

# Animal Tails

ANIMAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION • FALL/WINTER 2024



Photo of DiDi, Courtesy of Pet Life Photography by Carrie Nelson



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## LAURA'S LETTER

As we enter this season of Thanksgiving, I want to celebrate those who may not always be visible at the forefront of AWA's work. I am filled with gratitude for the exceptional people who make up our AWA family. Every day, our staff and volunteers bring dedication, warmth, and an unbreakable spirit to our mission to eliminate suffering and improve the lives of animals and people across our community.

Whether guiding families through adoptions, providing compassionate healthcare to animals, educating the next generation of pet lovers, or creating safe and loving spaces as foster families, every person plays a vital role in our story. Additionally, our partners who provide financial support allow us to continue our work and expand our impact.

It is your unwavering commitment that enables AWA to make a meaningful difference in countless lives and to be a place of hope, compassion, and change. This Thanksgiving season, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the tireless

hours, creativity, and kindness that our team brings to our community every day. Thanks to their dedication, families are complete, animals are healthy, and our compassionate community is growing.

Thank you for all you do and for being the heart of AWA.



Laura Houston  
Executive Director



## BETTER LIVES FOR OUR FELINE FRIENDS

We set an ambitious goal of finding forever homes for **400** felines during our annual **Raining Cats Adoption Event** this past July and August and surpassed it!

Not only did this event get cats and kittens into loving homes, but it also enabled AWA to support local New Jersey shelters by transporting cats and kittens to our facility, opening up more space at these shelters so more cats and kittens can be saved. Thanks to a generous Best Friends grant, AWA can continue this mission and expand our commitment to assisting local shelters in closing their life-saving gap and raising their save rate.

Another way we're supporting local felines is through our MASH TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) events. With three more scheduled for November and December, we're on track to spay or neuter 1,000 feral community cats by the end of the year, more than doubling 2023's total of 414.

By working together, we can enhance the lives of cats and decrease the incidence of unplanned kitten births.



1,000 FERAL  
FELINES WILL BE  
SPAYED/NEUTERED  
THIS YEAR!



427 FELINES  
FOUND THEIR  
FOREVER HOMES  
DURING AWA'S  
RAINING CATS  
EVENT!



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR STRAY CATS IN CUBA

From April 14–20, AWA's Executive Director, Laura Houston, volunteered her time to work with Project Git-Meow, a remarkable initiative aimed at managing the cat population at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (GBNB), Cuba. Over the course of five intense days, the team transformed an old restaurant into a temporary veterinary clinic, where they trapped, neutered/spayed, vaccinated, and then released 375 community cats back into their environment.

Guantanamo Bay's warm climate and the absence of natural predators have led to an unchecked population of feral cats, making this project crucial for maintaining ecological balance. Additionally, we were able to provide free veterinary care to the non-military residents of the community.

The experience was demanding, with team living in tents and many 14 to 15 hours days, but the sense of camaraderie and purpose kept the group energized. Volunteer surgeons, techs and trappers came from all over the United States and Canada, each playing a critical role in making this clinic possible. It was heartening to witness how beloved these cats are to the local community, as residents came together to support our efforts, sharing in the goal of improving the lives of the cats. AWA is proud to have been able to contribute to this effort and work alongside a truly amazing group of volunteers.



# CUBA



## GIVING A HELPING HAND TO OUR FRIENDS IN NEW MEXICO

AWA's own Dr. Emily traveled to New Mexico to be a part of the Soul Dog Rescue's spay/neuter clinic. Surgery was set up in the recreational center at a local reservation with a total of 108 animals (90% dogs) spayed or neutered. Also, several puppies that were found dumped on the side of the road received their surgeries. The team was bare bones but worked great together. Dr. Emily will be returning in December of 2024 to assist at a different spay/neuter clinic local to this area. This work is vital in helping to control the pet population and reduce the number of homeless pets.



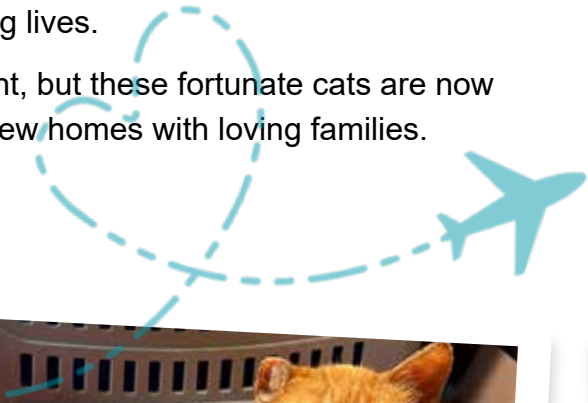
# NEW MEXICO

## FLYING IN FROM IOWA FOR NEW LIVES

In August, AWA welcomed 39 cats affected by the devastating flooding in Iowa that occurred in June.

Transporting these cats not only helps alleviate overcrowding in shelters impacted by the flooding, which are also caring for owned pets of families in recovery, but it also gives shelter cats a better chance of finding forever homes. After a disaster, shelter intakes rise while adoptions drop, illustrating the importance of AWA's transport program in saving lives.

It was a long flight, but these fortunate cats are now thriving in their new homes with loving families.



## ONE EYE IS ENOUGH FOR GALAXY

Galaxy came to us with an eye that wasn't in great shape. Initially, he went into foster care in hopes that medications and our dedicated medical team could help save it. Unfortunately, we soon realized that the eye was causing him more harm than good, and needed to be removed. After the surgery, Galaxy returned to foster care to recover and relax, cone and all. Thanks to the loving care of our amazing fosters, he thrived and spent a few months recuperating. Without their support, he wouldn't be in his forever home today! Fostering truly saves lives—it's hero work at its finest. Now, Galaxy can enjoy his favorite pastime: gazing out the window at the world beyond!



## 300 DAYS WAITING FOR A FAMILY TO LOVE

Autumn, a young dog who came to AWA in September 2023, found her forever home after spending 300 days at AWA.

When she first arrived, Autumn was a very timid and fearful girl. She was apprehensive about walking on a leash, would startle easily, and often trembled with fear. She would also try to escape from her kennel or any room she was in. The poor girl kept her tail constantly tucked.

Under the guidance of our medical and behavior team a tailored behavior modification plan was created for Autumn, and the work of building a trusting relationship with her began. She made remarkable progress: quickly learning various commands, becoming comfortable with being brushed, and responding well when called. Additionally, the behavior team gradually expanded her world by introducing her to walks with other dogs, starting around the building and eventually moving to the neighborhood streets around the AWA campus.

Autumn's adoption was a joyous occasion at AWA, and your support plays a crucial role in creating these happy endings. It's because of generous and compassionate animal lovers like you that we can make a difference in the lives of pets like Autumn.



## UNLEASHING FUN AT SUMMER CAMP

The Education Department had another successful Camp Tails & Whiskers summer camp program this year. Camp spanned a total of 10 weeks this summer and had 190 participants ages 6-13. Campers had an amazing summer getting to learn about animals, play games and do various crafts, participate in STEM related activities, view spay/neuter surgeries and of course, meet a lot of animals! The campers also enjoyed these visitors: Crisis Response Canines with therapy dogs, Howling Woods Wolf Farm, Voorhees Police Department K9 Unit, Farm Friends, The Seeing Eye Dogs and Leah from 168 Tattoo with ferrets, a turtle and bearded dragon.



## NEW - PAWSITIVE KIDS CLUB

The Education Department also launched the Pawsitive Kids Club, a program for children ages 5-7. With the success of Wags & Wiggles, this program was designed to be the next step in the journey for children learning about animal welfare and safety. This program allows kids to work on their socialization and developmental skills through hands-on activities that explore gross motor skills and physical movement activities. Kids also learn about animal safety and have the opportunity to pet an animal at the end of each class.

## STEM FOR PAWS AT AWA

AWA's Education Department hosted our first free STEM Day on October 12th thanks to a grant from WSFS Bank. This event was a great hit with children who attended and their parents. Nearly 40 children in grades K-7 attended the event. The two-hour long program allowed children to learn more of the science behind animal welfare through hands-on interactive lessons led by our education team, senior veterinarian, and manager of behavior training.

There were many interactive stations such as Engineering where children learned about animal engineers, bioengineering and bio-mimicry, and Animal Behavior teaching children about the science behind training animals.

This STEM Day inspired the Education Department's in-school program which launched this fall. This 2-hour long program brings the STEM Education into schools for grades K-12. Topics also include Engi-

neering, Veterinary Medicine, Animal Behavior and Pet Nutrition. Through hands-on interaction lessons, students are able to explore the world of STEM and home it plays a part in animal welfare.





# UPCOMING AWA EVENTS

## Pawliday Market

December 1, 2024, 12-4pm

Join us to kickoff the holiday season at Pawliday Market, an event for pets and their people to shop, eat, do activities and get pictures with Sanda and the Grinch!

## Festive Furrdays

December 6, 13 & 20

Gift Wrapping by Donation (5-9pm), Photos with Santa \$10 Sitting Fee (6-8pm), Complementary Cookies, Hot Cocoa & Holiday Music, Shop at AWA's ReTail Store, & Adoptions Open to 9pm (last meets with animals 8pm)

## SPECIAL FESTIVE FURRIDAY DATES

Pet Portrait Workshop - Dec. 6th - Fee \$30

For Tickets - Scan Red QR Code

Kids Night Out - Dec. 13th - Fee \$30

To Register Scan Green QR Code



VISIT [AWANJ.ORG](http://AWANJ.ORG) FOR ALL AWA EVENTS.



# EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT AWA

## WAGS & WIGGLES - AGES 2-4

Teaches the littlest animal lovers about animal safety, kindness and compassion.

## PAWSITIVE KIDS CLUB - AGES 5-7

This program will help grow kids' knowledge of animal safety, kindness, and compassion.

## KIDS DAY OFF CAMPS - AGES 7-13

Day camps for kids when there is no school due to holidays and school breaks.

## ANIMAL ACADEMY - AGES 5-17

Brings home-schoolers out into a new environment to learn, socialize, and strengthen their animal literacy and empathy.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE  
OR TO VIEW SCHEDULE OF  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.



# HOMELESS ANIMALS NEED HELP

With your generous gifts, homeless animals find a safe and loving place as they wait for adoption into their forever homes.

## PET SPONSORSHIP

The animals in our Pet Sponsorship program are in the most need. They may be having a difficult time being adopted due to age, breed, or size, or have medical or behavioral challenges making it harder for them to find homes.

## HEALING HEROES FUND

This fund is available for animals with extraordinary medical needs. With funds available medical care and treatment can begin immediately without the delay for fundraising.

## CONSTANT COMPANIONS

Monthly giving helps AWA spend more time and resources on lifesaving initiatives, and less time fundraising. For only \$0.33 a day (\$10 per month) you can help provide food, medicine, and care.



FIND OUT MORE WAYS YOU  
CAN HELP THE ANIMALS AT  
AWA VISIT [AWANJ.ORG](http://AWANJ.ORG).

YOUR DONATION SAVES LIVES - PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/ST/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

My gift of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check enclosed

Charge my card: ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ Amex ☐ Discover

Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Animal Welfare Association, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your gift may be 100% tax-deductible according to federal regulations. Federal Tax ID: 22-1752792

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FINDING FOREVER LOVE AT AWA!

