

Best Friends

Mission Statement: **SAVE THEM ALL**



Katrina survivor

A grass roots movement to stop the killing of dogs and cats in shelters was begun in the 1930's. Small groups of individuals banded together to save as many animals as they could. They had very limited success but did highlight a very large problem.

The founders of Best Friends made a promise to one another and to the animals already in their care – that they would build an animal sanctuary in Southern Utah where they could dedicate their lives

to housing and finding homes for unwanted pets while advocating for the importance of no-kill. In 1984 they purchased land and built a sanctuary in Kanab, Utah. At that time, shelters across America routinely killed cats and dogs as the primary method of pet population control. There wasn't a national voice to end the killing. However, as the founders began to broaden the reach of Best Friends, they quickly learned that others would stand with them. In addition to providing shelter, they promoted an aggressive spay neuter program at their sanctuary and also assisted other organizations start low cost spay/neuter service. Over 30 years later, they've inspired others throughout the country to take up the mantle of no-kill and helped to reduce the number of animals being killed in shelters.

Wherever there are companion animals in need, Best Friends is there. The largest test of their resolve...**Katrina**... one of the worst disasters in US history. The storm damage was devastating and then the levees failed compounding the disaster.

Protocol at the time: the governor's office invites national animal organizations into the state and they would eventually be told to leave. Protocol be damned. There were companion animals in need. Katrina was the first natural disaster that Best Friends was a major player in. They were one of the first animal organizations to arrive and the last to leave. They commandeered small boats and rescued pets from homes, porches, streets, everywhere. When the order came to leave, they stayed. Some volunteers of departing organizations joined Best Friends to continue saving and caring for the animals. Some small organizations stayed as well.

With input from Best Friends, legislation was passed to provide for companion animals in future disasters. www.bestfriends.org