



FOTAS News

SUMMER 2019

FOTAS is a recipient of the 2017 State of S.C. Angel Award - One of 10 organizations recognized as representing the most efficient, effective charities in S.C.



WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE LIVES

FOTAS was formed 10 years ago in response to the heartbreaking plight of the homeless and abandoned animals in Aiken County. At the time, about 6,000 animals were consigned to the County Shelter each year but only 5 percent made it out alive. In 2009, the founders of FOTAS dreamed of a day when no adoptable animal would have to be euthanized in Aiken County.

Thanks to your support, in 10 short years, intake numbers dropped about 21% (still too many but making progress), and the save rate at the County Shelter increased from a dismal 5% to more than 90%.

We could not have come this far and saved those thousands of animals without your help. You are FOTAS. You volunteer at the shelter seven days a week and on holidays and donate money, food and supplies that keep us going strong.

In 2019, FOTAS and the shelter continue to work in overdrive and thanks to your support, we've saved every adoptable animal this year. Your donations and efforts make a difference.

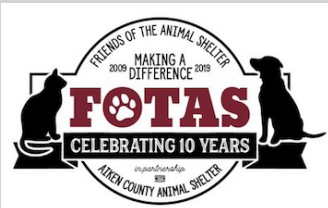


Dumped: Abandoned puppies rescued just in time

Lisa Brucchi walked out of her Windsor home into the blistering heat to check her mailbox. She was expecting an important letter from her mom and was eager to see if it had arrived. But as she walked up to her mailbox, she noticed a box on the ground. Inside the box were nine puppies covered in their own feces and urine, panting heavily and crying for help.

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The need for foster homes is greater than ever

The Aiken County Animal Shelter is full of puppies, dogs, cats and kittens who are confused and afraid. This summer, we have taken in an average of more than 500 strays and surrendered pets per month. There are only so many places to put these animals.

Fostering saves lives and is personally rewarding. It gives strays and surrendered pets time to decompress, heal and thrive and when people temporarily take them into their homes, it makes room for more animals at the shelter.

We can't thank our foster volunteers enough for what they do. They help prepare these pets for their forever homes and the adopting families are so grateful. Fosters care deeply about their rescue dogs and their greatest reward is knowing they helped give a homeless pet another chance at a good life. If you can help us foster, please call the FOTAS hotline, (803) 514-4313. FOTAS will supply all needed food and supplies.



Doggie Days Out program gives pets a break from stress

The FOTAS Doggie Days Out program allows citizens to take adoptable dogs out of the shelter for an hour, an afternoon or even overnight! The dogs benefit greatly from these field trips because they get away from the noise and stress of the shelter. It's also a wonderful way for people to spend more time with a dog they're interested in adopting before making their final decision. We can always use more doggie daters. If you're

interested in participating in the program, please stop by the shelter, 333 Wire Road in Aiken, and complete a short application so we can get you started!



FOTAS NAMED AIKEN'S CHOICE AWARD WINNER

When the 2019 Aiken's Choice winners were announced for the Best of Aiken Contest (hosted by the Aiken Standard), FOTAS was voted the winner of the Best Nonprofit Organization and FOTAS's annual Woofstock Doggie Derby Day was voted as the Best Pet-Friendly Event. We couldn't be more touched and pleased, not only because of the recognition but because we were selected by you, the community. Thank you!



JUNIOR FOTAS PROGRAM IS ON A ROLL

While making dog treats, FOTAS Program Director Kathy Jacobs talks to Junior FOTAS students at Tall Pines STEM Academy about the importance of pet responsibility and spay/neutering their animals. Junior FOTAS programs are being developed at a number of local schools this year.



STARVING DOG TITAN SAVED FROM CHAIN AND CURED OF HEARTWORMS



Titan arrived at the shelter starving to death, covered with fleas and fly bites. He had infected sores from sitting and laying on concrete, indicating he'd been a chained dog. The 9-year-old Retriever mix also had a severe heartworm infection and had to be treated immediately. But since being cared for and eating three meals a day, this once frail and skeletal senior is up to a hearty 50 pounds and after six months of treatment, which FOTAS funded, is heartworm-free. He was adopted to a wonderful home and is doing terrific. Another life saved at the Aiken County Animal Shelter!

FOTAS organizes mobile clinic, pays for spay/neuter surgeries

FOTAS, under Board Member Colleen Timmerman's leadership, organized four spay/neuter assistance days for folks in need of financial help to fix their pets. FOTAS contracted with a spay/neuter clinic mobile van to come to Langley Community Center in Warrentonville and 25 appointments were booked ahead of time. FOTAS paid for every pet's spay/neuter, rabies and distemper shots – making it free to each citizen who participated with their pet. We are now planning our next one!



TNR, VOUCHER PROGRAM AND TRANSFERS REDUCE NUMBER OF HOMELESS CATS AT ACAS

While a flood of animals has been coming into the shelter this summer, FOTAS has helped decrease the number of felines housed at 333 Wire Road through its transfer program. So far this year, nearly 100 kittens have been rehomed through out of state transfer partners.

"We have worked hard over the years to develop solid relationships with our cherished shelter transfer partners, and because of this, they have come through for us during this summer's kitten season crisis," said FOTAS President Jennifer Miller. FOTAS funds the transport fee for every cat and kitten transferred.

These transfers supplement local adoptions and when combined with our TNR (Trap, Neuter and Return) program and affordable adoption fees, we've been able to save every adoptable cat received this year, rehoming more than 900 cats through June.



Blind kitten Sunshine fights for chance to be adopted

Sunshine is a blind, 8-week-old Siamese who refused to give in to death.

Unable to eat, she was fed by syringe. Her eyes were crusted shut, her breathing shallow, and her survival was a longshot. But the shelter's vet staff didn't give up and neither did Sunshine.

Her eyes are permanently damaged from feline upper respiratory illness, but she can see shadows. Now, after cheating death, this loving and affectionate and playful kitten is safe and doing well in her new home.

"This little girl stole my heart," said Jean Barney of Martinez, GA. "She was found in a ditch with her eyes matted. The shelter named her Sunshine and it's appropriate because it was one of my mama's nicknames. I adopted her on my mother's birthday."



Later adoption hours gain traction

The new extended adoption hours introduced in April seem to be helping more animals get adopted. People are taking advantage of the later adoption hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with many stopping by the shelter after work. The new adoption hours are:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday: 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday: 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

PUNKY PIG



Buddy, a sweet pig who briefly made his home at the County Shelter, is happy in his new loving home with new mom, Betsy Lamb. He is also sporting a mohawk haircut for the summer.

Dumped: Abandoned puppies rescued just in time

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"When I saw them, I just burst out crying and didn't know what to do," Brucchi said. "How could someone leave them out there like that?"

Unfortunately, such a scenario is not uncommon. People dump animals they don't want all the time. Kittens are thrown from moving vehicles and unwanted pups are shoved in plastic bags and thrown in dumpsters. Yes, it's sickening but also a fact of life for the folks who work and volunteer at the Aiken County Animal Shelter.

Ms. Brucchi saved the distressed pups and brought them to the shelter, where they were put into some cool water to lower their body temperature. After the veterinary staff fully examined and treated them, a FOTAS foster took them into her home for extra care and monitoring. All nine recovered and are doing well.

Help us prevent these heartbreaking situations. Please spread the word to spay/neuter your pets. Aiken County citizens in need of financial assistance can get vouchers at the ACAS, supplemented by FOTAS.

ABANDONED PONY SAVED

People reported an abandoned pony wandering down a busy road. Aiken County Animal Control officers responded and brought the thin pony to the shelter. After much needed care and medical attention, he was happily adopted and is now living the good life in his forever home.



Forecast for September 23, 2019

It's going to be raining golf balls



FOTAS' 6th Annual Helicopter Ball Drop & Playing Fore the Pets Golf Tournament
Your Chance to Win \$1000.00 on the Ball Drop Raffle

Pre-numbered golf balls will be dropped from 300 feet over a designated hole at Woodside Plantation Country Club in Aiken, SC in conjunction with FOTAS' Playing Fore the Pets golf tournament. Donate \$10.00 to FOTAS for a ball drop ticket. The corresponding numbered ball that lands 1st in the hole or closest to the hole wins \$1,000.00

To purchase your golf ball raffle tickets contact FOTAS at golf@fotasaiken.org



Proceeds benefit the Aiken County Animal Shelter Visit www.FOTASaiken.org for golf tournament entry information



Upcoming FOTAS Events

FOTAS Playing Fore the Pets Golf Tournament and Helicopter Golf Ball Drop – September 23

This fun competition for a good cause will be held at the Reserve Club at Woodside. You still have time to sign up and play!

10th Anniversary Celebration
Nov 2, 10am - 1pm

We are celebrating our 10th Anniversary by hosting a party. Look for more details to come about this special community event!