

"Happy Howliday!"

2015....A Purrfectly Good Year!....RCHS

Between January and October 31, 2015, RCHS provided shelter for 775 dogs and cats. 68 of those residents were reunited with their owners, 307 were adopted in our community, 215 were successfully adopted outside our community with various rescue organizations, and an additional number still reside at RCHS. Our adoption rate continues to stay markedly above the adoption rates of most shelters, which still gives us wagging rights.

PetSmart Charities Our partnership with PetSmart Charities just keeps on giving! You have probably seen our new RCHS transport van, which we received, cost free, with a grant from PetSmart Charities. The van allows us to take our pets out into the community with more off-site adoption events and makes it more comfortable for the animals and more convenient for staff to make vet runs to and from the shelter. PetSmart also offered their assistance by funding two small grants for our TNR (trap, neuter, return) program, mentioned below, and will likely contribute in the future. We can count ourselves 'lucky' but it is primarily because of Shelter Manager Kelly Scheidegger's due diligence in going above and beyond meeting their program's requirements and expectations that we continue to enjoy this special, life-saving partnership. At this time, RCHS is the only shelter in WV participating in this program.

Forest Festival Adoption Event During our Forest Festival Adoption Event this fall in City Park, 21 dogs and 5 cats were adopted and not one of them has been returned to us! That is a great outcome and we are already planning a bigger and better event for next year.

RCHS Rescue Calendar 2016 Our third annual Rescue calendar, a fundraising pictorial celebration of successful RCHS adoptions, is available for sale at the shelter and the in-town vet offices. They are \$16 and all proceeds go directly into the Spay/Neuter fund. This year's calendar highlights many wonderful senior pets that were adopted last year into grateful and loving homes.



Atticus, our 2016 Calendar Cover Boy, has an especially inspiring and heartwarming story. Consider purchasing a calendar for your own pleasure and/or for an animal-loving friend or family member and support a good cause.

Spay/Neuter It only becomes more evident each year how important it is to spay and neuter our pets. It is the one sure way to reduce the plight of homeless animals and we know, over time, our efforts at RCHS and yours, at home, will make a difference in our community. Our adoption fees, which are quite reasonable, include the costs of spaying and neutering all residents of RCHS as well as their inoculations and rabies shots.

- **TNR** Our trap, neuter, return (TNR) program involves humanely trapping, sterilizing and vaccinating feral and stray neighborhood cats and then returning them to the area where they were trapped. This program is designed to reduce the number of kittens born in our county. If you are feeding and caring for a group of cats in your area, please give us a call to see if we can help with spay/neuter.
- **Spay/Neuter Assistance Fund** We continue to offer assistance vouchers for low-income S/N of dogs and cats, as funds are available. We are working cooperatively with our local veterinarians so please be sure to thank them for their assistance.
- Recently, RCHS was approved as a **Neighborhood Investment Program** organization. The NIP was established by the West Virginia Legislature in 1996 to increase charitable giving to local nonprofit organizations, in order to increase the capacity of nonprofits to serve low-income persons in highly distressed neighborhoods. In our case, qualified donors can receive state tax credits for donations to our low-income client spay/neuter fund!

West Virginia residents or businesses who contribute to the RCHS low-income client Spay/Neuter Fund are eligible to receive up to 50% of the contributed amount in the form of state tax credits. Donor individuals or businesses must be WV residents and the minimum eligible donation of \$500 must be received by RCHS after August 28, 2015. Donors may use the credits to reduce tax liability for West Virginia personal income tax, corporate net income tax, and business franchise tax. For more information see our website, rchsvv.org, or the WV Dept. of Commerce.

- **FOHO news: Save money and save lives! Funding the WV State Spay Neuter Program can be done!** How does \$900,000 per year, every year for spay neuter services available throughout WV sound? This can be done by increasing the existing surcharge on pet food brands registered with the WV Dept. of Agriculture, creating over \$900,000 annually for our WV State Spay Neuter Fund. Even if passed on to pet owners, this would be less than 75 cents per pet per year in WV. This would save WV millions of dollars while saving lives. A local group may even decide to use the money for control of community cats along with vouchers for pet owners. You decide based on your local need! Go to the Federation of Humane Organizations of West Virginia website, fohowv.org, and the WV Spay Neuter Assistance Fund [Facebook site](#) for more information. - Theresa Bruner, FOHO Treasurer.

Compassion in Action: This is a new program RCHS implemented last year which assists families in need by: providing food for their pets during hard times, so they are not forced to give up their pets; supplying straw bedding during extreme weather for pets who live outdoors; assisting families with spay/neuter of pet breeds difficult to adopt, to reduce unwanted litters.

rchswv.org Have you checked out our new website? Our thanks to Lisa Armstrong, Ajuga, Inc., for designing and maintaining our new colorful, interesting and user-friendly website, rchswv.org. Browse our selection of animals now available for adoption, learn more about our policies and programs, read articles related to animal care, and find out how you can help RCHS. You can even also donate directly from the website and we are in the process of making merchandise available for purchase through our on-line store. Check it out and let us know what you think!

The Cat's Meow If you haven't visited the shelter in awhile you will notice significant upgrades to our feline living arrangements and lifestyle. We have added outdoor play areas and indoors have replaced many of our single occupancy housing units with 4'x4'x6' communal living quarters. Three to four cats share these communal living spaces which allow climbing and freedom of movement, better air flow and natural light, ease of cleaning, and opportunities for play and socialization. We wish to thank Maria and Betty Jo Kostakos for donating two of these units and Johnette Totten who donated additional units. This is a wonderful upgrade for the cat house environment. It allows visitors to see the cats moving and interacting with each other and allows easier access and socialization for our visitors. Do come and visit!

Finances and Fundraising Our shelter operating costs have increased over the past few years due to a rise in operating expenses across the board as well as the necessary increase in costs of our expanded spay/neuter program, and they now approach \$300,000 annually. In 2015, we received \$80,000 from the City/County and \$6,000 from United Way. The remainder of our costs must be met through donations, grants, adoption fees and fundraising. In 2015 fundraising generated \$18,493.15. Our fundraising period begins in January and continues through September. Be watching for news on [facebook.com/RCHS2](https://www.facebook.com/RCHS2) and our website, rchswv.org, for announcements of fundraisers planned for 2016. Want to help? To learn more, contact our VP of Fundraising, Debbie Strader, 304-636-4747 ext:202 (wk); 304-591-4058 (hm).

DONATE * VOLUNTEER * ADOPT These three words sustain RCHS and the work we do. Monetary donations, no matter how small, are all greatly appreciated. You may choose to donate to **Yelp for Help!** which provides funds for emergency medical care for our residents or **Sponsor an Adoption and/or a Spay-Neuter** by paying the fees, increasing the likelihood of a timely adoption. To make a tax deductible holiday donation, please make your check out to RCHS noting how you would like your dollars spent, and send it to:

**RCHS
PO Box 785
Elkins, WV 26241**

When we receive your donation you will receive a heartfelt Thank You, as well as a receipt. You can also give online through the [DONATE](#) section of our website.

We also appreciate donations of needed supplies such as blankets, towels, high quality dog or cat food, cat litter, newspapers or cleaning materials. More information on the supplies we need is posted on our website, rchswv.org.

Donate a Crate If you have a clean, reusable crate to give away, RCHS would appreciate the donation. We would like to be able to provide crates to our fosters and our adopters who perhaps cannot afford a crate at the time of adoption. We believe that crate training can be instrumental in facilitating successful adoptions, and may even help convince landlords that the adopter is a responsible pet owner.

Consider VOLUNTEERING for jobs both on and off-site. There are many opportunities listed on our website. Download the volunteer brochure and find out how you can help. **Volunteer to Foster a dog or cat or a litter of puppies or kittens.** Becoming a foster family for RCHS is very rewarding and helpful.

ADOPT a pet from RCHS. Come visit us and find your new best friend!

Perhaps you have heard that **RCHS has been named the beneficiary of multiple bequests?** The RCHS Board of Directors has consulted with an investment manager about how to manage these funds and to decide how they should be used. The Board takes this role very seriously and views these funds as a means of providing solvency for the future of RCHS.



DONATE  **VOLUNTEER**  **ADOPT**

When you remember RCHS in your estate planning, you also remind others to celebrate the joy that our pets bring to our daily lives. Your gift will make a lasting impact and leave a legacy of love for the animals of Randolph County.



Randolph County Humane Society
PO Box 785
Elkins, WV 26241
304-636-7844

Thank You!

- United Way for raising funds for our community and including RCHS as a beneficiary.
- Phil Isner, JD, for serving as legal counsel and advisor in all matters of the law.
- Bruce Dillon, Pianos for Pets. Bruce refurbishes pianos and sells them. RCHS receives the profit, which he donates to the RCHS spay/neuter fund.
- Youth Build of North Central WV, who donate hours walking dogs each week, rain or shine. They are a great group to work with and we appreciate their help.
- Dr. Tanya White, Dr. Eileen Lammie, Dr. Mike Pritt, Dr. Tracy Walker, for working with RCHS to provide spay/neuters for both the TNR program and the low-income spay/neuter voucher program.
- Dr. Tanya White, for allowing RCHS to sell parking tickets in their business parking lot during Forest Festival and keep the proceeds.
- Eagle Scout Project: Zach Tysor built a freestanding roof over the dog kennels adjacent to the parking lot
- Eagle Scout Project: Ben Hummer added height to the fencing around the play yard and shored up the play yard entrance.
- Ann Weber, owner of Fancy Paws, who offers a free grooming for dogs adopted from RCHS.
- Tina Vial, owner of Pets and Pals, for providing a free one-hour training session to those who adopt from RCHS.
- Elkins Middle School for partnering with RCHS in sanctioning an animal advocacy program, which raises money for treats, toys and supplies that are donated to RCHS.
- Midland Elementary School, for choosing to partner with RCHS in conjunction with a reward program they are implementing called Accelerated Reader. Students read books and take quizzes on books to earn points they can use to earn time spent with RCHS animals, either at the school or at the shelter. This is a volunteer program and participants can earn reward points each 9 weeks.
- Yorkey and Associates, for their ongoing support and assistance with financial management.
- Robert Chewning, Pack N' Ship, for donating parade chair spaces at his business location, to RCHS during Forest Festival.
- American Legion for providing RCHS with parade chairs to be used during the Forest Festival parade, benefiting RCHS.
- Jabberwock, for allowing RCHS to sell parade chairs in front of the business and keep the proceeds.
- PetSmart Charities for the mini-grants, donating 500 flea treatments.

We also wish to thank Our Wonderful Volunteers! To our dog walkers, cat cuddlers, and those who volunteer their time to RCHS off site. We greatly appreciate your help!

Randolph County Humane Society Board of Directors:

Tina Vial, President
Pam Johnson, Treasurer
Larissa Fowler, VP Operations
Ginny Zuboy, VP Outreach
Debbie Strader, VP Fundraising
Mary Ann McDonald, Secretary

We thank you all for your support!

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!

RCHS

Feel-good story:



Meet Angel. Angel was adopted at Forest Festival this year and was a shelter favorite among dog walkers. She is 10 years old and was not doing well in a shelter environment. She was depressed, hang-dogged, and dejected. She was also very sweet. Angel was adopted by a woman who lives in another state and she reports that Angel shares the house with a 7-month old Yorky who has taught her how to play and that Angel follows her adoptive "mom" from room to room with her nose up her backside. She has her own couch, where she sleeps, and during the night she goes to check on her mom just to know that she is in her bed where she is supposed to be and that all is well in the house. "She is loved," said her human mom. We're so happy to hear about Angel and to know that she's in a wonderful home!

If you've adopted a pet from RCHS in the past we'd love for you to send us a note (and maybe a photo) to let us know how they're doing! Email Kelly at kellys@meer.net