

Columbia Humane Society Surviving *continued from page 3*

dog walker, and then as an employee cleaning kennels, working her way up the chain of responsibility in one capacity or another. She became certified as an Animal Control Officer and worked for both Columbia County and the Humane Society for several years, so she has seen both sides of the operation. She took a six month break at one time and worked training dogs, but then returned to Animal Control and the Humane Society. She recently took over as Executive Director.

Beggio says CHS had already changed their model of how they were adopting out animals even before the County canceled the contract. Beginning in March of 2017 CHS had closed their kennels to the public and only allows people interested in adopting an animal to meet the animal following an appointment with CHS staff. Previously, anyone could wander through the kennel area to see what animals were available for adoption. Beggio says CHS made this change for several reasons.

"It's very disturbing and stressful to the dogs to have strangers in their area where they live," explains Beggio, "Our first and foremost goal is the health and welfare of the animals that we have in our care. We did a lot of research and there are two other kennels in Portland that use this same model. We were met with a lot of opposition from the public, but now our dogs are much happier, healthier, and quieter. It's really been great for our pets."

Beggio says the new model is also working better for their human adopters. All animals available for adoption are listed online and the interview process allows staff to get to know more about potential adopters. "We spend time with them and get to know them, their family, and their household, and what they are looking for in a pet," says Beggio. "By making good matches we can find a long-term home for the animals and a good fit for the family."

Following the interview adopters are able to meet the pets and are encouraged to spend as much time with any dogs they are considering making part of their family. Beggio says they will hold a dog if a family needs time to make a decision. They will also search for a particular type of dog or a certain personality type if they don't have the right dog at the time of a visit. "They're not buying a jug of milk, they're buying a pet that I want them to take care of for the rest of its

life, and I want people to be sure before they take them home," says Beggio. Beggio notes that the rate of animals at CHS being returned because they don't work out is very low.

Beggio also says limiting access to the kennels cuts back on potential liability. "This is a way that we can protect ourselves," says Beggio.

Beggio says volunteers work with dogs that may not be best suited as family pets, which are often sent for additional training to be working dogs; dogs from CHS have gone on to work in youth corrections facilities, as search and rescue dogs, and as drug dogs. "We just had a dog graduate from the national search program who will be deployed internationally," says Beggio.

CHS will also continue to provide some outreach and services for the communities they service. Their vaccine clinic in January was a huge success, with over 100 dogs receiving discounted vaccinations. They will host a vaccination clinic at the Vernonia Fire Station on Sunday, March 4 from 12:00 - 4:00 pm.

Beggio says she hopes by spring to have a better handle on the financial impact the contract cancellation will have on operations at CHS, and says the facility may be able to start adding back staff and possibly hours. "Ideally we'd like to stay open later into the evening, especially in the summer," says Beggio.

While Beggio says she has a lot of volunteers to help around the shelter, one position where they are always looking for help is on their Board of Directors. The program is run by a 12 person Board and Beggio says she has several positions open and would like to add members from each of the communities in the County the shelter serves. "It's a pretty easy commitment, just one meeting a month here in St. Helens," says Beggio. "We would like to be able to hear from all over the County about what people need from us. There are actually a lot of people around the County that don't even know we exist."

For Beggio the real frustration with the change to how the County handles their Animal Control program is about the animals. Beggio says that shelters in the Pacific

Northwest have really embraced the idea of spay and neuter as a way to control the population of unwanted pets. Shelters in other areas of the country have not done so and end up with too many animals and often have to resort to euthanizing hundreds of dogs every day. CHS will often transfer dogs, space permitting, that have run out of time at other shelters, and then work to find them a home here. The loss of 14 kennels to the County has severely restricted CHS's ability to help more dogs. "I get a kill list every day from shelters down in California, asking us to take these dogs," says Beggio. "That's a big part of my problem with the County coming back into this building - because many of their kennels are currently just sitting there empty. And I know there were 14 dogs that died today that could have been saved. We have a great resource sitting here and it's sitting here empty. That's just sad and heartbreaking."

The Columbia Humane Society is located at 2084 Oregon Street in St. Helens. You can reach them at (503) 397-4353, or go to their website at www.ColumbiaHumane.com. You can also find them on Facebook.

Year of the Dog

T	G	H	R	E	D	F	N	A	Y
S	I	T	Y	O	L	O	V	E	A
P	B	N	G	M	S	Y	M	B	E
L	T	I	R	A	I	E	G	L	S
F	E	N	E	E	S	A	P	I	Y
R	L	S	E	E	H	R	X	W	M
O	D	O	N	M	U	T	U	A	H
L	R	I	W	P	E	H	F	T	A
O	H	A	H	E	W	L	A	O	P
C	T	C	N	C	R	Y	E	W	P
H	X	T	N	U	R	S	A	E	Y
L	H	T	E	A	L	O	Y	N	R
P	Y	R	A	U	R	B	E	F	G
Y	K	C	U	L	O	B	M	Y	S

Happy_Chinese_New_Year_Of_the_Dog
February_Sixteenth_Earth_Element_Yang
Ninth_Lunar_Lucky_Color_Red_Green
Purple_Flowers_Orchid_Rose_Season
Autumn_Earthy_Branch_Symbol TSP 2018

Natural Path to Health: Winter Flues *continued from page 9*

ive. These are all antioxidants and will provide an array of different nutrients to fight off illness.

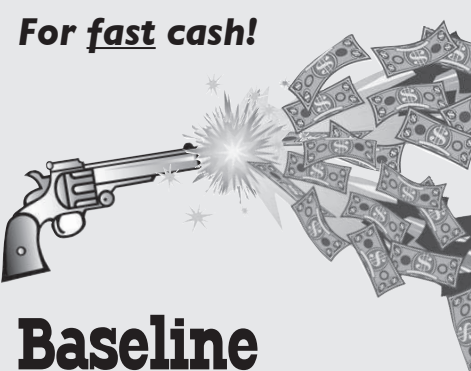
At my office I have an elderberry + immune syrup that has helped many through the season. Feel free to come by and ask questions. Classes will be held at the local Grange to show how to wildcraft and make your own medicine to help yourself stay well through the season. Just rest, take time, eat well, hydrate, and recognize the beauty of what your body can do. Science is always learning... maybe it could learn something from something we already know. Nourishment it

key! Nourish yourself and your children and see what happens.

Thanks for joining me. Be well~

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