



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Little Traverse Bay Humane Society Earns Award for On-site Cat Training Program
Michigan Pet Alliance Honors Animal Welfare Organizations, Shelters, Volunteers

September 6, 2022, Harbor Springs, Michigan – Today, Michigan Pet Alliance (MPA) proudly announces that nonprofit Little Traverse Bay Humane Society, Harbor Springs, Michigan, is the recipient of an on-site cat training grant, valued at \$1,000.

“This award honors a nonprofit organization that demonstrates how an on-site cat training program would increase lifesaving,” said Joe Dobesh, MPA CEO. “Little Traverse Bay Humane Society (LTBHS) clearly has the capability to build behavior programs. All they need now is the knowledge to grow and do more.”

To increase cat enrichment, confidence and adoptability, LTBHS initiated two new programs: Creative Kids and Cats and Cats with Class. Creative Kids and Cats inspires children to learn more about cat behavior and how to appropriately interact with feline friends. Children are encouraged to spend time with individual cats, then draw a picture and write a letter to potential adopters about their new friend.

Cats with Class focuses on tracking and furthering enrichment to all shelter cats each day. Staff, volunteers and even visitors are encouraged to interact with the cats in the shelter, taking note of their individual traits, what they like and what they dislike, and to make note of their findings. These thoughtful records aid staff in “matchmaking” the perfect cat to potential adopters.

“Even with these additional programs, there is such a desire in our community for feline education, and we can provide so much more with extra education on cat training techniques,” said Sarah Schertel, LTBHS training, behavior and programs specialist. “Incorporating a cat training program where feline care attendants, volunteers and foster parents will help us continue to practice fear-free, consent-based care within our shelter only better serves the cats in our care and their future families.”

“Throughout the history of animal welfare, cats have gotten the short end of the stick, but thankfully that’s starting to change,” said Deborah Schutt, MPA chairperson. “Cat training and enrichment programs are becoming more and more prevalent in our shelters and we’re seeing the positive results of that. Adoption rates are increasing for cats year over year.”

LTBHS is a no-kill, non-profit organization that offers a temporary home to companion animals. In addition, LTBHS is home to a full-service veterinary clinic, doggie daycare, training, as well as grooming and boarding for cats and dogs.

2022 award categories and recipients:

Karen Brocklehurst Volunteer of the Year

Anne Grzywacz, Ph.D., CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, St. Clair Shores

Fundraising Program: \$2,000 grant

Paws for Life Rescue, Troy

Community Outreach Program: \$3,000 grant

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance, Douglas

Elected Official’s Friend of Homeless Animals Award

Representative Tommy Brann, Kent County

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Best Friend to Dogs Award

Jennifer Clarkson, Bloomfield Hills

Best Friend to Cats Award

Cheryl Phillips, Northville

On-site Cat Training Grants: \$1,000 value to each

Little Traverse Bay Humane Society, Harbor Springs
Upper Peninsula Animal Welfare Shelter, Gwinn

On-site Cat Training Grant Award

Most animal shelters today operate some form of a dog behavior program to address the needs of the canines in their care. However, most shelters are lacking a behavior program to help their homeless cats. The recipient of this award will receive a day of hands-on, in-shelter training with cat behavior experts, valued at \$1,000.

Michigan Pet Alliance

Michigan's only professional trade association of animal welfare organizations, the mission of Michigan Pet Alliance is to work in collaboration and to speak with a single voice to eliminate abuse and neglect of Michigan's companion animals and to save all healthy and treatable homeless companion animals through training, technical assistance, education and advocacy. For more information, please visit MichiganPet.org and follow @MichiganPetAlliance on Facebook.

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