



2020
ANNUAL
REPORT



Société
protectrice
des animaux
DE L'ESTRIE

A YEAR SHAPED
BY **COVID-19**

Our Board of Directors



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Our Mission

Protect animals and harmonize their relationship with humans. We work together with the public to develop respect for animals and sensitivity to their suffering in order to improve their quality of life.

We Are Member of:

- Association des techniciens et techniciennes en sant e animale du Qu ebec
- Association of Shelter Veterinarians
- Association qu eb coise des SPA et SPCA (AQSS)
- Centre d'action b n vole de Sherbrooke
- Humane Canada
- National Animal Care & Control Association
- R seau des entreprises d' conomie sociale de l'Estrie
- World Society for the Protection of Animals

Municipalities

Ayer's Cliff
Ascot Corner
Austin
Bolton-Est
Bonsecours
Bury
Canton de Cleveland
Canton de Hatley

Canton de Melbourne
Canton d'Orford
Canton de Potton
Canton de Stanstead
Coaticook
Cookshire-Eaton
Dixville
East Angus

Eastman
Hatley
Kingsbury
Magog
North Hatley
Ogden
Racine
Richmond

Sherbrooke
Stanstead-Est
Saint-Claude
Saint-Denis-de-Brompton
Saint- tienne-de-Bolton
Saint-Fran ois-Xavier-de-Brompton
Saint-Herm n gilde

Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley
Sainte-Edwige-de-Clifton
Stanstead
Stoke
Val-Joli
Waterville
Westbury
Windsor

Thanking the community

A Word from the President



The year 2020 was surreal; it goes to show that life as we know it can really turn on a dime. So many things that we knew, so many activities that we took for granted, all completely transformed in the blink of an eye.

For many of us, our beloved pets came to the forefront of our lives.

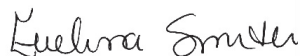
They gave us a reason to get up in the morning, they comforted us when it became impossible to see family and friends, and they loved us even when we only wore pajamas. Of course, they were also wonderful assistants during virtual meetings (my cats made a number of cameo appearances!)

Our best friends had a great year! So many animals were adopted the SPA could not keep up with the demand. Isn't the ideal situation! And imagine their delight when these animals not only found their forever home, but that their humans were constantly home to play and take multiple walks. Fantastic!

While things were great from the animals' point of view, SPA staff were thrown into what can only be described a whirlpool of chaos. Having to suddenly adjust to totally new "norms" with no warning and no guidebook, the once again rose to the challenge, making a seamless transition from "normal" to "new normal". On behalf of the board of directors, you have our respect and admiration.

Many thanks to my fellow board members and our tireless Executive Director, for your hard work and the ease in which we all settled in to our zoom meetings. By the way, you have the most adorable cats!

We have no idea what awaits us in 2021. But with our furry family at our side, we can weather the storm and emerge even stronger than before.



Evelina Smith
President of the board of directors

A Word from the Executive Director



The year 2020 has confronted us and everyone else on the planet, with a number of new challenges.

The main focus for us was to not let down animals that needed help, while at the same time respecting health regulations and protecting our employees as well as the public.

I also want to emphasize that we would not have been able to meet safety standards and health measures in the old shelter; once again we enjoyed our new facilities.

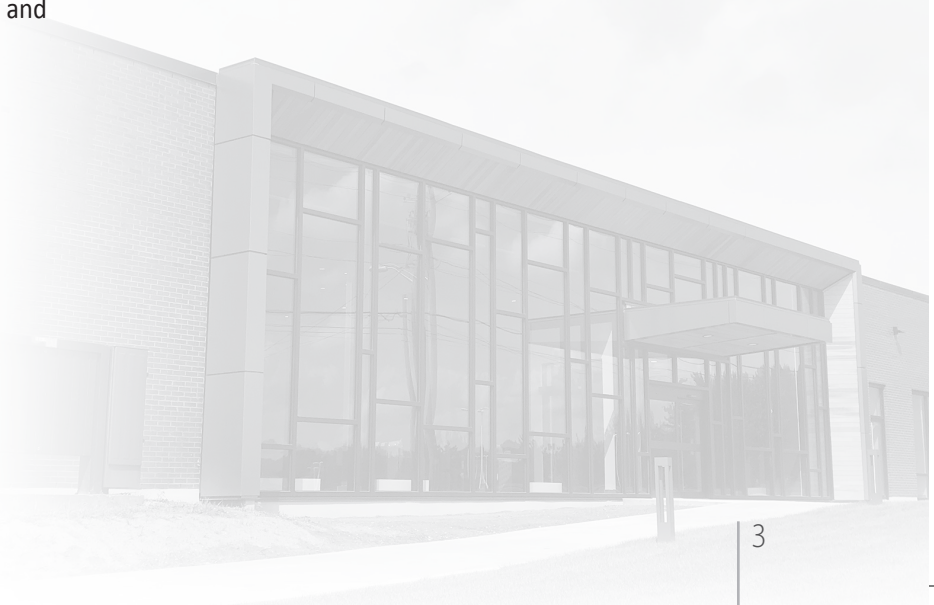
I must wholeheartedly congratulate all the SPA staff for successfully responding to all the requests for assistance received. I would also like to thank them for supporting the efforts that were required of them throughout the year.

Our whole routine has been turned upside down and so have our procedures. The public's enthusiasm for adopting a pet has required a lot of work. We needed to ensure that we were finding families who were aware of the great responsibility and commitment that comes with adopting a pet. Thanks also to our Board of Directors, all our donors, volunteers and suppliers who have supported us this year.

We all wish each other a «back to normal» reality in 2021 and to have «friendlier» human interactions !!



Bruno Felteau
Executive Director



A Year Shaped by COVID-19

2020 has been a very trying year for all of us; the Covid-19 virus has turned our lives and projects upside down. The situation caused by this global pandemic gave us many challenges. For the first time in our existence, we had to temporarily close our doors to the population.

During this time, we have remained available to respond to emergencies and maintained our essential services by phone. Despite the crisis, our dedicated team continued to provide the necessary care and support to the animals housed at the shelter. We are committed to the pursuit of our mission; to protect animals and ensure their well-being at all times.

The pandemic required a lot of health, material, physical and financial resources. It was an intense and demanding task to rethink our services. In addition, we adopted new habits to continue operating the shelter according to the new measures by providing several services by appointment and adapting our services on the road. It was essential for us to protect the health of all employees and customers with the implementation of rigorous health measures.

Masks, glasses and social distancing have appeared in our daily lives. We had to revise the layout of the reception so that the employees respected a distance of two meters at all times between them. Disinfecting each workstation became a daily task. We have proceeded to install new signage tools such as signs and arrows on the floor. We have installed Plexiglas on all reception counters. Several employees had to work from home for weeks in order to limit contact and reduce the number of employees

at the shelter. Virtual meetings have quickly become an essential means of communication in order to keep in touch. At first, we thought «this was going to pass» but we have to admit that it is not going away as quickly as we would like.

Despite all, staff and customers kept up the spirit and followed the directions, respecting one another. We thank them very much!



Sheltering Animals in Need

Because we are committed to helping animals in need, we make sure to provide quality, compassionate and respectful services.

Spectacular Enthusiasm for Pets

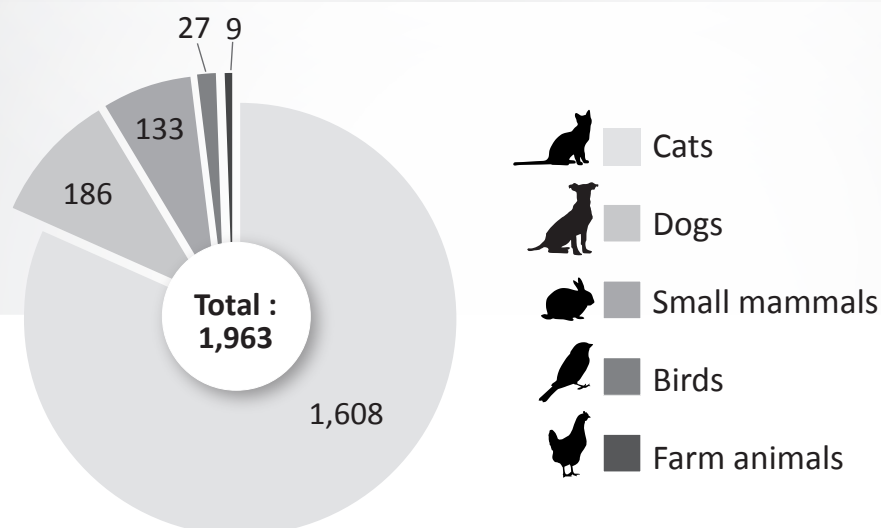
The pandemic has created a real infatuation for animals in general. This had the effect of reducing the time that animals spent at the shelter. Soon, our residents found new families to start a new chapter in their lives. The excitement was so strong that we had to stop taking adoption requests from our website because we were unable to keep up with the demand. Thus, social distancing, masks, repeated hand washing and making appointments, did not stop the adopters in their enthusiasm.

A New Family for More Than 1,960 Animals

Our caring team, including veterinarians, health technicians and animal care workers, takes care daily to feed, pamper and provide for the animals that find shelter under our roof. Once again, the team has played a vital role in the well-being of our animals so that they can find new families and start new lives. In 2020, 1,963 animals that stayed at our shelter were lucky enough to find a new loving family. An additional 380 animals that were unfortunately lost were able to return to their homes thanks to our efforts and the wearing of the SPA ID Tag. In addition to all of these adoptions, we transferred 3 wildlife animals, 12 wild birds and 3 exotic animals to specialized resources for these types of animals.

The number of adoptions is down when compared to last year. This is partly due to the fact that the shelter was closed to the public for several weeks due to Covid-19 pandemic and that we received fewer animals at the shelter during this period. Dogs were already scarce at the shelter and the pandemic only accentuated this situation in all shelters in the province of Quebec.

Adoptions in 2020



An Unusual «Adoption Blitz»



Given the exceptional situation and in order to act preventively to maintain the health and well-being of everyone, the SPA de l'Estrie has decided to close access to its shelter to the public as of Saturday, March 21, 2020, 5 p.m., for an indefinite period. However, we never

stopped providing essential services; we remained present and ready to respond to emergencies, for animals in need as well as to help caretakers dealing with various problems. We finally reopened the shelter to the population on June 16, approximately 12 weeks later.

Before restricting public access to the shelter to a minimum, we wholeheartedly wanted to give all housed animals a chance to be adopted and finding a happy life in a new home as quickly as possible; we did not want animals to stay at the shelter for several weeks.



In order to quickly find a good family for all of our young and older residents, we halved the adoption fees on March 19, 20th and 21st. There were 25 cats, 5 dogs, 8 rabbits and 5 rats waiting for a new home and targeted by this adoption blitz.

People with serious interest in adopting were invited to look at the animals available for adoption section on our website to pre-select the animals that might suit them and then to contact us to make an **appointment** to come and meet the animal and proceed to adoption.





Almost all of the animals passed through the SPA de l'Estrie's exit door during this extraordinary adoption blitz!



Adapted Care

Amongst the many animals that pass through the shelter's door, some are unfortunately in bad shape, being injured or sick. For several years now, we have been welcoming to the shelter more and more animals requiring medical care adapted to their condition in order to be back on their feet for adoption. We therefore regularly provide special care for broken legs, necrotic tails, fractured jaws, various emergency operations, enucleations, amputations, correction to a rabbit nose and many others. In 2020, our veterinarians performed 166 surgeries of all kinds.



Veterinary Care	Number
 Surgeries	166
 Sterilizations	1,298

Additionally, we sterilize all dogs and cats that we place for adoption in order to counter the problem of canine and feline overpopulation and prevent the suffering of unwanted animals. Thus, in 2020, our veterinarians performed over 1,290 sterilizations before putting the animals up for adoption. This initiative, which has been ours for over twenty years, aims at increasing the pool of sterilized animals in the Eastern Townships while minimizing feline overpopulation.

Medical Interventions in Partnership With the Cégep de Sherbrooke

A partnership between the SPA de l'Estrie and the Cégep de Sherbrooke Animal Health Technician program department was established several years ago. In 2020, five animals were treated through this partnership and underwent medical procedures performed by the program's veterinary professors. This unique collaboration allows students to attend surgeries and various medical procedures, including some rare ones and learn how to proceed in these situations. Scaling, removal of bladder stones, excision of a mass on the eyelid, dental extractions are some examples that show the range of cases treated.



attend surgeries and various medical procedures, including some rare ones and learn how to proceed in these situations. Scaling, removal of bladder stones, excision of a mass on the eyelid, dental extractions are some examples that show the range of cases treated.

Didi had to be amputated because her left hind leg caused her a lot of discomfort and pain. She was constantly scratching her left hind leg so much that it was hurting her. Because she couldn't carry herself on her paw, it would dangle and become cumbersome. Her surgery took place at Cégep in February 2020.

Didi was a fearful dog. When we managed to gain her trust, especially by providing her with treats, she would give us lots of kisses, showing us that she was feeling good. Strangers, different floor surfaces, or anything new made her feel anxious, causing her to withdraw into herself. The team worked hard to build her confidence and to get her used to things as simple as wearing a collar. She was finally adopted after a few weeks at the shelter!

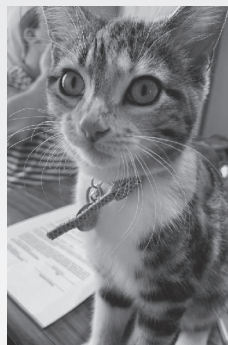
Many thanks to the Cégep de Sherbrooke for this precious collaboration!

Unique Adoptions

FLAVIE: Adopted in the midst of a pandemic

« Since the SPA moved closer to our home, we had gotten used to visiting the cats from the outside through the window.

We already had three beautiful cats at home, but the idea of adopting a fourth had been on our mind for a while. At the beginning of April, in the middle of the confinement, we saw through the window, a colorful little kitten.



As the SPA was closed, we sent an email to ask if we could meet her. The team was very efficient and planned a meeting with the adorable Flavie. From the very first minutes, it was love at first sight

with her beautiful green eyes and her little thumbs! She's an adorable little cat who adapted herself to our household very quickly.

We would like to thank the entire team at the SPA! If you love cats as much as we do, visit the SPA de l'Estrie to find a forever friend! »

Nicholas et Manon



GUSTAVE: three-legged sweetheart



Over the past few months, several animals requiring particular health care were admitted at the shelter. This was the case for Gustave. He was brought in by a concerned citizen who found him with one of his paw in a very bad condition. We had to act quickly and amputate it to make sure he could live a good and healthy life. Following his surgery, we made sure Gustave was recovering well and when we felt he was ready, he was up for adoption.

It did not take long for Gustave to charm his new caregiver. After a few hours, he was on his way to his new forever home. In spite of his missing paw, he developed some surprising skills very quickly and is now an accomplished climber.

Jack & Toby: the inseparable buddies

When a senior animal is brought to the shelter, we consider this a second chance at life ! We strive to provide them with the necessary care and attention to ensure their comfort and well-being during this stressful transition. To see them leave the shelter with a new family, reenergized and healthy is for us the greatest reward!

Here is the story of Jack and Toby. After several weeks at the shelter, these two handsome 10-year-old seniors have started a new life together. The two brothers have found a forever family to live their golden age. They will be able to continue to take beautiful walks side by side and enjoy the fresh air together!

Providing a second chance to senior animals; what a wonderful gift!



Helping Citizens at All Times

Patrolers Serving the Community



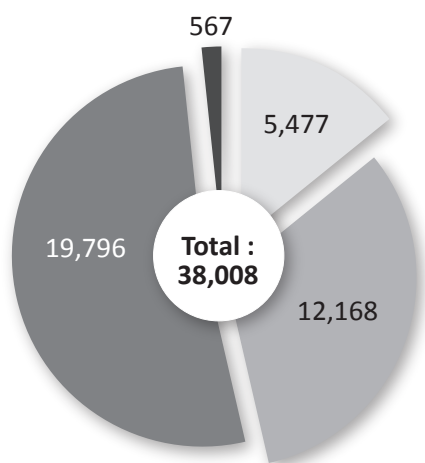
Just like animals, citizens dealing with animal-related problems can also be in need of help, day or night. Therefore, we work diligently to provide a regular and emergency road service. Our call centre responds to calls from Eastern Township residents in the 36 municipalities we serve, while our patrol officers are deployed in the field to respond to complaints and ensure compliance with municipal regulations.

Interventions 24/7

Day and night, seven days a week, our patrol officers and inspectors respond to requests from citizens and intervene in thousands of different situations. In 2020, 3,897 interventions were carried out in the field, including taking statements, rescuing animals left in hot cars, dealing with complaints about animal bites and serving notices regarding municipal by-laws.

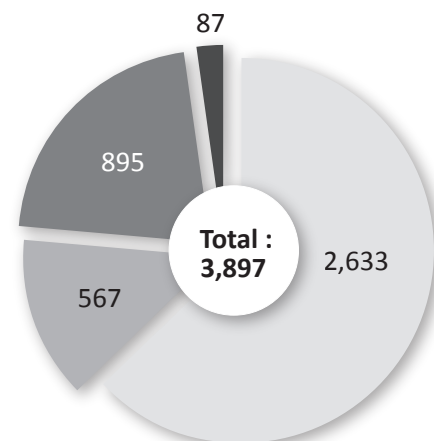
This year, due to COVID-19, patrol officers had to adapt the way they work in order to minimize contact with citizens and remain healthy. Therefore, many interventions were carried out over the telephone. We developed a protection protocol to safeguard our patrol officers against infection when a home visit was the only option. We also put in place an intervention protocol that covered the handling of animals coming from a place that might be contaminated by COVID-19.

Calls Processed in 2020



- Road Services
- Licensing Services
- Shelter Services
- Emergency Services

Interventions Carried Out in 2020



- Daytime Assistance
- Nighttime Assistance
- Animals Transported to the Shelter
- Park Patrols

Patrollers Present in Parks

This year, we noticed a marked enthusiasm for outings by people who have dogs, as a result of the pandemic. People were at home and had more opportunities to go outdoors with their furry friend.



Furthermore, during the holidays, we increased the presence of patrol officers in certain public areas that had received many reports, such as the Parc du Mont-Bellevue, the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations, and the Bois Beckett trails. Our patrol officers were present to raise public awareness concerning the proper behavior to adopt when out with their dog.

We should point out that many families in the Eastern Townships spent a lot of time enjoying the outdoors, very often with their dog, as a result of the government imposed restrictions and the mild weather.

Throughout the summer period, interventions by patrol officers vary depending on the situation, with the main goals being to enforce municipal by-laws pertaining to animal companions, and to promote prevention among citizens. In 2020, 87 patrols were carried out. In addition to these park patrols, our patrol officer, Sarah Rouillard, was interviewed by Radio-Canada in an effort to remind dog walkers of the municipal by-laws. Patrol officers play a leading role in raising public awareness.



Rescuing Animals in Distress



Sadly, because many animals still suffer at the hands of humans, our inspectors have the task of responding to cries for help from citizens who witness acts of neglect and cruelty. In order to protect animals and ensure their welfare, inspectors are mandated not only to enforce federal and provincial animal protection and welfare laws, but also to intervene in the field by carrying out inspections, conducting investigations, carrying out seizures of animals in distress, and laying formal complaints with the Ministry of Justice. Every year, countless animals receive much needed help thanks to the vigilance and professionalism of our inspectors.

In 2020, the SPA de l’Estrie Department of Investigations and Inspections performed over 283 inspections involving 1,143 animals of all species. As a result of these interventions, the Crown Prosecutor pursued several criminal and penal prosecutions.

Inspections and Investigations	Number
 Inspections and Investigations Performed	283
 Number of Animals Impacted	1,143

The Importance of Citizen Denunciation

We invite citizens who witness acts of neglect or cruelty towards animals to contact us. Public collaboration is of utmost importance. The public is our eyes and, through their actions, they give voice to vulnerable beings who cannot speak. It is thanks to their reports, all of which are confidential, that we are able to rescue hundreds of animals here in the Eastern Townships.

819-821-4727, Option 5
All reports remain confidential.

Investigations are Essential to Animal Protection

Several cases were opened in 2020 upon receipt of citizen complaints. After investigating each of these, SPA inspectors, together with the Crown Prosecutor, laid various charges under the Criminal Code.

Exceptional Convictions

90-Day Detention for a Magog Woman

Joanne Vaillancourt of Magog was sentenced to detention to be served on weekends after being found guilty of neglecting an animal, and failing to provide the animal with water, food and appropriate care. In addition, Mrs. Vaillancourt is prohibited from possessing animals for the next three years.

It was a complaint received by the SPA de l’Estrie, in December 2018, that prompted inspectors to visit Joanne Vaillancourt’s home. According to the complaint, the dog was not fed enough, had no water, and was walking in his own excrement. Its environment



was completely unhealthy. In addition, the chain to which it was attached was too short and restricted the animal’s movements during the visit of the SPA de l’Estrie.

The animal’s collar had not been adjusted either, and this caused it to be embedded in the skin, an injury for which the dog never received the necessary care.

The dog was seized by the SPA de l’Estrie and stitches were needed to treat the animal. This situation unfortunately lasted several months before the dog was rescued.

Three-Year Ban on Owning Animals for a Sherbrooke Woman

On September 9, 2020, Cindy Gervais was sentenced at the Sherbrooke Courthouse for an act of cruelty towards animals. Her sentence was suspended on the condition that she perform 200 hours of community service and pay an amount of \$ 200 to the SPA de l'Estrie. She had previously acknowledged the criminal charge of deliberately neglecting or failing to provide food, water, shelter and suitable and adequate care to an animal.

We should remember that in 2019, the SPA de l'Estrie received a complaint regarding two cats abandoned in an apartment. The odor emanating from the tenant's



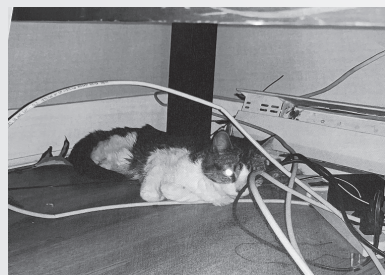
apartment had prompted the owner to enter. The place was unsanitary. An emaciated dead cat was lying on the floor and a second live cat, who was too weak to move, was under a table. The animals no longer had any food or water. The investigation demonstrated that the tenant had left a month before.



Judge Conrad Chapdelaine of the Court of Québec prohibited Cindy Gervais from owning animals for the next three years.

12 month probation & 100 hours of community service for a Coaticook man

On November 27, 2020, Samuel Brousseau pleaded guilty to deliberately neglecting or failing to provide food, water, shelter and suitable and adequate care to an animal under the Criminal Code. He was given a conditional discharge with 12 months probation and ordered to perform 100 hours of community service.



In response to a complaint regarding two cats left on their own outdoors, inspectors went on site to assess the situation. As the tenant was not present, notices were left on several occasions. During a visit, SPA de l'Estrie inspectors removed one of the cats because he was infested with fleas and had ear mites, and because

Samuel Brousseau had not returned their calls. During another search, the second cat was found dead and emaciated in the apartment. There was no water or food. The suspect was tracked down after a lengthy investigation.



Dynamic and proactive communications

Already very present and effective at the SPA de l'Estrie, communications play an increasingly important role in our organization. In fact, our communications department supports the SPA's various branches and services. It is called upon to develop and maintain the presence and image of the SPA in the community. It is also responsible for the creation of relevant and current content to ensure the uniformity of our messages both to the public and the municipalities we cover.



New website and online payment platform

Our communications department led the development project of a new website and the launch of a new online payment platform. From conception and structured planning to the unveiling of the final product, including approval of models, updating of all texts, selecting images and writing blog articles, the realization of this project of which we are more than proud stems from a long-term undertaking.

10 press releases published

In 2020, we issued ten press releases dealing with different subjects, such as on the importance of wearing the ID tag, on evolving changes to the state of SPA services due to Covid-19, on pets and home moving, on the new provincial regulations regarding dog supervision, and on how to be mindful of heat strokes in animals.

43 media interviews

Some topics gained extensive coverage, such as a story produced by Radio-Canada over dogs left in cars during the summer. This had more than 1,600 shares on social networks, in addition to being broadcast on the Estrie TV news at 6 p.m.

In addition, in October, an interview with TVA Estrie on the popularity of the SPA de l'Estrie animals and their adoption during the pandemic was broadcast throughout Quebec. This took place during the 6 pm news show hosted by Pierre Bruneau, and also the next day during the morning show Salut Bonjour.

70 Facebook posts

More than 70 posts were shared on our Facebook page: promotion of animals available for adoption, presentation of products on sale in the store, awareness of heat stroke, advice on home moving, reminders of various municipal bylaws, invitation to share pet photos, etc. Over a dozen of our posts reached in excess of 25,000 views, which is the number of times content is displayed on screens. Our January 2020 post on "cats available for adoption at reduced prices" triggered 47,493 views.

A growing community on social networks

In 2020, more than **2,385** people joined our Facebook community, which now has more than 19,775 followers. We continue to be active on this platform as we benefit from the generous support of our subscribers.

As for our Instagram account, we saw the addition of more than **200 people** for a total of 1,775 followers who, on a daily basis, access the corridors of our organization and who share photos of their adoption.

Production of 4 video clips

A new feature appeared on our social networks this year: video segments. Whether advertising a product from the store, promoting an animal for adoption, or highlighting our services, the various capsules all had excellent results in terms of views and sharing. Among others, our video that exposed the search for a family for Taz, a dog with special needs, generated 43,486 impressions and more than 350 interactions (likes, shares and comments).

13 bilingual newsletters

Every month, the SPA de l'Estrie sends a newsletter to its subscribers. Various themes are covered, such as the latest news from the SPA, calls for donations, tips and advices, adoption stories, and more. This communication also made it possible to inform people about the evolution and status of our services throughout the pandemic.

4 fundraising campaigns

Each year, several initiatives are put in place to raise donations. We solicit citizens in different ways. In 2020, 4 mailing calls for donations were made. The themes vary with each mailing in order to engage the donor's interest and to make it more specific by giving a value to their donation or by presenting a precise project, for example.

Initiating Projects that Allow us to go Further

The pandemic has shaken up our projects and activities for the year 2020. Although they did not all go as well as we would have liked, we have worked tirelessly to ensure better living conditions for animals and to provide townshippers and their companions with the best possible services. We have adapted to all these changes in order to continue our operations while renewing ourselves to face the crisis.

Review of shelter procedures and other services

This year, we undertook a major review of the SPA's processes in order to provide quality services to citizens by being more efficient, facilitating the work of employees and maximizing what we can accomplish for the animals with our resources. To move forward in this great project, we are fortunate to have a series of training sessions given by a consultant specialized in the field.

A new approach has been developed, based on clickable documents that can be easily consulted on the computer and updated in real time.

Since we have a good number of processes and we have to go step by step, priorities have been established. In 2020, we worked on the process for shelter admissions, for managing dogs that behave aggressively (following complaints from citizens) and for renewing licenses.

Dogs with aggressive behaviour

To develop a new method of managing complaints of dog aggression to comply with new provincial and municipal regulations on dog handling. Develop new tools and update existing ones. (Modification to our database, analysis tools allowing us to issue opinions at the request of cities, creation of forms and various letters, tool for monitoring the custody standards issued, support for veterinary behavioural assessments, support for cities served). Due to the implementation of this new process, we had to review certain work instructions, train the employees concerned, and search for specialized veterinarians in order to provide proper assessments.

License renewal

We developed a centralized clickable tool producing all the information license clerks need in order to respond precisely and in a standardized way to client requests. This includes animal registration, custody changes and licensing, as well as offer various license payment methods. Although all documentation already existed, this was updated and organized in a more structured way so that processes became more efficient and knowledge transfer made easier.

Animal shelter admission process

In order to avoid possible overflow at the shelter, the admission of animals is now by appointment only. This allows us to better control the entry of animals to the shelter in relation to the number of places we have. In addition, a dashboard has been designed based on adoption and admission statistics and the number of animals on the premises to evaluate the number of places available in the shelter on a daily basis. This new tool makes it possible to calculate the number of appointments that can be made during the day. The telephone call to make an appointment also allows us to discuss with the person who wishes to bring his or her animal to us and to help him or her find solutions that will make him or her decide to keep it.



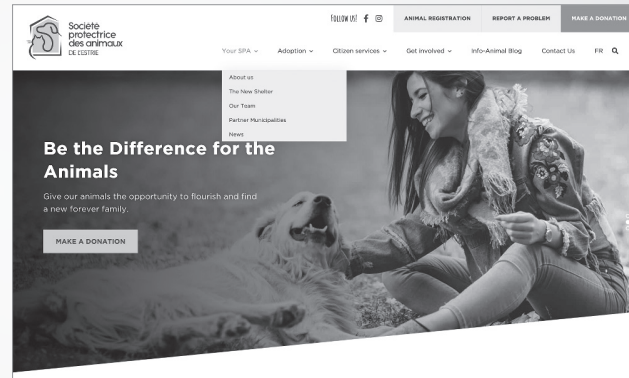
New website and online payment platform

In 2020, the communications department was mandated to redesign the website to better communicate and standardize our brand image.

We needed effective communication tools to ensure that our service offer and expertise were well conveyed to the municipalities we serve as well as the public. It was important to us that this new website be bilingual (French and English) and responsive, i.e. have the ability to adapt to the user's screen (computer, smart phone, tablet, etc.). An adaptive design facilitates navigation and improves the online experience.

The innovation of this redesign is reflected not only in its new look, but also in the many functionalities it offers!

This new website had to be able to support our organization's processes and procedures, for example, with the implementation of forms linked to the organization's database and the sharing of adoption records on social networks.



The great innovation undoubtedly lies in the new payment platform linked to our database, which will make it possible to renew licenses online. This new simple and secure platform now allows citizens who wish to do so to pay their bill in the comfort of their own home.

We invite you to visit our new website!

Development and implementation of a call software

For several months, all calls received by our various customer service areas were monitored manually. In order to capitalize on this new reality and requirement, our IT firm designed a call software. This software allows us, on the one hand, to make all kinds of queries; for example: providing the number of calls handled, by subject, and by origin. Also, this new tool will be of great use when the time comes to account for the services provided to the citizens of the various municipalities served. In addition, it will now be much faster for employees to compile calls rather than to complete daily monitoring reports. Finally, it will also serve to better target our communications and improve our customer service levels.

Targeted sterilization clinic



The primary objective of this project was to reduce the cat overpopulation in the Eastern Townships, by making sterilization more accessible to low-income families. The sterilization fee was set at just \$ 60, taxes included, for a cat, regardless of gender. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, we had to suspend this project for most of the year. This explains the low number of sterilizations performed this year by the Targeted Sterilization Clinic.

Clinics and sterilizations

Number



Clinics conducted in 2020

6



Cats sterilized

108

The implementation of this new service was made possible thanks to the generous financial contribution of \$250,000 by PetSmart Charities of Canada. The Eastern Townships SPA extends a heartfelt thank you to them for their support and confidence.



Ongoing employee training

Concerted Action Program for Maintaining Employment

To address the current COVID-19 crisis, the Quebec government implemented the *Programme actions concertées pour le maintien en emploi* (PACME), which reimbursed vocational training expenses. The SPA de l'Estrie benefited from this program, which in particular encouraged the acquisition of new tools to help relaunch our activities and facilitate adaptation to new realities.

Marie-Pier and Tamara, from the communications department, were able to increase their knowledge and deepen their skills through various training sessions on Web writing, the basics of natural referencing (SEO) and Google Analytics. These trainings allowed them to learn more about new Web trends in order to provide the best possible user experience when designing our new website. In addition, they also attended training on press relations and the development of a communication plan, among other things to refresh their knowledge of the field, but also to be able to exchange with professionals and colleagues in the industry on the various issues to come.

This program also allowed us to benefit from the help of a process management consultant. The training courses dealt with process management in general, addressing several specific aspects of the issue, such as the creation of

a global process architecture, the mapping of operational processes, and how to format the processes and the resulting documents to facilitate the consultation and use of Teams and Office 365 in relation to process management.

These trainings were really useful and relevant because they were designed to meet our specific needs at the SPA de l'Estrie, with the practical workshops being based on our own activities. We were therefore able to improve our system as the program progressed, and then ask any questions we had when we needed answers.

Customer Service Training

In January 2020, all of our employees received training on "Developing a customer-based approach to customer service." As part of their work, our employees must deal with different customers and suppliers throughout the year. It is therefore important for us to offer the best customer service possible. This training allowed us to recall basic concepts, to equip our staff to better serve our customers in order to retain them, to gain credibility with them and to facilitate interventions with certain types of customers.

Key News Stories in 2020

New By-law in Sherbrooke



In 2020, the city of Sherbrooke adopted a new version of its animal by-law. In 2019, we were asked to work with the City's legal department on rewriting the sections on animal guardianship. It has always been important for both parties to have regulations that are useful and need-based, in order to properly supervise animal guardianship on the territory and to facilitate the management of various problematic situations.

The Act to promote the protection of persons by establishing a framework with regard to dogs came into effect

On March 3, in order to have consistent rules, the Government of Quebec adopted the Act to promote the protection of persons by establishing a framework with regard to dogs.

These rules apply to all dogs in Quebec, while additional measures apply to dogs declared potentially dangerous. These rules promote healthy cohabitation between humans, dogs and other domestic animals. They also help avoid dog attacks.

In order to promote public safety, the provincial regulation emphasizes the supervision of dogs:

- Every owner or custodian of a dog must register their animal with their municipality. The latter then gives them a medal that the dog must wear at all times.

- Every dog should be kept on a leash when out in public. The leash must be a maximum length of 1.85 m. For dogs declared potentially dangerous, this maximum length is 1.25 m.
- A dog of 20 kg and more must also wear, at all times, a halter or a harness attached to its leash.
- In a public place, a dog must at all times be under the control of a person capable of controlling it.
- A dog may not be on property belonging to a person other than its owner or custodian unless the presence of the dog has been expressly authorized.

Anyone who does not comply with the legal obligations surrounding the ownership or custody of a dog may be issued a statement of offence. Fines range from \$250 to \$20,000.

New Inspection Contract

More than 10 years ago, the MAPAQ mandated the SPA de l'Estrie to enforce provincial legislation B 3.1, the Animal Welfare and Safety Act. As a result of new government decisions, the department wanted to end this agreement so that only departmental employees would be allowed to conduct these inspections. Our general manager, accompanied by two colleagues from other SPAs, met with the Minister of Agriculture, André Lamontagne. He welcomed our arguments and asked his officials to create a new three-year agreement. After more than a year of difficult negotiations, the new agreement was signed in January 2020.



The SPA de l'Estrie is proud to have two inspectors, Tanya Robinson and Ruben Gutierrez, who do this work with passion and empathy for the well-being of animals and humans alike. Thank you both for your professional work and loyal service for many years.

Please note that our inspectors also apply the Canadian Criminal Code regarding cruelty to animals.

Task Force Report on Dog Breeders

The task force report, on which our employee Emmanuelle worked through the Association québécoise des SPA et SPCA, was published in September 2020.

In 2019, following the adoption of the new Act to promote the protection of persons by establishing a framework with regard to dogs, the government of Quebec established a committee whose mandate was to propose recommendations concerning the supervision of dog breeders in order to promote the protection of persons and ensure the safety and well-being of dogs.

The Eastern Townships SPA in Touch With Its Community!

We all dream of a better society. We are convinced that improving the living conditions of animals and respecting them requires information, education and public awareness. That is why we make every effort to share and exchange with the community in various ways.

Being There for Animals and Their Owners in a Crisis

While many were experiencing especially difficult times due to the COVID-19 crisis, the SPA de l'Estrie, in partnership with 1st Choice, decided to give back to the community by

donating, in May and December, bags of food to Moisson Estrie, the Banque alimentaire Memphrémagog, as well as a few citizens who have applied directly to the shelter.

Through this initiative, the SPA de l'Estrie wanted to help animal caretakers in difficulty, primarily to prevent some of them from being forced to abandon their animals for financial reasons. It was only natural for our organization to continue to be socially involved and to actively participate in a movement aimed at supporting those who need it most while ensuring the well-being of the animals.

We donated more than **600 bags of dog and cat food** to these two organizations to help the people impacted by the pandemic.



A Visit From Veterinary Medicine Students

In March 2020, just before the COVID-19 crisis, the SPA de l'Estrie was visited by 24 students from the University of Montreal's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. These 3 and 4th-year students are also members of the Association vétérinaire québécoise de médecine de refuge (AVQMR). They wanted to visit the new shelter and learn more about how it was designed to optimize animal welfare despite the stress of being in a shelter. We also took the opportunity to visit the clinique vétérinaire des petits Animaux de l'Estrie and talk with Dr. Julie Brunette, our veterinarian, so that she could tell them about her role and daily life as a shelter veterinarian.

Since the students do not have much exposure to shelter veterinary medicine during their studies, we took the time to talk to them and answer their questions. We were impressed by their curiosity, interest and passion for

their future profession. It is our duty to engage the next generation and promote shelter veterinary medicine.

We were delighted to have been able to meet with them just before the pandemic.



Collaborate With our precious volunteers

A helping hand that makes the difference!

Each year, we can count on the help of generous foster families who actively and voluntarily contribute to our mission. These families take in, on a temporary basis, one or more animals that need some time before being put up for adoption. For all these animals, the warmth of a home is the ideal context to get through this waiting period.

We are also very fortunate to be able to count on valuable volunteers who provide us with time to transport animals to other resources.



In 2020:

**8 volunteers transported
20 animals**
to other facilities;



73 active foster families who have given us a huge helping hand. **A total of 456 animals** benefited from their good care and exemplary hospitality.

An essential «family»

Because we can't accomplish everything by ourselves, we are fortunate to have the help and support of many people. All of our work could not be achieved without the constant support of our Board of Directors, members, donors, volunteers and employees. The continued support of this large family allows us to help animals in need and to develop new projects, in other words, to help make our society a better place. To all of you, a big thank you!



The Eastern Townships SPA: Much More Than a Shelter

Your SPA is much more than just an animal shelter. We're a non-profit organization that needs you! For almost 20 years now, the Eastern Townships SPA has relied on the generosity of its donors in order to continue innovating and fulfilling its mission of promoting harmony between humans and animals here in the Eastern Townships. Donors like you founded the SPA and have helped finance its activities and projects for close to four decades.

In addition to being an animal shelter, your SPA provides:

CONSULTATIONS ON CANINE BEHAVIOUR



to help pet guardians develop a healthy relationship with their dog.

ADOPTIONS



of thousands of animals every year.

A SHOP



where you will find everything you need for your pet and more!

A ROAD SERVICE



that includes a 24/7 emergency service.

INSPECTIONS



and investigations to ensure the enforcement of animal protection and welfare laws.

PET REGISTRATIONS



and reunions of thousands of pets with their families.

A UNIQUE CALL CENTRE




that handles citizen requests.



Protecting animals and ensuring their well-being, even in times of crisis.



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