

2021 Impact Report

Published January 2022

**CELEBRATING A
90% SAVE RATE**

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
81%	85%	84%	89%	90%	91%	92%



SAVING MORE LIVES

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The Animal Rescue League of Iowa has hit yet another milestone to celebrate, one we could never have accomplished without the help of the community we serve. That community consists of city, county and state governments, pet owners and pet lovers, national and local animal organizations and of course, *you!* The milestone is a 90% live release rate — what’s often referred to as “no kill.” We’ve been at or above 90% for three consecutive years, and this year we reached our highest rate of lives saved ever!

How did we get here? We got here with governmental decision makers who passed ordinances that allowed trap-neuter-return programs for community cats. And through adopters who looked past one-eyed or three-legged or diabetic pets and adopted them in record numbers. We did it by partnering with national and corporate organizations who, through grants, partially funded public support services that helped keep pets in their loving homes rather than be surrendered because their owners couldn’t afford spay or neuter procedures, food while between jobs, or help with some unforeseen veterinary expense. We got there because other animal organizations in Iowa expanded their own capacity rather than directing owners to bring their pets, sometimes from hours away, to the ARL. And certainly we got there through the financial

support from all of you who make all of our lifesaving programs possible.

Will the ARL now start using the “no kill” label? Because that term brings with it a lack of consistency with how it’s defined and applied and creates divisiveness among some animal organizations, we continue to oppose its use in favor of those labels that encourage cooperation, diversification of efforts and, of course, saving even more lives. We will, however, remain committed to only euthanizing animals that are dangerous or suffering and only after we have exhausted all other humane and responsible options — never for time limits or space issues. Nationally, animal welfare organizations are setting aside their differences in a renaissance of cooperation to help as many animals in as many ways as possible and the ARL is at the forefront of that effort. We can celebrate together a 90% live release rate, along with the programs and people that make our organization unique. We continue to dedicate our resources and efforts to saving as many animals as possible, just as we always have. TOGETHER, we will continue this upward progression. I hope you will join us to save even more lives in 2022! Thank you!

Tom Colvin, CEO
Animal Rescue League of Iowa



FROM A RESCUE DURING A BLIZZARD TO WARM, LOVING HOMES



February brought a blizzard, dozens of dogs in need of rescue, and no time to waste. It was one of our most harrowing rescues of the year. The dogs were living in horrific outdoor conditions in the eastern Iowa town of Marengo when we received the call for help. We set off on the 90-mile drive just as the blizzard was beginning and arrived to find dozens of fearful dogs confined in pens with little shelter. We rounded them up as temperatures dropped sharply and snow filled in around our vehicles. Driving back, the storm and multiple accidents made many roads impassable. What should have been a 1.5-hour trip took over four hours. But it was all worth it when the dogs woke up indoors, safe from the frigid temps the next morning. Over the following weeks and months, our team slowly, steadily worked to gain their trust and treat their many medical needs so they could find the warm, indoor homes they have always deserved.



PET SUPPORT SERVICES

EXPANDING TO HELP MORE PETS & PEOPLE

When times are tough, it's often pets who hold families together, and we know that when money is tight, people will often feed their pets before feeding themselves. With many in our community continuing to feel economic stress because of the pandemic, in 2021 we expanded our pet food assistance programs to provide more pet food and supplies, as well as greater accessibility, to help keep pets with the people who love them.

We converted our pop-up Pet Food Pantry events at ARL Animal Services to a Pet Food & Supply Pantry, available to walk-ins six days a week for pets in need. We also expanded

our program to reach families with pets who are food insecure by working with DMARC and Food Bank of Iowa pantries to add pet food and supplies alongside the human food at their distribution sites. We also began working with community groups to deliver pet food and supplies directly to people experiencing homelessness.

Beyond food assistance, we continued to support people and pets in other ways, including offering housing for pets during crisis, veterinary assistance, and multiple low-cost vaccine and microchip clinics throughout the year.



KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER



When Jacqueline’s cat Pablo suddenly began limping, she rushed him to the emergency vet, where she was told testing alone would run several hundred dollars. It was more than she could afford. With nowhere else to turn and wanting what was best for Pablo, she made the difficult decision to surrender him to the ARL so he could receive the medical care he needed and find a new family.

Our veterinarians found Pablo had a lot of swelling and an abscess, but X-rays showed no broken bones, so we started him on pain medications and antibiotics to fight infection. The next morning he was already so much better, and he continued to recover as the days went by. We knew he already had a family who loved him, so once he was ready, we called Jacqueline.

When we brought Pablo out to see her, their bond was obvious. She called “mi amorcito” (“my love”) from across the room, and he responded with loud meows. Now Pablo is good as new and he’s back home with the family who loves him.

MAKING MIRACLES HAPPEN



2021 was a year of challenging medical cases and multiple large-scale rescues. In partnership with local authorities and thanks to your support we were able to provide emergency and ongoing care when these pets needed us the most and assist in investigations to hold their abusers accountable.

BEFORE

AFTER



JANUARY



CAM

When Cam arrived, he was so afraid and in so much pain from a severe skin infection, he wouldn't let us touch him. Over the course of several months, under the care of our medical and behavior teams, we gained his trust, healed his skin, and helped him build confidence so he could enjoy life again. He is now in a home with a loving family.



FEBRUARY



OLAF

Olaf was found frozen to the ground during a bitter cold snap. He had severe frostbite on his back paws, as well as parts of his front paws and tail. If he'd spent any more time in the severe cold, he would have died. After undergoing surgery on his paws, he spent time healing in a foster home with one of our surgical technicians, who later adopted him.



MARCH



JAX

When Jax arrived, he was skin and bones, weighing about half of what he should have. He was the first in a string of seven thin and emaciated dogs who arrived over the course of a few weeks. All were from separate cases in Des Moines, and for one, sadly, help arrived too late. Our medical team gave lifesaving care to Jax and the other 5 survivors, and all were adopted into loving homes. The person charged in Jax's case pleaded guilty to animal neglect.



MARCH/APRIL/MAY



MULTI-CAT RESCUES

ARL Animal Services assisted authorities with multiple cases of cats living in overcrowded conditions in Des Moines this spring. In all of the cases the cats and kittens were suffering from illnesses, and some were also very thin. Others clearly had experienced little human contact, and our behavior team worked with them for months before they were ready for adoption. Sadly, there were some whose medical conditions were so severe we were unable to save them, but the rest have now recovered and are in loving homes.



MAY



JUNIE

Junie arrived as a young puppy with her collar deeply embedded in her neck, less than a half inch away from her jugular. The person responsible for her had never adjusted her collar as she grew. Under the care of our surgical team, she made a full recovery over a number of weeks, and she now has a new family and a cat friend. The person responsible for her injuries was charged with animal neglect.



JUNE



HIGHWAY BOBBY

Highway Bobby was just a tiny kitten when he was found by the side of a road with severe trauma to his back end. Our surgical team amputated his tail and reconstructed the injured area. Even after surgery we were unsure he would survive, but over many weeks in our Miracle Medical Ward he made a full recovery. He now has a home with three other cat friends.



JULY



MINIATURE HORSE RESCUE

14 miniature horses in terrible condition were rescued from an eastern Iowa property. Many had severely overgrown hooves, some so long they had started to corkscrew. Several were underweight and many were not used to people or their touch, making helping them even more difficult. The horses received emergency hoof trims and were treated by equine veterinarians. After weeks of medical and behavioral care, nearly all the horses have now found homes.



JULY



LIBERTY

Liberty was just a few weeks old when she was found at the bottom of a dumpster under piles of trash. We rushed her to the ARL and gave her emergency care. The first few days were rocky, but she bounced back and eventually made a full recovery. She was adopted by a wonderful family and has a dog friend and several kids to play with.



JULY/AUGUST



MARION COUNTY RESCUE

Our Mobile Response Team rescued 43 animals living in terrible conditions at a property in Marion County. The dogs, cats, rabbits, horse and pot-bellied pigs were living alongside deceased animals with no food and no clean water. All had multiple medical issues, and sadly there were some whose conditions were so bad we were unable to save them. It took weeks for many to recover and find homes. The horse, named Jack, is still under veterinary care at our Second Chance Ranch.



SEPTEMBER



POTATO

12-week-old Potato arrived with a badly broken front leg. After undergoing surgery he spent several weeks recovering, first at the ARL and then in a foster home. Once he was ready, his foster family decided to officially adopt him. He's now happy, healthy and enjoying life with two dog brothers.



OCTOBER



OATMEAL

Oatmeal was one of many pets this year who arrived with severe hip or leg problems that required surgery to relieve their pain and improve their quality of life. Oatmeal's case was one of the most severe and required double-knee surgery to allow her to walk normally. After weeks of recovery at the ARL and in a foster home, she was adopted and now is enjoying life with a new family.



LARGEST PUPPY MILL RESCUE IN ARL HISTORY SAVING OVER 500 DOGS

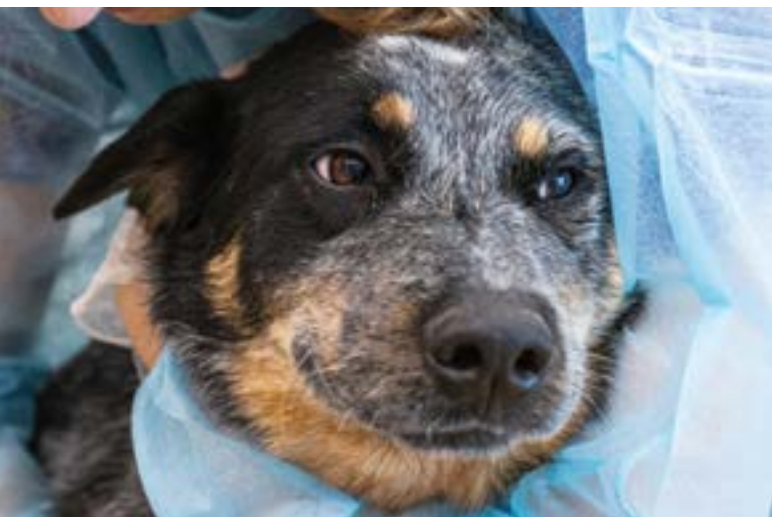
Near the end of 2021, we conducted our largest puppy mill rescue in ARL history. In October and November, the ARL led the massive operation to remove 514 dogs from horrific conditions at the hands of Daniel Gingerich, an Iowa breeder accused of 190 violations of the Animal Welfare Act. The ARL, working with several other rescue organizations, removed dogs from multiple properties in Southern Iowa.

Even after the dogs were safe, the numbers grew, with pregnant mamas giving birth to dozens of puppies in the shelter. All of the dogs

and puppies needed veterinary care — some of it extensive — and many needed behavioral care as well.

While most of the dogs and puppies are now in loving homes, some are still in our care working their way toward adoption.

Prior to the rescue, the ARL worked for months behind the scenes assisting with the investigation. Gingerich has been permanently banned from breeding and selling dogs anywhere in the country.



DOREE'S STORY

Of the 514 dogs rescued, Doree's story is the most heartbreaking. When she was found she was severely emaciated with multiple fractures to her ribs and spine. Records show she was forced to have puppies even with her excruciating injuries. When we found her, she couldn't even stand on her own.

Under the care of a team of veterinarians and rehabilitation specialists, she has made slow recovery, and her improvements have been nothing short of miraculous. Through daily hydrotherapy and physical therapy sessions, she has progressed from standing on her own for a few minutes, to walking with the help of a special cart, to very recently walking on her own! One of her veterinarians has been fostering her, and she has been experiencing the comfort of a home for the first time in her life.

While she still has a long road ahead we're encouraged by her progress. Her journey to recovery wouldn't be possible without you.

2021
YEAR IN
REVIEW

MAKING AN IMPACT ONE BY ONE

ADOPTIONS

4,568	Cats
2,189	Dogs
585	Small Pets
157	Barn Pets
7,499	Total

OFF-SITE ADOPTION LOCATIONS

12	Adoption locations
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SECOND CHANCE RANCH

157	Total barn pets adopted
38	Horses adopted
19	Barn pets cared for from cruelty situations

FOSTER

316	Foster homes
2,062	Pets in foster homes

VOLUNTEER

507	Volunteers
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OPERATION CATSNIP (TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN)

480	Cats through program
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MEDICAL PROCEDURES

50,176	Medical treatments given
5,427	Spay/neuter surgeries for ARL animals
2,109	Dental procedures
240	Other surgeries
163	Laboratory procedures

ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES (DES MOINES)

12,619	Dispatched trips
11,596	Animal Control Officer service hours
558	Citations issued
1,443	Animal cruelty/neglect responses
83,156	Miles driven responding to calls

CRUELTY INTERVENTION (OUTSIDE OF DES MOINES)

626	Animals rescued from cruelty
508	Cases/investigations
4	Law enforcement trainings
215	Law enforcement training attendees
6	Trained volunteers for emergency response

IN THE COMMUNITY

619	TheraPets visits
74	TheraPets teams

COMMUNITY-OWNED PETS

1,664	Pets returned to owners
204	Pets microchipped
305	Pets receiving veterinary assistance
664	Spay/neuter surgeries through free and low-cost spay/neuter programs
434	Pets vaccinated through clinics
40	Pets in crisis foster
1,161	Pets receiving food assistance
39,776	Pounds of food distributed

PET BEHAVIOR SERVICES

169	Dog training classes
679	Owned dogs receiving behavior help
271	Owned cats receiving behavior help
101	Owned horses receiving behavior help

JANUARY 2021 - DECEMBER 2021
ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF IOWA

	DOG	CAT	SMALL ANIMAL	BARN ANIMAL	TOTAL ³	2021 INTAKES¹
STRAY/IMPOUND	2,262	3,837	148	79	6,326	
OWNER SURRENDER	1,955	2,453	486	85	4,979	
TRANSFERS IN	166	270	1	4	441	
OTHER	59	62	32	0	153	
TOTAL INTAKES	4,442	6,622	667	168	11,899	

	DOG	CAT	SMALL ANIMAL	BARN ANIMAL	TOTAL ³	2021 OUTCOMES¹
ADOPTIONS	2,189	4,568	585	157	7,499	
TRANSFERS OUT	502	416	16	0	934	
RETURN TO OWNER	1,359	297	3	5	1,664	
RETURN TO HABITAT	0	480	1	0	481	
EUTHANIZED²	268	530	26	8	832	
DIED IN CARE	9	89	19	0	117	
TOTAL OUTCOMES	4,327	6,380	650	170	11,527	
LIVE RELEASE RATE	94%	90%	93%	95%	92%	

Reasons for Euthanasia

The ARL looks at every animal as an individual and not a number and determines a treatment or rehabilitation plan. We only euthanize animals that are dangerous or suffering, and only after we have exhausted all other humane and responsible options. We do not euthanize for space and there are no time limits on the animals in our care.

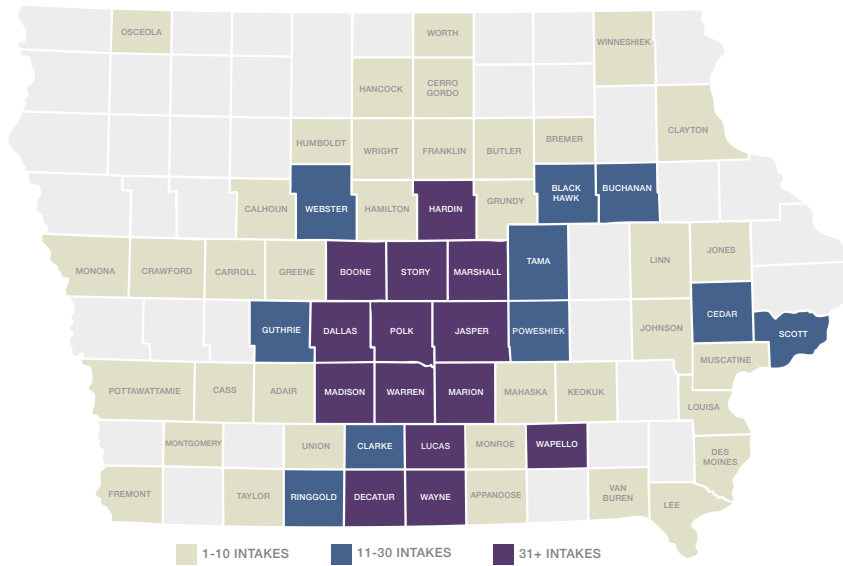
Note: We have attempted to make this report as easy to understand as possible, but if you have any questions, please contact arl@arl-iowa.org.

1 Does not include wildlife; we partner with several wildlife rehabilitation organizations to care for wild animals brought to us.

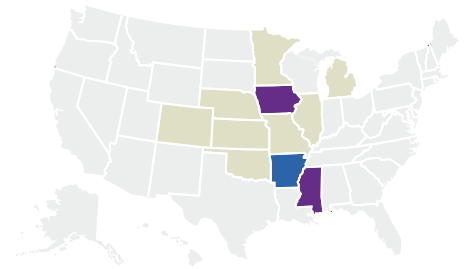
2 Does not include owner-requested euthanasia.

3 The number of intakes will not necessarily equal the number of outcomes over the course of a year. The difference represents a net increase or decrease in the number of animals in our care at the beginning of the period and at the end.

2021 INTAKES BY COUNTY



2021 INTAKES BY STATE



ARKANSAS
COLORADO
ILLINOIS
IOWA
KANSAS
MICHIGAN

MINNESOTA
MISSISSIPPI
MISSOURI
NEBRASKA
OKLAHOMA

CHOOSE A FUND, CHANGE A LIFE

MIRACLE MEDICAL FUND

Provide lifesaving emergency medical care to give shelter pets a second chance.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/MIRACLE

LOYAL FRIENDS CLUB

Help pets every month by joining our Loyal Friends Club with an automatic monthly donation.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/LOYALFRIENDS

PAW IT FORWARD

Keep families together with free/low-cost assistance for pet families in need.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/PAWITFORWARD

RESCUE RIDE RELOCATION

Give pets a ride from overcrowded shelters to a new life in the Midwest.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/RESCUERIDE

FULL BELLIES FOOD FUND

Keep shelter pets' bowls and bellies full with high-quality, consistent food.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/FOOD

HELP THEM ALL

Provide medical care, food, and safety to shelter pets and keep pet families together in our community.

ARL-IOWA.ORG/DONATE

