

# VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

HELP US. HELP THEM.



**SPCA**  
southwest michigan

November 2020 | Issue 262

**SPCA of Southwest Michigan**  
Pet Rescue & Adoption Center  
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*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**



## HOLIDAY HOURS:

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH - CLOSED**  
**THANKSGIVING DAY**



# GIVING TUESDAY

**DECEMBER 1, 2020**

The SPCA of Southwest Michigan is a non-profit, no-kill shelter that has been serving the Southwest Michigan area since 2002. We are the leading animal shelter in Michigan where we have assisted other shelters in and out of state, caring for and helping animals find loving, safe, forever homes.

It costs an average of \$1,800 a day to care for the animals in our shelter - this excludes additional costs for medical needs such as heartworm treatment, medication, and surgeries.

This #GivingTuesday, we're asking you to reach into your hearts to help us continue the exceptional care and provisions we try to provide for the animals. Every dollar you contribute goes directly towards maintaining our shelter and the needs of our animals.

We appreciate and thank you for your continued support!  
We can't do it without you!

## 7 THANKSGIVING SAFETY TIPS FOR PETS



Thanksgiving and pets go hand in hand... after all, aren't you thankful you adopted your four-legged friend and welcomed all those cold-nosed kisses into your life? But before the celebration begins, it's a good idea to make sure your Turkey Day will be as pet-friendly as possible.

### 1. Food Safety

Here are some Thanksgiving foods to be careful with:

**Turkey** – A few small, boneless, and well-cooked pieces of turkey should be fine. But never offer your pal raw or under cooked turkey because it could contain salmonella bacteria. Keep the leftover carcass (and bones) away from your pet, too. Dogs and cats have a hard time processing fatty foods like turkey skin, and even small pieces of bone can lead to gastrointestinal injury.

**Bread Dough** – If your doggie or kitty ingests raw bread dough, the yeast will continue to convert the dough's sugars into carbon dioxide and alcohol, a combination that could become life-threatening for your pal.

**Pies and Cakes** – Keep puppy and kitty noses out of the mixing bowl while you're baking because raw eggs can lead to food poisoning. Also, if you're using the artificial sweetener xylitol (found in certain peanut butter brands)

in any desserts, be aware that this can be fatal if consumed by pets.

**Chocolates** – Chocolate can be harmful to both dogs and cats and can cause vomiting, diarrhea, high blood pressure, seizures, and other symptoms.

### 2. Thanksgiving Costume Reminders

If you are considering an adorable pilgrim outfit or a funny turkey costume to add to the holiday's festivities, just make sure you pal's costume isn't too tight or too loose, limit mobility, obstruct breathing, get in the way of potty time, or hinder their ability to talk to you. Take care to make sure the costume is free of any choking hazards, such as beads, feathers, or other loose, dangling pieces.

It's also a good idea to let your four-legged friend try their costume on before the big day so they can get used to it. If your pet seems at all uncomfortable, skip the costume (no matter how cute it is!).



### 3. Decoration Dangers

Although pumpkins and decorative corn aren't toxic, ingesting too much can give your li'l buddy a bad case of tummy upset. You'll also want to be careful with candles that curious puppies and kitties could knock over, as well as any decorations that have small pieces that your pet could easily choke on. *(continued on next page)*

For some families, Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the holiday season. If you're using the long weekend to put up your tree and lights, keep glass ornaments (especially the metal hooks), tinsel, pinecones, and light strands out of paw's reach.

#### 4. Floral Centerpieces



Many people enjoy brightening up their dinner table with a pretty floral arrangement. Just make sure you are familiar with which plants are poisonous to dogs and cats. Some popular fall plants often found in festive decorations that are toxic to both include:

- Autumn crocus
- Chrysanthemum
- Acorns from oak trees

If you suspect your dog or cat has consumed a poisonous plant or substance, act fast. Contact your veterinarian, an emergency vet clinic, or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center right away.

#### 5. Hosting Guests

Both dogs and cats can become shy, nervous, or overly excited when you have a full house, especially if they have never met your guests before. If your pal seems anxious, try putting them in a quiet room away from the action with a favorite toy and plenty of fresh water.

You should also take care to watch the door when guests are coming and going. Excitable

pets, even if well behaved, may try to make a break for it. Now is a good time to make sure your dog or cat has their proper ID with updated contact information. You may want to consider a microchip just in case.

#### 6. Traveling With Pets

Whether or not you should travel with your pet is a big decision and one that depends on a lot of factors, such as your means of travel, where you'll be staying, and how well your dog or cat copes with new environments.

If you're going by car, remember to restrain your pal with a harness or carrier safely. Consult your veterinarian first if you're considering air travel. Wherever you go, take a copy of your pet's medical records and make sure they have proper identification. Traveling is another great reason to think about microchipping!



#### 7. Preparing for Emergencies

No matter how much you plan, holiday mishaps can still happen. It's a good idea to ask your veterinarian about their holiday hours and add the telephone numbers for an emergency veterinarian clinic and the ASPCA APCC to your contacts just in case. Keep a pet first-aid kit handy, and remember that in any emergency, the best thing you can do is to stay calm.

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



**SPCA SWMI FERAL COLONY**

The SPCA of SWMI has a current feral colony of around 6 cats. We provide shelters around the property with straw, food, and heated water.

Feral cats are scared of humans and will not come up to you. Ferals are created from unfixed strays. We ask our volunteers and guests not to approach these cats for both the safety of the animals and humans. The most active times for ferals are when there is less human activity, the most common times are dawn and dusk. Most feral cats do not thrive in a shelter environment but thrive better outside when provided with proper care from the community. They depend on humans to take care of them and are not considered wild life. Feral-ness is a behavioral characteristic and not something that is hereditary. There are a few factors that play into how feral a cat may be: age, number of feral generations, amount of human contact, and individual personality. Kittens less than 8 weeks old usually can be socialized fairly

quickly. Cats older than 8 weeks will take longer to try to socialize. At 4 months old, a cat will probably keep some feral traits for the rest of their life. An adult cat may take years to socialize. The longer the cat's generation is feral, the longer it takes to socialize them, if they socialize at all. A cat in it's lifetime can fluctuate from being friendly to feral. A once super friendly cat can turn feral if neglected for a long time and a feral cat can become friendly with the right socialization. Cats, like the rest of us, are individuals and have different personalities and likes. Depending on the cat's preferences, they may or may not socialize as much as others.

TNR(Trap, Neuter, Release) programs are the most humane practices for feral cats. The programs help reduce the population of unowned cats, reduce the risk of transferring FIV and Feline Leukemia, and overall injuries from fights. If a cat is surely feral, TNR programs are the best choice for them. Trying to force a feral cat to live indoors or in a cage can be inhumane (it stresses them out) and can damage their mentality.

The SPCA's mission is to be dedicated to working towards the well-being of animals and our goal is to end senseless euthanasia in SW Michigan and to provide all animals with a caring home.

- *Tabitha, Feline Coordinator*

*A few photos from Dog-O-Ween 2020. Check out more on our [facebook page](#) and thank you to everyone who came out to support us!*



we're HIRING!

We're looking for great folks to join our team!

We're currently reviewing applicants for Kennel Attendants. Our Kennel Attendants are responsible for providing the very best care for our animals (lots of cleaning and cuddles included).

You must be at least 18 years old and willing to work holidays and weekends. Interested parties please email a resume to [info@spcaswmich.org](mailto:info@spcaswmich.org).



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

**DAVID HAGEN**



David Hagen is the SPCA Volunteer of the Month! David has been with the SPCA since August doing exceptional work. He refers to himself as a "Professional Volunteer." From dog walking to multiple events, David has helped the SPCA in a multitude of ways.

The thing David likes about being a SPCA volunteer is, "It fills my cup- the animals, the people." A special moment for David was when he asked about choosing a therapy dog for advocacy which led to him being a volunteer. At home, David has two thirteen year old dogs named Kolbot and Kiwi. Outside of the SPCA, David volunteers at/as the U.P Board of Domestic Violence Coalition, District 7 VFW Service Officer Advocate, and Victim Service Unit for Van Burean County Sheriffs. We are thankful to have David as a volunteer!

Step Up For Pups and join the challenge in WoofTrax! Your walks could help us win a donation and earn you a chance to win fun prizes too! For more details, visit [here](#).

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

**DEXTER** Submitted by: Anne Marie Fleming

November of this year I sadly had to say goodbye to my fourteen-year-old border collie mix, Ginger Buddy, my eleven-year-old border collie aussie mix was devastated. The two of them grew up together, as I had adopted them months apart, and were best of friends and inseparable. Fearing that Buddy would become depressed and lonely, I started looking for another dog to adopt. Due to Buddy's age, I knew it would have to be the perfect fit. That is where Dexter entered our lives.

I saw Dexter on the Kalamazoo SPCA website, he is a nine-year-old border collie, and I was immediately drawn to his sweet face, and obvious personality. I decided to have Dexter and Buddy meet at the SPCA and see how things would go. I couldn't have been more pleased as to how the two boys interacted. We took the boys outdoors into a fenced area at the SPCA, Dexter proceeded to bring every toy he could find to me, so I may throw it to him. Buddy watched as Dexter would run, catch, and return every toy thrown his way. It was clear to me that Dexter had been very well taken care of by his previous owner, and that he had been trained well.

Buddy and Dexter became instant friends and seeing them together was an absolute joy. It was if they had known each other for years and were being reacquainted. Dexter has brought such joy, energy, and laughter to our home since his arrival. Buddy seems like a new dog, a younger dog because of Dexter. They run together, play together, and even snuggle up together at the end of the day. I feel truly blessed to have been able to adopt Dexter and give him the best remaining years of his life in his new forever home.



**JETTA & CHECKERS** Submitted by: Jennifer Newcastle



Jetta adopted 6 years ago today, and Oliver (formerly Checkers) adopted 3 weeks ago. They're tolerating each other!!!

**DUFFY** Submitted by: Amy Gieschen



Celebrating Duffy's gotcha day 2 days early with a new fluffy bed! Add a stylish bandana and treat from Beowolf downtown...and this former shelter pet is well loved. He gets unlimited hugs, pets, and cuddles daily from his brothers and momma---there is the right family for every dog, and he is still the perfect dog to complete this family!

**JOY** Submitted by: Latasha Ann



Just wanted to share an update: We adopted "Joy" now Athena a little over a year ago and she is the best! Very sweet and thinks she is a 60# lap dog!

When we went to see her she didn't seem overly interested in us but I had fallen in love (and she got along with our other dog). Well it took all of about 3 seconds for her true colors to show once we got her home! She instantly came out of her shell. Begging on her hind legs, wanting to be cradled and hugged, giving kisses and getting the crazy zoomies! She snores and is afraid of thunder, gun shots, fireworks and anything that makes a big boom but none of that matters!

Sorry for the long post but I wanted to share her story because often times the dog that seems uninteresting gets passed up. The dog that doesn't seem too excited gets passes up. BUT these dogs are often the best! Please please don't pass up the shy dog!

**SWEENEY TODD** Submitted by: Candice Harback



Monty (Sweeney Todd) is settling in to his new home! He is such a sweetheart and so playful. He is determined to win over his new siblings.

**FAYE** Submitted by: Stefanie Irene



A little over a week ago I semi unexpectedly brought a new baby home. World, meet 5 mo. Faye! I'd say she's adjusting quite nicely ♥

**BUELLER** Submitted by: Erin Shupe



We haven't updated you in years but Cooper (fka Bueller) is still doing great! He turns 10 next month and he's getting a little grey, but still moves (and acts) like a puppy.

**CASCADE** Submitted by: Rebecca Fraker



Stan Lee (Cascade) has been a part of our family for over a month now. We absolutely adore him and he loves his purry and furry brothers and sister. Thank you, SPCA for your partnership with other shelters so that fur babies can be adopted and not put down.



# 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).