

THE PET PRESS

FALL 2026



SafeHaven
HUMANE SOCIETY



COZY SEASON
STARTS WITH A
NEW BEST FRIEND!

A Quarterly Magazine for Rescue Animal Lovers Compliments of SafeHaven Humane Society



Holidays

at SafeHaven

Save the Date!

Mark your calendars now for these special holiday events supporting the animals at SafeHaven.



Saturday, November 7th:

Gift & Thrift Holiday Open House

Join us at both Gift & Thrift locations from 10am-5pm for a storewide sale, PLUS sweet treats, holiday merchandise preview, and a drawing for a prize basket.



Starting Mid-November:

Giving Trees will be back!

Grab a tag at one of our special Giving Trees throughout the area and help support pets at the shelter.



November 21st & 22nd:

Santa Paws @ Coastal Farm

Bring your family (and your pets!) to the Albany Coastal Farm & Ranch store to have your photo taken with Santa.

SafeHaven Humane Society is an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization that relies on donor support for its adoption, education & medical programs. We are not affiliated with any other humane organizations and we do not receive any government funding or tax dollars.

Our Tax ID is 93-0676661



2025 WINNER



Best Pet Rescue
Best Local Non-Profit/Charitable Cause

See all the latest news and cuteness online by visiting:
SAFEHAVENHUMANE.ORG

Or come visit us at the shelter:
32220 Old Hwy 34
Tangent, OR 97389
Open daily from 12pm to 5pm.

Keep an eye out on our social media and website to learn more!

Need to call?
Reach us at 541.928.2789.

A MESSAGE OF THANKS

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we enter a season that reminds us to reflect on what we are thankful for, I find myself looking at gratitude a little differently this year. Recently, I experienced a health issue that left me scared and feeling as though so much was suddenly out of my control. For someone accustomed to being the helper, needing help from family and friends was humbling. But I came through it with renewed hope, a stronger sense of purpose, and a deeper compassion for myself, the people and pets we serve, and the incredible community that fights every day on behalf of animals.

Life is messy, and sometimes it throws us for a loop. But together, we are stronger. Together, we can find resources when the answer isn't immediately clear, ask for help when something feels too big to carry alone, and find calm in the storm.

Animal welfare can feel much the same. There is always an animal just one phone call, email, or decision away from having their life changed forever. Every situation is different, but each reminds us how much we need one another.

One dog who will always remind me of that is Seraphina. Late one evening, a rescue plea came across Facebook for a gray-and-white pittie scheduled to be euthanized at 6 a.m. the next morning. She was reported to be reactive to other dogs, and no one was stepping up—not even me. I kept wondering how we could help a dog like that while also considering the safety of the animals already in our care. I turned off my phone and went to bed, but I couldn't sleep. At 3 a.m., I finally picked up my phone and sent one email to the rescue coordinator: SafeHaven will take her.

That email changed Seraphina's life, but it wasn't the email alone that saved her. What followed was months of patience, training, love, and commitment from SafeHaven's staff and volunteers. Seraphina adored people and children, and over the months she was with us, she stole the hearts of so many. It took nearly a year to find the right home, but together, we did it.

That is what I am most thankful for this year: the staff member who stays late because an animal needs them, the volunteer who keeps showing up for a dog who isn't ready to trust, the foster family who opens their home to one more kitten, the donor who makes lifesaving care possible, and the adopter willing to see beyond an animal's challenges. I am thankful for our rescue partners, veterinarians, supporters, and community members who refuse to give up when things get difficult.

Most of all, I am thankful that none of us has to weather the storm alone. Sometimes a life changes with a phone call. Sometimes it changes with an email sent at 3 a.m. And sometimes it changes because an entire community decides that an animal is worth fighting for.

Thank you for continuing to fight alongside us, for being part of the SafeHaven family, and for helping us change lives—together.

With gratitude,



Seraphina



We are *thankful* **FOR OUR ADOPTERS AND THEIR HAPPY TAILS**



Berni showing off her best smile!

BERNI RESCUED ME, TOO

By: Kira Smith

Three months ago, my boyfriend and I adopted a puppy named Bernadette (lovingly known as Berni), a pitbull-terrier mix, and since then she's become the thing that I orbit around in my life. I've struggled with anxiety and depression for many years, and some days can be harder than others. But no matter how I start or end my day, Berni is always there to make me smile.

When Berni first arrived at the shelter (then known as Astra), she was shy and fearful of new things, but she was also a cuddly and curious girl. Now, she has completely blossomed! She's curious as ever, always sticking her nose in bushes and exploring the grass. She's also an energetic ball of zoomies, constantly looking for something to play with or a new adventure to discover.

She's so goofy in the best ways and never fails to place a smile on my lips even when tears may be trailing down my cheeks. She joins me on my morning walks, getting me out of the house and helping me start my day. She's also had quite the adventurous summer! She's gone camping, is slowly warming up to swimming, and has made plenty of new friends among our family's dogs. And of course, she never has a shortage of love from her extended family.

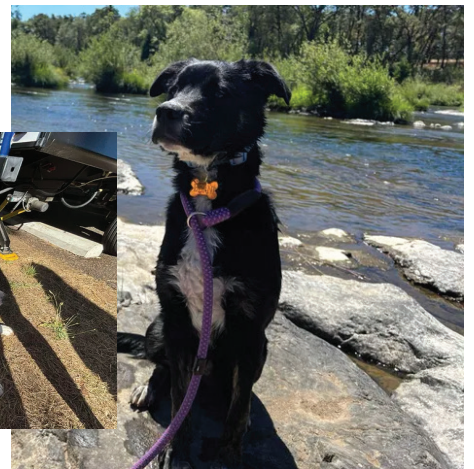
Berni is the cuddliest puppy I've ever known and kisses are her favorite way to welcome you home! At the end of the day, she would give every toy, every walk, and every treat away if it meant she got to see her people walk through that door and drop to their knees to give her hugs, pets, and of course, kisses!

She has become my lifeline, my reason to smile, and my reason to ensure I take care of myself so that I can take care of her in the way she so deserves. Lord only knows, she has taken care of a part of me I didn't even know needed to be cared for.

Because of Berni, I couldn't imagine getting my dog from any place other than SafeHaven. Rescue dogs really are unforgettable, irreplaceable, and incredibly worthwhile best friends - and I have absolutely no regrets!

Berni may have been the one we rescued, but in so many ways, she rescued me, too.

Berni on her many adventures!



We LOVE happy tails! Share your SafeHaven adoption story with us by submitting it online at safehavenhumane.org/submit-a-story/.



SKY: MY VELCRO DOG & CONSTANT COMPANION

By: Becky Merja

I've always been drawn to herding breeds - Border Collies, Aussies, Heelers, and especially the quirky, brilliant crosses. So when I saw Sky's photo on the SafeHaven website, something clicked.

Of course, meeting her in person was a little different. Here was an 18-month old pup who was worried, timid, and unsure. I wondered whether she'd be able to bond. But as I watched her interact with staff, I saw glimmers of trust - she recognized people, warmed up to them, and showed that underneath the fear was a dog who wanted connection. That's when I knew she would be worth the work.

At home, Sky has become a velcro dog. She's my shadow, my constant companion; she follows so closely that I often call her only to realize she's literally right behind me. People laugh...and it makes me smile.

She knows the daily routine. Every morning my partner Larry takes Sky and our other dog Jo for a walk, then breakfast. As soon as she finishes eating, I hear the door open and she rockets up the stairs to greet me, her whole body quivering with excitement. With Sky, the tail wags the entire dog!

Helping Sky learn emotional regulation has been the hardest and most rewarding part of being her mom. She came to me as a worried, defensive little girl. I had to learn her signals - the subtle shifts in her expression, posture, and energy - and help her build confidence one moment at a time. It's been slow, thoughtful work, but she's becoming the good citizen I knew she could be.

After completing a puppy class to build her social skills and for me to learn what she needed and get a refresher course on being consistent with her, Sky and I enrolled in agility classes, and we've been training for six months now. It's been a brain workout for both of us - she thrives on the mental challenge, and I love watching her discover what she's capable of.

Sky may have needed a little time to learn that the world—and the people in it—could be trusted. But somewhere along the way, she taught me something too. Sometimes the most wonderful relationships don't happen all at once. Sometimes they begin with a tiny glimmer of trust.

And then, one day, before you know it, you turn around...and there they are. Right behind you.

*With Sky, the tail
wags the entire dog!*



We are *thankful* **FOR OUR FOSTER HEROES AND THEIR COMPASSION**

Rachel Jacobs, DVM

Dr. Jacobs is a true foster hero, opening her home (and heart) to more than 75 cats and kittens who needed extra care!

She began volunteering at SafeHaven with her oldest son in 2022, and one day he asked about fostering animals. Up until that point, her only foster experience was with sick or injured animals that she occasionally brought home to care for from her work as a small animal veterinarian.

After the first SafeHaven fosters, 3 healthy bottle babies, everyone was hooked! Since then her family has fostered sick kittens, pregnant moms who delivered their babies in her home, spicy kittens, bottle babies of all ages...oh, and 1 dog.

According to Rachel, "The fostering experience has brought my family closer together. We are a team with one objective - to give each foster the chance to thrive so they can find their forever family."

If being an amazing foster parent weren't enough, Dr. Jacobs also volunteers her time as a veterinarian for SafeHaven's monthly Pet Wellness Clinic and once a week in surgery.

Helping animals in need is a labor of love, and we cannot thank Dr. Jacobs and her entire family for the compassion and dedication they show to the animals in their care.



We love to guess when the kittens will hit various milestones:

*Who will open their eyes first?
Who will try wet food first?
Who will start playing with toys first?*

*You may not wear a cape, but
you are a superhero to us!*



Our Cover Model: Fern

Trying to wrangle a kitten to be our cover model wasn't easy. But Fern's mellow demeanor quickly made him stand out from the rest. And not just for us, either. The same day we shot this cover photo, Fern was adopted!

We are *thankful* **FOR OUR STAFF AND THEIR DEDICATION**

We're incredibly thankful for the dedicated staff who make SafeHaven's mission possible every day. With two new positions recently filled, we love the fresh perspectives Aly and Mackenzie bring to their roles as we look to the future of both our Animal Care and Volunteer and Community Outreach teams.

Aly Kaufusi

Director of Animal Services

Aly is new to SafeHaven, joining the team in August, but definitely not new to the animal welfare world! Here's a little more about Aly's journey that led her to SafeHaven:

"My passion for animal welfare began at a young age and led me to a career in veterinary medicine. I started at a specialty and emergency hospital in Southern California, gaining experience in emergency care, surgery, neurology, general practice, and a variety of leadership and operational roles. Over the years, these experiences have helped me develop a strong foundation in veterinary medicine, animal care, leadership, and community education."

In my new role at SafeHaven, I'm excited to expand access to wellness services, particularly spay/neuter and microchipping, while strengthening support for our fosters, adopters, and community. I'm passionate about prevention, education, and helping people feel empowered to provide the best possible care for their animals. I'm incredibly grateful to be part of the SafeHaven team and look forward to helping make a difference for animals and families throughout our community!"



Mackenzie Bodyfelt

Volunteer & Community Outreach Manager

Since joining SafeHaven in 2022, Mackenzie has worked in both Animal Care and Customer Care positions and now in her new role, she oversees the Volunteer, Community Outreach, Humane Education, and Doggy Day Out & Enrichment programs.



Here's a little bit more about Mackenzie:

"I have loved learning about and participating in community outreach events, as well as assisting with our extensive youth summer camps. It has been wonderful to connect with our community in new ways and help create meaningful experiences for people and animals alike."

I have been incredibly thankful for my team and the opportunity to be part of so many amazing programs. We have been creating new resources for our volunteer program, including training videos covering specific topics that volunteers can reference as needed. We have also been updating our training protocols and are excited to begin integrating the Doggy Day Out program more directly into our volunteer software."

We are *thankful* **FOR OUR MEDICAL TEAM WHO PERFORM MIRACLES**

Their days are long, their work is demanding, and the need never slows—but our Medical team continues to show up for every animal who needs them. Animals like **Reba, Potato, Capone and Paramount** are all getting the second chance they deserve because of the incredible care our Medical team has shown them.



Potato's story began in an unlikely place—a farmer's field, where he was found as a tiny kitten all alone. His finders quickly noticed something was wrong with one of his back legs. A veterinarian discovered it was fractured, and for three weeks, they followed his treatment plan, hoping it would heal.

Unfortunately, Potato's leg continued to worsen, and it became clear that amputation was necessary. Knowing life as a three-legged cat on a working farm could be risky, his caregivers turned to SafeHaven for help.

Potato is now in our care, where our medical team is closely monitoring him and determining the best course of treatment.

Despite his difficult start, Potato has had people refusing to give up on him every step of the way. From the farmers who found him to the veterinary team and SafeHaven staff caring for him, everyone has worked to give this tiny kitten a chance.

Potato may have had a rough beginning, but we're determined to help him have a wonderful future!

When Capone arrived at SafeHaven on May 18th, after traveling from Texas with rescue partner Dog Rescue R Us, his brother Bugsy was by his side. Bugsy soon found his family, while Capone patiently waited for his own happily ever after.

Our Animal Care and Medical teams noticed Capone was limping on his left hind leg. As the limp worsened, it became clear he needed more than rest. On August 20, Capone underwent TPLO surgery to give his leg the stability and comfort he needs to get back to exploring and enjoying life.



Capone is a true gentle giant and a favorite among volunteers. He loves exploring, meeting people and children, and is wonderful on a leash. Everyone who meets him seems to agree: Capone is simply one of the nicest boys around.

Thanks to our supporters, Capone received the specialized care he needed. Now, after his long journey and surgery to get him back on four healthy paws, this wonderful boy is more than ready to trade shelter life for a home filled with soft beds, new adventures, and most importantly, 24/7 love.

We think he's waited long enough. Capone is ready to go home!



Late on a Friday afternoon, SafeHaven received a call from Marion County Dog Control about Paramount, a young dog who had been hit by a car and suffered severe injuries. One of his front legs needed to be amputated, and Dog Control reached out to SafeHaven for help with his medical care.

After being stabilized over the weekend, Paramount arrived at SafeHaven and underwent surgery Tuesday to amputate his badly injured leg. The procedure went well, but our team soon noticed he was struggling to walk on his remaining front leg. X-rays revealed it was also fractured.

Thankfully, the fracture can heal with time. Paramount's leg was carefully splinted, and he began a longer recovery than expected. ***He is now recovering in a foster home with plenty of rest, monitoring, and love.***

Despite the accident, surgery, and second fracture, Paramount remains a sweet, happy young dog. Thanks to the partnership between Marion County Dog Control, SafeHaven, and our generous community, Paramount has the care he needs to heal and look forward to a brighter future.

At just five weeks old, Reba had already endured more than any kitten should. She arrived at SafeHaven after a Good Samaritan found her in a local river. A severe upper respiratory infection had caused both of her eyes to rupture, but she was too young and small for the surgery she needed.

Our medical team created a plan to keep Reba comfortable while she grew stronger. In her loving foster home, Reba thrived. Despite being unable to see, she played, explored, cuddled, and grew just like any kitten.



Four weeks later, Reba was strong enough for surgery. She was spayed and had both damaged eyes removed, eliminating the source of her pain and allowing her to move forward. Reba quickly captured hearts, including a friend of her foster family, and she has since been adopted into her forever home, surrounded by people who love her exactly as she is.

Reba came to us unable to see her future. Today, that future couldn't be brighter.



YOU Can Change Their World!

Our work is 100% funded by private donations, and your gift is **guaranteed** to change the life of a homeless animal. Please consider giving today.

Visit **safehavenhumane.org** or
use the enclosed envelope.

We are *thankful* **FOR OUR PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT OUR MISSION**



Partners like **DORE: Discover Oregon Real Estate** who hosted "A Party To Change The World" on July 18th.

The goal of the party was to raise funds and awareness for local Oregon nonprofits and community changemakers, following the philosophy that generosity is a core value to practice from day one. SafeHaven is honored to be one of those non-profits!

We also loved how Maisy (shown in the picture with Chris, our Executive Director) is so passionate about SafeHaven that she donated 100% of the proceeds from her art sales that day to the animals at SafeHaven. Thanks, Maisy!!

And partners like **Miranda Lambert's MuttNation Foundation** and **Tractor Supply Co.** for awarding SafeHaven \$5,000 and naming us a **"Top Shelter in the U.S.A."** for 2026.

It's a great honor to be the only recipient of this grant for the entire state of Oregon!

For more information, visit:
<https://muttnation.com/mutts-across-america/>



Is your pet ready for their model moment?

Take part in the LIVE AUCTION at Rescue Roundup on September 26th and give your pet a chance to be on the **Fall 2027 Pet Press cover!**



We are *thankful* FOR OUR DONORS WHO CARE DEEPLY

Every donor has a story, and behind every gift is something deeply personal and meaningful. Whether inspired by a beloved pet, a personal experience, or a desire to make a difference, our donors give from the heart. Their stories remind us that every act of generosity has a purpose—and together, these gifts help create brighter futures for animals in need. We asked longtime donor, **Jerry Claussen**, to share his story of why he supports SafeHaven and this is what he had to share:

"Every time I speak or hear SafeHaven, it brings out a smile. My connection to SafeHaven started 23 years ago.

Connecting began when there was an article in the Albany newspaper announcing that Chris Storm was their new Outreach Director. Until that time, I had not had any connection with SafeHaven. I always had a love for cats which have been part of our family for 70 years. You who are pet caretakers know how much pleasure a pet can bring to a household.



When I read the article, I asked Don, our golf pro, to make contact with Chris and see if we could hold an event at The Golf Club of Oregon to benefit SafeHaven. She said yes and soon Chris and SafeHaven's Development Director visited us at our business. We were so impressed by her spirit and ideas that resulted in our co-sponsoring an event later that year. Because of Chris I took an interest in SafeHaven and became a donor.

At that time SafeHaven was housed in a former gas station on Highway 34 near Tangent and it was minimal in space and services. Over 23 years there has been a huge change in SafeHaven's size and growth in pet adoptions. Starting in 2003, SafeHaven became my number one commitment in both business and personal charitable giving. I took part in fundraising events and joined the board.

SafeHaven was always a no-kill shelter and over the many years I have seen Chris do anything and everything to save animals. After SafeHaven moved into a new facility in 2014, they hired a part-time vet to provide expansive medical services on site and more pet care.

Much of the credit for the huge growth goes to Chris Storm for her energy and brilliant leadership. She sets a good example for pet adoptions by caring for four dogs, four cats and two horses of her own.

Today SafeHaven has the largest facility and records the most pet adoptions – only behind Oregon Humane Society in Portland – serving all of Linn County plus surrounding counties. Right now, there is an increasing demand for cats to be adopted.

Hooray for Chris, her staff and volunteers! Our investment paid off."

*Thank you for
your years of
support Jerry!*

We are *thankful*

FOR YOUNG CAMPERS LEARNING TO CARE FOR PETS



A more humane world starts at Summer Camp! Each summer break, campers are treated to fun and educational camps all designed to spark compassion and curiosity about animals. From one-day camps with themes like "Vet Camp" and "Shelter Detectives" to the expansive four-day "Fun & Fur" camp, these days at camp are always a highlight for both the kids who attend and the shelter staff who get to see the joy on the faces of the children as they learn and interact with the shelter animals.

736 kids participated in SafeHaven programs this summer. It is a labor of love to bring these experiences to life, all led by our amazing Humane Education coordinator, Katie Bateman, and her team of dedicated volunteers.

Campers got to spend lots of quality time with adoptable animals, like camp favorites Seraphina (shown above) and Pumpkin (shown below). Pumpkin was so loved by campers that he got his own book, t-shirt and chalk art created in his honor trying to get him adopted! And it worked...Pumpkin found his forever home!

We cannot wait to see these campers grow into even more amazing animal advocates. Who knows, maybe they'll even want to work at SafeHaven some day - and we'd be thrilled to have them!



🌿 ★ 🌿 **SAVE THE DATE!** 🌿 ★ 🌿



ANIMAL ADVENTURE WINTER BREAK CAMPS ARE BACK!

December 22nd, 9am - 4pm; Grades K-5

December 29th, 9am - 4pm; Grades 6-9

December 31st, 9am - 4pm; Grades K-5

Registration coming in November!

Cost: \$75.
Space is limited.





BOW WOW



JOIN US THE **1ST WEDNESDAY** OF EACH MONTH,
FEBRUARY – NOVEMBER!

6:00 – 8:00 PM
\$1.00 per card or \$5.00 for 6 cards
Please bring cash – small bills work great!



2602 S Santiam Hwy
Lebanon, OR 97355

Seats are limited!
Get there early to reserve
your spot.

Unfortunately, children
under age 18 cannot
participate due to gaming
law restrictions in Oregon.

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT



FAMILY VOLUNTEER DAY

LOOKING FOR a MEANINGFUL WAY
TO SPEND TIME as a FAMILY?

During this hands-on morning, families will work
together on a variety of fun and impactful activities
which may include:



**CLEANING
PROJECTS**



**ENRICHMENT
ACTIVITIES**



**ANIMAL
SOCIALIZATION**

Space is Limited! Register Today at:
safehavenhumane.org/group-volunteering/

UPCOMING DATES:

October 18th, 9am-12pm
November 15th, 9am-12pm
December 13th, 9am-12pm

Questions?

Contact Katie at
HumaneEd@safehavenhumane.com
or call 541.928.2789.



PETS & pajamas MOVIE NIGHT

Pets and Pajamas is a fun and easy way to get your kids
involved with SafeHaven Humane Society, and have a little
time for yourselves too. Each night includes pizza, popcorn,
a little soda, time spent with our wonderful adoptable
animals, and a movie.

**MOVIE TICKET
\$22
EACH**

SHOWTIMES
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

UPCOMING SHOWINGS

September 18th
October 23rd
November 13th
December 18th

Space is limited so early registration is encouraged.

<https://safehavenhumane.org/pets-and-pajamas-registration/>

For more information, please visit our website at
<https://safehavenhumane.org/petspajamas/>
or contact Katie B. at (541) 928-2789.



Furry Tales STORY TIME

Every 1st & 3rd Monday of the Month
11:30am - 12:00pm

UPCOMING DATES:

October 5th & 19th
November 2nd & 16th
December 7th & 21st



Each session includes:

- A fun, animal-themed story read aloud
- A simple craft related to the tale
- A chance to meet one of our friendly adoptable animals
(based on availability)

Questions?

Contact Katie at HumaneEd@safehavenhumane.com
or call 541.928.2789.

View all of our upcoming events at: safehavenhumane.org/events/.

A SECOND CHANCE ACROSS STATE LINES

RAMA'S STORY OF HOPE IN UTAH

Story by: Joe Manning, SafeHaven Volunteer

My name is Joe Manning, and I want to tell you about a dog named Rama, because I think her story says so much about what rescue work is really all about: taking a chance, refusing to give up, and recognizing when saving a life requires all of us working together.

Rama's story began before she ever arrived at SafeHaven. Rama and her newborn puppies were at another shelter and had been placed on the euthanasia list. Their future was uncertain, and they needed somewhere safe to go. When SafeHaven learned about this little family, they said yes.

But when Rama arrived, staff quickly realized just how challenging her situation would be. Rama was a feral dog who had likely had very little, if any, positive interactions with people. She was terrified and extremely protective of her newborn puppies. Staff gave her the space and security she needed to care for her babies while keeping everyone safe. As the weeks passed, her puppies grew stronger. Once they were old enough to be separated from Rama, they were placed into foster homes where they could continue growing, socializing, and preparing for adoption. Then it was Rama's turn.

SafeHaven staff, along with a professional dog behaviorist, began working with her. They moved slowly, trying to build trust and help Rama understand that people did not have to be something she feared. Progress was difficult. Despite countless hours of patience and effort, staff still couldn't safely touch Rama or even leash her. For some, that might have been the point when they decided there was nothing more they could do. But SafeHaven didn't give up.

What has always impressed me about SafeHaven is that they don't treat a situation like Rama's as a dead end. They believe every animal deserves a real chance, even when providing that chance means looking beyond their own walls for additional resources and expertise.

Sometimes doing what's best for an animal means recognizing that another organization may have something they need that you cannot provide yourself. In Rama's case, that meant reaching across state lines.

That's where Best Friends in Salt Lake City came in. With extensive resources and experience working with dogs with significant behavioral and socialization challenges, they offered Rama an opportunity to continue her rehabilitation in an environment designed for dogs like her.



But knowing where Rama needed to go and actually getting her there were two very different things. I have to give tremendous recognition to Megan Corby, SafeHaven's Animal Care Supervisor, who became one of Rama's biggest champions.

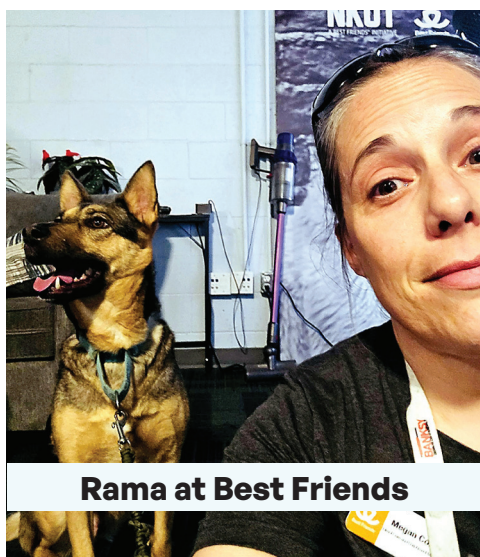
Megan saw an animal whose fear did not make her less deserving of a future. She refused to allow Rama to fall through the cracks simply because her needs were difficult. She spent countless hours coordinating, documenting Rama's history and behavioral needs, and advocating for the opportunity to get her into a program that could continue the work SafeHaven had started. Megan's efforts weren't simply paperwork and phone calls. They represented a genuine belief that Rama's life was worth fighting for.

Once the plan was in place, there was one more challenge: getting Rama safely from Oregon to Utah. That's where I was fortunate enough to play a small part. I volunteered my time and vehicle to make the long drive and personally transport Rama to Salt Lake City. It wasn't glamorous work. It was hundreds of miles on the road with a dog who was still deeply fearful of people. But sometimes rescue is exactly that - ordinary people willing to do the unglamorous things necessary to give an animal an extraordinary second chance.



When I think about Rama's story, what strikes me most is just how many people it took to save one dog and her puppies. It started with another shelter reaching out rather than giving up. It continued with SafeHaven saying yes to a frightened mother and her newborn babies when their lives were on the line. It was foster families opening their homes to Rama's puppies. It was SafeHaven staff caring for Rama day after day, even when progress was slow. It was a professional behaviorist helping the team search for ways to reach a dog who was terrified of human touch. It was Megan refusing to accept that Rama's story should end simply because SafeHaven had reached the limits of what it could provide for her. It was a long drive across state lines. And it was another organization willing to say, "We'll take it from here."

THAT is what rescue really looks like. Rama's journey is a reminder that rescue work isn't always one person or one organization swooping in to save the day. Sometimes it is a chain of people, shelters, foster families, behavior professionals, volunteers, and advocates, with each one carrying an animal a little farther toward safety. Everyone willing to keep trying even when the easy solutions have run out.



Rama arrived at SafeHaven a terrified mother protecting her newborn puppies, with her entire family's future hanging in the balance. SafeHaven gave her puppies the chance to grow up safe and loved. And when Rama needed more than SafeHaven could give her, they didn't give up on her. They found someone who could take the next step.

I'm incredibly grateful that I got to play a small part in Rama's journey, and I'm even more grateful for every person who refused to give up on her along the way.

Rama's story isn't finished yet. And that may be the most beautiful part of all.

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