



The mission of the Humane Society of St. Joseph County is: “To install a reverence for all life and to enhance the human/animal bond through the compassionate care of animals and community education.” This is our guiding principle which inspires us to avoid, whenever possible, the euthanasia of adoptable animals.

The Humane Society has not tried to hide the recent problems of overpopulation in our shelter. Several months ago, WNDU aired a story asking the community to consider adoption from the “Shelter Overcrowding Crisis.” Within that story, we were very clear about the number of animals housed in our facility: *“We counted our cats and found we had 384 in our shelter. Then we counted dogs and found that we had 572 animals total including: 1 goose, 1 gerbil, 6 rabbits, various and sundry free roaming mice and one raccoon who tries to get into the shelter on a regular basis. We have animals stacked on top of each other three cages high.”*

The number of cats in our facility fluctuates throughout the year. Obviously spring is a period of high intake of all animals. Stray animals that have spent much of the colder months in whatever shelter they were able to find are more active and visible when the warmer weather permits. This year, we have also seen a large number of stray cats uncovered by ongoing demolition of the Hollywood and Park Jefferson trailer parks. In one day alone, we accepted 51 cats. From May 1st to 22nd, we have accepted 244 cats. Because the Humane Society of St. Joseph County provides animal control services, we are unable to refuse any animal from within our jurisdiction. We are also legally required to hold all strays for a minimum of four days to allow owners an opportunity to reclaim lost pets. These factors, combined with the sheer volume of animals entering our shelter at any time, may result in temporary carrier housing in carriers for an average of 2-3 days. Feral (wild) cats in particular are housed in carriers until the mandatory quarantine period has expired.

We are working diligently to improve the accommodations available to these animals. Our solutions include: the purchase of new cages, cooperative agreements with rescue groups and other shelters, investigating the logistics of expanding our foster program, improved adoption procedures, community education and participation with other local agencies in the SJC-SNAP spay/neuter program for low income pet owners. (The SJC-SNAP program is still in development.) We also have plans to build a larger, practical building that will stand up to the daily wear and tear of running a busy animal shelter. Some of these solutions are long established programs that we continue to support and improve upon. Other solutions are the result of conversations over the past week. As long as there are unwanted animals in St. Joseph County, there is room for improvement at the Humane Society. Our ultimate dream is to arrive at a day when every companion animal has a loving, forever home with a responsible owner.

The WNDU chose to accept the information provided by former employees at face value is unfortunate. Their decision to present the story in hidden camera format immediately implies that we are attempting to conceal something from the public. This is a false and misleading impression. Unfortunately, some of the reactions to this story have turned to personal attacks and unfounded rumors. Fortunately, we have also received a huge outpouring of support. We have been overwhelmed by donations, as well as the number of people interested in volunteering their time.

We would like to thank everyone who continues to support us and those who have been inspired to begin supporting us. We also thank the animal care agencies who have offered their assistance in finding homes for our overpopulation of animals, especially Pet Refuge and the Indianapolis Humane Society. We encourage everyone to visit our website (www.humanesocietystjc.org) or contact our office (574-255-4726) for more information regarding our adoption and volunteer programs. As always, we accept both monetary and in-kind donations at our facility during normal business hours.

Working together, we can help put an end to the problem of pet overpopulation.

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574-255-4726 * www.humanesocietystjc.org