Happy Tails

"Pets are Life's Greatest Gift"



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 3rd Annual Birthday Bash Events
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Mailed to 3,620 Mailboxes

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Board of Directors AWL Officers

President: John Lantz Vice President: Megan McAndrews Treasurer: Dan Woods Secretary: Savannah Lopez

AWL Directors

Dr. Carla Carlton, DVM John Hall Liz Harkness Melinda Coleman Mike Smith Tom Tearney

Executive Director Tonya Blanchard

Animal Control Officers

Dana Hewitt – Warsaw Dalis Owens - Warsaw Kyle Denton – Kosciusko Co.

Shelter Hours

Sun. & Mon. Closed Tues. through Fri. 11:30 am - 5:00 pm Sat. 11:30 am - 4:00 pm

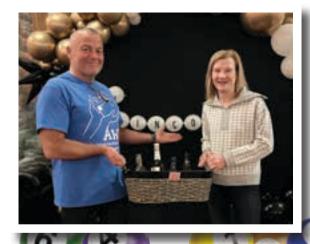


The Animal Welfare League is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization **serving all of Kosciusko County**



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Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County, IN 1048 S 325 E, Pierceton, IN 46562 | 574-267-3008 awlwarsaw.com | info@alwwarsaw.com









Dr. Hatfield



Anthology Whiskey Room
Black Dog Pub FW
Dan Woods
John & Maureen Hall
Julia Moore
Lake City Bank
Mark & Debbie Hesterman
Megan McAndrew's Family

Melinda & John Coleman
Molson Coors - Johnston Brothers
Pedal City FW
Service Liquors
Spencer Brown & John Lantz
Stacey Sherman
Tom Tearney Family
Tonya & Tony Blanchard

0





WARSAW FAMILY DENTISTRY

Our Staff *Welcomes*You!

Accepting New Patients

1603 N. Detroit St., Warsaw, IN 46580 574-269-7377 warsawfamilydentistry.com





Where: Noa Noa Taharaa Room

Address: 310 Eastlake Dr., Warsaw, IN 46580

When: 6:00 to 9:00

Reserve now or for more information call: 574-267-3008, ask for Tonya



HEARTWORM IN DOGS: What's the Big Deal?

By Brooke Lyon, AWL Adoption and Social Media Tech

Each dog that enters our shelter receives a heartworm test at the time of their intake and is given flea/tick and heartworm preventative whether or not they are heartworm positive.

Heartworm disease is caused by a parasitic worm that inhabits the heart, lungs and associated major vessels, where they cause damage that could be fatal if left untreated. Heartworms can grow and reproduce in an infected dog, so hundreds of worms could be in these dog's hearts and major organs before we find out they are heartworm positive. Can you imagine the amount of pain these dogs could be in?

HEARTWORM DISEASE IS ONLY SPREAD THROUGH MOSQUITOES

When a dog in our care tests positive for heartworm, they are scheduled to go to our vet on the next possible vet run to receive treatment for three days in a row. This treatment process is extremely painful for the dogs, but it is a crucial and major step in getting rid of the parasitic worms in their heart. After they arrive back at our facility, they are on cage rest for 30 days, where the only time they get to leave their kennel is to take a few, quick potty breaks throughout the day. It is imperative that the dog's activity is restricted because increased activity is associated with risk of complications, such as difficulty breathing or death. Even after the 30 days of straight cage rest, the infected dog's will be on restricted activity for another 30 days to ensure the amount of risk is limited as much as possible.

★ These heartworm positive dogs can either spend their 60 days of restricted activity within our shelter, surrounded by the stress of the other barking dogs day in and day out, or they can go into a foster home where they can receive comfort, silence, and love as they recover from this disease.

But we struggle to find foster homes for heartworm positive dogs, resulting in 80% of our infected dogs spending their entire painful treatment cycle in the confines of our shelter.

Want To Help Our Heartworm Positive Dogs But Can't Foster?

- The AWL has what we call our Hope Fund, where we put any undesignated donations into to help cover the costs of heartworm treatments for our dogs. You can donate here through our website, over the phone or in person at our facility.
- Can't donate? SPREAD THE WORD! We want our dogs to recover in a home versus in our shelter.

You Read All This - Now What?

Please give your pets flea/tick & heartworm preventative every 30-45 days (depending on type of preventative) to avoid this disease. There are several oral, topical, and injectable preventatives out there, as well as flea collars, that can help protect your pet.

To learn more about heartworm disease, consult your local veterinarian or research it on your own (using reliable sources of course).

Educate your friends and family! Our pets are a part of our family, and they deserve the best - including the homeless pets here at our shelter.

Heartworm in Shelter Dogs

"Almost 1 in 10 dogs that come to us have heartworm"

"We've saved every dog that was treated for heartworm at AWL. It's a \$300.00 treatment.

Tonya Blanchard

AWL Executive Director

"Because we save lives!"

DONATE

Your donation goes directly to the provide healthcare, food & shelter of Kosciusko's Homeless Pets

Donations can be made to AWL at awlwarsaw.com or mail your checks to: Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County 1048 S. 325 E. Pierceton, IN 46562



Animal Welfare League Pays off Mortgage

The Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County was fortunate to receive a remarkable financial gift allowing the nonprofit to pay off the remaining mortgage for their campus. We are so blessed that this kind person left us financial support to settle this debt.

It is important for us to acknowledge and express our heartfelt appreciation to our lender, 1st Source Bank. We wish to extend our sincere thanks for believing in AWL and for the trust and confidence you have placed in us. Your decision to support us has had a profound impact on our organization, and we are proud to have upheld our commitment by never missing a mortgage payment.



AWL Mortgage Press Release was honored to be recognized by



"Top Ten Business, Nonprofit Stories of 2024"



"2024 Included a Few Historical Moments for the Community"

AWL Names Buildings After Donors

In loving memory of these two incredible donors, AWL has named our buildings after them.



"Gone, but never forgotten"

AWL's main building was named after Arden Cook.



"Forever in our Hearts"

Peggy Gerkin's sister, Nancy Dirck, shown with Executive Director Tonya Blanchard in front of newly named Peggy Gerkin Cat House.

is Where Your Pet Is ...

DOG PARK AT THE GROVE

WARSAW'S NEW PET FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

WE SUPPORT AWL IN KOSCIUSKO COUNTY DebPatonShowleyGroup.com









For a fourth year in a row, the Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County has been recognized by the Best Friends Animal Society for our exceptional save rate of 94%. AWL has joined an elite group of organizations who are leading the way with their unprecedented rate of saving shelter pet lives.

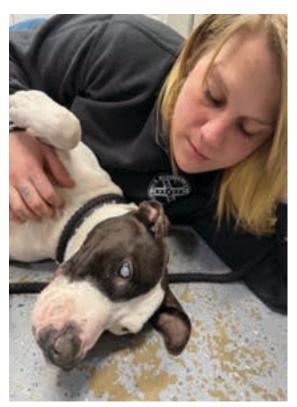
This accomplishment represents so much more than a number. It represents a culture of caring and compassion, along with extraordinary leadership. It also represents a dedicated staff, committed volunteers, a strong board of directors and motivated supporters.

Every day the AWL Team creates opportunities for pets and people to find loving companionship.





Blind dogs see with their hearts



They say love is blind so let me introduce myself, hey there I'm Caliber!! I am almost 5 years old, and have been at the shelter for 50 days. I am an American Staffordshire terrier, and if you haven't figured it out yet I am 100% blind, but that doesn't slow me down!! I am housebroken but will most likely need a few reminders once in my forever home. I would do best in a home as the only dog but could possibly have a sibling as long as they aren't too full of energy. I am looking for someone who will give me unlimited pets and snuggles, and I promise to be the bestest boy ever!

AWL K9 Vet Tech Jordyn Walker with Caliber

Fort Wayne Beagle Club Donates \$20,000 to Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County

Beagle Club President Mike Clabaugh visited The Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County to award them with a grant check for \$20,000. The Fort Wayne Beagle Club located in Huntington Indiana, is a private nonprofit foundation that has awarded grant checks to nonprofit animal shelters in several Northeast Indiana counties.

The Fort Wayne Beagle Club awarded AWL these funds to help with canine vaccines, spay/neuter, microchipping, food, and other medical care.

"I can't thank you enough! We have been truly BLESSED by your kindness and generosity, and I am deeply grateful" said AWL Executive Director Tonya Blanchard, "Together, we have the power to create a brighter future for homeless pets by giving them the love, care, and second chances they deserve. Thank you for this wonderful gift.

"We have absolute gratitude to the FW Beagle Club for helping with healthcare costs for our shelter puppies and dogs" said John Lantz, board president, "We thank you for believing in what we do at the Animal Welfare League and sharing our passion that we all have for helping homeless pets in Kosciusko County".



L to R: John Lantz AWL Board President; Tonya Blanchard, AWL Executive Director, and Mike Clabaugh, FW Beagle Club President.

Our Heartfelt Gratitude Wendy Trueblood!





We are howling the biggest thank you to Wendy Trueblood for donating pet beds for shelter pets! She does this every year for us and two other nearby shelters

Can you spot Dooley, one our puppies, among the beds and boxes?

Thank you so, so much, Wendy!! You have such a compassionate heart!

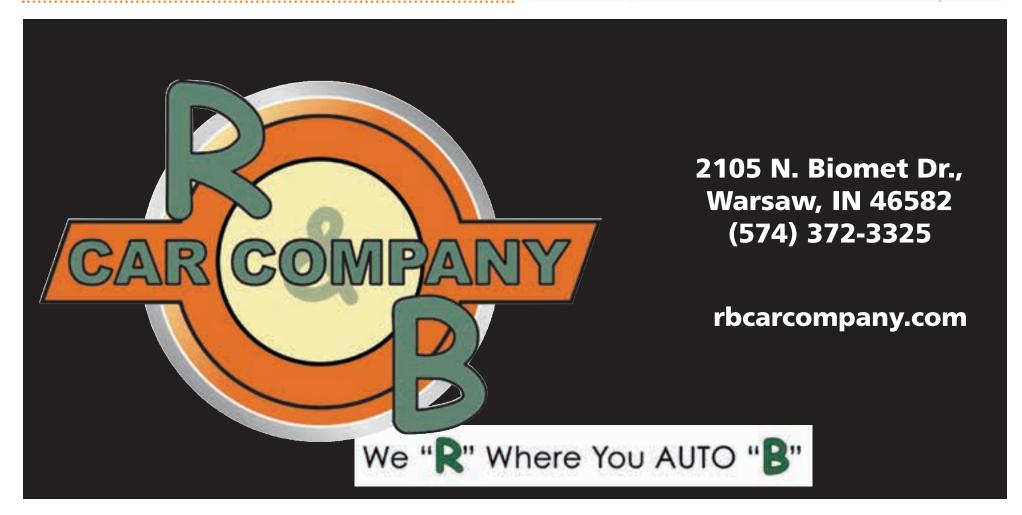
MAX DONATES FOR A 2ND YEAR



Max turned 10 years old and for his birthday this year, he asked his family members for donations for our shelter pets!!!

This is his second year in a row of donating to our shelter for his birthday!! What a rockstar!!!!

Thank YOU so much Max!!! Your heart is so so BIG!





"Sheltering is a Community Issue"



President: John Lantz Vice President: Megan McAndrews Treasurer: Dan Woods Secretary: Savannah Lopez

AWL DIRECTORS

Dr. Carla Carlton, DVM
John Hall
Liz Harkness
Melinda Coleman
Mike Smith
Tom Tearney

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Tonya Blanchard

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS

Dana Hewitt - Warsaw Dalis Owens - Warsaw Kyle Denton - Kosciusko County

Our mission at AWL is to find loving homes for unwated and abandoned companion pets.

The Animal Welfare League is 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving all of Kosciusko County

EIN# 351782336

SHELTER HOURS

Sun. & Mon. Closed Tues. through Friday 11:30 am – 5:00 pm Sat. 11:30 – 4:00

www.awlwarsaw.com

Request your appointment today, Call (574) 267-3008

A Message from our Executive Director

Caring for Animals Isn't What We Do, It's Who We Are

By Tonya Blanchard, Executive Director



Tonya Blanchard

I can't believe it's already the first quarter of 2025! I guess time flies when you're having fun. If you follow our social media pages, you can see we have been having fun with our pets.

In November, we were incredibly blessed with a financial gift that allowed us to pay off the remaining mortgage on the campus. I doubt anything we achieve will top that. I want to express my gratitude to everyone who supported AWL in 2024. The community has been truly amazing. As we look ahead to 2025, I have outlined some goals for AWL.

1. Increase Adoption Rates

- Goal: Achieve a 20% increase in adoption rates by the end of 2025.
- Action Steps:
- * Enhance online presence with updated photos, bios, and social media campaigns.
- * Partner with local businesses and events to host adoption drives.

2. Improve Animal Care and Health Programs

• Goal: Ensure all animals are spayed/neutered and vaccinated before adoption.

· Action Steps:

- * Expand partnerships with local veterinarians and clinics to offer reduced-cost or pro bono services. We need 2-3 more clinics on board to keep up with our need for spay/neuters.
- * Increase shelter staff training on animal behavior and care techniques.

3. Expand Foster Program

- Goal: Grow the foster program by the end of 2025.
- · Action Steps:
- * Launch a targeted outreach campaign to recruit new foster families.
- * Provide training for fosters on how to care for different types of animals (puppies, kittens, senior pets, etc.).
- * Offer additional resources and support for fosters, including pet supplies and emergency contact information.

4. Strengthen Community Engagement and Education

- Goal: Host Spay Neuter Clinics on the AWL campus
- · Partner Action Steps:
- * Host pet wellness clinics, vaccination drives, and low-cost spay/neuter events.
- * Bissell Pet Foundation "Fix the Future" national spay & neuter initiative, Four Directions Mobile Vet Service, Purdue Veterinarian School.

5. Reduce Shelter Euthanasia Rates

• **Goal:** Reduce euthanasia rates through increased adoptions and improved shelter management.

Action Steps:

- * Establish a clear intake and triage system to prioritize the most adoptable animals.
- * Work with partner shelters and rescue groups to transfer animals (to no kill partners) when necessary.
- * Provide a temporary foster care option for animals who need more time to find homes.

6. Build Partnerships with Local Businesses and Organizations

• **Goal:** Form at least 5 new partnerships with local businesses, pet stores, and organizations.

Action Steps:

- * Encourage local businesses to sponsor animals, donate supplies, or host adoption events.
- * Build a network of volunteers, both individuals and corporate groups, who can assist with shelter tasks or fundraising.
- * Establish ongoing collaborations with groomers, and pet stores to offer discounted services to adopters.

7. Improve Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

- Goal: Increase the number of active volunteers by 20% by the end of 2025.
- Action Steps:
- * Implement a new volunteer orientation program and provide ongoing training.
- * Create specialized roles for volunteers (e.g., social media managers, event coordinators, animal care assistants).
- * Recognize volunteers through regular appreciation events or incentives (e.g., discounts, free training).

8. Expand Marketing and Social Media Presence

• **Goal:** Grow the shelter's social media following and increase engagement on adoption posts.

· Action Steps:

- * Post daily content about animals available for adoption, success stories, and behind-the-scenes shelter life.
- * Utilize video content, such as pet introductions or live Q&A sessions, to boost visibility.
- * Collaborate with influencers or local celebrities to promote adoptable animals.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Quarterly Reviews: Review the progress of each goal every quarter to assess what's working and where adjustments might be needed.
- * Get more involved with the community and become a more visible and valued resource. The goal is to increase awareness, encourage adoptions, and build a supportive community around the shelter. By setting clear, measurable goals like these, the Animal Welfare League can make meaningful improvements and grow its impact in the community, which only benefits our adoptable pets and staff.

I feel AWL is making a difference in Kosciusko County.



2024 SHELTER STATISTICS - 94% SAVE RATE

January 1- December 31, 2024



1741 Total IntakesCats - 929
Dogs - 812



Total Returns
Cats - 39
Dogs - 82



Total Adopted
Cats - 720
Dogs - 519



Total Reclaimed by Owners Cats - 8 Dogs - 229



196 Total Pets Transferred Out Cats - 138 Dogs - 58



1635 Total Pets Saved



105 Total Died in Shelter Cats - 85 Dogs - 20

These are sick or injured pets that despite our medical efforts and veterinary care, just could not be saved.



Total Euthanized
Cats - 8
Dogs - 8

These are pets that were brought to us terribly injured, terminally ill, or very aggressive having attacked another pet or a person.

THE CAT HOUSE FOR SHELTER CATS



Please visit our amazing Cat House on our AWL Campus. It's a little piece of heaven for our feline guests and provides housing for a very large and ever-growing population of kittens and cats.

The Cat House provides a quiet, comfortable, and stress-free environment for our cats and kittens. Stop in for a visit, it will make you smile!



Bliss enjoying a relaxing moment

"Pets are Life's Greatest Gifts"



By John Lantz | Board President

We love sharing our **Newsletter & Annual Report** publications with our community! Newsletters are produced 3 times a year. We send these out to **3,620 mailboxes** and hand out hundreds as well. You'll read about the various individuals, organizations and businesses, that have recently

made contributions to AWL shelter pets.

Boundless Thanks... A very BIG heart felt thank you to our Donors and Supporters! You are deeply appreciated! Thank you for believing in AWL and supporting shelter pets that come to us from every corner of Kosciusko County. Together, we are making a difference.

Thank you to our Executive Director Tonya Blanchard and her incredible staff, volunteers, wonderful foster homes and dynamic board. Thank you for being committed and passionate about our AWL mission.

We are grateful for the support from both The City of Warsaw & Kosciusko County. Thank you for being great partners. We recently included both City and County Animal Control Officers to sit in on our board meetings so that we may better collaborate.

Wow, what a year! You may have heard that we were fortunate to receive a financial gift allowing us to pay off the remaining mortgage for our campus. We are forever thankful that this kind person left us such a wonderful gift allowing us to settle this debt. Special thanks to 1st Source Bank for having confidence in AWL. We are proud to have upheld our commitment by never missing a mortgage payment.

Our 2024 Results...It was another busy year for Tonya and her Staff. Kitty season and summer intakes always fill our shelter. Last summer we had 19 weeks with over 400 pets in our care, including fosters. Tonya partners with the Bissel Foundation and PetSmart Foundation for reduced fee adoption events to increase adoptions.

We also have reduced fees for periods during the year to free up space in the shelter for new intakes. Every year there are more intakes than adoptions. Our intakes have increased by 33% in just the past 3 years.

AWL Hope Fund . . . The Hope Fund is reserved for pets that need special emergency or major medical procedures. Just know that this remarkable fund created by Tonya does so much good for pets in need! If you want to donate to this fund, just specify "Hope Fund" on your donation.

4-month-old Tabby required eye surgery when she came to us. She received the needed surgery thanks to our Hope Fund. She's 6 months old now and needs a forever home!

Adopting an AWL Shelter Pet saves you money . . . All our shelter pets are spayed or neutered, have all their vaccines, are microchipped, along with

any other medical needs. We spent \$89,833 last year on these items. When you adopt a shelter pet, it saves you hundreds of dollars in veterinary expenses vs purchasing a dog or cat. Come check out our AWL shelter pets, take one home on a trial or just go ahead and adopt.

What does it cost to operate AWL...In each of our Annual Reports we always share our audited "Financial Position".

This is part of us being transparent with our community. With increased intakes, we need additional staffing. Remember that these amazing staff members take care of these pets 7 days a week, including all holidays. Inflated supplies and utilities have also increased our expenses.

Shelter Expenses – 2023 – \$746,005 2024 – \$828,382

Government funding pays for 30.4% of expenses The balance needs to be covered by donations Companion Pets for Veterans . . . We hope to be connected to the Men and Women Veterans of Kosciusko County. We invite Veterans to come and volunteer, foster, or adopt our pets at reduced fees. Pets give unconditional LOVE, alleviate loneliness, and they provide physical activity.

We are honored to participate at this year's "Stand Down" event, to share about our shelter pets. "Stand Down" is a wonderful yearly Good Will Industries event that provides FREE services and resources for our veterans. Special thanks to Jill Powers – Goodwill Industries of Michiana Program Manager, for allowing us to participate.

Warsaw Veterans Stand Down Day - Supporting Veterans

Saturday, 17 May: 11:00-3:00 Grace College - Gordon Health & Wellness Center 100 Publishers Dr, Winona Lake, IN 46590

Community, Community, Community Our community is taking notice of the wonderful work we are doing for shelter pets. We are so incredibly thankful for your support!

We invite work groups, organizations, and schools to volunteer at AWL to come socialize puppies and kittens, walk dogs, cuddle cats, make beef broth popsicles or help with dishes. If you want to see what our shelter is like, please view our "Tour Video" at awlwarsaw.com on our website homepage.

I am truly honored to be a messenger for AWL and advocate for our nonprofit. As I've said many times, being a part of AWL is my addiction in retirement!

Thank you for listening, John Lantz. Board President

AWL 2024 Financial Position

Statement of Activities thru December 31, 2024 - Audited

Ctatement of Notivities that December 51, 2021 Mariton				
FINANCIAL POSITION		CASH FLOW		AWL FINANCE COMMITTEE
ASSETS		REVENUES	\$2,094,726	Tonya Blanchard - Executive Director
Total Current Assets	\$339,123			John Hall - Board Director
Total Property and Equipment - Net	\$2,787,275	EXPENSES	\$828,382	John Lantz - Board President
Other Assets	\$660,164			Toni Walker - Finance Manger
Total Current Assets	\$3,786,562	Change in Net Assets	\$1,266,344	Dan Woods - Board Treasurer
Total Garrent Assets	ψ3,700,30 <u>L</u>	Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$2,493,029	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$3,759,373	
Total Current Liabilities	\$27,189			
Net Assets	\$3,759,373			
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$3,786,562			

"Our Very Special Thanks and Appreciation!" AWL Donors and Sponsors over \$500

Thanks for supporting Koscisuko County Shelter Pets

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Nanette Abrams

Mary Armstrong

Joyce & Carl Belling

Derek & Mandy Blanchard

Tonya & Tony Blanchard

Penny Breading

Don & Pat Brown

Dr. Richard Brungardt

Sandra Buchanana

Joy Carlson

Dr. Carla Carlton

Conley, Miller, Smith

Gary Dean Crane

Dennis & Kristina Cultice

Jana Frick

Magdalene Good

Greg Gregory

Dr. Carolyn Haggard

Bill & Carol Haldewang

John & Maureen Hall

RJ & Jennifer Hall

Robert & Liz Harkness

Robert Hill

Andrew Heeter

Charles Hutton

Dr. Dean & Carol Jansen

David & Elizabeth Kintzel

Charles & Cissy Kramer

John & Karen Lantz

Mariah Lee

Dee & Linda Matteley

David & Jonna Miller

Nanette Newland

Marie Noggle

Jean Northernor

Charles Orlando

Stephanie Overbey

Julie & Tim Patten

Robert & Stephanie Read

Rex & Barbara Reed

John & Deb Sadler

Clifford & Thelma Scholl

Mike & Nicole Smith

Karl Smith

Steve Snyder

Ernie & Vicki Strickland

Chick & Aggie Sweeney

Trisha Tackette

Wendy Trueblood

Ronald & Mindy Truex

Mark & Ellen Wease

Alfred & Mary Webber

Peggy Wells

Daisey White

Brent & Barbara Widman

Dan Woods

Dr. Dennis & Susan Woodward

Alan Wuthrich

Chuck & Judy Yeager

BUSINESS & ORGANIZATON DONATIONS

5 Star Distributing

Alderfer Investments

Bar 13 - Myra & Mike Pagan

Bissell Pet Foundation

Bissell Empty the Shelter

Charity Aid Foundation

Ourielete - Dure - Obereitele - Fran

Creighton Bros. Charitable Fund

Dane and Mary Louise Miller Foundation

De Free LLC

Eli Lily

Estate of Arden "Bert" Cook

Estate of Margaret Kennedy

Estate of Peggy Gerkin

Fort Wayne Beagle Club

Good Oil Company

Integrity Roofing

* Johnson & Johnson

K21 Health Foundation

Kensington Digital Media and Chris Cage

Kosciusko County Community Foundation

Kosciusko County Young Republicans

Lake City Animal Health and Wellness

Libengood Grant

LPL Financial

Maverick Motorcycles

*Medtronic

Meijer #267 Warsaw

Milford Food Bank

Noa Noa

North Webster

Paragon Medical

PETA

Petsmart Foundation

Pierceton Elementary 5th Grade

Pfeiderer Trust - 1st Source

Pittenger Memorial Endowment

Putt Endowment

R&B Car Company

Reuben & Betty Jane Clover Charitable Fund

RJ Miller Family Foundation

Rowland Advised Fund

Rural King

Skyline Builders

St. Anne's Episcopal Church Pet Blessing

Thelma & Clifford Scholl Grant - KCCF

The Papers, Inc.

United Pet Food

Warsaw Family Dentistry

W.A. Zimmer

Wellness Pet

Winnebago Industries

*Zimmer-Biomet

* Company Match to employee donations

We sincerly apologize if we have forgotten to mention anyone!

Proud Member of the Kociusko Chamber of Commerce



AWL and Four Directions Partner for Low-Cost Cat Spay/Neuters

Four Directions Vet is partnering with Animal Welfare League to bring lowcost cat spay/neutering to Kosciusko County. "Help us curb kitten season and stop pregnancies and overpopulation".

They are bringing their mobile spay/neuter surgery unit to AWL twice a month. Book online at www.4directionsvet.org and hit "Book Now".



"We were thrilled to hear from our new partners at Animal Welfare League of Kosciusko County! A big thank you to them for bringing us into town to help the community and their kitties" Four Directions Vet "We look forward to meeting everyone and seeing your feline friends!"

Other services for purchase at time of surgery: microchips, vaccines, FeLV/FIV testing, prescription flea meds. A friendly reminder that surgeries are \$100.

KoSCiuSko Co \$100 Cat Spay/Neuter

(under 50 pounds)

- When? Twice a month
- How to book? www.4directionsvet.org
- How much? \$100 spay/neuter
- Where? AWL Kosciusko Co.
- Who? Cats



IREN



It's Never Too Late To Plan

alderferbergen.com 574-267-6766



William (Will) Day, CFP®, ChFC® Wealth Advisor

Michael Bergen, CIMA® Chief Investment Strategist

Jason Gergely, CFP®, CRPC® Wealth Advisor Alan Alderfer, CFP® Certified Financial Planner Practitioner

Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA / SIPC.



*The Forber Best in State Wealth Advisor ranking, developed by SHOOK Research, is based on in-person and telephone weetings and a ranking algorithm that includes: client retention, industry experience, review of compliance including: assets under management and invenue generated for their firms. Portfolio performance is not a criterion due to varying client objectives and lack of audited data. Neither Forbes nor SHDOK Research receives a fee in exchange for rankings.

The Secrets Behind Cat Whiskers: Nature's Sensory Wonders



Cat whiskers are far more than just charming facial features; they are essential sensory tools that help cats navigate their surroundings. Strategically located on their cheeks, lips, and brows, these whiskers are crafted from keratin, the same protein found in claws and fur. Known scientifically as vibrissae, they serve as highly sensitive radar-like sensors that assist cats in assessing their environment, ensuring they can move with precision and awareness.

A Complex Navigation Tool

Whiskers are intricately connected to sensory hubs in a cat's body, similar to the tips of human fingers, which helps them detect the shape, size, and speed of objects around them. By responding to subtle changes in air currents, whiskers allow cats to gauge distances and detect obstacles in their path. This is especially important for tasks like determining if they can fit into tight spaces or maintaining balance during acrobatic feats.

Whiskers and Touch Communication

Recent research has provided fascinating insights into how whiskers communicate touch to a cat's brain. When a whisker touches an object, it bends into an "S" shape, sending signals to the brain. This allows cats to feel their way around and navigate the world more effectively. Additionally, whiskers play a role in expressing emotions, with cats adjusting their whisker positions to convey different feelings. For example, forward-curved whiskers may signal a desire for affection or even a "kitty hug."

Why Are Cat Whiskers So Long?

Whiskers are typically almost as long as the width of a cat's body. These long, flexible structures are essential for animals navigating complex environments. While whiskers are a common feature across mammals, their length and sensitivity are particularly pronounced in species that require detailed spatial awareness. However, some breeds, such as the Cornish Rex or Sphynx, have shorter or curly whiskers and rely more on their heightened sense of smell or sight.

Whisker Fatigue: A Hidden Condition

Cats can experience whisker fatigue, a condition caused by overstimulation of their whiskers. This can lead to stress and agitation, often manifesting in refusal to eat or drink from their usual dishes. The solution is simple: switch to wider, shallower bowls that allow whiskers to move freely without excessive contact.

Why Whiskers Should Never Be Cut

Cutting a cat's whiskers is detrimental to their ability to navigate and explore. These sensory organs are crucial for kittens, especially before their eyes and ears open. Whisker trimming can impair their natural curiosity and exploration. While whiskers may occasionally fall out, rest assured that they grow back quickly, typically within 7-10 days, although it may take longer to reach full length.

Animal Welfare League's Volunteer ** **PROGRAM**

Do you have a passion for animals? We accept volunteers during open hours every day we're open! No appointments necessary!

What Can You Help With?:

- · Walking Dogs
- · Socializing Puppies/Kittens
- Cuddling Cats
- · Laundry / Dishes
- Making Pupsicles



(574) 267-3008

1048 S 325 E in Pierceton

Come Join Us

🕮 awlwarsaw.com



- Kitten Food (Dry & Wet)
- · All Life Stages Dry Food
- Adult Cat Wet Food (Any Brand!)
- Scratch & Stretch Mini Scratchers
 - Wood Fuel Pellets (Non-Pine) This is our cat litter!
 - Toys & Treats
 - · Breeders Edge Foster Formula

- · Good Friends Brand Dry Kibble
 - Wet Food (Any Brand!)
- **Dog Toys** (We love Kong toys!) • Treats (Any Brand!)
 - Med / Large Sized Collars
 - Med / Large Size Leashes
- Enrichment Toys / Activities
 - Slip Leads
- Peanut Butter / Whipped Cream

We Do Not Accept:

- · Rawhides · Milkbones
- Toys With Yarn or String
- No Sheets & Clothing
- No Towels No Sanitizer Wipes
 - No Pillows

- Bleach
- Paper Towels, Toilet Paper
- · Hand Soap, Dawn Dish Soap
- Glad Automatic Spray Can Refills
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Fiona Celebrates her Birthday at AWL





Fiona has been volunteering weekly at AWL since September of 2023. She spends her time giving the dogs treats, cleaning and sanitizing bowls, making enrichment treats and socializing the animals. The thing she likes best about her time at AWL, though, is interacting with the staff. She has developed relationships with these folks and looks forward to seeing them and talking with them every week. Fiona is proud of the work she does at AWL and is motivated by the staff's recognition of her efforts. She plans to continue volunteering for a long time to come.

Executive Director Tonya Blanchard and her Staff brought in birthday balloons, cupcakes, a stuffed animal, and other birthday goodies to celebrate Volunteer Fiona's birthday.

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Wawasee High School DECA Donates and Volunteers at AWL



AWL wishes to express our heartfelt gratitude to the incredible students and staff of Wawasee High School DECA for their generosity by donating an abundance of essential supplies for our cats and dogs.

"Thank you for your kindness and unwavering commitment to our mission!"

AWL New Exercise Doggy

By Jill Smith, Lead Kennel Tech

On January 8th, AWL received a treadmill for our dogs here at the shelter! In the short time that we have had this resource available to us, we have seen many positive improvements in our dogs physically and mentally.



The shelter environment can be stressful for dogs, but shelter staff and volunteers can help ease that stress by providing enrichment activities, such as the use of this treadmill!
Enrichment activities help keep the dog's minds stimulated and, in case such as the treadmill, helps burn off pent up energy that occurs when they are stuck in kennels for most of the day!

Our high energy dogs, such as our huskies and shepherds that need more exercise than what can be given in a few walks a day, are really seeing the benefits. Our husky, who at one time would spread poop all around his cage

Treadmill

because of his energy, is now keeping his cage clean and is more relaxed in the evenings. After about 5 minutes on the treadmill, I can get lots of engagement out of him

which means he then gets the mental

stimulation he needs from basic training, which in turn makes home more adaptable.

As a staff we have also noticed that because dogs are on the treadmill, they are learning leash pressure. Teaching a dog leash pressure is invaluable to teaching them not to pull on the leash. In turn, this makes for enjoyable walks with staff, volunteers and potential adopters!

As great as the above things are, I believe the one on one the dogs are receiving with no distraction from other dogs is my favorite benefit. Getting to know these dogs one on one and to see them come to life as they play, exercise and learn has been my favorite thing to witness. Getting to know what each dog's favorite toy is or where their favorite itchy spot is located leaves me with a sense of accomplishment. Knowing that each dog that I work with every day has felt extra love that day that they may not have received while being in our shelter previously. I'm proud to work alongside my coworkers to continue to find new ways to improve the lives of all the animals in our care while they wait for their forever home.







Forever Commitment to a Dog

Dogs never wake up one day and decide they don't love you anymore.



When a dog is surrendered to a shelter, sometimes this is what they do:

- They sit there waiting for you to return.
- They don't want food, treats or toys . . . they want YOU.
- They become confused, bewildered, and even frightened.
- Please, if you don't want to make a forever commitment to a dog, don't get one.



R – Dana Hewitt, Warsaw Animal Control, L – Kyle Denton, Kosciusko Animal Control, Not Pictured – Dalis Owens, Warsaw Animal Control



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Easton Donates to AWL

Everyone say HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY to Easton!!

Easton turned 9 years old, and for his birthday, he asked for donations for our shelter pets!!

Thank YOU so much Easton!! We and our pets appreciate your big heart!



Potato gets his forever home



Thank you to everyone who helped us network him to find him his forever home! He is doing well with his cat fur siblings and his passionate mama!

Having been in the shelter environment for a full year, Potato started his journey at Kokomo Humane Society where he was brought in as a stray. When his owner never came for him, they put him up for adoption, and he sat there for months with no interest. In August of 2024, we swapped two of our long-term dogs with them, and they gave us their two long term dogs, which is how we received Potato and Sansa (though Sansa has been adopted!).

Thank you for adopting Potato!

Myra Pagan Brings Donations to AWL



Myra Pagan, owner of Bar 13 with her husband Mike, brought an abundance of donations for AWL shelter pets. Myra and Mike are repeat donors.

We appreciate your kindness!

13 Reasons Pets Are Life's Greatest Gift

Unmatched Companions — Pets have a unique way of bringing joy and comfort into daily life. Dogs have bonded with humans for millennia, offering loyalty and unconditional love. Cats, too, defy their aloof reputation by showcasing deep affection in their own charming ways. These companions enrich lives with their presence, making every moment better.

Endless Laughter — From chasing tails to sprawling across keyboards, pets are natural comedians. Their antics provide much-needed comic relief, brightening even the dullest days.

Boosting Mental Acuity — Studies suggest pets help maintain cognitive health, particularly in older adults. Walks and playtime stimulate not only pets but their owners, enhancing mental sharpness and emotional well-being.

The Power of Routine — Pets thrive on routine, and their schedules often set the pace for their owners. Feeding, walking, and caring for a pet instills purpose and structure, benefiting people of all ages.

Natural Stress Relievers — Simply petting an animal can lower stress levels, and daily interactions with pets foster calmness and tranquility. Their ability to sense human emotions adds another layer of connection, often providing comfort precisely when needed.

Mental Health Heroes — Pets significantly improve mental health. From the soothing vibrations of a cat's purr to the dopamine boost of a joyful play session, their impact on emotional stability is profound.

Encouraging Physical Activity—Dogs, in particular, are excellent motivators for physical activity. Whether it's a walk around the neighborhood or a game of fetch, pets encourage a more active lifestyle, improving cardiovascular health and overall fitness.

Partners in Adventure — Well-trained pets become ideal travel companions. Whether exploring trails or embarking on kayaking trips, their enthusiasm and trust create unforgettable experiences.

Comfort in Times of Need — Therapy and service animals showcase the profound connection between pets and people. Their calming presence and unwavering support offer relief to those facing physical or emotional challenges.

Fostering Social Connections—Pets serve as social bridges, helping their owners form connections in dog parks, cafes, and other pet-friendly spaces. Their presence encourages interaction and builds community.

Inspiring Acts of Heroism—Heroic pets capture hearts with their incredible deeds. From alerting rescuers to fending off intruders, their instinctive bravery inspires awe and gratitude.



Lessons in Deep Care — Pets teach the value of compassion and love, even as they age or cross the rainbow bridge. The bond formed with pets shapes the way people approach relationships, instilling patience and understanding.

Unconditional Love Beyond Measure — The love pets give is pure and unwavering. They accept their humans without judgment, offering comfort and boosting self-worth. Strengthening this bond through daily interaction only deepens the mutual affection.

Donor-advised funds: A smart way to give

Are you looking for a tax-advantaged way to make charitable gifts? You might consider a donor-advised fund.

You contribute stocks or other assets into a donor-advised fund, or DAF, which then sells these assets and uses the proceeds to provide grants to IRS-qualified charities you've chosen. These grants can be distributed over several years. Any funds not immediately used for grants can be invested and can potentially grow tax free, expanding your charitable impact.

If you don't typically give enough each year to itemize your charitable deductions, you can combine several years' worth of giving into one

contribution to a DAF and take a larger deduction that year.

And if you donate appreciated assets, you can avoid paying the capital gains taxes that would otherwise be due if you were to sell the assets and give the money directly to a charity.

Be aware, though, that your gifts are irrevocable. Once you contribute assets to a DAF, you can't access the money for any reason other than charitable giving.

Consult with your tax advisor before opening a donor-advised fund. If it's appropriate for your situation, consider it carefully — it could support your charitable giving efforts for many years.





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