

# Duxbury

## NEIGHBORS



MEET JOYCE KEYES:  
Paws, Purpose,  
and Community

POWERED BY

**BVM**  
BEST VERSION MEDIA

MARCH 2026

Photo By Drew Lederman

Joyce's path to leadership began with a deep conviction that community involvement matters. Over time, that belief evolved into a steadfast commitment strengthened by the results she sees firsthand. A low-cost spay that prevents future litters. A frightened stray that becomes a family pet. A small act of education that changes an owner's approach to care. For Joyce, those moments reinforce why the work is essential.

### Expanding Impact Across the South Shore

As the organization grew, so did the needs of the community. In response to an increasing number of calls, Standish created a dedicated trapping team. The team assists with escaped indoor cats, feral colonies needing spay services, and strays requiring medical assessment and potential rehoming. What began as a way to manage volume has become one of the organization's most impactful initiatives, significantly reducing unwanted outdoor pregnancies and stabilizing local cat populations.

At the same time, Standish expanded its foster network, tripling the number of homes available to care for cats outside the shelter environment. This shift has allowed more animals to recover, socialize, and thrive in nurturing settings. The results are tangible: nearly 700 stray or surrendered animals now find permanent homes each year through Standish's efforts. In addition, the organization has provided thousands of dollars in veterinary assistance to South Shore families facing unexpected medical costs.

### Powered by Volunteers

Behind every statistic is a volunteer. Because Standish is entirely volunteer driven, the opportunities to serve are extensive. Volunteers lead committees, clean cages, maintain the property, foster and trap cats, transport



## MEET JOYCE KEYES: PAWS, PURPOSE, AND COMMUNITY

BY KATELYN STEVENS | PHOTOS BY DREW LEDERMAN

On any given day at Standish Humane Society, the work rarely slows. A volunteer kneels beside a nervous stray, a foster family tends to a nursing mother and her kittens, and a trapper heads out before sunrise to safely recover a lost cat. At the center of this quiet but constant effort is Joyce Keyes, President of Standish Humane Society, whose leadership is grounded in one simple belief: everyone can help.

"We are entirely volunteer run," Joyce says. "Not everyone wants to take on the role of President, but everyone can volunteer to do something — whether it's once a year or once a month."

### A Mission Rooted in Community

That spirit defines Standish Humane Society, a nonprofit organization serving cats across the South Shore. The organization rehomes surrendered and friendly stray cats, places nursing mothers in foster homes where they can safely raise their young, offers low-cost spay and neuter services for those who may have difficulty accessing or affording other options, and assists families who need financial help for humane euthanasia when a beloved pet is suffering. While their focus is feline, they also offer limited support services for dogs throughout the year.





animals to veterinary appointments, review adoption applications, socialize shy kittens, and organize fundraising events. Others donate supplies, host yard sales, or help spread the word when a cat goes missing.

Yet even with this momentum, challenges remain. Joyce points to one issue in particular: the absence of local laws addressing unfixated cats. Without legislation requiring proof of spay/neuter to claim ownership, the cycle of unwanted litters continues. "If we required a spay/neuter certificate," Joyce explains, "the number of cats and kittens would be significantly reduced." Access to affordable spay and neuter services remains another urgent need, as many families simply cannot afford standard procedure costs.

### Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to 2026, Standish hopes to expand access to low-cost spay and neuter



services for families who may otherwise struggle to find or afford care, while also advocating for legislative change. The organization is also preparing for a major project in Duxbury to increase its building footprint and meet Department of Agriculture mandates. The expansion will allow Standish to grow responsibly and serve more animals while maintaining high standards of care.

Through each initiative — from trapping to fostering to advocacy — the common thread is community. Joyce is quick to emphasize that Standish's success depends on local involvement. Residents can volunteer, donate food or supplies, transport a cat to a veterinary appointment, help at an event, distribute flyers, or encourage local businesses to partner with the organization. Even small contributions make a meaningful difference.

For Joyce, the work is less about titles and more about collective responsibility. It is about recognizing that animal welfare is not someone else's job; it belongs to everyone willing to step forward. Each safe adoption, each prevented litter, and each family supported through a difficult moment



reflects what is possible when a community commits to compassion.

At Standish Humane Society, progress is measured not just in numbers, but in lives changed. And under Joyce Keyes' steady leadership, that work continues — one rescue, one volunteer, and one caring act at a time.

*For more information or to volunteer at Standish Humane Society, contact them at 781-834-4663 or plan a visit at 622 Congress St, Duxbury.*



**tinysandsons.com**  
**781.826.6163**  
**Fax 781.829.8819**

**575 Washington Street**  
**Pembroke, MA 02359**