

Milam Touch of Love Annual Report, 2023

Board President

Our fourth year has opened wonderful opportunities for us. We have solidified and expanded our network of partner relationships. Our supporters have ensured we are able to do much more good in the Milam County community.

Board of Directors

We have four members on our Board of Directors:

Board President: Jean Schara

Board Secretary/Treasurer: Meghan Cummins

Board Member: Bonnie Wiesman

Board Member: Kristen Johnson

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 Cindy Thweatt with donations totaling \$1450.

Our Top Organizational Supporter was Rockdale Rotary with a \$550 donation.

We received a Bushel Grant for \$18,854.91 to be used as we saw fit. We established an Emergency Fund with \$3,854.91 and divided the remaining \$15,000 between May Day funds and TNR. We also received a \$5,000 matching funds grant from an anonymous donor.

Facebook has been a tremendous source of fundraising for us, bringing in \$10,975.00.

From this, you can see that the majority of our donors are smaller donors, who enable us to do big things for Milam County.

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 \$108,106.96 from May 2022 through April 30, 2023.

As of April 30, 2023, we have \$15,807.01 cash on hand.

Where did we spend your money?

\$36,177.15 was spent for our Snip and Chip monthly low-cost spay and neuter program

\$30,945.64 was spent on our Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program

\$6,103.41 was spent for medical care (including spaying and neutering) of county dogs this year

\$2,323.59 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)

\$1,264.41 went to purchasing microchips for snip and chip and our outreach efforts to microchip dogs and cats in Milam County

\$3,946.38 supported the Cameron and Rockdale Shelters for supplies

\$609.46 was spent on veterinary care for foster animals

\$9,050.69 was needed for shelter veterinary care (not related to vaccinations, flea treatment, or wormer)

\$2,684.93 in emergency expenses for foster or shelter animals

Our transport and transport preparation costs amounted to \$543.29

Kitten and Dog Foster programs accounted for \$8,083.00 (mostly providing food to county dogs housed at Casa McKibben).

We expanded our TNR program by purchasing new equipment for \$64.50

We had \$2,303.24 in operating costs, including PayPal, bank fees, postage, insurance, and shipping charges for our vaccines.

Finally, \$4,966.58 was spent on various smaller expenditures.

This totals \$109,066.27 in expenses for our fourth fiscal year.

Programs Implemented

- The City of Milano continued supporting their citizens by paying all costs for spaying and neutering as well as wellness costs for city resident pets
- The City of Thorndale agreed to pay for spaying and neutering for their city residents' pets

Highlights of Accomplishments

- 123 dogs and cats were sent on freedom rides to rescues in and out of Texas
- 283 dogs were spayed or neutered and 259 were vaccinated against rabies
- Of 259 dogs tested for heartworms, 231 were negative. Most of the positive dogs were shelter dogs, who tended to come from environments where they did not get preventative care
- 104 owned cats were spayed or neutered and 100 were vaccinated against rabies
- 560 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 4743 to 5591
- We have microchipped 1,302 pets since we began performing this service in December 2019
- Our second large-scale TNR event on April 7, 2023 — 22 cats were spayed/neutered, vaccinated against rabies, and returned to their colonies in Thorndale and one to Buckholts while 38 were spayed/neutered and returned to their colonies in Rockdale in January 2023

Success Stories

We continued our relationship with Dr. Brinlee in 2022. We have sites in Cameron, Milano, Minerva, and Thorndale where we can host events. We have a monthly wellness day, barn cat day, and 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.

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 have purposefully shifted our focus to full-time low-cost spay and neuter efforts. Without people willing or able to volunteer as fosters, we cannot rescue homeless animals in Milam County. Our board believes we can make the greatest difference in the low-cost spay and neuter arena.

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 more rescue partners as well as 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.

Even though we've shifted our focus to low-cost spay and neuter, we still 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 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 well-managed communities and to allow them to exist safely.

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 life 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.