

# Daily Reporter

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### SEARCH FOR SHELTER: PAWS seeks new location after lease ends this year

By **Shelley Swift** - May 4, 2021



*A denizen of the PAWS Center emerges from a cozy space at the shelter at the Schakel Center, which has housed the center for a decade. (Tom Russo | Daily Reporter)*

GREENFIELD — The Partners for Animal Welfare Society — better known as PAWS — is seeking its new “forever” home.

After 10 years at its current location in the Schakel Center, at 3141 W. U.S. 40, the nonprofit animal rescue organization has been notified that its lease will not be renewed after the end of this year.



Board president Renee Schmidt said there are no hard feelings, but the group is actively searching for a new home.

PAWS is working with local Realtor Donnetta Looper to find a suitable spot.

If board members have their way, the organization would be able to raise enough funds to buy its own place.

“Ideally we’d like to have our own facility, but we’re still in the process of saving up our pennies. We’re working on it, and we’re getting some great donations. The work has just begun,” said Schmidt, who encourages the public to follow PAWS on social media for updates on future fundraisers.

She encourages anyone with leads on potential spaces to reach out to Looper, an animal lover who has adopted several pets from PAWS over the years.

“In a perfect world the building would be large enough that we could house several cats and possibly dogs,” Looper said. “If we cannot find a current facility, we would most definitely be open to a couple acres within the county where we could construct a pole barn structure and make it to fit our needs, and potentially offer us space for future growth.”

The current PAWS facility, referred to as a “cattery,” is 1,800 square feet.

“We’d like to have that much space if not more, and we’d like to stay in Greenfield or at least in Hancock County,” Schmidt said.

While the current facility houses only cats — dogs are cared for through a foster program — Schmidt said board members would like to be able to keep adoptable dogs onsite if the right facility allowed for it.

The board has even discussed having enough room to rent out space to veterinarians to do on-site spay, neuter and other services, as a similar pet rescue group does in Hamilton County.

The PAWS organization adopted out 320 cats and about 70 dogs last year, Schmidt said.

The no-kill shelter does its best to place as many pets in loving homes as possible, she said, and even takes animals from neighboring pet welfare groups when they become overburdened.

Even if PAWS is unable to land at a new location before the start of the 2022, Schmidt said the adoption program will continue. The cats at the current shelter however, would have to be fostered at volunteers’ homes, similar to the arrangement for Dogs.

To help better promote and process adoptions, board members are working with a service provider to improve its website, at pawshancock.org.



Just shy of 90 volunteers help out at the center, caring for the cats, cleaning litter boxes and facilitating adoptions.

A number of those volunteers hand-sew catnip bags, which are sold for \$1 each at the center as well as local veterinary offices. The pandemic has made it harder to sell those, however, since many vets haven't been allowing humans inside their offices over the past year.

Schmidt hopes that PAWS soon has a shiny new place to call home, where the public can come to not only buy catnip toys, but to find a new "forever" friend.

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The Partners for Animal Welfare Society of Hancock County is seeking a new home.

The no-kill shelter, now located in the Schakel Center along U.S. 40 west of Greenfield, will close out its current lease on Dec. 31.

Anyone with leads on potential locations is asked to contact PAWS board president Renee Schmidt at 317-270-7959 or via email at [pawshancock1@gmail.com](mailto:pawshancock1@gmail.com).

To make a donation to the PAWS building fund on Giving Grid, visit [givinggrid.com/tvfqwo](https://givinggrid.com/tvfqwo), or visit PAWS on Facebook, contribute via PayPal or go to [pawshancock.org](http://pawshancock.org) for more information.

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Partners for Animal Welfare Society, founded in 2000, works to promote animal welfare in Hancock County through humane education and pet population control.

The organization takes in abandoned and unwanted pets. Its volunteers care for the animals and work to match them with loving homes.

PAWS also partners with a low-cost spay/neuter clinic for cats and dogs a couple of days a month.

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