



After six years of life in and out of the shelter, Kenzi found her perfect home. You made it possible! Read how inside.

Paws for Thought

Fall 2023



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NEW MEXICO

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from the korner kennel

Finding Success in Adoptions



Val Wilson & our Adoptions Team

I am absolutely thrilled to share the incredible efforts of our team as they integrate our core values into their daily work. Despite the ongoing workforce shortages in the animal welfare industry and the challenges we faced with a 70% turnover rate in 2022, it is heartwarming to see the dedication and passion this team displays. Their commitment to improving the lives of pets in New Mexico is truly commendable.

One particular story that fills my heart with joy is that of Camilo, a beautiful two-year-old brown tabby and her adopter, Adena.

Adena had unique circumstances, using adaptive devices to help with her mobility and living in a group home environment, but she desperately wanted a feline friend.

Fortunately, our Adoptions team is skilled at considering all aspects of a family's unique circumstances and equally adept at evaluating our pet population to identify the perfect fit. In Adena's case, that cat companion ended up being Camilo. Camilo's golden-green eyes and sweet

temperament sealed the deal, and he headed to his new home.

This story is just one of many examples that highlight the incredible work done every day at Animal Humane, *thanks to donors like you*. We understand that each pet is on a unique journey to finding the perfect home! To facilitate adoptions, we have several different programs to increase each pet's chances of finding a family. Two notable programs are our Cats Around Town program, which places adoptable pets at retail locations throughout our community for greater exposure, and our Mobile Adoption unit that is once again out and about in our community helping to extend our normal adoption programs. I am grateful for our team & the dedication of donors like you. Together, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of New Mexico's pets & the community we serve. Thank you!

Val Wilson

Val Wilson, Executive Director

Angel finds her own slice of *Heaven*

On a cold December night, a small black and white cat was dashing under cars in a crowded parking lot, seeking shelter from the winter chill. Thankfully for this feisty feline, two Animal Humane employees happened to spot her and get her to safety.

Angel, the two-year-old Domestic Short Hair, was admitted into care at Animal Humane. **While many pets have a difficult time adjusting to shelter life at first, most soon acclimate to the constant coming and goings of people and other pets.**

Angel was different.

After her spay surgery and an extra week tucked away in a quiet space to decompress, Angel was still full of fear—cowering and hissing when approached. She never attacked, but it was easy to see that she was uncomfortable and would have a difficult time connecting with an adopter. **Your support allowed our team to place Angel on an individualized Behavior Modification plan for the next two weeks to help with her fear.**

"Angel was interested in food, play and sometimes touch." Behavior Manager Adrienne Lommasson explains, "She would do well some days, then back slide and swat at hands, even if they were offering food."

Adrienne realized that Angel's perfect home wouldn't be the typical house environment. However, her temperament along with her experience living outdoors made Angel the ideal Working Cat.

"Working Cat is all about meeting cats where they are to find their perfect fit. Some outdoor-experienced cats need that stimulation, that freedom of choice." Adrienne explains, **"With Angel, we treated her as an individual. While we may have originally wanted her to be an indoor cat, it was clear that was not what she wanted. She wanted to be back outside."**

Lucky for Angel, we had a sneaking suspicion that her perfect family had just submitted an application for a Working Cat.

"We keep all our feed in this little barn and rodents love that," Angel's adopted mom Emily explains, "We had our barn kitty Pearl who spent 3 and a half years with us keeping the mice away. After she passed, not



only did the mice get bad but we got pack rats."

When Emily decided it was time for another feline to light up their lives, she reached out to Animal Humane and was immediately paired up with Angel. Angel spent the next few days contained in her little barn, acclimating to her new space. At night, Emily and her daughters would sit with her in the barn, talking softly to her. One night, Angel walked down the hay bales and curled up in Emily's ten-year-old daughter's lap.

"It must have been for at least 20 minutes that Angel sat in her lap and was purring so loudly!" Emily says, **"At one point my daughter Annabelle started laughing saying Angel sounded like a helicopter. Pearl never purred like that with us, it was so different."**

"I love this cat so much," said Annabelle, "She deserved this chance!"

A chance that you made possible.

Angel has certainly earned her keep in her new home. The mice and pack rats are all a thing of the past, and Angel now spends her days lounging on hay bales, exploring acres of paradise and has even made friends with the horses on the property.

Whether it is a house cat, community cat or a working cat like Angel, your support has allowed thousands of pets to truly find their perfect place.

Keeping Kenzi



No matter their age, size or condition, Animal Humane has been a temporary home for tens of thousands of pets throughout the years. Some pets needed care for a few days, while others, over the course of their lives, spent years in our care. **One of these pets was Kenzi, an Australian Cattle Dog mix, who captured not only our team's hearts but yours as well.**

Brought to Animal Humane in 2017, Kenzi was tiny—only seven weeks old. **Over the span of almost six years, Kenzi would find herself adopted and brought back to Animal Humane multiple times.** Unfortunately for Kenzi and her many families during those six years, it was lack of pet-friendly housing, not lack of love, that caused her repeated returns. Each time Kenzi came back, you were there for her—giving the time, patience and care she needed as she waited for her next chance.

cover story

That compassionate space you provided her with was especially crucial during Kenzi's last stay at Animal Humane, her longest yet. Throughout the 190+ days that Kenzi was in care, she was treated to nutritious meals, regular vet checkups, long walks and all the cuddles she could ask for. **Kenzi never gave up hope, and we know you didn't either!**

In December of 2022, Tim and Kay visited Animal Humane searching for a new family member.

"Kay and I had rescued retired greyhounds before, but Kay wanted to try something new and suggested we go down to the shelter and adopt a local dog." Tim recalls. "After we described what we were looking for, they brought



Kenzi at 7 weeks old

in Kenzi and explained her history and how she had been there for so long."

Kay and Tim decided to do a



trial adoption, to see how Kenzi would adjust to life in their home.

"After just a few days, Kay said she was the one," Tim explains. "She is the smartest dog we've ever had, she already knew quite a few commands and was so well behaved. We also had food with her, and my feeling is once you break bread with a dog, they're yours!"

Unfortunately, tragedy struck just four months after Kenzi was adopted. After battling illness, Kay passed away. As Tim and Kay's family gathered for the services and to grieve together, there was a question lingering: Was Tim going to keep Kenzi?

"It wasn't a discussion that happened with me, and it didn't

need to. Kenzi is my companion now." Tim says.

Tim and Kenzi continue to spend every day together as they navigate their new reality without Kay.

"She follows me everywhere I go. Kenzi is just so attentive; she really is such a smart dog."

Not only did your support give Kenzi the depth and breadth of care she needed each time she was here, but you provided Tim with a companion to walk by his side through difficult times.

On behalf of Tim and Kenzi, we thank you for your dedication to bringing people and pets together!

PUPdates & CATch-ups



Carlos is getting along great with his new family and loves to play with his two other cat siblings. He also has earned the nickname "Flaco", which he responds to!



Oso enjoyed many fun road trips this summer with his new dad, including his very first camping trip near Chimayo!

Want your adopted pet to be potentially featured in an upcoming newsletter? Scan the QR code to send us a PUPdate and CATchup! Send any images to pupdate@animalhumanenm.org. We can't wait to hear from you!



Meet Dr. Robertson

"I've wanted to be a veterinarian since I was five years old," says Dr. Robertson. And with over 23 years in the field, she has truly made her mark.

Animal Humane's Chief Veterinarian Adena Robertson, DVM, started working in shelter kennels and veterinary clinics at just 15 years old. As soon as she graduated with her undergraduate degree, she started Veterinary School at Colorado State University, a monumental feat on its own.

"Getting accepted into Veterinary School is extremely competitive," Dr. Robertson explains, **"There are less than 35 Veterinary Schools nationwide, each school receiving roughly 1,000 applications each year but only accepting 100 of those applicants."**

After graduating from Colorado State, Dr. Robertson returned to New Mexico where she began work in emergency and general practice. In 2014, she opened her own private practice, which she ran for five years until she made the decision to sell it, craving something new.

"I've always had an interest in shelter medicine," Dr. Robertson explains. **"Working in a place like Animal Humane and in a clinic that is completely donor-funded has allowed for me to see more pets than I ever was able to in my private practice."**

Your support has helped Dr. Robertson and the Clinic Team care for and treat pets that would otherwise never find themselves in a Veterinary Clinic. The number of pets Dr. Robertson could help jumped even higher this spring when we re-opened our Clinic for community spay/neuter and preventative care.

"The community has been incredibly receptive and wonderful!" Dr. Robertson exclaims. "This is such an underserved population, and there are so few resources available. **You can see just how grateful they are that someone is finally able to talk with them and care for their beloved pets.**"



Kai Powers through Parvo

The pets who come to Animal Humane all need your support until they find their forever families. **But Kai, a 4-month-old Shepherd mix, would continue to need your help even after he had already found his home.**

Kai and his four siblings were transferred to Animal Humane from a rural Project Fetch partner in March of this year. All five puppies were happy and healthy, needing updated vaccines, deworming medication and their spay/neuter surgeries. By early April, Kai found his loving home with his new mom, Jennifer.

Five short days after adoption, we got a call we never anticipated—**Kai was not feeling well. Jennifer had taken him to an emergency veterinary hospital where he had tested positive for parvovirus!**

"I just wanted him to be okay, to feel better," Jennifer recalls, "He means everything to me."

Over the last year, we have seen an uptick in parvo cases in and around Albuquerque, even



"I just wanted him to be okay, to feel better. He means everything to me."

—Kai's adopter Jennifer

in previously vaccinated adults. When it comes to parvovirus, early intervention and action are key. Thankfully for Kai, your generosity allowed Jennifer to rush the small pup back to Animal Humane, where we immediately admitted him to our Parvo Treatment Ward.

You gave Kai the best chance at survival, as he spent the next week receiving all the care and love he deserved.

"Kai did amazing! After a couple days of IV fluids, he started to perk up," explained Animal Humane's Chief Veterinarian, Dr. Roberston. (More about Dr. Roberston on page 6!) "Then he started eating, barking, just making an absolute fuss. Since we had to keep him separate from all the other pets, he was just desperate for attention!"

Finally, parvo-free, Kai was ready to head home! When Jennifer arrived to pick him up, she was nearly speechless.

"I cannot thank Dr. Robertson and the Clinic staff enough—they saved my boy, and I am forever in their debt!" says Jennifer.

Kai and his family recently made the long drive to their new home in Oregon. **Whether it is learning to play fetch in the park or squeaking along with his favorite toys, Kai is living his best life, a life made possible by you!**



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Catching up with Corey



If you visit Animal Humane's front lobby, you might be lucky enough to meet Corey Nelson.

Beloved by people and pets alike, Corey has always felt called to serve, and she currently volunteers at our Front Desk. "If everyone volunteered, the world would be a better place," Corey says. A lifelong animal lover, Corey previously worked in an animal shelter in their marketing department and has a special place in her heart for senior dogs.

After moving to New Mexico with her family, Corey quickly became involved at Animal Humane, first as one of our Humane Hero monthly donors. "I don't think people realize how easy it is to positively impact an animal's life," Corey exclaimed.

Like you, Corey knows her monthly gift to Animal Humane, no matter the dollar amount, goes directly to saving the lives of the thousands of pets that enter our care each year. "It's all about getting these little guys in homes," she explains.

Despite her already tremendous impact, Corey wanted to do more and she, along with her business, Stellar Senior Housing Experts, will soon begin sponsoring the



Corey and Xena

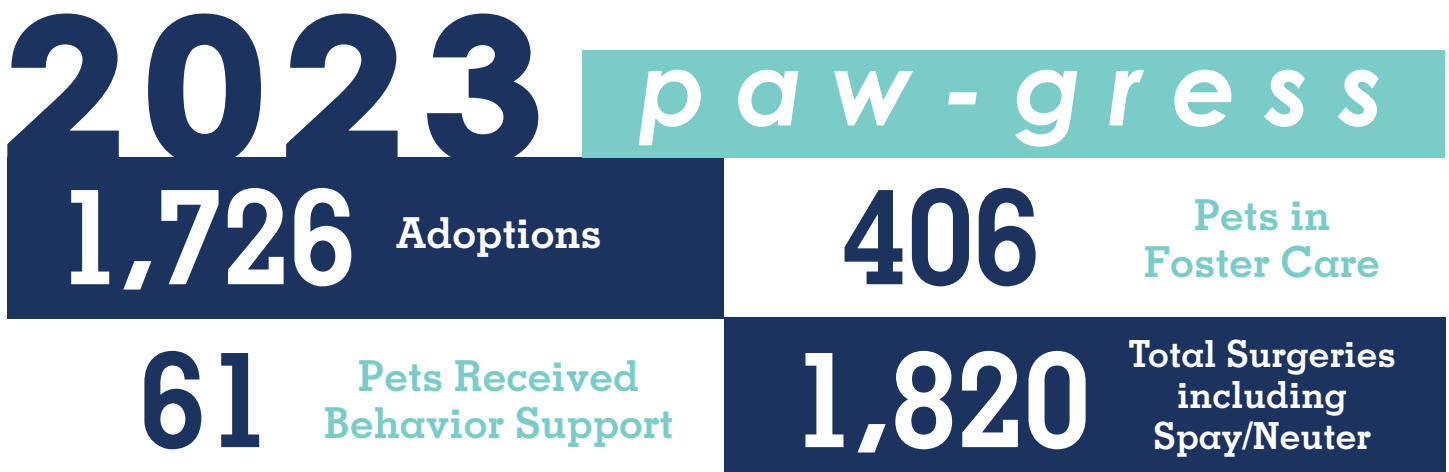
"I don't think people realize how easy it is to positively impact an animal's life."

—Corey Nelson

adoption fees for pets who have graduated from our Behavior Modification Program. "I just wanted to remove that barrier between an adopter and their future companion," Corey says. We are lucky to have dedicated donors like Corey, who choose to make homeless pets a priority every single day. **From all of us at**

Animal Humane, thank you Corey. Your commitment to serving the people and pets of New Mexico is inspiring!

Humane Heroes give automatically each month through automatic donation via a credit card or bank account. To learn more/donate please call 505.938.7938 or visit AnimalHumaneNM.org.



Numbers reflect 2023 statistics through August 15, 2023.