



WORKING TO ACHIEVE THE BEST QUALITY OF  
LIFE FOR MICHIGAN'S COMPANION ANIMALS



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## member spotlight

In southeast Michigan, there's an organization that every rescue and TNR team knows. It's All About Animals Rescue (AAAR), headquartered in Warren, with additional locations in Flint, Auburn Hills and Detroit.

With a clear vision to end pet homelessness, suffering and unnecessary euthanasia, All About Animals launched in 2005 as a foster-based rescue in Macomb County to help adoptable cats and dogs find forever homes.

“We quickly understood our efforts would continually fall short of the need if we didn’t seek to prevent homelessness before it began,” said Amber Sitko, president and founder, All About Animals. “A lightbulb went off while attending a talk on high-volume spay/neuter at a PetSmart Charities conference. ‘Spay one, prevent 100.’

“Economically and strategically, it was brilliant. Play the long game to prevent hundreds of thousands of future homeless pets with a nominal investment per animal sterilized. It was exactly what we were looking for to make the biggest impact for animals.”



*Zeus with Paws for Life Rescue recovers from neuter at AAAR.*

In 2008, All About Animals opened its first spay/neuter clinic to the public, then another in 2017. Fast forward to 2025 and All About Animals is now the largest high-quality, high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter, animal welfare organization in Michigan, if not the nation.

Inclusive in its No More Homeless Pets mission is a robust Trap Neuter Return (TNR) program, walk-in wellness services, off-site “shot clinics,” spay/neuter transports and its Detroit Pets for Life program. The goal is to proactively prevent unwanted litters and keep pets in loving homes.

“In 2010, we started holding monthly in-person TNR trainings on best practices and colony management,” said Sitko. “Instead of trying to take on TNR ourselves, we empower community members to address the spay/neuter needs of cats in their neighborhoods.”



Participants in All About Animals' TNR trainings are entitled to discounted sterilization and rabies vaccines for community cats returning to their colonies where they were trapped.

Purchasing hundreds of Tru Catch traps and trap dividers each year, making them readily available for loan or sale, and offering weekly walk-in TNR days year-round to encourage timely spay/neuter, All About Animals is supporting people to help community cats everywhere they work, play and live.

"In 2013, we partnered with Macomb County Animal Control to meet with cities within Macomb County to discuss the merits of TNR versus catch-and-kill methods, helping to establish Return to Field as the preferred outcome," said Sitko. "In 2020, we added an online TNR class, making it easier for people far away or with transportation challenges to still learn best practices."

In the last 10 years, more than 5,000 people have completed TNR training and nearly 90,000 community cats have been spayed or neutered, making a major dent in the cycle with each one sterilized.

"From the beginning, we knew access to affordable wellness care was an important piece of addressing the homeless crisis," said Sitko. "The more you can help people take care of their pets' veterinary needs, the less animals will find themselves homeless or euthanized due to illness. Keep them healthy, help keep them in the home. It's also a terrific opportunity to talk to pet owners about spay/neuter and pet care."



*All About Animals Shot Clinic Team*

As part of its mission to keep pets healthy, All About Animals teams up with cities, animal control agencies and shelters to hold large-scale walk-in vaccination clinics in the spring and fall. Last year, 11 clinics were held with 4,500 pets receiving services.

“Transport vans help us strategically extend our spay/neuter reach into low-income communities, which typically have higher rates of transportation issues,” said Sitko. “Average scheduling is 10 to 15 dogs, along with 25 to 30 cats, at a time. These climate-controlled vans have helped thousands of people gain access to sterilization for their animals.”



Boots on the ground outreach is the cornerstone to All About Animals' Detroit Pets for Life program.

For the past 12 years, residents in four different zip codes have had a consistently easy access to pet care questions and to free vet care. Pets are sterilized, microchipped and vaccinated at no charge.

The relationships built through the Detroit Pets for Life program have helped earn the trust of many who previously had no interest in spay/neuter.

“Our priority and goals as an organization are centered around breaking down barriers to spay/neuter and vet care,” said Sitko. “That means ramping up services we already provide. With the ongoing national veterinarian and veterinary technician shortage continuing to worsen, getting fully staffed to programing needs remains a top goal.”

As prices keep rising and service availability at other clinics continues to diminish, All About Animals is experiencing an unprecedented surge in demand from pet owners seeking affordable veterinary help and ways to surrender pets or strays.

The national veterinary staff shortage has a direct impact on animal welfare's ability to meet the current needs of at-risk and homeless animals and pet owners' ability to access vet care.



Animal welfare organizations continue to weather the perfect storm, created by the unending staff shortage, the COVID-19 pandemic, the present housing crisis affecting millions of pet owners pressured to give up their pets or be homeless, the exorbitant inflation of costs for pet goods and veterinary care, which is outpricing people's ability to care for pets and diminishing donations, the ongoing ICE deportations causing pets to be suddenly left homeless, and the overworked medical staff and overwhelmed, emotionally fatigued animal welfare workers with no room for another surrendered animal or stray unless another animal is euthanized.

"We're seeing an erosion of decades of gains we had collectively made for the animals," said Sitko.

Unfortunately, Michigan is not exempt from the massive shortage of veterinarians and technicians that is crippling pet care across the country.

The good news is results are being realized from Michigan Pet Alliance and many other animal welfare organizations raising the alarm.

Last year, Colorado voters passed Proposition 129, creating a new veterinary midlevel practitioner position known as a veterinary professional associate.



Progressive moves like this free up veterinarians to focus on complex diagnoses and surgeries, while lower level positions handle simpler procedures.

In Michigan, animal welfare organizations, including Michigan Pet Alliance, are championing HB 4220/4221/SB 193/194, known as the telehealth bills.

This pending legislation removes the requirement that a veterinarian-patient relationship be established in person prior to a telehealth appointment, reverting back to the same practice that worked well during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This change is necessary to reduce barriers and to increase access to much needed vet care for families and for animal shelters.

As for the future, Sitko said, “we’re most looking forward to getting fully staffed to provide expanded care services and continue advocating on the local and state level for what’s best for animals and the people who care for them. For example, the latest telemedicine bill, HB 4220/4221, would help eliminate many barriers around helping pets virtually.”



For 2025, All About Animals is full of celebrations, reflecting on some true wins over the years. More than 430,000 cats and dogs sterilized, 10 years of championing high-volume TNR with nearly 90,000 community cats sterilized and 5,000 people trained, embracing telemedicine and opening its Flint clinic, which allowed the organization to double the number of pets benefiting from greater access to care, are all accomplishments worth celebrating.

Michigan Pet Alliance is incredibly proud to have All About Animals as a nonprofit member.



*All About Animals Detroit Team*

***"Joining MPA was a natural fit for us. We're always looking at prevention as the best lever pulled to be more effective in reducing animal suffering. MPA brings together organizations from all areas of animal welfare, giving us an opportunity to learn from each other, break down silos, and strengthen our voice to influence policy at the state level."***

-- Catherine Garrett, director of development and marketing, All About Animals

Follow All About Animals and its life-saving initiatives at:



**Michigan Pet Alliance supports its members. Speaking with One Voice, we can create lasting change. Lend your voice. [Become a member](#) today.**

## regional workshops

**Discounted pricing through early-bird registration ends at midnight Eastern.**

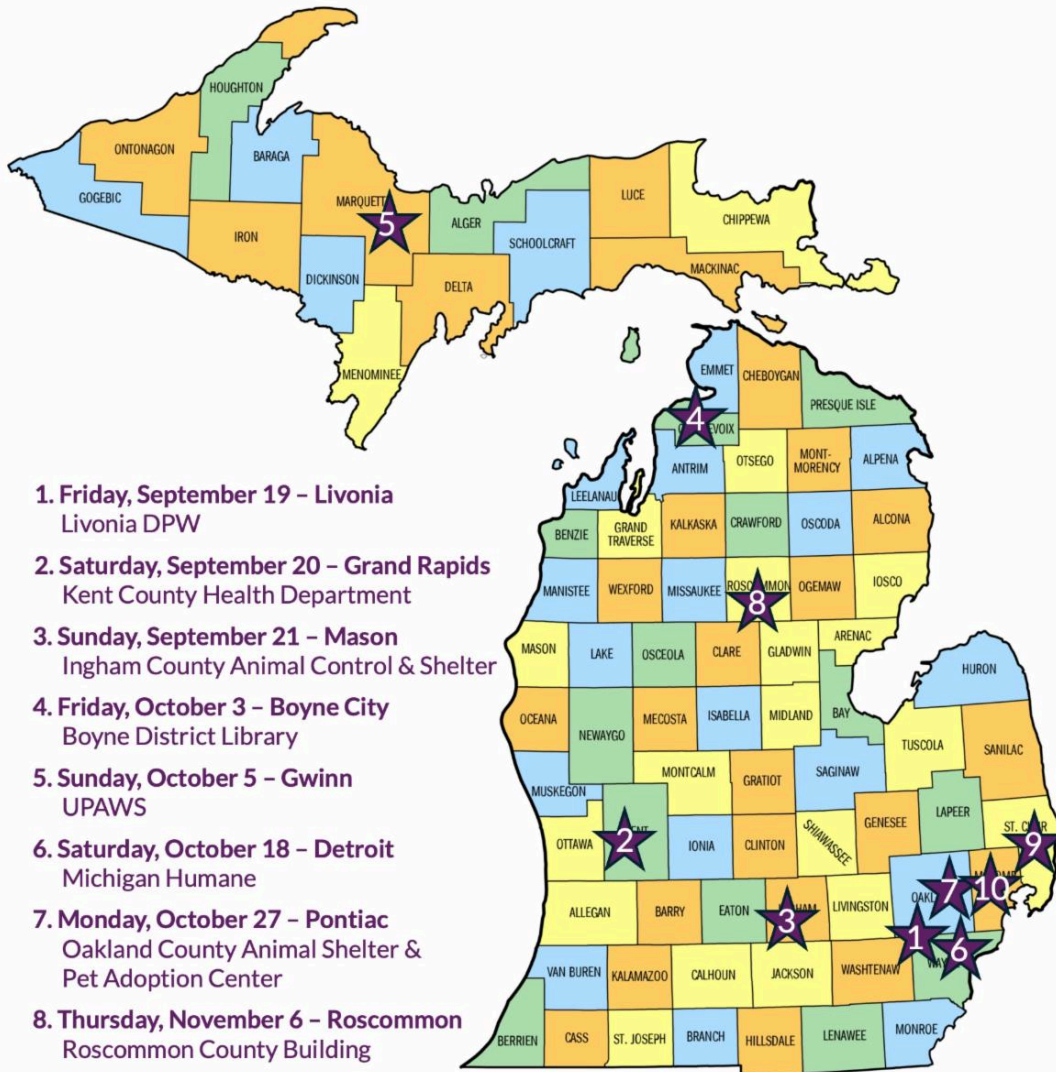
Procrastination ends tonight for the money savers. Identify your staff and volunteers who would benefit most from the training topics below. Register today to save.

This fall, we're bringing our [One Voice training workshops](#) to you ... 10 workshops in nine counties.

All of the 2025 One Voice regional workshops are approved for continuing education credits for CAWA and for NACA.

# 2025 one voice

## MICHIGAN PET ALLIANCE REGIONAL WORKSHOPS



1. Friday, September 19 - Livonia  
Livonia DPW
2. Saturday, September 20 - Grand Rapids  
Kent County Health Department
3. Sunday, September 21 - Mason  
Ingham County Animal Control & Shelter
4. Friday, October 3 - Boyne City  
Boyne District Library
5. Sunday, October 5 - Gwinn  
UPAWS
6. Saturday, October 18 - Detroit  
Michigan Humane
7. Monday, October 27 - Pontiac  
Oakland County Animal Shelter & Pet Adoption Center
8. Thursday, November 6 - Roscommon  
Roscommon County Building
9. Monday, November 10 - Port Huron  
St. Clair County Library
10. Sunday, November 16 - Utica  
Humane Society of Macomb

[michiganpet.org/2025workshops](https://michiganpet.org/2025workshops)

Updated 7/19/25

### Wayne County

Friday, September 19, Department of Public Works, Livonia

- "Animal Handling and Capture for Professionals"

### Kent County

Saturday, September 20, Kent County Health Department, Grand Rapids

- "Decoding Canine Behavior" - sponsored by NACA
- "Cat Body Language & Behavior"

Special guest speakers:

- Amanda Foster, Human Animal Support Services
- Mary Bart Houston, Mars Pet Nutrition - sponsored by Adopt a Pet Shelter Plus

### **Ingham County**

Sunday, September 21, Ingham County Animal Control & Shelter, Mason

- "The Why Behind the Goodbye: Preventing Pet Surrenders"
- "From Conflict to Cooperation: How to Turn Community Cat Skeptics Into Supporters"

Special guest speaker:

- Amanda Foster, Human Animal Support Services

### **Charlevoix County**

Friday, October 3, Boyne District Library, Boyne City

- "Meeting the Needs of Unique Shelters with Fear Free Strategies" - sponsored by Dechra
- "Community Cat Caretaker Certification"

Special guest speaker:

- Dr. Kathy Engler, Dechra

### **Marquette County**

Sunday, October 5, UPAWS, Gwinn

- "Tips on How to Improve Your Barn Cat Program"
- "Animal Sheltering 102: Advanced Health & Safety Protocols"

### **Wayne County**

Saturday, October 18, Michigan Humane, Detroit

- "Report and Document Animal Cruelty and Neglect"
- "Advanced Investigation Procedures for Professionals" - sponsored by NACA and Maddie's Fund

Special guest speaker:

- Elkie Wills, Human Animal Support Services

### **Oakland County**

Monday, October 27, Oakland County Animal Shelter, Pontiac

- "Dog Behavior & Body Language with Fear Free Shelter Tips"
- "Cat Body Language & Behavior"

Special guest speaker:

- Mary Bart Houston, Mars Pet Nutrition - sponsored by Adopt a Pet Shelter Plus

### **Roscommon County**

Thursday, November 6, Roscommon County Building, Roscommon

- "Dog Behavior & Body Language With Fear Free Shelter Tips"
- "Cat Body Language & Behavior"

### **St. Clair County**

Monday, November 10, St. Clair County Library, Port Huron

- "Cat Body Language & Behavior"
- "Creating a Successful Barn Cat Program"

## Macomb County

Sunday, November 16, Humane Society of Macomb, Utica

- "Dog Behavior & Body Language with Fear Free Shelter Tips"
- "Cat Body Language & Behavior"

Reserve your spot today to take advantage of early registration pricing:

- MPA members: \$50
- Non-members: \$85 (includes one-year MPA membership)

Space is limited. These workshops will sell out. [Reserve your seat](#) today and save with early registration prices.

### Free Registration

If your shelter, rescue, outreach or nonprofit organization is not yet a member of Michigan Pet Alliance, here's your chance to fix that and to earn two free tickets to the workshop of your choice. Check out our list of [current members](#) and join the pack.

The next two organizations or shelters that join MPA will receive two free registrations. [Join now](#).

[Register for Regional Workshops](#)

## legislative update

### Wayne State University accused of violating recently enacted Teddy's Law

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and the Humane Society of Huron Valley have requested that MDARD investigate Wayne State University for violating Section 287.388a of Michigan Public Act 224, commonly referred to as Teddy's Law.

D3002 was a male hound-type dog born July 1, 2022. He was sold by Marshall BioResources to Wayne State University on March 2, 2023. He was killed. May 1, 2024, after sustaining a minor paw wound and being given a poor prognosis by the attending veterinarian.

"I do not agree that D3002 had a poor prognosis, and I do not believe that euthanasia was the appropriate outcome," said Robin Chadwin, DVM, MPVM, MS, DACAW. "I believe that there was minimal effort to provide appropriate care and

that his poor prognosis was based on conclusions that were reached prematurely, were hypothetical, and/or were incorrect."

Public records obtained by the Physicians Committee through the Michigan Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") show that dog D3002 was killed by Wayne State employees in May 2024 despite being healthy and adoptable.

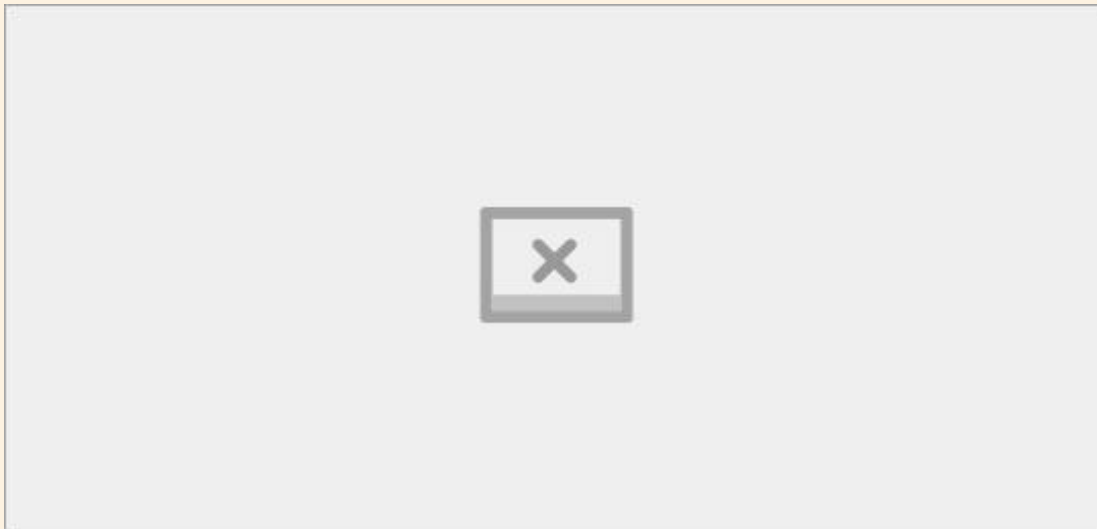
They killed this dog because he would not run on a treadmill as needed for the university's heart failure experiments, because of a small laceration on his paw, and because they misdiagnosed and overstated the importance of bacteria found in a skin culture.

Not only did Wayne State University fail to properly care for this dog, fail to provide the most basic vet care, Wayne State also failed to offer the dog for adoption as required in Teddy's Law.

Michigan Pet Alliance and its members fully support the complaint, implore MDARD to conduct a thorough investigation, and wish for Wayne State to be held accountable to fullest extent allowed by law.

This atrocious violation and mistreatment of an innocent life is more evidence as to why we must pass Queenie's Law, HB 4254 / SB 127, this fall. Queenie's Law will prohibit conducting research or training activities on dogs in a manner that causes pain or distress. It has been introduced in the Michigan House and referred to the House committee on regulatory reform.

[More information is available](#), including records and the formal [complaint](#).



*Thank you, WDIV - Channel 4 Detroit, for covering this important story.*

# lunch & learn

In case you couldn't catch us live, you can catch us on replay. Earlier this month MPA hosted the Lunch & Learn, "[Great Customer Service for Great Animal Outcomes.](#)" It is now available for replay and sharing.

An engaging and welcoming customer experience can make all the difference! When shelters and rescues create a positive, engaging environment, it helps homeless animals find loving families more quickly and makes the experience better for everyone involved.

Check out this fun and practical session with Tanya Hilgendorf, MPA board chair and president and CEO of the Humane Society of Huron Valley. Tanya shares proven tips and easy-to-implement ideas for building a supportive, people-friendly experience that also improves outcomes for animals. Whether you're greeting adopters, working with volunteers, or creating community connections, this session will leave you ready to roll out the red carpet, for both pets and people!

**WHAT MAKES IT HARD TO PROVIDE GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE?**

- Lack of a strong culture around customer care, **NO TRAINING**
- 20/60/20 – hire well/train well
- The environment is stressful (noise, chaos, parking, barking)
- Understaffed and overwhelmed, too busy with animal care
- Personal stress
- Difficult or demanding customers – unfair when other aren't nice
- Service roles often feel undervalued, looked down on
- Co-workers' poor service
- Tendency to judge, blame, or shame; getting on "soapbox"
- Negative emotions feed more negativity

I work well with others as long as they leave me the **fuck** alone

Tanya Hilgendorf

Zoom Meeting

Participants: Tanya Hilgendorf, [Name], [Name], [Name], [Name], [Name]

# shelter members

**Michigan Pet Alliance appreciates the partnership and engagement of our shelter members.** Give these compassionate shelters your support. They understand the big picture and that together, with One Voice, we accomplish more.

Capital Area Humane Society  
Charlevoix Area Humane Society  
Eva Burrell Animal Shelter  
Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue  
Happy Feet Pet Rescue  
Harbor Humane Society  
Humane Society of Bay County  
Humane Society of Genesee County  
Humane Society of Huron Valley  
Ingham County Animal Control  
Karma Kat Cafe & Rescue  
Kent County Animal Shelter  
Lenawee Humane Society  
Luce County Animal Shelter  
Newaygo County Animal Shelter  
Noah Project  
Paradise Animal Rescue  
Pet Angel Adoption & Rescue  
Saginaw County Animal Care & Control  
Shelter to Home  
Upper Peninsula Animal Welfare Shelter (UPAWS)

Encourage your partner shelters to join MPA and to become a shelter member. Share the [benefits of membership](#) in MPA.

## member events

**A benefit of MPA membership is free promotion for the upcoming events and fundraisers of member organizations.** Here are a few opportunities to support animal welfare organizations next month:

- **September 2025:** [Big Ticket Raffle 2025](#), Charlevoix, Charlevoix Area Humane Society
- **September 3:** [Bingo Night Wednesdays](#), Muskegon, Noah Project
- **September 5:** [Pets & Pajamas](#), Ann Arbor, Humane Society of Huron Valley
- **September 5:** [Golf Tournament](#), Tecumseh, Lenawee Humane Society
- **September 6:** [Golf Outing](#), Grand Blanc Twp, Paradise Animal Rescue

- **September 6:** [Paws, Claws, and Applause](#), Mount Pleasant, Karma Kat Cafe
- **September 10:** [Dog Vaccine Clinic](#), Mason, Ingham County Animal Control & Shelter
- **September 13:** [Strut Your Mut](#), Marquette, UPAWS
- **September 14:** [Microchip/Vaccine Clinic](#), Grand Rapids, Pleasant Hearts Pet Food Pantry
- **September 14:** [How to Care for Outdoor Cats TNR Training](#), Warren, All About Animals
- **September 15:** [Community Cats Spay/Neuter Day](#), Taylor, Feline Fund
- **September 19:** [Animal Handling and Capture Workshop](#), Livonia, MPA
- **September 20:** [Dog & Cat Body Language Workshop](#), Grand Rapids, MPA
- **September 21:** [Preventing Pet Surrenders Workshop](#), Mason, MPA
- **September 21:** [Turn Community Cat Skeptics Into Supporters Workshop](#), Mason, MPA
- **September 21:** [TNR Best Practices Training](#), online, All About Animals
- **September 21:** [Willis Fest Car Show](#), Willis, Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue
- **September 23:** [Free Pet Vaccine Clinic](#), Lansing, Capital Area Humane Society
- **September 27:** [Pet Costume Contest](#), Flushing, Humane Society of Genesee County
- **September 27:** [Woof Wag & Wine](#), Manistique, Eva Burrell Animal Shelter
- **September 28:** [Adoptions Meet & Greet](#), Grand Rapids, Fig and Friends Pet Rescue

Lend your voice and enjoy the benefits of being a member of Michigan Pet Alliance. [Become a member](#) today!

## Michigan Pet Alliance

### MPA Vision:

To achieve the best quality of life for Michigan's companion animals.

### MPA Mission:

To work in collaboration and 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.

313-731-2244

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[michiganpet.org](http://michiganpet.org)

Michigan Pet Alliance is a 501(c)3 charitable organization as defined by the IRS

(EIN 20-0399162) and is a [GuideStar Exchange Platinum Participant](#).



Contributions are tax deductible.



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