

Milam Touch of Love Annual Report, 2022

Board President

Our third year has opened wonderful opportunities to us. We have solidified and expanded our network partner relationships. Our supporters have ensured we are able to do much more good in the Milam County community. We tried some new things this year with mixed results, but we kept moving forward.

Board of Directors

We have four members on our Board of Directors:

Board President: Jean Schara

Board Secretary/Treasurer: Meghan Cummins

Board Member: W. Mark McKibben

Board Member: Bonnie Wiesman

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 Supporters have been Ruth Humble Cruz and Cindy Thweatt with donations totaling \$1900 each.

Our Top Organizational Supporter was Classic Bank with a \$1446 donation from their Community Chest Fund.

Milam County donated \$5000 toward veterinary care for animals found in the county. We used the last of those funds on April 25.

Facebook has been a tremendous source of fundraising for us, bringing in \$17,340.00.

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, fundraising efforts, and program fees, we brought in \$96,945.94 from May 2021 through April 30, 2022.

As of April 30, 2022, we have \$9,904.60 cash on hand (most obligated for the next few months, but that does feel good).

Where did we spend your money?

\$36,990.99 was spent for our Snip and Chip monthly low cost spay and neuter program

\$13,950.28 was spent for our Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program

\$4,797.06 was spent for medical care (including spaying and neutering) county dogs this year

\$4,130.67 purchased vaccines, flea treatment, and deworming medication for the shelters and to prepare animals for transport (doing our own distemper and bordetella vaccines costs us approximately 2/3 less than having a vet administer these vaccines)

\$1,661.84 went to purchasing microchips for snip and chip and our outreach efforts to microchip dogs and cats in Milam County

\$3,453.75 supported the Cameron and Rockdale Shelters for supplies

\$2,251.55 was spent for veterinary care for foster animals

\$6,104.73 was needed for shelter veterinary care (not related to vaccinations, flea treatment, or wormer)

Our transport and transport preparation costs amounted to \$875.19

Kitten and Dog Foster programs accounted for \$4,239.57 with an additional \$940.25 spent for equipment and supplies for our fosters.

We expanded our TNR program by purchasing new equipment for \$1,414.30

We had \$2,515.47 in operating costs, including PayPal, bank fees, postage (a lot of thank you notes), insurance, and shipping charges for our vaccines.

We made \$250 in charitable contributions

Finally, \$3,465.70 was spent on various smaller expenditures.

This totals \$ 87,041.34 in expenses for our third fiscal year.

Programs Implemented

- We added Central Texas Ruffugees as a rescue partner. They are a foster-based rescue located in Austin who ships primarily to the Northeastern United States.
- We began working with Twilight Tails Rescue, who ship to Canada
- Our May Day Spay program for people who simply cannot afford to spay their dog saved many families from having to deal with unwanted puppies or kittens.
- Barn Cat Days, expanded to monthly - A low cost event where people can bring their barn cats and porch cats in to get them spayed and neutered to prevent the birth of more outside cats.
- Throughout the year, we housed 32 county dogs, got them spayed/neutered, vaccinated, heartworm tested, and treated if necessary, and found them homes, either locally or through rescues. Milam County donated \$5000 to assist with this, and Casa McKibben, for the most part, donated the boarding space, which is not included in the cost listed. In January of 2022, Casa McKibben obtained an agreement with Milam County for reimbursement for housing county dogs (billable monthly) up to \$20,000. This is a separate agreement from Milam Touch of Love; however, it helps offset the costs of housing county dogs. Casa McKibben has been averaging 12 dogs per month.
- Of those 32 dogs, 14 were returned to their owners
- In October, we assisted the county with a near hoarding situation. We spayed and neutered, heartworm tested, and vaccinated 25 dogs. We have found rescues or homes for ten of these dogs. Four are being socialized at Casa McKibben, and eleven dogs are awaiting placement or fosters to get them ready for adoption. This was funded by the county by placing a lien on the property of the dogs' owner.

Highlights of Accomplishments

- Over 234 dogs and cats sent on freedom rides to rescues in and out of Texas.
- 307 dogs were spayed or neutered and 290 were vaccinated against rabies (This means quite a few came in for surgery already vaccinated — good news!)
- Of 294 dogs tested for heartworms, 248 were negative. Most of the positive dogs were shelter dogs, who tended to come from environments where they did not get preventative care.
- 121 owned cats were spayed or neutered and 118 were vaccinated against rabies
- 439 barn cats or porch cats have been spayed or neutered with an undocumented rabies shot (protecting the cat and improving public health)
- Our Facebook group membership grew from 3673 to 4743
- We're up to 64 participants on Amazon Smile with our most recent earnings being \$137.82
- We have microchipped 934 pets since we began performing this service in December 2019
- Established trial Save the Paws Program, a TNR program for friendly found cats, which was implemented in April 2022
- Our second large scale TNR event — 43 cats spayed/neutered, vaccinated against rabies, and returned to their colonies in Thorndale

Success Stories

We expanded our relationship with Dr. Brinlee in 2021. We have sites in Cameron, Milano, Minerva, Thorndale, and Davilla where we can host events. We added a site in Buckholts for 2022. We have a monthly wellness day, a monthly barn cat day, and a monthly snip and chip day. Demand has been so great, we are separating shelter dogs from snip and chip dogs and holding separate shelter spay days.

We added a TNR coordinator in 2021. We started with five slots per month and expanded to 10 slots monthly for TNR, which allows us to begin working on our homeless cat census submissions.

In April, 2021, the Milam County Commissioners voted to make a donation to Milam Touch of Love to allow us to help county dogs. With that donation, we have vetted county dogs to prepare them for adoption. Of the \$5,000 donated, we used the final \$800 on April 25.

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, while maintaining their dignity.

Vision for the Year Ahead

We plan to continue freedom rides to rescues — 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 are seeking not only more rescue partners but more transport coordinators to work with our partners to ensure dogs are visible and ready for transport.

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 need fosters, especially for puppies and dogs with a known exit date. We also need open-ended fosters. Fosters are critical to helping dogs adjust to a home life and for helping us know the true dog to match them with the best home possible.

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 would like to get community cat language written into city ordinances to legitimize not only well-managed communities but to allow them to exist safely.

We are looking for a Canine Foster Coordinator and an Adoption Coordinator. Without fosters and these two positions, we cannot expand into any rescue area like many people seem to want us to do. Rescues cannot happen without a place to care for animals or without an advocate for getting them adopted or to other rescues with better placement options.

Finally, we continue to 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. As people volunteer with us, they learn more about what we offer to the community and share with their friends. We have a weekly column in The Cameron Herald. We continue to meet people who don't realize our primary mission is to make low-cost spay and neutering services available to Milam County residents.