



HOME

AT LAST

C A M P A I G N

Job loss. Medical emergency. Domestic violence. Displacement. Homelessness. Hunger. Each is a crisis that all too often thrusts people into life-altering situations and heartbreaking choices. But for individuals and families with pets, the struggles are magnified and the choices often have devastating consequences. Where can people in physical, financial, or emotional distress turn for help without leaving their furry family members behind or in harm's way? In the Valley of the Sun, the answer is **Lost Our Home**, a no-kill pet rescue dedicated to helping people and pets in crisis.



An Urgent Need. A Personal Response.

In 2008, the housing crisis left thousands of people displaced and thousands of pets abandoned. Jodi Polanski was then a local mortgage banker and, as such, saw the devastating effects of the economic downturn on Phoenix families and pets firsthand. In the beginning, she saw a trickle of foreclosures and evictions, but as the financial crisis deepened, she saw a flood. Almost daily, people were forced to leave their homes. Pets were often left behind without food, water, or shelter. Many suffered. Many died. All because people felt they had no option to keep their pets.

At the time, Maricopa County was second in the nation in foreclosures in the country. It was also second in the nation for high shelter-euthanasia rates. That combination created a perfect storm that hit pets and their families hard and fast. And because the situation was unprecedented, there were no services in place to support the avalanche of need. No single agency was helping people *and* pets in this crisis.

Existing programs largely offered stopgap solutions that provided, at most, 30 days of kenneling before pets would be relinquished to a shelter that may, ultimately, not be able to find them new homes or guarantee their survival. Sadly, these solutions often made hard times more difficult by forcing the separation of pets from families. This increased the emotional trauma to both the animals and the people who lost the love, comfort, and support of their treasured companions. Jodi knew something had to change.

Help and Hope for People and Pets in Crisis

In response to the urgent and growing need, Jodi launched Lost Our Home Pet Rescue with just a small network of dedicated volunteers who were focused on helping pets that were abandoned during foreclosures and evictions. Help and hope were on the way as word quickly spread of Jodi's commitment to preserving the bond between people and pets in crisis. The story of her unique and compassionate program resonated across the Valley and soon requests for support for pets and people in many other forms of crisis poured in. Jodi's vision to fulfill the need became today's Lost Our Home, a team of rescue professionals who together are filling a need that so many now depend upon; her vision is now our mission.

Lost Our Home is a comprehensive, professional resource dedicated to providing a safety net for people and pets facing an array of life crisis situations and an IRS-approved 501(c) 3 nonprofit. From economic distress to social crises, such as domestic violence and homelessness, we work closely with other like-minded shelters and rescues, nonprofits, and partners to expand our capacity to help families and pets in our community during the most hopeless of circumstances.



Did You Know...

Domestic violence affects people *and* pets

- 25% of women will experience domestic violence.¹
- 85% of women and children entering a shelter report that their abuser had threatened, injured, maimed, or killed the family pet for revenge or psychological control. Yet, few domestic violence shelters are able to accept pets.²
- 40% of victims do not leave abusive homes for fear their abuser will take revenge on their pets, instead they choose to risk their own safety to protect their beloved pet.²

Homelessness affects people *and* pets

- There are over 36,000 homeless people in the Grand Canyon State — one in every 184 Arizonans.³
- 50% of the homeless in Phoenix are women, children or families — the fastest growing segment is families with children.³
- 10% of the homeless have pets.³
- 20% of homeless adults are veterans.⁴

Medical emergencies affect people *and* pets

- An estimated 10% of people receiving medical care do not have the support of nearby family, friends, or neighbors to help care for their pet or money to pay for boarding should they have a medical need.⁵
- A single, brief session of animal-assisted therapy significantly reduces patient fear by 37% prior to a serious medical treatment.⁶

Sources: 1) Phoenix.gov 2) Peace for Pets 3) Phoenix Rescue Mission 4) AZ Central 5) Mercy Care 6) Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences, 57A:428-432

Since 2008, Lost Our Home has...

Helped **20,000+** pets

Fed **17,000+** hungry pets

Helped **700+** pets return to their families following a crisis

Placed **3,800+** homeless pets in safe and loving homes

By 2025, with a home of our own, we will...

Help **41,000+** pets

Feed **30,000+** hungry pets

Help **2,600+** pets return to their families following a crisis

Place **9,000+** homeless pets in safe and loving homes

Reliable Housing is Critical: Home At Last

Lost Our Home is a unique and valuable member of the greater Phoenix social services community. We are the *only* organization dedicated to helping both people and pets in life crisis situations of any kind. Reliable housing for our operations is critical to our ability to deliver our services and safely shelter pets.

There are few locations that are appropriate for shelter operations due to prohibitive zoning laws for animals, strict ventilation requirements, and the need for a play yard, all at an affordable rate. And pet care environments typically require many, often costly, adaptations to standard buildings to ensure healthy and happy pets. Drainage, sound barriers, and ventilation are required modifications that we have made to our current, centrally located property in Tempe.

In the lease for the Tempe property, we proactively took steps to preserve the future of our housing, as well as our investments in shelter improvements, by negotiating an option to purchase the building at an agreed upon price at the end of the lease term. This secured purchase option insulated us from purchase price increases and the threat of a landlord substantially raising our rent or, even worse, not renewing our lease at all.

Given the large increase in commercial rents and purchase prices over the past three and a half years, all the shelter-specific customizations we have already made to the building, and the fact that the location is great for our operations and our volunteer base, our choice is clear. We're choosing to seize this opportunity to secure a lasting home of our own and we have launched the Home At Last Capital Campaign to help us do just that.

Ownership of the building enables us to further improve the quality of life of the pets we serve. By conducting a shelter-wide evaluation, we will create and implement permanent solutions where previously, due to the restrictions imposed by leasing the facility, we were relegated to temporary ones. These enhancements will have a positive and immediate impact on the level of care we are able to provide to every dog and cat who passes through our shelter doors.

The Home At Last Campaign goal of \$1.75 million will allow us to purchase the building outright, complete necessary facility enhancements and safety improvements, and cover operating and administrative expenses for the campaign. **All funds are needed by May 2018.**

Lost Our Home Pet Rescue seeks \$1.75 million to purchase and modify the building we now occupy to secure and grow our lifesaving work to help people and save pets.

“Lost Our Home cares for a segment of our community that often has very limited resources and they are a lifeline to many. Meeting the animals at the shelter and seeing how well loved and cared for they are was the highlight of my visit. Lulu’s Fund is proud to partner with them on this very important project.”

*~ Sandy Day
Vice President
The Timothy T. Day Foundation*

Owning Our Future: Physical Improvements and Financial Advantages

Our current 12,400 square foot building has everything Lost Our Home needs to support existing programs along with room to expand capacity in the future by as much as a third. Owning the space will allow us to make bigger, more permanent changes that will enhance on-site pet healthcare, improve the property, and save money.

A Medical Room: The installation of a medical room for sick and contagious dogs (i.e. those with Parvo, kennel cough, and other illnesses necessitating isolation) will improve care efficiency and expand the types of care we can provide to the pets entrusted to us.

Enhanced Kenneling and Drainage: The installation of durable, commercial-grade enhanced kenneling and drainage will improve safety and sanitation and alleviate kennel stress in pets.

A Fire Sprinkler System: The installation of a fire sprinkler system throughout the entire building adds a critical layer of safety for pets, people, and property.

Beyond opportunities for physical improvements, the building purchase offers opportunity for financial improvements. Lost Our Home will save \$4,500 per month in rent and fees on the 8,400 square feet we currently occupy and will generate rental income of \$2,600 per month by acquiring the additional 4,000 square foot leased unit. The expected net gain of \$7K+ per month will boost the financial health of Lost Our Home and support future growth.

Please Join Us in the Home At Last Campaign

Lost Our Home invites the community to support the Home At Last Campaign through leadership and financial gifts that will enable us to continue our mission of providing compassionate services to people and pets in crisis. We hope you will join us in this effort and we *thank you* for your consideration. **To learn more, please call Jodi Polanski, Executive Director, at 602-445-7390.**

Not Just Another Pet Rescue

A Mission of Compassionate Services

At Lost Our Home, our mission is to provide compassionate services to people and pets in crisis. We envision a world in which all pets have loving homes and are treated with dignity and respect and we're working to achieve that vision one pet at a time through our comprehensive programs and partnerships.

Our programs give people in crisis the help they need to feed, shelter, and protect their pets. These compassionate services also spare people the added emotional pain of having to choose between their own well-being and the well-being of their pets. When money is temporarily tight, people no longer have to choose between getting food or medicine for themselves or food for their pets. They don't have to leave pets behind in dangerous, and possibly life-threatening, situations so they can seek housing, personal safety, or other support. We can help.

Programs for Pets and People



Rescue for Abandoned Pets: Foreclosure and eviction often leads to pets abandoned without food, water, and shelter. We give these forgotten friends the comfort and care they need and the opportunity to find the new loving home they deserve.



Owner Turn-ins: Pet parents who can no longer care for their animals can take solace in knowing that their pets will be safe in our shelter and that we will work hard to find them loving homes.



Pet-Friendly Rental Program: Moving with a pet can be tough, but our Realtor volunteers can help pet parents find pet-friendly rentals that keep the whole family together. One hundred percent of the rental commission earned on placement is donated to cover any pet deposit fees.



Pet Food Bank: No pet should ever go hungry and no pet parent should have to suffer the stress of not being able to provide a basic necessity for their beloved pet. Through our pet food bank, we provide a safety net that helps pet parents who temporarily cannot afford to feed their pets.



Temporary Care Program: We offer extended temporary care (up to 90 days) for pets whose guardians are facing a crisis: family illness, eviction, homelessness, domestic violence, house fire, or economic hardship and more. This allows the time and support needed for those affected to secure a better outcome.



Low-Income Boarding Program: Low-cost temporary boarding (up to 30 days) is available for pet parents who need temporary kenneling, but cannot afford standard boarding fees. This program helps pet parents rest easy knowing their pets are safe and sound while they are away.



Sojourner Pet Companion Shelter: Created jointly with Sojourner Center, the largest domestic violence shelter in Arizona, this program offers a safe place for the pets of women and children escaping domestic violence situations and preserves the critical family/pet bond. The on-site shelter keeps people and pets together when they need that trusted connection most.

Community Engagement

Additionally, we work closely with like-minded nonprofits, dedicated volunteers, and community service groups who, like us, want to make our community a better place for all. With their partnership, we are able to expand our capacity to serve the people in our community, while also enriching the lives of the animals in our care.

For example, we partner with many nonprofits to use our shelter for their on-site work readiness programs which help individuals with disabilities. Our shelter is a loving, fun environment in which they can develop good work habits and social skills that promote interaction, communication, empathy, responsibility, self-esteem, and confidence. We also offer businesses, service organizations, clubs, groups, families (including children), and individuals a variety of volunteer opportunities that provide rewarding experiences while enriching the lives of the pets entrusted to our care. This includes projects for corporate team building, Eagle Scout and Girl Scout badge projects, ABC Program (Animal Book Club) and more. Foster opportunities are also available for those willing to open their homes and hearts in service to the animals and their families.



Lost Our Home
PET RESCUE
Helping people. Saving pets.

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