



FOTAS News


Spring 2020

FOTAS is a recipient of the Secretary of State of S.C. Angel Award-One of 10, out of 14,000 organizations, recognized as representing the most efficient & effective charities in SC.

CRITICAL TRANSPORTS SUSPENDED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

NEED FOR ADOPTERS AND FOSTERS NEVER GREATER



Adopting out the shelter's animals locally takes priority. However, FOTAS and the shelter staff must also transfer homeless pets to cherished rescue partners in order to keep up with its high intake and supplement local adoptions. These transfers to local partners and out-of-state rescues are crucial to saving lives. With states taking strict precautions and preparing to shut down in response to the coronavirus, this important re-homing channel has been virtually cut off. As many as 36 cats and dogs were sent to Northern shelters each week, with FOTAS funding the incurred transport costs, before these new safety precautions to address the pandemic were instituted. As a result, our need for adopters and fosters has never been higher. 



Duke goes home with his new family.



Brennan with his FOTAS foster mom, Yvonne.

With states taking strict precautions and preparing to shut down, transfers to local partners and out-of-state rescues have been virtually cut off due to the coronavirus.

Local adopters and fosters are immediately needed.



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FOTAS Community: Saving lives one homeless pet at a time

While these are extraordinary times, the FOTAS community always rises to new challenges. Just look at how far we've come in a decade, working in partnership with the County Shelter to raise its animal save rate from 5% to 96%.

We could never have made such strides without your donations. Without your generosity, so many lives could not be saved. Whether you support FOTAS by volunteering; donating food and other items from our wish list; adopting or fostering pets in need; or supporting us with cash donations – you are helping us save lives.

Many pets brought to the shelter are victims of neglect and abuse. They are often starving, injured or sick and in need of special care. It is your support and funding that makes their recovery possible.

Our heartworm positive dogs get treatment and find forever homes because of your donations. Dogs and cats that come in with collapsed eyes, shattered legs, twisted hips or even gunshot wounds are saved and rehabilitated because of you. When a dog arrives bleeding because his furless skin has been ravaged by demodectic mange, it is your donations that provide treatment to give him relief and it is your fostering that allows him to recover.

It is also your support that provides the dogs and cats with beds and blankets in their kennels – and the toys that get them through the long days of waiting to be adopted. You also help us reduce the population of homeless pets through programs like Fix-A-Pet and Fido Fixers mobile spay/neuter service. Home to Home is also funded through your donations – and it's made it possible for hundreds of pets to get adopted without having to go through the stress of staying at the shelter.



Lizzie before and after.



DeDe with Judi, before and after.



SHELTER STATS SUMMARY 2013-2019

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Animal Intake	5,107	4,689	4,785	4,912	4,907	4,221	4,029
Total Trap, Neuter and Returned (TNR) cats (not included in intake or Total Animals Saved)						781	1,044
Total cats Returned to Field (RTF)						265	130
Total Animals Adopted	829	1,141	1,136	1,730	1,592	1,843	1,640
Total Animals Transferred	681	1,107	1,568	1,382	1,350	1,394	1,663
Total Returned to Owner	160	158	260	243	254	224	234
Total Animals Saved	1,670	2,406	2,964	3,355	3,196	3,726	3,667
Total Animals Euthanized	3,627	2,528	1,906	1,509	875	239	170
Total Percentage of Animals Euthanized	71%	54%	40%	31%	18%	6%	4%
Total TNR/RTF	0	0	0	278	883	1,046	1,174

Total animals saved in 2019 including community cats (TNR/RTF): 4,711

All adoptable animals saved in 2019, 4% euthanized due to being too sick to treat or too aggressive/dangerous to people and other animals.

So, thank you for your generosity and making it possible for us to save more than 4,700 animals in 2019. This is a great accomplishment made possible through tight teamwork and determination.

Unfortunately, there's no time to rest on our laurels because as this newsletter goes to print, we are facing a new obstacle – an invisible threat that is making us change our adoption model and shutting down most of the rescue partners we rely on to help us save our overflow of shelter pets. With kitten and puppy season nearly upon us, we are expanding our network of fosters to take in these animals while we seek adopters for them.



It is a unique situation, but we will get through this because of your staunch support, our loyal community and the close partnership we have with the County.



First Annual Furry 5K Race raises \$3,500 for shelter animals

Thank you so much to 2 Girls and a Clock Race & Timing Services and all the participants (two legged and four legged) for making the inaugural FOTAS Furry 5K Race such a success. The amazing and much-needed donation of \$3,500 that resulted from the fund-raising event will go towards special medical treatments for adoptable animals received at the shelter.



Senior Beagles Aggie & Benson rescued by Ohio woman


A woman from Ohio saw two bonded, senior Beagle mix siblings, Benson and Aggie, posted on Facebook and, with a little help from some FOTAS friends, adopted them and had them in her home in less than 24 hours.

Benson and Aggie's journey to a new home began when Martinez, GA resident Steve Wall saw Martha Anne Tudor's Facebook post about the two dogs in need and shared it. Cindy Lejeune of Cleveland, Ohio saw Steve's post and commented that she missed her two late Beagles who had recently died from cancer less than two months apart.

But she was worried about making the long drive out to Aiken by herself. So, Steve made a very generous offer. He said he could transport Benson and Aggie part of the

way. If they met at Beckley, WV – the halfway point between Aiken and Cleveland – it would cut her trip in half. "I told her we shouldn't let 675 miles stop these dogs from finding a good home," he said.

Steve Wall meets adopter Cindy Lejeune in West Virginia with the two Beagle siblings.


Cindy agreed and on Saturday, Feb. 22, Steve picked up Benson and Aggie for their ride to a forever home. That afternoon, he and the dogs met Cindy at a BP gas station in Beckley. Steve passed along their paperwork, medical records and toys. By 8:30 p.m., Benson and Aggie were safe and comfy in their new home. 



Officer Creel to Junior FOTAS team: 'If you see something, say something'




County Animal Control Officer Brandon Creel met with the Junior FOTAS team at Tall Pines STEM Academy in March. He brought along shelter dog Sheeba to help him teach the kids about his job and what to do if they see a stray animal or a neglected/abused pet. "If you see

something, say something," Officer Creel said. However, he told them to call the authorities instead of personally confronting a possible case of abuse. "Let us know where the animal is and give us the details of your concern," he said. "We'll take it from there." 

Shelter adapts to being closed during coronavirus crisis

To protect the health of our community and shelter personnel, Aiken County closed the Animal Shelter to the public on Thursday, March 19. The County hopes to reopen the shelter to citizens in April.

The procedure for adopting and fostering was changed from walk-in visits to by appointment only. For safety during the coronavirus threat, adoptions and foster pickups have been taking place strictly outside the building with every sanitizing precaution taken. Potential adopters call the shelter between 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, to make appointments. Adoption fees are being waived with these temporary changes. On the first two days of employing the new appointment-only adoption model, the shelter adopted out 15 dogs. We are so thankful to our community and our cherished volunteers and fosters for helping the shelter through this crisis. 



On the first day the County Shelter was closed to the public, Chase and five other dogs were adopted.

FOTAS Programs Coordinator Kathy Jacobs cradles an intake dog.



Because of COVID-19 and out of respect for our cherished business community sponsors, WOOFSTOCK and GOLF TOURNAMENT are POSTPONED UNTIL FALL 2021.

Upcoming FOTAS Events

Pet Dog & Family Fun Day at Shelter - Fall 2020
Date to be determined

Dog Ears Reading to the Shelter Pets
We hope to resume these recurring reading sessions for children in May

Offsite Adoption Events
Check the FOTAS Aiken website (fotasaiken.org) and FOTAS Facebook site for announcements of upcoming programs and happenings

Young Miss Aiken collects goodies for shelter pets in need

Thank you to Layla Wise, Young Miss Aiken 2020, for collecting donations from her neighborhood and bringing food and other treats for the homeless pets at the Aiken County Animal Shelter. FOTAS and the shelter's animals in need appreciate her kindness and good work!



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Super momma cat Jeanne gets adopted.

Mama cat Jeanne is a heroine who finally has a home of her own

Jeanne arrived at the shelter with a broken left hip, a crushed right leg and a litter of 1-week-old kittens. After examining Jeanne, the medical staff realized she had been hit by a car just after delivering her babies, but somehow dragged herself back to nurse and care for them. Despite being in excruciating pain, she continued nurturing her kittens at the shelter.

Jeanne spent weeks in the shelter's medical ward, where her hip healed, and her kittens grew and were adopted. Although her right rear leg couldn't be saved, she gets around well and was quickly adopted. Jeanne now lives in a cozy home, where she has fully recovered from her injuries.



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