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SOS Animal Rescue Newsletter • Volume 10, Issue 2 • April 15, 2010

Update on National Spay Day

SOS Animal Rescue and Midland VetMED partnered in recognition of National Spay Day on February 23 to promote the lifesaving benefits of spay/neuter. Twenty pets were helped as part of this program, and we'd like to thank Dr. Kim Blasko and her team for making this event possible.

SOS was also participating in the Humane Society's 2010 Spay Day Photo Contest, and we had 26 animals rooting for us – dogs, cats, a rabbit, and even a mouse! It was a very successful fund-raiser for us, bringing in over \$1000 in donations.

More than 32,000 pet lovers entered the 2010 Spay Day Online Pet Photo Contest and Tanner, representing SOS Animal Rescue, made it in the top 500 of most votes/donations received in the fund-raiser category.



(Pictured from left to right are VetMED staff Amy Rappuhn, Dr. Kim Blasko, Noma Defever, and Dakota Bloom.)

SOS EVENTS

Sunday, April 18

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Friday, April 30

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Saturday, May 1

Sunday, May 2

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Thursday, May 6

starting at 1:00 p.m.

donations accepted for
 SOS Annual Rummage Sale
 at St. John's Episcopal Church

Friday, May 7

9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

SOS Annual Rummage Sale
 at St. John's Episcopal Church

Saturday, May 8

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

SOS Annual Rummage Sale
 at St. John's Episcopal Church

Saturday, May 15

12:30 p.m.

Parade Your Pet Pageant
 at Midland Farmer's Market

Sunday, May 16

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Sunday, June 6

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Wednesday, June 9

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Sunday, June 20

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

Wednesday, June 23

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Wednesday, July 14

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Wednesday, July 28

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Wednesday, August 11

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Wednesday, August 25

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Bark in the Park

Adopt-a-Thons may be cancelled if no pets are available for adoption.

Arthritis in Dogs: What You Can Do at Home

In addition to receiving regular holistic care from an experienced veterinarian, your arthritic pet can be comforted at home by providing holistic care. Obviously, the treatments that require training such as acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic, and herbal medicine should not be attempted by a lay person, but there are many things you can do to boost the health of your pet and decrease pain significantly.

Caring for your arthritic pet involves paying attention to the animals comfort. For example, one of the first things you should do for your pet is make sure he has a comfortable bed. There are orthopedic beds with special pads that distribute your pets weight better than a regular pet bed. With a heavy pet, such as a giant dog, this weight distribution can be particularly critical; but an arthritic cat benefits from proper bedding just as much as a heavier animal. If you make your pets bed yourself, make sure the padding isn't too deep because that would make it difficult for an arthritic animal to rise.

Also, take a good look at your home and yard and reevaluate it for a pet who has trouble moving. Can your pet comfortably reach his food? You might consider elevating food and water bowls. Where do you keep your pets bed? Is it on the ground floor, or does your pet have to jump up or climb stairs to reach a favorite sleeping spot? With an arthritic cat, be sure to consider the litter box. How well can your cat climb in and out? You may want to consider providing your cat with a flatter pan-style box. Another problem can be slick floors. Your pet may need better traction in his living areas.

Remember to pay attention to your pets mental/emotional condition, as well. Many diseases are thought to worsen if the patient is suffering from stress. A change in routine is enough to stress your pet or make him increasingly despondent. Many holistic practitioners believe that a pets immune system is heightened if the animal is happy. So try to avoid situations that stress your pet.

Keep a careful eye on your pet and report any significant changes in your pets health to your veterinarian immediately. Also, don't assume that because your pet shows signs of arthritic pain that he has arthritis. Early intervention is key to the success of treating arthritic patients. Unless your veterinarian makes the diagnosis of arthritis, it may not be arthritis. There are many curable diseases that cause arthritis-like symptoms. Make sure you confirm your suspicions and seek professional treatment.

By Joan Hustace Walker. Brought to you by The Essential Guide to Natural Pet Care for Cats & Dogs: Arthritis.



*1000 years ago, cats
were considered
royalty...They have
never forgotten this!*

SOS Animal Rescue Information

SOS Animal Rescue has a three-fold mission within Midland County to:

1. Rescue/foster/re-home homeless cats & dogs.
2. Encourage and support spay or neuter of pets.
3. Provide educational programs to the public about responsible pet ownership. Dogs and cats can make wonderful family companions, but as owners it is our responsibility to understand and apply appropriate pet care and safety measures to ensure a lifetime of well being for our animals.

We offer educational programs to people of all ages, explaining what animal rescue is and how it works, things to consider before adopting a pet, information on selecting a breed of dog that best matches your lifestyle, responsible care and safety tips for cats and dogs, and animals currently available for adoption. Sessions are typically 30 to 60 minutes in length, customized to audience age and background.

If you are interested in having SOS Animal Rescue give a presentation, please contact us via e-mail at info@sosar.org or call 989-492-0042. Or if you just want to learn more, these websites might be helpful:

General Resources

- www.humanesociety.org/animals/pets
- www.aspc.org
- www.petpeoplesplace.com
- www.gone-ta-pott.com/responsible_pet_owners_month.html

Resources for Teachers

- Classroom activities: www.avma.org/careforanimals/kidscorner
- Class plans: loveyourdog.com/resources.html

Resources for Students

- www.kidsites.com/sites-edu/animals.htm
- www.hsus.org/pets/pet_care

THANK YOU!

Sali Babinski

Susan Beeson

Sharon Brady & Bentleye

B-G Bunco Group

Khord & Jennifer Brieske

Lori Burbo
for kitty condo and fleece blankets

Eleanor Casteel
in honor of Greta Wittbrodt

Sarah Christilaw

Eric & Patricia Eidsmoe

Evelyn Fagley

Terri Fryzel

Deb Fugate

Lexi Gross

Hampton Inn for blankets

Richard Heiny

Marjorie Woods Madden

Harriette Miller

Adam & Stephanie Nearman
in memory of
Great Uncle Pat Murphy

Barbara Oberle

Karla Oldenburg

Lyuba Pace

Gary & Suzanne Paveglio

Codi Pound & Nicholas Pound

Michelle Povinelli

Leslie Russell

Siebert Bulldogs
for dog food and cat food.
They filled three boxes with food
for SOS Animal Rescue.
Now hungry cats and dogs will find
their tummies full
with good nourishing food,
thanks to the generosity
of those who participated.

Susanne M. Smith
for blankets, cat food, and dog food

Tricia & Rick Sommer

Jeanne & Allen Spalding

Julie Wackerle

Darlene Wensaut
in memory of Zach

SPAY DAY DONATIONS

Cindy Bishop

Dr. Blasko & Staff

Christina Erskine

Dan & Terri Fryzel

Isabella Jansen

Joann Taylor

Andreas Unterste

& MANY other anonymous donors
who donated and posted pets in
support of SOS Animal Rescue!

Poison Help Line • 1-888-426-4435

The Animal Poison Control Center is a unique emergency hot-line providing 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week telephone assistance to veterinarians and animal owners. The \$50 consultation fee is paid by the animal owner, veterinarian, or product manufacturer. Contact the Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-426-4435.

Bark in the Park

Join Midland Parks and Recreation, SOS Animal Rescue, and other dogs and owners for an evening of fun and friendship. There will be prizes and a dog-gone good time in Chippawassee Park, across the Tridge, near the doggie run. We meet from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on June 9, June 23, July 14, July 28, August 11, and August 25 (second and fourth Wednesdays).



**“It came to me that every time I lose a dog, they take a piece of my heart with them.
And every new dog who comes into my life gifts me with a piece of their heart.
If I live long enough, all the components of my heart will be dog,
and I will become as generous and loving as they are.”**

- Author Unknown

Spay/Neuter Statistics

From January 2004 to March 2010, SOS Animal Rescue has spayed/neutered 1124 cats and dogs.

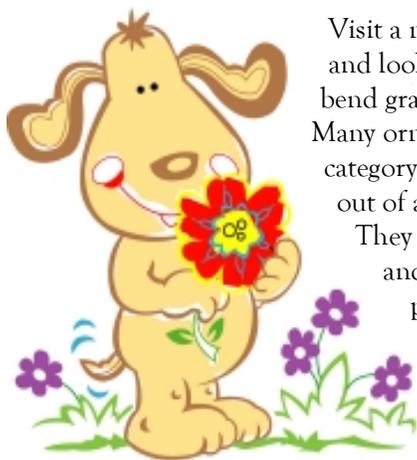
SPAY/NEUTER	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Female Cats	41	90	93	109	90	64	17
Male Cats	26	64	57	70	49	32	9
Female Dogs	14	31	32	30	44	44	28
Male Dogs	13	17	30	41	20	5	3
TOTAL	94	202	212	250	203	129	34

Plants for Yards with Dogs

While you might want to place your most valued plants outside the easy reach of paws and jaws, practically the whole nursery is open to dog-owning gardeners. Choose wisely, and both your dog and your plants will thrive.

When it comes to shrubs and trees, bigger is better. A tree consisting of an upright trunk less than one inch thick, with a few spindly branches, will snap like a twig if treated roughly by Rover, and it just looks too much like a plain old stick. Buy the largest tree you can afford, with some good girth to the trunk. Yes, it's more expensive and more work to plant, but it's also instant gratification.

Weeping trees make a particularly good choice. Their hanging, limber branches just push aside when dogs run through them. You can find an incredible variety, both deciduous and evergreen. My own garden includes, among others, Young's weeping birch, a weeping cherry, and umbrella bamboo.



Visit a nursery on a windy day, and look for those plants that bend gracefully with the breeze. Many ornamental grasses fit this category, and they'll bow nicely out of a passing dog's way.

They come in many colors and heights. You have probably seen pampas grass, but take a look at feather reed grass, switch grass, fountain grass, and others.

Ground-cover requires a bit more investigation. Those rated to accept foot traffic are a good bet. I've found creeping jenny so tough, it's thriving in the dogs' potty area. Chamomile offers up a nice fragrance when walked upon, and there's a whole line of relatively tough ground-covers called "Step-ables."

Vines make another good choice. Planted close to their supports, they grow up and out of the dog's way. Many are heavily scented, in case you need a little sweetness to mask any doggie odors. Depending on your part of the country, you might choose clematis, honeysuckle, jasmine, or many others.

Perennials and annuals, usually used for garden color, can be more problematic. They're easily trampled or torn up. Plant them en masse to create a more solid appearance. Or plant them in pots and hanging baskets for out-of-reach color spots.

If you're a vegetable-growing enthusiast, your dog is best excluded from this garden. Otherwise, dogs learn to help themselves to the harvest. Avoid hard feelings – and possible digestive upsets – by fencing the veggie garden. You probably need to keep out other critters anyway.

With just a little extra time to consider your choices, you can fulfill your needs and your dog's, and enjoy a vibrant, thriving, dog-resistant garden come spring.

By Cheryl S. Smith. Cheryl S. Smith's book, Dog Friendly Gardens, Garden Friendly Dogs, focuses on combining dogs and gardens successfully. You can visit her website at www.writedog.com.

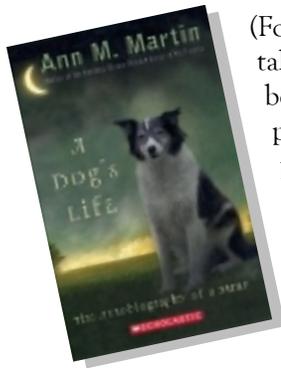
Parade Your Pet Pageant

Strut your mutt and other family pets at the Sixth Annual Parade Your Pet Pageant on Saturday, May 15 at the Farmer's Market, near the Tridge. Pets assemble and register at 12:00 noon with the pageant starting at 12:30 p.m. The cost is free! Prizes will be awarded for Best Costume, Best Trick, Most Unusual Pet, Smallest Pet, Largest Pet, Cutest Pet, Most-Looks-Like-Their-Owner, and Best of Show! Pre-register your pet by calling 837-3330 or at the event starting at 12:00 noon.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of a Stray by Ann M. Martin

"I've known of dogs who were treated cruelly by human hands and dogs who were treated with the gentlest touch, dogs who starved and dogs who grew fat from too many treats. I've known all these dogs, and I've been all these dogs." – quote from prologue



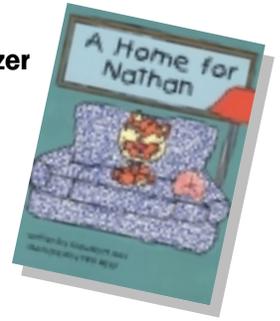
(For ages 9 to 12) The reader is taken along on Squirrel's journey, beginning with her birth as a stray puppy. Written from Squirrel's point of view, the reader gets a real sense of what many "real" dogs and cats might experience when left to fend for themselves as strays or forced to live in homes that may be cruel or neglectful. There is also helpful

information in the back of the book that may encourage children to become involved with their own pets' care and what to consider when adopting a pet. This is a book that the family could even read together!

Check out the Scholastic website for a cool interactive feature about Squirrel at www.scholastic.com/dogslife.

A Home for Nathan by Claudia M. Roll and Finn Rizer

(For ages 4 to 7) Nathan is a kitty with a home, until one day his family took him to a strange place and left him. They said that they could not afford to keep him any longer. The "strange place" was a humane society where he would have to wait for his new home. Thus begins Nathan's story. *A Home for Nathan* teaches children what animals need from people, to understand the importance of good animal care, responsibility, and love. This is a cute book with quirky illustrations that grab you. It won't disappoint.



Miracle Dog: How Quentin Survived the Gas Chamber to Speak for Animals on Death Row by Randy Grim and Melinda Roth

For all of you that think our animals deserve better than what our country provides, I suggest you run out and purchase this book. It is a great read, an amazing true account, with snip-its of humor that will make you chuckle...yes, chuckle. If your community, county, and/or state allows euthanization by gas in the shelters, this is a must-read that is full of inspiring photographs.

HOW MANY DOGS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHT BULB?

GOLDEN RETRIEVER: The sun is shining, the day is young, we've got our whole lives ahead of us, and you're inside worrying about a stupid burned out bulb?

BORDER COLLIE: Just one. And then I'll replace any wiring that's not up to code.

DACHSHUND: You know I can't reach that stupid lamp!

ROTTWEILER: Make me.

LABRADOR: Oh me, me! Pleeeease let me change the light bulb! Can I? Can I? Huh? Huh? Huh? Can I please?

TIBETIAN TERRIER: Let the Border Collie do it. You can feed me while he's busy.

JACK RUSSELL TERRIER: No prob, Dude. I'll just pop it in while I'm bouncing off the walls and furniture.

GERMAN SHEPHERD: I'll change it as soon as I lead these people from the dark, check to make sure I haven't missed any, and make just one more perimeter patrol to verify that no one has tried to take advantage of the situation.

CHIHUAHUA: Yo quiero Taco Bulb.

COCKER SPANIEL: Why change it? In the dark I can pee on the carpet.

GREYHOUND: It isn't moving.

POODLE: I'll just blow in the Border Collie's ear and he'll do it. By the time he finishes rewiring the house, my nails will be dry.

POINTER: I see it, there it is, there it is, right there.

DOBERMAN: While it's dark, I'm going to sleep on the couch.

AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD: First, I'll put all the light bulbs in a little circle.

BOXER: Who cares? I can still play with my squeaky toys in the dark.

OLD ENGLISH SHEEP DOG: Light bulb? I'm sorry, I don't see a light bulb. Did one burn out?

HOUND: ZZZZZZ.

THE CAT: Dogs do not change light bulbs. People do. The question is, how long will it be before I can expect light in here?

author unknown

Ear Care & Disease – Otitis Externa

“My cat’s ears have a terrible odor. What could it be?” “My kitten has been scratching her ears. The ears have dark, crumbly material in them. What should I do?” These are some of the most commonly asked questions of veterinarians.

Signs of Ear Disease

Every day we see cats who have problems with their ears. Signs of these ear problems include:

- Odor
- Scratching or rubbing of ears and head
- Discharge in the ears
- Redness or swelling of the ear canal
- Shaking of the head or tilting it to one side
- Pain around the ears
- Changes in behavior such as depression or irritability

Ear disease is one of the most common conditions we see in pets. The medical name for inflammation of the outer ear canal is ‘otitis externa’. One study found that from 2 to 6.6 percent of cats admitted to hospitals were presented because of otitis externa.

Causes of Ear Disease

Cats can have ear problems for many different reasons. For a cat with ear disease, we need to think about the possibility of:

- Allergies such as atopy or food allergies
- Parasites, ear mites
- Microorganisms - bacteria and yeast
- Foreign bodies, e.g., plant awns
- Trauma
- The ear environment, e.g., excess moisture and ear anatomy
- Hereditary or immune conditions and tumors

Allergies: Cats with allergies, either to food or something they inhale, may have ear problems. As a matter of fact, the ear problem may be the first sign of the allergy. Since the allergy changes the environment within the ear, we sometimes see secondary infections with bacteria or yeast. If we just treat the infection, we are not getting to the root of the problem. We need to treat the allergies too.

Parasites: The ear mite, *Otodectes cynotis*, is a common cause of ear problems especially in kittens. Some animals are hypersensitive to the mites and the resultant itching can be intense. These animals may scratch so much they severely traumatize the ear.

Bacteria and Yeast: Numerous types of bacteria and the yeast, *Malassezia pachydermatis*, cause ear infections. The normal, healthy ear has a good defense against these organisms, but if the ear environment changes due to allergies, hormone abnormalities, or moisture, the bacteria and yeast can greatly multiply and break down these defenses.

Foreign Bodies: Plant awns, those little “stick-tights” that cling to our clothes and our cats’ fur, can sometimes enter the ear canal. Their presence causes irritation, the cat scratches, and before you know it we have a traumatized, infected ear. So if you have a cat

who goes outside, be sure to routinely check the ears.

Trauma: As we described above, self-inflicted trauma to the ear due to scratching can exacerbate ear problems.

Hormonal Abnormalities: Deficiencies or excesses of various hormones can result in skin and ear problems. Thyroid hormone, glucocorticoids produced by the adrenal gland, and sex hormones all influence the health of the skin and ears.

Ear Environment: Bacteria and yeast could not ask for a better environment to live in than a warm, dark, moist ear canal.

Other Causes: There are various rare hereditary diseases that occur in different breeds or lines and affect the ears. Eosinophilic granulomas are related to a disorder of the immune system and can occur in the ears of cats. Squamous cell carcinomas, melanomas and other tumors can be seen in the ears.

Diagnosis

Because there are many potential causes of ear problems, we cannot just say it’s a bacterial infection, dispense antibiotics, and it will go away. Often more work is needed. Your veterinarian can use an otoscope to look down into the ear canal and determine the amount of inflammation present, if the tympanic membrane (ear drum) is involved, and if there are any foreign bodies, tumors or other potential causes of the problem. Swabs of the ear can be taken, smeared on a microscope slide, stained and examined for bacteria, yeast and mites. A thorough history and physical exam may help determine if this could be a hormonal, allergic or hereditary problem. If these are suspected, further diagnostic testing would be needed. If a bacterial infection does not respond to the first antibiotic therapy, a culture and sensitivity may need to be performed to select a different antibiotic.

Treatment

The treatment is going to depend on what caused the ear problem and what secondary conditions are there as a result. Antibiotics are used for bacterial infections and antifungals for yeast infections. Glucocorticoids such as dexamethasone are often included in these preparations to reduce the amount of inflammation in the ear. Ear problems caused by a systemic disease such as a hormone abnormality or allergy must include a therapy that treats the whole cat, such as hormonal replacement or allergy testing and hyposensitization (immunotherapy).

Allergies: Allergies are commonly treated with regular ear cleaning with an ear cleaning solution, antihistamines, and fatty acid supplements. Sometimes corticosteroids are needed. These may be given in an oral or injectable form, or they can be applied topically. Allergy testing and immunotherapy (hyposensitization) may be the best way to cure the ear problem.

Ear mites: Ear mites can cause a dry, dark, crumbly debris in the ear that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are more common in cats than dogs. For this condition, ear cleaning followed by an ear medication to kill mites will eliminate the problem, although the treatment may need to be continued over several weeks depending upon the product used.

(continued from Page 6)

Yeast: Yeast can cause severe ear problems. We usually observe a brown waxy exudate and a bad odor. Daily cleaning of the ears will help, but often these infections are difficult to treat, and special medications need to be given since antibiotics do not kill yeast. If you suspect a yeast infection in your cat's ears, consult your veterinarian.

Bacterial Infections: Bacterial infections can also have a bad odor and often have a more yellowish exudate. If it's a severe or chronic condition, ear cleaning alone will not take care of the problem and antibiotics will almost always be necessary. Again, consult your veterinarian. Ear infections of the canal, if severe, can spread to the middle and inner ear, so prompt attention to the problem is always best.

Regardless of the cause of the ear disease, we must always keep the ear canal clean.

Cleaning Ears

Your cat's ear is more L-shaped than yours, and debris loves to collect at the corner of the L. To remove this debris, fill your cat's ear canal with a good ear cleaner. Ear cleaners should be slightly acidic but should NOT sting. Massage the base of the ear for 20-30 seconds to soften and release the debris. Wipe out the loose debris and excess fluid with a cotton ball. Repeat this procedure until you see no more debris. Depending on your cat's ear condition, you may have to start out doing this twice a day.

Cotton applicator swabs can be used to clean the inside of the earflap and the part of the ear canal you can see. They should NOT be used farther down in the ear canal since that tends to pack debris in the ear canal, rather than removing it.

Some ear problems are so painful, the cat must be anesthetized to do a good job of cleaning the ears. You may find your cat does not like to have her ears cleaned because it is uncomfortable. Talking to her during the process, stopping momentarily to give her a treat if she's doing well (we don't want to reward fussiness!) and doing something fun afterwards may all help.

After the ear is clean, let the cat shake her head and allow some time for the ears to dry. Then you can apply any ear medication that was prescribed.

Preventing Ear Disease

The key to healthy ears is to keep them clean. Check your cat's ears weekly. A slight amount of waxy buildup may be present in normal ears. Treat any underlying condition that predisposes your cat to ear problems.

Remember, if your cat is showing severe discomfort, the ears have a bad smell, or the ear canals look very abnormal, don't delay in contacting your veterinarian. If your cat has a ruptured or weakened eardrum, some ear cleansers and medications could do more harm than good.

By Holly Frisby, DVM. Veterinary Services Department, Drs. Foster & Smith, Inc. Reprinted from www.purina.com.au.

SOS ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE!

**PLEASE DONATE
YOUR GENTLY USED ITEMS!**

**Thursday, May 6
starting at 1:00 p.m.**

COME AND SHOP!

**Friday, May 7
9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, May 8
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**St. John's Episcopal Church
405 N. Saginaw Rd.
Midland**

SOme thing for every one

SOS Donation Canisters

We'd like to thank area businesses for having SOS donation canisters:

- Auto Technicians on Bayliss
- Cupcake Place in the shopping plaza by Damon's
- D&R Automotive on Saginaw near Sanford
- Elvira's
- Larkin Food Store on Eastman
- Northern Animal Clinic
- Surrey Vet Clinic in Clare
- One Hour Cleaning at the corner of Saginaw and Eastman
- Service Express Cellular on Eastman
- Service Express Cellular, corner of Jefferson and Wackerly
- Soldan's



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Officers

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Shelley Park, Vice President
Darlene Andrews, Secretary
Karla Oldenburg, Treasurer

Mission Statement

SOS Animal Rescue is a non-profit
501(c)3 organization whose mission is
to reduce the number of unwanted pets
in Midland County through placement
and public education.

Board of Directors

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THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!



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