



Meet Georgie Taylor, Executive Director of the Humane Society of Schuyler County...

1. Describe Your Business:

The Humane Society of Schuyler County is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and is the only full-service animal welfare organization serving the Schuyler County community. Their mission is to, through education and appropriate action, to eliminate pet overpopulation, to prevent animal cruelty, to provide quality care for homeless animals, to promote responsible pet ownership and to help the community develop humane principles towards all animals. They provide low-cost spay and neuter services for the pets of the public, shelter animals, and feral cat populations at their on-site clinic. They house cats and dogs and dogs in their state-of-the-art facilities, and have placed about 2000 dogs and 6000 cats into loving

homes since 2009.

2. Tell us your story:

The Humane Society was established in 1987, but the roots of the organization go back to the 1950s when the organization was operating as an SPCA. Prior to the early 2000s, the organization's mission was primarily dedicated to spaying and neutering as they did not have housing for the animals. "Spaying and neutering has long been the cornerstone of what we do as an organization, and to-date we have sterilized over 13,000 animals in our county," Georgie said. "Over the last 18 years that I've been involved it's been an interesting journey. Nothing like I would have expected or anticipated. In that time, we came from not owning any physical building to acquiring real estate. It wasn't until 2006 that we had a building to call our own. Prior to that we were pretty much a virtual organization." They originally focused on the care of cats, as the county was responsible for the care of stray dogs, however the Humane Society of Schuyler County took over that responsibility at the end of 2009. At that point, they saw a need to expand and relocated to their current property in Montour Falls, a process that began in 2011. "That's a lot to have happened in 18 years!" Georgie said. "You never know when you sign on for something where it's going to take you, and this was certainly a case of that."

3. What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

"I guess I've been very fortunate in that regard, although it didn't always feel that way when I was going through it," Georgie said. "I have had the opportunity to hold a number of positions for a number of companies, and for one reason or another they didn't always work out." She has worked in positions ranging from marketing to public relations to product development. "From each of those, I was able to leverage the experience I had to do something else," Georgie explained.

4. What inspires you?

"There are some people for whom I worked who really inspired me," Georgie said. "They gave me opportunity. They gave me the chance to succeed, and they gave me the chance to fail. But they were great mentors and coaches, and they always inspired anyone who worked for them to do more. To be the best you can be. To shoot for the moon and think big. And to anticipate next moves for the future for yourself and the organization. That was invaluable experience."

5. What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

"One of our key objectives going forward is to build a sustainable future for the organization," Georgie explained. "That's something that certainly keeps me up at night at my age. Where will the funds come from and wondering who is going to take over and keep what we've built going with the same values and practices."

6. What is your favorite local activity?

"Who has time?" Georgie laughed. "There was a time when my husband and I would go sailing and horseback riding and we love to do those things. At this point, though, just being able to have some downtime at home in my garden with my own animals works for me. I need that sort of zen time after being 'on' all the time."

7. Is there anything else we should know about you?

The Humane Society of Schuyler County has a very small paid staff and relies heavily on volunteers. Additionally, the Humane Society of Schuyler County does not receive any government funding on the county, state, or federal levels. They also don't receive funding from any national animal welfare organizations like the SPCA. "We really rely on donors, the contributions of our friends and members, grant writing, and our own fundraising efforts," Georgie elaborated. "Our largest on-going fundraiser is Wag to Riches." Wags to Riches is a resale shop located at 29 N Franklin St in Watkins Glen. Wags to Riches is staffed by volunteers. "We're into our ninth year of operations, and we're pretty proud of that," Georgie said.