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In 2009 the City of Jacksonville dramatically changed its Animal Care & Control to the more modern and industry-leading practices of Animal Care & Protective Services. Since then through direct community work and partnerships 37,035 animals have left the shelter alive [21,290 cats, 14,939 dogs & 806 others].
**This is the first of hopefully many newsletters about the City of Jacksonville’s Animal Care & Protective Services and our community partners’ efforts to improve the quality of life in our great city for people and their pets. This inaugural issue brings you information you may not be aware of from the recent past as well as current events. In future issues we hope to include items of interest to you, your questions, some of the great news you share about your new pet, and other animal related stories. To submit ideas, stories and questions for future issues please email them to: trebatos@coj.net and include “Newsletter Submission” in the subject line of your email.**

A New Beginning in Jacksonville

In 2008, the City of Jacksonville was looking to step away from its old way of doing business with Animal Care & Control and better meet the needs of the community through a new direction. With a new shelter facility under construction, the City and its community partners set out to change a broken system that was not well respected by the community or its statewide peers. That led to the hiring of a new Division Chief and the City taking a leap of faith in breaking new ground in the area of public animal sheltering and community animal control. With the support of the Mayor, City Council and an informal animal advisory committee; we began the journey to transform Animal Care & Control to the new Animal Care & Protective Services. Empowering employees, listening to the needs of the community and working to build the best working relationships with all community partners we ventured into uncharted territories knowing doing the right thing would eventually result in success.

From a community low point where more than 3 out of 4 animals never left the shelter alive, we quickly hit a point in 2009 where the number of animals leaving the shelter alive surpassed the number that left dead. Each year from that point we have seen more and more improvements in our community effort to reach a time where no adoptable or treatable pet should have to lose its life in a shelter. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of the employees of ACPS, the efforts of the Jacksonville Humane Society, the innovative programs of First Coast No More Homeless Pets and a large number of Pet Placement Partners (individuals and groups that help us place animals into homes and provide foster care and other support). The future for our pets in Jacksonville is bright…but we will need continuing and growing community support to achieve all of our community goals. If any community can do it—Jacksonville can!
Above are statistics from Animal Care & Protective Services showing progress made in increasing the number of animals leaving the shelter alive each year.

This graphic above shows the progress of the entire community in Jacksonville over the past decade in improving sheltering and pet placement. It includes the City of Jacksonville ACPS, Jacksonville Humane Society & FCNMHP Mandarin Adoption Center sponsored by Best Friends Animal Sanctuary.
Recently one of our adopters, Elijah, came in to share his story of Jules, a Rottweiler. At our shelter Jules had some difficulty dealing with her surroundings but that never kept Elijah from thinking she was a great pet. Once settled in, Jules even slept with Elijah and was a very loving, loyal member of the family. One day Elijah came home and Jules was in the bedroom standing by the closet door. When Elijah went to get Jules she growled and would not move. This was confusing to Elijah and he continued to try to get her to come to him...the next thing he heard was someone in the closet asking to be let out without the dog attacking him and saying he was sorry that he had broken into the house. Elijah rewarded Jules by adopting a new friend from the shelter to stay with Jules and Elijah. He chose Jake who has been a difficult dog to get adopted. Thank you for this great story and adopting two pets Elijah—you are one of our success story heroes!

I just wanted to reach out and let the Forest Street staff know that the American Bulldog mix I adopted in February by the name of Prince Charles has been the best dog I’ve ever had in my life. He’s since been renamed to Alfredo, the name seemed to fit his goofy big-pawed playfulness much better. Not to mention he’s totally white, like the sauce.

I’ve been taking him to obedience classes and he is an outstanding student, the trainers love him and he gets along great with other dogs. I also found from my vet that at some point in his early puppyhood he suffered a jaw fracture, and will forever have a crooked nose and a tongue that hangs out when he’s sleepy. He had been returned to the shelter twice prior to my adopting him. Despite what hard knocks his life may have given him from the start, he is by far the friendliest, most lovable dog meatball ever. It’s amazing to me that this dog, that is so smart and has such a capacity to trust and wants to please, would have been returned to the shelter.

I guess some things were meant to be. I'm the lucky one that gets to give him his forever home. He's doing great and I'm so thrilled to have such a great companion.

The staff working the day I adopted were all very professional, helpful, and really seemed as if the current resident animals' best interests were at heart.

Again, I wouldn't have such an awesome canine pal if it wasn't for the shelter & the great staff there. Thank you for making my first dog adoption a positive and rewarding experience. Please make sure to pass along my thank you to the staff.

Best regards, Staci

Thank you for this great story and adopting Alfredo—you are one of our success story heroes!
SUMMERTIME TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR PETS

We all love to spend our free time outdoors in the summer sun, but did you know that including your pets in your activities can be dangerous – even deadly?

**HEAT STROKE** can occur quickly in dogs and cats because they are unable to sweat like humans, so their ability to tolerate high temperatures is limited. Dogs pant in order to exchange warm air for cooler air, but when the air temperature moves closer to body temperature that cooling ability is greatly compromised. Cats typically do not pant unless they are very hot or very stressed. The most common scenarios that can cause heat stroke include:

- **Leaving an animal in a locked car, even with the windows cracked open.**
- **Strenuous exercise in hot or humid weather.**
- **Prolonged exposure or confinement on concrete or asphalt.**
- **Prolonged confinement without access to shade or fresh water.**
- **Breed related tendencies.** Dogs with ‘short noses’ or ‘flat faces’ are at higher risk for heat stroke, such as the Pug, Pekingese, or English bulldog.

The first signs of heat stroke include heavy panting and labored breathing. Often the gums and tongue will be bright red, and the saliva will be very thick. As the core body temperature continues to rise (from 104°F to as high as 110°F), the animal may begin to vomit, have bloody diarrhea, trouble standing, develop seizures or collapse. Ultimately the animal may lapse into a coma and die.

If you notice any of these signs in your pet, you should seek immediate emergency treatment from your veterinarian. The **MOST IMPORTANT GOAL OF TREATMENT** is to slowly decrease the body temperature back into the normal range (100° - 102°F). This is usually accomplished by placing the animal in a tepid water bath (not ice water) and placing an IV catheter in the leg to supply cool intravenous fluids and maintain blood pressure. Placing the animal in front of a fan after the bath will also help to dissipate body heat by evaporative cooling.

So, how can you keep your pets safe this summer? ‘Survival’ tips include:

- **DON’T take your pet with you when you run errands!** Studies have shown that leaving the windows down on your vehicle will NOT significantly lower the temperature in your car. Plus, you run the risk of your pet escaping or being stolen.

- **DON’T take your pet outdoors in the heat of the day!** Avoid the beach, jogging, parks or arts festivals during the peak daytime hours. Not only is heat stroke a concern, but prolonged exposure to hot pavement or concrete can cause the paw pads to blister which is extremely painful for your pet.

- **If you MUST take your pet with you,** rest frequently in shaded areas and be sure to carry a supply of fresh cool drinking water.

KEEP YOUR PETS HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SAFE!
Feature Story:

Jacksonville Community Animal Organizations Break New Ground

In February of this year the Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS), First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP), Best Friends Animal Society and Animal Care & Protective Services (ACPS) set out with a goal of saving as many as 3000 additional animals. When reviewing the categories of shelter deaths it was determined that young kittens were at the highest risk when brought into a shelter. Thinking outside the box and breaking new ground in the sheltering community, the Jacksonville Humane Society’s executive director Denise Deisler proposed utilizing the building that formerly was used before the opening of the JHS Community Animal Hospital for surgeries and converting it to a underage nursery to assist kittens and puppies. Since kittens as young as a few days old flood shelters in late-spring through fall and those kittens cannot be sterilized and adopted until they are at least 8-12 weeks of age, and all available foster homes for all community partners fill up with kittens quickly, JHS committed to assembling the necessary volunteers and other support to launch this new effort (over 500 hours per week of volunteer commitment was needed).

Although the demands for resources and staffing for care requires a 24/7 commitment in order to save this segment of the pet population the new facility was brought into operation. Since there were no other models to follow every day is a new challenge. The results are stunning. In April alone the deaths of kittens in shelters in Jacksonville fell from nearly 52% to just over 16%. Literally hundreds of additional kittens are being saved through this effort. JHS alone has seen an increase of 226 additional saved kittens for April, and ACPS has put more than three times as many kittens into foster care (over 200 total) in this effort. FCNMHP secured financial assistance from Best Friends Animal Society to help offset some of the huge new expenses JHS took on as part of this commitment.

Denise Deisler said, “If we are to achieve no kill in 2 years we must work smarter. This joint project is a perfect example. The three agencies worked together to understand which animals were losing their lives and why, then created a program that would address the most pressing needs.” The cooperative working relationship between FCNMHP, JHS and ACPS is nothing less than astonishing and has been the envy of communities across the nation. Dozens of organizations from around the nation have come to Jacksonville to learn how they can bring these types of programs to their communities.
Our next challenge will begin in two months when hundred of new kittens are ready to find forever homes—we need your help to get these homes and get people to come to JHS, Mandarin Adoption Center and ACPS to adopt!

ACPS Monthly Kitten Intake for 2011

An all too familiar “present” left at area shelters
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?

Great job by our team and partners!!

Olive Oyle (pictured above) came to Animal Care and Protective Services in such bad condition that several staff members thought she might have been a dachshund—although she really was a rat terrier. This puppy was covered in motor oil that had burned on her.

After initial medical work by the ACPS veterinary staff, one of our many Pet Placement Partners—London Sanctuary—stepped in to assist this cute little girl with her recovery. They ultimately found her a loving forever home and you can clearly see how amazing her recovery was!

Unfortunately many of the injured or abused animals that find their way to our shelter can never be traced back to their owner or the person that may have abused them. While we want to bring offenders to justice, we are equally concerned with the health and welfare of the animal.

Great job by our team and partners!!
Jacksonville Animal Care & Protective Service is deeply indebted to the network of Pet Placement Partners that have joined in our efforts to find pets good forever homes. In the past shelters either thought they needed to do the job of placing animals on their own or were misguided in thinking they could do it better than anyone else. That was one of the first things that changed in Jacksonville when Animal Care & Control was set aside and Animal Care & Protective Services came into existence.

Individuals, organizations, groups, shelters, breed rescues, and others have joined ACPS, JHS and FCNMHP in taking on the task of placing as many animals as possible into good homes in an effort to end shelter deaths of adoptable and treatable pets. These enhanced partnerships are coordinated by June Beth Mason. The working relationships and knowledge about what various partners are able to take has dramatically increased the number of animals going to homes through these partners—look at the percentage of animals they are helping save.

Our goal for this column will be to feature one of the Pet Placement Partners and what they are doing to assist in the community goal of achieving no shelter deaths of adoptable or treatable animals in Jacksonville.

If you’d like to become a Pet Placement Partner contact Beth (MasonJ@coj.net) and when she has some available time she will get back with you. Please be patient as she deals with lots of different animals and groups so her availability at any given time can be very limited. We look forward to adding more people and groups to our network to get these wonderful pets into good forever homes.
PET MEALS ON WHEELS
A COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Meet Mrs. Ester Norris
with her cat, Adolph and 11 year old best friend, Bandito.

Mrs. Norris is 89 years old and has lived in her home for 60 years. Meals on Wheels delivers to her home and has helped her stay right where she needs to be. She says “We moved here right after we married, I raised my kids here, my whole life is right here in this house - I don’t know what I would do without Meals on Wheels. I know Dito and Adolph love it too… I would hate to lose them because they are all I got.”

Mrs. Norris has macular degeneration and is legally blind. She began to lose her sight over a decade ago and knew it wasn’t safe for her to cook anymore. “When all this happened, I became so scared. My husband passed away and my kids have married and moved off. I didn’t have anyone except Bandito and Adolph. When Meals on Wheels started coming, I knew then I wouldn’t lose my home and that I would have a place to stay.”

Mrs. Norris also receives Pet Meals on Wheels and says her dog loves his meal….almost as much as she loves hers! “Oh he just eats it right up. Before Pet Meals on Wheels, I was splitting food 3 ways and there were days when Adolph didn’t like what was being served…and some days Bandito wouldn’t eat a bite! I wasn’t eating right either, but you know, you have to make things work. Then I got Meals on Wheels delivered to me and now they bring food for my Dito and Adolph! It’s a blessing, a real blessing and I don’t know what I would do without it,” says Mrs. Norris.
Welcome to the first column written by field operations. You may have noticed the warning on the top of this page. Our goal in this column is to provide a true, honest and unrestricted look at what our officers encounter and do in the field every day. Some of the stories and photographs are likely to upset and offend some people but we feel it is important not to hide the field operations side of the operation.

Not every issue will have stories dealing with animal cruelty or other graphic topics. Some of the columns will deal with the law, court, what’s happening in the animal control profession or other topics. If you have an idea please let us know and we will try to incorporate it into our column.

Since this is the first field operations column let’s start at the most basic of levels—what exactly does ACPS Field Operations do? A simple question with a very long and complex answer. By law ACPS is the animal control authority for the City of Jacksonville. It is empowered to enforce local ordinance code by writing citations for civil infraction as well as investigating violations of Florida state law. Working with JSO and the State Attorney’s Office, ACPS Field Operations can also be involved in arrests and prosecutions of criminal violations.

Story continued...
Our team of 15 officers, investigators and supervisors is kept very busy in this large City. From January through December 2011, our officers made direct contact with 46,422 citizens; impounded 14,512 stray animals; assisted JSO 2757 times; prepared 43 criminal information filings; returned 190 animals to their owners without taking them to the shelter; and issued 4245 warnings and 2707 tickets. Additionally, they picked up 2094 dead animals from the roadways and utilized 1894 educational opportunities with first-time offenders. Even with this record number of responses, ACPS was not able to respond to every complaint and utilizes a prioritization system in our responses.

The quality of the services provided to the citizens was acknowledged in 2011 by the Florida Animal Control Association, the professional organization representing all animal control agencies in Florida. Out of over 100 different counties and municipalities with animal control agencies, the City of Jacksonville’s Animal Care & Protective Services was selected as the Outstanding Animal Control Agency in the State of Florida for 2011. This is a highly sought after and prestigious award, and the first time Jacksonville has received this acclaim.