

Sharing the Love for Reservation Animals in Need

For centuries, dogs have played an important role within many Native American cultures. Their responsibilities often included hunting, guarding, even pulling travois (sleds). These valued animals were considered integral members of the tribe. That sentiment remains strong today – animals are considered relatives in many Native American communities, and caring for them is an important tradition.

Unfortunately, overpopulation of animals, specifically dogs and cats in need of care, is a significant challenge for some Native communities. The Navajo Nation alone has thousands of stray dogs and cats roaming their 26,000 square miles.

These animals may have been born as strays on the reservation, and many of them have ticks and fleas. Many require veterinary care for more serious ailments like broken bones, ear and eye infections and even wounds.

Many animals are left on the side of the road in Native communities, by unknown individuals living off-reservation, a common occurrence known as “animal dumping.” This creates tremendous health and safety issues for the animals and communities involved.

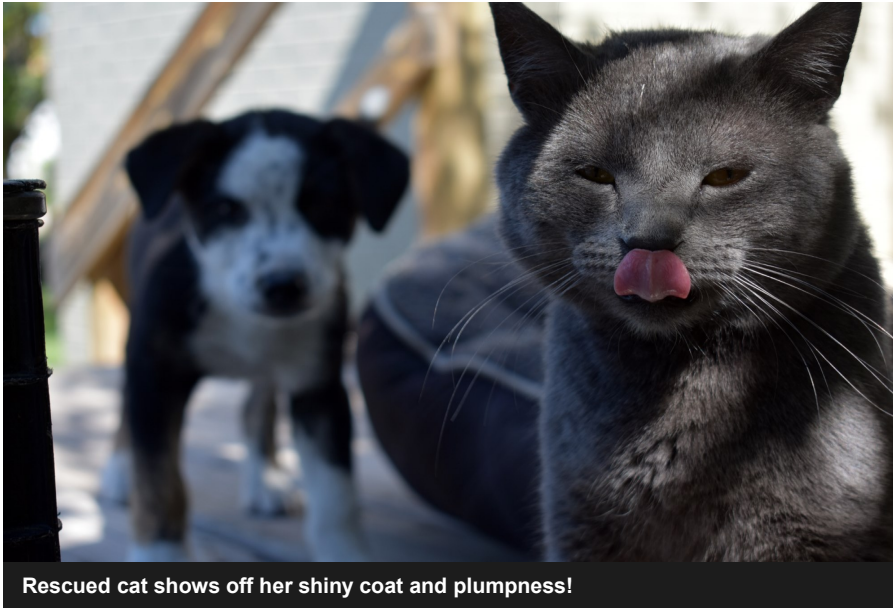
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Animals of the reservation in need of food, rescue and forever homes

In This Issue

- What is animal dumping?
- What can mobile spay/neuter do?
- What are the signs of heat stroke in pets?
- What can you do about abandoned reservation animals?



Rescued cat shows off her shiny coat and plumpness!

Twiggy's Story

A small black-and-white spotted kitten dashed across the road at "6-Mile Corner" on the Rosebud Reservation. In the dark of night, in the cold of winter, her tiny frame was caught in the headlights of the driver's car. In an instant, there was no doubt that this tiny creature could not be left behind. So, into the car Twiggy went.

Despite her obvious malnutrition, Twiggy's purrs came quickly, as she rubbed against her rescuer in the warmth of her "chariot." But, Twiggy's story has an even happier ending... she was adopted by a family who had already adopted June Bug, now her canine brother!

For the love of animals

What's working

With great concern for the four-leggeds and their caregivers, Partnership With Native Americans (PWNA) and its [Reservation Animal Rescue](#) (RAR) program supports animal welfare groups that spay, neuter and vaccinate animals and educate communities on proper animal care.

Unfortunately, many residents living on reservations face impoverishment and limited access to veterinary care. Additionally, individuals and communities often lack the resources to manage the stray dog and cat population and care for orphaned animals. However, critical services supported by PWNA, such as spay and neuter, can help humanely control the pet population on remote reservations.

PWNA also provides support to RAR partners that rescue, rehabilitate and place injured or stray animals in foster care or forever homes. Foster families – who may have plenty of love to share but not a lot of available funds – are often hesitant to take in a pet. But, provisions supplied by PWNA to RAR partners ensure foster families are able to start off with a supply of food and other essentials.

In 2016, PWNA supplied veterinary programs and animal care groups on remote reservations with more than 23,000 pounds of pet food and other needed supplies, such as bowls, collars, leashes, and toys to help meet this growing concern. Some RAR partners, such as the McKinley-Gallup Humane Society in New Mexico say, "The pet food, especially the puppy food, is lifesaving!"



Hungry pets get a meal

"The pet food, especially the puppy food, is lifesaving."

How to Help Stray Dogs

- Be still and let the dog get a good look at you.
- Let the dog come to you. Never extend your hand with your fingers out.
- Move slowly, talk softly.
- Be careful about luring the animal with food.
- Don't drive with the animal unrestrained.
- Contact the nearest shelter or vet.

Heat Stroke

The key signs of heat stroke are nausea and panting, wobbliness or weakness, heavy breathing or palpitations.

If you spot any of these signs, avoid icing the animal. Instead:

- Limit the activity of the pet.
- Ensure the pet has plenty of water.
- Ensure the pet has shade, if outdoors.
- Keep your pet as comfortable as would a child.

Get our RAR infographic



Adorable pup gets love at spay/neuter clinic by RAR collaborator Midwestern University

For the love of healthy communities

Overpopulated and stray animals can pose real health risks to humans, too, ranging from animal bites to disease, and PWNA helps partners and collaborators address these larger health and safety issues for the overall well-being of Native communities and tribal citizens.

One such collaborator – Midwestern University's Animal Health Institute in Glendale, Arizona – received a \$10,000 grant. The funds from PWNA through its RAR program served a critical need for reservation-based spay and neuter services to be conducted via their mobile surgical unit on the San Carlos Apache Reservation.

In one visit alone, coordinating through our San Carlos community partner, Midwestern's team spayed/neutered 41 animals, vaccinated 27 more and performed one specialty surgery – repairing a laceration to the leg – on a dog that had been attacked by a javelina.

Through the support of PWNA and its RAR program, the mobile clinic provides the equipment and the environment needed to provide veterinary services in areas without the benefit of a local veterinarian or clinic.

An Animal Lover Steps Up

During a 2017 mobile spay/neuter clinic supported by PWNA and RAR, we met Rhianna, a young community member and volunteer from the San Carlos Reservation. She played an important role in outreach during the clinic; knowing many of her neighbors who were bringing their animals in for surgery, Rhianna quickly put them at ease and completed the necessary intake. She was also instrumental in getting one community member to bring in several crates full of cats (some feral) and kittens in need of surgery.

As someone who actively volunteers and rescues strays in the community, it's important to Rhianna to help spread the word about the benefits of animal spay/neuter.

When asked about the importance of these spay/neuter clinics to the community and its residents, Rhianna said, "Because we're struggling monetarily, there is no way we can get our dogs fixed. They come out here and fix our dogs...they're really a blessing to some families that love their pets but have no money to take them to a vet."

You are invited

Innocent animals need not suffer without love and care. Learn more about what you can do to improve the quality of life for stranded and orphaned animals on Native American reservations at www.nativepartnership.org and our program site at www.rarprogram.org.

Contact us to
learn more:

(866) 311-9635
info@rarprogram.org

Visit us online:

www.rarprogram.org

Download the
story:

www.nativepartnership.org/AnimalNews1



Serving immediate needs, supporting long-term solutions for strong, self-sufficient Native American communities



Spay/neuter clinic volunteer, Rhianna, on San Carlos Reservation, in Arizona

"Because we're struggling monetarily here, there is no way we can get our dogs fixed. They come out here and fix our dogs... they're really a blessing to some families that love their pets but have no money to take them to a vet."