

CLAWS Rescue and Adoption Shelter Celebrates 1st year in Operation

On May 8th, 2010 CLAWS held an open house at the shelter located on Sanford Ave to celebrate its 1st anniversary. The year had gone by quickly, it always does when there is so much to do. The building, a former veterinary office, was purchased in February, 2009 but lots of work was needed to make it ready for all the new inhabitants. Everything had to be cleaned, painted, repaired and rebuilt to make way for the transformation that was to come.

Since 2007 CLAWS had been operating without a shelter. Extraordinary efforts by Valerie Mazrin and Kim Lindsey (CLAWS co-founders) and a small group of volunteer foster moms had been the best hope for many cats in the Grand Valley. Cats and kittens just seemed to appear in those days. Some were surrendered, some were saved from a life on the streets and others came from Mesa County Animal Control when space ran out. They all had one thing in common, they needed help. Each cat or kitten had to be immunized, tested for feline diseases and spayed or neutered before they could be adopted into new homes. A committed group of foster moms provided safe, secure surrounding in their own homes until the cats could be adopted. What a welcome relief this must have been to so many cats who had reached the end of the line. Unwanted, victims of people who could no longer care for them many had spent time without food, love or a place to call home. These temporary homes, provided by CLAWS, were their last chance for a new life.

When the shelter opened on May 8th, 2009 there were already cats

lined up for spaces in the new facility. The new banks of stainless steel cages filled quickly and the regular rhythm of feeding, cleaning and management for all these precious lives began. The work seems endless at times. There are no weekends, holidays or days off at a shelter. The cats need feeding and caring for 365 days of the year.

In 2009, we rescued 654 cats, and re-homed 562 of them. All of these animals were spay/neutered before adoption and will not contribute to the tragedy of overpopulation. We are currently housing about 110 cats/kittens at our facility and have approximately another 95 in foster homes. Many of these are young kittens, senior cats or special needs kitties and require individual attention.

The first year was a huge success but the work never stops. As of today the shelter is "full" and we are unable to take any new animals until more space becomes available through adoption. CLAWS is an ADOPTION GUARANTEED ORGANIZATION. This means that we DO NOT EUTHANIZE cats when space runs out. Once CLAWS has accepted a cat it is given a permanent, safe place to stay until a new home can be found. Adoptions are done at the shelter and usually at PetSmart on weekends.

Please visit our website at <http://www.clawsgj.org> for more information about our organization and adoption options. And we are always in need of dedicated volunteers to help keep our organization viable. If you can help us in any way please call (970) 241-3793 or email us at claws@bresnan.net