



Spring 2022

FOTAS News

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 SOUTH CAROLINA.

Neglected shelter dog sees his dreams come true



Biscuit when he arrived at the shelter.
Inset: Biscuit with his new family.

There was blood on the kennel walls and a dog named Biscuit curled up on a pillow. He had big, beautiful eyes surrounded by scabs and pain. His fluffy white fur was missing in patches and he looked like he was in pain.

We see so many neglected dogs but why? This furless, bleeding Great Pyrenees wasn't even a year old. How did someone walk by him every day and ignore his suffering?

Now in the shelter's care, Biscuit needed time to heal – mentally and physically. This dog needed a home environment to recover from his neglect. He was positive for demodex mange, which causes fur loss and needs treatment, so FOTAS called Sarah and John for help.

New to Aiken, this couple came to our shelter with their three stunning Great Pyrenees. They wanted to adopt a dog in need, but the one they wanted didn't get along with their dogs. However,

after a short time, we found them Pretzel, another big fluffy dog with a gentle spirit who joined their pack.

We knew Sarah and John would be great fosters for Biscuit. Over the next few weeks, Biscuit blossomed in their care and after one month he was unrecognizable! His fur grew in where there had been bald patches. He looked beautiful!

Sarah and John were worried because he had bonded with Pretzel and all five dogs were so good together. But five large breed dogs? Yes, it happened – Biscuit won the dog lottery and is now adopted into their family.

We are so grateful for the animal control officer who saved Biscuit from a bad living situation and for the shelter staff that comforted him, treated his wounds and gave him love. We are beyond grateful for Sarah and John, who gave him the gift of love and security.

Our shelter is a resource, not just a destination

Most people only think of the Aiken County Animal Shelter as a place to bring lost or unwanted pets for rehoming. But it is so much more than that. Through its partnership with FOTAS, the shelter provides community outreach programs that not only benefit people and their pets, but also help to prevent dogs and cats from ever having to be surrendered and put in its kennels.

In fact, we are now holding pet food assistance drive-thru events. During these events, local residents in need of food for their dogs and cats can drive up to the shelter, where FOTAS volunteers place bags and cans of pet food in the trunks of their vehicles. Thankfully, many generous people donate pet food to the shelter specifically for folks in need.

FOTAS also offers Fido Off-the-Chain to the community. This program provides humane runners and tethering for people who don't have fenced-in yards.

FOTAS's Home to Home program is another resource that helps county residents keep their pets out of the shelter's kennels. It is provided for people to use free of charge – a marketing tool designed for pet owners who need to rehome their pet but do not want their dog or cat to endure the stress of being surrendered to the shelter.

We'll continue to develop community outreach programs that further establish the County Shelter as a helpful resource rather than just a destination for unwanted pets.



Volunteer Jackie Edel with shelter dog Grace.



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FOTAS is a recipient of the Secretary of State of SC Angel Award – one of 10, out of 14,000 organizations, recognized as representing the most efficient and effective charities in SC.

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Text Dogscats to 44321

FOTAS: The numbers tell a story of success

The intake, transfer, adoption, trap/neuter/return (TNR), and Return-to-Field (RTF) data from the Aiken County Animal Shelter has been collected – and the results are breathtaking.

The shelter has managed to achieve, for the fourth year in a row, a live-release rate of 93%. We saved a whopping 4,375 dogs and cats in 2021.

The county and FOTAS celebrate our success, which is due so much to your generosity and support. Thank you! You have made it possible for the County Shelter to save more animals than any other rescue organization in the CSRA.

2021 Statistics

Total Animals Intake	3,339
Total Cats TNR (not incl. in intake)	1,379
Total Animals Intake (incl TNR)	4,718
Total Cats RTF	165
Total TNR/RTF	1,544
Total Cats RTF	165
Total Animals Adopted & Transferred	2,516
Total Returned to Owner	315
Total Animals Saved (not incl TNR)	2,996

2021 Save and Euthanasia Rates

Animals Saved:	
Animals Saved	2,996
Animals Saved incl TNR	4,375
Total Animals Saved	92.73%
Animals Euthanized	218
	6.53% *

IN 2021, ALL ADOPTABLE ANIMALS WERE SAVED!

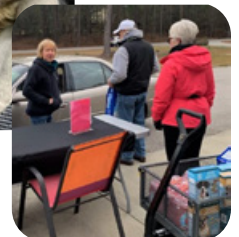
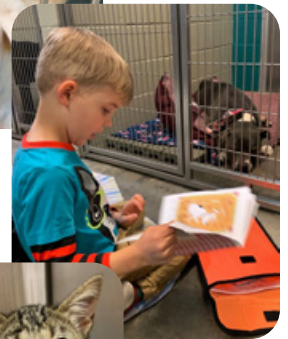
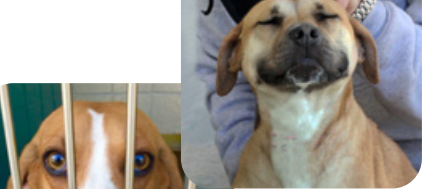
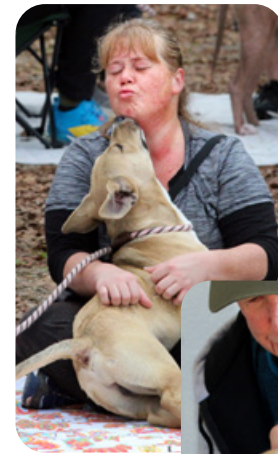
TNR is Trap, Neuter, Return

RTF is Return to Field

*This number does not include animal deaths unrelated to our lifesaving programs:

*Animals that died soon after arrival from injury or neglect: 44 (1.32%).

*Animals euthanized at request of owner: 67 (2.01%).



A legacy for the future



Create a legacy donation to support the Aiken County Animal Shelter and our community's animals in need. Documented planned gifts or bequests to FOTAS in your will or trust are cherished and honored by FOTAS.

This is an excellent way to ensure your love of animals lives on after you. For more information, please contact FOTAS Treasurer Frank Townsend at legacy@fotasaiiken.org or call 803.514.4313.

Nancy Bennett's family presents her estate check, which will help fund the new P.A.W.S. building.

Desperate dogs beat the odds to find good life with loving family

Choco is a 2-month-old, black & tan puppy who arrived at the Aiken County Animal Shelter on Sept. 3 with a life-threatening birth defect. His only chance for survival was expensive, experimental surgery that might not even work. This poor baby needed an adopter able to get him the needed surgery and provide him with a loving home.

Enter Jenna Lubeck and her boyfriend Sam, who had just moved to Aiken from Chicago with four children and 21 horses. They were planning to buy a purebred dog but read a Facebook post about Choco written and shared by Martha Anne Tudor. The family was so moved by the pup's dilemma, Jenna and her youngest child drove to the shelter to meet the pup.

"When we met Choco, my eight-year-old son looked up at me and said, 'We have to adopt this puppy! I'll pitch in my allowance for his surgery.'" The family adopted the pup, renamed him Dante, and provided his expensive surgery. Thankfully, the surgery was a success and Dante made a full recovery.

Just five months later, Jenna saw another post on Facebook. This one featured a chocolate and white, 6-year-old stray dog named Maggie, who was found eating garbage at a trash dump. This skeletal Doberman



Dante (left) and Maggie were both adopted from the Aiken County Animal Shelter. Dante was born with a life-threatening birth defect and Maggie was found eating garbage to survive.

mix with broken teeth and a sweet face reminded her so much of Dante, she drove to the County Shelter to adopt her.

Against all odds, Maggie and Dante have beautiful lives in a home where they are loved. "I'm so glad we adopted instead of buying," Jenna said. "I think I'm going to only adopt from now on."

FOTAS friend brings happiness to senior dog



John Berk at home with Buster, his newly adopted, 14-year-old canine companion.

When 14-year-old, 70-pound, Buster was brought to the shelter, it was sad for all. Buster's owner had health issues and could no longer care for him.

Buster was examined by the County Shelter's vet staff and put into a kennel. He was so nervous, he was lapping up water as fast as he could and shaking in fear. It was so sad; we immediately took his picture and were going to reach out to the public to find help.

Just as we were about to post his picture, we were visited by an old friend, John Berk.

John was a daily volunteer with FOTAS and a friend to us all. Just over three years ago, he fell for Hobbes, a senior dog with fur loss and little "cage appeal." John started to take him out for overnight visits and doggie days out and realized that the poor dog never had much happiness in his life. John adopted Hobbes and gave him the best life any dog could have. He was his constant companion.

When John arrived for a visit, it didn't take long to see the tears in his eyes. His friend Hobbes had passed away at home the day before. Despite the pain of his loss, John asked if we had a senior dog that needed help.

We introduced John to Buster. John took his leash and walked the older dog to his car. He said he wanted to give it a try. It was a little tough for Buster to get in the car, so John pulled out the steps that he had used to help Hobbes get up into the passenger seat.

John and his wife, Sally, have cats and another small dog that they rescued, so we weren't sure this would work. But not even a week passed before John came to the shelter to make it official.

"We've made one dog very happy; thank you for picking him for me," John said.



Doggie Days Out reduce kennel stress

Pretty mixed breed Gwyneth recently enjoyed a break from the stress of the shelter when volunteer Jasminne Ross took her out on a Doggie Date.

"I had an amazing time with Gwyneth!" wrote Jasminne. "She is such a sweetheart and is so kind and adventurous. We went to Langley Pond, Boyd Pond Park and took a

trip to Starbucks to get a Puppuccino. I cannot wait to see her again!"

Being at the shelter can be stressful for homeless pets. So, when they get a chance to get away on a Doggie Day Out, it brings them a lot of joy and relief. If you would like to take a Shelter dog on a Doggie Day Out, just stop by the Shelter, 333 Wire Road, and fill out a short form. You can take a homeless dog in need out for a car ride, trip downtown, walk in the woods, or even overnight!



FIV+ kitties make wonderful indoor pets



When Carmen Newcomb adopted 2-year-old Tabby Isabelle early this year, she knew the FIV positive kitty was the right fit for her family.

"She is wonderful with my elderly dad, follows him everywhere," Carmen said. "She's so sweet and playful. Her personality is showing more and more every day. I'm so glad she's here with us."

FIV or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus is a condition that can be managed and most cats with FIV can live a normal life. However, since FIV is spread through body fluid contact, FIV cats must be kept indoors to limit the possibility of infecting other cats.



FOTAS events are coming up fast!

With the pandemic finally behind us (we hope), FOTAS looks forward to hosting many terrific events this year, including **Woofstock Doggie Derby Days 2022!** The event on April 16 at Citizens Park will be bigger than ever, with the Doxie Derby, all-breed dog races, costume & other contests, a talent show, music, food, exhibitors & more. On May 21, the **Furry One Mile and 5K Run & Walk** will take place at Generations Park. Proceeds from this event, held by 2 Girls and a Clock Race and Timing Services, will benefit FOTAS and the shelter. We also will host more **Reading to the Pets** sessions for kids and visit many schools and other organizations this summer. And don't forget the **FOTAS Playing Fore the Pets Golf Tournament** on Oct. 17 at the Reserve Club. Look for more event updates and details on the FOTAS Facebook page and our website, fotasaiken.org.



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