

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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fairfax county animal shelter



A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Reasa Currier

I recently celebrated my one-year anniversary with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. During my first few months on the job, we were still in the throes of the pandemic, masking and carefully managing the number of people we allowed in the shelter. As the infection rate dropped in the Spring, we eagerly opened the doors to the shelter wider than ever, welcoming the community back with new and innovative programs for learners of all ages, resources and support for pet owners, and a retooled volunteer program.

As a result, **foot traffic into the shelter increased by over 90% and adoptions increased by 50%**, resulting in a reduced length of stay for animals. Our volunteers returned in droves, with many new faces joining the team, doubling the hours they spent walking dogs, providing socialization and enrichment to all species, and supporting pet owners in the community. During the summer, when we struggled under the weight of the number of pets coming into the shelter, our volunteer foster families stepped up to help and we were able to move nearly half of our pets into loving foster homes.

We understand that not every Fairfax County resident can come to the shelter to access the resources and services they need for their pets. A highlight of this past year was our work outside the shelter walls to meet families with pets where they are...in their neighborhoods. **We provided free and low-cost wellness exams, vaccinations, microchips, spay/neuter surgeries, behavior support, and free pet food and supplies.** Since January, we've served over a thousand families and their pets through these programs.

Our shelter isn't just a place to care for pets who are awaiting homes. We are a diverse and vibrant community that includes a highly skilled and dedicated staff, a passionate team of volunteers, the **Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter**, the **Animal Services Advisory Council**, our contract veterinary partner **Pender Veterinary Centre**, and of course all the animals and residents that we serve. The work of FCAS is anchored in the belief that pets are family, and everyone deserves the love and companionship that comes from sharing one's life with a pet. Thank you for your support to make our work possible.

Reasa D. Currier



ABOUT US

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter accepts every animal regardless of age, health, or behavior. Last year, we accepted nearly 4,000 companion animals into our care and touched the lives of over 1,000 more through our wide range of community-based programs and services.



We can all be incredibly proud that at our animal shelter, no treatable, adoptable, or healthy animal is euthanized, and we have a consistent live release rate of over 90%.

>90%

At the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, we are committed to providing the highest quality of care to the pets we tend to while also working to increase pet retention and increase access to pet services. The shelter has excellent volunteer and foster programs, progressive sheltering policies, and robust community-based programs.



Friends OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER



Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter is the nonprofit 501(c)(3) fundraising partner organization of the Shelter. Friends provides the funding for emergency treatment and other life-saving medical care, dental procedures, parasite prevention, equipment and supplies, pet enrichment items, and so much more! By funding a myriad of critical programs to support pets, Friends joins in the Shelter's efforts to ensure every Shelter pet is offered the best opportunity to find and remain in a loving home.

FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Evelyn C. Grieve, President
Rita Altman, Vice President
Jill Westeyn, Secretary
Nancy Abbott, Board Member
Michael R. Frey, Board Member
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Bobbie Cippel
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Helped by Friends: Doug's Story

Doug arrived at the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in rough shape—he had severely broken his right, hind leg while outside as a stray, and it was clear he would need emergency medical care. During a medical evaluation, veterinary staff determined that amputating the injured leg would be the best course of action. Luckily, Doug's recovery was uncomplicated and he began to hop, climb stairs, and use his litter box. In fact, he's a model "tripawd" rabbit—such a happy-go-lucky and affectionate guy despite everything he's been through.

Friends is happy to report that, after recovering in a foster home, Doug was adopted by an experienced rabbit owner who fell in love with this little guy's story. He will live out his days with his new name, "Peter Cottontail" and with a bunny sibling named BunBun.

Look for the yellow Friends seal throughout this report and read the story of an animal (like Doug) who was helped by Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter !





2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

in-house volunteers contributed

15,113
hours

which equals 7 full-time positions

645 pets sent to
foster homes 

3,547
animals cared for



338

pets moved from crisis to care
through our transfer program

92%
Save Rate



477

community cats
received spay/
neuter surgeries &
vaccinations



871

children attended
our Reading Tails
program



1,274

pets in homes provided with free and low-cost veterinary care, pet supplies, and support

328

behavior & training sessions conducted

3,114

lives saved through adoption & reunification

1,164

spay/neuter surgeries were performed on shelter pets

Friends OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

48 pets provided medical treatment, including emergency life-saving medical care, totaling **\$52,715**.



35 pets provided with dental care to improve overall health, reduce pain, and help set pets and their adopters up for success, totaling **\$30,517**.



Adopters of **652 dogs** and **1,010 cats** provided with supplies that included leashes for dogs and collars with personalized tags, totaling **\$11,858**.



In 2022, the Shelter's comprehensive parasite prevention program treated **1,597 dogs** and puppies, **1,337 cats** and kittens, and **214 rabbits** thanks to **\$78,709** of funding by Friends.



477 community cats were spayed or neutered, vaccinated, ear-tipped, and examined as part of the Shelter's Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) Program, funded with **\$35,150** from Friends.



\$24,206 for shelter improvements, including chicken coops and trees along the back walking trail to act as a noise buffer for I-66.



\$3,047 toward in-Shelter enrichment items for pets, such as Kongs®, Nylabones®, and cat scratchers.



32 pets highlighted on social media as part of the Friends Spotlight Program.





FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER — LORTON CAMPUS

“This facility will allow us to substantially grow the geographic reach and impact of our work for the residents of Fairfax County. Not only will we be able to create even more families through adoption, but the second shelter will provide a hub for essential services from behavior and training support, veterinary medical care, pet supplies, and other critical services that help keep pets together with their families.”

— Reasa Currier, Director



The 23,000-square-foot facility on Lorton Road will be the second county-operated shelter in Fairfax, joining the existing shelter located at 4500 West Ox Road.



Proper HVAC to decrease disease/odor.



Natural light in almost all animal areas.



Acoustical designs to decrease noise in animal housing areas.



Indoor meet n' greet rooms and play rooms for dogs and cats.



Separate entrances for Adoptions and Admissions/Vet Clinic.



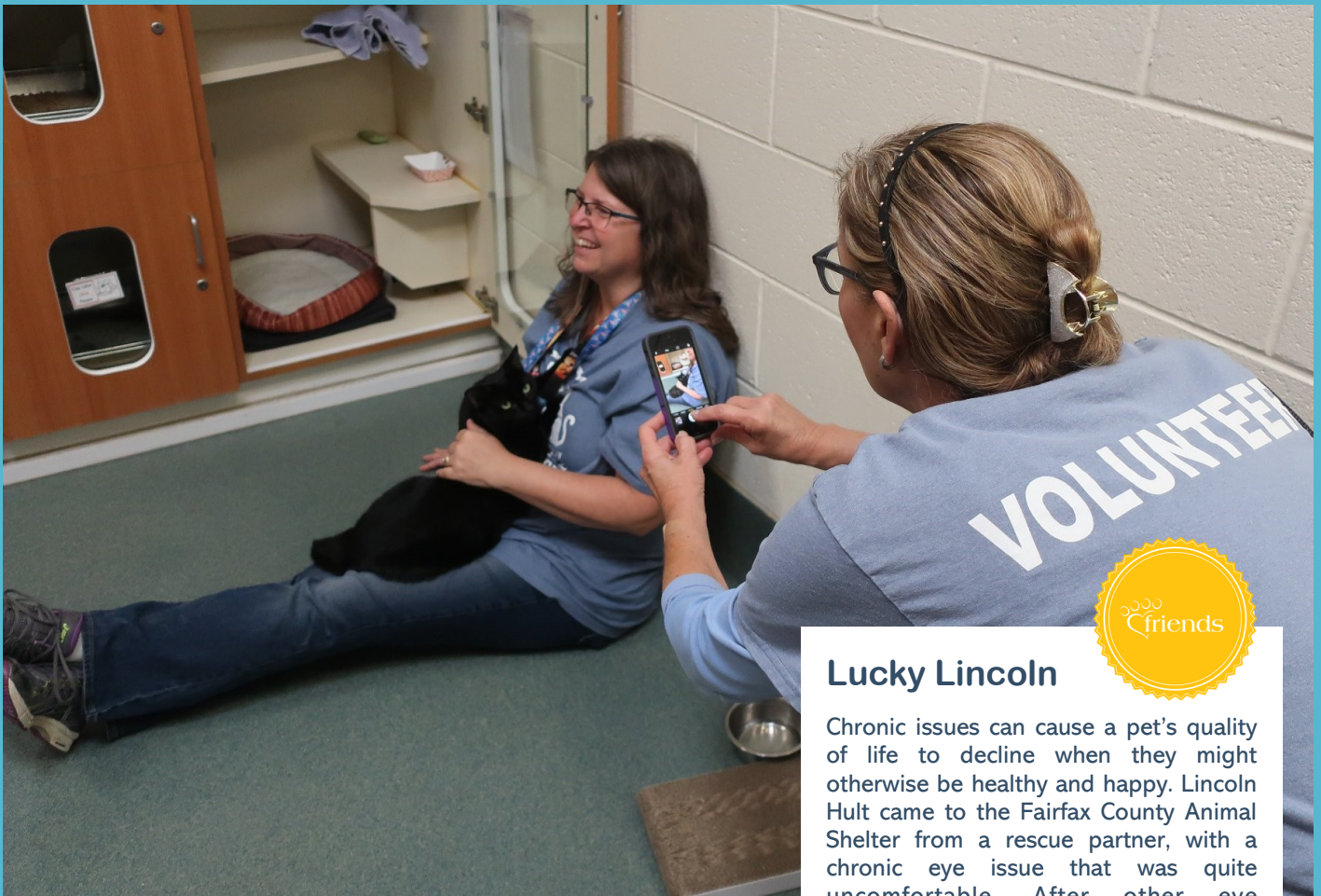
Outdoor enclosed "catio" spaces for shelter cats to get fresh air.



Focused effort on "fear-free" housing with separation of species throughout the facility.



Sustainability features, including electric vehicle charging stations, space for solar panels, and energy-efficient systems.



Lucky Lincoln

Chronic issues can cause a pet's quality of life to decline when they might otherwise be healthy and happy. Lincoln Hult came to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter from a rescue partner, with a chronic eye issue that was quite uncomfortable. After other eye treatments failed to work, a veterinarian determined the best route to relieve him of any ongoing issues was to surgically remove it.

Friends funded an eye enucleation surgery for this handsome guy, making him happy and pain-free! Lincoln Hult spent time in a wonderful foster home that nursed him back to health and then eventually he was adopted into a loving family. Congratulations, Lincoln Hult!

The Resurgence of Volunteers

In-house volunteers and fosters with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FCAS) play a critical role in improving the lives of Shelter pets, enhancing Shelter operations to better serve our community, and helping expand the reach of programs. Through the invaluable support and involvement of in-house volunteers and fosters, the Shelter can achieve its mission and have a positive impact on the pets and people in Fairfax County.

In late March 2020, the Shelter closed to the public and temporarily paused its In-House Volunteer Program, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the Volunteer Program was resumed, it was off to a slow start. After identifying key areas for volunteer recruitment, streamlining the onboarding process, and training staff and volunteers to assist with onboarding, things really took off!

The number of active in-house volunteers increased from 182 in December 2021 to 307 in December 2022—that's an increase of 68% in one year.





Dog Training Assistants Program

Volunteer Dog Training Assistants teach designated shelter dogs foundational skills needed for a more successful adoption. The cornerstones of the program are the building of trust, the development of communication using markers, the creation of motivation through the use of food, and finally the ability to hold engagement.

Volunteer Dog Training Assistants work with dogs on three specific behaviors: Sit, Eyes, and Place. A Sit is exactly what it sounds like: a dog must simply bend its rear legs until its bottom rests on the ground. Eyes develops focus on the handler (the volunteer handling the dog) and stimulation control. A dog must look at the handler, while ignoring treats, which are spread apart at the dog's eye level with the handler. And Place is achieved by luring the dog onto a platform or Kuranda® bed. The volunteers record the number of successful behaviors they achieved out of five attempts.

In 2019, volunteers in this program accomplished 2,318 Sits, 2,234 Eyes, and 1,772 Places with shelter dogs. In 2020, Covid-19 hit and before pausing the in-house volunteer program, they accomplished 320 Sits, 291 Eyes, and 297 Places. In 2021, Covid-19 restrictions were easing and volunteers were returning; they accomplished 736 Sits, 299 Eyes, and 215 Places. **In 2022, volunteers accomplished 2,235 Sits, 1,204 Eyes, and 1,311 Places;** they achieved these behaviors in addition to walking the dogs so they could get outside to potty and stretch their legs a bit. That does not include all the other areas in the shelter they may volunteer!

Our Behavior and Training Specialist has been working with families and their new dogs post-adoption, and sessions encompass a broad range of help. **In 2022, 150 families were assisted and 328 training sessions were given**—a substantial increase from when training help was first offered in 2019, when 70 families were assisted and 96 training sessions were given.

At the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, we continue to look for new ways to create opportunities to support our volunteers and residents of Fairfax County. The better we understand and can handle dogs, the more successful the placement in their new homes.



Veterinary Assistance Grant Program

The goal at the Fairfax County Animal Shelter is to ensure that pets stay with their families, and the Veterinary Assistance Program is helping us do just that by keeping pets in their homes. Thanks to the generosity of our nonprofit partner, the Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (Friends), the Shelter can help eligible Fairfax County residents who are struggling to afford non-routine veterinary care for their cat or dog.

Evelyn Grieve, President and Co-founder of Friends, explains, “Without our generous pet loving donor community, this program would not be possible. This is a targeted program to help the most vulnerable pet owners receive the help they need to ensure that their pet can remain in their loving forever home.”

When Diamond, a sweet 7-year old dog, broke out in a bad rash, her mom Jatana was so worried about her, but the cost of a vet visit was out of reach. Thanks to the grant funds, Jatana was able to take Diamond to a vet and get her treated for her allergic reaction, remove a benign growth, and spay Diamond all at once. Jatana was so relieved that Diamond got the care that she needed, she reached out and said, “Good morning! I want to thank you personally, I am literally in tears that my dog was able to be checked to ensure she’s in good health. I am honored that you have granted service for Diamond to be seen. Thanks again, have a fantastic day.”

Programs like this — ones that address the root cause of pet homelessness— have such a huge impact on both the individual pet that is being helped and on the overall animal welfare system. The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is grateful to have Friends help reach their goals.

HELPING KEEP PEOPLE & PETS TOGETHER

The People and Animal Wellness Services (P.A.W.S.) Program is a new initiative that focuses on building community partnerships and expanding services to help address the systemic roots of resource inequity in Fairfax County. The Shelter partners with pet owners to help provide several resources to support a “whole family” model to increase pet retention and deter unnecessary pet surrender. Our goal is to help pet owners resolve issues so they can keep their pets. We accomplish this through:

PET SERVICES EVENTS

- Free community events with a variety of services (pet & human)
- Hosted bimonthly in identified opportunity communities
- Open to those without other access to pet care

LOW-COST RABIES VACCINATION & MICROCHIP CLINICS

- Bimonthly low cost clinics hosted at the Shelter

SPAY/NEUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- Free spay & neuter surgeries
- Other minor surgeries and treatments, e.g. skin allergies, hernia repair, etc.
- Open to those without other access to pet care

COMMUNITY PET FOOD PANTRY

- Food, litter, and other pet supplies
- Available at Shelter and off-site locations

VET ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM (in partnership with Friends of FCAS)

- Financial assistance grants by application
- Available to individuals receiving government assistance



REUNITING PETS & FAMILIES



A nice family came to the shelter looking to adopt a dog. They'd been looking around for a while, but just hadn't felt a connection yet. They looked through our adoption kennels but still no one caught their eye. As they were leaving, one of the kids noticed the pictures of more available dogs... and suddenly there was a connection, because one of our dogs looked just like their last dog. Turns out... it WAS their dog!!! Their dog had gone missing in another county a while back and they looked everywhere, but didn't think he could've made it this far away.

Soldier, whose real name is Dante, was absolutely overjoyed to see his family. Lots of jumping and whining and tail wags, running from person to person as if to confirm that yes, they were REAL and they were here to take him HOME again!!! It's clear that Dante is a very loved member of the family, and we were so happy that everything worked out for the best. Maybe this was the universe not letting them feel a connection with any other dog, because Dante was still waiting for them.

Lost...But Not For Long

One of the most rewarding services our shelter offers is reuniting lost pets with their families. We are thrilled when any found pet goes home, but the most joyous and heartwarming reunions are for the long-lost pets who have been away from their families for months or even years.

When a lost animal arrives at our shelter, we immediately check for identification. We check the collar for tags, we scan for microchips, and we look for leg bands on found birds. We also receive lost and found reports daily from the public, which we use to check for matches. Sometimes animals arrive without identification, or the contact information we have for their family is not current, so our staff members often need to use our detective skills to locate owners for the found pets. We check websites such as PawBoost for matching listings, we check the dog license database for similar dogs, and we check our own shelter database to see if similar animals were brought to our shelter previously. We also contact other local shelters if pets are found near the border of another jurisdiction. If an ear-tipped community cat is found, we check with our local trap-neuter-return caregivers to see if they are missing one of their colony cats. If a pet has a microchip that isn't registered, we will contact the implant facility to see if they have any owner information. Sometimes we track leads throughout the country, and for some animals we must contact multiple previous owners until we are finally able to locate the current family.

Once we contact the pet's current family, we tell them what is needed to pick up their pet (photo ID, proof of ownership, documentation showing current rabies vaccination and dog license, and payment for impound, boarding, and any vet fees).

Strays that arrive without identification are held for 5 days, and strays with identification are held for 10 days, after which they are evaluated for adoption if they are not reclaimed.

We have been very successful with reuniting lost pets, and in 2022, we reunited about 90 percent of the 790 stray dogs, and about 60 percent of the 1,396 total stray animals who were brought to our shelter.

Accidents happen and pets sometimes get lost, but every pet owner can take certain steps to assist with a quick reunion. Please microchip your pets, have them wear identification, keep your dogs leashed when not in a safe fenced area, consider keeping your cats indoors, and file a lost report with your local animal shelter if your pets go missing.

Pepper's Story



Poor Pepper was found on the side of the road in Maryland by a Good Samaritan and transported to a veterinary hospital in Fairfax County. Pepper was seriously injured by a suspected car accident, suffering from multiple fractures in her hip and pelvic area. The damage to her little body was extreme, but there was hope for a brighter future.

Pepper needed a femoral head ostectomy (FHO), which is a surgical procedure that removes the damaged head and neck of the femur to restore mobility and comfort. Before she could undergo this procedure, she needed the fractures in her pelvis to heal. During this time, she remained on crate rest with a caring foster family. After several weeks of rest, Pepper was able to receive the necessary FHO surgery funded by Friends.

This lucky gal was given a second chance thanks to caring people in our community and the support from our compassionate constituents. Pepper was adopted very shortly after she was cleared by the vet and is now in a loving home.



The Beagle Brigade

Over the summer, FCAS took 26 beagles into our care. These beagles were part of a massive effort spearheaded by the Humane Society of the United States, who coordinated the rescue of 4,000 beagles from a now-defunct breeding facility. We were one of many shelters and rescues across 27 states who could help these very deserving dogs!

Our first group included six puppies and ten adults ranging in age from one to seven years. The puppies were typical adorable little puppies, very boisterous, playful, and friendly. The adults were a different story—they were very shy, did not know how to walk on leashes and needed to be carried everywhere, and didn't even know that they could lie on the beds in their kennels. They clearly wanted to be friends with people, and with patience and some gentle words, they slowly opened up. It may seem silly, but it's like they knew their lives had changed for the better!

The improvements were gradual at first. A couple of beagles started laying on their beds, or on towels we placed on the floor. Some slow tail wags began when staff would approach their kennels. While at first the adults ignored Kongs and other treats, after just a few days, the beagles began holding the treats in their mouths while wagging their tails. Not eating them, but at least holding them proudly! Eventually, they figured out how to walk on leashes; and finally—finally!—one by one, they performed the quintessential beagle bark. They were really feeling better!!

We knew that they still had a ways to go, but their new families could and should be the ones to continue this journey with them. So, all 16 of the beagles were bathed, spayed/neutered, and made ready for adoption. Within a couple of days of being available for adoption, all 16 of the beagles had found their new families! We are so happy for each of them to go from their former existence into rich, vibrant lives as part of their own families.

We were thrilled to welcome another 10 beagles to our shelter in early September! These ten went straight to foster homes and were made available for adoption shortly thereafter. Even better is that those ten were among the very last of the total 4000 beagles rescued. That's 4000 beagles living the good life now, thanks to shelters, rescues, donors, fosters, and adopters across the country. We were so glad to be a part of this amazing effort.



A Very Special Adoption Story

Picture a very small, elderly black and white Chihuahua, with long legs, very large ears that stick up, a slightly hunched back, and a tongue that perpetually hangs out of his mouth because he's missing part of his lower jaw. That is Mr. Snuggles. He was brought in by Animal Protection Police as part of a custody situation, and after everything was said and done, he was in our care for almost two whole years. Thankfully, he spent almost all that time in foster homes, and at the end of it all he was welcomed in to one of his foster families officially via adoption!

Here's the heartwarming update about this pipsqueak of a dog with a huge personality: "After just shy of two years of fostering Mr. Snuggles, we were thrilled to make him officially part of the family! Since he became an "official" family member, he's made his debut on our annual Christmas card, has been a wonderful co-pilot on road trips, and even earned his wings when we flew to see family for the holidays! He loves the home-knitted sweaters our daughter makes him and all the attention he gets when he runs errands with us. Because of his memorable and adorable face we thought it would be fit to share it on Instagram. He has gained a following of kind and supportive Chihuahua lovers from all walks of life. A few things Mr. Snuggles enjoys in his loving home are long evenings of cuddles and movie watching, slobbery kisses every morning from his husky-pit mix brother (Mr. Snuggles is the size of his head!), delicious plates of kibble and chicken (he's a little piggy!), and of course sunbathing when the weather permits. He is truly a member of the family and we couldn't imagine a life without him."



FOR THE LOVE OF A SENIOR DOG



Molasses arrived at our shelter as a stray in very poor condition. He could barely walk, his coat was matted, and his head was held low because he was scared and didn't seem to understand where he was or what was happening to him. We made him comfy in his kennel, and waited for his family to come find him, but they never came.

After an exam with our medical team, we learned that Molasses was about 12 years old and had multiple health issues such as a severe arthritis, a heart murmur, and there were some concerns with his bloodwork. Due to his age and health issues, one of our wonderful adoption counselors asked if she could take Molasses home as a hospice foster so he could be loved and spoiled for his remaining days.

At the foster family's home, Molasses was happy, but he was still a sick boy. His foster family spoon-fed him his food and they all took turns sleeping on the couch with him during the first week to make sure he was okay.

With each passing day, Molasses got better and better. He started wanting to go for short walks and his foster discovered that he enjoyed barking at passing cars! They gave him yummy treats, occasional *Puppuccinos* from *Starbucks*, and did everything they could to make every day special. They adored Molasses and enjoyed every minute with him, but they also recognized how excited he became when he met new people. The foster also knew that he adjusted quickly to new situations, and sensed that he would be very happy with a new family if someone would give him a chance.

After discussing his progress with the foster coordinator, it was decided that Molasses would be made available for



adoption. We knew it would be a challenge to find someone willing to adopt a senior dog who had health issues, but if we found the right person, Molasses could have a forever home.

Not too long after he was made available for adoption, we were contacted by a potential adopter. The adopter had experience with senior dogs with medical issues and wanted to help another one in need. Molasses came to the shelter to meet her; he walked straight up to her, plopped on his side, and asked for belly rubs. It was obvious that this was a perfect match and they instantly loved each other, so Molasses was adopted then and there!

Since his adoption, we have received regular updates and photos of Molasses (renamed *Chow*) enjoying this new chapter of his life. He is the center of attention. His new mom brings him to work with her, takes him on outings, and even bought him a cart so he doesn't have to walk when he gets tired.

Senior dogs like Molasses have so much love to give, and if you open your heart and home to one for fostering or adoption, you will be rewarded tenfold with grateful kisses and tail wags.



Jack's Story

Jack arrived at the Shelter with several other young guinea pigs. Poor Jack was apparently getting picked on by the other guinea pigs he was housed with. Things were so bad that Jack had a rather severe eye injury. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter stepped in and paid for an eye enucleation surgery and relieved Jack of any discomfort he was experiencing.

Now a one-eyed adorable guinea pig and separated from the others who were picking on him, Jack was ready to be adopted. He was so sweet that in no time at all, a wonderful family came along, met him, and adopted him.

Jack is now living the life and is completely unbothered by the fact that he only has one eye! Thank you for helping Jack, Friends!

WORKING CATS

On August 8th, 2022, Animal Protection Police (APP) responded to a call and discovered 85 cats and five dogs living in less-than-ideal circumstances; due to the conditions of the home, APP began removing dozens of cats from the home and bringing them to the Shelter. After several days of rounding up cats, which involved using humane traps and manually removing those who were hiding in holes in the walls, they were all brought to the Shelter. Most of the cats were terrified and ranged in age from just days old to four years old.

The entire team of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FCAS) came together at a moment's notice to meet these animals' needs. The Animal Care Team worked to care for them and sort out who needed the most immediate medical attention. The rest of the shelter staff and the volunteers pitched in with what they could to support the Animal Care Team. Our wonderful medical team worked tirelessly to get these cats healthy, and spayed and neutered. Partner shelters and rescues took a few small groups just to lighten the load a bit.

Once the dust settled, some of the cats were ready for adoption — and just in time for the Clear the Shelters adoption event. The response from the public and the interest in the cats was absolutely wonderful.

Slowly but surely over the course of the next few months, all of the cats found new homes. Their adopters were prepared to welcome under-socialized cats into their homes who were not yet used to human affection but had still shown the potential to be a pet if given lots of time and patience. A few of the less social cats were adopted as "working cats." One long-time FCAS supporter came up from Madison, VA, to adopt three working cats to live in her barn facing Old Rag Mountain!



GET INVOLVED

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter strives to lead the way in creating a compassionate, safe community for pets and people. We wouldn't be able to do all that we do without the support of our donors, staff, volunteers, fosters, adopters, and community advocates. Are you looking for ways to get involved?

ADOPT

Shelter pets have so much love to give—and they won't ever stop giving it to you once you let them into your heart! Consider adding a dog, cat, rabbit, guinea pig, parakeet or other adoptable pet to your household. The Fairfax County Animal Shelter has many pets waiting for a good home. Visit our website to learn about our simple adoption process and see a list of available pets!

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/adopt

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter play a critical role in improving the lives of Shelter Pets and community members served by FCAS. Become a volunteer to support our programs, promote animal welfare, and provide shelter animals with the care, love, and attention they so desperately need.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/volunteer

FOSTER

Not prepared to get a pet for life? Become a foster home and welcome a shelter pet into your home *temporarily*. Shelter pets need foster care for a variety of reasons, including those too young to be adopted, pregnant or nursing moms with their litters, those experiencing behavioral challenges, and some who need advanced care as they recover from medical treatment.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/foster

DONATE

Whether you make a donation to the Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter through their website, purchase a commemorative brick in the Friends Tribute Garden, or leave a legacy to them through your estate plans, you can rest assured that you are directly helping Shelter pets. Friends provides the funding for emergency and other life-saving medical treatment, dental procedures, parasite prevention, equipment and supplies, pet enrichment items, and so much more!

www.ffcas.org/donate



WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

As we look towards the coming year, we eagerly anticipate the opening of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FCAS) in Lorton. There will be 27 new staff to support the facility. We are particularly excited about the location, so we can provide additional services and support to Fairfax County residents in the southern part of the County. We are already hearing from residents who live near the new shelter who are eager to volunteer and take part in our programs.

Every animal that comes through our doors is an individual. This year, with the help of the Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, we are increasing our investment in training our staff and volunteers to provide specialized behavior and training support to the pets in our care. FCAS isn't just a place for pets to wait for a new home, but a place of opportunity where pets can learn new skills that will help them adapt to their adoptive homes.

At FCAS, we are committed to providing the highest quality of care to the animals in our shelter, while also working to tackle the root causes of animal homelessness in our community. Families with pets can face many barriers from lack of access to veterinary care to lack of availability of pet-friendly housing. We are deepening our relationships with community partners and other County agencies to create a system of wrap-around services so families with pets don't fall through the cracks. Our work is anchored in the belief that pets are family, and we look forward to expanding our programs and services over the coming year that help people and their pets stay healthy, happy, and together.



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