

Issue 2: Spring 2013



Animal Care & Protective Services

NEVER STRAY FROM HOPE.

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Be sure to visit the City of Jacksonville Public Animal Adoption Center just west of Riverside in the Brooklyn Neighborhood at 2020 Forest Street (32204)



Alvin Brown, Mayor City of Jacksonville

Scott Trebatoski, Division Chief
Animal Care & Protective Services

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Animal Care & Protective Services recently reached a milestone in animal placement. In January we placed more than 90% of the animals with only 9.7% dying in the shelter. This is a major accomplishment for a city of our size and is a first in what is considered the “South” - a region that faces different challenges than other areas of the nation. Additionally, the Florida Animal Control Association also named ACPS as the Outstanding Agency in Florida for 2013. There’s a lot this community should celebrate related to our pets and community — thank you to everyone in the community that makes this possible!



From the chief...

Since our last newsletter was published in the Summer of 2012, there have been a number of improvements made to our operations and we have reached some remarkable milestones. These changes and milestones reinforce our commitment to serving the community in the best, most innovative, and cost efficient way with a solid focus on public safety and the community's animals. If you haven't visited our facility, it's time for you to come in and see the changes.

As we progressed as an organization, we have found that the services we provide can be broken down into operational matters and animal programs. With that in mind, we have created a management structure to reflect the specific commitment to each area. Nikki Harris has joined ACPS from the Nebraska Humane Society through FCNMHP. She will be responsible for animal programs and management of related functions. She has already brought new focus to the use of social media, formal behavioral testing of dogs for placement, changing intake focus to pet retention, a renewed commitment to building a volunteer program, and many more improvements in just a very short time! John Page will continue to be overall operational matters and specifically oversee the field operations, animal care assistants in the kenneling process, and internal/external customer service (among other responsibilities).

Through community partnerships and a commitment of the entire team at ACPS, we have reached the milestone of 90% or more of the animals brought in and/or leaving the shelter for two months (Nov. 2012 & Jan. 2013). This is amazing when you look at the overall benchmarks that have improved since the division took on its new focus and new name. The current definition among some animal welfare advocates for 'No-Kill' has been placed at achieving a 90% live release or save rate.

Keep watching for more improvements and milestones in 2013.



City of Jacksonville

2007

- 82.1% Euthanasia (19,663)
- Budget: \$5 Million
- Staffing: 62 Employees
- Average Daily Pop.: 633
- Died in Shelter: 558
- Surrenders: 5,792
- Placement: 4,631
- Adoption: 2,794
- Partner Placement: 428

2012

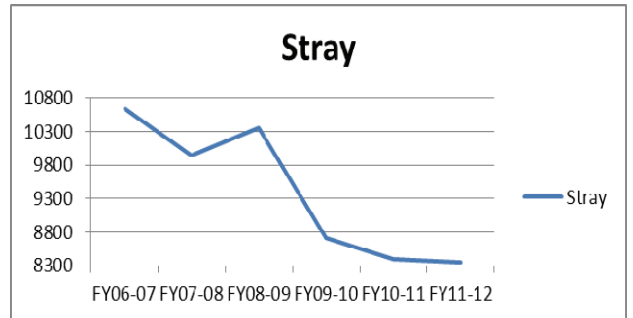
- 31.4% Euthanasia (5,069)
(January 2013 Euthanasia 9.7%)
- Budget: \$3 Million
- Staffing: 44 Employees
- Average Daily Pop.: 289
- Died in Shelter: 62
- Surrenders: 2,088
- Placement: 10,755
- Adoption: 3,395
- Partner Placement: 6,459



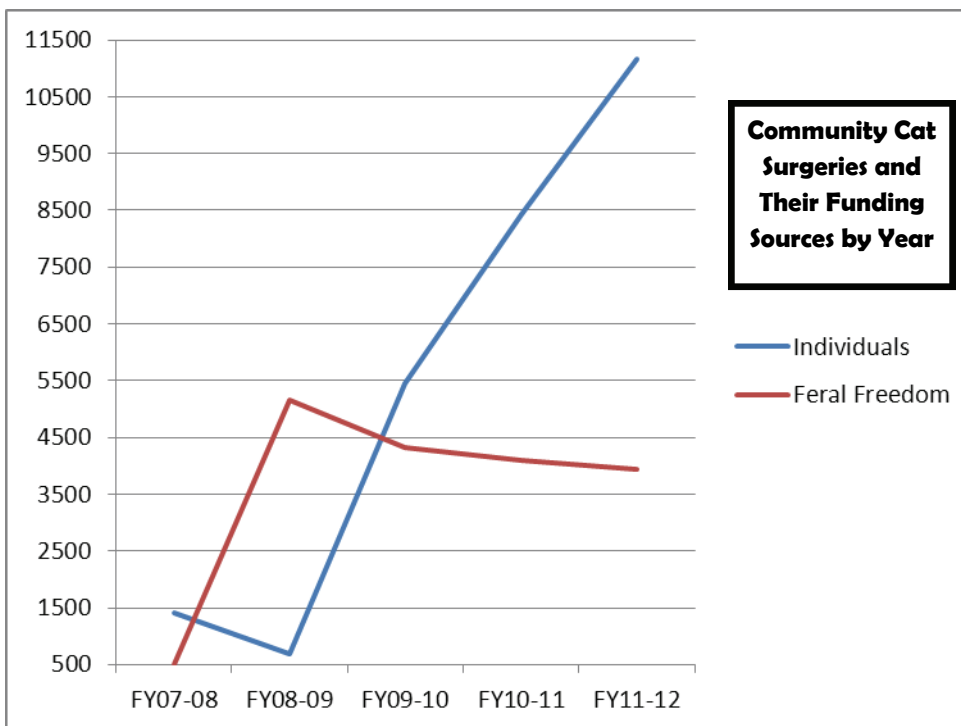
Tracking Success ...

As Jacksonville enters its fifth year of the community cat management program known as Feral Freedom, let's take a look at some of the successes of the program and the savings it has brought to City taxpayers.

Like most communities in Florida the City of Jacksonville had been experiencing an increasing number of stray and feral cats entering the shelter each year under the traditional community cat management practice of trap, hold and euthanize. Since late 2008 when Feral Freedom began, we have experienced not only a decrease in feral cat intake but all stray cat intake.



Much of the reason that cat intake has fallen so dramatically is the major increase in sterilization of cats in the community. Prior to Feral Freedom the number of community cat sterilizations were low but similar to communities of our size across the state. Once seed money provided by Best Friends Animal Society through First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) began the ball rolling, the community at large has really stepped up and gotten tens of thousands of community cats sterilized reducing outdoor kitten births and further population increases. In looking at the chart provided by the Target Zero Institute for community cat sterilizations and funding sources for those procedures it is amazing to see the huge level of community support in trying to manage our community cats in a non-lethal manner.

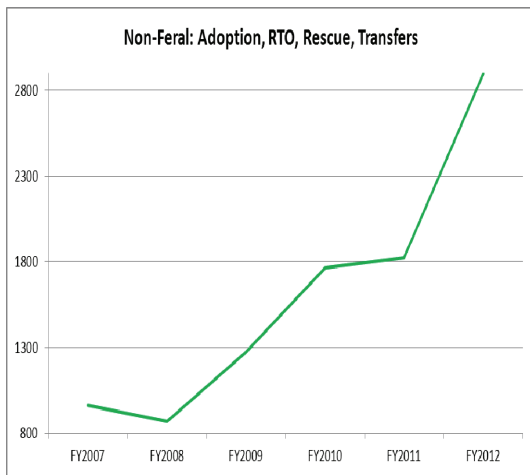


The remarkable results have attracted the attention of communities across the United States. Several of these communities have sent representatives to Jacksonville to meet with FCNMHP and ACPS to learn from our experience so they can formulate community cat programs in their own areas.

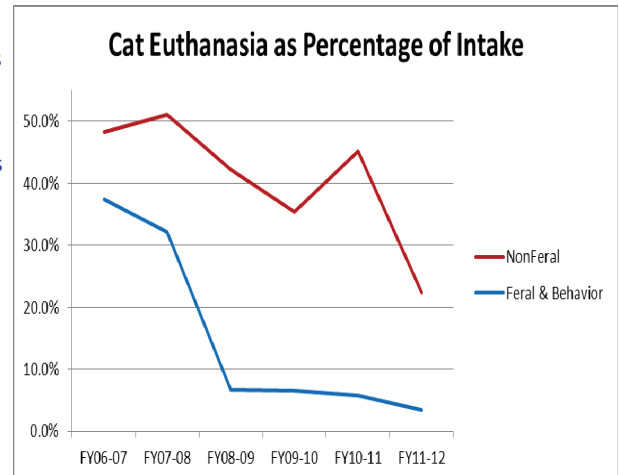
In addition to the reduction in stray cat intake, there have been extraordinary gains made in the adoption, rescue and transfer of non-feral cats due to a reduction in medical problems

and more time for staff to work with non-feral cats since they no longer have to spend time on thousands of feral cats that filled up the shelter often leading to upper respiratory infections among the shelter cat population.

(continued on page 4)



These charts show both the decrease in euthanasia rates as well as the huge increase in placement of non-feral cats. There have been weeks in the winter months where ACPS is no longer full in adoptions and they have allowed rescues to use that space to place more cats into good homes.



Feral Freedom has been privately funded through the extraordinary efforts of FCNMHP. The community cats are transferred twice daily to FCNMHP, and not taking up ACPS shelter space or staff time. This has saved the City of Jacksonville several hundred thousand dollars since the inception of the program. The estimated equivalent cost savings from old practices to the Feral Freedom program are \$1,383,475 from July 2008 through September 2012.

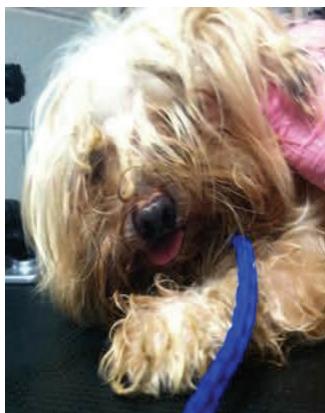
COMMUNITY CAT COSTS	FY06-07	FY07-08	FY08-09	FY09-10	FY10-11	FY11-12
Total Feral Intake	5034	4647	6035	5019	4759	4260
Traditional Labor Costs/Cat	\$35.75	\$35.75	\$35.75	\$35.75	\$35.75	\$35.75
Traditional Hard Costs/Cat	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$16.00
<i>Total Traditional Cost</i>	<i>\$260,510</i>	<i>\$213,986</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>
Feral Euthanasia	5034	4135	871	693	553	326
Cost Labor/Supplies/Disposal	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$19.00
<i>Total Euthanasia Feral Costs</i>	<i>\$95,646</i>	<i>\$78,565</i>	<i>\$16,549</i>	<i>\$13,167</i>	<i>\$10,507</i>	<i>\$6,194</i>
Community Cats Returned	0	512	5164	4326	4206	3934
Net Total Cost Outlays C.C.	\$356,156	\$292,551	\$ 16,549	\$ 13,167	\$ 10,507	\$ 6,194

Even if you factor in the costs that have been picked up by FCNMHP and the Best Friends Animal Society, there is still an overall community savings of approximately \$100,000 per year. These savings have both been passed along to the taxpayer through reduced funding for ACPS, which has contributed to no further increase in the millage rate. The funds have been shifted to assist in the increase in live release of animals from the shelter.

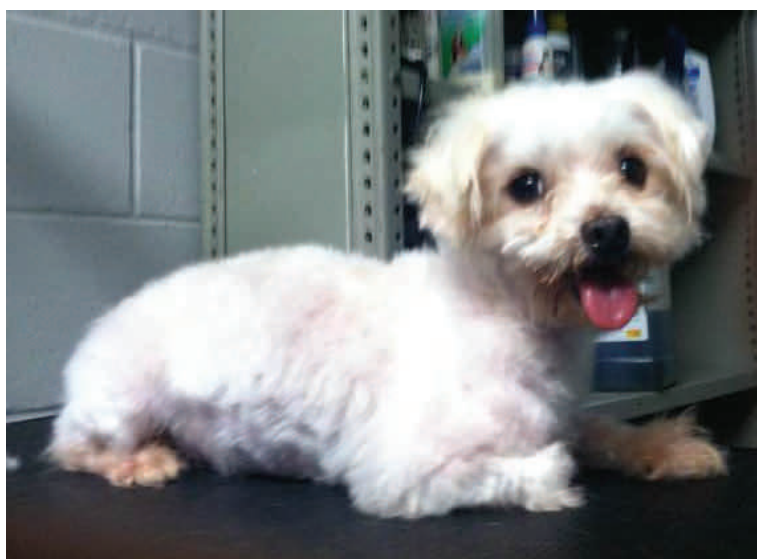
This is one of many changes in practice and community partnerships that have brought Animal Care & Protective Services into a benchmark agency others aspire to become over time. These accomplishments were recognized in the state with Jacksonville ACPS holding the title of Outstanding Agency in Florida in 2011-2012, and nominated again in 2013.



VOLUNTEER GROOMERS



We have been very fortunate to have gotten a local groomer Linda Hubbard. She volunteers her services to help the dogs in our care. Although the small pictures don't do this case justice, the dog came in heavily matted and filthy. The dog may have been in pain from when it moved due to the pulling of the mats against the skin. By the clear look of relief and happiness you can see in the "after" photo the dog greatly appreciated being set free from its own matted fur.



We are always looking for experienced groomers and bathers to help get our dogs into their best presentable condition before going to surgery and adoption. Please feel free to contact us through 630-CITY or stop by and talk to Nikki Harris.



Microchip & Staff to the Rescue

Giovanni, a 7 year old well mannered dog, was found by one of our field officers who scanned and found its chip. Both the owner and emergency contacts were Illinois number so we left messages to get in touch with us. We got no response but a lost pet website matched the microchip to an owner that had posted various lost reports online using the microchip number. We found the owner in Tennessee and she came to Jacksonville to pick up her dog. This shows the value of microchipping your animal, but also highlights the need to keep your registered information up to date with the microchip registry company.



**Florida Animal
Control Association**

ACPS Named Outstanding Agency in Florida, Again!



The City of Jacksonville's Animal Care & Protective Services Division was named the Outstanding Animal Control Agency in Florida for 2013 by the Florida Animal Control Association at their annual education conference in February. The award was accepted on behalf of the City by Division Chief Scott Trebatoski and several of the ACPS team in attendance.

This is considered the top award in the state with over 100 agencies eligible to compete for the honor. During the presentation of the award, ACPS was praised for being an industry leader and mentor to other agencies seeking to become more progressive. The work of the ACPS team was recognized for the tremendous results that have been achieved in a time of declining budgets and staffing. The live outcome rate of 90.3% in January 2013 is radically different from the previous Animal Care & Control numbers in 2007 when only 17.4% of the dogs and cats entering the shelter left alive.

The strong community partnerships, SpayJax sterilization program, community cat management leadership, pet placement partnerships with rescues, the local ordinance, volunteer programs, Pet Meals on Wheels, media relations, and the commitment to improving the animal control profession were among the reasons that ACPS received this award again. It was first received in 2011, making Jacksonville Animal Care & Protective Services the reigning Outstanding Agency in Florida from 2011-2013.



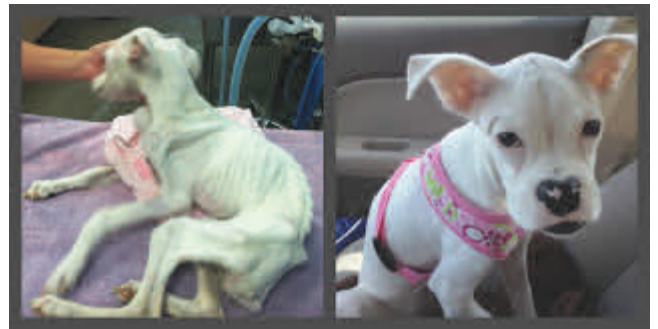
Feature Story:

Ameeno: The Little Dog that Won't Give Up



The story of Ameeno began when this extremely emaciated Boxer (weighing only 8 pounds) was picked up by a Good Samaritan and she called ACPS. This dog was so thin that it was questionable whether or not we could bring it back to health or if it had passed beyond the point of no return before we got it—but this little dog won't give up; and so starts the success story.

You may ask where did they come up with that name? When someone saw the dog in the early days they commented on how it really needed protein—saying I think she has only one amino acid left. And since amino acids are the basic building blocks of protein the name “Ameeno” stuck; it is as unique and cute as the dog.



With the fragile condition that Ameeno was in, and the constant monitoring that would be required in order to give her the best chance at life, along with the high risk a shelter environment would have on a dog in this condition, one of the ACPS employees volunteered to foster her. The employee brought her into work every day for a while until she had stabilized. This is the kind of dedication that is exhibited by the ACPS team that happens frequently but is often never seen or appreciated by the public.

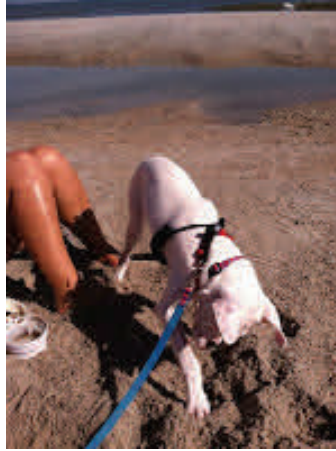


Although Ameeno could not even stand up for a few days after she was saved, the dedicated care she received helped her on her path to health. Within two weeks, Ameeno nearly doubled in weight reaching 17 pounds, and as she got healthier she got a little feistier too. A blog was started on the ACPS Facebook site and her fans began to watch her progress from across the country and around the world. A star was born!

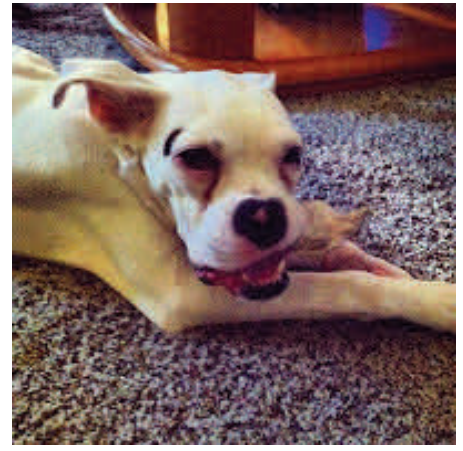
After a month or so passed Ameeno had nearly tripled her original weight and was healthy enough to be spayed. She came back to ACPS for some medical review and the sterilization surgery. Her recovery was uneventful, which is not always the case with dogs that have been through such severe starvation. After Ameeno got home, we got a picture of her saying it was the first time that she was not hungry when food was given to her. *(continued on next page)*



The first time Ameeno wasn't hungry!



Digging at the Beach



Enjoying a treat at her foster home.

Eventually Ameeno transitioned from a foster home to a permanent home—all without having to return to the shelter. She is very happy and healthy, although her starvation may have stunted her growth somewhat. A happy, smaller boxer now has a local family to share a home with after a rough early part of life.



The Other Part of Ameeno's Story...

Although Ameeno clearly was the victim of animal cruelty through neglect, she like so many other animals that are picked up by Animal Care & Protective Services never saw any justice because there simply was not enough evidence found to establish who her owner was. Her victory is in the fact that she was pulled from the brink of death and probably would have been euthanized for humane reasons in many other shelters. Ameeno can serve as the image of what the team at ACPS has made your local animal control agency—professional, caring and going above & beyond when they can.

Many of the success stories like Ameeno require united community efforts from ACPS, the Jacksonville Humane Society, First Coast No More Homeless Pets, the Jacksonville Veterinary Medical Society and its members, our pet placement partners, volunteers, and the community at large. Imagine nearly 20,000 animals a year each with their own story entering Animal Care & Protective Services each and every year. The task is huge and the victories sometimes small but your professional team at ACPS provides the best care and compassion in they can—daily!

Jacksonville Utilizes Partnerships and Relationships to Assist in Animal Cruelty Cases

When it comes to animal cruelty cases, there is often a large amount of evidence collected not only at the scene of the crime but also from the animal. To enhance the likelihood of a criminal conviction, ACPS has established working relationships with the ASPCA, HSUS, the University of Florida, and other organizations that have access to equipment and testing that isn't available locally and too expensive for ACPS to purchase/maintain.

If the victim is still alive blood and bodily fluid samples, skin scrapes, digital x-rays, and other physical evidence can be collected and sent to forensic labs for analysis and reports. The ASPCA's Maddies Shelter Medicine Program has helped provide specialized testing; and the University of Florida has provided expert veterinary analysis and statements.

When a victim is dead, a necropsy (animal autopsy) is usually performed. Additional testing and samples are possible and often needed that are not taken from live animals. One example is a starved dog will have the contents of its digestive system analyzed, and in severe cases a bone marrow test may be taken to see how long the dog was malnourished.



Both the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the ASPCA have mobile units they can bring to assist in criminal cases. HSUS actually helped recently with a dog fighting case and their vehicle made

initial assessments much easier and better documented.

The City of Jacksonville continues to work to improve its ability to process evidence and prosecute criminal and civil violations of cruelty and neglect.



Sometimes people forget that the veterinary staff deals with far more than sterilizing and vaccinating pets for adoption or returns to owners. The future goal for this section will be to highlight some of the other aspects of shelter medicine and what is going on around your community.

Did you know that Animal Care & Protective Services' veterinarians perform forensic veterinary services, give expert testimony in civil and criminal trials, deal with injuries & illnesses, work with rescues & foster caregivers and educate the public?

Pet Placement Partners Page: S.A.F.E. PET RESCUE

Saving Animals From Euthanasia (S.A.F.E.) was founded in September 2008 when three people in a car drove to an animal control facility to make a difference in the lives of the pets facing euthanasia. S.A.F.E. came away that day with their very first rescues—dogs and cats in crates, on laps, dirty, smelly, wonderful grateful pets; all who would have been euthanized if not for their “freedom ride” that day. So S.A.F.E. Pet Rescue began operations.



S.A.F.E. is run completely on donations; and Jean Motley is very instrumental and good at collecting donations because she simply won't take no for an answer—and who could resist her charm anyway. A very caring North Florida community has helped S.A.F.E. grow into a lifesaving 24/7 organization with over 100 volunteers who provide foster homes, walk dogs, cuddle kitties, transport pets, work in the thrift store, work in the office and so much more!



Jean Motley, S.A.F.E. co-founder, is turning a vivacious 90 years young! Her wish was for a S.A.F.E. pet reunion so that she would get another chance to see some of the 4,500 pets she has helped rescue. Jean is happiest when she is at an adoption event with a doggie on her lap - preferably a poodle (her dog of choice). She still drives herself from her home in Palatka to adoption events each Saturday and Sunday—and she is the person in charge. Jean will spend the full 8-hour day volunteering whether it's sunny, rainy, hot or cold; her dedication is inspiring.

Jean Motley's 90th Birthday Pet Reunion is Sunday, March 24th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the S.A.F.E. Office/Thrift Store just north of SR 312 off of A1A (1250 County Road A1A for those of you using GPS). If you can't attend please send a photo of you with your S.A.F.E. pet to P.O. Box 840215, St. Augustine, FL 32080 or by email to Rnordan_se1@comcast.net.

We will have an update of her celebration in our next newsletter...to be continued.



The Friends of Jacksonville Animals

Friends of Jacksonville Animals (FOJA) is an all-volunteer organization that was founded in 2008 to assist efforts to improve the lives of shelter animals, help reduce unnecessary euthanasia, and to educate the people of Jacksonville about responsible pet ownership. FOJA works directly with ACPS to benefit the lives of shelter animals by focusing on fundraising to assist with medical care, shelter environment enrichment, promote adoptions, reduce euthanasia and much more. All funds donated to FOJA go directly toward those goals through a number of different programs and initiatives.

One such program is the “Heart Care” Program. This program provides funds so that heartworm-positive dogs can be treated within the shelter, and if necessary, after they have been adopted. With budget cuts the City could no longer afford to purchase the drugs needed to treat heartworm positive dogs for adoption so most would have been euthanized had the program and partnership not happened. Since its inception in 2009, the program has helped save over 500 dogs that would have otherwise been put down. FOJA also routinely funds various special or advanced medical procedures for animals in need, for which ACPS does not have the budget.

In addition to medical aid programs, FOJA also heads up several shelter enrichment programs. From dog-walking and interaction, to playing soothing classical music throughout the shelter, all of these programs are designed to improve the quality of life for the animals in the shelter. One especially interesting program is the “Open Paw” program, in which the shelter dogs are each given some of their daily food by hand whenever a volunteer or staff member passes through the kennels. This small gesture helps the dogs associate people with a positive reward and trains them to come to the front of their cage and sit quietly whenever someone approaches. Though it may seem insignificant, the difference in behavior - barking and jumping versus quietly sitting - makes a world of difference in fostering a positive perception of these dogs to potential adopters. Many of these dogs have not had the best experience in the past with people and this helps reshape that human bond we are all so used to with our pets. The benefits also include a more friendly environment for potential adopters to interact longer with the animals in the shelter which is proven to increase adoption of dogs that were not the “first choice” of what the adopters thought they wanted. To that end, we are constantly brainstorming and communicating with ACPS to come up with new, innovative ways to help save these animals.

The Friends of Jacksonville Animals was one of the pioneers in working with the City when it was in the early stages of turning around the operations. Through its strong partnership with ACPS, FOJA is extremely proud to have helped play a role in the recent achievement of “No-Kill” status in November of 2012 and January of 2013, with more than 90% live-outcomes in those months. We look forward to and continue to strive toward the day when ACPS is “No-Kill” every month of every year.



Helping Hand



From the Field...

**True Stories from the streets of
Jacksonville— Uncensored & Real**

WARNING!

The topics and stories in this section may contain descriptions and photographs of a graphic nature that may not be suitable for all audiences.

DO NOT CONTINUE BEYOND

THIS WARNING IF

GRAPHIC MATERIAL

UPSETS YOU

Embedded Collars

Embedded Collars



An embedded collar occurs most often when a dog is purchased as a puppy or adolescent that has not grown to its full size. The owner gets the dog a collar and chains it out in the yard. In most cases the owners regularly feed and provide water for the chained dog and it continues to grow. But through a lack of attention, grooming and human-dog contact; the dog grows to its full size as the collar that once fit nicely begins to slowly cut into the neck. In some cases the wound tries to enclose the collar and in other cases the open wound becomes infected. Ultimately the dog suffers daily. Our officers see this nearly every day in Jacksonville!

Tragically, dozens of dogs a day are likely suffering from a preventable injury known as an embedded collar. A little daily attention and caring would prevent this from ever happening. A properly fitted collar that is checked regularly and replaced as need would prevent the vast majority of these cases. The remaining cases could be prevented by owners using a collar or harness rather than a chain, rope, wire or other inappropriate collar material or restraint.

In the worst cases, the collar (or sometimes harness) cuts into the dog. The wound becomes infected and ultimately the flesh starts to die or become gangrenous—this can put the dog's life at risk. If the dog can be saved, the dead tissue must be surgically removed and the wound repaired. Antibiotics and painkillers are essential, but the road to recovery can be rocky. There are times the wound is so severe, that even the best measures cannot help the wounds and the animal dies as a result of this injury. Many of these dogs can only be treated and saved through community partnerships due to the fact funds/veterinary time would have to be diverted from other daily necessities to provide extraordinary medical treatment, specialized housing and care needs, and the regular monitoring and wound care that takes staff time away from the other thousands of animals entering the shelter. A tragically preventable injury

How bad is the problem? Animal code enforcement officers see some degree of embedded collars each and every week. It would be rare not to see a severely embedded collar every month. They have become so common in the open admission sheltering community, that they no longer shock the employees who have to help them. People from the public are often shocked by the most minor cases and most refuse to even be near or look at a more severe case. The picture above is a severe case but not even close to the worst that is seen in Jacksonville.



Thank You



Many, many thanks to:

Animal Care & Protective Services staff, Jacksonville Humane Society, First Coast No More Homeless Pets, rescues, foster homes, volunteers, adopters, and supporters for stepping up to save our dogs in danger of euthanasia. These dogs were saved, thanks to the diligence of this amazing community.

