

JOPLIN'S ANIMAL RESCUE

RESPONDING IN TIMES OF NEED

Historically Joplin's Animal Rescue's individuals and teams have responded primarily to natural and man-made disasters (i.e. wildfires, tornadoes/hurricanes, floods and oil spills). In so doing we have developed a wide range of skills through training and experience. With that said we never conceived or imagined that these skills would prove to be extremely helpful in a pandemic.

But with the COVID 19 outbreak in early 2020 until now we have had the privilege to use those skills while working with health departments, care providers, first responders and family members in providing assistance to animal owners who have been directly affected by the virus.

In total we have participated in thirty three situations where we have provided varying degrees of assistance. While the owners have either been quarantined/isolated for two weeks or hospitalized we have fundamentally taken care of their animals/pets until they were able to do so themselves.

In the simplest case we were responsible for feeding/watering and taking a dog for a walk twice a day while his owner was hospitalized for ten days. In other smaller cases we took care of poultry and a few other small animals wherein we kept everyone fed and their areas cleaned up on a daily basis.

In a number of cases we had over seventy five animals of varying species to care for. They ranged from poultry to llamas, to donkeys, horses, goats, cows and even a couple of pigs. Regardless of whether it was sunny, raining or snowing/freezing everyone needed daily care.

Each situation had similarities and yet differences. We had to provide quality care while learning each farm's normal routines. From our experience we know it is often important to adhere to the farms' routines as much as possible to eliminate stress on the animals.

Probably our most interesting and challenging task was helping a dairy farm where several of the owner's family and workers had been potentially exposed to COVID. In that situation we assisted in feeding, watering, cleaning and turning out over 125 dairy cows. Fortunately we did not have to do any of the milking or deal with the milking equipment. That was truly beyond our experience and comfort level.

To say that these engagements have been interesting, challenging and yet rewarding is an understatement. We are happy that it appears that we are finally getting the virus under control and these types of situations are going to be greatly diminished.

We want to thank everyone who has supported us through the years. It is due to your support and encouragement that we have been able to respond in this time of need.