

ATHENS COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY



Happy Holidays!

The Athens County Humane Society has had another busy and productive year helping the animals of Athens County. By year end we will have found homes for over 300 cats (some rabbits, turtles, and birds too!) That is by far a record for us considering we are entirely foster based. We are only able to do this because we have many amazing and dedicated foster caretakers.

Our spay/neuter clinics continue to work hard to serve low-income individuals in the area. In 2021 we have seen 1100 cats and dogs. The demand is so high that at times we have had a 3-4 month wait for an appointment. Despite this being an issue everywhere, we are hoping to lessen the wait in 2022 by bringing on more staff at our clinic and hosting the mobile Rascal Unit more frequently.

Our team of TNR (trap-neuter-return) volunteers worked so hard this year and trapped 85 cats for spay/neuter! Requests for help from this program have exploded and we have a lengthy wait list, but we will continue to work hard to assist in these situations.

It has remained hard to plan fundraisers in 2021 due to the uncertainty of Covid so we are very much reliant on your generosity. If you are able to this holiday season, please consider donating to the Athens County Humane Society. Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,
Angela Marx, Executive Director

Caring for Cat Colonies (By Connie Romine)



First, you might ask, what is a cat colony? Cat colonies are a gathering of numerous cats and kittens. Basically, it's a cluster of homeless cats.

My colony of cats numbered 18 at its largest. A healthy colony is usually about seven to eight cats. Many of these cats are either abandoned, lost, or feral, meaning never having had contact with humans, who found their way to the food and shelter that I've provided for the last 15 years. As their caretaker, I took on the responsibility of providing food, fresh water, and shelter of some sort to help them survive the elements. I also saw it as my responsibility to have them spayed or neutered and get them medical care when needed and find them homes whenever possible.

Have I done this alone? No. There's been a caring community of co-workers who have taken up collections when needed for medical care, or I've turned to

The Athens County Humane Society invites you to join our Membership Program. Becoming an ACHS Member has many benefits. Not only will you have the opportunity to directly impact the animals in Athens County, you will also be able to share your input and help direct us in our future endeavors. Your support helps us do all the amazing things we do... in fact, we couldn't do it without you! Please see the membership levels below as well as the impact your membership will make.

Senior Membership: Age 65 and over - \$25 per year

Individual Membership: Age 18 and over - \$50 per year

(Benefits include – Newsletter, Member Sticker, Invitation to yearly member meetings)

Businesses/Organization Membership - \$100 per year

Helping Paw Membership - \$100 per year

(Benefits include – Newsletter, Member Sticker, Invitation to yearly member meetings, yearly ACHS Calendar)

Golden Paw Membership - \$150 per year

(Benefits include – Newsletter, Member Sticker, Invitation to yearly member meetings, yearly ACHS Calendar, an ACHS t-shirt of your choosing)

What do your membership dues support?

- Spaying and Neutering services for stray/feral cats and low-income pet owners
- Emergency and routine vetting needs for cats in our Adoption Program
- Critical care to injured stray cats
- Pet food assistance program
- Foster supplies for pets in our Foster Program

the Athens County Humane Society for affordable spay/neuter or help in trapping. An earnest group of volunteers, though many overstretched, but these ACHS volunteers have been ever-present whenever I've been overwhelmed with my elected responsibilities for these wonderful felines.

In my years of tending this colony, I've trapped over 16 cats; paid to have them neutered or spayed, and pleased to say, found some of them homes. I think I've run out of friends at this point, but luckily, our colony is now small, and all cats are spayed or neutered with warm shelters and daily care. Debbie, my co-caretaker and I think that we might just have THE most pampered colony of cats in the area! We love and dote on them every day – if they'll let us that is! It's such a privilege to help these wonderful animals.

Being a caretaker for a cat colony is filled with more rewards than trials or sadness. If you've a colony near you, go online and read about how to properly care for them, or contact the ACHS for advice on care or trapping. The most important thing that you need to do is provide regular meals and water, and please, please, get them spayed or neutered. The most affordable is through the ACHS, though the wait list is long. Don't be discouraged and don't wait until you have dozens of cats living in your area.

Winter Feral Cat Shelters (By Linda Sauer)



Stray and feral cats need your help this winter. Here is some information that will help you make plans for any outdoor cats about which you are concerned.

If you're unable to purchase an electric outdoor shelter, there are many ways to make one with little cost. Outdoor shelters must be waterproof, insulated, provide protection from frigid wind and sturdy enough to not

be blown around. It is crucial that the bedding in a shelter be made from straw! Blankets, towels, fabric of any sort will only hold the cold and moisture and defeat your purpose of trying to keep the cat warm. Straw is the answer and plenty of it! Also be sure that the opening is not ground level to avoid water running into it and that it be not bigger than 6 inches wide and tall to keep the cat protected from predators. If possible, place the shelter a few inches above the ground to create a pocket of insulation under the shelter from the ground. Attaching the shelter to 2x4's is often done.

The best homemade shelter is made from a heavy duty used Coleman (or similar company) food and beverage cooler. If you have an old one sitting around, it will be a perfect solution. If you can use a Dremel tool, you can easily cut the doorway. Another decent one would be to take two very sturdy plastic tubs (with lids) that one will fit inside the other one. In between the two you can put part of a roll of home insulation, self-expanding foam, or a layer of straw on three sides and on the top of the lid of the inner tub. It would be helpful to line the opening with pipe insulation to cover the exposed materials in the doorway. For more information, you can google winter shelters for outdoor cats. There are many sites with specific directions and even Pinterest has many photos and specifics that are helpful.

Why the Long Wait? (By Dr Marshall Aanestad, DVM)

While there are many local vet practices in Athens able to see and treat animals, it seems that there is still a significant deficit of veterinary care for the number of animals in our area. I can assure you that unfortunately, the long waits of getting your animal seen is something happening across our country. Many factors play into this deficit:

One of the most obvious reasons is due to the pandemic itself. Not wanting to go out in public unless absolutely necessary, many pet owners didn't bring their dogs or cats in for yearly visits and vaccines. Now, owners are playing catch-up to get their animals vaccines updated. Additionally, spending more time at home encouraged many to consider buying or adopting additional pets (you would be surprised how many

new dogs have been named "Rona" or a similar variant during this period).

Before COVID, there were an estimated 76 million dogs and 58 million cats in US households in 2012. In contrast there are ~123,000 veterinarians currently practicing in the US, of which only 67% see primarily dogs and cats. Assuming everything else is equal and leaving out all other species, that equates to 1,505 animals per veterinarian. While we won't have statistics on it for some time, it can be assumed that this ratio has likely gotten even larger during the pandemic.

Other factors to consider would be more veterinarians and veterinary staff leaving the field than new employees to replace them. Whether it be from nearing retirement, burnout in the field or not feeling safe in the workplace since the outbreak, good help can be hard if not impossible to find.

No matter who you use for preventative and/or urgent care, please be kind to your veterinarian and the staff that takes care of your furry family member. Everyone hates to wait, but we are all doing what we can to provide quality care and still be able to get some sleep at night.

Bonded Pair – Kevin & Rosebud available for Adoption



This bonded pair are anxious to join their forever family. They are both around 2-3 years old. Rosebud is absolutely stunning, super playful and will grunt and snort to let you know she's a happy girl. Kevin is a shy guy and takes time to warm up to humans, but he's a total sweetheart and will be demanding attention and

chin scratches after a little while.

Kevin is completely in love with his Rosebud. They would do best in a calm environment where they can birdwatch and laze about. They both love a snuggle but Kevin would prefer to sit next to you while Rosebud sits on you. Come meet supermodel Rosebud and her sweet boyfriend Kevin today!

Cooper - 1 year old male



Sweet Cooper has been in our care for awhile now due to an injury we had been treating. He had an injured leg and had to have his tail amputated. Thanks to our supporters generosity this adorable boy is all healed up and has a clean bill of health. He is ready for his forever home. How can you say no to that face?! You'll fall in love with this charmer right away.

To submit an application for adoption, visit athenshumane.org/adopt

For information and frequently asked questions, visit - www.athenshumane.org

To contact ACHS please email us at - info@athenshumane.org

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