



## WE DID IT TOGETHER: MORE THAN 4,000 DOGS AND CATS SAVED IN 2017!

Thanks to your donations and close teamwork with the County Shelter, we saved more than 4,000 dogs and cats in 2017. Tallying all the numbers of adoptions, transfers, community cats returned to field, and lost pets returned to owner, a total of 4,079 dogs and cats were saved. That's a save rate of 83 percent!



Last year, the save rate was 74 percent and in 2015, the save rate was 56 percent – so there has been a steady increase in animals saved each successive year. A major reason for the greater number of shelter animals being saved is the strong animal advocacy of FOTAS and its donors.

“These accomplishments take huge human and financial resources, and without the community’s help and support, none of this would have been possible,” said FOTAS President Jennifer Miller.



Photos:

A. Volunteer Anne Morgan and Angel; B. Jinx and his new owner; C. Glory shows her appreciation at her adoption; D. A young visitor greets Lucy; E. Volunteer Linda Leitner bottle feeds kitten; F. Two kittens head to one home! G. Emmy gets adopted; H. Gary Urban during transfer; I. Birthday donation; J. Betty Ryberg fostering Fred.

**AIKEN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER**

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**FOTAS**

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**Your Donations Make all the Difference**





## New year starts off strong with opening of Wellness Center

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the official opening of the Nurture and Wellness Building, a structure that will ensure shelter animals with short-term but contagious illnesses will have a proper, isolated building in which to recover.

The much-needed Wellness Medical Isolation Building funded by FOTAS is the latest addition that will help the Shelter save animals. Said Aiken County Council Chairman Gary Bunker, who cut the ribbon with FOTAS President Jennifer Miller, "The Wellness Center is another milestone for this wonderful public/private partnership that we have with FOTAS."

## Chow survives bulldozer to gain second chance at life

An abandoned Chow Chow mix hid in a waste truck and was unknowingly transported and dumped into a local landfill. As a giant bulldozer flattened and separated the huge pile of debris, the scared dog popped his head up out of the garbage and ran for 50 yards before falling over from thirst and exhaustion.

He was brought to the Shelter and treated for an injured leg by the medical staff, but no one claimed the dog as their own and he wasn't microchipped. Once on the adoption floor, "Roska" was socialized and trained by volunteers and shelter staff.



A home was found for him at one of FOTAS's cherished rescues up north, and Roska is now living the good life with his new family.

### Other early 2018 milestones...

- January - 91% of animals received at shelter were saved
- February 7 - Aiken County Council unanimously passed Resolution no.18-02-20, stating that Aiken County works to save the lives of all healthy and adoptable dogs and cats at the Aiken County Animal Shelter
- February - 95% of animals received at shelter were saved (before FOTAS was founded in 2009, the Shelter had a 5% save rate)

If a shelter's save rate is 90% or above, it is given "no kill" status (according to National Best Sheltering Practice), as it is assumed there always will be some animals too sick or aggressive to be adopted. Our joint goal is to achieve or surpass this save rate and gain a "no kill" status in 2018. Volunteering, fostering and donations enable every adoptable animal to be saved. Working together... **WE CAN DO THIS!**



## Blue survives bullet, becomes a service dog for sick veteran

Blue arrived at the Shelter as an injured stray. He had been shot in the face and a bullet was removed from his chin. Miraculously, the 4-year-old Siberian Husky recovered from his wound and was added to the adoption floor, where it became increasingly apparent that he was a special dog.

A veteran who suffers from many health problems, Reverend Bill Kline adopted Blue, with all his adoption fees paid for through FOTAS's veterans aid program. Now, Bill can't imagine being without his large, canine companion. Blue is in training to be Bill's service dog, helping him to get around and assisting him with tasks.

"Blue's my lifeguard," he said. "It's amazing how he can tell if I'm not feeling well or down in the dumps... he's always right there to comfort me."



## Abused, injured animals finally find love through adoptions

Not all animals arrive at the shelter healthy and in good shape. Lost dogs and cats are sometimes attacked by predatory animals or harmed by cruel humans. They are also vulnerable to illness and parasites. Whether it is a kitten hunted by a hawk, a dog hit by a car or a cat used for BB gun target practice, the Shelter medical team helps these sweet animals heal physically, and then FOTAS volunteers and staff work to socialize the injured animals and help them to trust and love again. FOTAS donations help with all needed expenses. Luckily, most of the animals recover beautifully and get adopted to loving homes.

Photos:

- A. Happy the dog adopted through the transfer program;
- B. Daisy the one-eyed cat; C. Dr. Levy treating Remington's eye;
- D. Coco, an abused dog; E. Feather who was injured by a hawk.







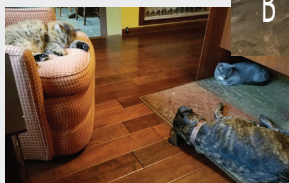
Photos: A. Junior FOTAS tours the shelter;  
B. Alex presents cash donation to Bobby  
Arthurs during Junior FOTAS visit; C. Junior  
FOTAS gives some love to Marcelle.



## Children are the future for our animals

Junior FOTAS clubs are starting to spring up at local schools. Students at Tall Pines STEM Academy launched a Junior FOTAS club this year, and have already made informative videos about FOTAS programs, donated funds to the animals, visited with Shelter Manager Bobby Arthurs for a tour of the Wire Road facility and are making plans to raise more money for FOTAS. Other schools have expressed interest in starting Junior FOTAS clubs and FOTAS Programs Coordinator Kathy Jacobs has offered to assist them.

## A Letter to FOTAS



Dear FOTAS,

We are repeat adopters and have several family members via the Shelter. The dog out for the count is Glory and she was adopted March 2014, right after your move to the new shelter. She is the perfect companion for our son. We adopted the gray cat, Mao, in May 2016. Then, one day while I was volunteering, Emma snatched hold of my heart and told me she was coming home to live with me. We adopted her in June 2016. We have so much love for our fur babies.

Thank you for the chance you give all the animals that come to the shelter,  
Carolyn McCurdy  
Aiken, SC

## Doggie Day Out and Dogs Playing for Life programs save lives

Being at an animal shelter can wear on dogs and such stress can create behavioral problems such as shyness, depression and even aggression, which can keep them from finding a forever home. That's why FOTAS's Doggie Day Out and Dogs Playing for Life programs are so important.

During a Doggie Day Out, in which citizens take adoptable canines on a "date", the animals interact with people, sniff new smells and enjoy exploring places they've never been. Meanwhile, at the Shelter, FOTAS canine coaches and volunteers manage group play with dogs, helping the animals learn socialization skills while they expend built-up energy. These Dogs Playing for Life sessions also help the volunteers and staff to assess the dogs' personalities, so they can effectively match them with prospects and ensure better adoptions.

## Future Events

April 21 - Mead Hall Strawberry Festival  
May 3-7 - Aiken Charity Horse Show  
May 5 - Woofstock Family Fun & Doggie Derby Day  
May 7 - Marco's Pizza Monday (15% of sales to FOTAS)

May 10-13 - Aiken Charity Horse Show  
May 18 - Furever Friends Friday at Aiken County Visitors Center  
June 4 - Marco's Pizza Monday (15% of sales to FOTAS)  
June 15 - Furever Friends Friday at Aiken County Visitors Center