

Celebrating 25+ years of saving and improving the lives of animals!



Pico
RAPS CAT
SANCTUARY

2021 Annual Report



2021 Best of
Vancouver
"Local Heroes" Category
2nd Place,
Georgia Straight



2021 Best
Veterinarian
Hospital,
Richmond News



2020 Best
Veterinarian
Hospital,
Richmond News



2020 Best
Community
Organization,
Richmond News



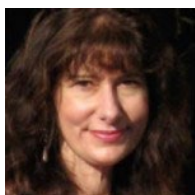
2020 Best
Community
Association,
Richmond Chamber
of Commerce



2020 Business
Leadership Award,
Richmond Chamber
of Commerce



2020 Best of
Vancouver
"Local Heroes" Category
2nd Place,
Georgia Straight



Speaking for Animals

REPORT FROM
THE PRESIDENT



“Caring for animals requires that we recognize and support the people who care for them! That is why our not-for-profit animal hospital makes vet care as affordable as possible.”

— FEARN EDMONDS, PRESIDENT

Caring for animals is an essential service. This is something we always knew. But this year, in a time of turmoil and unprecedented challenge, we had that reality affirmed.

People who work in the field of rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming animals do so as a labour of love. However, we also carry the substantial burden of knowing that this is life-and-death work. Were it not for the dedicated Canadians who commit to this work, untold numbers of innocent animals would face deeply troubling futures.

Until recently, however, this work was not formally recognized as “essential.” That changed – thanks to RAPS.

British Columbia’s Ministry of Labour has designated the Regional Animal Protection Society as an “essential service.” Legal definitions have not kept up with changes in social understanding of our relationships with animals. By law, animals remain viewed as “chattel” – not as sentient beings deserving of rights, but as property. The confirmation of our work as “essential” does not fix the overarching injustice of this legal interpretation, but it does take a significant step in the right direction. At the very least, the essential service designation recognizes that providing the necessities of life to animals in the care of an organization is a sacred trust.

Our friend Rebeka Breder – a member of RAPS board of directors and probably Canada’s leading expert in animal rights law – believes this to be significant.

“To the best of anyone’s knowledge, this is the first decision of its kind in B.C. and possibly in Canada,” she says. “The designation reflects an incremental but consistent trajectory in the way animals are viewed in our society and afforded more basic humane privileges.”

During the pandemic, every organization, business and household in the world faced previously unimagined obstacles. At RAPS, we had to reorder the way we deliver services to animals. We segregated our teams into pods to ensure that, should an outbreak occur among our staff or volunteers, there would still be enough people to feed, clean up after and care for the animals. The resilience with which our teams pivoted to respond to the changed circumstance is a testament both to their professionalism and to the simple reality that nothing could be permitted to stand in the way of services to animals – services that we knew to be essential and that, now, are recognized as such by the Government of B.C.

The issue arose specifically because we are negotiating our first collective agreement with our unionized employees. The pandemic also put the issue front and centre. We believe that our request to the provincial government – and their affirmation that care for animals is indeed essential work – appropriately reflects the changing conception of animals in our society.

This issue is significant, but it is also just one of a spectrum of animal-related public policy issues we take on. RAPS is, of course, a direct animal-serving agency. But we are also an education and advocacy organization, recognizing that there are systemic, legal and regulatory norms that affect animals and the people who care for them.

It was in large part due to RAPS’ advocacy against retail sale of pets and in favour of mandatory spaying and neutering that made the City of Richmond one of Canada’s most animal-friendly cities! Those milestones were nation-leading steps – and RAPS has only redoubled our advocacy efforts over the years.

Three years ago, we drafted and submitted to a provincial government task force a major paper on the housing challenges facing households that include companion animals. Some of the details in the report were shocking, like the fact that a lack of animal-welcoming housing for victims of domestic violence results in a perpetuation of abuse. We are updating this report with the latest statistics – because so much remains to be done on this issue.

This year, we also released an in-depth report on “economic euthanasia” – the situation in which families (or agencies) are forced to euthanize animals due to the unaffordability of veterinary care. This report not only identifies the problems, but provides some highly innovative steps that individuals, veterinary hospitals, regulatory bodies, employers and governments can take to ameliorate this tragic problem. From this report emerged a major campaign encouraging the federal government to make veterinary care a tax-deductible expense. If we are successful, this will not solve the entire problem of economic euthanasia. But it will take some of the financial burden off of pet guardians – and it will also be an important affirmation by Canada’s Parliament that animals make our lives, families, neighbourhoods and communities safer, healthier and happier.



Honey Bear

RAPS CAT
SANCTUARY

We will continue to be a powerful, unwavering voice for animals – and their people. Caring for animals requires that we recognize and support the people who care for them! That is why our not-for-profit animal hospital makes vet care as affordable as possible. It is why we work with social service agencies, transitional housing facilities, emergency shelters and other groups that serve vulnerable populations to make sure that the crucial relationships between people and animals is strengthened even when people are facing terrible challenges.

And, of course, we continue our work educating the public – especially young people – about the joys and responsibilities of companion animals, as well as safe interactions with animals. Creating successive generations of animal allies to carry on this essential work is a responsibility we take to heart.

In these pages, you will learn much more about the work RAPS does – and our ambitious, indeed audacious plans for the future. We are saving and improving the lives of more animals than ever before.

All of this is possible because of your support. As you read this annual report, we ask you to reflect on the impacts you have had through your kind contributions to our work. As supporters, donors and volunteers, YOU have made all of these achievements possible. Our work is essential. And you are essential to our success.

With pride and gratitude ...

FEARN EDMONDS

Fearn Edmonds
President

Blossom
RAPS ADOPTION &
EDUCATION CENTRE



PHOTO: MICHELE WRIGHT, FURRY FRIENDS PHOTOGRAPHY

MORE THAN
\$3MILLION
IN COMMUNITY
ASSISTANCE SINCE
2018



REPORT FROM
THE CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER



A year ago, in these pages, I wrote about the year of resilience we had experienced, adapting our services and programs to the demands of a global pandemic.

We did not imagine that, fully a year later, we would still be under continually evolving regulations due to COVID-19. Like every other household, business and organization on the planet, we have adapted to continue meeting our mandate of saving and improving the lives of animals.

I am deeply impressed, proud and moved by the ability and willingness of our staff, volunteers and supporters to do everything necessary to ensure the uninterrupted care for the animals we serve. The animals cannot thank us in words. But their gratitude comes through in those extraordinary ways of inter-species communication. For my part, and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank each and every person – our deeply devoted staff, our cherished volunteers and our entire community of supporters – for their patience and fortitude through this unprecedented time.

We are also extremely proud that, during this time of challenge, the trajectory of progress and growth that the organization has been undergoing has continued uninterrupted. In fact, there have been a range of new and continuing initiatives that are ensuring we save and improve the lives of more animals than ever before!

You will see many of these accomplishments in the pages of this report. I would like to share a few other developments that may not be as visible.

We have implemented many major advancements in the operations of RAPS. We have further professionalized our administrative side, including hiring a professional human resources agency that ensures we are following best employment standards. With this change has come improved benefits packages for employees, upgraded safety protocols, refined and streamlined policies and procedures and other steps to make RAPS an even more enviable place to work.

We have continued to enjoy superb support from our corporate partners. The RAPS Animal Hospital and the administrative centre are both possible because of the unbelievably generous contributions of **Applewood Auto Group**, which provides this space at no cost!

CONTINUED ...

Helping Animals And Their People

In addition to Applewood Auto Group, we are grateful for the support of so many other allies, including:

- Anipet
- Government of British Columbia
- Kevington Building Corp.
- PB Bakery Group
- Pet Valu and its subsidiaries
- Vancity Community Foundation
- Vancouver Foundation

We have enhanced some of our existing programs and developed new ones, all with the aim of maintaining a financially sustainable no-kill animal organization.

Our monthly sponsorship of Sanctuary cats is a growing program, with new recognition strategies including certificates of gratitude.

We are growing our planned gifts through general awareness and by welcoming lawyers to RAPS-sponsored seminars that educate legal professionals about advising clients on supporting animal-related charities and ensuring advance planning for the care of pets in the event of their person's passing.

We have created a series of unique animated videos that teach people about our services in fun and easy-to-understand ways.

We have launched a tribute card program, enabling donors to send cards to their loved ones, while also spreading awareness, good wishes and, most importantly, raising additional funds for animal-serving programs.

We held our first-ever online 50/50 draw, which gained enthusiasm and raised thousands of dollars for RAPS – and one lucky winner!

We launched a digital gift card program at the RAPS Animal Hospital, providing people with ways to save money on veterinary care or to make meaningful gifts to friends and family who can use some assistance in paying for their pet's care.

We are engaging more supporters through third-party fundraisers, such as students raising funds at school. Creative supporters are making and selling crafts to benefit RAPS. Nicholas Read, author of the magnificent book *A Home Away from Home: True Stories of Wild Animal Sanctuaries*, is giving to RAPS half the cover price of books sold through our site. Our popular annual calendars are a year-end fundraising tradition that make great holiday gifts! And much, much more ...

We are growing new markets for Canada's only hyperbaric oxygen therapy facility for cats and dogs – an innovative, noninvasive treatment only at the RAPS Animal Hospital.

And here is an exciting piece of news ...

Tyson Productions has been on site at the RAPS Animal Hospital, the Cat Sanctuary and the thrift stores filming a series that will air on Discovery's Animal Planet channel starting in the spring! RAPS – and, more importantly, our animals and the work we do to save and improve lives – will be featured to the widest audiences ever!

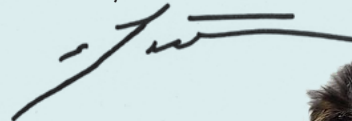
We will be sharing with you details as the program goes to air – you won't want to miss an episode!

All of these achievements – and more – are building our capacity to do more, for more animals and their people! And we have managed all this growth and progress in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

Everything we do – every life we save – is possible because of the support we have from a deeply engaged community of animal allies.

As you read through this year's report, please remember that YOU have made all of this possible. We hope you feel the same pride we do!

Sincerely,



Eyal Lichtmann
CEO

DR. REGAN SCHWARTZ
WITH PATIENT AT
THE RAPS ANIMAL
HOSPITAL



Organizational Overview

RAPS CAT SANCTUARY

The RAPS Cat Sanctuary is a beloved community institution. Home to hundreds of mostly unadoptable cats – many of whom would have faced euthanasia in other jurisdictions – this “Kitty Club Med” is a loving, forever home.

Special for animals ... special for people

The RAPS Cat Sanctuary is also a destination for individuals and families who adore spending time with the residents. Although the pandemic has, at times, forced us to close the Sanctuary to the public, it always holds a special place in the hearts of so many.

In addition to families who simply like hanging around with cats, the Sanctuary is a destination for people who are unable to have pets of their own due to allergies or housing circumstances. It is a place where seniors visit or volunteer, obtaining joy from interactions with people and animals. The Sanctuary welcomes people of all differences and abilities, providing rehabilitation and socialization for people with special needs. There is a small army of volunteers who we depend on to deliver individualized attention to hundreds of cats – and who depend on the cats to bring them joy in return.

Necessary infrastructure upgrades

If you share your home with a cat or two, you know that they can sometimes leave their marks on a place. Now imagine hundreds of cats, each with a very unique personality, living their lives in a magical feline wonderland. Yes, things can get a bit worn down!



PHOTO: MARLA JENKINS

We are constantly making cosmetic and structural upgrades to the facilities. Making the Sanctuary a comfortable, welcoming place for the cats is our top priority – but being a welcoming place for humans is also important.

We are making changes to keep infrastructure strong due to changes in climate (like too much rain) to offset floods and heat waves. We are adding more features for security and safety of the animals - including drainage to stop flooding, more gravel, more heating, more electrical, etc... We have installed all-new thermostats that control heating pads that keep the residents warm all year round. (In summer, of course, we have misters that cool down residents, volunteers and visitors.)

A quiet place for senior cats

The Moore House, a quiet home for senior cats and those who prefer less commotion, finally exceeded its lifespan and has been removed.

The residents have been temporarily integrated into other areas of the Sanctuary and there have been no issues! They are adapting to the increased commotion and still enjoying their retirement. However, a trailer for the seniors and other less extroverted residents is a priority. We are fundraising for a replacement and hope this goal will be reached soon.

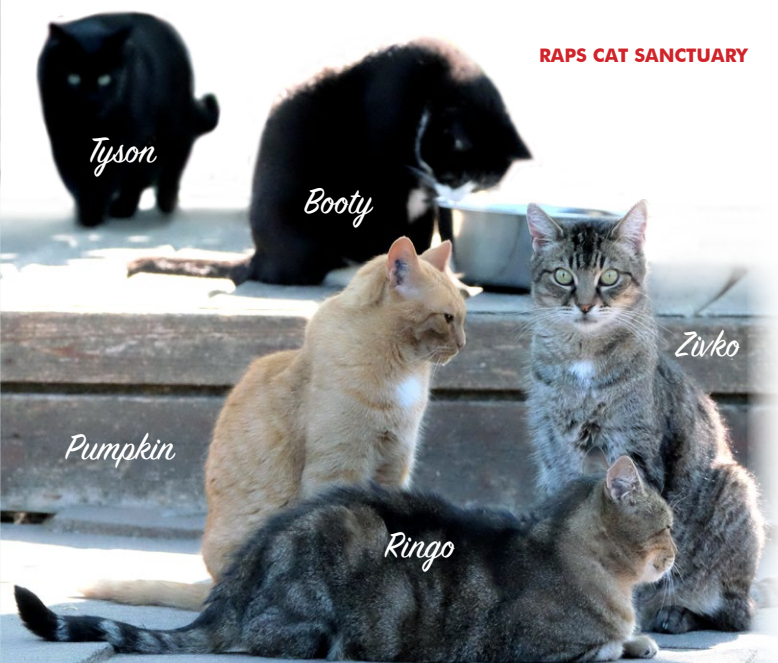


PHOTO: KAREN NICHOLSON

Did you know?

RAPS USES APPROXIMATELY



Did you know?

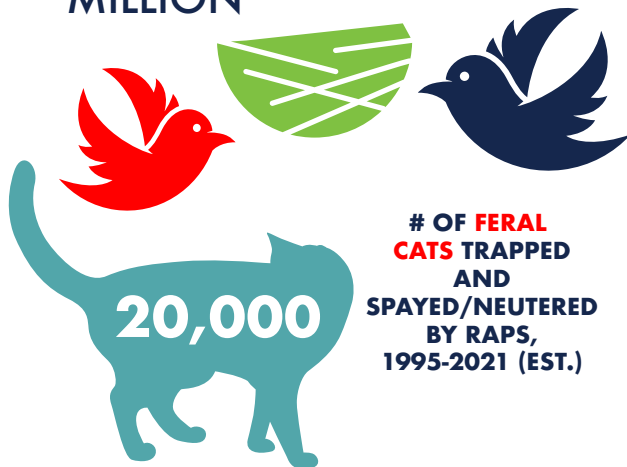


OF BIRDS
KILLED BY CATS
ANNUALLY
IN CANADA

**100 TO 350
MILLION**

OF BIRDS
KILLED
ANNUALLY PER
FERAL CAT ^[i]

24 TO 64



American statistics estimate that free-ranging domestic cats kill 1.3–4.0 billion birds and 6.3–22.3 billion mammals annually.^[i] These numbers suggest that cats kills between 4.8 and 5.6 times as many small mammals as birds.

Extrapolating these numbers we can estimate that, over 26 years, RAPS has had the following impacts:



OF BIRDS WHOSE
LIVES WERE SAVED BY
THE REDUCTION
OF FERAL CATS
(20,000 X 24 TO 64)

**480,000 TO
1,280,000
ANNUALLY**



OF MAMMALS WHOSE
LIVES WERE SAVED BY
THE REDUCTION
OF FERAL CATS
(20,000 X 24 TO 64)

**2,304,000
TO 7,168,000
ANNUALLY**

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ANIMALS!



RAPS is the subject of a new reality TV show set to air in the new year! The program will show how RAPS combines sheltering, sanctuaries, hospital, advocacy and social enterprise thrift stores to create a new model of sustainable veterinary care!

Of course, the animals will be the stars of the show. The challenging, heartbreaking and uplifting aspects of our work will be featured in this top-quality, professionally produced series that will introduce RAPS to millions of new animal allies!



WE ARE ESSENTIAL!



The Regional Animal Protection Society was recognized as an "essential service" by the Province of British Columbia this year. We believe that we are the first animal organization in the country to receive this designation.

There are hundreds of animals in our care. They cannot wait for their food, their insulin or the other necessities of life. In the event of a labour disruption or any other situation, we will ensure that the services we provide to animals will not be diminished!

We hope that this precedent will extend across Canada to ensure that all communities recognize the well-being of animals as an essential component of a healthy society.

[i] <https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Blancher-2013-Estimated-number-of-birds-killed-by-domestic-cats-in-Canada.pdf>
[ii] <https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380>

RAPS ADOPTION & EDUCATION CENTRE

A sanctuary for dogs ...

We have decades of experience in homing unadoptable cats. We are now aiming to expand our services to create a designated RAPS Dog Sanctuary and Adoption Centre!

Dogs and cats are different, as any pet guardian knows. Many cats are perfectly happy to live in colonies with dozens or, as at the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, hundreds of other cats. Most dogs are far more inclined to thrive in a family setting. That's why the RAPS Dog Sanctuary will provide all the rehabilitation, socialization and medical care necessary to prepare challenging dogs for the next phase of their lives – no matter how long it takes!

This is something RAPS has always done. (See Sunny's story, page 16.) Until now, though, these labour-intensive rehabilitation cases have been done while the animals are in foster homes. The new Dog Sanctuary will be a purpose-built facility, featuring all the indoor and outdoor spaces, equipment, supplies and resources necessary to equip unadoptable dogs with the confidence, trust and training to take their places at the heart of a loving family home.

We envision this sanctuary as a model for the sector in caring for and rehabilitating dogs with special needs – dogs who, sadly, face euthanasia in other jurisdictions.

We have made fantastic progress on fundraising for this project, made possible by the ThanksVegan Foundation, but more support is needed in order to make it a reality. You can read more about the project and donor recognition/ naming opportunities by visiting: www.dogsanctuary.ca.

Your support will save lives!

Blueberry
RAPS ADOPTION &
EDUCATION CENTRE



RAPS Adoption and Education Centre

In February 2021, our contract with the City of Richmond ended. Since 2007, RAPS had operated animal care and control services in the city, including the Richmond Animal Shelter.

No geographic limits!

As construction is underway on a replacement for that old and badly outdated facility, it made sense that the city would partner with the BC SPCA, which is able to accommodate Richmond's animals across their constellation of shelters throughout Metro Vancouver.

A fortunate side-effect of this change is that RAPS is no longer bound in any way by geographic limitations. Until this year, we were constrained by our agreement with the city to limit our acceptance of animals from outside Richmond.

We believe that *where* an animal lives should not determine *whether* an animal lives. As a no-kill animal-serving agency, RAPS has always welcomed animals from throughout B.C. and even beyond, within the limitations of our contract. We are now free to expand our partnerships with other rescues and to accept animals from anywhere, especially from jurisdictions where they might face euthanasia.

Fresh new facilities

Thanks to an extraordinarily generous gift from Irene Scarth and Carol Dillman, we now have a brand new, double-wide trailer that has been outfitted to create the RAPS Adoption and Education Centre. This 40-foot-by-24-foot structure, located within the compound of the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, is the new location for adoptions. This is where people seeking to add a furry family member to their household will come to meet their new companions.

The new RAPS Adoption and Education Centre will also be the headquarters of RAPS' outreach and education programs. Education has always been a central role for RAPS. While we are a direct service provider to animals, we also recognize that caring for animals and people requires us to equip the public, especially young people, with education about the joys and responsibilities of companion animals and safe inter-species interactions. As the pandemic subsides, we are excited to return to a full schedule of programs, including classroom visits, public outreach and even more education to people of all ages.

Help where it's needed!

The RAPS Animal Hospital was created to deliver needed assistance to animals – with the well-being of the animals, not profit, as the bottom line!

We have delivered subsidized care to thousands of animals and always provide competitively priced services.

Now, we want to bring our services right to the animals – and people – who need them.

We are nearing completion of our first Urgent Transport Unit. This vehicle will transport patients from home to the hospital and back, making veterinary care more accessible for people who have mobility issues, single parents who cannot leave their children to take a pet to the vet or anyone who need a lift in order to obtain the care their companion animal needs!

We are working to secure funds for the project and are grateful to The Leo & Frances Longo Fund at Vancity Community Foundation for stepping forward with part of this funding.

Another revolutionary component we are working towards is a Mobile Veterinary Clinic. This purpose-built, 30-foot-long hospital will allow veterinarians to travel British Columbia – especially to areas suffering extreme shortages of veterinarians – to perform spay and neuter procedures, dentals, exams and other routine medical treatments. The province, like all of North America, is experiencing a severe shortage of trained veterinarians and veterinary assistants. RAPS Animal Hospital is fortunate to attract and retain superb staff who are drawn by our not-for-profit model. With the launch of our Mobile Veterinary Clinic, we will be able to bring animal health care to the places where it is needed most!

MOCKUP OF MOBILE VETERINARY CLINIC



RAPS was honoured to be recognized in 2020 with six significant awards and we are proud to have won Best Veterinarian and runner-up for Best Local Hero in 2021, for a second year in a row!



2021 Best of Vancouver
"Local Heroes" Category
2nd Place,
Georgia Straight



2021 Best Veterinarian Hospital,
Richmond News



2020 Best Veterinarian Hospital,
Richmond News



2020 Best Community Organization,
Richmond News



2020 Best Community Association,
Richmond Chamber of Commerce



2020 Business Leadership Award,
Richmond Chamber of Commerce



2020 Best of Vancouver
"Local Heroes" Category
2nd Place,
Georgia Straight

Hands – and paws! – across the water

The opening of the RAPS Animal Hospital almost four years ago has empowered RAPS to do so much more for so many animals and their people. As one of the few animal agencies in the province with a community-owned, not-for-profit veterinary hospital, we have been able to help individuals and organizations around B.C.

One success story is Coco.

Coco came to Nanaimo Animal Control Services when a member of the public called to say she had found a cat that she believed to be injured.

Carley Colclough, pound and adoption coordinator for Nanaimo Animal Control Services, knew at a glance that the injury was serious.

"In about 30 seconds, I said this cat needs to go to the vet immediately," she recalls. "She wasn't closing her mouth and I could tell that she was distressed." She assumes the cat was hit by a car.

The vet in Nanaimo gave the cat, named Coco, pain control and took X-rays. The results showed that, in addition to several fractures in the lower jaw, there was also a break in her skull.

There are no veterinarians on Vancouver Island who can manage complex surgeries of this sort. A veterinary specialist on the Mainland estimated the surgery at about \$5,000 – something neither the rescue agency nor the animal's owner (who was found and surrendered Coco to the rescue) could afford.

"I started reaching out to my contacts," says Carley, hoping to find an organization that could help save Coco's life. Although Nanaimo Animal Control Services had not worked with RAPS before, Carley was formerly on the board of CatNap Society, which has transferred several FIV-positive cats to the RAPS Cat Sanctuary. "So I was aware of RAPS and knew how amazing it was."

She contacted Shena Novotny, the Adoption Centre and Sanctuary Manager for RAPS, and it was agreed that RAPS Animal Hospital would do the surgery.

One of the vet techs at the Nanaimo veterinary hospital volunteered to bring Coco to the Mainland by ferry. The surgery was performed on August 30. Five days later, Coco was flown by Harbour Air back to Nanaimo. There she was checked again by the local vet and deemed to be recovering beautifully.

As is so often the case with animals, Coco's resilience amazed her helpers.

"Even when I saw her when she first arrived, she was bright and alert and friendly — just with her mouth hanging open," Carley recalls. "It's just crazy to think that, from a human perspective, to have those kinds of injuries and still be behaving in a friendly way ... She's a pretty special little cat."

Coco, who is about a year old, seems to have forgotten that she experienced a traumatic injury.

"I'm treating her like a fragile porcelain doll, but she feels that she's ready for anything," Carley says. "She's just a dream to work with. She's really easy and super happy. She loves having her time out of her kennel and wandering around supervised. She is mostly on kennel rest but she gets out for walkabouts with us. She eats everything I put in front of her. She's eating soft food of course, but eating really well. I can't keep up with her."

Coco has been adopted and has settled in magnificently with her new family.

Meanwhile, Carley is inspired by the teamwork across the rescue community.

"It kind of takes a village," she says. "We had different volunteers doing transportation and your organization really stepped up. The animal community coming together to do this was a big thing for us."

There are lots of animal rescue organizations in B.C. We are all working toward the same goal. We are thrilled that, thanks to the support of our powerful community of animal allies, we are able to save lives like Coco's – and help organizations like Nanaimo Animal Control. Without YOU, Coco's surgery would not have been possible.

You can support our RAPS Animal Hospital Emergency Cases Fund here:
rapsbc.com/donate-to-raps-emergency-cases-fund/



Organizational Overview

RAPS ANIMAL HOSPITAL

The community-owned, not-for-profit RAPS Animal Hospital is a centerpiece of our commitment to sustainable, no-kill animal care.

Revenue saves even more lives!

Opened in 2018, the hospital provides routine and emergency medical treatments for the animals in RAPS' care and offers quality, affordable vet care to the public – with all revenues reinvested in RAPS programs to save and improve the lives of even more animals!

Continuous expansion to meet growing demand

Over these three-and-a-half years, we have progressively expanded our hours of operations to meet the demand from the community. Our reputation as a destination for caring, compassionate, affordable veterinary services has led to an ever-increasing client base – and we were chosen by readers of the *Richmond News* as “Best Veterinarian” two years running! (2020 and 2021)

We are further expanding our hours, plus welcoming new veterinarians to our superb team in order to reduce wait times for procedures. We are also in the process of expanding to open three more examination rooms.

At a time when there is a critical shortage of veterinarians in British Columbia (and across North America), the RAPS Animal Hospital has top, experienced veterinary doctors reaching out to us to join our team. For the most devoted doctors, it is a powerful draw to work in an environment where the pressure to generate revenue is subordinate to best interests of the patient.

Vets who make house calls

Making veterinary care accessible means keeping fees as affordable as possible – a challenge we meet by eliminating the profit motive! But it also means ensuring that households that have transportation challenges, or who are unable to bring their companion animals to us will be able to access the care they need. If a single parent can't leave their kids and travel to the vet, if a person with disabilities faces challenges in accessing veterinary care, or a senior who doesn't drive requires veterinary services, the RAPS animal Hospital now offers at-home services.

We are in the process of funding a Urgent Transport Unit vehicle to safely bring animals from their homes to the hospital and back. This vehicle also allows veterinarians to do routine exams and minor procedures in the pet's own home.

We have also heard the voices of our clients and friends who have said that, on the saddest day of their relationship with their pet, they wish they could say a final goodbye to their furry family members in the safe comfort of familiar surroundings. Thanks to our new Urgent Transport Unit

vehicle, we will soon be offering at-home euthanasia to provide what consolation we can by allowing the family to be together at home during this sad time.

While we continue to secure funds for this project, we are grateful to The Leo & Frances Longo Fund at Vancity Community Foundation for stepping forward with part of this funding.

A promise of stability!

The mayor and city councillors of Richmond voted unanimously Nov. 15 on a rezoning motion that turns the RAPS Animal Hospital's location within the Richmond Auto Mall from a temporary usage to a permanent one!

This change ensures our hospital's stability and solidifies our place in the community.

The RAPS Animal Hospital opened in the Richmond Auto Mall in 2018 thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the Applewood Auto Group. This outstanding corporate community partner has donated 6,000 square feet of space on their premises to house not only the RAPS Animal Hospital but also the RAPS administrative offices. This contribution-in-kind, with an estimated value of \$2.6 million over 15 years, is an enormous charitable gift.

Since opening, the hospital has provided more than \$3 million in partially or fully subsidized vet care to households with low incomes or facing other challenges. We have helped more than 8,000 animals, with average assistance of \$375 per animal. We also offer British Columbia's only no-interest veterinary care payment plans, ensuring that no one is forced to make life-and-death choices about their companion animals based on ability to pay.

As a community-owned, not-for-profit veterinary facility, the RAPS Animal Hospital is taking the profit motive out of animal healthcare and creating a whole new model for the sector. We are sharing our knowledge with other animal-serving institutions to make sustainable no-kill animal welfare more accessible to all.



**DR. VICTORIA
CRUZ-MENDEZ
VETERINARIAN**

1000's
OF ANIMALS
TREATED
AT RAPS
THIS YEAR

**DR. REGAN
SCHWARTZ**
VETERINARIAN

**DR. JOSEPH
MARTINEZ**
VETERINARIAN

AYALA DAFNI
ASSISTANT
MANAGER,
RAPS ANIMAL
HOSPITAL

Organizational Overview

RAPS THRIFT STORES

Good value. Good values!

The RAPS Thrift Stores are a vital source of revenue for the organization. In addition to raising hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to save and improve the lives of animals, the thrift stores are an environmental and economic boon to our communities. Households access incredibly affordable clothing, kitchenware, household goods, furniture, sports equipment and much more – while diverting tons and tons of material from the landfill.

Pandemic challenges

The past year was deeply challenging. The stores were understandably forced to close at the start of the pandemic and the reopening was slow and measured. Many volunteers, particularly those who are older or have health conditions, were unable to return. Closures and limits on the number of customers in store had a negative impact on our revenues. We are glad to be safely reopened and welcoming customers again.

Expansion of our stores

The RAPS Thrift Stores have grown dramatically in recent years, partly because of increased support from corporate partners, who frequently deliver large donations of brand new excess inventory for us to offer to our customers.

From a small, single outlet on Granville Avenue in Richmond, the stores have expanded to a second Richmond location on Francis Road. A pop-up shop in New Westminster was intended as a short-term location to liquidate a vast stock of quality, brand new furniture contributed by a corporate partner – but the success and continually growing inventory have kept the location open.



All for a good cause

Unlike many thrift stores, the largest of which are for-profit ventures, 100% of revenues from RAPS Thrift Stores go directly into programs and services that save and improve the lives of animals.



PHOTOS: SARA DANE PHOTOGRAPHY

SAVE MONEY ... SAVE THE WORLD!

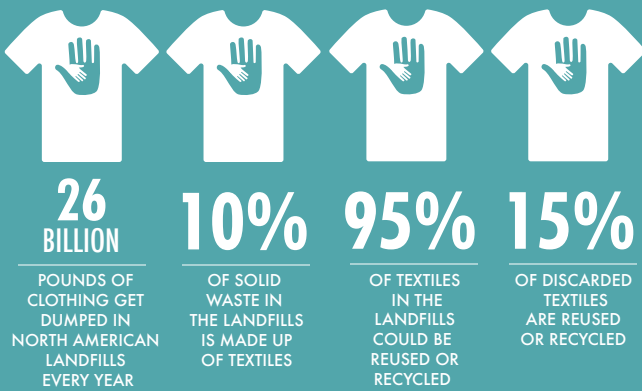


It has been estimated that more than 26 billion pounds of clothing get dumped in North American landfills every year. As much as 10% of solid waste in the landfills is made up of textiles and experts estimate that as much as 95% of that could be reused or recycled instead. An Ontario study indicated that only about 15% of discarded textiles are reused or recycled.

Also: a jaw-dropping 700 gallons of water can be used to make a single new cotton T-shirt. When it comes to textile production, water is the most intensive resource used. Count the items in your closet and extrapolate the impact on water resources.

Textiles are only part of the inventory that RAPS Thrift Stores offers. Great quality furniture, housewares, collectibles, books and magazines and so many unexpected surprises are kept from the landfill and go on to second (or third, or fourth) lives.

Plus, the RAPS Thrift Store strategy is to price things so ridiculously low that inventory turns over at an incredible rate – meaning we are helping people save money and the world!



3
RAPS
THRIFT STORES
WITH MORE
TO COME!



PHOTO: SARA DANE PHOTOGRAPHY

PUBLIC POLICY



Animals make our lives, families, neighbourhoods and communities safer, healthier and happier. Successive studies have indicated that companion animals have powerful positive impacts on human health. This not only has wonderful life-extending benefits to individuals – it saves the healthcare system incalculable millions of dollars every year. These are among the reasons that RAPS has increasingly been involved in advocating for government policies that recognize the centrality of animals in the lives of Canadians.

In part because of RAPS' efforts, Richmond is one of Canada's most animal-affirmative cities. The banning of the retail sale of pets and mandating spaying and neutering are common across Canada now, but Richmond was a pioneer on these issues and RAPS' advocacy was a motivator.

In 2018, RAPS made a major submission to a Province of British Columbia task force on rental housing. We demonstrated the negative consequences of tenancy rules that discriminate against households that include companion animals. In an environment that is already among the world's most expensive housing markets, families with pets are disproportionately likely to live in substandard housing – and to pay more for it.

Discriminatory policies also have an impact on domestic violence. The lack of emergency shelters that accept pets means people experiencing domestic violence are more likely to remain in the situation longer or return to it sooner.

This year, RAPS released a major report on "economic euthanasia" – the situation in which households and animal organizations are forced to euthanize an animal due to unaffordable veterinary care. In the report, RAPS included a range of initiatives to reduce and, ideally, eliminate this phenomenon, including steps that could be taken by pet guardians, veterinarians, businesses and governments. Also stemming from the report is a campaign, now underway, to encourage the federal government to make veterinary medical expenses a tax-deductible expense.

Read the full report at rapsbc.com/2021/08/raps-releases-major-report-on-economic-euthanasia

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

RAPS is a frontline animal-serving agency. But we realize that caring for animals also means affecting policies, laws and attitudes that affect the well-being of animals and their people.

Children and youth

Education has always been central to our work. RAPS staff and volunteers go into schools and welcome class groups to our facilities, helping to make young people aware of the joys and responsibilities of companion animals. Many students, through organized clubs or as special birthday projects or fundraising efforts, support RAPS in myriad ways. We view this as the beginning of a lifelong commitment to animal allyship!

General public

RAPS engages in seasonal and other relevant education campaigns to make the public aware of issues, especially around animal safety – being vigilant about animals in hot cars in summer and the dangers of holiday-related hazards at Halloween and Christmas, for example.

We also raise public awareness about the hazards of free-roaming cats – both to the life and health of the cat, as well as the catastrophic impacts that feral and free-roaming cats have on the ecosystem by killing birds and small mammals.

**MANDY
LICHTMANN
VOLUNTEER &
OUTREACH
COORDINATOR**

*If it matters to animals,
it matters to RAPS.*



Animal rescue without borders!

RAPS exists to rescue animals. Central to our mission is the certainty that *where* an animal lives should not determine *whether* an animal lives. More than ever before, we have been able to realize this promise because we are no longer contracted by the City of Richmond to provide animal care and control services. This frees us up to be truly an animal rescue without borders!

Well, that shift has brought an embarrassment of riches in the past few months!

On June 2, RAPS staff drove 10 hours round trip to the B.C. interior to pick up 32 adult cats, and 11 kittens. In September, our team went for another road trip and collected another 23 cats. RAPS Animal Hospital veterinarians assessed and provided care for these animals on their arrival.

These cats were trapped and spayed or neutered by the Canadian Animal Task Force, a Calgary-based rescue group we are honoured to partner with. They are currently dealing with one of the largest colonies they have ever encountered and so they reached out to partner agencies as far away as ... well, here!

We feel truly honoured to be able to assist other agencies. We have grown dramatically in recent years and, with our range of facilities, we are now one of Canada's largest and most innovative animal agencies. Because we have the community-owned, not-for-profit RAPS Animal Hospital, we can deliver health care to animals whenever and wherever needed – as our vets showed in their late-night assessment and treatment of the Calgary cats. Because we operate Canada's largest cat sanctuary – which has the capacity now to welcome even more animals – we are fortunate to be able to welcome cats from rescues that do not have this sort of sprawling "Kitty Club Med."

This vast number of cats have kept our staff and volunteers extraordinarily busy recently. They are being dewormed and de-fleaded, tested for health conditions, given any treatments required and, importantly, assessed for socialization.

Terms like "feral" and "semi-feral" are not an exact science. All cat people know that each animal has its distinct personality. Does a hissing fit mean the cat won't make a great house pet? If you were uprooted from everything you knew, brought to a strange place populated by a species you had rarely encountered, you might hiss a little too! That doesn't mean you wouldn't warm up when you discovered these bipeds surrounding you were offering up delicious, healthy food and that having their giant, bald paws rub your jowls isn't half bad.

In other words ... some of these cats, especially the kittens, will soon be ready for forever homes. As days and weeks go by, we'll see how many of the adolescent and adult cats are suitable for family homes. The others will settle in to a wonderful existence at the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, where they will find their groove among cats who, like themselves, prefer the freedom of the sanctuary to the cozy lap of a human guardian.

Whichever route each of these magnificent creatures ends up taking, one thing is certain: A rescue (or series of rescues, as is the case) takes a great deal of resources.

Everything we do – every animal whose life we save – is possible because of the support of animal allies in the community.

This has been a challenging year for so many households. If yours is in a position to help with a contribution to RAPS' Emergency Cases Fund, it will make an enormous difference. www.rapsbc.com/donate-to-raps-emergency-cases-fund/



Patience and time ... the key to a good dog

Sunny's story an example of why we are building the RAPS Dog Sanctuary

As a no-kill animal-serving organization, RAPS routinely faces challenging cases that, in other jurisdictions or agencies, would probably lead to euthanasia.

Our no-kill promise states that, under our care, no animal is ever euthanized due to lack of space, treatable illness, physical defect, age, behavioural or socialization issues.

For cats, being unadoptable for any of these reasons means they will probably live out their lives at the RAPS Cat Sanctuary – our “Kitty Club Med.”

For dogs, the challenge can be, well, more challenging.

Here is an example.

In March 2016, German Shepherd Sunny was found as a stray in Richmond. He had no ID and no one came to claim him. After he was vaccinated, dewormed, received flea prevention, was neutered and tattooed, Sunny was placed up for adoption and, in April 2016, went to what we hoped would be his forever home.

But a couple of months later, in June 2016, Sunny was returned for repeatedly putting his mouth on his new owner. He also broke down the backyard fence and succeeded in destroying two of the neighbours' yards.

The family had consulted trainers and spent time devotedly working with Sunny, but in the end decided they didn't have the expertise and experience that Sunny required.

Sunny was then placed back up for adoption and was adopted again in August 2016. This time it seemed to be working out. But, sadly, after four years, in July 2020, Sunny was returned again. The new owner had gone to superhuman efforts to help Sunny become the best dog he could be. But it became too much.

Sunny was not adequately socialized with dogs and would get extremely overexcited when seeing them. Being a large and very strong dog, Sunny had occasionally gotten away from the family members and charged over to the dogs in his vicinity. He also demonstrated resource guarding and had other behavioural issues.

Sunny is incredibly smart and also suffers from anxiety, which makes a very difficult combination. When Sunny did not want to do something, he would have full-blown temper tantrums, often putting his mouth on people.

RAPS staff were intensively working on his obedience and behaviour every day to prepare him for adoption. Sunny was also put on anti-anxiety medication as being in the kennel really stressed him out and he would bark non-stop.

After a few months and lots of work and training, Sunny was finally put up for adoption. We were looking for a very specific owner that had German Shepherd or other large breed experience, was a calm, confident, assertive owner and would continue the training we had been doing with Sunny to ensure he was set up for success.

Sunny received some interest but nothing that would be a good fit for him.

Then, at the end of October 2020, a retired couple with lots of large breed experience came to meet Sunny and fell in love. Over the course of two weeks, the couple had five meet-and-greets with Sunny to ensure they got to see all of Sunny's sides and really get to know what his needs were.

They were then approved to take Sunny home for a seven-day trial adoption. Sadly, after two days, they returned Sunny, as he was extremely difficult to handle in the home. The couple had not followed our instructions of using his crate, setting up rules along with other training instructions so, without firm boundaries, Sunny immediately took over and became unmanageable.

We were all sad for Sunny as the couple seemed to really understand what his needs were and we thought they were going to honour his training and continue to set him up for success.

We were at a bit of a loss and were hoping someone else would come along, but Sunny's history was becoming one of successive failures.

In December 2020, Sunny ended up going for seven days of boarding and intensive training with trainer Kelly Argue so that she could better understand him and tell us what his needs would be in his new home.

We learned a lot from this and started new training techniques.

Finally, in January 2021, Tyna contacted us. She was interested in fostering Sunny. Tyna had lots of experience working with large, reactive dogs and was confident she could handle Sunny.

The only thing was that Tyna had a 10-year-old female Dachshund named Honey, so we were unsure if Sunny would be too much for Honey but he had done well with Kelly's small dogs during his weeklong board-and-train, so we gave it a shot. Tyna and Honey came for a meet-and-greet and it went very well.

Tyna did so well with Sunny and took him home as a foster in February 2021. We continued to have Sunny posted for adoption, but sadly he received very little interest.

Thankfully, Sunny was thriving in his foster home with Tyna and Honey. Tyna went above and beyond for Sunny and Sunny really loves Tyna. Then ... another bump in the road.

Tyna learned that she was allergic to Sunny because German Shepherds have similar dander to cats and she is allergic to cats. Even with the allergies, Tyna loved Sunny very much and was happy to continue fostering him until he found his new home. Tyna did a lot of work with Sunny and was able to fully wean him off his anti-anxiety medication, which was a huge step.

Then, in the middle of June, Tyna told us that she wanted to fully adopt Sunny!

The entire RAPS team was over the moon because we knew how much Tyna loved Sunny and vice versa – plus she fully understood Sunny's needs and how to make him the best boy he could be.

Tyna spoke with her allergist about how to handle her allergies and she is going to receive a monthly allergy shot so that she can keep Sunny ... Now that is commitment!

Tyna officially adopted Sunny on June 16, 2021, after Sunny had been in our care for almost a year!

Sunny's story has a happy ending. But thousands of stories like his do not. Most animal agencies do not have the resources and time to rehabilitate, socialize or otherwise prepare problematic animals for a forever home. In far, far too many cases, a dog like Sunny would be put down.

If this project is something you would like to support, please contact Jonathan Lerner, Director of Business Development at jonathan@rapsbc.com or visit www.dogsanctuary.ca.

For more than two decades, unadoptable cats have come to the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, where they live out their lives surrounded by all the love and care we can deliver.

But difficult-to-adopt dogs are a different story. Unlike cats, dogs do not tend to thrive in such a setting. They need regular bonding and devotion with a human family. Until now, we have rehabilitated dogs like Sunny through our amazing fostering network.

But we are ramping up to create a designated, permanent facility for dogs – the RAPS Dog Sanctuary & Adoption Centre, made possible by the ThanksVegan Foundation. Unlike our Cat Sanctuary, the Dog Sanctuary will not be imagined as a forever home for the residents. Rather, it will be the place where dogs come for intensive training, socialization and loving care, with experts in every field of behaviour, veterinary medicine and whatever other disciplines are necessary to see them finally succeed in being adopted – no matter how long it takes.

The RAPS Dog Sanctuary and Adoption Centre is another promise kept in RAPS' longtime commitment to our no-kill ethos.

We are building support now to create and open this new facility in the near future.

Did you know?

OF DOGS IN CANADA
7.7 MILLION

OF
HOUSEHOLDS
WITH A DOG
IN CANADA

**3.6
MILLION**

Sunny

RAPS ADOPTION &
EDUCATION CENTRE

ADOPTED!

Life insurance: Planning ahead

RAPS encourages animal guardians to plan ahead. Too often, we see animals who have lived wonderful lives suddenly homeless and confused when their person passes away. When doing estate planning, don't forget to consider the animals in your life. This is also a time when we can assure that the things that are important to us in life – the causes and issues we care the most about – are reflected in our last wishes.

Jonathan Lerner, director of business development at RAPS, has chosen an innovative way to both ensure the well-being of his pet and to continue supporting the welfare of animals in general should something happen to him.

"I have an 11-year old cat named Peanut who has chronic health issues," says Jonathan. "If something unexpected were to happen to both me and my spouse, I would want Peanut to be well cared for. Therefore, I put a clause in my will that if my spouse and I both were deceased, Peanut would go to the RAPS Cat Sanctuary."

To ensure that RAPS would have the funds for lifelong care of Peanut, and also to fulfil his philanthropic goals to help animals, he chose an innovative method.

"I do not have excess liquid funds, but I do have a life insurance policy," he says. "Therefore, I added RAPS as a charitable beneficiary to my life insurance policy as a percentage of the total. This did not cost me any extra! Premiums do not change. I am simply setting aside a small percentage for the care of a loved one (Peanut) and my philanthropic goals (RAPS)."

Jonathan's insurance strategy is a very cost-effective method for legacy giving, because most people with a spouse, children and a mortgage already have a life insurance policy. Brokers are very familiar with this procedure.

**JONATHAN
LERNER**
DIRECTOR OF
BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT



"Additionally, the life insurance company added a \$1,000 benefit to a charity of my choice (in addition to the regular policy) and I named RAPS as the beneficiary," he says.

There are plenty of innovative ways to support the causes that are important to you. Many of them can provide generous tax benefits today for philanthropic contributions.

RAPS has volunteer experts in estate and tax planning to discuss your needs and desires. Contact us at development@rapsbc.com.

"Having the peace of mind that my cat will be well-cared-for in the event of the unexpected is priceless."



DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021



The development of stable and scalable fundraising for RAPS is a top priority for providing the best care to the most animals possible. Our network of committed donors, corporate sponsors and community partners has grown extensively in recent years, and 2021 was no exception. Despite the challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic, the RAPS team continued to innovate and expand our development initiatives. We are immensely grateful to all who have stepped up to make this past year a fundraising success. What follows are a few of the highlights.

New Donor Database

2021 was the first year that RAPS fully implemented its new, state-of-the-art donor database. Hosted by one of Canada's top providers of not-for-profit database solutions, this new tool not only enables our donors to receive tax receipts directly from RAPS with their online gifts, it also makes it possible for our team to more efficiently analyze revenues, run reports, issue receipts and communicate with our supporters. Ultimately, this means more time and money going to helping the animals, while improving our fundraising.

Online 50/50 Raffle

This year, with the pandemic still limiting in-person events, RAPS decided to innovate by hosting our first-ever online 50/50 raffle. This fundraiser ultimately reached a total jackpot of **\$60,555**, with the lucky winner taking half! This was such a successful initiative that we plan to host more online 50/50s in the near future. Stay tuned for news in 2022!

Tribute Cards

For over 26 years, RAPS has been an important part of our community, and we can think of nothing better than sharing in the special moments of your lives – holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and so much more! That is why we were delighted to launch our new Tribute Card program, where a donor can have a beautifully designed card sent to a recipient of their choice (with a custom message inside). Please visit <https://www.rapsbc.com/tribute-cards/> for more information.

Special Projects

We have been busy this year fundraising for many special projects, including the dream of a RAPS Dog Sanctuary & Adoption Centre (please see page 7 for more information), upgrades to the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, and expanding the hours of the RAPS Animal Hospital. Ongoing fundraising and pending grant applications hold great potential for realizing many of the projects outlined in this Annual Report. If you would like more information about any of our initiatives, please email development@rapsbc.com.

We are immensely grateful to all of our incredible supporters, including the many people and organizations who have held third-party fundraisers to support RAPS through their own initiatives. Your generosity is why we are able to help more animals and people than ever before.



Thank you!



Thank you for your support.

RAPS CAT SANCTUARY

Jamie



RAPS | Regional Animal
Protection Society

RAPS
ANIMAL
HOSPITAL

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

Supported by the Province of British Columbia

PHOTO: MICHELE WRIGHT, FURRY FRIENDS PHOTOGRAPHY