

WolfStone Ranch Newsletter

Issue #6

January - August 2016

January 2016...

- ✓ **Shadoe**, an exceptionally sweet kitty with a subtle sense of humor, had originally belonged to an elderly woman in the Kansas City (“KC”) area who had died... which meant that **Shadoe** was going to be killed because KC’s animal control had no room for her. So Best Friends Animal Society (“Best Friends”) had put out a desperate plea to their Missouri Network Partners for someone to take her in. Declawed and older (*8 years old*) she’d been intimidated by the other cats during her year here, so I was thrilled when a delightful little old lady in Park Hills adopted her into a cozy home with no other pets. **Shadoe** now spends her days contently sitting on Dorothy’s lap... or on the back of the couch, happily bird- and squirrel-watching through the sunny picture window!

February 2016...

- ✓ **Angel** had been a tiny feral kitten when she and her littermates had been dumped in front of the Farmington Pet Adoption Center (“FPAC”). She was unadoptable, being so wild and skittish, so I brought her here... Where my very maternal **GinGin** (*a gentle geriatric male!*) fawned over her. In her short life (*6 years*), she had to endure 3 dental surgeries, losing all her teeth in the process. During the first surgery, she nearly died from complications that led to chronic bronchitis and, eventually, heart disease as well. I struggled during her last year to treat her (*I couldn’t medicate her without tricking her into voluntarily eating a series of custom-designed and daily-built treats with pills hidden inside*). Even during her last few months, she still had far more good days than bad... Until her final week (*which had included 3 daily trips to a St. Louis emergency hospital*) and ultimate euthanasia... Thankfully, following her traumatic first surgery, she’d become a very loving kitty... so I have fond memories of the precious hours we cuddled together!

March 2016...

- ✓ Just two weeks after losing my darling little **Angel**, I also nearly lost **Durango**! Both x-rays and blood tests showed nothing abnormal, but one of the FPAC “unadoptable” dogs that I’d taken in years ago was suddenly deathly ill. He dropped 14 lbs. in three weeks (*from 50 down to 36*), so we finally performed an MRI that showed he had a blockage (*made of blanket ravelings and blades of grass*). Within minutes of the MRI, our veterinarian performed emergency surgery... and my skittish little boy is now alive and very well once again! Incidentally, **Durango** was a “shining example” of “shelter psychosis” when he arrived here in 2012, but even without professional rehabilitation, he has become a sweet and docile pet with me... moreover, he has made significant progress in accepting other people as well.

- ✓ Since I have rescued so many cats that I must now keep one in my kitchen, I finally cat-proofed my parakeet cage... my handyman and I built and attached a sturdy cage directly onto the top of the dresser on which my bird’s regular birdcage has perched for years... basically, a cage within a cage. So I no longer have to keep the kitchen cat in a crate... He may now freely roam the kitchen, even sitting on top of **LyLy’s** sturdy, anchored cage (*which, thankfully, LyLy doesn’t mind... too much!*)

- ✓ I’ll never understand why a dog as handsome and affectionate as **Beau** was dumped here, but Five Acres Animal Shelter (“Five Acres”... *the premiere no-kill in NW St. Louis that takes all of my adoptable dogs... IF I first heartworm-test, neuter and vaccinate them*) was delighted to take him in... and he was adopted in less than two weeks!

- ✓ **Lady** was very sick for three weeks... some kind of flu-like virus... but where did she get it? Some stray dog coming up to the fence and sneezing in her face? I’ll never know. I’m just relieved she finally got over it!

April 2016...

- ✓ When the neighbors behind me moved out, they took their pet dogs and cats, but abandoned three feral barn cats. It took me a couple of weeks to figure out that they’d moved to the home of the neighbors beside me. When I went over to ask if they’d allow me to neuter and vaccinate their new cats, they readily agreed (*unlike the former neighbors, who had been more characteristically offended by my offer*). But I also asked if we could postpone live-trapping for a few days,

because I was still busy with **Durango's** post-surgical care. Nonetheless, that very evening they showed up, apologizing for live-trapping one of the cats and bringing it to me with no warning... because all three cats had started jumping into their fenced dog yard... and their dogs had already killed one kitten! So instead of undertaking a classic TNR (*Trap, Neuter, Return*) project, I was suddenly forced to take in **Lollipop, Skidoodle** and **Pansy**! Over the next two days we live-trapped the other two and placed all 3 in my quarantine pen ("Q pen")...

- ✓ A week later, **Lollipop** gave birth to **Popsi, Snickers and Doodlebug**! Believe it or not, I had no prior experience with a dog or a cat giving birth... so I spent many hours researching how to tame kittens born to a feral cat, because I knew that was the only way they would ever get adopted...
- ✓ The first thing I had to do was kitten-proof the Q pen as fast as possible! Last year, I'd had to cat-proof the Q pen for **Maverick** (*who now lives in the kitchen!*)... But keeping tiny kittens in a pen requires a much smaller wire mesh and tighter gate openings...
- ✓ In the process of cat-proofing my Q pen, I'd divided it into 3 enclosures. Thus, when I rescued **Sarge**, an ancient German Shepherd hit by a car near the ranch (*but not seriously injured*), I was able to put him in the uncovered part of the pen, in spite of the fact that the feral cats were in the covered section... which meant that I had to move **Sarge** into the barn whenever it rained. Fortunately, I finally found his owner and... and what joy it was to see him reunited with his "sister" (*a younger German Shepherd*)... They circled each other (*sniffing noses and butts*), tails wagging furiously, whining and grinning with sheer ecstasy!

May 2016...

- ✓ I began the incredible (*Disney-worthy*) rescue adventure of a handsome and charismatic young Great White Pyrenees, **Balto** aka **Denali**... because Brittany (my *former intern from Mineral Area College, "MAC"*) had asked me to get involved... So I checked with Bullet (*Farmington's Animal Control officer*) who said (1) she'd been trying to catch him since February and (2) the police were getting ready to shoot him simply because they were tired of getting calls on him... not that he was causing any trouble whatsoever, just an innocent stray jumping in people's fenced

yards to play with their dogs and kids! So I pulled together a plan and coordinated a team to set up a portable kennel to live-trap him... Turned out I even needed to involve the public through social media, because so many people all over town were feeding him (*see enclosed flyer, posted on Farmington Police Facebook page*)!

- ✓ I rescued a sweet but highly energetic young dog named **Bella** when I was informed by Jenna (*a neighbor down the road who had almost become a MAC intern here*) that her lowlife next-door neighbor was keeping **Bella** chained up outside his trailer all the time, in the severe heat and heavy rain...
- ✓ I rescued a darling little puppy, **Scout**, running along Highway 67, about to get hit... Actually, Hannah (*a former WolfStone Ranch volunteer*) was the one who had picked him up, but I agreed to rescue him if she would foster him...
- ✓ **Minerva** aka **Meira**, an adorable but quirky orange tiger, was adopted by Nicole (*a former WolfStone Ranch employee*), who was actually the very same person who had originally rescued this declawed kitty whom she had discovered was being abused and about to be dumped in an abandoned barn... so Nicole had brought her here last November!
- ✓ I made major modifications to a dog crate in order to transform it into a kitten-taming crate, according to the extensive research I had done to learn how to accomplish the “feat” of taming 3 precious newborn kittens, still in the care of their very devoted feral mother, without getting bitten and scratched to pieces in the process!
- ✓ I covered **Daisy’s** dental surgery (*paid back in full in July*)... While working with Brittany on catching the Great White Pyrenees, I discovered that her family’s sweet old toy poodle was struggling with the chronic pain of long-overdue dental work (*drooling excessively, not able to eat much, etc.*)... So I offered Brittany’s family the opportunity to put the surgery on **WolfStone Ranch’s** Care Credit account, which would give them up to 6 months (*with no interest*) to pay it off in full... and they jumped at it. I am delighted to report now that Daisy is, for the first time in years, healthy and happy once again!

- ✓ I supplied Farmington and Park Hills' Animal Control officers with Spray Shield and Roccal... During the extended process of catching **Denali**, I had learned that our local Animal Control officers sometimes shoot (*and even kill*) aggressive pet dogs who are threatening them, so I provided them with the same pet-safe animal deterrent spray that Best Friends turned me onto years ago, which I wear on my belt at all times. Roccal is the best disinfectant on the market... very effective against parvo and other viruses (*and bacteria*). I had more than I can use before it expires, so I gave some to them, because Bullet told me they were having a bad year of parvo in their pounds. Hopefully, these products will help save even more lives!

June 2016...

- ✓ I installed a much-needed divider fence in the doggie “barnyard”... The purpose of such a divider fence is to prevent fence-fighting between aggressive dogs. Years ago I had been able to install such a fence between the backyard and the super kennels, but had run out of money to put one in the barnyard. With all the simultaneous rescues I’m doing this year, though, it had become critical that I have such a divider fence, now that I must keep more dogs kenneled in the barnyard...
- ✓ I finally caught **Denali** and started “taming” him... I had set up the kennel (*trap*) at one location, but shortly thereafter he had quit stopping by there for meals, so then I discovered where he had begun hanging out and moved the trap there... and voilà, success! But it was a traumatic day for all of us, including the family who had volunteered their yard and assistance in trapping him... We had inadvertently overmedicated him (*with a tranquilizer*), because we’d overestimated his weight... and then had to rush him to the emergency veterinarian for treatment before finally bringing him to **WolfStone Ranch**... At that point, we were all exhausted and pretty freaked out... Especially **Denali**, who’d apparently never been kenneled... or worn a collar... or walked on a leash... so very much for him to learn!
- ✓ I rescued and then adopted out an abused Rhode Island Red chicken... She’d clearly run away from my neighbor’s place because big patches of her wing feathers were pecked out... she showed up here, and started to fly into my dog yard, where Lady was already licking her chops! So I nabbed her, and she’s now

very safe and sound living happily with the little flock that Laura (*my rescue “sister”, who is my local coordinator and transporter to Five Acres*) keeps for eggs...

- ✓ **Bella** was transferred to Five Acres... and adopted in less than two weeks!

- ✓ **Popsi, Snickers and Doodlebug** were transferred to Five Acres... and all were adopted within a couple of weeks! I do not know if I could've handled letting go of “my” darling babies if it hadn't been for their mother's calm acceptance of the rightness of her children growing up and moving out... As with all of the animals I've transferred to other shelters, what hurts is not knowing anything about their future welfare... who adopted them, how they're doing for the rest of their lives... But this was for me the hardest transfer ever!

- ✓ I hosted MAC's Upward Bound (“UB”) student volunteers... the start of **WolfStone Ranch's** humane education program! The only way we're ever going to win the battle of animal suffering is to change cultural attitudes about animals... When I was approached by MAC's UB program, I wanted to say no (*because I knew it would be time-consuming and I was already overwhelmed with rescues*), but I said yes anyway, because this is part of our Mission!

- ✓ I registered **WolfStone Ranch** with Amazon Smiles and eScrip for donations... If you buy anything through Amazon (*and who doesn't?*), you can now sign up with their Amazon Smiles program (smile.amazon.com) so that 0.5% of the price of eligible items will then be donated to **WolfStone Ranch!** Similarly, eScrip.com will allow you to shop online or locally, dine out or book travel, earning money for your chosen schools or nonprofits... such as **WolfStone Ranch!**

July 2016...

- ✓ **Denali** was transferred to St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center (“SCCPAC”), where he was adopted within two weeks... He spent nearly a month here, during which I worked with him daily, grooming him (*which he needed, but which also*

relaxed him and allowed us to build a bond of trust)... Eventually, I was able to put a collar on him... and then a leash, which really flummoxed him! And finally, I was even able to get him to come into the basement (*out of the excessive heat and away from the fireworks, which my neighbors fired off for a whole distress-filled week*)... And I really couldn't have pulled off this rescue without my wonderful new mentors, Marilyn Neville with Bollinger County Stray Rescue and Chuck Cortner with SCCPAC... Kudos to Marilyn and Chuck for all they do!!

- ✓ **Scout** was transferred to Five Acres, and adopted within two weeks! However, let it be noted that it was Hannah's Aunt Laura... who is an occasional **WolfStone Ranch** volunteer (*while Hannah quit*)... who cared for Scout all those weeks in foster!
- ✓ I hosted a couple of student volunteers (*as part of our new humane education program*)... I was asked by a dear friend (and **WolfStone Ranch** supporter) if I would allow her granddaughters to volunteer here as part of a Farmington Junior High School Beta Club (*an honor's program*) requirement for service to the community... To which I responded, Absolutely! You see, I've long had a dream of starting an area-wide, comprehensive animal-wellbeing, humane education program... and while I wouldn't've chosen this as the year to get this program off the ground, I'm glad I did it! My MAC Upward Bound students and Sandra's granddaughters were a very modest beginning, but now that I've done it, I'm brimming with ideas on how to build this program in the future!

August 2016...

- ✓ I rescued **Spot**, a sweet but very anxious bird dog, from a neighbor. He'd apparently been startled by their toddler (*who may have accidentally stepped on him while he was napping?*) and sort of bit her. He only put a tiny scratch on her cheek and had never previously been anything but wonderful with the kids... But most of the family wanted to SHOOT HIM!! However, one person thought that was not the right response... and long story short, over time and after I got the whole story, I came to wholeheartedly agree with the man with the big heart! **Spot** turned out to be an incredibly wonderful dog who just needed to be in the right kind of home.

- ✓ I rescued a stray cat who started hiding out at Presbyterian Children's Home. **Charlize** is a beautiful and very affectionate long-haired tabby who is highly adoptable.
- ✓ I nearly killed **Paprika** and **Felicia** when I accidentally put the wrong flea preventative on them! Miraculously, I realized it "out of the blue" 90 minutes later, called Poison Control, bathed them per instructions, and rushed them to the St. Louis emergency veterinary service (*since it was after hours*), where they both spent 24 hours for treatment and monitoring. Thank God (*literally*), I caught my mistake before they began suffering any symptoms and they both survived, none the worse for wear! I assure you, I changed my protocol so that this kind of confusion never happens again.

Current Head Count

3 adoptable dogs (**Juli Sundance Lady**), 3 dogs needing rehab (**Skyler Denver Durango**), 7 adoptable cats (**Joey Clover Jada Savannah Felicia Maverick Skidoodle**), 5 difficult-to-place cats (**Loki Paprika Koala Lollipop Pansy**), 2 sanctuary cats (**Shayla Cricket**) and... 1 sanctuary parakeet (**LyLy**)

Life has meaning only in the struggle. Triumph or defeat is in the hands of the gods. So let us celebrate the struggle.

~Swahili Warrior Song

After reading these monthly summaries, I am hopeful that you will forgive me for only now publishing a newsletter... I've been a tad busy this year! And remember, the countless hours I spend on rescues is on top of the 8 hours that I spend every single day just caring for the 21 animals already residing at **WolfStone Ranch**. And don't forget that I have two part-time jobs... cleaning several houses every month and working at the Presbyterian Children's Home.

This has been an especially hectic year, too, because I have already rescued way more animals than I have in previous calendar-years. And here's an interesting point... In the past, I've had animals dumped here, mostly (*I suspect*) by neighbors... But I made enemies of most of them last year when I tried to pressure them into either paying a surrender fee or volunteering to help whenever they brought rescues to me.

Their response? THEY were all furious with ME! And this in spite of the fact that I ended up taking in all the animals they brought to me without them ever paying a surrender fee or volunteering any assistance! But my being brutally honest about my need for help, insisting that I'm not the neighborhood's personal dumping ground, has seemingly paid off... However, instead of neighborhood rescues...

This year I have a new source of emergencies, coming from people already associated with **WolfStone Ranch**... former or potential MAC interns, volunteers, co-workers, clients... The need in our area is simply so great that there's just no way for me to stay hidden from or invisible to the world until I get more people involved in **WolfStone Ranch**...

And so I struggle on... deeply indebted to all of you for your help, very grateful that I continue to be blessed with health so that I have the energy to continue, and enormously thankful for all the precious lives WE... **TOGETHER**... have saved!!!

But wait! There is even more to celebrate...

WolfStone Ranch's First Official \$1,000 Grant!!!

As a Network Partner with Best Friends, I've been filling out their monthly census form for over two years. Earlier this year, though, they informed us that we would be switching over to another online system, provided by Shelter Animal Count ("SAC"), a nonprofit organization managing a national database of shelter animal statistics designed to provide data and enable insights to aid in saving lives nationwide. And SAC was offering an incentive to all shelters to participate in this initiative... \$1,000 grant to all eligible shelters... and I am thrilled to report that we are expecting to receive our grant before Labor Day!

I had been hoping to use this windfall to put up an anti-jump lean-in fence, because... long story short, when **Denali** was here, I discovered that **Juli** can jump our 6-foot fences! I have determined that I could purchase the materials for about \$1,000... and then install it in sections with my handyman as I find a little extra money here and there from time to time...

But another long story short, it looks like I'm going to need at least half of the grant for veterinary expenses and the other half for a camper shell...

So I'll just have to microchip **Juli** and keep on keeping a much closer eye on her when she's the dog in the play yard!

Camper Shell For Transporting Animals

Thank God Cliff (*my handyman*) was here working on a project (*in spite of the pouring rain*) when a lady drove up to announce that she'd just moved a dog off the highway to keep him from getting hit again, and that she'd been told to come here for help. At the time, my trusty little 1996 Toyota Tacoma had a topper on the bed that allowed me to fill up the bed on runs to the Rescue Food Bank in St. Louis without worrying about rain, but it also prevented me from placing crates in the back to transport animals. Thank God Cliff and his big pickup with an open bed were here... and thank God he was willing to drive me down to the injured, stunned dog and help me lift the old boy into his truck, and drive us to my veterinarian... in the rain!

Following that incident, I asked Cliff to keep an eye out for a used fiberglass camper shell and, eventually, he found a sturdy old Brahma almost the right size and in pretty good condition. But it's going to need a few repairs and some "jerry-rigging" to mount it onto my old truck. Still, my research says I should be able to finish this long-overdue project for around \$500, which is about a third of what a brand-new one would cost... so, good deal!

I hope to make the trip up to Mid-America Trucks (*in St. Louis*) sometime in September to wrap up this project... And then I will be able to throw one extra-large dog crate, or several smaller dog or cat crates, into the back for more efficient veterinary and transport runs. Finally!

ODIN, The Unknowable, Destiny, The White Rune... A present moment full of possibilities and absolute trust is required. You might have to jump into the void with empty hands.

~ Viking Rune

Preparing For Our First Community-Building Experience

As soon as I finish getting this newsletter in the mail to all of you, I will begin to write a 2-minute "elevator pitch" on a Community-Building Experience ("CBE"). Next, I will expand that into a 20-minute group presentation. And then I will begin reaching out to as many different networks (*civic, business, religious, educational, child welfare, animal rescue, social justice*) as I can find. Instead of trying to generate interest and support for producing a CBE from the bottom up, I have decided to do it from the top down... starting with Farmington's mayor!

I believe this is not only a more efficient approach to building involvement in our first CBE, but also... my reaching out on my own (*not as a mere representative of Presbyterian Children's Home, which is how I first conceived my role in producing this event*) to all such community leaders will build my reputation in the community as someone who cares about the entire community (*meaning people of different races, ethnicities, cultures, religions or not, political persuasions, ages, sexes, etc.*), not "just" about animals. That is, I believe I will become, in the eyes of the community, a more vital person to the community than I am today (*invisible, largely unknown or worse, "that crazy old animal lady/witch"*). Furthermore...

Becoming a community leader through producing a CBE and, subsequently, helping to maintain a proactive "community" of community leaders will, I believe, also help me to inspire high-quality people to get involved with **WolfStone Ranch**. Do I have proof that this will work? Of course not. But I have faith... Faith in the Community-Building Experience. Faith that I have what it takes to make it happen. Faith that I have been "Called" to this project, and that therefore God... that is to say, **LOVE**... will manifest this vision... for the sake of all the animals in this region... including humans!

I have found that you have only to take that one step toward the gods, and they will then take ten steps toward you...

That step, the heroic first step of the journey, is out of, or over the edge of, your boundaries, and it often must be taken before you know that you will.

~Joseph Campbell

Let me tell you, this won't be the first time since I initially felt compelled by the Sacred Within to found **WolfStone Ranch** that I've been required to leap into unknown territory... but let me also assure, it also won't be the first time that "the gods" have, in return, taken ten... or a hundred.. or a thousand steps toward me!

Thank You From The Bottom Of My Heart!!

Speaking of miraculous ways that the Sacred has rewarded my willingness to follow the Calling of my **WolfStone Ranch** Mission... There is not a day goes by that I do not thank God for your financial and moral support. I have given everything that I have, and everything that I am... but I would have failed miserably many times over

and **WolfStone Ranch** would have had to close its doors by now... if it weren't for each and every one of you.

P.S. You can see why I still haven't found time to share the account of **Chloe's** amazing (and yes, miraculous) rescue... it remains a story worth waiting for... And now I need to add **Denali's** equally incredible and miraculous rescue... maybe I should write a book... in my spare time?! 🤔