

# PAW PRINTS



## Inside Scoop...

Snow has officially begun to blanket our valley as scents of hot cocoa, wood fire stoves, and hearty meals fill the air. With the cold winds of winter nipping at our heels, I would like to share our gratitude to those members of our community who brave this cold weather, making the dedicated journey to come to AVHS to volunteer and foster.

This year we have seen our volunteers and foster families step up to help the shelter in big ways. As we worked through our staff transition this fall, several of our longtime volunteers became trained as volunteer kennel technicians in our Adoptable Dog Room. They joined our staff each morning to help clean kennels, feed, and rotate the dogs into our outdoor yards. Additionally, our foster families took on challenges of bottle baby kittens and other animals with special medical needs. So far in 2023 there has been a collective 1,930 hours of time dedicated to the animals of AVHS by our volunteers alone—surpassing the total for all of last year by over 400 hours! Additionally, there have been a total of 213 foster placements so far this year amongst 150 unique animals.

Kitten Gabriella is one of the special animals who recently found herself in need of a loving foster family. She arrived at AVHS at only one day old after being found with several littermates, all wrapped in each other's umbilical cords, sadly abandoned by their mother. Upon arrival at AVHS these kittens were immediately placed into an experienced foster home. It is rare for orphaned kittens this young to live without their mother. Despite all efforts being made, Gabriella's littermates unfortunately failed to thrive over the next several days, until Gabriella was left as the sole survivor. This was a difficult time for our staff and fosters, but hope still remained for young Gabriella.

Caring for a kitten this young is no small feat; it requires around the clock bottle feeding, temperature controlled environments, and stimulating the kitten to help them go to the bathroom. We knew early on that working to save Gabriella would be a team effort. During her time with AVHS Gabriella was cared for by FOUR loving foster families. In each home she received love, and grew stronger. Our foster families would excitedly send updates to each other as she hit important milestones, like opening her eyes and walking for the first time. While Gabriella stole the hearts of us all, she ultimately found her home with her final foster family, and we could not have been happier! Gabriella worked to teach us all the true sense of community as our fosters and staff worked together to beat the odds for this sweet girl.

We thank our volunteers, foster families, and all within our local community and beyond, that work to ensure that all pets know love this holiday season. Thank you to those who attended our annual Open House in November. It was so fun and heart-warming seeing so many of you, and it always brings us joy to hear your stories and receive your photos and notes. Happy Holidays to you, your families, and your furry friends! We wish you a winter of good health and plenty of cuddle time with your pets.

Sincerely,

*Nikki Ritter*

Nikki Ritter  
AVHS Executive Director



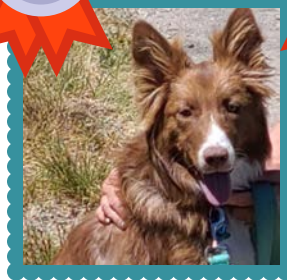
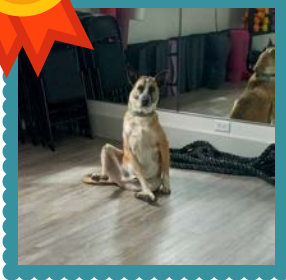
# Happy Tails Photos!

*Thank you to everyone who adopted an animal this fall!*



## Our Eighth Annual Feline & Fido Photo Contest and Fundraiser was our most successful year yet!

Congratulations to the top finishers! Our 2024 calendars have arrived and are filled with your beautiful pet photos. Thank you to all who participated in this year's photo contest and fundraiser- because of you we had our most successful year yet, raising over \$15,000 for animals in need!



Special thanks to our 'Film Lover' business sponsors:



HEART OF THE ROCKIES  
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



TRACKS  
SOFTWARE

MAIL BOXES



First  
COLORADO LAND  
Office



TRI-STATE

# Paws for Thanks, a joyous day filled with puppy snuggles

On Sunday, November 5th we invited the public back for our second annual open house. Over 75 visitors took a guided tour of the shelter from our hardworking staff and board team. The 'Oliver & Company' litter were happy to greet all visitors, along with all of our other adoptable cats and dogs. Some of our guests and staff/board team are pictured here. Thank you to all who came out!



Heather M, Volunteer & Foster Coordinator, with puppy from the 'Oliver & Company' litter

Animal Care Tech, Caleb A.



Volunteer, Dave, with Animal Care Tech, Kate R.

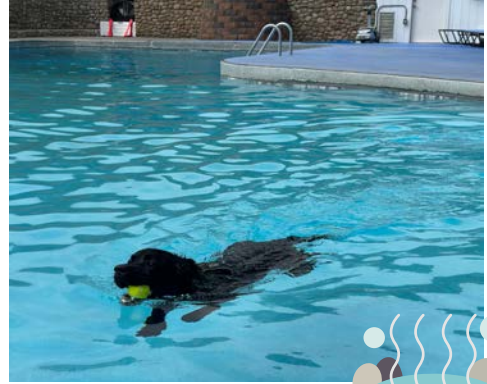
Board Member Terry W. from Heart of the Rockies Radio

Animal Care Tech, Kiersten K., with adoptable dog Sparrow

Board Member Tom P. with Assistant Manager Taylor W.

## First ever Doggie Paddle and Benefit from Mt. Princeton Hot Springs was a success!

We're incredibly grateful to Mt. Princeton Hot Springs resort for hosting this wonderful event for the pups of our community! Sixty-eight dogs got to romp around in their upper pools before they shut down for the season. Mt. Princeton generously donated 100% of ticket sales and 50% of food and beverage sales to AVHS from this event, raising nearly \$1,000 for homeless pets! Thank you!



## LaGrees Food Drive brings in needed cat and dog food, replenishing our community Pet Food Pantry!



Thank you to everyone who donated food to LaGrees Food Stores, benefiting Ark-Valley Humane Society. Over 725lbs of pet food was donated by our generous community. LaGrees then matched ALL donations- pound for pound, giving a total of over 1,450lbs of pet food! This not only helps feed our shelter animals, but also replenished our community Pet Food Pantry, which has served over 668 animals so far in 2023!

## Moonlight Monday raises \$582 for Ark-Valley Humane Society, thank you to all who attended! Mark your calendars for next year's Moonlight Monday: November 11, 2024.





## Commemorative Glass Leaves & Brick Order Form

Take advantage of this special opportunity to acknowledge your support of Ark-Valley Humane Society with a commemorative glass leaf or brick paver. The bricks will be on permanent display outside of the new addition to our Buena Vista Shelter. Commemorative Glass Leaves may be returned to you as a keepsake or may be displayed at AVHS. If you choose to keep your leaf, there is no additional cost to you, however your donation will be reduced by the cost of the leaf and shipping if selected.

**A hand-crafted glass leaf memorializes or honors a loved pet. A brick celebrates a special donation, honors a long-time volunteer or memorializes a loved one!**

**Questions?**  
Contact Nikki Ritter at [executivedirector@ark-valley.org](mailto:executivedirector@ark-valley.org)  
719.395.2737

# Glass Leaves



**Green \$50 Donation**

Green

**Yellow \$75 Donation**

Yellow

**Orange \$100 Donation**

Orange

Leaf to be displayed at AVHS

Leaf to be mailed to address listed below

Pet's name to appear on Leaf \_\_\_\_\_

## Brick \$250 Donation

4x8 Personalized Brick Paver

**PLEASE PRINT WHAT YOU WISH TO INSCRIBE BELOW**



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# How To Order

Fill out this order form and bring in or **mail to:** AVHS  
Attn: Glass Leaf/Brick Campaign, 701 Gregg Drive, Buena Vista, CO  
81211

First & Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Include check of appropriate amount along with this form filled out**

*\*Please make check payable to Ark-Valley Humane Society*

**To pay with credit card, please make payment in person at our shelter located at 701 Gregg Drive in Buena Vista**

## Board of Directors

Terri Buchanan, Chair

Allison Gergley, Vice Chair

Sarah McMahon, Treasurer

Junia Fitzgerald

Tom Purvis

Judy Hamontre

Terry West

## Staff

Nikki Ritter,  
Executive Director

Krissy Zic,  
Operations Manager

Emy Nettleblad,  
Outreach Manager

Taylor Williams,  
Assistant Manager

Heather Mills, Volunteer &  
Foster Coordinator

Abbie Fritz, Medical & Transfer  
Coordinator

Alecia Giordano,  
Animal Care Technician

Kate Haviland,  
Animal Care Technician

Kiersten King,  
Animal Care Technician

Caleb Awe,  
Animal Care Technician

Michele Crago,  
Bookkeeper & Admin Support

## Thank you to our Grant Funders!

These foundations provide support for our services and programs



Petfinder Foundation



Ray Foundation



ANIMAL ASSISTANCE  
FOUNDATION

Alice N Jenkins Foundation



Chaffee County  
Community Foundation

The Mary Elizabeth Bates Foundation

## Legacy Society Members

To become a legacy society member visit [ark-valley.org/legacy/](http://ark-valley.org/legacy/)

Debbie M.

Jack and Lulie Melton

Judy H.

John & Cindy Dykins

Lynda Walters

Sally Mather & Greg Mihalik



## NUMBERS THAT COUNT

SEP - NOV RECAP

Animals Adopted **114**

Lost Animals Returned to  
Owner **47**

Animals In Foster **54**

Number of Animals Helped  
through our Community  
Pet Food Pantry **147**







701 Gregg Drive  
Buena Vista, CO 81211

*\*return service requested\**

**Save the Dates: Feb 26th - Mar 10th  
Fifth Annual Good Pet/Bad Portrait Fundraiser!**



**DONATE**

\$10 can  
help an animal



**VOLUNTEER**

sign up  
online today



**EMAIL**

stay up-to-date  
on AVHS news



**CONNECT**

connect with  
AVHS online



701 Gregg Drive, Buena Vista, CO 81211  
(719) 395-2737 [www.ark-valley.org](http://www.ark-valley.org)