



Volunteer Newsletter

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Community Outreach – Fulfilling Our Outreach Mission

by Anitra Holley

You've heard it before... "Volunteers are the lifeblood of any non-profit organization." ...and it is SO true. Without volunteers, we would not be able to keep our doors open. That means no strays being adopted from our shelter, no orphaned kittens finding their forever homes, and no elderly dogs finding the perfect family to share in their golden years. It also means rising euthanasia rates, and THAT is the difference our volunteers are making. Homes for the homeless and a life worth living for the animals of Columbus, Georgia. But when you really dig deep into what volunteerism can be, quite often it involves work that is done behind the scenes. That quiet, sometimes unnoticed work that MUST happen before the hands on adoptions, spay/neuter, and wellness visits are completed.

Bringing awareness to the community of what PAWS Humane offers is one of the many behind-the-scenes tasks that not only keeps our doors open, but also helps us reach our vision of creating a No Kill Community. Imagine that you are a child growing up in a neighborhood where it is unheard of to spay or neuter your pets. Chances are, you will never hear those words spoken by your

friends or family. In turn, it won't even cross your mind as an adult to spay or neuter your own pets. Or suppose you are on disability and barely able to put food on your table, let alone pay for vet visits and vaccinations. You do your best to provide food, shelter and love for your pets, but preventative medical care can be expensive and you just don't know how to swing it. This is where volunteers can make a HUGE impact in our community. By reaching out to our underserved neighbors, we are giving them the information they need to help their pets become healthier and to help cut back on multiple litters, which can also be a big expense for families.

At PAWS Humane, we have many ways that we reach out to the community. Humane Education is a program where we take our outreach into schools around the community to help educate young minds on the benefits of caring for animals. We teach them proper techniques on how to approach animals, basic nutrition principles, and why it is important to clean up after our pets.

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We also reach out to the community by hosting a Pets for Life Free Rabies Clinic twice a year. PAWS staff and volunteers join together to bring the clinic into underserved neighborhoods, providing easier access for pet owners who may not have transportation. Volunteers play a big role in helping us get the word out by going door to door in our targeted neighborhoods, talking with pet owners about our Free Rabies Clinic and low cost spay/neuter services. Thanks to volunteer efforts, 435 pets received FREE rabies vaccinations last year!

Hispanic Outreach is yet another way we spread our message to the community. When English is your second language, it can be difficult to find resources in a predominantly non-Hispanic community. That's why we are partnering with other local organizations, including the Muscogee County Sheriff's Office, to inform the Hispanic community of the services we offer at PAWS.

As you can see, there are a variety of ways our volunteers help keep our pet population under control and bring euthanasia rates down. Community outreach may seem like thankless work at first glance, but when the effort is put in the right places, we WILL see our efforts pay off. And when we finally see Columbus officially declared a No Kill Community, we can all quietly smile and know that we did our part to help make that happen. What a rewarding day that will be!

A Look Back

PAWS volunteers and staff have been busy since the release of the last newsletter! Here are some highlights:



Dr. Bergquist's Last Day at PAWS - July 15th

We were sad to say goodbye to one of our favorite veterinarians last month. Dr. Brendan Bergquist's last day with PAWS was July 15th and he will be sorely missed! The good news, though, is that he will be working



Hispanic Outreach Event - July 23rd

PAWS is committed to being a resource for our underserved community. That's why we are members of the Hispanic Outreach

Committee here in Columbus, GA. Last month, the HOC decided to host an outdoor health fair in a primarily Hispanic underserved neighborhood to bring free and heavily discounted services to residents. PAWS was there with volunteer, Lenin Machado to inform residents of our high quality, low cost spay/neuter and wellness services as well as give away free dog food to those in need. We were also able to give away 6 spay/neuter coupons, thanks to our Spay It Forward and Pit Fix programs.

with a rescue in Vermont, so his great work with shelter animals will continue. AND, we gained a wonderful new Vet to our PAWS team, Dr. Nicole Pettry! Please welcome her to our team when you get the chance. (Dr. Pettry's photo is on the left.)

Girl Scout Troop 50063 Visits PAWS & Daisy Gets Adopted!

Part of our Humane Education Outreach involves inviting groups of school-age children to our shelter to learn about working in animal welfare. Girl Scout Troop 50063 came to PAWS on July 21st. Not only did they learn how to take care of and approach animals, but one of the lucky Girl Scouts and her family went crazy for Daisy in a BIG way! They became her forever family!!! Congrats to Daisy and her new family!



2016 Barks & Blues Festival a Success!

Our very first Barks and Blues Festival was a HUGE success, thanks to YOU!!!! (and a few of our staff members!) Despite the heat, 650 people attended the event. That means 650 people in Columbus are now helping to spread the word about our awesome facility and our sweet orphans, resulting in more adoptions and spay/neuter appointments. 15 orphans found their forever homes that day including our longest term resident, Scout! He spent 288 days in PAWS Humane's care and now has a loving forever family with a PAWS Alum as his sibling. Yay Scout!!!!

THANK YOU to over 35 volunteers who helped out at the festival! We could not have made the Barks and Blues Festival of 2016 a success without you. Enjoy a few photos from the event taken by our very own PAWS volunteer, Ekta Parab.





Volunteer Appreciation Brunch

Despite the name, there were no doilies, teacups or petit fours at our Volunteer Appreciation Brunch, but there WERE lots of smiles filling up the room. Catered by The Egg and I, volunteers enjoyed a buffet of scrambled eggs, French toast, bacon and some delicious pastries graciously provided by our lovely volunteer, Mirella McMorran. The event began with a welcome from Volunteer and Community Outreach Coordinator, Anitra Holley, who shared an emotional story of her background in volunteering and how it has shaped her life for the better. A video presentation was shared called "Let's Go Home," which is a poem written and performed by Steve Connell and PAWS CEO, Bobbi Yeo, spoke to our volunteers about the positive impact they have on our numbers of adoptions and how their work with our shelter helps to lower the euthanasia rates in Columbus.

The highlight of the brunch was the awards ceremony where 15 volunteers were recognized for their outstanding efforts in volunteering with PAWS. Each recipient was awarded with a Certificate of Appreciation in addition to a gift which was personalized by 4 of our longest term residents; Maximus, Patrick, Moses, and Little Bo Peep. (If you're curious, check out the pictures below.)

We certainly appreciate our volunteers at PAWS and were proud to honor them during this special gathering. Thank you to those of you who could join us, and to those who could not make it to the brunch, you were missed.

2016 PAWS Humane Volunteer Awards

Capture This Award – Ekta Parab
Healing Hands – Samantha Special
Lickety Split Award – Tom Lokey
Offsite All-Star – Anahi Rocha
The Cat's Meow – Max Anderson
In-Home Hero – Leslie Davis
Behind the Scenes – Mary Causey
Pick of the Litter – David Stricker
Friendliest Face at PAWS – Liz Jordan
Big Heart Award – Halie Hathaway
Humane-itarian of the Year – George Hogg
PAWS MVP (Most Versatile Player) – Mirella McMorran
Volunteer Dog Trainer – Becky Pence
Volunteer of the Year – Tom McDaniel
Lifetime Achievement - Becky Braxton





Mark your calendars...

First Friday Art Walk

Friday, August 5th, 4-8pm

This is family friendly free event where local Artists and Artisans join to sell what they make. They also have Collaborative Art stations and live music! PAWS will have adoptions happening in front of Outside World. Stop by and say hello!

Volunteer Dog Trainer Orientation

Saturday, August 13th, 8am-5pm

Taught by our Certified Professional Dog Trainer, Karlene Turkington, this is a full day class that will equip volunteers to train our shelter dogs in basic commands such as sit, stay, down, let's go and look. To take this class, you must be 18 or older, have gone through PAWS Volunteer Orientation, and you must commit to training our dogs at least 2 hours per week. To sign up or for more information, email Anitra at address below.



MEGA Adoption Event!!!

Saturday & Sunday, August 5th & 6th, 9am-1pm

Calling all volunteers! We need your help! The Pet Coalition of Muscogee and Harris Counties will be hosting a HUGE adoption event in the Winn Dixie shopping center on Veteran's Pkwy to help clear out our shelters! As you know, rescues throughout Columbus pull their residents from Animal Control and right now, they are **FULL**. Come help us prevent any more unnecessary euthanizations by volunteering at this event and spreading the word. Our shelter babies need you!

Sign up for these events by emailing Anitra at volunteer@pawshumane.org

We need you



Each and every one of our volunteers is special to us here at PAWS Humane. We strive to let you know how much we appreciate you on a daily basis, but we are only human and we fall short. When in doubt about the difference you make in our community and our world, just remember who you do it for.



You do it for those sweet, furry faces you see when you walk through our doors. You do it for the unconditional love they provide. You do it as an outlet for the love inside your heart. You do it to set an example for others. You do it because every animal deserves a loving home. You do it because it's the right thing to do.

From all our sweet orphans and from every staff member at PAWS,

thank you!
SO VERY MUCH

