

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

What it means to be a no-kill, limited-intake shelter

A man came into the Oregon Coast Humane Society (OCHS) recently with three kittens. The family pet had gotten out and got pregnant. They had taken care of the kittens until they were weaned and now they needed to get the kittens placed into other homes. Our shelter manager explained that we have a waiting list for people to surrender their animals and that he would have to wait until there was room to take in his kittens. The man was very angry at receiving this bad news. People believe that the shelter must accept any animal brought to them, at any time. This is not the case.

OCHS is a non-profit, limited intake, no-kill shelter. What does that mean?

No-kill shelter

This is the most important part of our mission — no-kill. It is a routine practice in large urban, tax-run, shelters to limit their population by euthanizing the older, less desirable animals to make room for the newer, younger animals. OCHS will never do this.

We do not euthanize animals that are healthy. The Animal Welfare Committee must be involved in any decision to euthanize an animal. The best interest of the animal will drive this decision, not the convenience of operating the shelter.

Limited-intake shelter

What does limited intake mean? Our shelter is a small building and

we have crates and cages to house our cats and dogs. Think of this shelter as an apartment building for animals. When all the apartments are full, the shelter cannot accept more animals.

The shelter manager limits the number of animals we let live there. We put animals that need to get in on a waiting list. There is no place to put any more cats this month. Our capacity is about 100 cats. We currently have 100 cats, plus 60 kittens. There are cats and kittens everywhere we can put them!

Non-profit shelter

Oregon Coast Humane Society is a non-profit, privately run animal shelter. We do not get public tax revenue to operate the shelter. It costs a lot of money to feed 100 cats. All 60 of the kittens need to be vaccinated, spayed or neutered, microchipped and dewormed. The cost of caring for so many animals is staggering. There are 160 feline mouths to feed each day.

Our small, dedicated, hardworking shelter staff needs to be paid. Our operating costs include utilities, insurance and building maintenance. We do not pay rent. Lane County owns the land where the shelter was built and has given the humane society a 50-year, no-cost lease. We get our operation funding from donations, membership, fundraisers and the revenue from our Thrift Stores.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By **BETTY ANN BLACHOWICZ**
 BOARD MEMBER, OREGON COAST HUMANE SOCIETY

The Florence community has a very big heart. We have a large volunteer base to help care for the kittens by cleaning food bowls, kennels and litter pans. They provide post-surgery monitoring on spay/neuter day. They socialize and play with the cats and kittens. They take our dogs for walks. They answer the phones at the shelter, provide landscaping help, help with fundraising and work as cashiers at our downtown thrift store.

If you have some time to give, we would love to hear from you. Please come to the shelter or visit our website, oregoncoasthumane.org, to complete a volunteer application.

We have volunteers who provide foster homes for kittens, special needs animals and small dogs. These wonderful families help us increase the capacity of our shelter by taking some of the 60 kittens into their homes for a couple of months. These lucky kittens are cared for, litter-box trained, socialized and played with, to prepare them for being the best pet their new family could hope for.

We have one family who has fostered more than 70 dogs and another family who has cared for hundreds of kittens over the years. (Thank you so much, Bob and Eddie and Ed

and Marge!)

Foster families are desperately needed. If there were more foster homes, we would not have to

keep animals in need on waiting lists. Please contact the shelter at 541-997-4277, if you would like to apply to become a foster family.

The shelter provides food, crate, litter pan, collar, leash, harness and record forms for these foster pets. Medical care includes worming, vaccinations, flea treatments, spay/neuter services, routine medical treatments and contacts for emergency medical treatment. These are all paid for by OCHS.

All animals in foster care are reviewed by the shelter veterinarian on a regular basis. During these visits, the animals are evaluated for general improvement and growth. Foster care providers are required to keep records on the progress of their foster animal and of procedures done at home such as worming and flea treatments.

The shelter works actively to find permanent, loving homes for these foster pets.

There are other ways to help. Our thrift store is a major source of funding for the shelter. Please donate your lightly used household goods to our Bay Street Thrift Store. Your tax deductible donations help us take care of all our animals. And if you are looking for the best bargains in town, this is the place to

shop.

Spay and neuter your cat or dog. This will help to reduce the number of unwanted animals that have to come to our shelter.

When you are looking for your next pet, adopt a shelter dog or cat. These animals are so grateful for their forever homes. They make great pets. All our dogs and cats come to you microchipped, neutered and up to date on their vaccines.

Please consider the Oregon Coast Humane Society in your estate planning. If you cross the rainbow bridge before your pet, we will care for your pet and do our very best to find them another loving home. Contact your lawyer to ensure there is a donation to the shelter in your will and add a statement that it is your desire that OCHS take care of your pet. Better yet, plan ahead and designate a friend or family member to be the custodian for your pet, so that your pet does not need to spend time in the shelter.

Become a member of our local humane society. Your tax-deductible, membership dollars will all stay in our community and help these animals in need. Membership costs \$30 per year. Please contact the shelter or visit our website www.oregoncoasthumane.org to become a member or to make a donation to the Oregon Coast Humane Society.

All your gifts are greatly appreciated by our dogs and cats. Please help us, help them.

LETTERS

Potter's Auto is the best

I've brought my cars to Paul Potter's Automotive Services for about 15 years. I have bought cars from Paul as well. Old cars — I'm pretty old myself, so I'm fond of those oldies-but-goodies. Potter's has the best crew to keep the old cars running.

I bought a sweet Chrysler New Yorker from Potter's a few months back. Old cars usually have problems, of course, but this "Sweet Betsy" soon developed an ignition-electrical problem, like a nasty flu that wanted to slip down into pneumonia.

I'd come to love that car. She is a deep maroon, with a Landau top, made in 1990. She is in near-pristine condition and looks and drives like a Caddy. She gets happy glances when folks see her. Finest model Chrysler ever made.

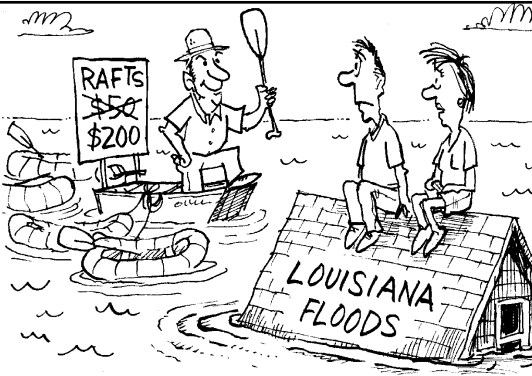
I'm more than just a longtime customer to Paul — we're longtime friends. And we don't throw away a fine machine that someone cared for all these many years. Paul shared the costs and time searching for the source of Betsy's mysterious illness.

In the meantime, Paul sold Potter's Automotive to AJ and Megan Shervin. They hail from Jackson Hole, Wyo.

AJ grew up in the auto repair business. Florence is quite lucky because he comes with a brand-new generation of automotive knowledge. He also provides our community the same family spirit Paul offered Florence all these years.

My Betsy is back on the road again. She's starting up sharp and breathing right and almost as good as new. And, just like Paul always did, AJ gave me a sweet discount just to give me a friendly hello. Thanks Paul and AJ, from a very happy customer.

Francis Archer
 Florence



A responsibility to safety

Kevin Kraft's recent Letter to the Editor ("So-Called Rights," Aug. 17) is the perfect example of the paranoia I referred to in my Letter to the Editor of Aug. 10. My point was that, at the time of the break-in, True Value Hardware in Florence was not equipped to safely and securely sell AK-47s, Glock handguns, or other assault weapons.

Simply put, I said that gun sellers and, by extension gun owners, have a responsibility which too many of them are wont to ignore. I did not suggest repealing the Second Amendment or changing it in any way; although the Supreme Court has ruled that the right to bear arms is not unlimited and doesn't prohibit regulation of firearms.

Unfortunately, many gun owners are so obsessed with protecting their interpretation of

their rights that they leap to conclusions, make assumptions, ignore statistics and spurn any attempt at informed, civil discourse.

While it was not the point of my letter, I cannot let go unchallenged Kraft's claims that tougher gun laws are not the solution.

He cites Chicago as proof of his claim. With a little research he would learn that approximately 60 percent of illegal guns recovered in Chicago are from out of state.

Nearly a quarter of those are from neighboring Indiana, where gun laws are very lax, e.g., gun owners can sell their weapons without background checks or any paperwork recording the sale; lawmakers repealed a prohibition on manufactured sawed-off shotguns; adults can keep guns in their vehicles in school parking lots. Another 22 percent came from parts of Cook County outside the city limits where gun dealers

and gun shows are legal. In other words, if Chicago didn't have tough guns laws, gun violence statistics would be even higher.

Bottom line — common-sense gun laws don't infringe on Second Amendment rights any more than a legal drinking age of 18 infringes on the 21st Amendment.

I, for one, do not understand why a rational, thinking person would not support universal background checks, an assault weapons ban, and limiting firearm magazine capacity to 10 cartridges if it saved the life of even one single innocent child.

Dolly Brock
 Florence

LETTERS POLICY

Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County. Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity.

Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published. All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

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