



Winter 2025

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.

Faces of the 5,000 Homeless Pets of 2025

The Aiken County Animal Shelter continues to see record numbers of neglected pets—many arriving without even the most basic needs like food, shelter, or medical care. Each face tells a story of hardship, hope, and love.



Among them were three stunning Great Pyrenees found wandering together, starved and weak. They could barely stand when they arrived, yet thanks to our dedicated staff and volunteers, they're now thriving and full of life.



Another rescue, Xena—a French Bulldog—was found on the roadside with puncture wounds and maggots. Our team worked tirelessly to heal her wounds, and today, she's healthy, happy!





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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.

Programs & Success Stories

FOTAS to the Rescue: Many Aiken County residents love their pets but struggle to afford food and care. FOTAS operates a Community Pet Food Pantry to keep pets in their homes and out of the shelter. We even help Aiken Senior Services' Meals on Wheels Program—ensuring seniors and their pets never go hungry.



Ensuring Dogs Are Adoptable: FOTAS partners with Dogs Playing for Life, a program that helps shelter dogs thrive through organized playgroups. These sessions help dogs socialize, reduce stress, and prepare them for adoption.



FOTAS funds medical testing and treatment for more pets now received at the shelter with tumors, fur loss, or other conditions so they can find loving homes. We never want to euthanize an adoptable animal with a treatable condition.



Saving Lives Through Social Media

One post about a deaf pit bull puppy named Frankie reached a young woman in Colorado—she flew across the country to adopt him. Stories like Frankie’s show the power of connection and compassion.

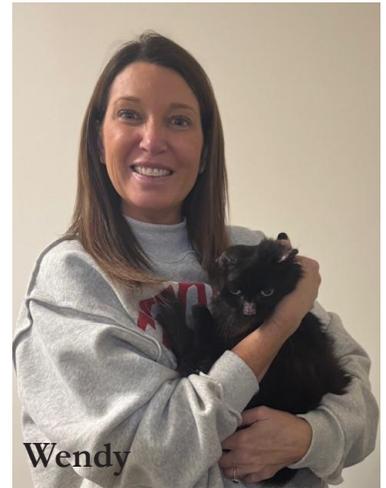
Bethany, a senior cat, arrived matted, scarred, and suffering from cancer. Instead of giving up, our team treated her and found her a hospice home. Her new owner, Wendy Johnson, says, ‘I knew she was special—like God knew we could help one another.’ Bethany’s story reminds us that love, not longevity, defines a life well lived.



Frankie



Bethany



Wendy

Early Education Matters

We believe the key to the future of proper animal care is education. Through our Dog Ears Reading Program and Junior FOTAS Club, children learn kindness, empathy, and the importance of spaying and neutering. These programs help shape the next generation of animal advocates.



Home to Home - A Better Way

FOTAS offers the Home to Home program, a free rehoming service connecting pet owners directly with adopters—eliminating the stress of shelter surrender. This keeps animals safe and comfortable during their transition to new homes.



Bear is a Home to Home adoption. Please message foster with any questions by going to the link below:
<https://home-home.org/pets/6c9017c0-5126-40fb-98bb-845cc15ff34e>



Our Mission and Future

Founded in 2009, Friends of the Animal Shelter (FOTAS) is a volunteer-based nonprofit w/no brick and mortar dedicated to saving every adoptable animal at the Aiken County Animal Shelter. With the support of our community and amazing volunteers we've achieved saving every adoptable pet for the past 7 years. This is a remarkable achievement considering 90% were euthanized before FOTAS was founded. However, it gets harder each year as shelter's intake is so high.

We're now working with Aiken County to open a low-cost spay and neuter clinic to reduce unwanted litters and shelter intake.

And mark your calendars—Woofstock Family Fun Day returns April 25, 2026, at the Aiken County Animal Shelter!



Remembering Mr. "Bob" Kennedy 1933-2025

After losing his wife and dog, he began volunteering daily, sitting with our most frightened dogs. His quiet kindness inspired the creation of the Mr. Kennedy Program, inviting seniors and those with physical limitations to provide love and companionship to shelter pets.



To support our work, please consider donating monies and/or time. For leaving a legacy gift. Contact Frank Townsend at legacy@fotasaiken.org for more information.

Thank you for helping FOTAS' lifesaving programs for Aiken County's Animals. Their lives are in our hands.