

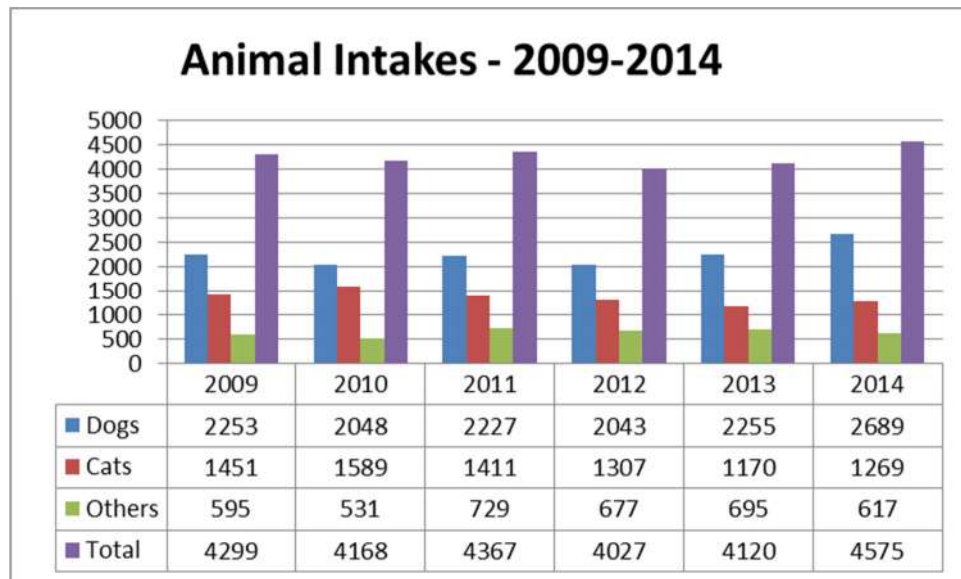


# FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

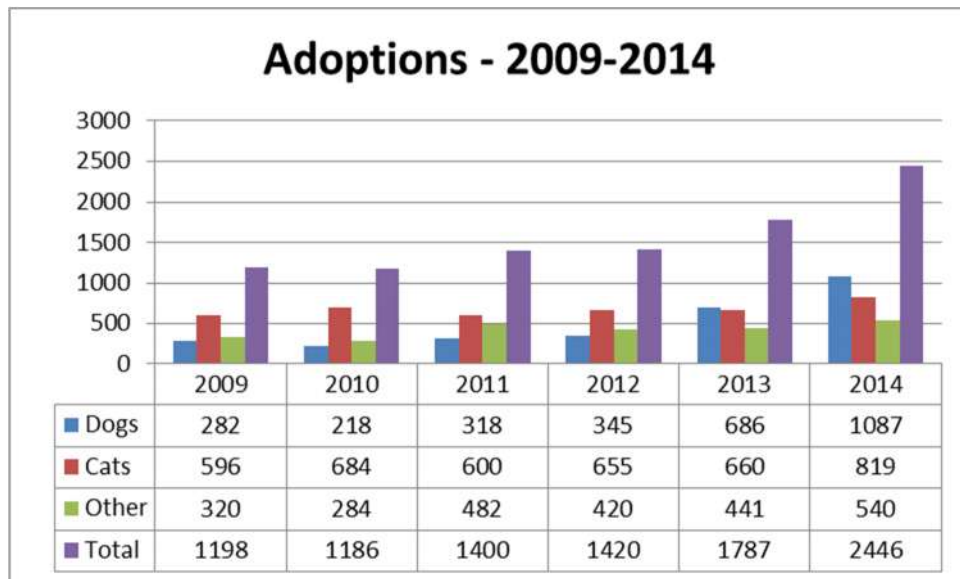
## 2014 Annual Report

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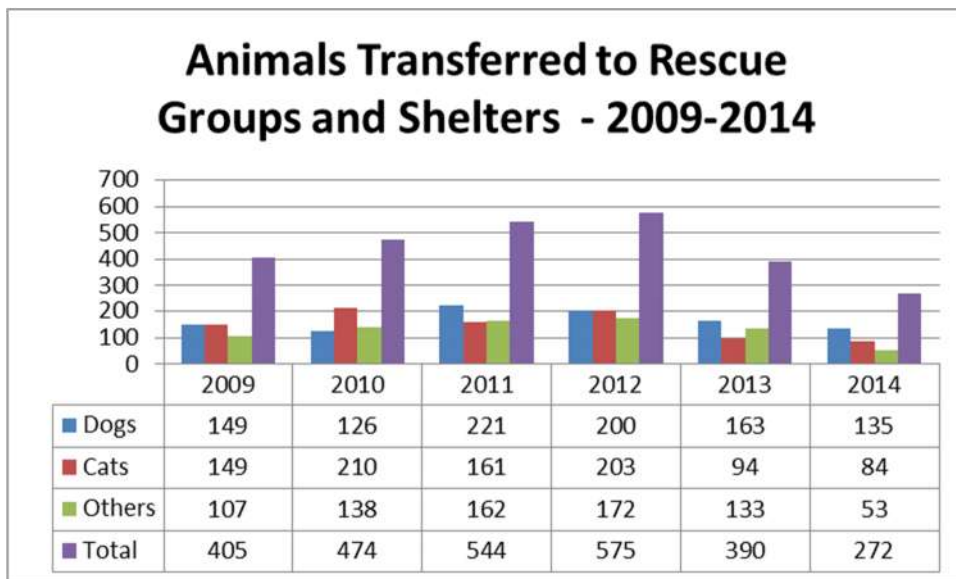
**Intake:** The number of animals brought to the shelter declined from 2011 through 2013 but has increased again in 2014, due to the strategic transfer in of animals from rescue and shelter partners in the region. If intentional intake is backed out, shelter intake has remained steady at approximately 4,000 animals for the past three years.



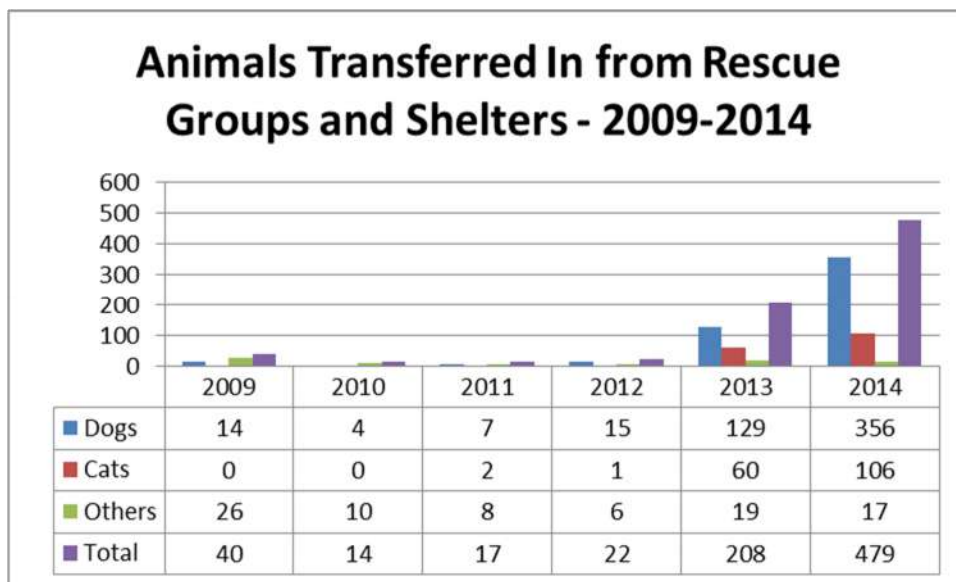
**Adoptions:** 2014 was a record adoption year. For the first time in Fairfax County Animal Shelter history, more than 1,000 dogs were adopted and overall adoptions exceeded 2,000. Since 2009, there has been a 104% increase in overall adoptions and a 285% increase in dog adoptions.



**Animals transferred to rescue groups and shelters:** Since 2012, there has been a decrease in numbers of animals transferred to rescue groups. The renovations and new construction completed this year addressed the need for more space and that combined with a strong foster program facilitates the adoption of more of the animals that come into its custody. The shelter now transfers out less than half the animals it did in 2012. This frees up the rescue organizations' resources to focus on animals in need.

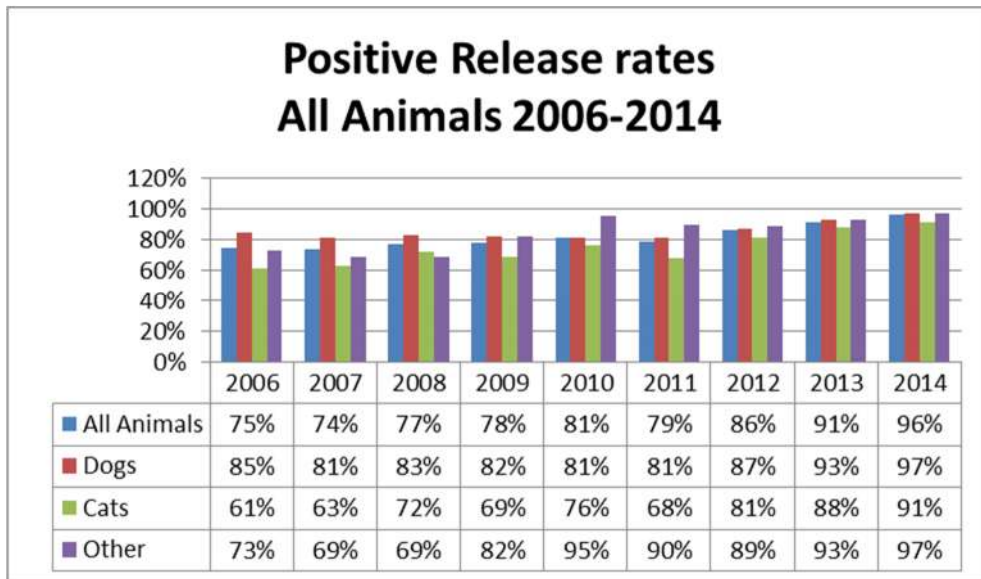


**Animals transferred in from rescue groups and shelters:** Since the completion of the renovation project and increased visitation to the shelter, there is more room in the adoption areas for available pets. The shelter has developed a strategic transfer-in program bringing healthy, friendly dogs and cats from under-resourced shelters in the region into the Fairfax County Animal Shelter for adoption. This year alone, the shelter has transferred in nearly 500 pets from other shelters and rescue groups. In addition to being a regional lifesaving practice, keeping friendly, healthy animals on the adoption floor at all times encourages people to return to the shelter and tell their friends and family about the shelter.

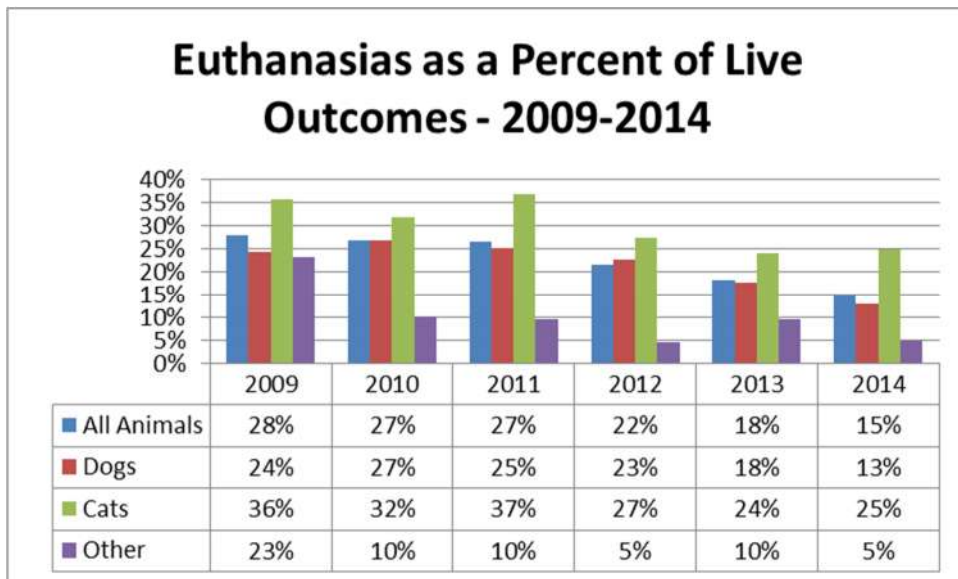


**Asilomar Accord live release rates:** The Asilomar live release rate calculates the number of live outcomes of animals in the shelter, taking out the animals signed over as requests for euthanasia. The chart below reflects the ‘live release’ rate as calculated using the Asilomar method. Visit here to read more about the Asilomar Accords. <http://www.asilomaraccords.org/>

This chart does not include euthanasia performed as a request from the owner. The data including Euthanasia requests is reported to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and reflected on the next page.



**Euthanasia rate:** Because of an overall increase in space and adoptions, the euthanasia rate of animals in the shelter has decreased from 28% in 2009 to 15% in 2014. The shelter does continue to provide a free euthanasia service for residents of Fairfax County so this includes animals surrendered for euthanasia.



**Foster Program:** The shelter has more than 150 foster families who provide in-home care to homeless pets. Animals are sent to foster homes when they are too young to be in the shelter, when they are sick or injured or are recovering from surgery, or when they need a break from the stress of being in the shelter.

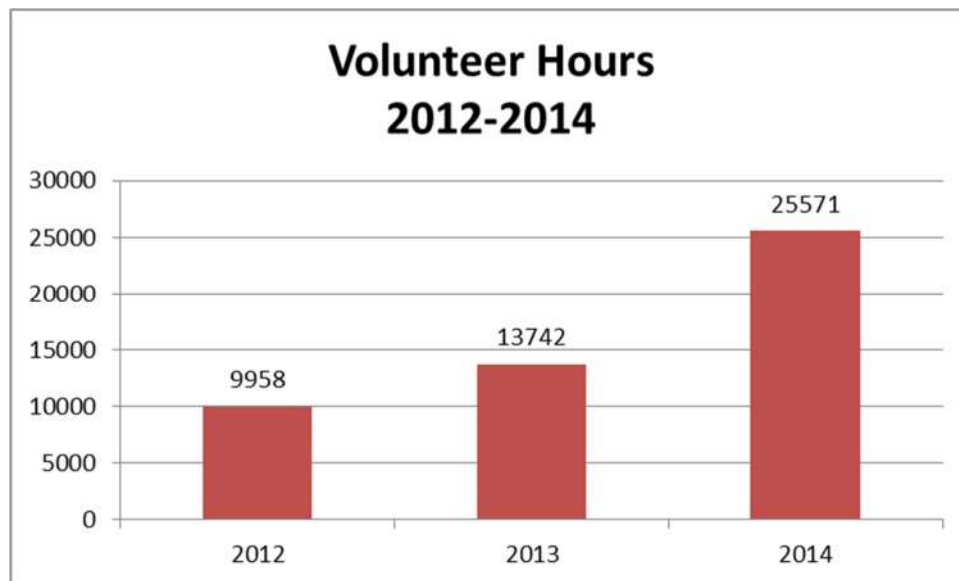
In 2014, a total of 484 animals entered the foster program. 160 cats were sent to foster homes. 65% of these were kittens too young to be adopted. 296 dogs were sent to foster homes. 22% of these were puppies too young to be adopted. 28 small animals were also sent to foster homes.

Three new foster programs started in 2014.

1. **Weekend Fostering:** Adoptable dogs are given a break from the shelter and are taken home by foster families during the two days the shelter is closed.
2. **Power Hour Fostering:** Shelter dogs are taken out for field trip outings to stretch their legs and have a fun, positive experience. Read about this program in the Huffington Post: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arinen-greenwood/shelter-dog-hiking\\_b\\_6041240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arinen-greenwood/shelter-dog-hiking_b_6041240.html)
3. **30-Day Cat Fostering:** Older cats sometimes wait many months for a new family. This program gives them a 30-day break from life in the kitty condos.



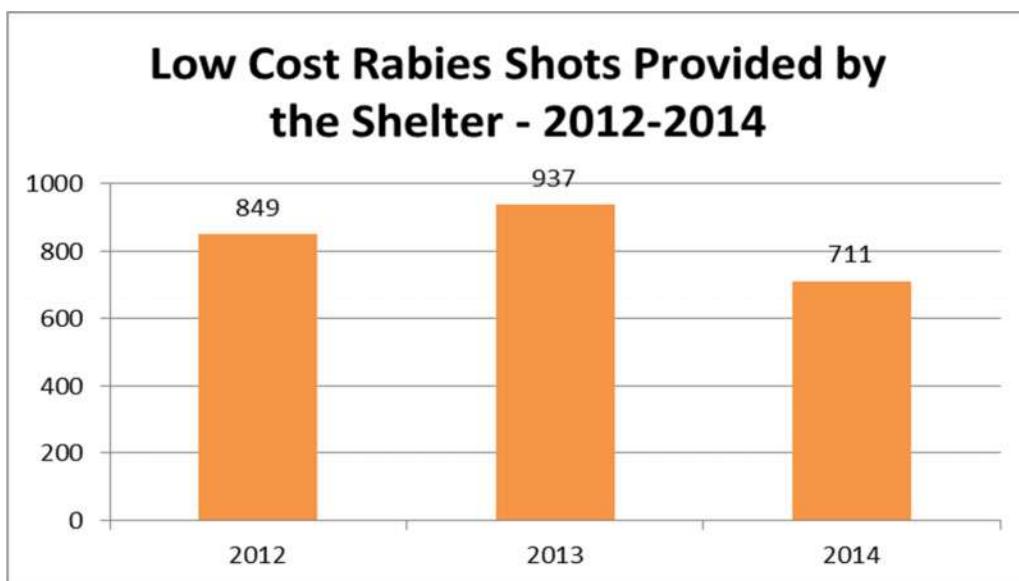
**Volunteer Program:** The shelter currently has more than 300 active volunteers who contributed more than 25,500 hours to the Shelter, the equivalent to nearly 14 full-time staff members. Volunteers helped with all aspects of shelter work, including walking, bathing, and training dogs; socializing cats and small companion animals; assisting with front-office work such as performing adoptions, selling dog licenses, and greeting citizens as they enter the shelter providing valuable information on how to visit with and adopt our animals. They also assist with cleaning animal kennels, training, enrichment, data entry and more. Since 2012, there has been an increase of 157% in volunteer hours.



## Community Programs

**Community-based spay and neuter:** Since 2008, the shelter has sterilized and vaccinated more than 5,000 free-roaming cats. In 2014, nearly 1,000 cats were spayed or neutered. This proactive, community-based program contributes to the annual intake remaining steady, despite a growing population of cats and people in Fairfax County.

**Low cost rabies shots:** Rabies vaccine clinics are held seven times per year, in various sites in Fairfax County, providing affordable vaccines to the public.



## **Awards and Recognitions**

In 2014, the shelter received the Compassion Award from the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies for its work to reduce unnecessary euthanasia.

FCAS was recognized as one of the top 1% shelters in the United States by Humane Society of the United States President and CEO Wayne Pacelle, who visited the shelter in July.

Shelter Director Tawny Hammond received the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Leadership Award.

Communications Director Kristen Auerbach received an Outstanding Performance Award for the shelter's nationally-recognized social media program.

Kristen Auerbach received an award from the Fancy Cats Rescue Team for her efforts to rehome Fairfax cats.

## **Conference Presentations**

Director Tawny Hammond and Kristen Auerbach presented at the Alley Cat Allies national conference on Fairfax County's groundbreaking community spay and neuter program.

Tawny Hammond presented at the Humane Society's Taking Action for Animals annual conference held in Washington D.C.

Kristen Auerbach presented at the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies annual conference on marketing and social media.

## Media

**Website:** The new animal shelter website is [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter). Since the redesign and migration of the site, page views have roughly doubled. This year, the shelter website has received approximately 500,000 page views. Previously, the web page location was not intuitive for visitors to the county web site.

This past year, the shelter has received national media coverage with six stories in the Huffington Post and stories featured in Animal Sheltering magazine and posts by Animal Farm Foundation and ASPCAPro.

Shelter programs and adoption promotions have been featured multiple times on NBC Washington and on Fox 5 DC as well as HLN, part of the Turner Broadcasting System.

Tips and Tails, the animal shelter television show is produced quarterly by Channel 16 and has aired six, half-hour episodes.

The Paw Cast, a podcast featuring news, stories and events from the shelter completed its inaugural year, with 15-minute episodes airing twice a month.

## Social Media

Facebook: The shelter started the year with about 5,000 Facebook followers and ended the year with more than 16,000. About half of the shelter's adopters say they saw the shelter or a shelter pet on Facebook. Posts receive around 100,000 views per week, bringing lifesaving attention to homeless pets.

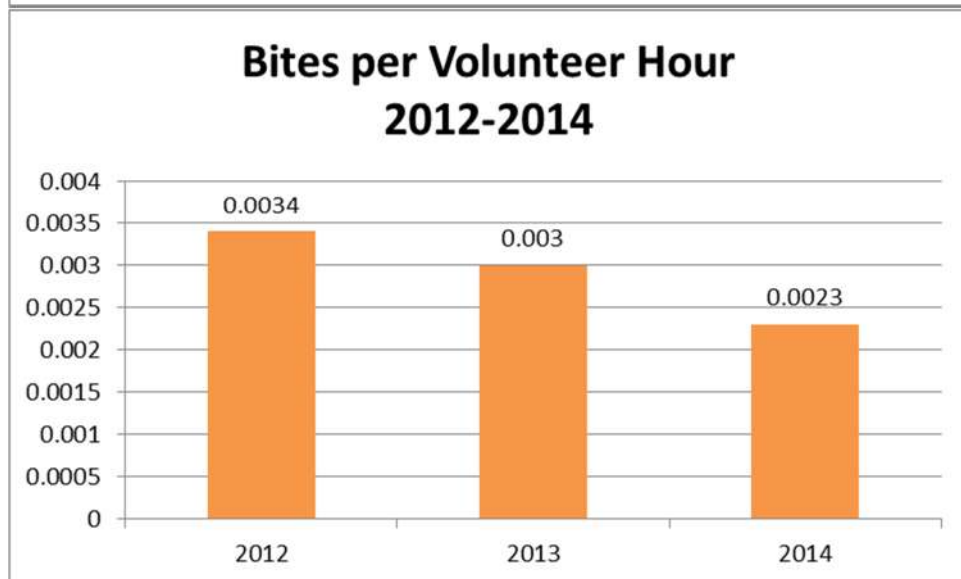
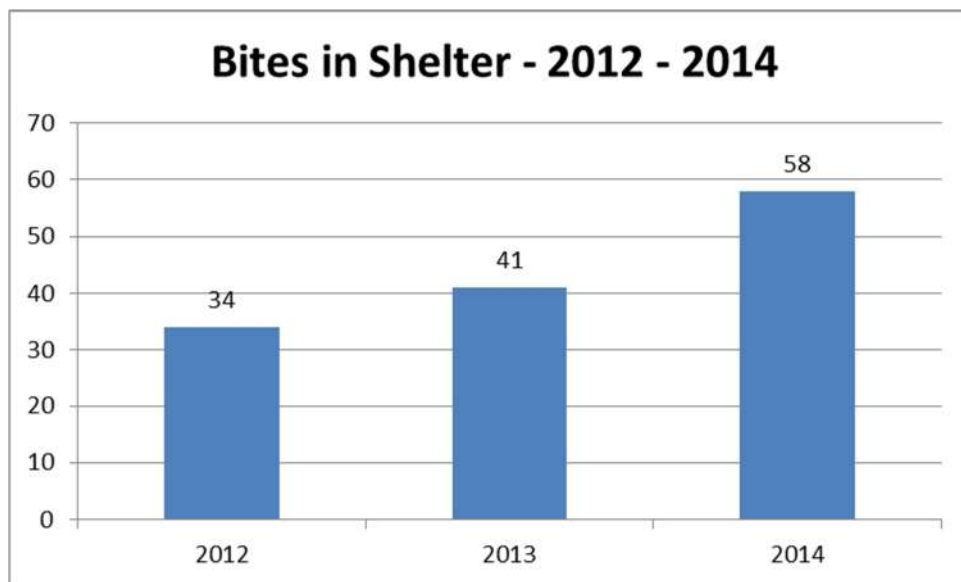
Instagram and Twitter: The shelter started Twitter and Instagram accounts this year, providing additional platforms for engagement. Each platform has about 1,000 followers.



## 2014 Shelter News

- Pender Veterinary Center was awarded the shelter veterinary services contract in full and plans are underway to move most procedures, including spay and neuter of shelter pets and community animals, to the vet suite in the shelter.
- The pit bull restrictions on adoptions were lifted in January, resulting in an increase in adoptions of pit bull type dogs.
- The shelter switched from the Chameleon software system to the PetPoint shelter software system in July. The new system can be used by animal control officers, can be accessed remotely, is more user-friendly and has increased reporting capabilities.
- One of the small animal rooms was converted to a 'Kitty City' to provide communal housing for friendly, adoptable cats.
- The shelter held seven adoption promotions, including the Chocolate Bunny promotion, Extravacatza!, Meowloween, Black Fur Day, the Ugly Sweater Party promotion, the Tax Day promotion, and the special delivery promotion.
- The animal shelter photography program has expanded and there are up to five photography sessions held every week in the shelter.

**Shelter Safety:** Shelter staff remains focused on safety and training and overall safety has been improving. Bites per volunteer hour have decreased by approximately 30% since 2012. The vast majority of bites are minor puncture wounds not requiring urgent medical care and they are spread evenly between cats and dogs.

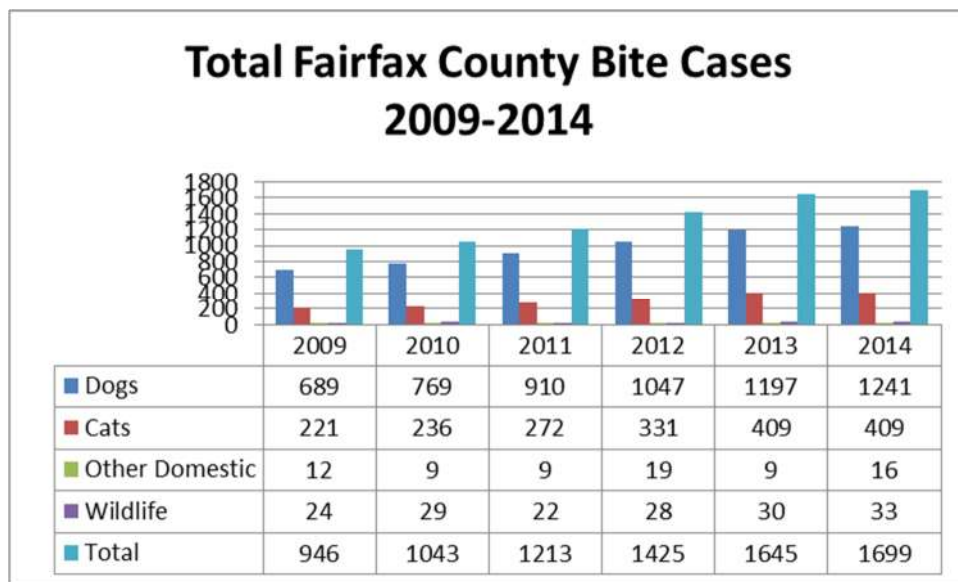




## Community safety

**Adopted animals returned for biting:** Animal Control did not track animals returned to the shelter for biting for a complete year until 2013 and they have recorded seven animals returned for biting in 2013 and seven in 2014. In 2014, this means that about three out of every 1,000 animals were returned for biting.

**Animal bites in Fairfax County:** Reported bites have increased by about 200 animals per year since 2010, with a smaller increase between 2013 and 2014. Several years ago, the health department began tracking hospital visits due to bites, which resulted in more accurate and higher numbers of bites being reported.





## **Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FFCAS)**

FFCAS is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2006 to support the Fairfax County Animal Shelter and provide financial resources to facilitate adoptions for shelter pets.

### **In 2014, the FFCAS:**

- Provided funding for collars and personalized I.D. tags for over 2,000 adopted cats and dogs, helping to reunite lost pets with their people more quickly.
- Funded medical treatment for 40 shelter animals, saving lives and increasing the animals' adoptability and quality of life.
- Funded spay and neuter surgeries for approximately 500 feral cats, helping to reduce the problem of pet overpopulation.
- Facilitated adoptions for nearly 50 of the shelter's neediest dogs and cats through our new shelter pet sponsorship program, reducing adoption fees and increasing resources for adopters.
- Provided the first year of funding of microchips for all cats adopted from the shelter, increasing the chances they will be reunited with their owners if they become lost.

Visit their website at [www.ffcas.org](http://www.ffcas.org) and find the Friends on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/ffcas!>

## **Wildlife**

**Deer Management Program:** Each year, deer management is conducted in Fairfax County parks to reduce the number of deer-related conflicts that can pose safety and health concerns for residents and minimize ecological damage resulting from overabundant deer.

The program is mandated by the Board of Supervisors and is implemented by the Fairfax County Police Department, in partnership with the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. The program uses the safest, most effective and sustainable deer management methods currently permitted by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries including archery, managed shotgun hunts and police sharpshooting.

The current harvest total for FY 2015 (through December) is 919 deer. All venison harvested during sharpshooting operations is donated to Hunters for the Hungry, a non-profit organization that provides food for the needy.

**4-Poster Deer Study:** The 4-Poster Deer Treatment Station pilot study is being conducted to examine wildlife host-targeted tick control on white-tailed deer and the effects of baiting deer year round. White-tailed deer are the primary maintenance host of adult blacklegged ticks and all motile life stages of the lone star

tick which can spread pathogens to humans and domestic animals. The 4-Poster pilot study is in the final year of data collection and will conclude in March 2015.

**Community Outreach and Safety:** FCPD Animal Services staff held two public information meetings to discuss the FY 2015 archery program for deer management. Additionally, staff attended community meetings to discuss deer management and safety considerations for the Sully District (Oakton/Difficult Run Stream Valley Area), Mantua Citizen's Association, the Hunter Mill District, neighbors of Frying Pan Farm Park and the Reston Association Board of Directors.

**Media:** Wildlife management topics including the Deer Management Program, 4 Poster Study and humane exclusion techniques were highlighted in a variety of media outlets including Connecting with Supervisor Hudgins, 16 Around Fairfax, the County Conversation Podcast, Tips and Tails, the Animal Shelter Pawcast and Fairfax Connection. Phone and on-air interviews were provided for WTOP, ABC, FOX, and the Washington Post following reported sightings of a mountain lion within the county.