



Volunteer Handbook

v. May 2010

Introduction

Welcome to PAWS of NE Louisiana, Inc. (PAWS). We are proud to have you join our team! This handbook contains information to help you learn about us and will serve as your guide as you begin your volunteer work with us. Feel free to ask questions! We believe all questions are important, so please do not hesitate to ask.

Mission Statement

To reduce and aid the population of unwanted and lost companion animals in our community and to support and encourage the positive interaction between pets and people.

History of PAWS of NE Louisiana

PAWS is a nonprofit 501c3 organization that has been serving the Northeast Louisiana area since 2003. PAWS is not a branch or division of a national agency. It was founded by local residents who realized the problems that our community faced regarding animal welfare. Since its inception, PAWS has grown and flourished thanks to our volunteers, members and supporters. We do not receive United Way funding or tax funding. Donations, fundraisers and grants are our chief sources of income. We are an all-volunteer organization that is guided by a volunteer board of directors. We do not have a physical location, we do not have paid employees and we are not a shelter. We are an organization that provides services to our community through our many programs.

Phone: (318)397-0007

Address: P. O. Box 15432
Monroe, LA 71207

Website: www.pawsonela.org

Email: pawsonela@yahoo.com

2010 Board of Directors:

President – Jo Traylor

Treasurer – Shari Littleton

Secretary – Nina Bennett

Spay/Neuter Director – Amber Osbon

Grant Acquisitions – Holly Sanders

Marketing Director – Jennifer Pesnell

Volunteer Coordinator – Angie Pritchett

Rescue Coordinator – Christy Primm

The following pages will describe our programs and volunteer opportunities so that when someone in the community asks you about PAWS, you will be armed with the information you need to help educate the public and encourage volunteerism. See Appendix A for the most Frequently Asked Questions about PAWS.

Services and Programs

- **Spay/Neuter Program** – A major part of our mission is to reduce the pet overpopulation in our community. To help accomplish this, we offer spay/neuter assistance to low income pet owners. In 2009, we expanded on this idea by making plans to build our own low cost spay/neuter facility. PAWS of NE Louisiana Spay Neuter Services, Inc. will be coming soon.
- **Animal Shelter Rescue Program** – Local shelters are overrun with unwanted animals all year round. We work with the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter by pulling dogs, cats and horses and getting them placed into rescues around the country. Another way that we are able to assist shelter animals is by taking them to monthly offsite adoptions. By getting the dogs and cats out of the shelter and into the public, more people are introduced to the prospect of pet adoption.
- **Pet Therapy Program** - Volunteers and their certified therapy dogs make monthly visits to retirement homes, hospitals, libraries and schools. They are able to enrich the lives of those who may not get the opportunity to otherwise interact with pets.
- **Tag Your Pet Program** – Once a month we provide a free pet id tag to pet owners at our offsite adoptions. Additional tags are sold for only \$2.00. Tags are also sold at the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter throughout the week. We offer these free and low cost tags because 95% of pets who get lost while wearing no form of identification will never find their way home.
- **Membership Program** - Members are an integral part of our organization. When you become a member, you are showing that you support our efforts to make a difference in our community. You can even sign up your pet as a member! Join as a member today by visiting our website or requesting a membership form via email or at one of our events.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Offsite Adoption Assistant** – Help at offsite adoptions by bathing shelter dogs, transporting animals to and from the shelter, handling an animal during the offsite or making pet id tags. See Appendix B for our Offsite Adoption Guidelines.
- **Foster Parent** – Foster a shelter dog or cat in your home while we are waiting to get them placed into a rescue or while they are recovering from a medical procedure such as spaying/neutering or heartworm treatment. See Appendix C for our Foster Home Guidelines.
- **Rescue Transporter** – Help transport a shelter dog or cat to a rescue. Once we bring a dog or cat into our rescue program, we've got to get them to the rescue. This usually consists of driving a 2 hour leg of the transport to either Shreveport or Jackson, MS.
- **Pet Therapy Team** – Have your pet certified as a Therapy Pet and make visits to hospitals, retirement homes, etc. as a part of our Pet Therapy Program. Dogs must know basic obedience but you can also certify cats, bunnies, goats, etc.
- **Fundraising Events** – Volunteer at one of the fundraisers that we hold throughout the year such as our Krewe of PAWS Mardi Gras Pet Parade.
- **Tabling Events** – We are asked to attend events throughout the year but we can't attend them all due to time restrictions of our board members. Our most knowledgeable volunteers can help by attending these events on our behalf to provide information about PAWS to the public.
- **Hold your own Fundraiser** – If you are a go-getter, help us by holding your very own fundraiser such as a garage sale, bake sale, collecting change at businesses or schools, etc. We have to approve the idea first, but we are open to most anything!

Guidelines for Volunteers

- Be polite and helpful at all times
- Treat animals, members and other volunteers with courtesy and respect
- Wear the provided name tag when volunteering at events
- Dress comfortably and appropriately for all events
- Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult
- Accept the decisions of board members
- The job of an animal welfare volunteer is often charged with emotion and personal opinions. When you volunteer at a PAWS event, please keep in mind that you are representing PAWS and be mindful of your personal opinions.
- Please give advanced notice if you volunteer for an event and then are unable to attend.
- Please direct comments and questions to the volunteer coordinator. Your feedback helps the volunteer program to grow. We want you to be proud of the organization to which you dedicate your time and effort.

- When at a PAWS event, volunteers should adhere to our mission which is to address pet overpopulation through adoptions and spay/neuter. Those wishing to pursue breeding issues with guests and fellow members must do so outside PAWS events.

How To Become a Volunteer

In this day and age, we rely more and more on the internet and email for the work that we do in animal welfare. We keep in touch with our volunteers via email. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact us at pawsnela@yahoo.com or during one of our events. We will provide you with a volunteer form to fill out and we will add you to our email address book. Volunteer opportunities are sent out via email when we have the need for volunteers as well as when we have event announcements which includes our quarterly newsletter, The Pet Scoop. You will then be on your way to volunteering with PAWS!

There are many simple ways that you can help PAWS even if you don't have a lot of time to help with one of the above volunteer opportunities. Visit the "You Can Help" page on our website at www.pawsnela.org to learn 10 simple things you can do to help spread the word about PAWS.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received the volunteer handbook and I hereby release PAWS of NE Louisiana and its members from any and all claims that I may have as a result of my volunteer work.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____
(if applicable)

Thanks for your interest in volunteering with PAWS!
*With YOUR help, together we will make Northeast Louisiana a better
community for our animal companions!*

Appendix A

FAQ's

1) What does PAWS do?

We provide the following services through our programs:

- Spay/neuter assistance to low-income pet owners
- Animal Shelter Rescue
- Free pet id tags at monthly Tag Days
- Pet therapy visits to retirement homes/hospitals/library
- Humane Education through local schools

2) How do I receive low-income spay/neuter assistance?

Fill out a spay/neuter application and return it to us to see if you qualify for our program. Once we receive your application we will determine if you qualify as a low income applicant. If you do, we will send you an authorization form to have your pet spayed or neutered by a local vet. If you are feeding feral (wild) cats and need assistance for them, we can refer you to another group.

3) My pet needs medical treatment and I can't afford to pay for it. Can PAWS help?

We are only able to provide assistance for spaying and neutering your pet. If your pet needs help for another medical issue, please contact ORVAL (Ouachita River Valley Animal League) at 323-4989 and they may be able to help you.

4) How can I get a free pet id tag for my pet?

You can attend one of our Tag Days which are held on the last Saturday of each month at Petco in Monroe from 12:00-4:00. The 1st tag is free and each additional tag is \$2.00 each.

*** If you'd like a tag sooner or can't make it to the next Tag Day, you can stop by the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter at 417 Well Road in West Monroe where we keep our tag machine. You can purchase tags there for \$2.00 each.

5) What is pet therapy?

This is where volunteers take their personal certified therapy dogs on visits to retirement homes and hospitals where they visit with residents. We also visit the library with the dogs for a reading program that allows children to read to the dogs. The therapy teams are also involved with our Humane Education program where we visit local schools with the therapy dogs to talk with the students about responsible pet ownership.

6) How can I get my pet certified to be a therapy pet?

Your dog would need to have basic obedience training in order to become certified. If your dog is not already trained, you can enroll your dog in a class at the Ouachita Valley Dog Training Club. Once your dog has been through the class, you can then have them tested there to become

certified. Cats and other small pets can be certified too through another organization. You can call us for more detailed information on this program.

7) How do I become a member of PAWS?

Submit a membership form and fee to us. You will then become a PAWS member and will receive a PAWS gift. You can print a membership form from our website or become a member online.

8) What can I do to help PAWS?

You can become a PAWS member, make a tax-deductible donation, volunteer, help us come up with new ideas or just spread the word about PAWS.

9) How can I volunteer with PAWS?

We do not have a physical location but there are ways that you can get involved and volunteer with us. Here are just some of the ways that you can help:

- Volunteer at our monthly offsite adoptions at Petco
- Foster a shelter animal in your home.
- Join a fundraising committee
- Distribute our fliers/yard signs to spread the word about PAWS.
- Become a pet therapy team with your pet

10) I found a dog/cat or I need to rehome my personal pet. Can PAWS help?

PAWS does not have a shelter or place to take in homeless dogs or cats. You can call one of the local shelters to see if they can help you. If the dog is a pure breed, we can try to help you locate a breed rescue.

Shelters: Humane Society Adoption Center– 387-9553
Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter – 323-4032
River Cities Humane Society for Cats – 387-4392

11) I would like to report someone for animal cruelty. Who do I call?

If you live outside of city limits, you can call the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Dept. If you live inside the city limits, you can call the Monroe or West Monroe police dept. You can also try Grace's Home for Abused and Neglected Animals at 361-0333 or the Humane Society of Louisiana at 1-888-6 HUMANE or visit their website at www.humanela.org.

12) I would like to donate to PAWS. How do I do this and where does my money go?

We are an all-volunteer organization so your donation goes directly to support our programs: Animal Shelter Rescue, Spay/Neuter Assistance Program, Pet Therapy and Humane Education.

You can donate online through our website or you can mail your donation to us. If you would like to make a donation in memory or in honor of someone, just include that information and we will send an acknowledgement to the person or their family.

Appendix B

Offsite Adoption Guidelines

- All volunteers requesting to work at an offsite will be required to fill out the PAWS Offsite Volunteer Form for each offsite.
- Any volunteer under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult who is willing to closely supervise the minor.
- Offsites are 4 hour periods that are broken into 2 shifts. The 1st shift is from 12 to 2 & anyone volunteering for this shift should arrive 15 minutes early in order to receive name badge, help unload the dogs, unload & setup tables, tag machine, water bowls & help clean up any accident the animal might have made on the ride over. The 2nd shift is from 2 to 4 & the volunteer should arrive a little early to receive their name badge, get acquainted with the animal & learn what information we have on the animal. All volunteers should wear comfortable clothing, comfortable shoes & a PAWS name badge.
- No volunteer should bring their own personal animal or foster animal to an offsite that they are volunteering for. Your full attention is required for the shelter animal. If the volunteer notices any aggressive behavior from any animal the volunteer will report it to a PAWS Board of Directors member.
- All volunteers should have complete control over their animal at all times. Volunteers should not allow children to put their face in the animal's face, volunteers should not allow the animal to jump on people, and volunteers should not allow the animal to play with other animals. Volunteers should be positive about their animal but should not be pushy to an interested adopter. The volunteer is responsible for making sure the animal stays calm, has plenty of water to drink, takes potty breaks & is presented to all potential adopters in the best manner.
- PAWS of NE Louisiana will not be held liable for any injuries sustained during an offsite. If an incident with an animal or volunteer does occur, the volunteer needs to report the incident to a PAWS Board of Directors member immediately.

Appendix C

Foster Home Guidelines

Foster homes are temporary homes designed to help rescues save more animals from euthanasia. A foster home may have an animal for a few weeks or possibly a few months. There is no guarantee of exactly how long the animal will be in foster care. You must read this contract thoroughly and understand exactly what is required of you as a foster home. This document provides for the release of liability of PAWS of NE Louisiana, Inc. (referred to hereafter as PAWS) due to the actions of any pets in foster care.

DAILY CARE

The foster home agrees to provide the rescued animal with sufficient food, water, exercise, socialization, and to care for any foster dog as if it were their own. On occasion PAWS is able to provide dog food. The foster home will help the animal adapt to their new temporary home. This will include crate training and house training in most instances.

HEALTH /TEMPERAMENT

The foster home understands that PAWS has no prior knowledge of the health or temperament of its foster animals. The foster home further agrees that it will hold PAWS harmless in the event the foster animal is responsible for any injury, property damage, illness (including if the disease is spread to any other animals) or for harm to any person(s) who may come into contact with the foster animal while it is under the care of the foster home. The foster home will not hold PAWS liable for any acts of the foster dog during its stay at the foster home. The foster home will notify the Rescue Coordinator immediately should any problems occur with the foster dog.

VETERINARY CARE

The foster home may be asked to transport the animal to the vet for certain medical issues such as vaccinations, spay/neuter or heartworm treatment. If the animal must go through heartworm treatment, several trips to the vet will be required. All veterinary expenses will be put on the PAWS account at the vet, you will not be asked to pay any expenses. The foster home should not take the animal to the vet without pre-approval unless it is an emergency and the PAWS Rescue Coordinator can't be reached. In this case, the foster home must notify the Rescue Coordinator at the earliest possible time. The current Rescue Coordinator is Christy Primm and she can be reached at 318.396.8280 (home), 318.348.4944 (cell) or 318.396.3336 (M-F, 7am-4pm).

OWNERSHIP

The foster home may not give, sell or otherwise transfer custody of the rescued pet to anyone while it is under the foster home's care. PAWS will make final decisions regarding adoption. The foster home also agrees that PAWS may make visits to the foster home to check on the foster animal's status.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Foster animals must be housed indoors. When not indoors, the foster animal must be safely confined in a securely fenced yard or walked on a leash. At NO time should the animal be allowed off leash outside of a fenced area. The foster animal must wear a collar with PAWS id tag at all times. When a foster animal must be left alone in the house, he or she MUST be confined in a crate of adequate size. It is also recommended that the animal be kept in a crate at night. Some animals are not used to a crate but will adjust if given a few days.

PROTOCOL WITH CHILDREN

- Never leave a child unattended with any animal
- Do not leave treats or toys around the house when children are present and be cautious and observant when children are eating and the animal is in the room
- Children under the age of 15 will not walk the dog unless supervised by an adult
- With small children, there is always a risk of being accidentally knocked over, scratched or bitten
- Always feed the animal away from small children to prevent accidents

MULTIPLE PET HOUSEHOLDS

- When bringing a foster animal to your home, introduce them to your pet(s) slowly.
- Do not leave multiple dogs in the same room unattended
- Do not feed the dogs in the same room and don't leave toys and treats lying around the house. This is an accident waiting to happen.
- Use caution when introducing a foster dog to your cat and do the introduction slowly over a week or two, keeping the dog on a leash when the cat is near.

Thank you for helping us save lives!!

