

YORK COUNTY SPCA

PET GAZETTE

2026 -
SPRING
EDITION

CELEBRATING
**100 YEARS OF
SERVICE TO
YORK COUNTY**

THE IMPORTANCE OF
MICROCHIPPING

SAVE THE DATE
**GIVE LOCAL
YORK**

APRIL 30 - MAY 1



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

OF SERVICE TO YORK COUNTY

STEVEN MARTINEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we reflect on 2025, we are grateful for your trust and support. Because of you, the York County SPCA continues to serve as a reliable resource for animals and people across our community.

This year is especially meaningful as we approach an extraordinary milestone. In 2026, the York County SPCA celebrates 100 years of service to York County. For a century, our organization has worked to protect animals, support our community, and strengthen the bond between people and pets. That legacy exists because of the community that has stood beside us for generations.

The York County SPCA is the county's only animal shelter and high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter clinic. As an independent nonprofit, we are not affiliated with any national organizations, like the ASPCA, and our progress relies on local generosity as we assist animals and families in need.

In 2025, your support helped us:

- Achieve a **95.3 percent save rate for animals in our care**
- Provide **safe refuge for 2,661 animals**
- **Place 1,922 animals** into loving homes
- **Reunite 405 lost pets** with their families
- **Spay and neuter 14,711 animals**
- **Donate 61,432 pounds of pet food** to families in need

These outcomes reflect our growing focus on addressing the root causes that bring animals into the shelter. Through expanded community and human service programs and increased investment in spay/neuter, microchipping, and access to resources for pet owners, we are working to keep pets and families together whenever possible.

As we enter our centennial year, the York County SPCA is also embarking on a new chapter. In 2025, we completed a three-year strategic plan that will guide our future by prioritizing sustainability, broader community engagement, and enhanced services for animals and families in York County.

As part of that process, we refined our mission to reflect the role we play in the community: to serve York County by providing essential services that protect animals and support the people and communities who depend on us.

As we celebrate 100 years of service in 2026, we remain focused on sustainability, expanding access to services, and strengthening our impact for the animals and families who rely on us.

Thank you for being part of our first century—and the future we are building together.



“As we celebrate 100 years of service in 2026, we remain focused on sustainability, expanding access to services, and strengthening our impact for the animals and families who rely on us.”

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PUTTING EVERY CAT FIRST

DR. NATALIE WEEKES, VMD, SHELTER MEDICAL DIRECTOR

At the York County SPCA, every animal who comes through our doors is treated as an individual. That belief is at the heart of our Shelter Neuter Return (SNR) program—an approach that can be misunderstood, but one that has transformed outcomes for countless community cats.

Community (often referred to as feral) cats live outdoors and are typically unadoptable due to behavioral concerns. Before we implemented SNR, many of these cats faced euthanasia simply because they could not safely or humanely live as indoor pets and behavioral rehabilitation is often unsuccessful and resource intensive. SNR changed that. When injured or ill community cats are brought to us, we provide necessary medical care, spay/neuter surgery, vaccinations, treatment for parasites, and, if they are healthy enough and the environment they came from is safe, we return them to the place where they were already thriving. This has dramatically reduced the euthanasia rates for cats while allowing healthy community cats to continue living the lives they know.

SNR is never a one-size-fits-all solution. Sometimes a cat cannot be returned due to medical needs or unsafe conditions at their original location. When that happens, we look at alternative solutions such as adoption or placement as a working cat. Every decision is made with the cat's best interest at the core.

Delilah's journey is a powerful example of this philosophy in action.

Delilah came to us as an SNR cat, but her initial exam told a much bigger story. She was thin, dehydrated, and battling an upper respiratory infection. Our veterinary team also detected a heart murmur, significant dental disease, vision problems, and, after blood work, early kidney failure. Returning Delilah to life outdoors was not an option. It would not have been kind, safe, or humane.

Instead, we committed to her recovery.

Delilah received medications, supportive care, and a much-needed dental procedure. She spent weeks healing, gaining strength, and learning that she could trust humans. Through dedicated rehabilitation and daily compassion from our staff, Delilah slowly transformed. Once she was stable and comfortable, we knew exactly what to do next: give her the chance to find a home.

Delilah was placed up for adoption, and she found her forever family. Today, she is living safely indoors, cherished and cared for, with her medical needs lovingly managed.

Delilah's story reflects what we strive for every day. Whether a cat is returned to their outdoor home, adopted into a family, or placed as a working cat, our promise remains the same: we will always do what is best for each individual animal. Compassion, not convenience, guides every decision we make.





THE IMPORTANCE OF MICROCHIPPING

DR. KIMBERLY MANN, VMD, CLINIC MEDICAL DIRECTOR



Microchips have become the most common form of permanent identification in dogs and cats. Lost animals with a form of permanent identification (microchip or tattoo) are much more likely to be reunited with their owners than a pet without permanent identification. Placement of a microchip is a quick and simple procedure that can keep your pet out of a shelter and have them reunited with you more quickly if they ever become lost.

A microchip is a small device the size of a grain of rice that can be implanted under the skin of an animal either awake or under anesthesia using a large hollow needle. The microchip emits a radiofrequency that can be read by a microchip scanner, and gives a unique code assigned to that chip. A database exists for chip number lookup, so that the name, address, and phone number of the owner can be identified, and the pet can be reunited with their family. Microchips act as a valuable tool for identification of an animal, but they do not act as a GPS "tracker" device.

Pet owners are encouraged to keep all contact information associated with their pet's microchip up to date so that they can be easily contacted if their lost pet is found. Most microchips also come with a plastic tag that can be placed on the pet's collar or harness so that the microchip code can be read without a scanner. Pet owners are also encouraged to have their pet scanned by their primary care veterinarian on a yearly basis to ensure that the chip is still functional.



Although microchipping your pet is the most important step you can take to ensure your pet will be reunited with you in the event that they are lost, it is also important to use other identification strategies. These include physically canvassing your area, hanging lost pet signs, filing a lost pet report with the SPCA and other local shelters, and using social media to spread the word about your lost pet.

At the York County SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic, we include microchipping in the surgery package for every owned animal who is not already microchipped. Our clinic software also automatically registers each microchip using the contact information provided at the time of surgery scheduling. You can also have your pet microchipped at one of our vaccine and microchip clinics offered throughout the year.



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For more information on additional services we offer please visit our website at www.ycspca.org.





“BEHIND THE SCENES PAW-SIBILITIES”

ALY MALAY, VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

When people think of volunteering at an animal shelter, they often picture walking dogs or cuddling cats. While those roles are important, what many don't realize is that there are also behind-the-scenes duties that are just as crucial to the success of the York County SPCA. This year, we're focusing on recruiting volunteers for those essential support roles that help our staff, animals, and the community every day.

LOBBY GREETER:

Our lobby greeters are often the first face the public sees. If you enjoy helping people, this role may be for you! Volunteers greet guests, help assemble adoption bags, assist with foster, adoption, and volunteer applications, and provide general support to visitors. Our customer service representatives (CSR) assist numerous customers every day, and rely on the support of our lobby greeters to help ensure every customer is met with a warm smile and guidance.

KENNEL & FACILITY SUPPORT:

In this role, volunteers help keep things running smoothly behind the scenes with our animals. Tasks include washing dishes, doing laundry, folding towels and bedding, and helping ensure our kennel areas stay safe and welcoming for both pets and people. These volunteers may also be asked to support with cleaning windows, donation drop-offs and other various activities to support our facilities team.



CLINIC SUPPORT:

Our high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter clinic is one of the busiest and most productive spay/neuter clinics in Pennsylvania and our volunteers are vital to its success. Support tasks in the clinic include labeling syringes, cleaning surgical instruments, and preparing Elizabethan collars for pets after surgery.

EVENT TABLING:

Love engaging with the community? Event tabling volunteers represent the YCSPCA at offsite and community events. You'll learn about our animal and human services, talk with community members, and assist with selling merchandise like t-shirts, candles, and more.



If you would like to learn more about any of these volunteer roles, we invite you to attend one of our Community Volunteer Open Houses from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

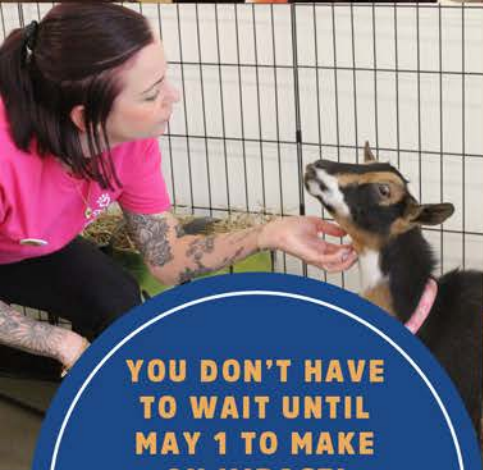
During the open house, you will have the opportunity to speak directly with volunteers serving in these roles and hear about their experiences firsthand!

Registration is not required, simply stop by the YCSPCA on the following dates: Saturday, April 25, Saturday, July 25, Saturday, October 31

Scan the QR code or visit www.ycspca.org/volunteer to apply to become a volunteer. We can't wait to meet you and welcome you to the team!



OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IS PRESENTED BY WELLSPAN HEALTH.



SAVE THE DATE:

GIVE LOCAL YORK IS APRIL 30 & MAY 1, 2026 FROM 7 P.M. - 7 P.M.



Give Local York: Every Gift Makes a Difference for the Animals!

Give Local York is more than just a day of giving, it's a community-wide celebration of generosity! For 24 hours, thousands of people come together to support the causes closest to their hearts, making an incredible impact across York County. **This year's event kicks off at 7:00 p.m. on April 30th and runs until 7:00 p.m. on May 1st.**

For the YCSPCA, these 24 hours represent a crucial opportunity to fund lifesaving programs and provide medical care, shelter, and second chances for animals in need.

Why Give During Give Local York?

Every gift helps unlock additional funding through Give Local York's stretch pool. The more unique donors we have, the more funds we receive. **Every single gift, whether it's \$5 or \$500, truly makes an impact.**

The past two years, thanks to your support, we had the most individual donors of any participating nonprofit. **With your help, we can do it again!**

How Can You Get Involved?

- **Donate early** - return the envelope included in the newsletter (just write "Give Local York" in the memo line!)
- **Give** on May 1st at givelocalyork.org.
- **Attend** our Give Local York PAW'ty!

Join us on Friday, May 1st for a PAW'ty at the York County SPCA

Visit us at the Brougher Companion Animal shelter from **5 - 8 p.m.** on Give Day to celebrate this tremendous day of generosity. **We'll host a community celebration for the whole family with activities like "Adopt a Plushie", face painting, balloon art, food trucks, vendors and more!**

Learn more about our Paw'ty and Give Local York at www.ycspca.org/givelocalyork



Questions? Please contact:
Jessica Hoffman, Development Director
717-400-1994 | jhoffman@ycspca.org

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL MAY 1 TO MAKE AN IMPACT!

INCLUDE 'GIVE LOCAL YORK' IN THE MEMO LINE OF YOUR CHECK TO HAVE IT COUNTED TOWARD OUR FUNDRAISING TOTAL!

Mark your calendar and get ready to make this the best Give Local York yet!

Every donor counts—will YOU be one of them?

FROM STARVATION TO SAFETY: LAUREN'S SECOND CHANCE

When Lauren arrived at the York County SPCA in October 2025, the signs of neglect were heartbreaking.

The two-and-a-half-year-old pitbull had been found as a stray in York Township, weighing just 26 pounds - nearly half of the 45-50 pounds she should have weighed for a dog her size.

Severely emaciated, with overgrown nails and a body covered in dried fecal material, she was rushed straight to our medical team for care.

Diagnostic testing revealed intestinal parasites, and bloodwork showed that the severe lack of nutrition had already begun impacting both Lauren's liver and kidneys. She also had developed a heart murmur linked to her deteriorated physical condition.

Treating a dog in Lauren's condition requires extreme care. When animals have been starved for extended periods, feeding them too quickly can cause refeeding syndrome, a potentially fatal complication.

Instead, the YCSPCA medical team created a carefully controlled recovery plan and monitored her closely to ensure a safe recovery.

The case was referred to the York Regional Police Department, the owner was identified, and charges were pursued.

In February 2026, the case was resolved and Lauren was officially signed over to the YCSPCA.

Lauren's story is one of resilience and hope but also serves as a powerful reminder of why this work matters.

Sadly, cases like Lauren's are not uncommon. **In 2024, the YCSPCA humane society police officer conducted 1,983 animal welfare checks, leading to 503 cruelty and neglect investigations and 102 convictions.**

Each investigation represents an animal in need, and a team committed to protecting them.

Your gift during Give Local York helps ensure we can continue to be a voice for animals like Lauren. Scan the QR code to donate to our campaign.

 **GIVE**York
LOCAL



PREPARING FOR KITTEN SEASON

KASIE MATTHEWS, FELINE PATHWAY COORDINATOR



Preparing for Kitten Season at York County SPCA: How You Can Help Save Lives

As the days grow longer and temperatures rise, the YCSPCA prepares for one of the busiest times of the year: kitten season. This is when shelters see a sharp increase in kittens, pregnant cats, and nursing moms. While kittens are adorable, the reality is urgent: space fills quickly, resources are stretched thin, and community support becomes more critical than ever.

What Is Kitten Season?

Kitten season runs from early spring through late fall, with peak intake in late spring and summer. During this time, the YCSPCA may welcome everything from fragile newborns to playful, weaned kittens. Without enough foster homes, supplies, and volunteers, it becomes difficult to give each animal the individualized care they deserve.

The good news? You can be part of the solution.

The Need for Foster Homes

Foster families are the heart of our lifesaving work during kitten season. By opening your home temporarily to our most vulnerable shelter residents, you help free up space and give at-risk kittens the best chance to thrive.



Bottle Baby Fosters (Neonatal Kittens)

Some kittens arrive without their mother and are too young to eat on their own. These tiny babies need frequent bottle feedings, help staying warm, and close monitoring. While neonatal fostering is more time-intensive, it is also one of the most impactful ways to save lives. The YCSPCA provides training, supplies, and ongoing support to help fosters feel confident.

Kitten Fosters (Weaned Kittens)

Many kittens simply need a safe, calm environment to grow and continue socializing until they are ready for adoption. Fostering older kittens is a great option for those who want to help but may not be able to commit to bottle feeding.

Whether you can foster newborns or energetic 6-10 week olds, there is a foster opportunity for you.



A Gentle Reminder: Don't Be a "Kit-napper"

It's natural to want to help when you see kittens outdoors, but sometimes well-meaning actions can unintentionally cause harm. In many cases, mom is nearby even if you don't see her.

Before intervening:

- Watch from a distance to see if mom returns
- Avoid moving kittens unless they are in immediate danger
- Contact the YCSPCA for guidance if you're unsure

Keeping families together whenever possible gives kittens their best chance at a healthy start.



Donations Save Lives

Kitten season brings an increased need for supplies such as **kitten food, formula, bottles, heating pads, litter, cleaning supplies, towels, and blankets.**

Donations directly impact the level of care we can provide. **Please consider supporting our foster program through our Wishlist by scanning the QR code!**

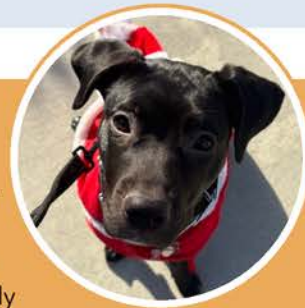


ADOPTION SPOTLIGHTS



FRANKENSTEIN A.K.A PARKER

When I first saw a photo of Frankenstein, I knew I had to have him. I did not waste any time and I brought him home just a few days later! He's been the best addition to my family of fur babies. He has 3 dog brothers who are obsessed with him. He loves to lay with his squishmallow, and hop around the hallways while I'm cleaning his room. He's so calm, cuddly, and anytime I come up to him he stands up on his back legs for pets! He also loves to sit with me while I get ready for work in the morning. Frankenstein is the perfect (most spoiled) companion. Thank you York County SPCA!



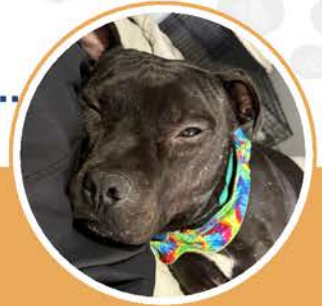
KELCE A.K.A JAX

Kelce has settled into her forever home beautifully and brings joy everywhere she goes. She loves walks, meeting new people, and making new dog friends along the way. Any toy that squeaks instantly becomes her favorite, and she never turns down a walk to Starbucks for a pup cup or a car ride to Tractor Supply to pick out toys. Kelce also has a funny side. She loves staring at herself in the mirror and absolutely lights up when she gets to play in the snow. Most of all, she's a cuddle bug at heart and happiest snuggled up with me, relaxing and watching Eagles football together!



MIA

Mia came home with us in early February of 2024. It's hard to believe she has been with us for almost two years already! After her previous owner passed away, she was looking for a slow and steady forever home, one where she could relax on her couch all day and cuddle with her humans in bed all night. Our old girl so easily became a part of our little family, moving with us between 2 different temporary homes until we bought our first house in May of 2024. Mia is the most gentle cat I've ever known, welcoming a 2-week old abandoned and orphaned kitten (Noodle) into her life in April of 2025 with open paws and an open heart. Now, the girls enjoy filling that well-loved couch indent together! We are forever grateful that we found Mia at York SPCA and can give her all of the love, cuddles, and treats she deserves.



BOOMBOX

Boombox was adopted from the York County SPCA in December of 2025. He loves to play and cuddle, loves everyone and everything, and loves to go on car rides.



STORMY LOU

Stormy Lou is the most fun and loving kitty. When first meeting her, we were told she was very vocal and boy was that true! We get to hear her sweet voice all day and it's simply the best addition to our home.



JELLY A.K.A JELLY SHOES

She is a very chill and calm dog and she loves taking socks and trying to chase squirrels in the backyard. She loves her lamb chop and she spends her days sleeping and eating all the time. She also loves car rides and walks. She does this really funny thing with her paws when she wants attention and sometimes she tries to play fight with you but she just licks you to death!

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN ADOPTING

DON GRIFFIN, DOG WALKER VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR



In March 2025, we adopted two older cats from the York County SPCA. They were named Belle and Lil Bit. Since they were both 7 years old, we decided not to rename them. We have always had cats, and when our last one passed away in November 2024, we wanted to wait a few months before getting another cat.

Lil Bit and Belle had lived in the same home with 8 other cats. So, when we decided to adopt them, we had hoped things would go well since they had lived together. When I first met them at the YCSPCA, Lil Bit was very stressed and did not really want any human attention. On the other hand, Belle was very friendly.

When we brought them home, Lil Bit bolted down to our basement and decided that would be his new home. He wanted no human contact. Belle was nervous of her new surroundings but within a day or two she started to adapt and was friendly with us. Within 3-4 days, we realized that we had several issues. The most immediate problem we found out was that Lil Bit would come up from the basement in the evening and go after Belle. As a result, she decided not to use the litter boxes that were in the basement. She peed on our carpeting upstairs. We solved this problem by separating the two and putting a litter box upstairs. After about two weeks Lil Bit started to come out and become friendly with us. When he did eventually decide to come out of the basement, he tried to dominate Belle.

The result of this was that she would not come down from our upstairs. This went on for over a month. Finally, she decided to come downstairs and even though he still tried to dominate her, she started to fight back. Today, we have two happy cats that get along with each other and can be quite entertaining.

The morale of this story is that when you make a commitment to adopt an animal, you need to be patient and work through the problems that can occur. Shelter animals are often stressed and they need time to adapt to their new surroundings and family.

Always remember “Patience is a Virtue and a Lil Bit won’t hurt you.”



WHY ADOPTING A PET MATTERS

This article was written by **Caroline Farman**, a local student from York County.



Adopting a pet from the shelter matters so much more than you might think. When you adopt a pet, it changes their life forever. To break it down, here are some reasons why adopting a pet matters.

How Having a Pet Can Improve Your Mood

According to a study from John Hopkins Medicine, research has shown that simply petting a dog lowers the stress hormone cortisol, while the social interaction between people and their dogs actually increases the levels of the feel good hormone oxytocin (the same hormone that bonds mothers to babies). When this oxytocin is released, it makes you feel happy. Having a pet can calm you down when you are angry, make you feel better when you are sad, and be happy with you when you are happy. Pets love their humans so much, so they want to comfort them. Having a loving pet can definitely make you feel better.

Why You Should Adopt from a Shelter

When you adopt a pet it helps create space for other pets in York County who are in need of shelter and care. When you adopt from a shelter, it also helps keep the community safer because there are fewer animals wandering around outside where they could get lost or hurt, like being hit by cars. Another reason is that those pets have likely never had a good home so it makes them very happy to have a nice home with good people. Animals love being warm and comfortable, so it will make them happy to have their own home.

Please take these things into consideration when you are looking for a pet.

You could save an animal's life.





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