



## ARL'S 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

### PRIORITY I: KEEPING PETS IN HOMES, RESCUING THOSE IN NEED

#### Build a comprehensive Community Cat Program

- Decrease kitten (feral offspring) intake by 5% each year.
- Decrease adult stray cat intake by 5% each year with special attention to geographic hotspots.
- Reduce cat complaint calls by 5% each year.
- Increase the number of cats who receive TNR by 100% in 2021 and 20% each subsequent year.

Note: When expanding a community cat program, it is normal to initially see an increase in cat intakes and complaints as more people learn that ARL is here to help cats. This will stabilize and decrease over time.

#### Actions to achieve these goals

- Determine how many cats to TNR and how much it will cost to ensure sufficient resources.
- Identify four geographic hotspots for targeted TNR.
- Obtain resources (food pantry) for registered TNR colonies.
- Procure equipment and create active inventory list (i.e., trap banks).
- Recruit, train and certify 6-10 TNR volunteers on feeding, trapping, transporting and releasing community cats.
- Engage and educate the community on the need for TNR, beginning with the TNR hotspots.
- Secure partnerships with 5 local animal welfare groups to collaborate with for the TNR program.
- Identify/appoint/hire a position to coordinate community cat programming overall when the program is more mature and needs more ARL presence in the community to conduct TNR to feed our surgical capacity. Estimated timing in 2023 once the community slows down bringing us cats to TNR where we are in the position of needing to seek out community cats ourselves to TNR.

#### Ensure the five freedoms are met for every animal in ARL's care

- Meet all "should" requirements of the ASV (Association of Shelter Veterinarians) guidelines by 2023.
- Every animal receives daily enrichment appropriate to their species and needs by Q1 2021.
- Decrease animal bites on staff and volunteers by 20% by the end of 2022.
- Maintain 80% of direct care staff certified in Fear-Free handling at all times.
- Complete 40 hours per year of continuing education for staff in enrichment techniques and professional development.
- Decrease lengths of stay for animals as follows:
  - o Surrendered cats waiting to be put up for adoption to 7 days by Q4 2021.
  - o Surrendered dogs waiting to be put up for adoption to 5 days by Q4 2021.
  - o Stray cats waiting to be put up for adoption 10 days by Q4 2021.
  - o Stray dogs waiting to be put up for adoption to 7 days by Q4 2021. Please note that as our behavior cases increase, length of stay will as well as they require additional care.

#### Actions to achieve these goals

- Participate in and learn from the Cat Pawsitive Pro Program by 2021.
- Participate in and learn from Dogs Play for Life Program by 2022.
- Expand get well and get acquainted dog housing.
- Expand outdoor exercise space for dogs and farm animals by 2 acres by 2021.
- Engage volunteers to support animal care – meeting 5 freedoms (develop specific volunteer roles to meet enrichment and other needs).
- Secure needed dog training equipment (add behavior park and shelter).
- Create a dedicated a small-animal room/space in the shelter by Q1 2021.
- Provide dog handling/behavior training for staff/volunteers.
- Double the space for each cat through portal installation of all stainless-steel cat enclosures.
- Update all core systems (HVAC, etc.) to be no older than 10 years.

#### Maximize lifesaving through increased foster care, adoption, and transport

##### Foster:

- Increase the overall number of reliable ARL adult-animal fosters by 20% annually through 2025, with a focus on high-need animals (adult cats and dogs with behavior or medical issues).

##### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Provide cat and dog behavior/handling classes to fosters.
- Recruit and train new foster caregivers specifically for high-need animals.

##### Adoption:

- Generate 500 annual offsite adoptions in 2022 and 1,000 annually by 2024.
- Decrease adoption returns to 7% by providing post-adoption support by 2025.
- Increase the number direct home-to-home adoptions by 10% Q4 2022 to reduce the number of animals entering the shelter and to expedite safe placement.

##### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Purchase vehicle to facilitate mobile adoptions when funding/grant becomes available, likely around 2023 (Capital Budget – Vehicle for Mobile Adoptions ~\$100k-\$175k; Operating Expenses of Mobile Unit – Insurance (\$2,500), fuel (\$3,600), Maintenance (\$1,500) = \$7,600).
- Increase follow-up calls after adoption (3 days, 7 days and 14 days).
- Re-build relationship with offsite partners in 2021 to enable permanent adoption days weekly.
- Increase staff investment in social media of promoting available animals.
- Facilitate quality direct placements in community – when pet retention is not possible – with technology, 10 hours of staff time per week and educational materials for successful placement.

## Transport:

- Implement all AAWA best practices for transports by the end of 2025.
- Identify 3 regular partners by 2025.

## Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Focus on local region for majority of transports initially.
- Build relationships for transfer out of cats in peak periods. Secure one new cat rescue for transferring cat out of the ARL by the end of 2022.
- Secure 2 dog partnerships for transferring dogs into the ARL by the end of 2021, assuming dog population remains low.

## Provide professional animal protection services

- Encourage positive relationship building among municipalities and their leaders through community participation and continued assistance, expanding contract network and authority by engaging in regular meetings annually with top target municipalities.
- Increase municipalities contracting with ARL for animal protection services by 5% of county population annually.

### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Provide rapid, responsive services by tracking and increasing response time on cruelty calls by ensuring staff can operate independently in the field and enhanced tracking to ensure cases are followed up on promptly and regularly.
- Conduct cruelty investigations and proactively follow up on all leads and follow-up visits consistently.
- Increase staff training and certification in emergency response to ensure every ACO has completed department tiered trainings within a year of starting.
- Provide monthly or quarterly reporting to contracted towns as requested.
- Develop educational resources for our community and staff members to increase awareness and understanding of Animal Protective Services
- Maintain efficient systems of support with local and state police and further education amongst agencies about Animal Control and Humane Policing
- Attend a minimum of 4 roll-call sessions quarterly with municipality police and/or leaders to address questions and concerns, provide updates on local enforcement
- Create and implement new image of department – Uniforms, Department Crest, Vehicles, SOPS

## Provide accessible, affordable spay/neuter and veterinary services

- Lower barriers to basic veterinary care to all members of our community, particularly focusing on families from areas at higher risk of needing to surrender, by:
  - o Increasing the number of animals seen at the ARL public clinic by 10% each year.
  - o Increasing number of medical case diversions to participating partners by 15% per year.
  - o Increasing public spay/neuters 10% per year.
  - o Providing 25% of spay/neuter services through subsidy program to animals in at-risk areas of community.

## Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Upgrade medical equipment and space (X-ray machine, blood testing machine, expansion of surgery recovery space, additional surgery spaces and equipment for second veterinarian)
- Add telemedicine platform
- Add mobile unit to reach pets in need (Mobile Unit under capital budget, if separate from unit for mobile community outreach, budget \$200k to have mobile medical.)
- Add veterinary relationships
- Increase medical diversion rescue partnerships by 5% annually
- Hold regular vaccination clinics. At least 3 annual low-cost clinics to start.

## Provide proactive support to keep pets in homes

- Increase Return to Owner (RTO) rates for cats by 2% by the end of 2022.

## Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Create a lending sign program aligned to Missing Pet Partnership/ Missing Animal Response Network by 2022
- Train and dedicate at least one volunteer, 10 hrs per week to engage with Lost/Found social media pages and list shelter animals on those pages and build relationship with and support community by April 2021
- Add Missing Pet search tips to website and communicate on website, two articles per year in newspapers and on social media by end of 2021.

- Decrease owner surrender appointments by 5% annually.
- Establish in-home behavior evaluation and counseling program and increase use of program by 10% annually by 2023.
- Establish dog training center program and increase number of dogs in the program by 10% annually by 2023.
- Establish an online behavior information portal and forum and increase engagement by 15% annually by 2024.

## Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Continue to evaluate surrender data to identify resources needed by community to prevent surrender.
- Increase ARL surrender prevention resources (at least 3 new resources) available to the public by the end of 2021.
- Build program and provide in-home behavior evaluation by 2023.
- Build program and provide behavioral counseling and dog training classes e.g. basic obedience reactive dog classes by 2023.
- Build resource library and launch a behavior hotline by 2024.
- Build partnerships with food pantries and other social service agencies by the end of 2021.

- Increase resources and help with pet-friendly housing options in Berks County.
- Establish a network of pet friendly housing options by 2023
- Partner with human social service organizations throughout Berks County by the end of 2024
- Establish a foster network specifically for emergency boarding and increase it by 15% annually by 2024
- Build veterinary practice partners by 10% each year to provide low cost services for the community members that need it the most

## Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Create Emergency Boarding Response Network of Public Fosters to expand emergency foster capacity by 100% by 2025
- Provide a platform for large quantities of people in need of emergency foster placement of owned pets to directly connect with willing fosters
- Provide support to the program via signed agreements, low-cost vet care, animal supplies, stipends for fosters
- Create a list of pet friendly apartments and rental units



## PRIORITY 2: ADVOCATING, COLLABORATING AND EDUCATING

### Promote and help pass strong, consistent laws to protect animals

- Pass at least one (1) animal-related state bill that supports positive outcomes for animals by 2025.
- Support creation of declawing and debarking bans and advocate for new state legislation.
- Conduct an assessment to identify the best legislative strategy to pursue the creation of appropriate animal ordinances with a particular focus on outdoor cats by 2025.
- Advocate for a robust animal-protection law like PACFA in Colorado to enhance regulations, guidelines and enforcement for minimum standards of care for breeders and all animal-holding facilities with kennel licenses by 2025.
- Focus on eliminating feeding ban restrictions across Berks County by 2025. Proactively engage with municipalities to attempt to prevent any new feeding ban laws with the ARL's expert testimony, local case study examples and engagement.

### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Build relationships with advocacy groups
- Work with the state lobbyist/legislative representative of the ASPCA on puppy mill legislation and enforcement support
- Work with the state ASPCA lobbyist on utilizing other state models like Colorado's Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) Program
- Build relationships with municipal leaders and stakeholders by sending communications on what we are working on in the community and how we they can take action with us, followed by annual outreach by 2025.
- Build community awareness and engagement by sending communications on what we are working on in the community and how they can take action with us, followed by annual outreach by 2025.
- Improve funding for Animal Control and protection by appealing for county and state support for dedicated funding that relieves local municipalities of the financial burden or subsidizes services.
- Add declawing and debarking position statements on ARL website by Q1 2021.
- Determine ASPCA's position and political prioritization of declawing and debarking legislation in PA by Q4 2021

### Lead collaboration and cooperation among animal welfare agencies

- By the end of 2023, launch a Berks County animal welfare coalition with a board that meets biannually to find common ground, share information, unify animal welfare efforts, prioritize animal needs for the county and to strategize collaborative efforts to tackle the biggest challenges together.
- By 2025, have a regional animal welfare coalition extending the 2023 goal of the Berks County group.
- Build relationships and formalized partnerships with 5 local veterinarians and vet techs to encourage their active participation in the broader animal welfare issues in Berks County that they could positively affect by 2025 to expand access to vet care.

### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Set up quarterly meetings for rescue groups to come and discuss our Pawsitive Partner program and to talk about collaborations within our community by 2021.
- Launch a partner newsletter/email that will go out monthly/quarterly to include them on new ARL initiatives and update them on progress being made with current programs by 2021.
- Create a poll to send out in 2021 to send to the animal welfare groups to find out what their focus/capacity is in the community and what level of interest they have in

collaborative projects.

- Starting by end of 2021 to set up biannual meetings with local vet practices to discuss community needs and our partnership.
- In 2022, set up quarterly education workshops throughout the year for animal welfare and an annual CE class for vets.
- Encourage vets and vet techs to donate their time serving the community and local animals in need by educating them on local issues and challenges by 2022.

### Relaunch community education on responsible pet ownership

- Create quarterly educational content, workshops or events to educate on animal welfare and pet ownership issues by Q4 2021.
- Create an online information center on our website by Q4 2021.

### Actions to Achieve these Goals

- Host a family-oriented Furstival event for all ages and socioeconomic community members to encourage community engagement and awareness – friend-raising and fundraising event by 2025, assuming ~\$10k fundraiser.
- Educational Workshop Ideas include Cat Ownership 101, What are Community Cats, How to Manage Outdoor Cats, Loose Leash Walking, Handling Pet Behavior Issues
- Holding ARL events at local venues by 2022 like fire halls, recreation centers, etc for contracted municipalities to ensure that ARL is traveling to where people need us when transportation is a barrier.
- Train volunteer educators to also teach the workshops by 2022.
- Hold volunteer orientations at different county locations for recruitment boosts by Q1 2022.
- Q&A online forum and volunteers staffed by 2022.
- Launch educational blog and let people decide the topics by 2021.
- Staff driven blog by 2021.
- Monthly newsletter to supporters starting Q2 2021.
- Provide catio tours event to encourage keeping cats indoors by 2025.



## PRIORITY 3: ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

### **Build a strong staff, board and volunteer team who reflect the community we serve.**

#### **Staff:**

- Ensure ARL is properly staffed and decrease the rate of turnover by first establishing a baseline in 2021 with tracking in the HR software.
- Increase staff satisfaction by 5% annually determined by the SEEDS survey each year starting in 2021.
- Decrease staff turnover by 5% annually starting in 2022.

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Combat staff compassion fatigue with trainings, wellness activities, access to professional counseling and team-building events.
- Increase staff training and operational understanding with access to continuing education opportunities and enhanced internal communications to help them understand ARL strategy.
- Open up cross-training opportunities to expand accessible job roles and learning opportunities for staff.
- Grow Development team to two staff members to expand bandwidth for fundraising focus.
- Staff Culture Committee to host at least 10 team-building events annually.
- Succession planning to ensure long-term continuity for key staff positions.

#### **Board:**

- Build a professional and active board filled with members of various professional skill sets to help serve the current and upcoming needs of the ARL.
- Ensure each board member receives orientation, training and description of their role.
- Achieve full board participant in an annual board retreat by end of 2021
- Every board member participates in at least one training per year.
- Establish customized board skill matrix for recruitment purposes and revisit it annually.

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Create board member goals for giving
- Develop board diversification requirements, maintaining a 10-15 member board
- Update board recruitment based on a skills/needs matrix by 2021.
- Update board onboarding process to include a training schedule and Board mentor by 2021.
- Update and formalize working committees with board chairs, annual goals and meeting schedules.
- Development of a Board Handbook by 2021.
- Develop a board pipeline by recruiting for ARL Working Committees as a feeder program.
- Creation of advisory committee for specialized roles and expertise not yet on the Board or Working Committees that would be useful for the organization (i.e., veterinarian) by 2022.

#### **Volunteers:**

- Cultivate a core group of active and engaged individuals that fulfill available volunteer opportunities by 75% in 2021 and 90% in 2025
- Increase TNR and foster volunteers specifically by 20% in 2021.
- Increase volunteers by 20% annually through 2025.

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Target recruitment, expand and develop formalized roles and opportunities for volunteers each with written position descriptions, training and support. Positions can include:
  - Tiered dog walking levels with increasing responsibility
  - Tiered cat companion levels with increasing responsibility
  - Events managers and support volunteers
  - TNR managers and support volunteers
  - Community Outreach volunteers
  - Administration
  - Medical/Surgical
  - Adoption Counselor assistants
  - Transport; Volunteer Mentors
  - Gardening/Grounds maintenance
- Develop growth opportunities for volunteers by creating positions with increasing levels of responsibility within each role; Identify individuals who wish to take a lead role
- Consistently provide surveys, open meetings and communications to and from volunteers to improve communication and feedback.
- Provide continuing education and training opportunities for volunteers (webinars, workshops, certifications, etc.).

### **Increase Spanish language tools and cultural competency**

- Convert all public collateral to Spanish by end of 2021
- Offer prerecorded phone prompts and messaging into Spanish by the end of 2021
- Have at least one Spanish-speaking employee in each department by the end of 2025

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Recruit bilingual staff
- Engage volunteers to translate materials based on demand and time to completion

### **Ensure the long-term solvency of ARL through endowment, capital investments, and reserves**

Achieve and maintain 6 months liquid operating reserve by the end of 2023

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Open savings account that is linked to primary operating account for ease of cash transfers.
- Transfer surplus bequest income over budget requirement and based on current cash flow availability to designed savings account.
- Create non-charitable revenue streams that may include:

- o Launch a grooming program (Spring 2021)
- o Launch a behavior/training public program (Mid to late 2021 if staffing allows)
- o Reassess current public fees and increase as appropriate (Annually)
- o Launch an ARL store for retail sales (Mid 2021)
- o Develop veterinary clinic offerings and fees (Ongoing)
- o Online retail pharmacy (Mid 2021)

Establish a capital reserves fund (Once a 6-month operating reserve has been met)

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Launch a board committee focused on capital projects needed at the ARL for research and approvals.
- Establish a “pre-approved” list of capital projects able to be fundraised for at any given time.

Achieve and maintain 1x the operating budget in investment endowments by 2026

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Develop an endowment
- Earmark surplus of bequest income over budget to establish endowment.
- Once a 6 month reserve and capital reserve funds have been established, direct surplus non-charitable revenue to grow endowment fund.

Conduct a feasibility study for a capital campaign by 2023

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Hire a consulting firm that specializes in this
- Requires better constituent data of our donors (age, gender, wealth screenings, complete giving histories, etc.)
- Select a date for a capital campaign based off of feasibility study recommendations.

#### **Expand and diversify development and revenue streams**

- Host 3 annual signature events per year grossing \$200,000, supplemented by smaller rotating events

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Signature Events – Mingle, Festival of Trees/Gala, Walkathon, Clues and Brews
- Develop an annual sponsorship packet for corporate donors to sponsor an entire year’s worth of events at one time (part of Q1 DMs)
- Offer events that appeal to all price points and demographics of supports – NOT just sponsor tickets.

Build a sustainable annual giving program designed to identify donors of capacity and increase retention rates after they have been determined

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Distribute 5 direct mail appeals annually (1 per quarter with the exception of 2 in Q1)
- Participate in national days of giving (Giving Tuesday) and develop an ARL specific day of giving annually

- Grow monthly donors by 20%
- Develop and annual plan for e-giving campaigns through Facebook, website, email, etc.
- Expand marketing for corporate matching gifts

Solicit 15 major gifts annually (\$10,000+) each year, of which, 10% are six figure gifts

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Build a prospect list of donors in our current database (and not) that are capable of making these gifts and ensure they are receiving quarterly touchpoints. Of this group, focus on the top 20% each year.
- Develop a “fundable projects” list that can be presented any given time to donors who express interest in making major gifts (overlaps with capital budget goal)
- Run an annual wealth screening on donor database to assess capacity

Secure 3 new 1952 Society donors annually

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Develop a packet of materials to present to prospects during asks
- Update website
- Develop a stewardship program for 1952 Society members
- Collect demographic data on age (using Wealth data captured above)

Ascertain the ARL’s donor retention numbers and achieve industry standards for retention rates (25% for gifts up to \$100, 35% between \$100-\$500, and 40% for gifts \$1000 and above)

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Ascertain the ARL’s donor retention numbers to develop a starting base (first numbers will be viable in 2022)
- Develop and execute on stewardship plans for each level (to include newsletters, mailings, invitations to specific events, gifts, etc.)
- Survey donors in each level for interests and feedback
- Import historical donor data from QB into Salsa

#### **Increase awareness of ARL, our approach and our services**

· Complete ARL rebrand and launch campaign by end of 2021

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Suite of branded outreach resources
- Updating and re-do all internal collateral
- Drive increased media presence to raise awareness and encourage support the ARL and its mission

Identify demographic data (age, address, email address, campaign response, interests, etc.) for 75% of constituent database within 5 years to better target communication efforts.

#### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Import/update information monthly on constituent records between Better Impact, Shelter Buddy, and Salsa CRM
- Develop a standardization of data entry so that each system is inputting information the same way in each software
- Build new relationships with the media
- Hire support staff for community outreach and events
- Increase communication with community
- Develop program specific marketing tactics to be used by demographic/geography
- Distribute monthly e-newsletters to all constituents
- Identify new and emerging media based and develop relationships with managers or influencers
- Engage interested volunteers in community outreach and events. Capture new leads at public events.
- Develop program-specific marketing tactics to be used by demographic/geography
- Distribute monthly e-newsletters to all constituents
- Standardize company-wide capture of constituent data

### **Increase operational efficiency**

- Improve internal communications with new technology solutions to prevent errors and staff frustration by 2021.

### **Actions to Achieve these Goals**

- Create workstations instead of offices and pivot to a hybrid model of work from home/at the office for those roles that are appropriate.
- Go paperless in each department eliminating the need for paper storage containers
- Designate multipurpose spaces that require scheduling to reserve.
- Technology that integrates efficiency, e.g. cloud server, portable computers and payment units
- Interactive technology for staff and volunteers
- Data targeting (see Data Analysis Report from Adisa)
- Use shared space for offices, multi-functional rooms, etc.

## **MISSION & VISION**

### **Our mission:**

We protect animals, provide a safe haven and promote innovative programs and services to help both people and animals in need throughout Berks County.

### **Our vision:**

A world where people are empowered to respect and care for all animals with love and kindness.

