



HUMANE SOCIETY *of Washington County*

We Are the Humane Society of Washington County

The Humane Society of Washington County exists to promote the welfare of companion and domestic animals through educational programs and initiatives that reduce pet overpopulation, endorse fostering, enrich adoptions, and encourage responsible pet guardianship. Our vision is to be the area's leading resource for animal related issues.

We Believe Every Animal Deserves a Chance

We provide a soft bed, nutritious food, medical treatment, and spay/neuter surgery to all creatures in need of refuge. It makes no difference to us whether an animal is young or old, healthy or sick, or friendly or scared—we give every single one our attention. In 2017, our Animal Care and Veterinary teams provided compassionate care to 6,472 animals.

Over 250, or approximately 4%, of the animals we help each year are victims of neglect or cruelty. Our Field Services Officers rescue these innocent creatures from dangerous situations and assist in the criminal prosecution of the offenders.



You Help Us Save the Lives of Thousands of Animals Each Year

Once animals are ready to leave our shelter, we place them through several avenues including adoption, foster care, and transfer to rescue groups, or return to field, as appropriate.

For the adoption program, our Adoptions Counselors work tirelessly inside the shelter's walls to match our furry charges with loving homes, which resulted in 2,933 adoptions in 2017. For the foster program, our volunteers also work tirelessly, but *outside* our walls and in their homes to provide care to animals with special needs until they are ready for adoption. Some of these volunteers go the extra mile by traveling to community adoption events every weekend seeking new families for their foster animals. Since its launch in late 2015 through 2017, the Traveling Foster program has saved the lives of 1,352 animals, 1,266 of which were cats and kittens.

From 2014 through 2017, the HSWC's Live Release Rate (LRR) has steadily increased. In 2017, we saved the lives of 4,866 animals—a LRR of 80%.

Cats

Our Challenge

Unfortunately, despite our hard work, cats and kittens are still the **number one animal being euthanized** in our shelter.

Because free-roaming and feral cats are able to quickly and easily breed unseen in our community, the number of cats and kittens entering our shelter is staggering. **Over the last four years, cats and kittens have averaged 73% of our total annual intake. This constant influx has caused our feline euthanasia rates to continue to rise, averaging 85% of all animals euthanized.**

Our Veterinary team strives relentlessly to save lives by providing medical treatment and spay/neuter surgery for the dogs and cats residing at the shelter and in our foster program. Unfortunately, the team is too small to do all of that AND also offer spay/neuter for the community's free-roaming and feral cats.

Our Solution

HSWC must drastically expand our spay/neuter program.

HSWC is uniquely positioned to help free-roaming and feral cats as we are the sole animal shelter in Washington County. We also contract with the County to provide animal control services to all its citizens.

It is our dream for our Veterinary team to spay/neuter every cat in Washington County.



Dogs

Our Challenge

Washington County is a community of animal lovers and many of its citizens choose HSWC when seeking their next pet. However, a significant number of people who walk through our doors yearning for a new dog to join their family leave heavy-hearted and empty-handed because we rarely have enough dogs to meet adoption demand. **Dogs account for less than 30% of total animal intake at the HSWC, making it common for potential adopters to find only three or four dogs on our adoption floor on any given day.**

The low availability of dogs is a true testament to HSWC's effective programs and the community's commitment to spaying and neutering canine companions. But, it can sometimes lead people to give up on finding a shelter dog and instead purchase a dog from a breeder, pet store or puppy mill.

Ironically, other shelters are fighting an uphill battle day-after-day to save the lives of dogs and puppies in their care because spaying and neutering is not widely practiced in their area of the country. **These shelters battle an endless stream of healthy, beautiful dogs they are forced to euthanize for lack of a home.**

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), approximately 670,000 dogs are euthanized in shelters each year. Even more sobering, Shelter Animals Count™ estimates that 80% of the animals euthanized are healthy and treatable and could have been adopted.

We can all agree, of course, that they *should* have been adopted—if only there had been enough homes for them all.



Our Solution

HSWC already partners with overpopulated shelters in Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Mississippi, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina to transfer in dogs at risk for euthanasia. In addition, we partner with The Humane Society of the United States and the ASPCA to rescue animals from natural disasters and high need areas, such as Puerto Rico.

Because of these partnerships, we are able to modestly increase the number of dogs saved from euthanasia and the number available for adoption at HSWC.

But it is still not enough.

To save even more dogs, the HSWC must forge additional partnerships with high-volume/high-risk animal shelters throughout the country that are struggling to place adoptable dogs. Our initial goal is to transfer in twice the number of dogs each month. Over time, we will gradually raise this number until we transfer in three times the number of dogs each month from areas in need.

These transfers will free up resources for our transfer partners so they can implement and grow their own life-saving programs, especially those that focus on decreasing canine intake and assisting owners with keeping their pets when possible.

Dogs in other states are being euthanized and adopters in Washington County are eager to welcome them.

It is our dream that together, we will save the lives of dogs across the country.

The Best Investment We Can Make for the Future of Animals



It is our dream that every cat in our community and every dog across the country be given an opportunity to live.

In order to achieve our dream, HSWC is doubling the size of our Veterinary team and its resources so we can expand our programs for cat spay/neuter and dog transfers.

Now, more than ever, is our time to save the lives of countless animals.

This is what our board envisioned when they voted to build a veterinary center.

This is what our community has been waiting for.

This is what our staff has been working for.

And this is what the animals have been, literally, dying for.