

Shadow eventually died, but Bland's passion to help people pay pet medical bills lived on. Through her organization Wrapped in Kindness she kept selling scarves online and added pet beds, totes and more. In the last two years she's raised more than \$82,000, helping 83 pets

including Meg, a Bernese mountain dog who needed a nearly \$3,000 operation to correct a liver defect. "In a hopeless time, Kate appeared," says Meg's owner Anna Lofton.

"It's worth coming home from work and [working on] this for hours," says Bland. "It changes lives."



For more information on the organizations featured in these stories, go to:

www.rollingdogranch.org
www.wildliferescuecenter.org
www.tailsofhope.org
www.unitedpegasus.com
www.wrappedinkindness.com



"They respond to the love they get," says Marker (right, with Smith and two of their blind dogs).

Photograph by ANDREW GEIGER

CREATING A SANCTUARY FOR DISABLED PETS

STEVE SMITH AND ALAYNE MARKER, OVANDO, MONT.

Doggy dinnertime at Smith and Marker's ranch is an unusual affair. Three-legged labrador retriever Cody spins on his remaining rear leg before chowing down, while husky mix Travis, who suffers from a muscle disease preventing him from opening his jaw, slurps up a bowl of liquefied food, and dachshund mix Ito, afflicted by a neurological disorder, wobbles back and forth as she dives in to eat. "You can tell

they like being here," says Marker, 51, who, with husband Steve, 48, opened the Rolling Dog Ranch Animal Sanctuary in 2000 after realizing there was a dearth of facilities caring exclusively for disabled pets. Adds Smith: "You can't imagine they might've been put down."

Yet that's exactly the fate many of the 80 dogs, cats and horses afflicted with everything from blindness to deafness to muscular dystrophy would have met had the couple not given up their day jobs as Boeing executives to create a home for them. "It didn't seem right to keep making lots of money but do nothing about this problem," says Smith.

The couple turned their 160-acre rural vacation home into the Sanctuary, and hordes of needy animals (some of whose previous



owners were ready to put them down) followed. Since their facility opened, the couple have been able to find adoptive homes for 40 pets. "Disabled animals can have a wonderful quality of life," says Smith. "You don't have to give up on them."