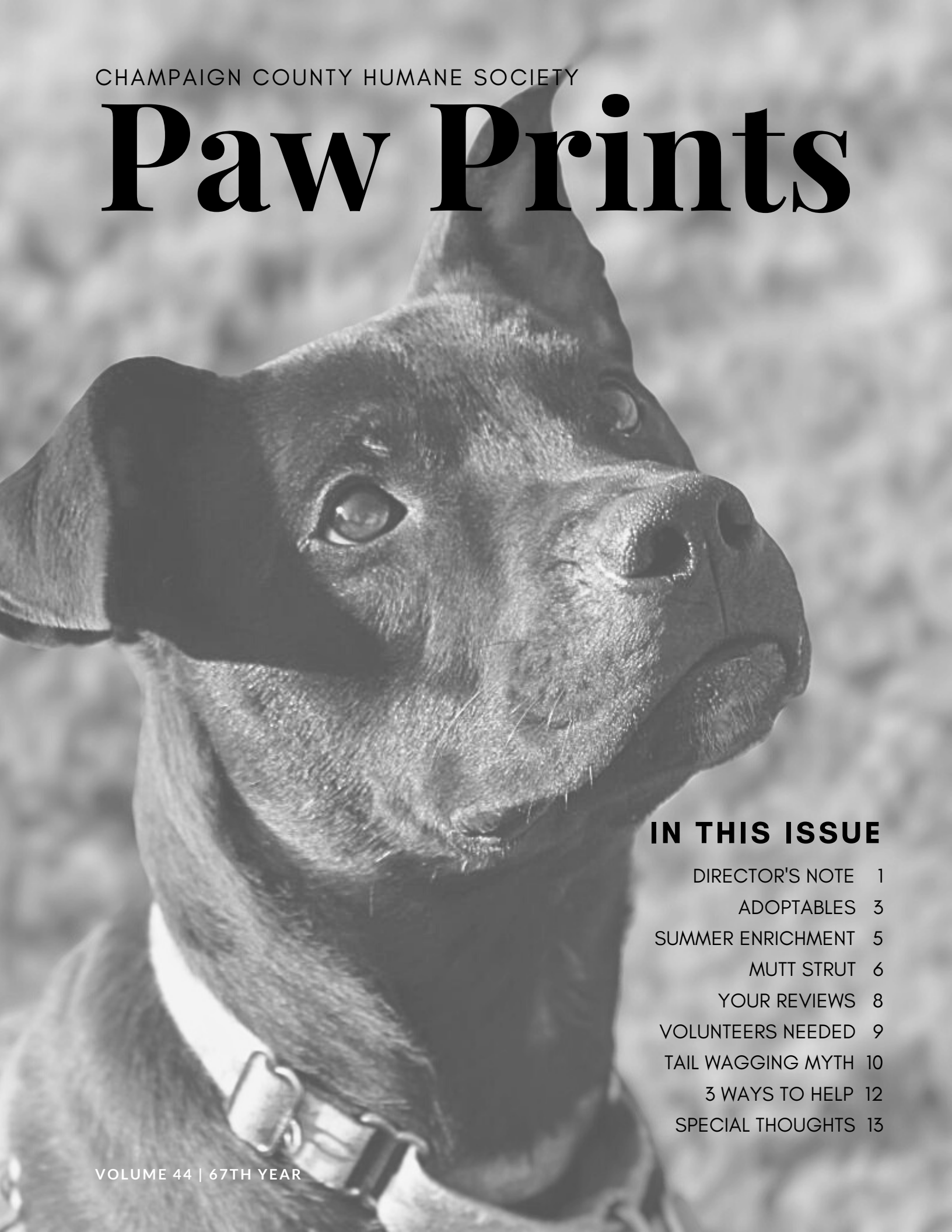


CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Paw Prints



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Paw Prints

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Pixie & Gremlin, my devious torties pictured above, never tire of boxes. I, on the other hand, would be happy to never see another box . . .

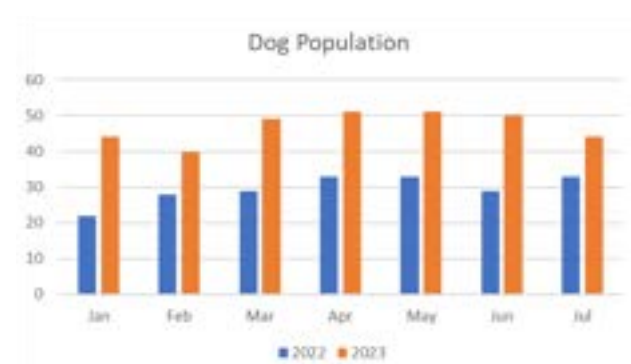
As everybody knows, moving is stressful! We've been in our new location since March, and I've still got boxes waiting to be unpacked. But I'm not complaining. Any suffering I've endured during the move is far out-weighted by the positives!

For example: Seeing the shelter cats immediately relax and settle into their quiet, well-ventilated condos warmed my heart. The glistening floors and walls; daylight everywhere; recovery cages in the surgery suite; a dishwasher that cleans dog bowls in 2 minutes; and the education center - already in use every day and holding the potential for so much more!

We anticipated that our move to Champaign would be a big change, and it was! What we didn't anticipate was that the entire landscape of animal sheltering would shift beneath our feet at the same time. Shelters everywhere are full (including ours), intakes are relentless, and adoptions are down.

For the past six months, our shelter-dog population has been higher than it has been since 2010.

Since shortly after my tenure began at CCHS in 2007, and before the end of 2022, the number of dogs needing shelter had trended downward. In January of 2019, we had only 25 dogs in our care. By contrast, in January of 2023, we were at 44 dogs in shelter - a number we hadn't been close to since 2010. By March of this year, our dog population was up to 50, and that's where it has stayed. Dogs are getting adopted, but they also keep coming in.



The high shelter-animal population has been stressful on our staff and volunteers, but the impact of these numbers spreads beyond our campus. Finding homes for stray dogs that remain unclaimed at Animal Control has always been a big part of our mission. Champaign County Animal Control doesn't have an →

adoption program, and we've always been their most reliable transfer partner. But with all our kennels full - with owner-surrendered dogs - we haven't been able to accept transfers from Champaign County Animal Control. And they're getting the same answer when they reach out to all the other shelters on their list: No room at the inn.

If you're wondering "what's going on?" so are we! But through conversations with my colleagues around the State, I've got some theories to share:

1. Though the numbers vary depending on the source, there seems to be consensus that during the Covid pandemic the percentage of U.S. households with at least one pet rose considerably. It follows that if a certain percentage of all pet-owners will at some point need to surrender their pet to a shelter, when the number of pet-owning-households rises, so will the number of people who need to ultimately surrender their pet.

2. Many shelters are not just seeing an increase in intakes; they're seeing a real slow-down in adoptions. This could also be the result of an increase in pet ownership during Covid. Everybody who was inclined to own a pet already has one. The market for pets is saturated.

3. During the pandemic, low-and-no cost spay/neuter programs shut down. Many of these services have not resumed at their pre-pandemic level, if at all. A shortage of veterinarians could be contributing to the dearth of spay/neuter services. We're receiving litters of puppies this summer in numbers we have not seen for years, and kitten intakes are also high across our region.

4. Economic pressure, whether inflation, cost of housing, or cost of veterinary care, may be another factor pushing the number of pet-relinquishments upward.

Whatever the cause of this "new reality," we're going to continue doing our best to give great care and second chances to all the animals that come through our doors. And we feel so fortunate to have this awesome new facility in which to do it.

How can you help? If you're thinking about a new pet, please adopt. Spread the word. If you've ever thought about volunteering, your help is needed! Just keep reading for more information on volunteer opportunities and other ways to help.

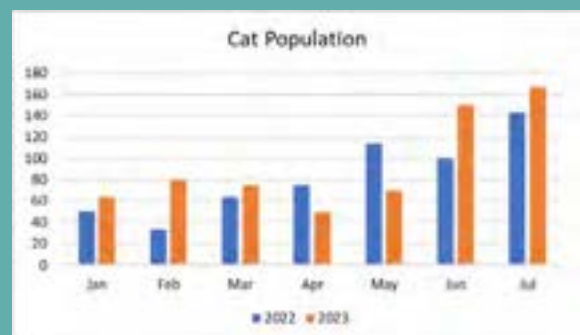
I'm grateful to each and every one of you for your love of animals and support of our cause!



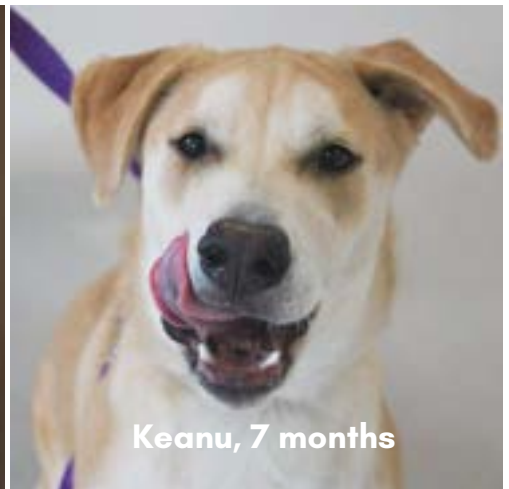
Mary "Tief" Tiefenbrunn
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHAT ABOUT CATS?

Cat numbers are high too! "Kitten Season" got off to a slow start for us, but by June we had 150 cats in our care. At the end of July, we were up to 167.



ADOPTABLES



Pets available as of August 1, 2023.

See all available pets online at www.cuhumane.org

Or use the camera on your smartphone or tablet to scan the QR Code above.

CCHS Alumni PUPDATE!

Tony came to us when we were still at the Urbana shelter – twice. Right away, he became a favorite of staff and volunteers with his exuberant nature and love of play, especially fetch!

When we moved to our new Champaign facility in March of this year, we thought that Tony would be one of the first pets to be adopted. But to our surprise and dismay, he was with us for over 130 days!

I don't think we'll ever understand why he was overlooked for so long. After he was finally adopted, we were thrilled to get this message from his new family:

"Tony is an absolutely wonderful dog. I can't understand why anyone hadn't adopted him before me. Other than the fact that we are meant to be together." Welcome home, Tony.



Summer Enrichment Ideas

Breanne Tabbert, Animal Behavioral Specialist



FOR YOUR DOG

- Pupsicles: place some of your dog's favorite treats in an ice cube tray/metal bowl, fill with water, freeze overnight, pop out the next day for a cool treat.
***For extra flavor, check out dog-safe fruits and veggies that can add some variety to your pupsicles!
- Kiddie pools: not just for the kids! Fill a small pool with water for your dog to walk, wade, or lie down in. Throw in some float toys for extra fun!
- Food scatter: instead of feeding your dog in a boring old bowl, scatter their kibble in the yard so they can engage that magnificent sniffer to hunt down dinner.
- Tricks: if it's too hot to be outside, hang out in the air conditioning and teach your dog some new tricks! Shake, roll over, sit pretty, fetch the remote . . . the possibilities are endless!

NOT THE FURRY, DROOLING, TAIL WAGGING, BARKING TYPE?

- For your feline friends: put a handful of soft toys in a container, sprinkle in some catnip, and let them "marinate" for a couple days. Once that's done, pull out one at a time to delight your cat with a "new" toy everyday!
- For your critter friends: scatter their food in their enclosure rather than filling their bowl. It will encourage them to explore their space and use their senses.
- For your reptile friends: adding a novel perch can change their whole environment and give them an extra place to sun.

Do you have questions on how to help your pet live its best life? Our Animal Behavioral Specialist, Breanne Tabbert, is here to answer any pet-related questions you have. Reach out to her at breanneecuhumane.org.