

OCAP RECAP

A newsletter for members of Ontonagon County Animal Protection

WINTER 2024

President's Corner

Lee McCaffery

We have a lot to squeeze into this newsletter, so I'll condense my points into a quick list:

- Thanks to generous donors, fundraisers, and millage, we're starting 2024 in the black.
- Our dinner/auction will be held this spring at a date to be determined. To help us make it a success, we would appreciate donated items for use in bucket raffles or larger pieces for the live auction. Call Jan Wolfe at 906-884-2429 if you have something to donate.
- Nancy Skerchock was appointed to our board to fill the trustee position vacated by Barb Martin. Nancy will be handling memberships and acknowledging donations.
- We installed a system that rings our personal phones if the smoke alarms go off at the shelter. This was a safety upgrade that cost little but provides great peace of mind.
- We could use more volunteers in the cat area. Shifts are about two hours in the morning and about an hour in the evening. For more information, contact Jan Wolfe 906-884-2429 or jwolfe2@jamadots.com.

BELLA – MOTHER OF THE YEAR

Rescues like OCAP aren't just in the business of finding homes for homeless animals, we're also dedicated to reducing the number of unwanted kittens and puppies entering shelters each year – to that end, we're constant promoters of spaying and neutering.

Having said that, we still get silly over babies.

A cat named Bella was surrendered to OCAP and went to be spayed. To be on the safe side, we asked the vet to make sure she wasn't pregnant. Well, her ultrasound clearly showed tiny spines and a profile of kitten ears. No spay that day! Bella came back to the shelter to finish her pregnancy and rear her kittens.

About two weeks later, she delivered four healthy orange tabby kits. That was good. What was better was that one week later OCAP got a call from a woman in Greenland who'd found four newborn kittens in her driveway when she let her dog out early that morning!

OCAP rushed to get the babies, because they can't survive long without their mother's warmth, and no one knew how long they had been outdoors alone. Being accepted by an experienced queen is best for neonates, so the kits were placed with Bella, who immediately snuggled them in for breakfast and a good bath.

With eight hungry kittens to nurse, Bella became very thin, even though she had access to food 24/7. Still this busy mom maintained her high standards of child-rearing with the result that all eight grew into plump, confident kittens and eventually went to loving homes.

Watching how hard she worked, the cat volunteers called her "Mother of the Year" (someone even made a poster for her room) and pledged that they would find her the best home possible. This came to pass, and Bella is featured with other our Happy Tails in this issue, safe and loved in her forever home.



Bella's orange kits – one week old. Darker orphans – one day old. The little orphans weighed about two ounces each. In comparison, Bella's orange kittens looked like linebackers after having mom to themselves for seven days.



Eight healthy kittens at about four weeks (orange) and three weeks. They'd outgrown the den/kittening box and took their many naps in a cushy medium dog bed where all could fit - sort of.

WHAT ABOUT BOB?

Submitted by Anne Lundberg

If you remember, Bob is a senior-aged horse who was rescued by the Critter Ranch and friends in March of 2023 after being neglected for years, causing him to be significantly underweight among other issues. OCAP's budget cannot support farm animals, but at the time of his rescue, we wanted to lend a hand and started an online fundraiser for Bob. We recently reached out for an update on Bob the Horse to the D&E Critter Ranch where he has remained since his rescue.

We are told that he has gained a good amount of weight, but despite having food in front of him 24/7 since his arrival, he still needs to gain about 100 more pounds. Reaching his healthy body condition has been problematic. Erin, owner of the Critter Ranch, stated, "Bob looked really good this summer, but with the switch of the weather, he did start to drop some weight...he's been stalled inside during the bad weather to help him try to maintain his weight."

At the time of his rescue, he needed to complete a farrier appointment. Unfortunately, behaviorally he was not willing to tolerate the process. He remains a behavior challenge and requires some sedation for hoof care, but Erin reports, "He's sweet when he wants to be and loves treats and being brushed."

Medically they've provided health exams, had his teeth floated, and dewormed him more than once. He was found to have a metabolic disease called Cushing's. Erin reports that some older horses do get the disease and she went on to say that he also has a limp when he runs around too much, which might be a previous injury or an injury that flares up with too much exercise.

When asked if they had goals for adoption or rehoming Bob, we were told that he really isn't a good candidate to adopt out and will remain at the Critter Ranch unless Erin feels he is uncomfortable or if another option comes along that she feels will fit his needs. Erin reports, "He's made friends, especially with a mare that he is attached to at the hip. For him being alone for so much of his life, he has really bonded with other horses." Erin generously added that they don't feel the need for any more donations since he is now a part of the Critter Ranch family.



Bob after: *He still needs to gain about 100 pounds, but the cold weather worked against him and he started to drop some weight. Still, what a difference proper care has made.*

Bob before: *We hope this small picture still lets you see how thin and ribby he was on arrival. A horse needs a lot of food to gain and then maintain a healthy weight, and his rescuers are seeing that he gets it.*



This newsletter is available at occappaws.com a week after mailing.

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[Paws](https://www.facebook.com/OcapPaws)

For more information on our dogs or to discuss volunteering with the dogs, contact Anne Lundberg at 906-390-0167 or email her: annelundberg79@gmail.com.

For information about our cats or to discuss volunteering with the cats, call Jan Wolfe at 906-884-2429 or email jwolfe2@jamadots.com.

Report neglected or abused animals, to the Ontonagon County Sheriff: 906-884-4901.

OCAP volunteers are not certified animal control officers. Animal Control issues are handled by the County Sheriff's Dept. OCAP's role is to provide a safe haven for cats and dogs that need a place to shelter or live until claimed or adopted.

OCAP CALENDAR FUNDRAISER

A year ago, Ontonagon Artist Collective (OAC) wanted to raise funds and awareness for Ontonagon County Animal Protection and at the same time fulfill OAC's mission of promoting and providing opportunities for local artists. The Ontonagon Artist Collective received some seed money from Kimberly's Cats & Dogs Foundation of Minnesota and an anonymous donor and set out to create a calendar of the shelter's and other people's cats and dogs.

Dan DeFoy, a local self-employed photographer who has taught photography workshops and led students on tours throughout the Upper Peninsula, agreed to take on the project. The artist and production were paid for through the generous grants received by OAC. 100% of the sales proceeds went to OCAP.

The Ontonagon Herald produced 125 calendars, which the OAC promoted and sold at community events, the Ontonagon Township Library, Community Action Agency, and Gitche Gumees Landing through January 15, 2024.

OCAP appreciates the time and effort that went into producing the calendar and the supporters who purchased them.



Dan DeFoy photo

In late January, the OAC presented a check for \$1,902.00 to OCAP! Pictured from left to right are OAC board members Cherri Teuber, Secretary; Tisha Jorae, President; Barb Braithwaite, OCAP's Co-Treasurer; and Gladdie Funke, OAC Treasurer.

Calendars are available at a reduced price at WUPY radio and OCAP.

LOCAL ARTIST DEB SCHOCH HELPS OCAP



Artist Debra Schoch (left) with the winner of the black cat and cart she created especially to raffle off to raise \$250.00 for OCAP at a juried show in Lower Michigan.

Debra Schoch, nationally known Halloween artist from Ontonagon, attended her last juried craft show last fall. Debra began selling her creations in shows in 1985 and wrapped up the traveling part of her artistic life in 2023 with one last sold-out show.

One difference in the 2023 show is that Debra made a kitten sculpture specifically for a drawing to raise money for OCAP! She put a \$250.00 price tag on it, and people entered the contest for the opportunity to take home a Debra Schoch original.

Debra, whose Halloween-themed creations can bring over \$2,000.00 from her serious collectors and followers, will still work from home. Her creations can be found on Etsy as well as the websites of other quality creative shops.

She and her husband adopted two of the orphaned kittens Bella raised (see front page story). Visiting the shelter and falling for those kittens motivated her to raise the money to help other shelter animals.

OCAP is grateful to Debra for using her special talents to raise funds to help with the cost of supporting the animals we serve.

HAPPY TAILS



Violet's look-a-like brother Birch (she has a mustache, he doesn't) was adopted before she was, but the wait was worth it. Now called Lola, she's landed a cushy home where she's well and truly spoiled.



Adopted kittens often have to get used to all kinds of new housemates, usually dogs or other cats. Tito (left), one of the Jackson Five orphans that were bottle-raised by a foster mom, is now named Phoenix and has settled in with the family canines - but is still making up his mind about the resident avian.



This photo of Buddy (left) was actually taken at the shelter when he was told that he had an approved adoption application. Buddy and his roommate Holly had been left behind when their family moved and sold their house. From the look on his face, he's happy with the news.



Bella, our Mother of the Year, has settled into her country home with her two dog siblings. A smart cat knows the warmest place on the couch isn't just on a blanket but on a blanket on top of a warm dog! After all the work she did to raise eight kittens, she deserves the softest, warmest best-seat-in-the-house.

Rocky (right), a mix of two working breeds, lost his home because he needed a job. Our goal was to not only find him a home that would drain his energy but one with the kids that he loves so much. We think we nailed it! He loves all the kids in his new home and has a doggy friend to run with.





Eager to take over new territory, confident kitten Bongo set right out to explore his new home as soon as he arrived. He was one of three brothers, all of which came to OCAP as friendly, social kittens and were soon adopted. In no time he won over Petra, his new sister cat, an older OCAP alum.



Able is a working breed who had to be rehomed to a place where he could put his instincts to work. OCAP worked with the family and facilitated a home-to-home adoption. Now Able helps his new dad keep the apple orchard free of birds and deer.



Seven-month-old Henley (right - black and white) lost his home when he was just too exuberant for his senior-aged brother. His owner was invested in trying to make things work, but despite following all our suggestions, it wasn't to be. Henley now has a home with a big brother Jackson, who also loves to play - and snuggle



This little ray of sunshine came to us through no fault of her own. She's a work-in-progress but has a need to please and to give and receive love. She enjoys her big sister Sylvie and thinks it's her job to herd the kitties, who have taught her respect. One of her favorite playmates is her "nephew" Moose, and she loves to play Frisbee with one of her favorite people, Ben. Patience, love, and guidance are in her corner.



Maggie (left) was adopted from us in 2016 and is now 10 years old. She loves to run and play with her mom and enjoys her kitty friends. Maggie was part of Detroit Pit Crew's initiative, Straight Outta Detroit, and was rescued from the street, vetted, and transported to OCAP to find a better life – a goal she achieved to the fullest.

Looking toward warmer weather – to shave or not to shave

When we get to the warmer months and our dogs begin to shed and pant, many dog owners' first inclination is to shave their coats short. And that's ok for some dogs but not so great for others, specifically breeds with a double coat. (However, shaving a single-coated dog can create hair growth issues and leave it susceptible to sunburn and insect bites.)

Let's focus on double-coated dogs. Double-coated dog breeds include Golden Retrievers, Chow Chows, Pomeranians, Samoyeds, Siberian Huskies, and Alaskan Malamutes to name a few. Single-coated dogs are breeds like Boston Terriers, Boxers, Poodles, Chihuahuas, or Beagles, etc. You can tell if your dog has a double coat by running your hand backwards against its coat. If you can see skin immediately, you most likely have a single-coated dog. If you see fluff and possibly no skin or a very slight patch of skin, you most likely have a double-coated dog

Double-coated dogs have a bottom coat that is fluffy, thick, and soft with a topcoat of courser hairs with guard hairs that are tougher and thicker in texture. All dogs should be brushed regularly through every season, but it is even more important with double-coated dogs. When spring begins, their fluffy undercoat is released from their bodies, and they look like they're molting with tufts of lighter colored hair protruding from the topcoat. (Much like a Pussy Willow at the end of its season.)

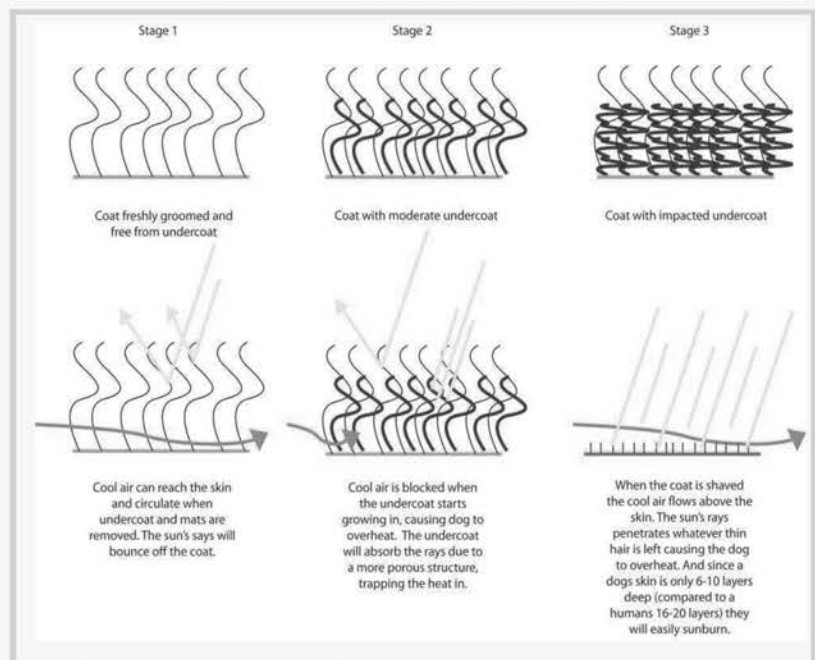
During the winter, this undercoat keeps dogs warm; but during the warmer months it also helps keep them cool by insulating their bodies from the heat - much like your favorite tumbler keeps your drink cold. BUT for this to be effective, we must help them rid themselves of their old undercoats by gently brushing with appropriate undercoat brushes. A reputable groomer can also facilitate this process by bathing with special products and using their tools to literally blow out the old, dead undercoat.

If you neglect the coat and don't help the dog rid himself of the old undercoat that is molting from him, the coat becomes impacted and matted and prevents air from being able to move between the dog's topcoat and skin. Once all the old undercoat is gone, air can circulate between and through the hairs of the topcoat and keep the dog cool, and it also helps protect from the sun and bug bites.

So why not just take a short cut and shave your double-coated dogs to quickly rid them of their undercoats with the idea that it will keep them cool? Remember the previously stated caution as to what function the undercoat has in a dog's coat – insulation helps keep them cool – shaving them removes their natural cooling ability. Dogs don't sweat through their skin. They sweat by panting and between their paw pads. Shaving double-coated dogs can ruin their coats, as well. When their coats do grow back, strange things can happen.. They can have patches that don't grow back or that don't grow both coat layers (top and undercoat) – this seems to be worse for older dogs. And sometimes their undercoat grows faster than their topcoat and what happens is the slower growing topcoat can get hung up in the faster growing undercoat causing a matted mess. Shaving a dog can also rid the dog of its natural ability to repel water, which is the job of its guard hairs. The coarseness of the guard hairs helps the water roll off the topcoat and keep the undercoat dry.

The best thing to do for your double-coated dog is to keep it clean and bathed and help it naturally remove its undercoat in the spring with grooming. Your dog can retain its natural ability to stay cool and protected in the summer and warm in the winter - and look beautiful as its DNA intended.

Grooming Double Coated Dogs



Cold Weather Pet Safety Tips



Do not leave pets outdoors when temperatures are below freezing

Outdoor dogs must be protected by a dry, draft-free doghouse



Pets spending a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter



Always have fresh, unfrozen water available for pets



Cats & small animals may hide near car engines - bang on your hood to scare them away before starting your engine

De-icing chemicals & salt can irritate your pet's feet - wipe their feet with a damp towel after coming indoors

Keep your pets happy & healthy this winter!

Is Your Cat's Litter Safe for YOU?

If you have celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder characterized by potentially severe reactions to gluten, you should know that gluten is also in some kinds of cat litter. This might not seem like a problem since people don't ingest litter, but it's prudent to avoid inhaling gluten particles from pouring litter or getting it under your nails while cleaning boxes or handling litter.

People with celiac disease might want to check with the manufacturer of their brand to see if it's one of the gluten-free formulas.

Another ingredient in some litter that can cause a bad reaction is crushed up walnut shells. It might be a problem only for those allergic to walnuts, but there's a close genetic relationship between the various tree nuts – not just walnuts but varieties like almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, and pistachios. An allergy to one might mean an allergy to others.

Full Year Shelter Statistics 2023

	Intake	Strays Claimed	Seizures	Transferred In	Transferred Out	Adopted	(Feral Cats) To barns or TNR	Euthanized
Cats	67	3	0	0	0	42	1	*1
Dogs	29	17	0	0	0	10	n/a	**2

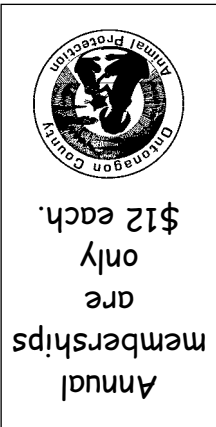
*Twenty-two-year-old cat with kidney failure.

** One senior dog with severe seizure disorder. One senior dog with neurologic disorder causing paralysis.

OCAP
PO Box 315
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Renew or become a member of OCAP and help lost, abandoned and homeless animals

Ontonagon County Animal Protection Membership



Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ E-Mail _____

I will read your newsletter online at ocappaws.org
Do not send a copy in the mail.

Please Check Below:

Individual Membership New _____ Renewal _____
 Pet Membership (not eligible to vote) _____
 Donation _____

* Memberships run January 1 thru December 31.
Please mail to: OCAP • PO Box 315 • Ontonagon, MI 49953