

# VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

HELP US. HELP THEM.



**SPCA**  
southwest michigan

October 2020 | Issue 261

**SPCA of Southwest Michigan**  
Pet Rescue & Adoption Center  
6955 West KL Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
269.344.1474  
[www.spcaswmich.org](http://www.spcaswmich.org)

*The SPCA is a non-profit animal rescue group based in SW Michigan. Thanks to volunteers like you, we have rescued over 25,000 dogs, cats, puppies & kittens since we started in 2002!*

## OUR MISSION

SPCA of Southwest Michigan is dedicated to working for the well-being of animals and creating an adoption-focused community in Southwest Michigan. Our goal is to end senseless animal euthanasia in SW Michigan, and provide all animals with a loving, caring home.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

[AMAZON WISH LIST](#)

[SPCA MERCHANDISE](#)

# Dog-O-Ween

**A FUN-FILLED DAY FOR YOUR DOG & FAMILY**

**OCTOBER 24 • 11AM - 3PM**

Come out and enjoy a Spooky COVID-friendly day with your family and fur-baby! Many activities that include dog Agility Course, Haunted Trail, Costume and Peanut Butter Licking contests, and of course dog and cat adoptions.

This event helps raise funds for the dogs and cats of Southwest Michigan!

This will be an outside event, weather permitting.

More info on Dog-O-Ween [here](#). Sponsorship Form [here](#) and Vendor Booth Rental Form [here](#).



## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR DOG FOR FALL



Fall is here. While it is a beautiful time of year and one that both you and your dog can enjoy, there's a fresh set of challenges and hazards for you to be aware of and protect your dog from.

### Wrap Up Warm

You notice the days (and nights) become a great deal cooler, so while you start to put on your extra layers, the same should be done for your dog. You should consider purchasing a dog coat, especially if you have a smooth or single coated breed. Make sure it's water resistant, lined and is adjustable.

### Mothballs

Did you know that mothballs are toxic to dogs if eaten? Be extra cautious when bringing out your winter woolies after being tucked away in your wardrobe for a long time.

### Engine Coolant

Fall is the time of year people are most likely to change their engine coolant. Look to see if the variety you use is ethylene glycol based as this is toxic to dogs. If you can, change brands to one that is propylene glycol based because if accidentally ingested it is less toxic.

### Mushrooms

While 99% of mushrooms are perfectly harmless,

there is still 1% that are incredibly toxic, so make sure when you are out and about you keep your dog away from all mushrooms to be on the safe side. If your dog does eat a mushroom, contact your vet immediately.

### Walking in the Dark

If you find yourself taking your dog for a walk at dusk or in the evening darkness, make sure you are vigilant about your dog wearing proper ID, and that they are microchipped. For added safety, you should consider buying reflective collars or hi-vis clothing for yourself and your dog.

### Rodenticides

Fall is also the time that many people choose to use rodenticides to deter rodents from coming into their home. These are incredibly toxic to dogs - so if you are determined to use rodenticide, be careful to not put it in places where your dog can reach - or seek out safer alternatives.

### Outdoor Living

If your dog spends a lot, if not all of its time outdoors you will have to prepare them to face the impending cold temperatures. Make sure they have a warm and dry shelter to protect them from the elements. Be sure to include extra blankets and bedding. Consider including cedar shavings into the mix because they provide great insulation.

### Fleas and Ticks

It may be getting cooler, but that doesn't mean fleas and ticks are no longer a problem. Make sure you keep on top of your usual flea and tick treatments.

*This is a shortened article, read full article [here](#).*

## COMMON FALL HAZARDS FOR CATS



Well-meaning cat parents let kitty parade around the garden outside without knowing about common fall hazards that are lurking around the corner. What may seem like harmless fun rolling around in the dirt could turn out to be a trip to the emergency vet.

Common fall hazards can be both inside and outside the home. It's not all just pumpkin spice lattes and scented candles, you know. Speaking of scented candles, make sure you have the pet-safe kind in your home. **It's better for both you and your cat.**

### OUTDOOR HAZARDS

If you're a pet parent who likes to let their kitty go outside, be forewarned: it's mushroom season. The ASPCA says this about mushrooms and pets: "Fall and spring are mushroom seasons. While 99% of mushrooms have little or no toxicity, the 1% that are highly toxic can cause life-threatening problems in pets."

It's best to err on the side of caution when it comes to mushrooms and plants. If you see your cat eating a mushroom or exhibiting strange behavior after visiting the garden, call the ASPCA's Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435.

Rodenticides and other poisons meant to kill pests can also cause your cat harm. Mothballs also make the list of common fall hazards. If you have to use these items, make sure to do so where your cat can't get to them. Many brands offer pet-safe products (ant traps, for example) with instructions on how to keep pets out of them.

Be watchful of your pets when you're winterizing your vehicles. It only takes a tablespoon or two of antifreeze to kill a cat. Read more about symptoms of antifreeze poisoning and what to do if it happens [here](#).

### INDOOR HAZARDS

Fall means it's time for the kids to go back to school. Among our list of common fall hazards for cats are school supplies. Yes, that's right – your child's backpack could pose a threat to your poor kitty.

Ingestion of marker tips, glue or other substances like hand sanitizer usually found in your child's school supplies can cause blockages, stomach upset and vomiting. Avoid letting your cat lick your hands after you've applied hand sanitizer, and advise your children of the same. Such a small amount won't result in a vet visit, but it will upset kitty's tummy.

As the season of scented candles comes upon us, remember to keep matches out of your cat's reach. Those tiny kitty teeth love to chew, and matches are just one more toy for them to play with.

Any fall decorations should be tinsel-free. Tinsel is to cats what a new chew toy is to dogs; just try keeping them away from it. It's shiny, chewable, and it sparkles like a metallic temptress in your beloved feline's eyes. Steer clear of tinsel.

*This is a shortened article, read full article [here](#).*

## SPCA SWMI VOLUNTEER NEEDS

The SPCA SWMI is always looking for new volunteers whether it be dog walkers, cat socializers, or adoptions counselors. We do have a few needs that go beyond typical volunteering. Here are a few volunteer roles we are looking to fill:

- Maintenance assistant(s) to help our main maintenance guy, Dan.
- Morning cat room cleaner(s)
- An organizer to organize the cat food shelf.

You do not need prior experience to fill these roles. Anyone who would like to volunteer to help out in these areas would be greatly appreciated. Please contact our volunteer coordinator, Tricia Mohney, at [Tricia@spcaswmich.org](mailto:Tricia@spcaswmich.org) to volunteer.



# DOG O' WEEEN!

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2020**

**11AM - 3PM**

Come out and enjoy a Spooky COVID-friendly day with your family and fur-baby!

Many activities include dog Agility Course, Haunted Trail, Costume and Peanut Butter Licking contests, and of course dog and cat adoptions! Fun for the whole family!

All of this to help raise funds for the dogs and cats of Southwest Michigan!

This will be an outside event, weather permitting.



**COSTUME CONTEST**

**11:30 AM**

**&**

**1:00 PM**



**PB LICKING CONTEST**

**12:30 PM**

**&**

**1:30 PM**



**AGILITY COURSE**

**11:00 AM - 3:00PM**



## THANK YOU WEDEL'S!



Thank you to Wedel's Nursey for having the SPCA out for an adoption event. And BIG thank you to our nine volunteers who took our dogs out to Wedels for a fun day. Everyone had a great time and three of our dogs found their furever homes.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### *Brett Jensen, Senior Kennel Staff*



Brett has been with the SPCA of SWMI since October 2017. He lives in Kalamazoo with his two dogs, Sky and Annie. He loves to work with the large, afraid, and misunderstood animals we receive. He also works closely with the Veterinary team to make sure our animals are spayed/neutered before adoption. Brett always steps up to help the SPCA SWMI in any way he can. He always brings his best and we are lucky to have him.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

### *KARISSA LEHMAN*



Karissa Lehman is the SPCA's Volunteer of the Month. She first volunteered at the SPCA at 12 years old and now continues to volunteer at seventeen years old. Karissa spends most of her time in the SPCA's office as an adoption

counselor from noon to close each day. Karissa likes to help at events and walk dogs, as well. Karissa's favorite things about being a volunteer is doing something bigger than herself. Helping others in small and big ways brings comfort to her and she likes to work with the SPCA's staff.

A special moment for her was adopting out DeeJay at the Wedel's Event. DeeJay was a shy dog who warmed up to Karissa and fell asleep on her lap. DeeJay trusted Karissa to put him in the right home and when she said, "Bye DeeJay," he came running back to her.

At home, Karissa has an eight-year-old calico cat named Callie who is very much a lover. Two fish, two baby turtles, and a hamster complete her animal family.

Outside of the shelter, Karissa is the youngest of four kids and is a senior at Mattawan High School. She plays Lacrosse and works at Old Navy. She lives with her mom, Shelley, her dad, Eric, and her brother, Logan.

Karissa is a huge asset to the SPCA. She has a bright, positive personality and she works hard. We can always count on Karissa to get our dogs and cats placed in their furever homes. The SPCA is lucky to have a volunteer like Karissa.

# Happy Tails



submit your happy tail to [happytails@spcaswmich.org](mailto:happytails@spcaswmich.org)

**CAYANNE** Submitted by: Lucy Dilley



Hi there! We adopted Cayanne in July and love her! We think she loves us too. Here are some pictures.



**LOGAN** Submitted by: Kara Mockler



We adopted Ryder (then Logan) in April 2019 from you all at the Pet Expo in GR. He has been the BEST addition to our family. The perfect combo of playful and snuggly!!!



**CARMEL** Submitted by: Nicki Forsyth



Carmel and her BFF Pumpkin. We adopted Carmel on 4/15/20 and she fits right in.

**SNOW WHITE & LITTLE BACH**

Submitted by: Dawn Messinger Rouse



Here is Snow white, now Susie and little Bach, now Gracie, we adopted them at Thanksgiving. Such good girls!

**TALOULAH** Submitted by: Dana Wagner



Taloulah, the first day I brought her home from the SPCA of Southwest Michigan in 2013, to her 9th birthday we just celebrated!

**CAROL** Submitted by: Mark Schieber



We got Oona (Carol before adoption) 6 years ago. She has been such a great dog. She completed an 80 mile backpacking trip this week! Thanks SPCA.



## ADOPTIONS - THANKS TO YOU!

Thank you for opening your hearts and your homes to these animals! See all our adoptable dogs, cats, puppies & kittens at [www.spcaswmich.org](http://www.spcaswmich.org).

Please send Volunteer Newsletter submissions to Jess Duncan @ [newsletter@spcaswmich.org](mailto:newsletter@spcaswmich.org).