thank you for being part of the Stray Rescue family!

With some blood, lots of sweat and plenty of tears, we just completed the most amazing year in Stray Rescue's history. With the closing of the city pound, Stray Rescue has grown exponentially in terms of the number of lives that have been saved from torment, neglect and death on the streets.

Our new shelter opened, thanks in large part to the generosity of the Bagby Family and all who helped us to this point. Nearly 200 dogs now call Pine Street home, and are anxiously awaiting a chance to find their forever families. We have put the finishing touches on the Meet and Greet Apartment, where people can try out dogs to see how they might do in a house.

And as we grow, we need your support more than ever. We need you to foster and help prepare our amazing animals for life after the shelter. We need your financial support to not only complete our city's dream facility, but also to help us save even more lives. And we need you to volunteer.

In this edition, you'll see how amazing – and creative – our volunteers truly are. Read how members of the St. Louis Blues spent an off day making life better for several dogs that might otherwise have died at the onset of winter. A special volunteer-initiated hiking program has given several groups of shelter dogs the chance to hit the trails for fun and socialization. Stray Rescue's cause also took center stage in a unique theatrical performance written by Stray Rescue volunteers. The love and backing of our mission we receive really humbles me daily. You guys rock!

Enjoy this edition of "Rescue News." To stay informed on a more regular basis, sign up for the E-newsletter from our website, www.strayrescue.org.

WOOF!
Randy Grim
Founder/Director

Stray Rescue Unveils Companion Center's Sign Honoring Bagby Family

Stray Rescue of St. Louis has unveiled a new shelter sign dedicated to the Bagby Family in honor of their continued support, the most recent of which was a \$100,000 donation in January.

Bob Bagby, former CEO of A.G. Edwards, and the Bagby Family have given Stray Rescue numerous donations, including the building on Pine Street that is now the organization's primary facility.

"Such inspiring generosity has been integral in providing Stray Rescue with the means to carry out our mission to rescue stray animals, provide them with medical care and place them in loving adoptive homes," said Randy Grim, Stray Rescue's founder. "The Bagby Family's most recent generous contribution of \$100,000 is a tremendous help in the continued effort to finish shelter renovations."

We still need about \$550,000 to complete the shelter, and the compassion of key Stray Rescue family members like the Bagbys is essential to reaching that goal in 2011. If you'd like to contribute, contact Kathleen England at Kathleen@strayrescue.org or call 314-422-3404.



Bob Bagby, Randy Grim and Barb Bagby in front of the Companion Center's new sign.



"Wasting Away in Barkaritaville" played to a sold-out house at the Stray Dog Theatre in January.

The plight of homeless and neglected dogs took center stage recently with the opening of "Wasting Away in Barkaritaville," a play written by Stray Rescue volunteers/playwrights Mary Martin and Sandy Eden.

The play covers a two-day period at The Paradise Shelter, a no-kill pet sanctuary on a mythical paradise called Barkaritaville Island. Much of the story is told from the

perspective of five canine characters, offering insight into the emotional and physical needs of all dogs who share like emotions with humans.

The play was inspired in part by Stray Rescue's Barkaritaville event in 2008, for which Martin volunteered and co-author Eden attended, as well as events in their own lives.

BLUES TEAMMATES ARE PLUS-4 ON RESCUE RUN

By Chris Pinkert - St. Louis Blues Online (11-29-10)

There's an old saying that a dog is man's best friend. But as four stray dogs learned in November, the reverse also can be true.

On an off day before Thanksgiving, Barret Jackman and Alex Steen of the St. Louis Blues visited abandoned homes in North St. Louis to help the staff of Stray Rescue of St. Louis rescue dogs from abuse, neglect, starvation and in one's case, even near-death.

"You round them up and their first trip is right to the veterinarian," Jackman said. "They check for heartworm, give the dogs all the shots they need and quarantine them for a bit to make sure they (aren't infected) with anything too serious."

Jackman and Steen rescued four dogs that day: one was a puppy found on the floor of a building that had previously caught fire; another was a scraggly dog with a sad face that had days, if not hours, left to live.

"My family was out of town for a couple weeks, and I said if they needed a hand with anything, I was free. I wasn't doing much on my off days," Steen said. "(Jackman) called and said they were going out, so I went. We found some dogs and it was a happy day."

Randy Grim, the founder of Stray Rescue, had made several visits to this particular site in North St. Louis, feeding the strays and caring for them until he had room at his shelter to finally bring them in. With assists from Jackman and Steen, his shelter added four new residents that day.

"All of them were strays that were born on the streets or just lived on them," Jackman said. "We're lucky to get them, take them to a vet and hopefully they're doing well now."

The dogs were each named for Blues players: the first rescued dog, a female, was named "Steen" to commemorate Steen's first animal rescue experience. The puppy in the burning building was named "Baretta," while the other two were named "Beener" and



Alex Steen, Barret Jackman and Randy Grim look for strays.



Alex Steen and his very first rescue, Baretta.



Barret Jackman and Steena.

"Ty" after B.J. Crombeen and Ty Conklin, respectively.

"One had a lot of bark and was aggressive, but when we got him back to the veterinarian, he was a sweetheart," Jackman said. "All bark and no bite, kind of like (Conklin), so we named him 'Ty.'"

"I'm proud I could be named after one of the dogs they saved," Crombeen said. "A lot of guys on this team do charity work that goes unnoticed. This is one of those things. You hear about them spending their off days going into these areas and finding dogs and taking them in. It's a pretty crazy experience and I think it's something that everyone is proud of them for."

Rescuing dogs is nothing new for Jackman. Since establishing his own animal rescue program through Stray Rescue, Jackman and his wife Jenny have gone out for several rescue missions with Grim. "Barret's Buddies" works with Stray Rescue and helps find homes for rescued animals.

The Jackmans have two rescued dogs, including one from the Hurricane Katrina tragedy that struck New Orleans in 2005, at home: Bailey, a rottweiler-labrador mix, and Tanner, a shepherd mix.

"My wife is able to go out (on rescue missions) all the time," Jackman said. "With our schedule, I'm not able to go out as much as I want, but when you come home with four dogs that otherwise might have died on the street, you sleep a little bit better that night."

For more information on Barret's Buddies, visit www.stlouisblues.com and click on the "Community Programs" tab.

ANNUAL GALA PROVIDES HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Stray Rescue held its annual Hope for the Holidays Gala at St. Louis City Hall in December. Mama Cartwright, left, shows off her holiday best. (Center) Bobbi Williams, Tami Zahndt and Dawn Harrod, the Volunteers of the Year, get a group hug from Randy Grim. (Right) Many canines and their companions took part in the Blessing of the Dogs. This year's gala raised more than \$38,300.



HAPPY TAILS TAKE TO AREA TRAILS



An early morning snowstorm only added to the enjoyment of the group's "Couples Hike" Feb. 5 in Forest Park for dogs at the Pine Street shelter.

Over hill, over dale, they love to hit the dusty – or snow-packed – trail. Group hikes, Stray Rescue's newest activity, quickly is gaining popularity not only among the dogs, but also with the volunteers.

Donna McCall, D.O., an avid hiker/backpacker, animal lover and photographer, began organizing hikes for volunteers and shelter dogs in early October. Now, hikes can be organized based on fitness level (of volunteers and dogs) and experience.

"I never envisioned anything more than writing a little and getting to know the dogs," McCall said. "There is nothing more genuine than seeing how the first few dogs seemed to appreciate every sniff and store them up in their noses and their memory. The volunteers who've joined in for a variety of reasons may not be established hikers, but are inspired by the dogs. As a preventive medicine physician and outdoor advocate, leading this group has been quite satisfying."

Stray Rescue staffer Tara Schaper selects the lucky canine participants. The trails have provided several shelter dogs opportunities to bond with people and other dogs, and in some cases, a shot at a forever home.

"It's like a big window is opened and they just dive through it to the other side, the side of the 'real dog,'" McCall said. "They get exercise, are introduced to scents they may have never had in their noses, bond with their human hiking partner, and try to socialize with other dogs. Despite their demeanor in the shelter at times, it has been quite successful in that regard. Some of the dogs that are in their forever homes were found through the blog postings."



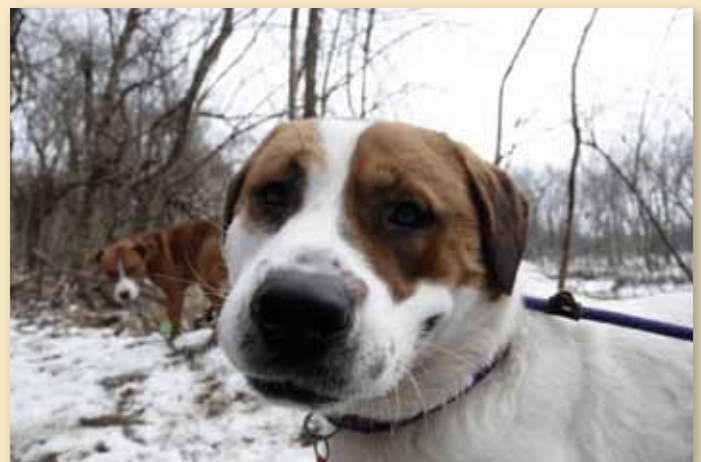
Dawn Harrod and her hiking partner take a break during a January adventure.

Longtime volunteer Dawn Harrod has found a new means to exercise not only the dogs – but herself as well.

"It's nice to allow the dogs the time and space outside of a shelter setting. They are able to just be dogs," said Harrod, who took her husband Mike along on the January outing. "The dogs bond well with their person and this, to me, is the coolest part of hiking. The dogs get that one-on-one attention and are able to play and be silly. I love the fact that the dogs are tired and fall asleep fast after they settle into their apartments at the shelter. The best part is when I am getting ready to leave Pine Street and the dog I walked is resting so comfortably. They are so thankful for their special time away!"

McCall has developed a website, www.fourdirectionshiking.com, where people can view different dogs, read about them, check out photo galleries or join the group hikes. A photo album of past hikes also can be found in the lobby at the Pine Street shelter.

"I have been blessed with a new 'family' of energetic people and canine pals, and I am overwhelmed with joy when someone sends me a positive comment or a photo with their new canine companion," McCall said. "Hiking truly is a way to give some release to shelter dogs, and maybe even the people who hike with them."



Prince Albert likes Forest Park.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Puppy Love Blossoms for Nancy Fedke

Although she's only been with Stray Rescue a short time, volunteer Nancy Fedke has made a huge impact. A florist at her "real job," Nancy spends most of her free time at Stray Rescue's new shelter on Pine Street.



Nancy Fedke and Daisy

"I had always seen Randy on the news and loved his passion for the dogs," she said. "I bought his book, 'The Man Who Talks to Dogs,' and thought 'OK, this is what I want to do. I want to help. I'm signing up to volunteer.' I walked in and they had me at woof!"

Not only is Nancy

at the shelter walking dogs, she's also in charge of Stray Rescue's new Ambassador program. She greets new volunteers and visitors with a smile and a helping hand.

She's also one of the first to help at Stray Rescue's numerous fundraisers.

"The first fundraiser I worked at, I couldn't believe the generosity of the public," she said. "They kept buying and making donations. It was the most wonderful feeling."

While the Ambassador program and fundraisers keep her busy, Nancy's heart is at the shelter walking the dogs. Stray Rescue's mission – to give dogs a second chance no matter what – is the primary reason why she loves the organization.

"I could never volunteer anywhere but a no-kill shelter," she said. "I've made many new wonderful friends, both human and dog. I would tell anybody – and I do – if you volunteer at Stray Rescue, you will walk away with a lighter heart and a smile on your face."

That's exactly how we feel having Nancy as part of our team.



Lonely Hearts Club



Yahtzee

Yahtzee was one of the first residents of our Pine Street shelter. He is a sweet boy who seems to get overlooked because of the "black dog syndrome." But you won't find a more loving, loyal friend. Please give this guy the loving home he deserves.



Suede

Suede was one of the last dogs to leave the city pound on Gasconade Street. She is sweet, loving, laid back and an all-around happy girl. Her favorite pastimes are lounging, going for strolls and getting belly rubs. She'll make some lucky family very happy.

Barkaritaville ...

(continued from page 1)

"Not long after I began working on Barkaritaville, I found myself envisioning what such a place might look like," Martin said. "It may have been a fairytale place, but it was fun to pretend, if only for one night, that there really was a Barkaritaville, where stray dogs and island music rule. But we wouldn't put pen to paper and begin writing the actual story until the following spring"

A fellow writer, Sandy DeSha, helped Martin and Eden with the first draft. When Stray Dog Theatre expressed interest in staging the play, Martin said that the first draft of the play suddenly evolved into something even more meaningful.

"It became the stray dogs' story of survival," she said. "They were the ones with the real stories to tell, and so we gave them a voice. 'Wasting Away in Barkaritaville' became a symbol of hope."

And further inspired by the throngs of dogs coming to the new Pine Street shelter after closure of the city pound on Gasconade, they finished the second draft in about two months.

"The more I spent time there with those dogs, the stronger their voice became," Martin said. "I also felt as if I could literally see their life story in their eyes, and some of them just broke your heart. Sandy said she experienced these same feelings.



The cast and crew of Barkaritaville are all smiles at the conclusion of the performance.

Once we began the actual writing process, the play seemed to literally write itself. As we've said all along, the dogs themselves told their story, we just put their words to paper."

Casting took a while longer, but the right group of dog lovers was assembled, as were technical crew members and directors who became as dedicated to the cause as the writers. The event sold out.

"The play's successful debut has to be shared with the cast, crew and techs," Eden said. "We may have written it, but they gave the dogs life and conveyed their message. We think everyone was overwhelmed by the positive response."

Including the playwrights. "Sandy and I both say it was one of the most rewarding experiences of our lives," Martin said. "It was a spiritual journey in many ways – one we will never forget."

LIFE OF FEAR AND VIOLENCE IS OVER FOR STRACKS

Stray Rescue founder Randy Grim recounts the story of Strack' rescue.

During the cold snap in February, I came across an old friend while doing the feeding rounds and triaging street dogs.

This old friend was dying.

I always come across dogs that really need our help, but the reality is that I can't pick them up or take them without being the target of gunfire.

My buddy Stracks lives on a street where I've been shot at before. Stracks, in fact, was shot about two years ago. The police don't even go there. So for the past three years, I or Donna have always done a quick feed, given a pet and a kiss, and driven away as fast as possible.

This day, however, I had no choice but to park and stay – my buddy was dying.

When I found him, he looked like he already was dead. Stracks was bloody, had many bite marks and a gaping wound on his neck. But I also saw that he was still breathing. My friend Alex was with me on this trip and helped with both Stracks and the people who were milling around the area. We got Stracks into the car as quickly as we could and bolted to Veterinary Specialty Services.

One of his ears had to be amputated, and his neck wound still is very raw. Stracks, who is heartworm-positive, also suffered multiple gunshot wounds and is being treated for a skin infection so serious that some of his skin has peeled off. Stracks has had multiple surgeries and likely will require more. He may also lose a leg.

I pray very hard that Stracks will survive this horror. He continues to take baby steps on his road to recovery, and that is encouraging. What makes this story so important for me to share is how violent a society we are – and that has to change. I have no idea how to make that happen. I just wish the people on these mean streets would stop the violence – against the dogs and against each other.

If there is a hell on earth, Stracks was forced to live there. At least now he will be able to experience real love without fear. No dog – or human – should have to live like that.

Stracks, you are loved by many and have touched us all.



Stracks lies near death on the street.



Alex picks up Stracks to transport to VSS.



Stracks immediately after surgery.



Stracks begins his road to recovery.

STRAY RESCUE EXTREME MAKEOVER - GRACE

Grace was rescued just before a severe temperature drop and snowstorm this winter. Thanks to Stray Rescue's veterinary team, and a good diet and love that all our companion animals receive, Grace has made remarkable strides in only two months. She's pretty in pink, and feeling in the pink, in her forever home.



Grace - Before



Grace - After

TIPS TO ENSURE YOUR PET'S HEALTH WITH SPRING APPROACHING

Planting a garden, cleaning, fertilizing the lawn – we all have lots of work to do with the coming of spring. But pets also have health and safety needs this time of year that their guardians should know about.

Here are some of the American Veterinary Medical Association's spring hints for pet guardians:

Fleas and ticks -- They can be tiny, little more than a pinhead in some instances, but they grow and spread quickly once they find a host. The preventative treatments that you may have discontinued in the winter should start early in the spring to keep your pet's coat, and your home, free of pests.

Lawn fertilizers -- Lawn fertilizers are very toxic to pets. Store fertilizers in a place far from where your dog or cat — and children— can get at it. After applying it to your lawn, follow manufacturer instructions on how long you should wait before allowing your pet into the area. If you see a sign posted on a lawn that tells you to keep your pets off, abide by it.

Pesticides and herbicides -- It's probably not surprising that these chemicals can be toxic to your pets, but, even when they're not lethal, there are some long-term health concerns. Studies indicate the use of pesticides and herbicides may be tied to increased rates of specific forms of cancer in dogs. If your pet is exposed, wash your pet with soap and water immediately and call your veterinarian.

Cocoa bean mulch -- It's becoming common to mulch a garden with the fragrant spent shells of cocoa beans. But just like chocolate, dogs like to eat them and they are toxic.

Rat and mouse poisons -- Controlling vermin becomes an issue again in the spring. Be aware that the same properties of common rat and mouse poisons that make them irresistible to pests also will attract your pet. If consumed, these can be fatal to your animal.

Cleaning products -- Spring cleaning is an annual tradition in many households, but make sure the cleaning products don't hurt your animals. If the label states, "keep pets and children away from area until dry," follow those instructions carefully. And always store all chemicals out of reach of children and pets.

Paint and paint thinners -- If you're putting a fresh coat of paint on the house, keep the pets away. Paint thinners, mineral spirits and other solvents can cause severe irritation or chemical burns if swallowed or even if they come in contact with your pet's skin. Latex house paints typically produce a minor stomach upset, but some specialty paints may contain heavy metals or volatile substances that could be harmful if ingested.

Preventative medications -- Consult with your veterinarian about seasonal medications to keep your pet healthy. For example, in many parts of the country, heartworm medications for dogs are often discontinued in the winter. Spring is the season to restart this medication to keep your dog free of this parasite. Keep in mind that manufacturer's instructions warn that heartworm medications should not be given without first visiting your veterinarian to ensure that your pet has not developed the heartworm parasite. A simple blood test will give you that peace of mind.

For more information, visit www.avma.org

(This story is from Dogs Online Magazine)



Miracle Dog, Too

Cahokia Continues Remarkable Recovery from Distemper



Cahokia could not run, let alone stand, one year ago. Now she runs and plays with other companions in her forever home.



Visiting a donut shop in South St. Louis for sweet treats to reward Cahokia for hard work in therapy sessions.

In our Spring 2010 Newsletter, we introduced you to Cahokia, a Shepherd mix who had survived being hit by a car only to contract the distemper virus, which is a death sentence for virtually every dog.

After undergoing an experimental treatment in Austin, Texas, Cahokia and her then-foster mom Donna returned to St. Louis to begin the monumental task of rehabilitation. That she even made it through the treatment was a miracle in itself. At that point, doctors could not speculate whether or not Cahokia would ever completely recover.

The fact that Cahokia could not even stand up on her own was her biggest hurdle, but the neurologic repercussions from the distemper also left her with such extreme twitching in her head that she could not hold steady enough to eat on her own. Cahokia had to be carried everywhere she went and had to be fed by hand. The only thing she could do on her own was wag her tail. And thankfully she did that a lot. Donna spent most of her time at home lying on a blanket on the floor with her.

Since no one really was sure what else to do, the decision was made to start physical therapy. Cahokia's treatment regiment began with simple leg movements to stimulate muscle memory. Donna also used a large exercise ball to get Cahokia used to standing up. The slightest improvement in her condition, few and far between in the early stages, was considered a major victory.

A very important component of Cahokia's treatment turned out to be swimming. Donna and Cahokia visited the Healing Paws Rehab Center located downstairs at Veterinary Specialty Services for 20 minutes of pool



Cahokia is another of Stray Rescue's Miracle Dogs.

time twice a week for several months. And from Cahokia's perspective, maybe the most important part of her treatment were the donuts she earned from St. Louis Hills Donut Shop in south St. Louis as a reward for her hard work.

As time passed, Cahokia's neurological symptoms lessened in severity. She still could not walk without assistance, and still had jaw "chomping" and an involuntary head twitch.

And then Cahokia had a major breakthrough. Chosen to be an artist for Stray Rescue's Urban Wanderers exhibit, Cahokia visited the Manchester Shelter yard for her special time on canvas. While creating her work of art, Cahokia actually stood up on her own for the first time and took a step – her first in more than four months. It was

cause for celebration – and at that point there was no doubt that Cahokia had found her forever home with Donna.

Once things started to improve, it seemed as if new things happened almost daily. Donna vividly remembers standing in the kitchen one day and hearing one of the dogs getting a drink of water. When she turned, she saw it was Cahokia. That simple task, one she had not done for months, brought tears to Donna's eyes.

In the last five months, Cahokia has regained nearly all of her motor functions. She now runs and plays with her canine brothers and sisters, and leads a very normal canine life. She still has some of the distemper "twitches," which just adds to her personality. Her story is nothing short of miraculous – and it's what Stray Rescue is all about.

LEAVE A LIVING LEGACY

Remembering Stray Rescue in your will or estate planning will help ensure that we continue to grow and expand. Planned gifts leave behind a living legacy of compassion, as your gift will be helping to end the suffering for many animals. These gifts not only help the animals, but also can help you meet your financial, tax and estate planning goals. Consulting an attorney who specializes in estate planning may be of great assistance to you. When remembering Stray Rescue, please make sure to use the following language in your will or estate plans:

Stray Rescue of Saint Louis
2320 Pine Street
St Louis, MO 63103-2219
Tax ID # 43-1823801

Thank you for considering Stray Rescue in your will or estate planning. For more information, see our website at:

www.strayrescue.org/donate.html

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Mardi Growl Compassion Carnival

When: Sunday, March 6, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Where: Pine Street Shelter, 2320 Pine Street

The dogs of Stray Rescue invite you and your two- and four-legged family members to join them for a day of revelry. Music, raffles with great prizes, special T-shirts and other gear. Half-price adoption fees. Prizes for best-dressed Mardi dogs. Microchip-a-thon for \$10 per pet noon-3 p.m. Randy Grim book signing noon-1 p.m. For more information, visit the Stray Rescue calendar at www.strayrescue.org.

Trivia Night

When: Saturday, April 9 (doors open 6 p.m., trivia contest begins 7 p.m.)
Where: American Legion Post 162, 9305 S. Broadway

The event benefits the Shannon Foundation and Stray Rescue. Fee is \$20 per person for tables up to eight participants. Fee includes beer, soda and water. More information is available by calling 314-623-0412 or e-mail kulade5@yahoo.com.

Spring for Strays

When: Sunday, May 1, 2-6 p.m. Where: Harry's, 2144 Market Street

Celebrate the change in seasons. Silent and oral auctions, food, drag show, raffles; well socialized dogs welcome, but not allowed in silent auction area. Admission is \$10. For more information, visit the Stray Rescue calendar at www.strayrescue.org.

Remember, you can meet our dogs available for adoption every weekend at locations including PetsMart, PetCo, Four Muddy Paws, Wolfgang's Pet Stop and Whole Foods Market. Check the event calendar on our website, www.strayrescue.org, for locations and times.

Rescue News is produced 3 times a year by: Stray Rescue of Saint Louis, 2320 Pine Street, St Louis, MO 63103-2219. Phone: 314-771-6121; website: www.strayrescue.org. Thank you to all the volunteers who donated their time to make the newsletter happen! Editor: Pat Matreci, Photographer: Donna Lachmann, Layout & Design: Michelle Zignago

Mission Statement: Stray Rescue's sole purpose is to rescue stray animals in need of medical attention, restore them to health and place them in loving, adoptive homes. Virtually all of the pets we save have been abused and neglected. They've been dumped on highways and remote country roads, or abandoned in public parks, empty houses and dark alleys. We've even saved dogs left chained behind buildings after their families had moved away. Rescued animals often make the best pets. Pets from Stray Rescue seem to understand that they have a second lease on life. In return for a little affection and attention, these remarkable animals reward their new guardians with a love and loyalty unmatched anywhere.



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