
ARIZONA ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE
Annual Impact Report

2022



ARIZONA ANIMAL
WELFARE LEAGUE & SPCA
ARIZONA'S OLDEST & LARGEST NO-KILL SHELTER

AAWL.ORG

A LETTER

from the CEO

As a leader in the no-kill movement here in Arizona, AAWL is focused on leveraging community resources and partnerships to ensure positive outcomes for pets. In 2022, we rescued and provided life-saving veterinary care to 1,985 dogs and 1,908 cats throughout Arizona. Every year, we spend nearly \$1.5 million in veterinary costs for our animals, which includes everything from basic diagnostic testing and preventative vaccines to more complicated orthopedic surgeries and costly medication.

Our live release rate -- which continues to be above 97% -- reflects the "no-kill" principle that we were founded upon in 1971. These life-saving results were made possible this year by growing our medical and behavior capacity to take on more challenging cases such as parvo and distemper, which we have been able to successfully treat by exploring alternative treatments and improving specific protocols. These investments have resulted in improved health outcomes for animals in our care and would not have been possible without the support of our AAWL community of donors, adopters, fosters, volunteers, and staff.

Sadly, though, if we're truly going to reduce the number of healthy and treatable animals that are euthanized each year in shelters across Arizona, we must do more. The animal welfare needs of the pets and people throughout the state far outweighs our capacity to help address them. In Maricopa County, animal welfare organizations across the Valley are struggling with higher intakes because of complex issues such as housing instability or lack of veterinary and behavioral care. A total of 36,526 cats and dogs came into Phoenix shelters in 2021. Tragically, it has led to an increase in the animals who are suffering.

This year's Impact Report demonstrates how we've leveraged your philanthropic donations to respond to these community needs. Our new board-approved strategic plan looks even further out into the future and lays out the vision for how we're going to save 40,000 lives over the next five years by focusing on: **Finding Adoptable Animals Homes, Delivering Affordable, Accessible Vet Services, Keeping Pet Families Together, and Recruiting & Retaining Excellent Talent.**

As I approach my second year as President/CEO of AAWL, I'm hopeful that we will be able to grow our base of AAWL supporters who feel strongly about our future goals and want to make a lasting impact on the animal welfare landscape in Arizona. Please consider making a tax-deductible stretch gift TODAY! Your personal, financial support ensures we have the resources to save more animals like Flash, Chico, and PJ who are featured in this report and were given a second chance at life thanks to your donations. Thank you for helping us save their lives, and I look forward to partnering with all of you to save many more!

With gratitude,



Alessandra Navidad, CEO



OUR YEAR

at a glance



3,893
Lives Saved



1,908
Cat Adoptions



1,985
Dog Adoptions



171
Rural Rescue Trips



123,295
Miles Driven



20,008
Vaccines Administered



3,198
Surgeries Performed



68
Medical Miracle Fund Cases



550+
Lives Saved In Our Infirmary

FINDING ADOPTABLE

Animals Homes



Every year, AAWL finds homes for thousands of animals from both rural and metro areas. Our Rural Rescue program, which involves transporting animals from high needs shelters across Arizona, is the core strategy that helps us carry out 3,600 to 4,000 adoptions each year. In addition to transporting animals, we provide them with a full range of veterinary care, including treatment for injuries or illnesses, spay/neuter surgeries, vaccines, and behavioral enrichment. While there are many factors impacting our adoptions, the primary driver is capacity for care and the health of the animals when they come into our shelter. The Covid-19 pandemic led to an increase in preventable illnesses like parvo and distemper that we treated upon intake. Animals with greater medical or behavior needs ended up staying at the shelter for longer periods of time. To address this need, we plan to increase vaccine reimbursements for our rural rescue partners to improve health outcomes for animals and recruit more foster parents for behavior dogs and medical cats to reduce their stress and overall length of stay.



FLASH



Flash had severely enlarged eyes, likely due to untreated glaucoma, when he arrived at AAWL from one of our rural rescue partners. His eyes were beyond repair, so the best thing we could do to help him was to remove his eyes since they were causing him a lot of pain. Flash recovered quickly from surgery, but he would need to learn to navigate the world in a whole new way. Our team knew that Flash would do best in a foster home while he waited for his forever family, so that his fosters could help him learn to adjust to his new world. Flash thrived in his new foster home and was ready to find his forever family. But it turns out, he already found them, they just had to make it official! Flash's family absolutely adores him, and he has come such a long way from where he was when he first arrived at our shelter.

MABLE



After receiving a medical plea from one of our partners, Mable arrived at AAWL severely underweight and dehydrated. She was lethargic and her stomach was sensitive to touch. Our medical team ran bloodwork, checked her thyroid levels, and performed x-rays, which all came back normal. However, Mable's condition continued to decline and was unable to gain weight. Since she was unable to have normal bowel movements, we suspected that she had GI lymphoma.

We placed Mable on a treatment plan for the cancer and found her a foster home, but we weren't sure what her prognosis would be. We didn't know how much time Mable would be able to live comfortably, but Mable's health made a drastic improvement after a couple weeks in her foster home. She was able to gain weight and her real personality started to show.

After a month in her foster home, Mable was cleared by our medical team to go up for adoption, and quickly found her forever family.

SNAPPLE

Snapple came to AAWL from one of our Rural Rescue partners after he was rescued from a hoarding situation where he lived with 45 other dogs. Because of this, he didn't have many positive interactions with humans, and was very frightened and overwhelmed by the shelter environment.



Our team knew he wouldn't make much progress with socialization if he wouldn't leave his kennel, so they found Snapple a foster family to help him build his confidence.

In just a few days, Snapple had progressed in leaps and bounds. He even started to play and approach his foster family for head scratches and back massages. All Snapple needed was a safe place to gain confidence and learn that the world wasn't a scary place.

After over a month in his foster home, Snapple found his forever family! Now he is thriving in his new home, and his personality has started to shine. He even has a group of dog friends in his neighborhood that he loves running and playing with every night.

PROVIDING AFFORDABLE, Accessible Veterinary Care

To better serve pets in need, we partnered with PetSmart Charities to conduct a bi-lingual needs assessment – the first-of-its-kind nationwide – of 614 pet owners living near our shelter. Six out of 10 respondents said they recently needed vet care and were unable to get it (despite living just minutes away from our shelter). They cited inability to pay and lack of knowledge about where to go as the top two reasons they couldn't get care for their pets. Vaccinations, spay/neuter, heartworm, flea, and tick prevention were among the three highest reported veterinary needs. Our strategic plan focuses specifically on aligning our community veterinary services to better meet the needs of pet owners living in high-poverty, high needs zip codes near the shelter. By providing low-income pet owners with affordable and accessible veterinary care, we will improve the health outcomes of these animals and prevent them from being surrendered for preventable health reasons.

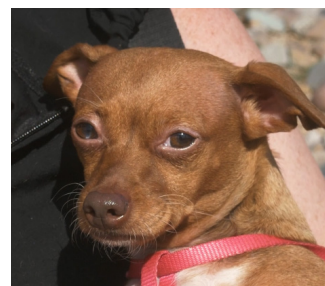
KAREN

Karen is a five-time domestic violence survivor and until recently had struggled to find her footing. She previously had to give up her three pets because she lost her home, although she was committed to finding them a safe and happy home, it was heartbreaking for her to lose them, and she never wants to have to part from her animals again. Pretty & Handsome, her two shy Chihuahuas, are her family and says "These are mine now. For the rest of my life!"

Karen is an MD PetCare client and takes advantage of our low-cost services particularly while she's out of work due to a short-term medical disability. Even though she needed to ask a friend for a ride, Karen did what she had to do to bring Pretty in.

Now Pretty and Handsome are microchipped and fully vaccinated, and Karen has made a commitment to bringing them to every one of their appointments at AAWL, so she can make sure they are safe and healthy. She also worked with AAWL to get both her dogs fixed, so she doesn't have to worry about any unwanted litter.

"I'm just very thankful you guys are here. It's very important to me that I made it here."



SONIA



Sonia first heard about the Arizona Animal Welfare League after receiving a flyer about our low-cost clinics and other services at her daughter's school. Now just a few months later, she volunteers at our low-cost vaccine clinics to help pet owners who primarily speak Spanish. She helps them fill out paperwork and shares other opportunities available to them and their families.

Sonia shared that it's often hard for those in the Latinx community to come across low-cost services that are accessible to them. Oftentimes, she finds that locations are too far, appointments are booked out, or there are issues with language barriers that discourage owners from bringing their pets in. That's why when she found out about what AAWL was doing she knew she had to get involved.

Sonia is a huge animal lover and has four dogs herself. She knows what it meant to be able to get her pets fixed and fully vaccinated at no cost and she wants other pet owners in her community to know that these resources are here.

Sonia says she couldn't ever imagine, under any circumstances, having to leave her pets behind.

*"No matter where I go,
I will take my dogs with me."*

Unfortunately, sometimes that is the only choice some pet owners are left with when they can no longer afford to care for their pets. She has witnessed many dog owners leave behind their pets after moving away or moving into a place that doesn't allow them. She never wants that to be her because every single one of her pets are "part of the family."

No one should ever have to give up their pet because they can't afford to care for them, and that is the reason why Sonia is so passionate about spreading the word about AAWL.



541
Clinic
Clients



1,481
Exams at our
Low-Cost Clinic



3,352
Vaccines
Administered

KEEPING FAMILIES Together

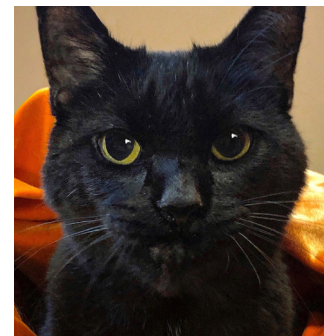
Animal return/surrender rates have increased from 10% to 23%, with some animals ending up at our shelter after being in a home for over 5 years. Reasons range from increased housing costs and job instability to behavior challenges and rising veterinary costs. In addition to our lifetime commitment to our animals, we plan to ramp up our behavior programs by hiring more staff to provide adopters and community members with more free or low-cost behavior support, including increasing training options, expanding our behavior hotline, and training volunteers to help us serve more pet owners. We believe that by investing in shelter intervention strategies we can end the vicious cycle of animal sheltering and keep families together.



PJ

PJ arrived at AAWL in 2019 after being rescued from a dog fighting ring in Canada. After a year of rehabilitation with one of our partners, he was ready to find his forever home. Unfortunately, PJ was adopted and returned three times for various reasons, and had spent over 300 days in and out of our shelter. When PJ ended up back at our shelter again, our team looked for a foster home to help PJ continue to build his trust with people. Our Behavior team worked closely with PJ and his foster family to help him become the best dog he could be while he waited for his forever home. It turns out he was already there. His foster family fell in love with PJ and how he interacted with their baby at home. Before they made it official, our team wanted to set PJ up for success in his new forever home, so they spent countless hours working with his new family to help give them the tools to manage PJ's training on their own. PJ is now thriving and for the first time knows what it means to have a family who loves him.

11-year-old Chico came to AAWL from one of our county partners and was adopted a few weeks later, only to find himself back at our shelter after six months. Over the next couple months, he struggled with various medical issues, including having a mass removed from his jaw that luckily turned out to be benign. Finally, he was cleared by our medical team and was able to find his forever home. Several months later, his adopter called our behavior hotline after she was struggling with Chico urinating outside of his litterbox. Our Feline Behavior Manager called to offer some assistance and tips on how to alleviate the problem, including adding more litter boxes and having Chico's vet check for a possible UTI. Our team counseled her and let her know Chico was welcome back at our shelter, and that we would do a full medical recheck to see if we could find the source of the behavior. Chico returned to the shelter, but after a couple weeks, his adopter called saying how much she missed Chico and was willing to work through the litter box issues. Our team released Chico back to his family and continued to work with them until Chico's litter box issues were resolved.



CHICO

RECRUITING & RETAINING Excellent Talent

At the height of the Covid-19 shutdown, when businesses across the state remained closed, our adoption counselors, animal care technicians, behavior and intake staff, and medical team members continued to come to work to provide food and water, clean cages, conduct behavior assessments, and manage the animal-related needs at our shelter. In 2022, we conducted a salary study to gather compensation data and develop a more competitive salary structure to help us increase recruitment and retention. We are now leveraging this data to develop a financially sustainable hiring plan that we believe will help make AAWL the employer of choice for animal welfare professionals in Arizona. In addition to paying fair market wages, we also plan to partner with schools and workforce development organizations to recruit youth volunteers to create a hiring pipeline for future AAWL veterinarians and animal caretakers. Investing in our frontline animal care staff members is critical to our mission and will help us serve more pets in need.



**SARA
SKROMME**
Canine
Behavior
Manager

Sara has been a part of AAWL for over five years, and since she joined our organization in 2017, she has been promoted four times and now manages our entire Canine Behavior department! Sara started her career at AAWL as one of our Animal Care Technicians. But her love and dedication for our animals was quickly recognized and she was promoted to Intake Specialist, where she would conduct field and in-shelter evaluations of animals to assess their behavior and medical needs before they entered our care. Last year, she was promoted to our Lead Behavior Specialist, and we prioritized training opportunities to help her continue to expand her skillset. Sara received her CPDT-KA certification after passing her comprehensive exam and gaining over 300 hours in dog training experience. Sara's exceptional leadership skills and her commitment to finding ways to grow and improve our behavior department led to her most recent promotion to our Canine Behavior Manager.



**DR. SARA
PADILLA**
Shelter
Veterinarian
Extern

Dr. Sara always knew she wanted to become a vet because it would combine her two passions: animals and science. She eventually went on to study veterinary medicine at the University of Mexico and graduated with two degrees. Sara wanted the opportunity to become a licensed vet in the United States, and through a few shared connections, was connected to our team. AAWL like many other shelters and vet clinics across the United States have been struggling to find qualified veterinarians. After reviewing Sara's extensive educational background and meeting with her, we knew she could be a great asset to our team. We offered to sponsor her to come work for us at our shelter clinic as a veterinarian extern and in turn she would be mentored by one of our long-time relief vets while she studied for her licensing exams. Then once she passes her state licensing exam, Dr. Sara will become our low-cost community clinic veterinarian, which will give AAWL the opportunity to reach and serve Spanish speaking pet owners in our community to help keep their pets safe and healthy.

WAYS TO GIVE



GIVE THROUGH YOUR WILL

By making a bequest or other planned gift to AAWL, you will continue to save the lives of homeless animals for years to come.



MAKE A ONE-TIME OR MONTHLY DONATION

Your monetary donations help run our day-to-day shelter operations and our various programs. No amount is too small, and your generosity will be rewarded by wagging tails and soft purrs from those that need our help the most.



GIFT OF STOCK

Making a gift to AAWL via stock, bonds, or mutual funds, allows you to have an immediate impact on the lives of homeless animals.

Learn more about these alternative ways to donate & make your gift at: links.aawl.org/waystogive

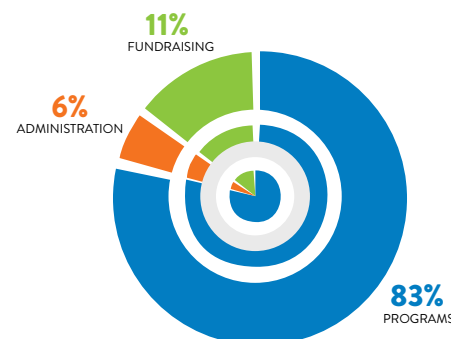
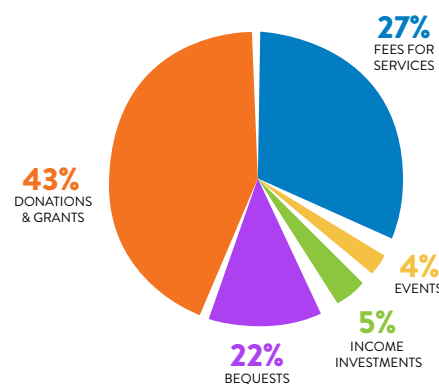
FINANCIALS

AAWL has a financial obligation to ensure that all donations and community funding we receive directly supports our lifesaving programs.

Please note that these financials are budgeted financials for 2022, and are not audited. If you would like to review audited numbers please visit aawl.org. 2022 audited financials will be available to review next year.

REVENUE
\$5,635,916

EXPENSES
\$5,801,735



TO OUR AMAZING Volunteers & Fosters

All the lives we saved this year wouldn't have been possible without all of you. Thank you for your dedication and for always being a champion for the animals.

243
ACTIVE
FOSTERS

499
ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS

31,221
VOLUNTEER
HOURS LOGGED

52,778
FOSTER
HOURS LOGGED

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Alicia F. Maharty Foundation | Danielle Miller | Leslie James | Sir Michael Delight Foundation |
| Annamary Imel | Debra Flori | Maddie's Fund | Sonia Breslow |
| Banfield Foundation | Dorothy D. and Joseph A. Moller Foundation | Mary Carol Sheets Charitable Foundation | Soul Singh & Meher Khalsa |
| Barbara Hoverland | Exceptional Pets | MetLife | Vernon Nichols |
| Betsy Ross-Retchin | James Jacobson & Allison Warren | Michael Miller | Walter Station |
| Bissell Pet Foundation | Jeffrey & Jennifer Cannon | Nancy Troutman | Warren Lueker |
| Caleb Reese | Joan Rowland | Patrick Mather | William Dick |
| Carol Sacca | Joanna O'Neal | Petco Foundation | |
| Cecilia Claudio | Joy Weber | PetMeds | |
| Charles Krause | Judith Stivers | PetSmart Charities | |
| Community Church of New Thought | | Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers | |

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- | | | |
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ARIZONA'S OLDEST & LARGEST NO-KILL SHELTER
**ARIZONA ANIMAL
WELFARE LEAGUE
& SPCA**

25 N. 40th St., Phoenix, AZ 85034

UPCOMING EVENTS

DESIGN FOR DOGS

February 24, 2023

WALK TO SAVE ANIMALS

November 4, 2023

To make a donation:
Arizona Animal Welfare League
25 North 40th Street
602.273.6852 x106
aracelycruz@aawl.org
aawl.org/ImpactReport
Tax ID: 23-7149453

