**Nominee:** Jennifer Hart

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**Category of Service**: Philanthropic

**Optional Information**: White/Caucasian

**Outstanding**: Jennifer Hart has been a volunteer with Furry Friends which is a cat adoption agency in Vancouver, all volunteer, no-kill nonprofit. She has been volunteering since 2004. She works full time for the US Dept. of Agriculture, yet she spends just as much time or more on her volunteer duties at Furry Friends. She was recently appointed to president of the organization. Running an all volunteer cat shelter is a daunting task. Too little money and skilled volunteers to perform all the tasks, so they fall on Jennifer. She handles all the business dealings of the group, she approves which cats the group will take in, she handles newsletter duties, transportation of cats, coordinated the (TNR) trap, neuter, return program, educated new volunteers to the halfway house (shelter) and whatever else pops up. This week the phone lines are down and she is getting educated on fixing the connection herself since Century Link will take a week to get out to investigate. The groups treasurer has left, so that job falls on Jennifer until we can find a new book keeper/treasurer. She ends up taking home cats to her house that for one reason or the other are not adoptable. She is a woman with a big heart and sacrifices so much for others.

**Professional Achievements**: Current employer or place of business: US Dept. of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Portland OR

**Volunteer Achievements**: How I got involved: I had been volunteering with SW WA HS with my niece and nephew but when their home and school responsibilities brought that to an end I decided to move on. About that time same time, I met Nancy McMartin in 2004 while she was at the Furry Friend booth at the Pet and Companion Fair in Portland. The rest, as they say, is history. Why I give back: How can I NOT give back? How can we all not give back to our community? Whether it is once a week, once a month or once a year everyone needs to get out of their bubble and do something selfless for others around them. There are so many organizations and causes that need your help. Proudest moment as a volunteer: It will be the day Furry Friends moves into its permanent home! The organization will have to move from its present location that it is renting by October 2016. We have been putting a lot of effort into fund raising so we can buy a permanent location to house the cats that we have for adoption.

**Community Achievements**: What local challenge or issue are you most passionate about? People that dump or abandon their cats. There is an idea out there that it is okay to dump cats in the woods or parking lot or leave them on the doorstep as they drive away to a new home. They tell themselves someone else will take care of them or that since cats are carnivores they will eat birds and mice and survive just fine. This is just not true. Yes they may kill birds and mice, but they don’t always eat them for food. These are pets and they want their kibble in a bowl. Abandoning any animal is inhumane and ignorant.

**Leader/Role Model**: Her commitment to people and cats have been such an encouragement to all that know her. She is a self-less person. Caring deeply for people in crisis. She is the one that receives the phone calls when older people are having to give up their kitty because they are going into assisted living. Or the military person that has no one to take care of his cat. Then there are the kittens, so many litters of kittens. People call not knowing what to do about the mom and baby cats that have showed up in their back yard.

**Impact**: It is difficult to give hard statistics on what Jennifer has done. But I could give you many lists of people that would call her an angel for what she has done in their lives. Jennifer has touched many lives in such a positive way.

**Nominator**: Diane Stevens

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