Chicago Bears’

MATT FORTE

A Force for Bully Breeds

KATRINA REFUGEES
10 YEARS LATER
LONGEVITY FOR DOGS
GO RAW AND OTHER TIPS
PREVENTION
The main tools for reducing the birth of unwanted animals are spay/neuter programs and community outreach. The majority of stray, feral and other homeless pets originate in low-income, under-resourced communities. With the PAWS Chicago Lurie Clinic and the GusMobile Spay/Neuter Van, which brings lifesaving solutions directly to neighborhoods most in need, we perform more than 18,000 spay/neuter surgeries each year.

ADOPTIONS
A robust and visible adoption program is essential to building a No Kill community. Thanks to our adoption centers, offsite events and innovative programming, more than 6,000 animals find loving homes each year. Our Adoption Center in Lincoln Park redefined animal sheltering. PAWS’ first satellite adoption facility—the Glenn L. Felner North Shore Adoption Center—opened in December 2014 and represents an important step in our mission to expand lifesaving and build No Kill communities.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR
Our No Kill commitment means that we give every pet the individualized treatment and rehabilitation they need. Our shelter medicine program helps pets with illnesses and injuries. Our behavior programs provide enrichment and training for pets who have challenging pasts, either suffering mistreatment, abuse or lack of socialization.

VOLUNTEERS
Volunteers are the life force behind every aspect of our lifesaving efforts, from supporting our adoption, medical, spay/neuter, outreach and education programs to serving as foster parents, welcoming pets into their homes. Volunteers dedicate more than 100,000 hours of service each year, fulfilling the work of 50 full-time employees. Without this impassioned labor force, PAWS Chicago would not be possible.

A TRADITION OF NONPROFIT EXCELLENCE
Charity Navigator, the country’s premier independent charity evaluator, has ranked PAWS Chicago the best performing charity in the nation in the Animal Rights, Welfare and Services category. They have also awarded PAWS Chicago their highest 4-star rating for 13 consecutive years. That’s something less than 1 percent of charities evaluated by Charity Navigator have ever received.

Some things are a natural fit. Like Subaru owners and their four-legged copilots. Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive and confidence on the road, and the proud partnership between Subaru retailers and PAWS Chicago. Because anyone willing to give pets a little love deserves some back. Love. It’s what makes a Subaru, a Subaru.

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has since been adopted into Chicago’s dog Heidi, who has since been adopted into a wonderful, new home (page 16).

Bears player Matt Forte (page 24) with PAWS www.jkphotoworks.com

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Carley Champlin
Melissa French
George Castle
Andy Barnes
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ON THE COVER:
Bears player Matt Forte (page 24) with PAWS Chicago’s dog Heidi, who has since been adopted into a wonderful, new home (page 16).

PHOTOGRAPHY:
Andy Barnes

PAWS CHICAGO
Winter 2016

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FROM THE FOUNDER

With the tremendous support and advocacy of the Chicago animal-loving community, we are seeing incredible results for homeless animals in our city.

In 2013, the number of homeless animals euthanized in Chicago fell below 10,000 for the first time, and the positive trend continues. In 2015, while final data is not yet available for all Chicago shelters, it appears the number will remain below this threshold. For example, euthanasia at Chicago Animal Care & Control (CACC), the city pound, was cut by 18 percent.

These numbers represent immense progress, especially when compared to the stunning 42,561 homeless cats and dogs who were killed in Chicago in 1997. That year, we founded PAWS Chicago in an effort to bring to light this horrible epidemic of animals dying simply because they didn’t have homes.

But these numbers also show how far we still have to go to become a No Kill city. Every day, we still see the faces of those dogs and cats that have been left behind, pleading to be rescued. These pets are often the elderly and sick who have been dumped at shelters, animals with the scars of past abuse and those that are never even given a chance.

These animals require focused efforts designed to help reduce the number of dogs and cats that end up in shelters in the first place, and additional strategies to save those who would not otherwise make it out alive.

In this issue of the PAWS Chicago Magazine, we are highlighting some of the programs we have introduced to help these animals, from our project to spay and neuter feral cats in Englewood (see page 12), to our Featured 5 initiative designed to increase the exposure of animals who have been with us for a longer period of time and deserve their own homes (see page 16). Because these pets need special adopters who can provide them with specific lifestyle and health care, they have often been overlooked.

We devoted our cover and the main section of our magazine to the bully breed challenge, which requires both a long-term plan and immediate adoption opportunities for those animals already in the shelter system. Special thanks to Matt Forte for being a voice for these at-risk animals (see page 24). His passion in dedicating his time and attention to helping the Chicago community is truly inspirational.

In 2016, much of our focus will be on expanding our Medical Center. The city pound does not have the space to treat many hurt or ill animals. As we get closer to reaching our goal of a No Kill city, more of the animals we rescue will be sick or injured. And with the Canine Influenza Virus still present in Chicago, many dogs and puppies are being left behind (see page 8). To address these needs, we are planning a massive expansion of our medical facility that will triple our capacity to treat animals in desperate need of help.

We want to thank you for supporting our programs during 2015, and ask you to continue to help us in the coming years as we try to rescue the most vulnerable animals who are still suffering and dying in the shadows of our city.

Thank you for all you do for homeless animals.
Warmest regards,
Paula Fasseas
Founder and Chair
"FOR THE PUPPY MILL INDUSTRY, CHICAGO IS OFFICIALLY OFF LIMITS"

With these words, Chicago City Clerk Susana Mendoza announced that a lawsuit filed by the puppy mill industry to block legislation to end the sale of puppy mill animals in the city had been dismissed in federal court. "This is a victory today for people who believe animals should be treated with compassion. Profiteering from systematic animal abuse is unacceptable in any form."

No longer have a market in the city." Chicago joins at least 70 other municipalities in the United States and Canada that have instituted retail pet sale ordinances.

With the new law, retailers from selling cats, dogs and rabbits obtained from large breeding operations. Instead, retailers can sell animals coming from shelters, rescue organizations or humane societies. "This is a very important change for pets in Chicago," says PAWS Chicago Founder and Chair Paula Fasseas. "It will mean so many more dogs and cats get rescued and fewer die because they don't have homes. It also means puppy mills no longer have a market in the city." Chicago joins at least 70 other municipalities in the United States and Canada that have instituted retail pet sale ordinances.

EMPIRE STARS VISIT ADOPTION CENTER

You may know them as Rhonda Lyon and Anika Calhoun, two women vying for the spotlight in Empire, FOX’s number one TV show. But actresses Kaitlin Doubleday and Grace Gealey are also active animal lovers. They took time off from their busy taping schedules with the drama series to visit the Lincoln Park Adoption Center in July 2015. Grace and Kaitlin used the opportunity to pose for some pictures with PAWS pets Puffin, Grey Goose and Amelia.

‘AJ’S ANIMAL AVENGER COLLECTION’ BENEFITS PAWS

Former WWE Diva AJ Brooks and the designers at Beautiful Disaster Clothing partnered with PAWS to come up with a line of shirts promoting rescue dogs. Beautiful Disaster donated the proceeds to PAWS, and AJ’s PAWS alumni dog Larry (at left) was featured in the design. AJ and her husband, UFC fighter CM Punk, adopted Larry in February 2015. Check out the clothing collection at bdrocks.com.

HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY TO TEAM PAWS

Members of TEAM PAWS are paving the way toward a No Kill Chicago. TEAM PAWS is celebrating its 10th anniversary, with nearly 600 animal lovers taking strides to support PAWS Chicago. Over the past decade, the team has coached about 3,850 members, logged hundreds of thousands of miles and raised critical funds for homeless animals. The Rock ‘n’ Roll Chicago Half Marathon and Bank of America Chicago Marathon are a few of the team’s featured races, but members are encouraged to represent the team in any event of their choice, in any city or country. In 2015, 448 runners took on the Chicago Marathon wearing PAWS Chicago singlets.

TEAM PAWS is comprised of runners from all walks of life. Our youngest member was an 11-year-old who ran a Disney Princess Race and our eldest was a woman from the Bahamas in her late 70s. Members have joined from just about every state, and from the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Mexico and Switzerland.

SIGN UP FOR TEAM PAWS 2016

Join PAWS Chicago’s charity racing team and run to save the lives of homeless animals in Chicago. Our team raised enough money to rescue 2,789 animals in 2015. This year, our goal is to save 3,000 lives. Help us by making your miles matter. Join the team today and enter discount code MAGAZINE to save $10 on any registration option. Visit teampaws.org to sign up.

“MY FAVORITE PART OF BEING ON TEAMS PAWS IS MEETING SO MANY AMAZING NEW PEOPLE WHO SHARE SIMILAR BELIEFS”

– TEAM PAWS member Ken Gasper

NORTH SHORE ADOPTION CENTER NAMED

In September 2015, PAWS Chicago supporters gathered for the official naming of the PAWS Chicago Glenn L. Felner North Shore Adoption Center, and to celebrate the legacy that Glenn is providing for Chicago’s homeless dogs and cats. Glenn’s love for animals has been a constant theme throughout his remarkable life, which includes landing at Normandy six months after the D-Day invasion and helping to liberate the Buchenwald concentration camp.

The Glenn L. Felner Center, which opened in December 2014 inside the Highland Park Petco, is PAWS Chicago’s first satellite adoption center. PAWS opened the facility to help find more homes for pets who need them—especially large dogs popular with suburban families—and to bring our progressive sheltering practices to a new community of adopters. We adopted 622 animals into new homes in 2015 through the Center.

Learn more about the Center at pawschicago.org/northshore.
THE DOGIST FEATURES PAWS PUPS
Elias Weiss Friedman, also known as The Dogist, is the creator of a wildly popular Instagram feed, with 1.7 million followers, that captures the beauty of dogs. He photographs dogs in shelters and on the streets of cities across the world.

The Dogist made an appearance in October 2015 at Anderson’s Bookshop in suburban La Grange to promote his new book and to speak on how photography can make a difference in a pet’s life. To coincide with his visit to the area, The Dogist featured PAWS dogs Sedna and Brian on Instagram, both of whom have since been adopted. Follow The Dogist on Instagram at @thedogist.

CHICAGO MAGAZINE NAMES PAWS TOP 20 CHARITY
PAWS Chicago was recognized among the top 20 Chicago charities to support in 2015 by Chicago Magazine. With the help of Charity Navigator, Chicago Magazine narrowed down its choices from 18,000 local nonprofit organizations to 71 that received Charity Navigator’s top ranking of four stars. From that list, nonprofit consultants and community leaders helped rank the best charities by category based on the impact each organization has on the city.

OTHER HONORS
PAWS Chicago was named best charity by the Chicago Reader for the fifth year in a row and was recently selected as a “Shelter of Excellence” by Animal Planet.
**THE CANINE FLU IMPACT**

*by Jake Van Heel*

**IT HAS BEEN NEARLY A YEAR SINCE THE NEW STRAIN OF THE DOG FLU, OR CANINE INFLUENZA VIRUS (CIV), FIRST STRUCK THE CHICAGO AREA.** While it started in dog boarding and daycare facilities, it is now impacting Chicago Animal Care & Control, the city pound, most severely. Because of the large populations of animals exposed to one another and a lack of isolation facilities, virtually every dog at the pound has CIV, which means some rescue groups and shelters had to cut down or stop taking in dogs. CIV-exposed animals need to be quarantined for up to 30 days to avoid spreading the virus. All CIV-infected dogs require isolation and other dogs, for up to 30 days. CIV is airborne, so direct exposure to other dogs must be limited. While CIV is highly contagious, most instances of dogs improve within a week of showing symptoms. Since antibiotics are not effective against CIV, treatment is primarily care to bolster the immune system and alleviate symptoms, though antibiotics may be prescribed if there is concern of a secondary infection.

**PAWS CHICAGO CIV RESPONSE**

PAWS Chicago has been able to continue to save CIV-positive dogs from the pound by utilizing the Medical Center on 26th Street to quarantine infected animals. The Medical Center has a large, previously unused space that has been converted into a CIV ward for the infected animals.

The PAWS Chicago Medical Center is the only facility in Chicago equipped to take in a large volume of CIV cases. In 2015, PAWS treated more than 300 animals with CIV and currently has about 60 in quarantine with the illness, along with many others in foster homes.

To increase capacity to save more dogs with CIV, PAWS recently launched the Foster First program. Families without dogs are able to foster a dog during the isolation period in order to open space at the Medical Center to save more CIV-infected animals. Once the foster dog is medically cleared, the foster family can adopt the dog.

**MEDICAL CENTER EXPANSION**

While the CIV crisis hit Chicago particularly hard, it is only one in a long list of infectious diseases that continually impact shelter populations. The limitations of the current Medical Center, particularly isolation space, have created a bottleneck in PAWS’ ability to take in more animals. In addition to treating sick animals, the Medical Center is the first stop for every pet rescued by PAWS. Each animal is given a complete medical exam, dentistry and spay/neuter surgery.

Dealing with the volume of CIV-positive dogs has brought sharp focus to the need for PAWS Chicago to expand its Medical Center in 2016, with the goal of tripling its capacity to treat animals in need.

“As we get closer to No Kill, we are seeing a larger percentage of homeless cats and dogs who are either sick or injured,” says Paula Fasseas, PAWS Chicago Founder and Chair. Currently, more than 75 percent of the animals brought into its capacity to treat sick and injured animals has brought sharp focus to the need for PAWS Chicago to expand its Medical Center in 2016, with the goal of tripling its capacity to treat animals in need.

**CIV: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

H3N2, the particular strain of CIV that was found in Chicago in April 2015 has never before been seen in the U.S., making it highly contagious. It is not known how the virus made its way to the city but it has since spread to 24 states. Animals in shelters and kennels are at special risk of catching this virus.

CIV is a flu, not a life-threatening disease. Dogs with CIV typically have a persistent and lingering cough, fever and runny nose. They may be lethargic, depressed or have a decreased appetite. The virus itself is not a risk, but it can cause secondary infections, like pneumonia, particularly for dogs with weakened immune systems or those who are very young or senior. Because most dogs have not had any exposure to CIV, they do not have immunity to this disease. This means that many dogs will be susceptible and get sick. A dog can be contagious and shed the virus, which could spread to other dogs, for up to 30 days. CIV is airborne, so direct exposure to other animals must be limited. While CIV is highly contagious, in most instances dogs improve within a week of showing symptoms. Since antibiotics are not effective against CIV, treatment is primarily care to bolster the immune system and alleviate symptoms, though antibiotics may be prescribed if there is concern of a secondary infection.

**Learn more about:**

CIV at pawschicago.org/civ

The Foster First program at pawschicago.org/fosterfirst

Medical Center expansion at pawschicago.org/medicalcenter

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**Discover more PAWS Chicago programs:**

Adopt a Pet Today! pawschicago.org/adopt

Foster First pawschicago.org/fosterfirst

Medical Center expansion pawschicago.org/medicalcenter

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**What you need to know:**

- **CIV:** Can be contagious and shed the virus, which could spread to other dogs, for up to 30 days.
- **Symptoms:** Cough, fever and runny nose. They may be lethargic, depressed or have a decreased appetite.
- **Prevention:** Avoid direct exposure to other animals.
- **Treatment:** Care to bolster the immune system and alleviate symptoms.
- **Antibiotics:** Not effective against CIV.

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**Learn more:**

Visit pawschicago.org for more information.

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**Discover more PAWS Chicago programs:**

Adopt a Pet Today! pawschicago.org/adopt

Foster First pawschicago.org/fosterfirst

Medical Center expansion pawschicago.org/medicalcenter

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**PAWS HELPS ENGLEWOOD’S COMMUNITY CATS**

By John Caruso

**HIS NAME IS CAT-DOG, AND HE BELONGS TO NO ONE AND EVERYONE.** He is one of many community cats roaming Englewood, a Chicago neighborhood with little access to veterinary services. Cat-Dog got his name because he is friendly, engaging, and loyal—qualities many residents associate with dogs. He’s also been known to chase his share of neighborhood dogs.

“He’s always there, ready to jump in someone’s car or sleep on a porch,” Margaret, a resident of Englewood, told PAWS Chicago Community Outreach Manager Laurie Maxwell. “He looks like a cat, but acts like a dog.”

Cat-Dog is one of more than 1,000 cats spayed or neutered by PAWS Chicago in Englewood with funding from PetSmart Charities over two years. The program focused on cats who are looking out for him. I worry about him like my kid. I go out looking for him if he doesn’t come back,” she says. “I’m his mom. He knows he can always come home, get some sleep, have a good meal. He knows he’s safe here and no one will mess with him here.”

And when Cat-Dog is away from Margaret’s home, he is definitely not adding to the feline overpopulation problem. He has been vaccinated. He is healthy. And he has people who are looking out for him. Since the PAWS for Life initiative began in November 2014, community members have been enthusiastic about the benefits of spay/neuter and readily participate. “We have been overwhelmed by the positive response from the Englewood community. Ninety percent of the unaltered pets we meet end up getting spayed/neutered through our program,” Maxwell says.

If PAWS’ staff and volunteers hadn’t been active in Englewood, then stories like Margaret’s—and Cat-Dog’s—may have ended very differently. Margaret, an Englewood resident, developed a particular affection for Cat-Dog when he began showing up at her home for a meal or companionship. He would wait on her porch, but always declined invitations to come inside. “He knew he was cold. So I opened the door for him, said ‘Come on kitty’ and he ducked in the house so fast! He’s been coming in my house ever since.”

When PAWS staff met Margaret, she explained she would like to give Cat-Dog a permanent home inside, but all attempts she made were futile. Cat-Dog wanted his freedom. PAWS arranged free neuter and veterinary care for Cat-Dog through the PetSmart grant. The hope was that once he was neutered, Cat-Dog would acclimate better to indoor life. However, Cat-Dog still chose to come and go.

Margaret made peace with this arrangement, but does whatever she can to keep him safe. “If I don’t see him I worry about him. I worry about him like my kid. I go out looking for him if he doesn’t come back,” she says. “He knows he has people who are looking out for him. He has people who are caring about him.”

**About trap neuter return**

PAWS Chicago spayed and neutered 4,867 community cats during 2015 across the Chicago area. The PAWS Chicago Trap Neuter Return (TNR) program provides a humane approach to outdoor cat control and a proven method for reducing the number of homeless animals.

Working closely with volunteers and community members, PAWS traps community cats and provides them with spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations and microchipping. Their ears are also tipped to indicate they have already been spayed or neutered. If cats are not tame enough for adoption, they are returned to where they were living, where community caretakers and volunteers continue to feed them, provide shelter and keep an eye on their well-being.

Ultimately, TNR results in healthy and well-cared for colonies, while gradually diminishing the overall number of cats because they are no longer reproducing. There also is an immediate reduction in complaints about behaviors associated with unsterilized cats, including spraying and fighting. And by having a controlled cat colony, there will be significantly fewer rodents in the neighborhood.

Learn more about this program at pawschicago.org/tnr.
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WHILE PAWS CHICAGO FOUND LOVING HOMES FOR NEARLY 6,000 PETS OVER THE PAST YEAR, certain cats and dogs sometimes get overlooked and need a little extra exposure. A pet requiring a specific type of home may end up at the PAWS adoption centers for more than a few weeks, or even months.

PAWS Chicago’s commitment to helping every pet find a loving home led to the creation of the Featured 5 Adoption Program to help potential adopters with the special care or needs that come with their new family member. Under this Program, cat adopters receive a year of Merrick Pet Care cat food and wellness care, including blood work, heartworm tests and vaccinations. Dog adopters receive a year of Merrick Pet Care dog food, a year of wellness care and a year of training at the PAWS Chicago Training Center.

COVER GIRL HEIDI

You may have noticed the pretty bully breed posing with Bears player Matt Forte on the cover of the magazine. That cover girl is Heidi, a 5-year-old, one-eyed American Staffordshire mix, and one of the Featured Five dogs adopted into a wonderful, new home in November 2015. “Heidi’s doing great and we all love having her,” adopter Sarah says. “She’ll cuddle up with anyone and everyone. She even gets recognized during walks.”

MEET THE FEATURED 5

by Sam Bautista

LILITH

Two-year-old Lilith enjoys quality playtime, although she suffers from a rare condition known as subvalvular pulmonic stenosis, which restricts the flow of blood to the heart. Lilith knows her limitations and will rest as needed. She does require ongoing medication, but she doesn’t let her condition get her down.

PERSIE

This 2-year-old Hound mix would make a great workout partner for an active adopter. Persie is full of energy and gets along well with other large dogs who share her rough and tumble play style. She is an intelligent pup who can make a game out of anything. When the day is done, she will be your snuggle buddy.

“We adopted Heidi because of her sweet disposition, and hearing about how badly she needed a home just sealed the deal since we could provide one.”

— HEIDI’S ADOPTER, SARAH

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IN FALL 2005, AFTER SEEING HEART-WRENCHING IMAGES OF TERRIFIED ANIMALS AND DESPERATE FAMILIES TRYING TO SURVIVE IN THE AFTERMATH OF ONE OF THE WORST HURRICANES AND FLOODS IN U.S. HISTORY, A FIVE-VEHICLE CONVOY OF PAWS VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF LEFT FOR THE GULF COAST. THEY RETURNED 41 HOURS LATER WITH 70 ANIMALS, HELPING CLEAR CROWDED SHELTERS TO MAKE ROOM FOR MORE AND MORE INCOMING PETS. THE DOGS AND CATS ARRIVED IN CHICAGO, EXHAUSTED BUT SAFE, AND IN DESPERATE NEED OF NEW HOMES.

Word about the Katrina animals spread across Chicago, and when the pets were fully vetted and available for adoption a few days later, more than 500 people turned out to adopt. In the first day of adoptions, more than 55 animals impacted by the storm found their new families. PAWS made return trips in the following weeks and months, helping save more than 200 animals and uniting them with the most wonderful adoptive families.

As the years have gone by, some of the Katrina animals have passed away. Others remain healthy and happy. Many still show small but lingering signs of their trauma: an aversion to water, a fear of thunderstorms or loud noises. But overriding these memories is their basic resilience, promoted by the lasting love of their adoptive families and returned with compounded interest.

“She will know it is heaven when we see her again,” wrote PAWS Chicago Board Member Charles Day, after his dog, Maude, passed away in November 2014. “The wind that brought her to us blew up from the south nine years ago. Along the way, it picked up a terrified 9-month-old puppy in Louisiana and dropped her into the PAWS clinic. Which is where we met her, huddled and catatonic and afraid in a small crate.”

“WE ALL FELT HELPLESS AND WANTED TO DO SOMETHING, ANYTHING TO HELP RELIEVE ANY SUFFERING.”

SALLY SPRINKLE

No animal or adopter came away from Katrina unchanged. Maude never fully recovered from the hurricane. Found wandering the streets around New Orleans in the aftermath of Katrina, the efforts to trap her scarred her for life. Until the last of her days, the arrival of a stranger sent her into a panic; a fear hardwired so deeply that only a handful of people made it all the way through her defenses,” Charles says. But “to do so gave you access to the unbridled joy that defined her when she felt safe. She didn’t run to you, she bounced. She didn’t wag her tail, she thumped it, the sound loud enough to fill a home.

“The fear that held her back from every stranger meant that her love, when given, was as precious as any breath.”

The rescue worked both ways for Sally Sprinkle. Her black Lab adoptee, Cajun, was Sally’s emotional savior in 2009 as her marriage ended, she was laid off in the Great Recession, lost her home, and then relocated across-country from LaGrange, a suburb of Chicago, to the San Francisco area.

Sally recalls watching the Katrina devastation unfold on television. “We all felt helpless and wanted to do something, anything to help relieve any suffering, be it human or animal, that we could.”

She decided to adopt a Katrina dog. “I went down on a very hot Chicago day and took my lottery number. It was 68, and at the time I was convinced that my number was so high that all the dogs would certainly be gone. When I finally got in, I wandered through the different rooms until I found a small black Lab puppy curled up in the back of his cage looking scared. I asked if I could take him out and see him. He climbed high up on my shoulder and put his head on my shoulder and put his head down,” she says. “It was love at first sight.”

Sally’s voice begins breaking up as she talks about Cajun, who died three years ago at the age of 7 of an intestinal illness. She remains inspired by her Katrina dog. “I am now involved with Lab rescue here in Northern California and have fostered five dogs in honor of the best dog a girl could have ever had, my Cajun!”

In Island Lake, teacher-activist Jan Belzer adopted Louie, who was named after New Orleans’ Louis Armstrong. He’s a senior now, but “Louie looks like he hasn’t aged a day,” Jan says.

She came down to PAWS and “was one of the first 10 people in line and he was in the first vanload of dogs brought up from the affected area. He had been put in a cage in the first room off the reception area. I walked in and pulled the tag on his cage. At the time, I was unaware that his leg was broken and that he had a buckshot wound on the back of his neck,” Jan says.

“Louie has been a complete blessing. He runs and jumps like a puppy and entirely enjoys living on Island Lake and being the center of attention.”

Louie truly came to the right household. In 2005, as head of a Palatine elementary school district teacher’s union, Jan spearheaded the raising of about $50,000 for Katrina victims, an amount matched by the McCormick Foundation.

The condition of the Katrina rescue dogs traveling from a way station in Arkansas to the PAWS Chicago Medical Center following the storm are still difficult for then-PAWS volunteer Kylie Gordon to recount.

“The hardest part emotionally was how sick and sad and vacant the animals were when we picked them up. They were very frail. I wanted instantaneously for them to be better. At least I knew it was a step in the right direction.”

The greater good of saving innocent lives made the exhausting and dirty conditions in which the volunteer found herself well worth it.

Now relocated to the San Francisco area, Kylie says that the arduous journey has increased in value through the years as she hears about Katrina rescue thriving in loving homes in Chicago and beyond.

“I think it’s the adoptive families who are the heroes here, who took the time to be patient and rehabilitate the animals and give them the kind of home they deserve,” she says.
Below are a few stories of animals PAWS rescued following Katrina and the incredible impacts they had on their families.

BUZZ

“I couldn’t believe when PAWS called to say he’d be mine. Buzz is a perfect fit for me. He kept my Dad company while I went to work each day. My favorite memory/moment with Buzz was watching him with my Dad, who has now passed away.”

– Carol Ann Dvorak

RODNEY

“Rodney has now been a member of the family for 10 years! And what a 10 years it has been. During that time, we’ve added three children to our family. These days, he is content to lounge on the bed in the sunshine while the kids are at school and then he follows them around the house at night while they are home. He’s very protective of all of us.”

– Kathy Farrow and Rachel Hegarty

LUCY

“Lucy brought us so much joy. She was also a bit of a celebrity. Several times when we walked her around town, people stopped us and asked if she was one of the Katrina dogs. She was the most protective pup and she always stood guard over my children’s strollers. We lost Lucy last winter and miss her very much.”

– Nicole Cready

OTIS AND MIA

“I can’t believe Otis and Mia are now 10 years old. I had just bought a new condo in 2005 and living on my own for the first time, I knew I wanted to adopt a couple of cats. I can’t imagine the space without them, and the best part of coming home is having them greet me at the door.”

– Patti Schintgen

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CHICAGO BEARS RUNNING BACK MATT FORTE, ONE OF THE BEST RUSHERS IN THE NFL, IS STILL NOT FAST ENOUGH TO WIN RACES AGAINST HIS DOG, ALI.

Forte has been a force on offense during his eight seasons in Chicago, and is one of the top rushers in the National Football League. He is known for tough workouts, but he hasn’t become one of the NFL’s best rushers on his own. Forte gets help from 3-year-old bully breed, Ali.

Forte often works out at The Hill, a spot in Arlington Heights that Bears Hall-of-Famer Walter Payton used for notoriously difficult workouts. When Forte heads out to The Hill from his home in River North, he brings Ali, who joins him on sprints up and down The Hill.

“I used to win, but he’s gotten a lot faster as he’s gotten older,” Forte says. “Sometimes I let him run around and chase me like I’m dodging defenders.”

Ali has brought much more to Forte than help on the football field. The dog lives with Matt; his wife, Danielle; their 2-year-old daughter, Nala; newborn son, Matthew Jr.; and their 5-year-old Yorkshire Terrier, Taz. Ali is a big and much-loved part of the Forte family.

As Matt and Danielle talk about life with their dogs, Ali sits quietly while Nala climbs all over him. The Fortes knew that Ali would be protective of their newest family member.

“Ali would never sit with his back toward Nala. He would always face her, no matter where she was. She would be sleeping, and every 15, 20 minutes, he would sniff her, check on her, and go sit back down by her,” Forte says.

“Taz was the first dog the Fortes brought home. Matt and Danielle knew they wanted to have children, so they didn’t make choices lightly when it was time to add a second dog. They wanted a family-friendly pet. Forte says before he brought home Ali, his family worried because of the bad reputation of bully breeds.”

Continued on page 26
While Taz was trained at a kennel, Matt took on the task of go and try to sneak one of the toys away when Ali’s not with him.”

“I like to get Ali all riled up. It’s good exercise for him. Taz is protective of the family,” Forte says. “When I’m not at home, I know that he is protective of the family.” Forte says, he would like to see more people consider them.

Forte has to balance his time with his dogs with the responsibility, so make sure you’re able to take care of the dog, and provide for it.”

Because of his love for dogs, Forte has become the latest bully breed ambassador for PAWS Chicago’s Adopt-a-Bull events. Created to dispel myths, raise awareness about the dog, and provide for it.”

“Matt is a wonderful ambassador for bully breeds. He has such a big heart for kids and animals, and he uses his fame to impact the lives of others,” says PAWS Founder and Chair Paula Fasseas. “You can just feel the love for his family and his dogs. It’s special to see.”

“WHEN I’M NOT AT HOME, I KNOW THAT HE IS PROTECTIVE OF THE FAMILY. IT’S GOOD TO HAVE A DOG WHO CAN DO THAT AND ALSO BE GENTLE WITH KIDS.”

— MATT FORTE

Continued from page 25

“Everybody thinks bully breeds are mean, vicious dogs, which they aren’t. So they were kind of concerned when we first were getting one, asking, ‘What about when y’all have kids?’ But we told them and sent them some of the research about the dogs,” Forte says.

The forts found Ali to be the perfect addition to the family, but they were sure to find out what their dogs needed to be happy and healthy.”

“All dogs need a certain amount of exercise and all that, and it’s good to be informed whether you’re getting a dog or not. Just to know, and not discriminate against them,” he says.

They had made the decision to get a bully breed, but hadn’t yet found the right one. Matt surprised Danielle when he picked her up from the airport. Ali was in the backseat. While Taz was trained at a kennel, Matt took on the task of training Ali himself.

“I put him in the crate right next to my bed, and he got it right away. He would bark early in the morning—it was kind of like having a baby—at like five o’clock in the morning. Then I’d put him in the grass, so that he would correlate the grass with using the bathroom. He learned from there, and I taught him to sit, and everything came pretty quick with him.”

With Ali and Taz trained, Forte now has a more playful relationship with his dogs. He sometimes brings Ali to Halas Hall, where the Bears train, and Ali knows how each dog he sees there likes to play.

“I like to get Ali all riled up. It’s good exercise for him. Taz is hilarious because he likes to just sit there and watch. He’ll go and try to sneak one of the toys away when Ali’s not looking,” he says.

Forte is usually the one in charge of the dogs’ care, including walking, feeding and discipline. “When I say their names, if I say it too loud, they know Daddy’s home,” Forte says.

Forte has to balance his time with his dogs with the demands of a professional football player. During the season, he gets just one day off a week. He travels for at least eight away games, and spends much of the late summer in Bourbonnais, Illinois, for Bears’ training camp.

Forte is also very active in the Chicago community. He founded the What’s Your Forte? Foundation in 2013 to help at-risk kids in the Chicago area by providing mentoring and scholarships. He also spends many Saturdays in the Englewood neighborhood, coaching a flag-football team and teaching kids about teamwork. In 2015, Forte was nominated for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award, which recognizes players for their community service.

When Forte is away from home, having Ali with his family gives him some peace of mind. “When I’m not at home, I know that he is protective of the family,” Forte says. “It’s good to have a dog who can do that and also be gentle with kids.”

Bully breeds are becoming more popular for families, and Forte says, he would like to see more people consider them.

“Read up on them. Get informed about the breed of dog and their names, if I say it too loud, they know. Daddy’s home,” he says. “Obviously owning a pit is a large responsibility, so make sure you’re able to take care of the dog, and provide for it.”

Visually identifying a bully breed isn’t easy, according to Dr. John Ciribassi, of Chicagoland Veterinary Behavior Consultants. “A large number of breeds and mixed breeds have that same body type. To the untrained eye, a lot of dogs look the same.”

Terms such as “pit bull” and “bully breeds” are used to describe a number of breeds, including the American Pit Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and Bull Terriers. Many mixed breed dogs also are included, based only on how they look.

Studies show that even people who work with animals often cannot correctly identify bully breeds. Research by Maddie’s Shelter Medicine Program and the University of Florida compared the DNA for 100 shelter dogs with visual identifications from more than 5,000 dog breeders, trainers, veterinarians and shelter staff.

Breed identification was considered correct if a breed representing at least 25 percent of a dog’s genetic makeup was selected. The study found that respondents correctly identified a prominent breed an average of 27 percent of the time.

Test your ability to accurately identify breeds. All the mixed-breed dogs shown here were given DNA tests. A particular breed was considered “significant” if it made up 50 percent or more of the dog’s genetic makeup and “distant” if it made up 12.5 to 24 percent. If the dog was found to be between 25 and 49 percent, it was labeled as having “some” trace of that genetic background.

**CAN YOU PICK OUT THE BULLY BREED?**
When "bully breeds" can be confusing and misleading.

When the term "bully breeds" is used, it often refers to a group of dogs based on appearance has had dire consequences. These dogs are the most commonly euthanized in shelters today.

The pit bull has become "the only breed that people bother," writes Tom Junod in The State of The American Dog. When a pit bull is classified in a manner that is specific as to breed. But breeds are still banned in some Illinois towns and cities because of a home rule provision in the Illinois constitution that gives some municipalities the power to override state law.

But fortunes changed for bully breeds in the 1980s as a breed of dogs was lumped into this category, often wrongly, based on the appearance of the dog. A pit bull is never anything but a pit bull.

But the terms "pit bull" and "bully breeds" can be confusing and misleading. These names are used to describe a group of breeds, including the American Pit Bull Terrier, any "aggressive behavior toward humans is uncharacteristic of the breed and highly undesirable." But breed-specific laws ban or restrict the keeping of dogs by breed and typically target pit bulls.

Bullying breeds can be traced back to 18th-century England, where people bred Bulldogs with Terriers, some for use in animal fighting, but also for many other jobs. When these dogs came to America, they had a variety of roles, including working on farms or serving as travelling companions and family pets. According to the United Kennel Club, the first registry to recognize the American Pit Bull Terrier, any "aggressive behavior toward humans is uncharacteristic of the breed and highly undesirable." But fortunes changed for bully breeds in the 1980s as a minority of these dogs were bred and used for dogfighting. During this period, media coverage of dog bite incidents created a myth of bully breed unpredictability, according to Karen Delise, founder of the National Canine Resource Council. "It was the great misfortune of the pit bull to be the new "fad" dog and thus the new dog found in incidents of attacks at the very same time when the media stopped reporting triggers or events which precipitated an attack."

As bully breeds were accused more often than other dogs of biting attacks, some municipalities enacted breed-specific legislation. These regulations ban or restrict the keeping of dogs by breed and typically target pit bulls. Although some states specifically ban breeds, Illinois' Animal Welfare Act declares that "vicious dogs shall not be classified in a manner that is specific as to breed." But breeds are still banned in some Illinois towns and cities because of a home rule provision in the Illinois constitution that gives some municipalities the power to override state law.

Cities and towns with existing breed-specific bans or restrictions include Addison, Buffalo Grove, Golf, Lincolnwood, North Chicago, Markham and Maywood in the Chicago area. The Chicago City Council decided against breed-specific bans a few times in the last 15 years, instead focusing on licensing and penalties for owners.

**FROM WAR HERO TO MENACE**

While critics of bully breeds argue that they are involved in a disproportionate number of attacks against people, studies show that these dogs have more incidence of aggression than other groups. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, "Controlled studies reveal no increased risk for the group blamed most often for dog bites, 'pit bull-type dogs.' Reporting biases and misidentification led the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to stop tracking breed information in relation to bite statistics in 1999.

Some experts believe that when breeds are identified in controlled studies, some bully breeds are actually slightly less aggressive than other breeds. Of the 870 American Pit Bull Terriers tested by the American Temperament Test Society, 86.8 percent passed. Mixed breed dogs passed 86.6 percent of the time, higher than the Border Collie (81.5 percent) and Golden Retriever (85.2 percent).

Bullying breeds were not always demonized. The nation’s first war hero dog, Sgt. Stubby, was a short brindle Bull Terrier mutt who may be labeled a bully breed today. The Little Rascals’ dog, Petye, was also a bully breed, as was Helen Keller’s therapy dog, Sir Thomas. An account of Keller’s first meeting with the dog said, “He rubbed his nose on her skirt, and when she knelt down, put his chin on her knee.”

“IT’S REALLY A DOG-BY-DOG THING, NOT A BREED-SPECIFIC THING, WHEN YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOR.”
— ADAM BOYKO, CORNELL UNIVERSITY

But as even research shows that the labeling of particular groups of dogs is inaccurate, the bad reputation of bullying breeds is not easily overcome. "The intense and persistent media and political attention given to pit bull attacks has skewed our perceptions so dramatically that we no longer have a balanced view of the dangerousness of a very few dogs against the extreme tolerance and contributions that millions of other dogs provide," Delise wrote in her book, The Pit Bull Placebo.

"For every pit bull that attacks someone, there are tens of thousands of his brethren that tolerate all the conditions humans place them in, from loving homes to horrific conditions of abuse."
Tough Odds

Half the Bully Breed Dogs Who End Up in the Chicago City Pound Do Not Get Out Alive.

By Danielle Gordon

Two 10-month-old chocolate brown dogs tentatively stepped out of a van in the parking lot of Chicago Animal Care & Control (CACC), the city pound. Sage, the smaller of the dogs, crumbled to the ground, too scared to move. She had to be carried inside the building. Her brother, Gio, resisted all the way, his owner requiring assistance to control him as they entered the facility.

Once in the reception area, the elderly man who had brought the dogs to CACC sat on a bench filling out paperwork. Sage stood close by, looking to the man and to her brother for reassurance. She was the runt of the litter, brown with a thin white line down her nose.

Why, on a sunny August afternoon when other dogs were at home or out on walks, were Sage and Gio being entered the facility?

Progress is being made. In the first half of 2015, 50.8 percent of bully breeds survived the pound, up from 39.2 percent in the first half of 2013. But even with this increase in lives saved, bully breeds are 2.8 times more likely to die at CACC than other types of dogs.

At the city pound, after their owner left, Sage and Gio were placed in separate cages in long cement block pavilions. Some dogs, like Gio, stand at the front of their cages and bark at passersby, others, like Sage, plaster themselves against the back walls, avoiding eye contact.

Sage and Gio’s parents should have been spayed or neutered, the men agreed. But they also explained they had neither the money to pay for nor the information on who to contact to arrange for low-cost surgeries.

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Gio was found to be aggressive and was euthanized for “untreatable behavioral” issues on August 22, 2015, two days after arriving. Sage got sick while at the pound, likely suffering from the canine flu that hit Chicago earlier this year. She was fearful, urinating when spoken to, lunging at strangers and growling in retreat. She was euthanized for severe illness on August 28, but it would have been unlikely for her to have found a home when so many friendly and sociable dogs are still dying.

Prevention, Prevention, Prevention

Like Sage and Gio, many bully breeds end up at the pound because owners lack access to spay/neuter or animal care resources. In 2015, nearly 47 percent of all the dogs at CACC were picked up as strays, 32 percent were given up by their owners and nearly 10 percent were confiscated by authorities.

To decrease the number of unwanted animals ending up at the shelter, PAWS Chicago started the PAWS for Life Outreach Program in Englewood in November 2014. PAWS staff and volunteers go door to door in Englewood, bringing spay/neuter and vet services to families. The biggest obstacles to these services in Englewood are a lack of finances, transportation and information regarding options, according to Laurie Maxwell, PAWS Outreach Manager. But when these barriers are lifted, about 90 percent of owners sign their pets up for surgery.

“People are not breeding pit bulls as part of dogfighting,” Maxwell says. “Most litters I see are just accidents. The message is simple: prevention, prevention, prevention. PAWS data shows that out of 427 dogs encountered in Englewood, only 11 were intentionally bred. About 45 percent of the dogs in this neighborhood are bully breeds. ‘There’s simply an oversupply of these dogs. It’s not people actively looking to get a pit bull; it’s just that they are readily available.’”

Maxwell points to Juanita as an example of how PAWS can help reduce the number of accidental litters. Juanita’s dogs Princess and Lucky had given birth at least five times. “My dogs are my family. They eat when I eat, they sleep when I sleep, they watch TV when I watch TV! I love them more than anything,’” says Maxwell.

Maxwell was able to set up spay/neuter appointments and transportation for every dog in Juanita’s building. “She was so thrilled and relieved,” says Maxwell. “She told me, ‘My dogs are my family. They eat when I eat, they sleep when I sleep, they watch TV when I watch TV! I love them more than anything.’”

Once in a while Maxwell meets a person who resists the idea of spaying and neutering their dogs. In response, she points out some of the advantages of getting a dog fixed, including reduced aggression, marking and roaming. Changing minds takes listening and patience, Maxwell says. But once it starts, and as long as resources are available, it has a ripple effect across a community. “People tell friends and family, and they start coming to us asking for spay/neuter services.”

Once a dog enters the city pound system, the primary way out is through a private rescue or shelter. In 2015, about 37 percent of all dogs were transferred out of CACC to private groups, nearly 14 percent were returned to their owners and 6 percent were adopted directly from CACC.

PAWS takes in the most bully breeds from CACC, and is the pound’s largest transfer partner. “We look for a variety of dogs. We are not a breed-specific rescue,” according to PAWS Founder and Chair Paula Fasseas. The number of dogs who can be brought into the program also depends on available space in PAWS Medical and Adoption Centers.

In July 2015, PAWS rescued Waffle Sundae, who came to CACC as a stray. She gave birth to six puppies at the pound. Two-year-old Waffle and her puppies were suffering from ringworm. They were treated at the PAWS Medical Center. After they recovered, all the puppies were quickly adopted.

But Waffle is still awaiting adoption. This 61-pound American Staffordshire mix is affectionate, energetic and loves long walks, according to volunteers who work with her. Waffle currently is in a special program for PAWS dogs who need additional training, where she’s working on socialization and her leash manners. PAWS is looking for a home for Waffle that does not have small children or other dogs. The number of families interested in adopting bully breeds like Waffle has been growing, Maxwell says. “There’s been a recognized shift in perception over the past 10 years.” Still, there are obstacles for potential adopters, including a shortage of pet-friendly housing and breed-specific bans in some communities.

In April 2015, PAWS started holding Adopt-a-Bull awareness events to address the misconceptions surrounding bully breeds. The History Channel’s Danielle Colby was PAWS’ first bully breed ambassador. Colby adopted her dog, Vida, from PAWS. “The bull breed has been mislabeled and widely misunderstood for too long,” says Colby. Chicago Bears player Matt Forte will be PAWS’s next bully breed ambassador (see page 24).
Is there anything people need to consider when meeting a bully breed on the street?  

Not any more than any other dog. My feeling is if someone is walking a dog on the street, then you always ask if the dog can be approached before you dive in and approach it.

What about when out on a walk with their own dog?  

It’s always proper etiquette for anyone walking his or her own dog to give a wide berth to any other dog. Most of the problems happen when everyone assumes that every dog can be approached. Most dogs can’t be approached on leash and it doesn’t have anything to do with breed. Of course a larger, stronger dog could cause more damage if you made the wrong choice. However, a lot of the little dogs are extremely reactive and vocal, and will bite a dog who comes up. All dog owners should be aware that not every dog wants to be approached.

Do potential bully breed adopters need to know and/or do anything prior to adopting?  

First, keep in mind that it’s a big, strong breed. Bully breed temperaments come in a wide range, so you might go in for a bully breed and have the most sweet, mellow, easy dog that doesn’t fit the general standards of a powerful, active dog. Whenever you look at a particular group of dogs you want to make sure that it’s the right fit for you.

Second, consider whether you have the right space for the dog. A lot of housing is prejudice against bully breeds. Generally that’s the biggest barrier for a lot of people. So it is important to check housing rules or limitations.

Finally, think about the temperament you’re looking for. Are you an active person who loves to walk a lot? Are you a person who’s kind of sedentary and wants a couch potato? Are you home a lot? How much do you want to invest in training? All those questions should be answered, and then you can go in and look for the dog of your choice.

What sort of training classes or techniques would you advise someone adopting a bully breed to take?  

If you love bully breeds, it’s especially important to have a well-behaved dog because of the stigma and scrutiny they are under. By ensuring your dog has good obedience and is under good control, you are showcasing an ambassador for the breed like any dog, bully breeds can do many different types of training including agility, nose work and high levels of obedience.

What other advice do you have for people looking to adopt or who have adopted a bully breed?  

It’s training and making sure your environment and personalities fit. But I would advise them not to get caught up in the stigma of the breed because there’s really good representations of all breeds. Bully breeds are going to be bigger and stronger than many dogs. If they’re looking for a little tiny couch potato breed, they’re not going to be happy with a bully breed of any sort, even a lazy or low-key one. So, make sure that their personality fits a dog of that size.

What are the strengths and things to pay attention to when considering adopting a bully breed?  

Strengths: Bully breeds tend to be extremely people-oriented, so adoption could be a good choice if you’re looking for a companion to give you a lot of personal attention. They are also often that way with strangers. The sociability of the breed is amazing. If they’ve been well-socialized and brought up to love people, they just love all people. Also, if you’re an active person they can keep up with you.

Pay attention: You want to make sure they’re social with other animals. If you have an environment where you’re taking them all over the place, make sure that’s tested beforehand because if they haven’t been socialized well, they can develop prey drive or aggression towards other dogs. The other negative is people’s attitude towards them can affect things. How they’re perceived is important and people are sensitive to that, but I think the benefits outweigh the negatives.

“It would be really great if people could look at dogs individually and not stigmatize breeds.”  

– Joan Harris, PAWS Chicago
On Christmas Eve 2014, a bully breed puppy was found wandering the streets of Chicago. That same night, Karina was giving her fiancé a “dog package” filled with toys and treats, letting him know she was ready for their first dog, something he’d wanted for a while. About a week later they received their first foster email from PAWS, and there was Chief. It was meant to be. Chief had pneumonia from being out in the cold and needed a foster home as soon as possible. Karina and her fiancé stepped in, and they’ve been one happy family ever since, adopting Chief in January 2015.

Follow Chief on Instagram at @chiefofthechi.

Seven-year-old Red tried to protect his owner when burglars invaded his home in 2009. His owner was beaten and Red was shot in the back, losing the use of his hind legs. The wounded owner was unable to care for Red and he landed at the city pound. PAWS couldn’t let this hero perish and took him in, knowing it would be challenging to find the right family. But in 2012, Dawn, the perfect adopter, came forward. At 13, Red is thriving and loves to play in his huge fenced yard. Red recently made a surprise appearance at a PAWS volunteer appreciation party, where he kept himself busy greeting everyone and hustling around looking for cake crumbs and affection. “Our family loves him dearly and I am eternally grateful to PAWS for allowing me to adopt such a wonderful soul!” Dawn says.

Follow Red on Instagram at @redthepitbull.

In October 2014, Bubble was found in a trashcan, hairless from a bad skin infection and weighing a mere 5 pounds. After he was diagnosed with severe Demodex mange, a treatable, noncontagious condition that can take months to heal, the PAWS shelter medicine team and his foster mom, Maggie, ensured that Bubble received the love and socialization he needed. Today he’s a happy 1-year-old who loves romping around on the beach with his dog buddies. His foster family was won over by his happy demeanor and sweet temperament and couldn’t let him go: “He was literally picked up out of the trash and given a shot to live. He really does live every day like he is so happy to be alive,” says Maggie. His happiness is evident to everyone he meets, dogs and humans alike. While it’s too cold to swim now, keep an eye out for a smiling Bubble on the beach this summer. “The love he has to give is just so special. It’s truly amazing to own such a wonderful pup!” Maggie says.

Follow Bubble on Instagram at @bubble_the_pitbull.

Joanne and David came into PAWS to adopt a dog and left the proud owners of Piglet, named after her adorable snorting. The couple heard that she had a puppy available for adoption, and after some “wouldn’t it be crazy if...” discussions, decided they had to meet him. Piglet’s puppy, Kingston, is a beautiful white bully breed who had to have both eyes removed due to a serious condition present at birth. It didn’t take long for them to realize they were going to be the proud owners of two bully breeds. It’s been over a year now, and the family of four couldn’t be happier. Kingston loves to follow his mom around and even nap right on top of her. Piglet is a loving mother who helps guide Kingston and give him the extra confidence he needs. “Today, we have two amazing best friends, cuddle monsters and our daily reminder why rescues are the best dogs in the whole world.” Joanne and David say.

Follow Piglet and Kingston on Instagram at @pigletandkingston.

Nabbi’s family knew she was the dog for them the moment they saw her. They adopted Nabbi from PAWS in January 2014, after losing their 14-year-old dog to a brain tumor. It wasn’t until a couple months and one DNA test later they discovered their sweet, gentle dog was half pit bull. This came as a shock to Nabbi’s mom, Gina. Like many others, she had been led to believe pit bulls were aggressive and dangerous. “I had always been terrified of the breed because of the stereotypes I was led to believe. Nabbi changed every perception I ever had about pit bulls,” Gina says. “She is the best dog we have ever had. I thank God that we walked into PAWS that day and found her.” Gina and her husband have developed a love for the breed and have opened their home to three more rescued pit bulls, including a three-legged dog named Larry and another dog who was surrendered at the city pound and was scheduled to be euthanized. And it’s all thanks to Nabbi. “Nabbi is the opposite of everything I thought pit bulls were!” Gina says.

Follow Nabbi on Instagram at @nabbipitbull.
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COLLEEN FRY HELPING OTHERS WHILE HEALING FROM LOSS

by Julia Poukatch

COLLEEN FRY WANTED TO MAKE THE BEST OUT OF A DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE. When Charley, her Wheaten Terrier, passed away two years ago from cancer, she found a way to honor his memory at PAWS Chicago. "I walked into PAWS for the first time to donate Charley’s toys and blankets, and realized I could volunteer," she says. Colleen came to PAWS to heal from the loss of Charley, but her relationship with PAWS has just kept growing.

Colleen has lived in Chicago for nearly 40 years, but grew up in the southern suburbs. She went to college in Iowa and moved to the city to pursue a career in acting, working with a musical trio called Stardust. After getting married and having children, she became a meeting planner for a group of interior designers.

Now retired, Colleen loves being a PAWS Adoption Counselor. “It is incredibly rewarding to see pets find their forever homes,” she says. “What really moves me is when the older dogs or dogs with physical challenges go home. Everybody loves a cuddly puppy but when the dogs who might have missing teeth, or are blind, maybe they are getting around on three legs when they go home, well, it just makes me so happy. I love it when people see past the challenges and fall in love with their dog. It truly is a perfect match.”

Colleen is also a mentor to new volunteers. “What I am signed up for includes anything that needs to be done,” she says. And her support of animals and PAWS doesn’t stop there. She and her husband, Chip, are generous supporters, helping provide funds for PAWS Chicago’s operations through the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation.

Involvement with PAWS came full circle when Colleen and Chip also became PAWS adopters, opening their hearts and their home to Lily, a Cockapoo mix. “In September 2014, I was leaving a volunteer appreciation party at PAWS. I was taking a walk past the dog suites and there was this little white and cream dog. I picked her up, she put her head on my shoulder and that was it.” Lily is a “delightful, really smart little dog,” Colleen says, adding she’s also a very good soccer player and loves to chase squirrels.

Colleen considers herself fortunate to have found her place at PAWS, and we know the animals she has helped are lucky to have her here. “I think as you get older and you have raised your family, you’re retired, you think OK, what’s next?” she says.

“If you’re lucky like I am with PAWS, you find an organization or cause that you believe in and can contribute to. I am constantly learning things at PAWS about different breeds, body language of dogs, different training techniques. It is fascinating. One thing I do know is that when you have the love of a dog, it is a hard bond to break. And why would you? They are amazing, loyal, loving beings.”

AS YOU GET OLDER AND YOU HAVE RAISED YOUR FAMILY, YOU’RE RETIRED, YOU THINK OK, WHAT’S NEXT? IF YOU’RE LUCKY LIKE I AM WITH PAWS, YOU FIND AN ORGANIZATION OR CAUSE THAT YOU BELIEVE IN.

– COLLEEN FRY
WANT TO CURE WHAT AILS YOUR AGING PET?
START BY USING FOODS THAT PACK A HIGHER NUTRITIONAL PUNCH, SAYS DR. BARBARA ROYAL, owner of The Royal Treatment Veterinary Center in Chicago and a pioneer in integrative veterinary medicine.

In her practice, Dr. Royal says she regularly sees how better nutrition can improve an animal’s overall health, reduce inflammation and ease symptoms of chronic diseases like arthritis. “Aging is not a disease,” she says. “You should be functional until you go.” Here’s what else she has to say about the importance of wild nutrition, food no-no’s and why your dog could use a massage, too.

A good-quality canned food would be better than dry kibble. It’s not as highly processed and it doesn’t need the same carbohydrate level to keep it shelf-stable. The protein in canned food is closer to its original form, which makes it easier for the body to assimilate in an appropriate way.

And don’t forget to look at the label. The five foods to avoid—corn, soy, wheat, white potato and peanut butter—are off-limits because they are carbs and inflammatory. They are present in many varieties of kibble and treats.

There’s a perception that raw food is too rich for some dogs or that raw food carries a risk. There’s a risk with any meat product you bring into your home, and you have to follow manufacturer’s instructions for freezing, thawing and preparing. Percentage-wise, there’s more risk and recall associated with dry and canned food than with raw food.

How about an older dog who may be ill or nearing the end of its life?
A I never underestimate the healing power of the body. My optimism is eternal. There’s never a good reason not to get an optimal diet for your pet.

**GO RAW, AND OTHER TIPS FROM DR. BARBARA ROYAL**

by Monica Ginsburg

**LONGEVITY FOR DOGS**

**GO RAW, AND OTHER TIPS FROM DR. BARBARA ROYAL**

_“Better Nutrition is the number one thing we can do to combat aging.”_ —BARBARA ROYAL

**Cure for what ails your aging pet?**

Want to cure what ails your aging pet? Start by using foods that pack a higher nutritional punch, says Dr. Barbara Royal, owner of The Royal Treatment Veterinary Center in Chicago and a pioneer in integrative veterinary medicine.

In her practice, Dr. Royal says she regularly sees how better nutrition can improve an animal’s overall health, reduce inflammation and ease symptoms of chronic diseases like arthritis. “Aging is not a disease,” she says. “You should be functional until you go.” Here’s what else she has to say about the importance of wild nutrition, food no-no’s and why your dog could use a massage, too.

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**How about an older dog who may be ill or nearing the end of its life?**

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**Tell us what’s new in the field of antiaging and longevity for pets.**

A The latest news is actually the oldest: Better nutrition is the number one thing we can do to combat aging. Improve the diet and you’ll see an incredible amount of resilience, even in a very old body. I see lots of animals come in with chronic ear infections, arthritis, vision problems or animals who are overweight. Many noncommunicable diseases are entirely based on nutrition.

By far the best option is raw food, which is closest to what a dog’s natural diet would be. Raw food is a variety of meat sources and is packed with vitamins, minerals, and supplements to make a complete and balanced meal. They typically come in frozen patties and nuggets, which you thaw before feeding to your pet.

A There’s a perception that raw food is too rich for some dogs or that raw food carries a risk. There’s a risk with any meat product you bring into your home, and you have to follow manufacturer’s instructions for freezing, thawing and preparing. Percentage-wise, there’s more risk and recall associated with dry and canned food than with raw food.

**Ingredients:**

1 whole organic chicken carcass or other raw bones
Asorted fruits and vegetables including carrots, kale, celery, cut lemon, cut apple. Note: do not add onions or garlic as they are toxic to dogs and cats.
1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar, optional
1 tablespoon turmeric*
1 tablespoon cumin
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon thyme
1 teaspoon basil
Juice from two lemons
Organic chicken pieces
Cover chicken carcasses or bones with water in a large pot.
Simmer for 8 to 12 hours (you may start offering small amounts after two hours if needed).
Strain broth in a colander.
Add herbs, spices, lemon juice and chicken pieces.
Feed 1/2 cup warm (not hot) broth 4 to 6 times daily for a 30- to 50-lb dog. Broth will keep in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days, and will last one year in the freezer. You can freeze broth in an ice cube tray and use as a healthy treat.

*Turmeric is a great anti-inflammatory ingredient. The other herbs have antiviral and antibacterial properties and also support the blood and immune system.

**Movement is your friend! If your pet hasn’t had a lot of exercise, start with short, frequent, low-impact exercise. Older dogs with arthritis often benefit from a low-impact way to encourage movement. When you’re on a walk outdoors, don’t take the easiest path. You want your pet to get the full range of motion rather than shuffling along on the sidewalks. A prewalk rubdown of your dog’s feet is an amazing massage therapy to increase circulation. Massage is also excellent to start with younger pets and it’s great for bonding with your dog.**
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More than 400 animal lovers and their dogs boarded the Castaways ship deck on July 23, 2015, for the 13th Annual Beach Party. Guests soaked up the sun, danced the night away and raised money to save homeless pets. Thanks to the generosity of all of our sponsors, guests, donors, volunteers and vendors, the event raised critical funds needed to continue the PAWS mission to make Chicago a No Kill city.

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Thousands of people and their canine companions braved the rain to participate in the 15th annual Run for Their Lives on June 14, 2015. While getting off to a wet start, this event was all sunshine for the homeless pets saved during a record-setting year for fundraising. Thank you to Unleashed by Petco for presenting the event and to Zoetis for sponsoring the VIP post-race party, where members celebrated their life-saving efforts.

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Stanton R. Cook, former CEO of the Tribune Company, died September 3, 2015, at the age of 90. Cook, who is credited with increasing the company’s independence and public influence, had a wide variety of interests and a voracious appetite for knowledge. But Cook is particularly remembered by family and friends for his compassion for animals: “We used to say that if we were reborn, we’d like to come back as one of Stan’s dogs because he treated them so well,” former Tribune colleague Byron Campbell said in a 2008 interview.

Following Cook’s death, his family suggested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Cook’s honor to the Leelanau School, a boarding school in Michigan, or to PAWS Chicago. “Dad always had dogs,” Cook’s son Doug says. “He loved watching them interact with each other, and he loved seeing them grow up.”

As Cook got older, he no longer had his own dog. Instead, he often came by Doug’s home to “borrow” Bo, Doug’s Rhodesian Ridgeback rescue dog. “Dad and Bo were best of friends,” Doug says. “He would come and pick up Bo and they would go to his Michigan home for weeks—it was like Bo was away at camp.”

And Cook loved travelling to New Mexico to visit his daughter, Nancy, his grandchildren and their menagerie of animals. Those visits, and being surrounded by all the kids and animals, was “like going to Disneyland for him,” Doug recalls.

Cook was born in Chicago in 1925. He grew up in Park Ridge, served in the military during World War II and received a degree in mechanical engineering from Northwestern University. Cook started at the Tribune in 1951 and rose through the ranks, becoming publisher in 1973. “His is the classic bootstrap story. Nothing was handed to him. He was a Midwestern guy whose heart was in Chicago. He had a great range of talents and interests, but he also flew under the radar,” Doug says. “On one hand, he was the guy who ran the Tribune, but he was also the goofy guy who loved to spend time talking to his dogs.”

For his 90th birthday, Cook said he wanted to have a party. The family celebrated the day in July at Cook’s Kenilworth home. “So many people showed up—it showed what an influence he had had on so many people’s lives,” Doug says.

Cook is survived by five children and seven grandchildren.

IN MEMORY OF
STANTON COOK

PAWS Chicago lost a great volunteer, supporter and friend when Diane Cole passed away. Through her countless hours as a Dog Town and Kitty City volunteer, she selflessly gave love and encouragement to hundreds of PAWS dogs and cats. What they will never know is how much their unconditional love and companionship meant to Diane; through the best of times, and eventually, through her battle with lung cancer.

Susan Frank, Diane’s fellow volunteer and longtime friend, recalls that Diane found joy in snuggling, hugging and caring for every PAWS pet she met. “When asked why PAWS held a special place in Diane’s heart for so many years, Susan replied, “I know it was the highlight of her day—the highlight of her existence in life—animals were. She just loved them dearly and related to them. They gave her so much love and strength and compassion.”

Diane felt a deep sense of connection and responsibility for our canine and feline friends. As a Guardian Angel, she generously included PAWS Chicago in her estate plans, providing resources to continue PAWS Chicago’s No Kill mission. While Diane is no longer with us, her decision to leave a generous legacy secures the lives and the future for so many pets.

IN MEMORY OF
DIANE COLE

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IN MEMORY OF

Smokey

John and Rita Canning’s dog, Smokey, passed away in November 2013, a few months shy of his 13th birthday. The 135-pound black Labrador Retriever was “a gentle giant who tolerated being adored,” the couple recalls.

After joining the family as a puppy, Smokey helped guide them throughout his life. Smokey’s favorite activity was riding around in the family’s Lexus. He would sit on the backseat with his paws on the front arm rest. “The three of us would be shoulder to shoulder,” John says. “He wanted to look out and make sure we were all going in the right direction.”

For Rita, Smokey was a constant companion who would follow her from room to room, even when she told him to stay where he was because she’d be right back. “We would lock eyes and I could look into his soul,” she says. Rita took care of Smokey in his later years. As he got older, and started to suffer from diabetes and seizures, Rita would get down on the floor with Smokey. “I would be there with him and he would provide great comfort to me.”

In his youth, Smokey was renowned for his athleticism. He could jump off a diving board into the family pool, and catch a Frisbee before hitting the water, John remembers. “He’d make us laugh every day.”

John’s fondest memory is of Smokey falling asleep aseep on top of his feet, contentedly snoring loudly as John watched television. Smokey even knew about Christmas and picked out a gift for himself from under the tree each day leading up to the holiday. “He only wanted one gift a day, but he would be so proud he’d carry it around. We would go for a walk and he would bring his new big bone for everyone to see,” John says.

For Rita and John, it is still hard to walk around their Inverness home, to live in the house as if Smokey were still there. “The three of us would be shoulder to shoulder,” John says. “And then I remember he’s gone.”

Sammi came into my life in the midst of the Chicago Cubs ill-fated, 2003 playoff run, and as her brother was named by PAWS staff after outfielder Moises Alou (who in a fit of irony was also the man involved in the botched fan-interference play that many still say cost those same Cubs a world title), she too was christened, quite brusquely at that, after slugger Sammy Sosa. This at least partially explains how the adopted pair became Mr. Thom and Sammi instead, if only to erase the stain of my regret.

From the first Sammi was both quiet and shy, her lone concern being that of the welfare of her brother. But somewhere around 2 years of age she’d find her voice with me, and in commandeering our home she let it be known that her every opinion and feeling was worth hearing. And by this I mean to say that I came to respect her place among us as equal to my own.

For Sammi’s empathy was robust and no less wrung forward than a true heart. Vigilant, restive, and rather timely when needed most, I learned appreciation for the kind of magic that was in this spry sphinx, so much so that when I lost her, and suddenly too in the midst of her 12th year, and I far from home on a world tour, I cried and cried over my own impending impovishment. Sammi having understood all along that one should never hold back, not even for a second’s pause, from those that need of you most.

William Corgan
(pictured at right with Sammi and Mr. Thom)
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ATTEND AN EVENT
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MAKE A DONATION
It is through the generosity of our community that PAWS Chicago can save the lives of homeless pets. There are many ways to support PAWS. Learn more and donate today at pawschicago.org/donate.

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Robert Kabakoff Leaves a Legacy for the Animals

When Robert Kabakoff adopted his first dog, Zydeco, from the city pound in Phoenix, Arizona, the state of homeless animals left a lasting mark. “The sadness that I felt from seeing the living conditions motivated me to do all that I could for animals in need,” says Robert. “I truly wish that I could have been able to take all of the orphaned animals home that day but promised myself that I would do more throughout my life to promote animal adoption.”

After becoming involved with PAWS Chicago—as a volunteer, donor, fundraiser and Development Board member, Robert worked with his attorney to plan a trust which included a gift for PAWS Chicago through its Guardian Angel program so that homeless pets would be taken care of if he were no longer around to do so.

According to Robert, “The process of setting up my trust was very easy with the help of my lawyer. Including PAWS Chicago in my trust took only a matter of minutes.”

Through PAWS Chicago’s Guardian Angel program, Robert takes comfort in knowing that he will continue to help create a No Kill Chicago, even after he is gone.

“Katie and I don’t have any children of our own and we really want to make a difference with such a wonderful cause,” says Robert. “I couldn’t be happier to help provide food, shelter and foster care until homeless pets can find their forever home. I hope my gift will provide an even better environment for homeless and sheltered animals as they wait to be adopted.”

Through the PAWS Chicago Guardian Angel program, Robert Kabakoff has made a lasting commitment to homeless animals.

Please visit pawschicago.org/guardianangel for more information and sample language, or call (773) 475-4240.