



Annual Report  
**Fiscal Year 2016**  
July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016



**Our mission is** to prevent cruelty and neglect of animals within the state of Colorado by: assisting agencies in the enforcement of laws relating to cruelty and neglect of companion animals and equines, educating the public on animal welfare issues, supporting animal-friendly legislation, and acting as a resource to individuals and groups interested in the prevention of cruelty and neglect of animals.

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Scott C. Johnson  
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Dear friends,

*Staying the course.* That’s been a theme for The Colorado Humane Society & SPCA™ (CHS) during the past fiscal year, as our four animal-protection agents responded to 355 reports of neglect and mistreatment involving 1,149 horses and companion animals. In close collaboration with local law enforcement authorities, they tirelessly traversed our state to oversee and assist in protecting the welfare of animals in 37 Colorado counties covering more than 65,638 square miles with a population of 705,742 people.

In the course of their daily work, CHS investigators witness all manner of suffering—pets and horses denied basic physical needs, forced to live in unsanitary and unhealthy conditions, and deprived of the companionship of caring humans or their animal kin.



John R. Nagy  
President

CHS agents may be called in to assist another agency at the very beginning of an investigation, or to assess an animal owner’s progress in addressing an ongoing violation. Sometimes they help seize seriously endangered animals and bring them to safety, or provide vital courtroom testimony in abuse and neglect cases. They may never learn the ultimate disposition of individual cruelty and neglect cases. Due to its confidential nature, much of their activity can only be reported in the most general terms in order to preserve the integrity of ongoing legal processes.

But beyond investigations work, a key part of CHS activity involves educational outreach. This may include consulting with individual pet and horse owners over an extended period to help them make difficult decisions about finding new homes for their animals, or finding new ways to more effectively maintain the health and vitality of animals in their care. While this work can be tedious and time-consuming, it often prevents dangerous situations from escalating and pays dividends in terms of reducing animal suffering.

In addition to the specific cases you will read about in this report, CHS been involved in a wide range of activities over the past year, such as: assisting multiple local sheriffs’ offices in the seizure, removal or transport of numerous dogs, cats, horses, wolves, birds and other animals from abusive, neglectful or incapacitated owners and breeders; assisting the North Carolina ASPCA in the care and sheltering of horses in a cruelty case; and advising Fremont County, Colo., planners regarding wildfire animal evacuations, handling and sheltering.

As CHS continues to pursue its mission of preventing animal neglect and mistreatment, we are very grateful to supporters and donors like you who care about vulnerable animals—and who make our efforts on their behalf possible. Thank you so much for your ongoing compassion and commitment to our cause.

Sincerely,

Scott C. Johnson  
Chairman  
Board of Directors

John R. Nagy  
President

## History

The nonprofit Colorado Humane Society, formed in 1881 by Denver civic leaders, was part of a national humane movement that had begun in 1866 with the establishment in New York of The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.



Similar to societies in other states, the first Colorado Humane Society included children as well as animals in the scope of its work. Through legislation in 1901, the society became an arm of state government. While retaining its nonprofit status, it acquired broad powers to enforce laws “for the prevention of wrongs to children and dumb animals ... and to promote the growth of education and sentiment favorable to their protection.” By the end of 1901, the transformed humane society, functioning as the Colorado Bureau of Child and Animal Protection, had 387 volunteer anti-cruelty agents throughout the state, watching out for abusers and rescuing the victims.

The state bureau functioned until 1951, when the Legislature cut off its appropriation. Responsibilities for child welfare and animal protection were assigned to other state and local agencies. The nonprofit humane society kept going through private donations and volunteers, but it eventually limited its activity to companion-animal shelter and care in the Denver metro area. The society was disbanded in 2008 through an action by the Colorado attorney general.

The new Colorado Humane Society & SPCA Inc. (hereinafter referred to as CHS) was formed in 2010. It restores the mission of the early founders by preventing and investigating animal neglect and mistreatment, and promoting animal welfare statewide.

CHS is authorized by the Colorado Agricultural Commission to enforce the Animal Protection Act as it applies to horses not used in the production of food or fiber, as well as to animals defined as pets—cats, dogs and selected other small mammals. (Livestock is excluded from the CHS purview.)

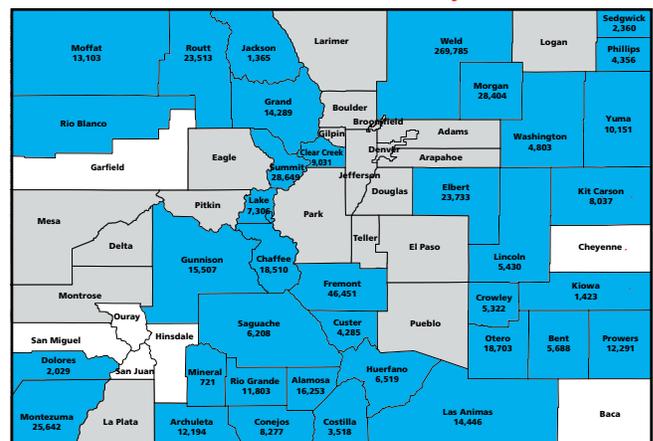
CHS works with the Bureau of Animal Protection in the Colorado Department of Agriculture to identify areas where limited resources have inhibited its agents and local law enforcement from investigating animal neglect and mistreatment situations.

## Our partnerships

All Colorado Humane Society investigations are conducted in cooperation with a local sheriff’s office, police department or animal control agency. Strong working relationships are a hallmark of the CHS team, enabling us to protect even more vulnerable animals with our partners.

During FY16, we had working relationships, solidified through memorandums of understanding, with the sheriffs of the following 37 counties: Alamosa, Archuleta, Bent, Chaffee, Clear Creek, Conejos, Costilla, Crowley, Custer, Dolores, Elbert, Fremont,

Counties in blue are served by CHS



Grand, Gunnison, Huerfano, Jackson, Kiowa, Kit Carson, Lake, Las Animas, Lincoln, Mineral, Moffat, Montezuma, Morgan, Otero, Phillips, Prowers, Rio Blanco, Rio Grande, Routt, Saguache, Sedgwick, Summit, Washington, Weld and Yuma—an increase of one county over FY15.

## Animal-related activities

Throughout the year—and throughout the state—the Colorado Humane Society worked with law enforcement officials to rescue vulnerable animals and to investigate, prosecute and monitor cases of animal mistreatment and neglect.

Our four state-commissioned animal-protection agents covered 65,638 square miles of Colorado with a population of more than 705,000 people. Driving approximately 15,000 miles a month, they responded to 355 reports involving 1,149 animals.

Additionally, CHS partnered with the statewide Crime Stoppers hotline on cases that produced 99 tips. Crime Stoppers offers a reward program for members of the public who wish to anonymously report animal abuse or neglect, dog fighting or other inhumane activities involving animals. Tips sent to (720) 913-STOP (7867) through this centralized system are funneled to the appropriate agency or organization for follow-up. Those providing tips that result in charges or convictions are eligible for a cash reward.

### INVESTIGATING NEGLECT

In September 2015, the Fremont County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from CHS, seized 37 dogs as part of a large neglect case. The animals were removed from a filthy home steeped in feces and littered with large animal bones. The animals were emaciated, dehydrated and fearful. Deprived of medical attention and socialization, many were in poor health and had behavioral problems.

The dogs were taken to the Dumb Friends League, where they received nourishing food, veterinary care including spaying or neutering, grooming and gentle behavior training to help them conquer their anxiety and fear. CHS investigators testified in the case against the animals' owner, who pled guilty to charges of animal cruelty and was convicted.



*Eight-month-old Lucille, an Australian cattle dog, was one of 37 dogs rescued by CHS and the Fremont County Sheriff's Office. After three weeks at the shelter, Lucille was adopted by lifelong dog owner Ryan S., who understood that she needed time and love to recover from her traumatic past.*

### ENCOURAGING A HUMANE ENDING

For nearly a year, local police and animal control personnel in a small northern Colorado town had fielded concerns about the health status of a horse named Kitten before calling in a CHS investigator for a consultation. Although three other horses on the property were in good shape, Kitten, a 26-year-old sorrel gelding, had a body condition score of 1—the lowest possible rating—as well as severe arthritis, which caused mobility problems and considerable swelling in his knees. Kitten's elderly owner said she'd had the horse since he was a foal and was doing everything possible to care for him, including giving him pain medication and plenty of food. The investigator determined that the owner was feeding the appropriate type of food, just not enough of it. He suggested increasing the portions and recommended that she ask her veterinarian about a more specialized feeding regimen if the horse didn't gain weight.

A follow-up visit revealed that Kitten had gained a minimal amount and still seemed to be in pain; as he shuffled along, loud clicking and popping accompanied his every step. The owner admitted that she did not give pain medication every day but



said her veterinarian had approved the food plan. The investigator told her he would follow up with the veterinarian to see if an exam was recommended. The investigator asked her if she had considered euthanasia because of the horse's condition.

According to the veterinarian, he had not seen the horse in several months, nor had he consulted with the owner since the CHS visits had begun. When he was apprised of the horse's current condition, he noted that the prognosis was very poor and that the humane course of action was euthanasia. Later that day, he reported that the owner had contacted the clinic to schedule a euthanasia visit, telling the doctor that Kitten had told her that very morning it was time for him to go. Five weeks after the initial visit, with CHS's patient counsel, the owner had finally made the responsible decision for her horse.

#### **HELPING A PET OWNER GET BACK ON TRACK**

When the undersheriff in a southern Colorado county asked a CHS investigator to help him assess some animals a local town marshal had come across, he agreed. When they arrived, they found four cats, 17 dogs (several of which were puppies and eight of which were husky/wolf mixes) tied up outside, and a bay colt tied to a tractor with a tow chain. The dogs

were underweight and the colt had a body condition score of 1.5. The owner said she fed the dogs road-kill deer carcasses and the horse 3 pounds of good-quality alfalfa daily, less than a quarter of what he should have been receiving. The investigator told her to increase the feed for the horse to 15 pounds a day and to supplement that with some pelleted feed for juvenile horses. He also instructed her to feed the dogs proper dog food and to provide water for all the animals at all times.

A return visit two weeks later by our investigator showed apparent improvements in the animals' condition, but when he returned a month after that, the animals had again lost weight. The owner explained that she had been trying to bulk up the horse by giving him fruit, baked apples, carrots, yogurt and cheese, and took him inside her home at



night to feed him and protect him from predators. She was instructed to stop feeding him yogurt, to stop feeding him fruit, except as an occasional snack, and to give the horse all the hay he could eat, along with the pelleted supplement instead. She was also told to build a pen for the horse rather than bringing him indoors. She was issued a written warning and was told the investigators would return soon.

Over the course of the next few months and several visits, CHS counseled the owner on her feeding regimen and on improving the living conditions for

the animals. In keeping with Colorado's Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act (PACFA), she was ordered to reduce the number of cats and dogs she owned. Ultimately, the owner complied with the orders and instructions given to her. She reduced her menagerie to three cats, nine dogs and one horse by rehoming all the other animals. The horse and all the dogs were brought up to acceptable weights, and she built pens for the horse and the dogs so none would be chained up.

## Education and outreach

Every CHS investigator is a commissioned Colorado Bureau of Animal Protection agent who wears many hats, including advisor, instructor and even counselor. Education makes up the majority of our efforts, and everything from teaching proper animal nutrition to offering a shoulder to cry on may be required of any investigator on any call.

Face to face—at the front door, in the pasture or the backyard, in both rural and urban settings—we talk to people one-on-one. This routine aspect of our work helps hundreds of animals that might otherwise live out their lives in misery. We talk first about the basic care requirements that are specified in the law. Beyond that, we help them understand what their animals need not only to survive, but to thrive. Every effort is made to work with animal owners to keep their pets or animals at their home, but when education and assistance have failed to make the



situation better, the animal may need to be removed to safety and a better life.

We worked throughout the year to educate both law enforcement and the public on our services and the key challenges facing animal owners. We spread the word about animal cruelty—how to recognize it and



ways to report it—by meeting with numerous public and private sector agencies, community groups and interested parties throughout the state.

Proactive efforts to enlist the help of the public in reporting potential animal cruelty also included the development of reward posters and media releases, communication through social media, and activities with Colorado 4-H, a youth organization that is part of Colorado State University Extension. Our public appearances and educational efforts not only increase awareness of CHS and its services; they also regularly generate reports of possible cruelty or neglect from concerned citizens.

Education is also essential to effective investigations. To that end, the Colorado Humane Society sponsored or taught classes on investigative techniques for animals—including search and seizure, report writing, personal protection, and animal behavior and handling—that were attended by local sheriff's offices, police departments, Colorado State Patrol officers, code enforcement officers, animal care and control officers, and other like-minded professionals who are dedicated to the prevention

and prosecution of animal abuse and cruelty in Colorado.

Additionally, we trained multiple agencies in animal-related topics, and continued to strengthen relationships with law enforcement as we developed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with new counties to provide transport, holding facilities and care for animals seized in cruelty or neglect cases.

We are members of the Colorado Association of Animal Control Officers, Colorado Federation of Animal Welfare Agencies, County Sheriffs of Colorado, Denver Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, National Animal Control Association, and Society of Animal Welfare Administrators. We also serve on the board of directors of the Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance and as an advisor to the board of directors of Metro Denver Crime Stoppers.

## Long-range plan

We recently completed year four of our strategic plan, which has helped us define where we stand now and where we want to be.

Our primary goal is to develop a network of animal welfare and law enforcement agencies that covers all 64 Colorado counties. To that end, we now have working relationships in 43 counties in conjunction with the Dumb Friends League investigations team and provide support when requested to eight additional counties. Having good relationships in place helps us expand our reach and work effectively together to significantly reduce animal abuse and improve equine welfare.

Another important goal is becoming a valued resource on equine care and welfare. We are working toward being the established group that local law enforcement and animal welfare agencies can contact for training opportunities, as well as with individual questions and concerns. We are making the agencies aware of our availability and helping with advice and hands-on support in equine abuse cases. We are ensuring they are aware of the Dumb Friends League Harmony Equine Center™, which receives horses after they are removed from owners by law enforcement in situations involving abuse and neglect.

Following are the Core Values of our organization:

- We hold central the **compassionate care and treatment** of all animals.
- We are committed to a high standard of **people care**, both internally and externally, because people are the key to fulfilling our mission.
- We value **collaboration** and strategic partnerships as they provide a means to further our mission.
- We provide **leadership** within our industry and our community to remain forward-focused and adaptable in order to meet the ever-changing needs of the people and animals we serve.
- We believe in being **good stewards** of our organization's human resources, financial assets and our reputation in the communities we serve.
- We have pride in our **integrity** and hold ourselves to high standards regarding fiscal responsibility and accountability to our community.
- We believe that **education and advocacy** are among our greatest tools for promoting the humane treatment of animals and enhancing the human-animal bond.
- We actively pursue **excellence** in everything we do.



# Financial report\*

## SOURCES OF SUPPORT: \$460,000

**Donations: 97%**  
**Other income: 3%**

Of every dollar donated, 88 cents went to programs and services. Contributions were received from individuals, businesses, estates, foundations and the Dumb Friends League.



## EXPENSES: \$506,000

### **Investigative Services & Program Management: 84%**

Expenses included preventing and investigating mistreatment and neglect, and counseling, aiding and cooperating with individuals and other agencies in enforcing the Animal Protection Act.

### **Community Relations: 4%**

Expenses included educating the public on animal welfare issues, serving as advocates for the humane treatment of companion animals and equines, and serving as a resource center for information on the prevention of cruelty and neglect.

### **Supporting Services: 12%**

Included are human resources management, accounting, administration and fundraising.

*\* Unaudited numbers are used in this document. An audited financial report is available on request or at [coloradohumane.org/about-us](http://coloradohumane.org/about-us).*

## Contributors

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