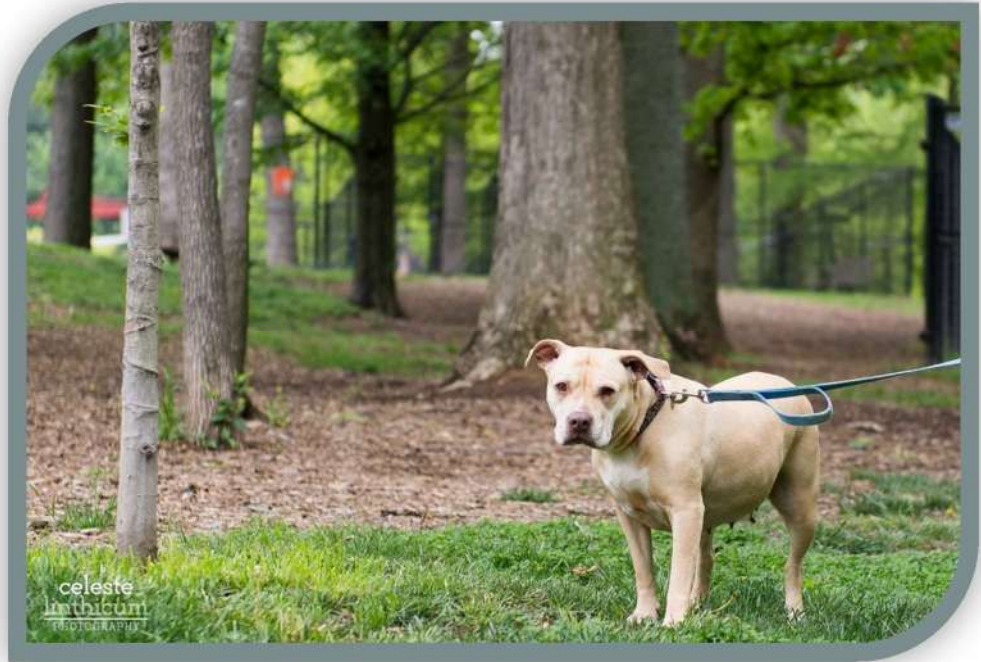


# Fairfax County Animal Shelter 2016 Annual Report



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## Director's Summary

2016 was a challenging year for the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. It was a year of transition and change. It was a year of uncertainty -- a roller coaster year of ups and downs, highs and lows, and the constant ebb and flow of sadness and joy that infuses every municipal shelter dedicated and committed to with helping pets that find themselves homeless.

2016 was also a year of success as the shelter continued to maintain a positive release rate of over 90%, ensuring that no pets were euthanized for lack of space, time, or lack of other resources. It was a year of bumps and bruises as we worked hard to develop reliable processes in a changing culture, staying focused on our mission of animal welfare while still maintaining an eye toward public safety. It was a year of resolve and validation as the County moved forward to create the new and separate Department of Animal Sheltering. It was a year of hope as vacant positions began to be filled with eager and energetic staff to complement those already onboard. And it was a year of looking forward as the County began the planning process for a new animal shelter facility in South County.

As a returning interim director, I have had the unique opportunity to return to a place both familiar and unfamiliar. Construction was incomplete when I left at the end of 2012. Positions were created, but not authorized to be filled. Social media was not yet an approved communication tool; the County's policy for the adoption of "pit bull type dogs" was still more restrictive than for other dogs. All those things have changed and with those changes the Fairfax County Animal Shelter emerged as a leader among open-access shelters.

Change is never easy even when it is good, but our blessings are many. We are fortunate to live in a community that embraces diversity both with people and pets. We have dedicated, compassionate, and experienced staff and a fantastic corps of volunteers with many, many talents who give countless hours for the animals in a labor of love. We have a wonderful, compassionate on-site veterinarian who inspires us all, and a hard-working, generous Friends group whose efforts to support us financially allow our shelter to operate with a mindset that almost nothing is impossible. We work alongside professional Animal Protection Police Officers and we have the resources of so many other professionals as well-- attorneys, human resource staff, elected officials, and County leadership.

In 2017, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will appoint a new director for the new Department of Animal Sheltering. We are excited, and we are ready for the next chapter.



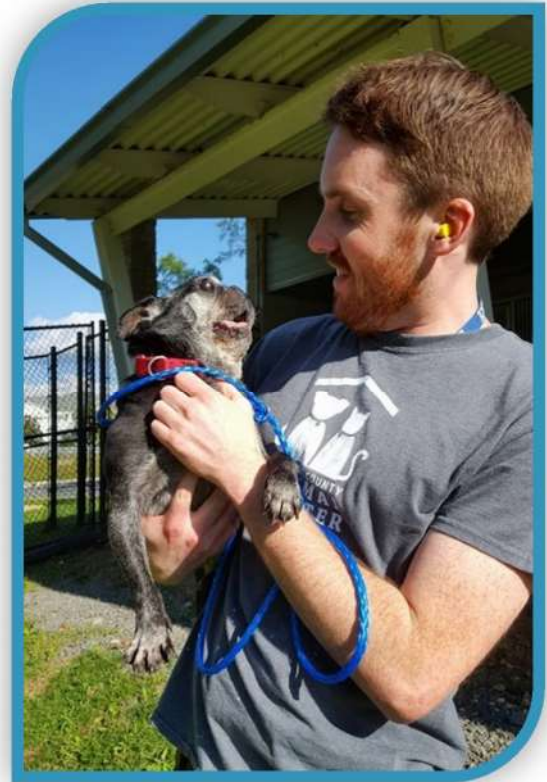
*Karen Diviney*

Acting Director, Fairfax County Animal Shelter



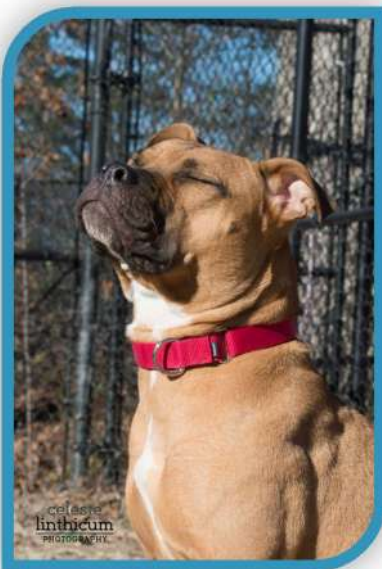
## Showing Compassion for All Animals

As Fairfax County's only open-access animal shelter, we take in stray animals in need, owner surrendered companion animals when the owner is no longer willing or able to care for them, and animals who have been seized or taken into custody by Animal Protection Police. We accept all companion animals from Fairfax County who are in need of care, regardless of health, age, temperament, or history. We do not euthanize for space or length of time, and all adoptable animals are given every opportunity for a new home and family. We have an incredibly compassionate staff, comprised of three teams: Animal Caretaking, Customer Care, and Outreach. In addition to our shelter staff, we also have vibrant and active volunteer and foster programs. We know that every animal who enters our shelter will be given the best care and shown boundless love while they are in our care, and while they wait for their forever family to adopt them.



## Understanding Life-Saving Data

Every animal welfare organization in the State of Virginia is required to report data annually to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in the format the State Veterinarian prescribes. Our 2016 information can be found at: [https://arr.va-  
vdacs.com/Home/SelectReportNew](https://arr.va-<br/>vdacs.com/Home/SelectReportNew)



To obtain the raw data live release rate: (Returned-to-owner + adopted + transferred in-state + transferred out-of-state) / (annual total – number on hand at year's end).  
**Our 2016 live release rate using raw data is 90.9%.**

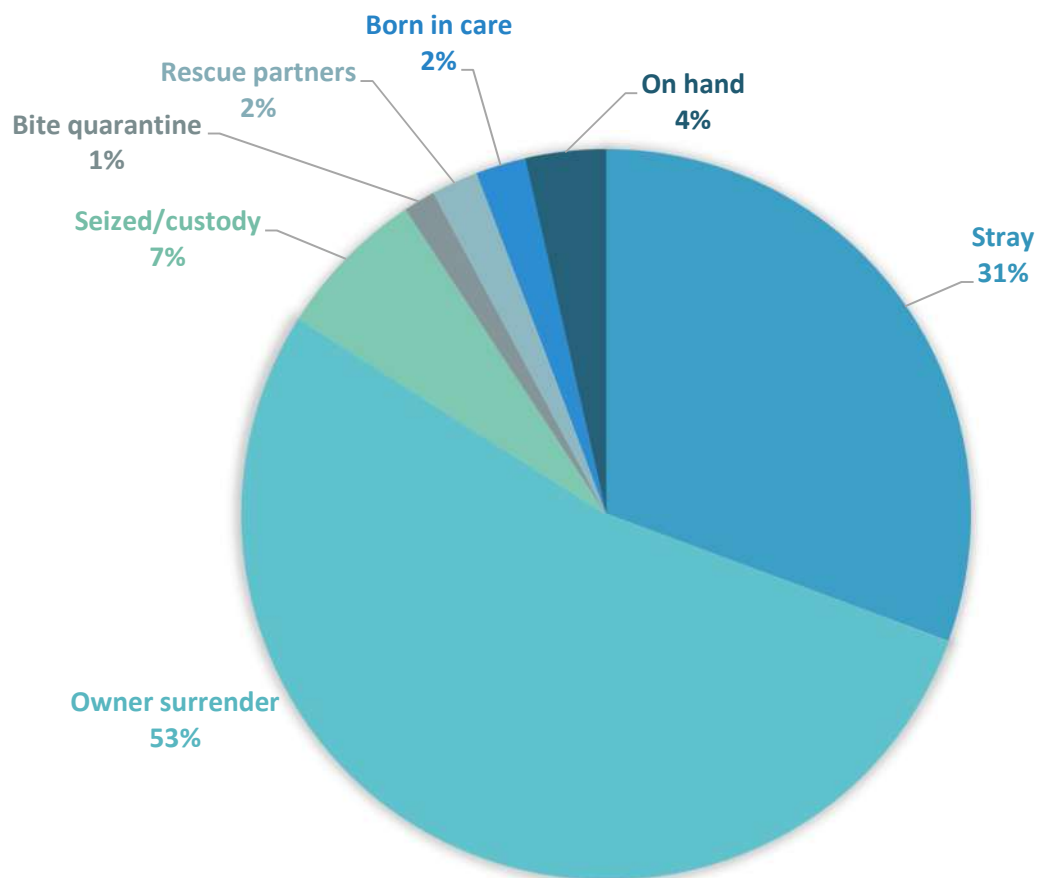
Many animal welfare organizations in the country use a standardized format called the Asilomar Accord. This calculation allows shelters to reduce their overall numbers by the total number of owner-requested euthanasia (typically, end-of-life) they performed. In 2016, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter provided 147 owner-requested euthanasia procedures at no cost to the pets' owners.  
**When this number of owner-requested end-of-life euthanasia is subtracted from our total, the 2016 live release rate becomes 93.9%.**





## 2016 Intakes

- 172 animals were on hand on January 1, 2016.
- We received a total of just over 4600 dogs, cats, small animals, and poultry.
- 2576 were surrendered by owners who could no longer care for them:
  - 982 dogs
  - 886 cats
  - 708 small animals
- 1480 were picked up as stray or abandoned.
- 324 arrived as custody/courtesy holds (i.e. PetHaven) or were seized by Animal Protection Police.
- 69 were held on bite quarantines.
- 100 were transferred in from other shelter facilities or rescue partners.
- 107 were born in our care.

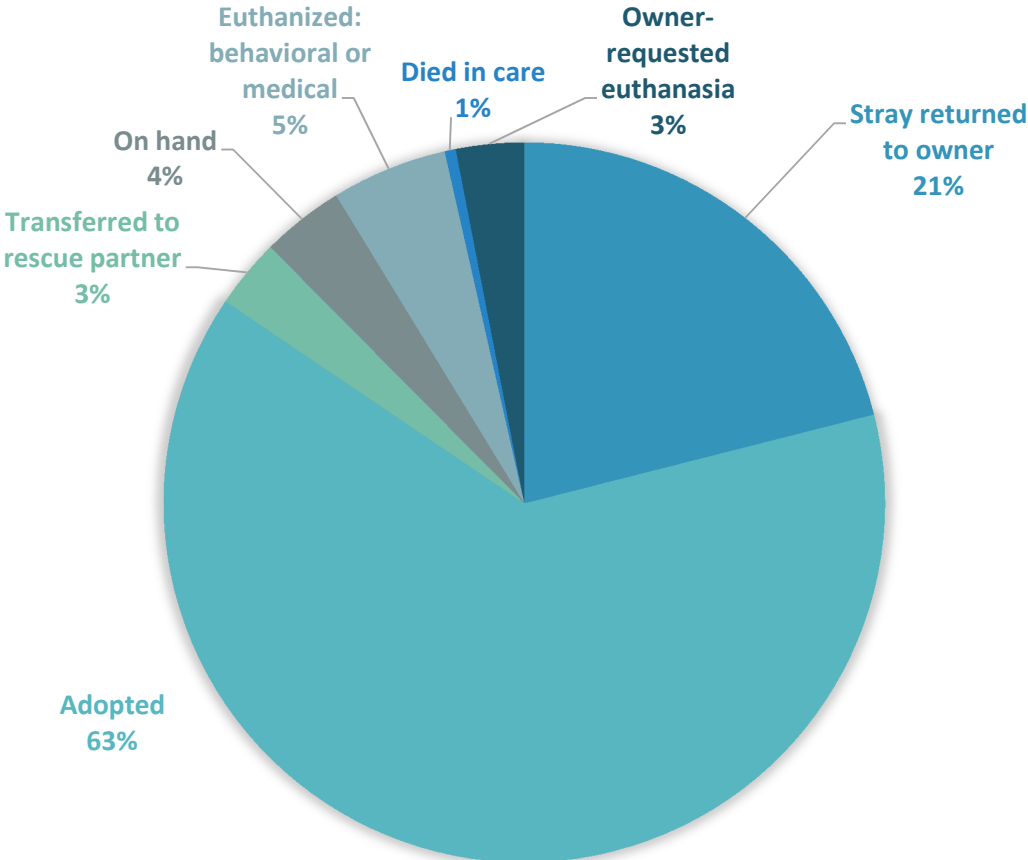


**2016 ANIMAL INTAKE TYPES**



### 2016 Outcomes

- 3056 animals were adopted:
  - 1133 dogs
  - 1124 cats
  - 784 small animals, including rabbits, guinea pigs, and reptiles
  - 15 chickens
- 1014 stray animals were returned to their owners.
- 150 animals were transferred to rescue partners:
  - 69 dogs
  - 44 cats
  - 25 other
- 24 animals died in our care.
- 250 animals were euthanized for medical or behavioral reasons.
- 147 animals were end-of-life euthanasia, at the request of their owners.



2016 ANIMAL OUTCOME TYPES



## Providing Life-Saving Medical Care

### Spay & Neuter

Spaying and neutering cats, dogs, and rabbits is an essential program for reducing overall shelter intake and reducing euthanasia. All cats, dogs, and rabbits adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter are spayed or neutered prior to adoption.



### Orthopedic Surgery & Support

These procedures can be expensive, but they are critical to ensuring the animals in our care are pain-free and able to live healthy, happy lives, running and playing with their families as they should. Thanks to generous donors in the community, our Friends of the Fairfax County Animal (FFCAS) group is able to help fund these necessary procedures each year.

### Dental Care

Dental disease in adult and senior dogs and cats is a common sight for our shelter veterinarian. It's often overlooked that dental disease in pets, as in humans, can have a profound negative effect on overall health. Many of our cats and dogs get a dental cleaning or even extractions to improve their quality of life and their health.



### Parasite Prevention

New in 2016 is our parasite prevention program to help not only individual dogs and cats but also help improve the overall health of our shelter population. Every dog, cat, and rabbit who enters the shelter receives appropriate parasite control and prevention medication including dewormer and flea/tick treatment.



## Fundamental Program: Foster Care

Each year, hundreds of animals' lives are saved and enriched by foster families willing to devote time, energy, and love to them until they are ready to be adopted. In 2016 specifically, 847 animals entered our foster program, often on multiple occasions and with many different people. With over 300 active foster families, we are able to offer care to the neediest animals who enter our shelter. There are a number of programs, a few of which are described below, offered for short- and long-term foster care for all species and ages of animals, allowing us to serve the smallest, largest, youngest, and oldest of animals, and everything in between.



### Weekend Fosters

Our weekend dog foster program allows for dogs to be in a foster home on the days the shelter is closed to the public. In 2016, shelter dogs went to weekend foster homes a total of 123 times! This gives the dogs a break from the shelter, and provides us with lots of great information about their behavior in a home and their personality. The dogs get to spend time on their foster's couch watching movies, taking long walks (like Stacks, pictured above), and of course having their photo taken.

### Neonatal Kitten Program

Neonatal kittens, also known as bottle babies, are some of the most fragile animals who enter the shelter. We have many specially-trained foster families who are capable of caring for these most delicate bottle babies, until the kittens are old enough to be adopted. While they are still nursing they require bottle feeding around the clock. The lack of sleep is worth it, and we are proud that our shelter saves even the tiniest of lives! This year, 361 unweaned (including neonatal kittens), pregnant/ nursing moms with kittens or puppies, and underage animals were cared for in foster homes.







### Power Hour Program

Our Power Hour program continues to be one of the most popular foster programs at the shelter, as evidenced by the 290 Power Hours that occurred! Fosters take dogs out for a walk or hike, for one hour or the whole afternoon. The fosters get to enjoy hanging out with a shelter dog, and the dogs get to enjoy time outside of their kennel, going for a walk or a run, or just hanging out on the foster's couch. And we love the photos, of course! Our staff take dogs on Power Hour outings, too; at the left is caretaker Will and his workout buddy, Buddy, dressed to go for a walk!

### Special Needs

Whether an animal is recovering from a surgery or medical condition, getting socialized to people, or doing some physical therapy to overcome a mobility issue, we like to send them to a foster home for recovery time! We helped 326 special needs pets in 2016! June Bug, pictured to the right, is a perfect example of a special needs dog who spent a lot of time in foster. She suffered from Intervertebral Disk Disease (IVDD) and was attending acupuncture sessions to help her recover. Happily, she has made great progress, and her foster mom ended up adopting her.



### Hospice Foster

Occasionally, there are animals who arrive to the shelter either surrendered by their owner or as a stray who are quite elderly, but still have good quality of life. In 2016 there were eight such animals. While they may not ever be ready to go on the adoption floor, we recognize that these pets still have love to give, and are happy to receive love in return. We are immensely proud of our foster families who specialize in taking these hospice foster animals, to fill their lives with love for as much or as little time as the pet has left. Carson, on the left, lived in hospice foster for a year, and we can say with great certainty that he loved every single day with his foster parents.



## Volunteer Program: Great People Doing Great Things Together

Our in-house volunteer program is incredibly active, with over 411 volunteers contributing a whopping 36,013 hours to the shelter in 2016. Volunteers are busy in the shelter from 8am to 8pm and do a variety of essential tasks, including: dog kennel, cat room, and small animal assistants; clean team; administrative assistant; and photography team.

### Dog Kennel Assistant

Our dog kennel assistants' primary duty is to make sure our shelter dogs get outside at least three times a day. They also clean kennels, introduce dogs to potential adopters, and offer socialization and enrichment for the dogs by helping with programs like Kong Crew.



### Administrative Assistant

The front lobby is a busy place, and our Admin Assistants do all the tasks that keep things running smoothly: answering phones, assisting visitors with purchasing dog licenses, making copies of adoption paperwork and making tags for adopted dogs, and helping with intakes and adoptions.



### Cat Room Assistant

This volunteer team ensures that our cats are getting out of their condos to stretch their legs and play, help our shy cats become more confident, and assist potential adopters as they meet their perfect match!

### Clean Team

While not the most glamorous of volunteer jobs, this one is critical! We go through lots of dishes and laundry here, and the Clean Team volunteers help us stay on top of keeping dishes and bedding clean and organized.

### Small Animal Room Assistant

Bunnies and guinea pigs need to have time outside their cages, too! Our Small Animal Room Assistants socialize the many species of small animals, and show them to visitors. We even do bunny-to-bunny meetings!





### Photography Team

Follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/FairfaxCountyAnimalShelter](http://www.facebook.com/FairfaxCountyAnimalShelter)) to see this volunteer team’s contributions in action! An excellent photo can help tell an adoptable animal’s story so much better than words alone, and we have no doubt that the amazing photos these volunteers take help them find their forever homes. The Photography Team takes photos of all our adoptable pets, in the shelter, in their studios, and in foster homes, to really capture each animal’s individual personality.





## Offering Community Support, and Finding New Homes

### Trap, Neuter, Return

Since 2008, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter has spayed/neutered and vaccinated over 6,000 community cats. In 2016 alone, 733 cats were spayed/neutered, vaccinated, eartipped, and returned by their caregivers to their outdoor homes where they were trapped. This humane, effective, proactive program benefits the community by reducing the shelter's cat intake, allowing shelter staff and volunteers to focus our efforts on adoptable pet cats, and by ensuring that Fairfax County's community cats are sterilized and vaccinated. Many kittens arrive at the shelter via the Trap, Neuter, Return program, and often those kittens are young enough to be socialized and adopted into loving homes.



### Reuniting Lost Pets with their Families

Our Administrative Team, aka our adoption counselors, do an incredible amount of sleuthing to try and locate the owners of stray animals. We especially love when a stray animal has a microchip, as that helps us track owners down more quickly, and sometimes we get to facilitate the reunion of pets who have been missing for months! We also help lost birds find their families, including little Azzurro, pictured to the left. He was found in a garage but had a band on, which traced to a bird registry, which gave us the info of his family! Azzurro was a very happy bird when his family picked him up!

### Low-Cost Rabies Vaccination Clinics

A total of eight low-cost rabies vaccination clinics were hosted by the Fairfax County Animal Shelter and Pender Veterinary Centre at various locations within Fairfax County, providing affordable rabies vaccinations to dogs, cats, and ferrets. A total of 586 vaccinations were given: 395 to dogs, 186 to cats, and five to ferrets.





## Social Media Saves Lives

If there's one thing we've learned, it's that people love seeing photos and stories of individual animals at our shelter! Social media continues to grow in popularity, use, and reach, and we can certainly see the impact our social media presence has on the number of dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, snakes, hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice, chickens, and every other type of animal who get adopted from our shelter.

Whether it's stories of how our caretaking staff goes the extra

mile to help a newly-arrived scared animal feel safe and loved, or tales from our in-house volunteers about their

experiences with every individual animal, or witty and poignant observations from an animal's time in a foster home, the photos and posts we share on our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages help everyone get to know the multitude of

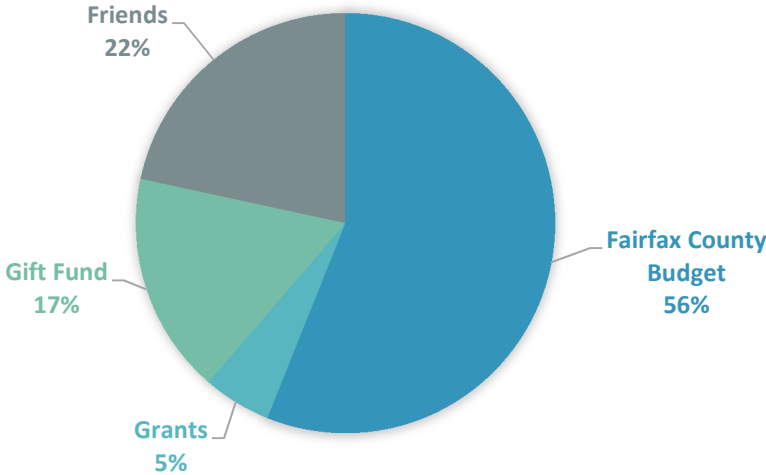
ways that everyone involved at our shelter helps animals. Telling those stories and sharing those photos helps the animals we all love find their forever families.



### Funding and Budget

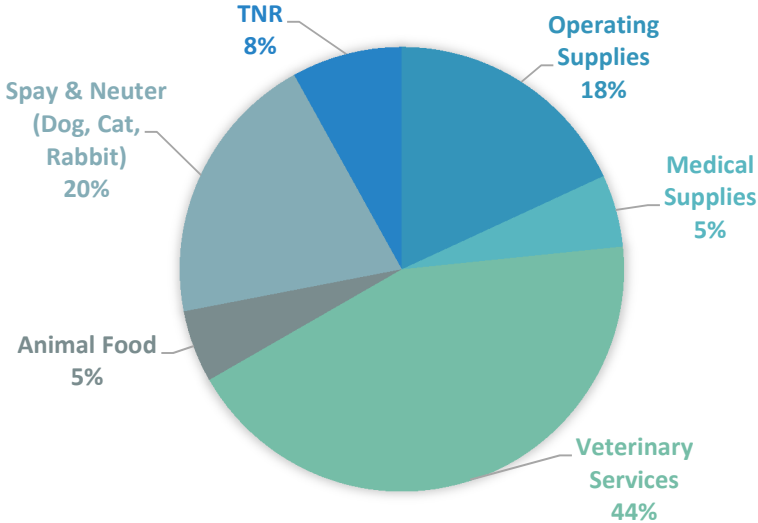
#### How Shelter Operations Were Funded:

- FY 2016 Fairfax Co budget: \$480,000
- FY 2016 Grants: \$45,000
- FY 2016 Gift Fund: \$146,000
- CY 2016 FFCAS: \$185,000
- **TOTAL: \$856,000**



#### How the Shelter Allocates Our Operational Budget and Funding:

- Operating supplies: \$155,000
- Medical supplies: \$45,000
- Veterinary services: \$371,000
- Animal food: \$45,000
- Spay and neuter: \$171,000
- TNR: \$69,000
- **TOTAL: \$856,000**



## Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter

The Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FFCAS) is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 organization that was founded in 2006 with the mission to support the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. In 2016, the FFCAS provided financial resources amounting to \$185,500 to support shelter programs and facilitate adoptions for shelter pets.

In 2016, the FFCAS accomplishments include:

- Providing funding for collars and personalized I.D. tags for over 2,250 adopted dogs and cats, to help reunite lost pets with their families quicker.
- Funding medical treatment for over 100 shelter animals, amounting to over \$81,000, to save lives and increase animals' quality of life and adoptability.
- Funding spay and neuter surgeries and vaccinations for over 300 community cats as part of the shelter's Trap, Neuter, Return support program.
- Funding a comprehensive parasite prevention program to provide flea, tick, and worm prevention to all dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, and rabbits upon intake. The total program funding provided was \$49,605 and treated:
  - 3,505 dogs and puppies
  - 1,318 cats and kittens
  - 218 rabbits
- Supporting four major adoption events through the Adoption Event Support Program.
- Highlighting the shelter's neediest animals through FFCAS' Shelter Pet Sponsorship Program, which helped 280 animals find homes. This program is funded separately by additional donations, which in 2016 amounted to \$24,673.

To keep up with FFCAS' ongoing events and activities, and to see the critical support that is provided to the shelter by the FFCAS through generous donors, make sure to visit their website: [www.ffcas.org](http://www.ffcas.org), and Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/ffcas](https://www.facebook.com/ffcas).





# THANK YOU!

We are so proud to be part of a community which values animals so greatly, and we could not accomplish all that we do without the support of you. Volunteering and fostering, donating supplies, sharing our Facebook posts, telling your friends, family, and neighbors about our shelter, and adopting pets from our shelter yourself – all of that helps Fairfax County be one of the best places for animals to live, and helps the Fairfax County Animal Shelter be the best place for animals to stay while they're waiting for their forever families. Thank you.

Sassi, the dog on the cover of our 2016 Annual Report, is a perfect example of how our life-saving policies, compassionate and hardworking staff, and vibrant and essential volunteer and foster programs come together every day, to pursue the best possible outcome for every animal who enters our care. Sassi arrived to us in March of 2016 when her owner's housing situation changed. Sassi was nine years old and loved all people, but became nervous and unsure when she arrived at the shelter. It took some time, and a lot of patience and care, but after almost two months Sassi was ready to go up for adoption.

We wanted to end on this heartwarming photo of Sassi on her adoption day, posing proudly with her new family. These happy adoption moments are why we all love what we do. Thank you for supporting us, and helping Fairfax County animals like Sassi.

