

Milam Touch of Love Annual Report, 2020

Board President

I am thrilled to announce we had an amazing first year, thanks to generous donors and volunteers. Our board of directors worked hard to learn from experienced organizations and capitalized on opportunities presented to us.

Board of Directors

We have four members on our Board of Directors:

Board President: Jean Schara
Board Vice President: Sue Ann Kendall
Board Secretary/Treasurer: Meghan Land
Board Member: W. Mark McKibben

Vision and Mission Statement

Vision: Milam County domestic animals are cared for and provided for by responsible owners.

Mission: Milam Touch of Love is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit volunteer organization working independently to help in efforts to care for domestic animals, educate their owners and the community, and help them achieve responsible ownership goals.

We formed as a legal entity in the State of Texas on May 3, 2019.

Top Supporters

Our Top Individual Supporter has been Ms. Ruth Kruse.

Our Top Organizational Supporter has been the Amazing Grace Thrift Shop.

Our most successful Facebook Fundraiser was actually for another non-profit who had fallen on hard times. Our fundraiser for DogTown Ranch netted over \$1300 and allowed that non-profit to remain in business and caring for many hard-to-place dogs.

Facebook has been a tremendous source of fundraising for us, bringing in \$5874.

Donations Received

We have received large and small donations via our postal box, from checks and cash left for us with Cameron's Animal Control Officer (ACO), and at the various events where we've set up our outreach booth.

Financial Information

Through membership fees, donations, and fundraising efforts, we brought in \$24,366.00 from May 2019 through April 30, 2020.

As of April 20, 2020, we have \$5181 cash on hand.

Where did we spend your money?

\$7072 was spent in the Cameron and Rockdale Animal Shelters, most went toward spaying/neutering, and vaccinating shelter dogs. Hearts, Homes, and Hands donated a play yard for \$2000 to the Cameron Shelter. They donated the \$2000, we bought the supplies, and they did the installation.

Spay, Neuter, Vaccination, Health Certificates, and Veterinary care accounted for \$7638

Kitten and Dog Foster programs accounted for \$878

We spent \$905 on our Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program

We reimbursed transport mileage for \$76 (most transporters decided to donate their mileage)

We purchased \$486 in microchips

We had \$86 in marketing costs

We had \$1641 in operating costs, including PayPal and bank fees.

There was a one-time cost of \$403 for origination fees, which were donated by the directors.

This totals \$19,185 in expenses for our first fiscal year.

Programs Implemented

- Shelter Support
- TNR
- Shelter Spay and Neuter
- Low-Cost Snip & Chip
- Kitten Fosters

- Bottle Baby Fosters
- Freedom Rides to Colorado (and other locations)
- Mama Spay; Puppies to Colorado (CO)
- Cat Census
- County Dog Registry

Highlights of Accomplishments

Adoption and transport arranged to Illinois for one dog

Adoption and transport arranged to CO for one dog

Over 150 dogs sent on freedom rides to CO and over 132 kittens fostered and homed.

98 dogs were spayed or neutered and vaccinated against rabies

Our total membership grew from 10 to 35

Our Facebook group membership grew from 1275 to 2562

We're up to 12 participants on Amazon Smile with our most recent earnings being \$22.24

Success Stories

Certainly, our exciting success stories were two Cameron shelter dogs being adopted out of state — one to Illinois and another to Colorado. The exciting thing for these two adoptions was being able to work the intrastate transports for them.

Another huge success story was learning ways to deal with unwanted puppies. For the longest time, the only thing we could say was “post them to the group and maybe someone will see them and adopt them.” That’s still an option, but if people are willing to give us some time and work with us, we have an avenue of being able to get fosters for the puppies in Colorado, ship the puppies, and spay the mama dog so people don’t have to deal with unwanted puppies again.

When we started, there were few low-cost spay/neuter options for Milam County. Over the course of this year, we have developed a relationship with Brinlee Veterinary Services, which is allowing us to achieve our dream of bringing low-cost (and in some cases no-cost) spay and neuter as well as other services to Milam County communities. We call them Shelter and Community Snip and Chips. We began spaying shelter dogs and a few foster and privately owned cats in January. In April, we held our first community Snip and Chip in Minerva. For people who didn’t need their dogs snipped, they were able to get them current on vaccinations and even get them microchipped if they desired.

Microchipping has been a community service project we began in December 2019, which we have reaped benefits from. The very first dog we chipped got away from home, was discovered, and reunited with his family. Our goal is to chip as many dogs and cats as feasible in the county so they can be reunited with their people. We ask a suggested donation of \$10, but we will chip all dogs and cats regardless of anyone's ability or inability to pay. If someone can pay the suggested donation, they are paying for their chip plus two others. People have been very generous with this program, and we are able to keep purchasing chips and to continue our service project because of their generosity in paying forward.

Beneficiary Data

We are aware of a large population in Milam County who loves their pets but does not have the means to do all the things considered essential for "responsible pet owners." Our goal is to help these people achieve this through low cost or no-cost spay/neuter events. For now, we rely on our Animal Control Officers and our community volunteers who know the small community they live in to know who is truly in need. Over time, we'll develop other ways to means test people, but we want to maintain their dignity as well.

Vision for the Year Ahead

We plan to continue freedom rides to Colorado — spaying the mama dog allows the family to keep their pet while not having to worry about finding good homes for the puppies — breaking the cycle of unwanted animals.

We plan to continue microchipping as many dogs and cats as possible without worrying if people can pay. We don't ask for money at our microchipping events, but the donation jar is there. If people ask us, we tell them we suggest a donation of \$10. If they don't ask, we don't ask.

We plan to expand our Snip & Chip to communities as we find sponsors. Some will be free and some will be low cost.

We are advocating an agreement between the county and the City of Cameron for housing county dogs, not to exceed five kennels at any given time. This will help the Milam County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) be more responsive to having a safe place to house lost dogs as well as a safe place to house dumped dogs, easing the problem of county residents feeling as if lost or dumped dogs are forced on them. MTOL will work with county dogs as we work with city dogs — getting them spayed/neutered and vaccinated, and either finding homes or seeking transport to a distant foster or adoptive home.

We are still seeking community cat managers. As we learn the terrain — many cat communities are already out there — we'll coordinate with the colony manager to get their colony spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and ear-tipped. We'll also seek to get community cat language written into city ordinances to legitimize not only well-managed communities but to allow them to exist safely. We plan to work with a group that will help us understand the right way to do this process.

Finally, we will expand our education services. We've been seeking the right tone for our efforts. We don't want to preach to people. We want to offer useful lessons they can apply to improve the quality of lives for their pets.