

Virginia Federation of Humane Societies



VIRGINIA FEDERATION
of HUMANE SOCIETIES
SINCE 1959

From the President



**March
2019**

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I just returned from the American Pets Alive Conference. There were many wonderful presentations but one of my favorites was “Goal Setting and Key Performance Indicators – Resources, Responsibility and Results” by David Meyer, President and Co-Founder of Adopt-a-Pet. He could have been speaking to a room full of sales people, company owners, and entrepreneurs about how to grow their business and the basic tenets would have been the same. There is no argument that sheltering and rescuing precious animals can be emotionally driven, but his presentation was a powerful reminder that the success of any organization requires sound planning, measurable goals, and frequent monitoring of those goals to generate extraordinary results. For anyone who is struggling with planning and goal setting/monitoring, I highly recommend that you watch the video of Meyer’s presentation. It is inspiring and offers a roadmap for uncomplicated planning and goal setting. A link to the presentation will be available soon. If you would like me to send you that link, you can email me at president@vfhs.org.

(continued below)



President's Report, cont'd.

The VDACS 2018 stats are now online and an early read of them suggests we are on track to achieve our goal of at least a 90% save rate by 2020. More analysis will be done in the coming weeks.

In this newsletter, you will see a wonderful update on High Five. 2018 was a banner year for High Five partners who, together, facilitated the transfer of over 3,000 dogs and cats.

Annual Conference is almost upon us! It will be held March 28-30, 2019 at the gracious and very pet-friendly Founders Inn in Virginia Beach. You won't want to miss "Karaoke Night" where participants will vie for prizes in the form of spay/neuter grants! We are thrilled to have Becky Robinson, President and Founder of Alley Cat Allies, as our keynote speaker! Other speakers include Lori Hensley of Beyond Fences, Susanne Kogut, who is Executive Director of the Petco Foundation, and experts from Best Friends and Maddies Fund.

Thistle – adopted!



Tinsel – adopted!

High Five Continues to Support the Work of Virginia's Animal Organizations



The High-Five program, which transfers animals from under-resourced areas of the Commonwealth to regions where adoption chances are greater is honored to announce that last fall we received a grant from the William H. Donner Foundation to continue serving those who save animals. We are so grateful for this funding that allows us to bolster the efforts of organizations doing lifesaving work for Virginia animals.

We are thrilled that in 2018, in conjunction with our High Five partners, we helped support the transfer of 3051 animals, either by networking them via our Facebook page, website, and emails to participating groups or by providing funding to address barriers to transfer including helping with transport fuel, vetting, and boarding needs.



**Addie and
Maddie
on
Transport
from
Russell
County**

**Puppies on Transport from
Buchanan County**



Wise County transport



High Five Continues to Support the Work of Virginia's Animal Organizations, cont'd.



Our work with Best Friends Animal Society IT experts continues, in partnership with doobert.com, to build a new High Five IT platform that will streamline and increase the effectiveness of the program.

Collaboration and cooperation among our partner organizations is crucial to efforts to save the healthy and treatable animals in Virginia's sheltering system. High Five is proud to play a role in fostering these types of relationships. We want to help you help animals! If you'd like to learn more about becoming involved in High Five, email highfiveva@gmail.com or go to <https://www.vfhs.org/high-five-virginia-1>.

Yardley – adopted!



Missy – adopted!



Henry – adopted!



Legislative Report



Three very important animal welfare bills succeeded in the 2019 General Assembly.

HB2745 patroned by Delegate Patrick Hope was generated at the request of VFHS. This bill allows for deferred adjudication in dangerous dog cases. Currently, a Judge has two choices when s/he hears a dangerous dog case which is to deem the dog dangerous or not. But not all cases are cut and dried. This third option allows the Judge to put the dog on a sort of probation, with a variety of imposed conditions, and if there is no subsequent 'bad behavior' during that probation period, the case is dismissed. Some Judges in Virginia were already doing this but others were not. HB 2745 simply makes it clear that Judges have this option at their disposal. This third option will surely be the difference between some dogs staying with their families or being surrendered and euthanized because the costs of keeping a dog deemed dangerous can be prohibitive. We are grateful to our own Heidi Meinzer for helping to craft the language of this lifesaving bill and to Delegate Hope for being a great advocate for the legislation as it made its way through the General Assembly.



Legislative Report, cont'd.

SB1025 patroned by Senator Lionell Spruill, Sr. significantly increases protections for outdoor dogs. It articulates that during hot weather, dogs must be provided shade and says that the dog's shelter may not readily conduct heat. It goes on to instruct that, during cold weather, the shelter must include a windbreak at the shelter entrance and have a quantity of bedding material consisting of straw, cedar shavings, or the equivalent that is sufficient to protect the animal from cold and promote the retention of body heat. SB1025 also improves tethering requirements including increased length of the tether and addressing the weight of the tether relevant to the dog's body weight. Furthermore, the tether may not have weights or other heavy objects attached to it.

SB1604 patroned by Senator Bill DeSteph raised the penalty from a misdemeanor to a Class 6 felony for acts that cause serious bodily injury to a dog or cat in an important section of the code addressing cruelty. Currently, a dog can be brutally treated but, unless the dog dies or must be euthanized as a result of the cruelty, the penalty is only a misdemeanor. SB1604 raises that penalty to a Class 6 felony. This bill garnered overwhelming public support as a result of the horrific case of Tommie, the precious dog who was tied to a fence in Richmond and set afire.



Tribute to Ursula Landsrath



We were saddened to learn that, within only a few days of the New Year, the animal rescue community lost an incredible animal advocate, our friend Ursula Landsrath. Although fortunate to have lived an exhilarating life sharing many happy adventures with her husband, Ken Rietz, Ursula's deep love of all animals became a dominant part of her being.

Ten years ago she founded the Animal Rescue Fund to enable many animal rescue groups throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia to improve the lives of animals and prevent their pain and suffering. Through her tenacious and compassionate spirit and the support of many of her closest friends, the ARF distributed over \$1.5 million dollars in ten years to groups in Virginia, helping thousands of companion animals, small mammals, horses, and wildlife. The annual summer event at her lovely home was always enjoyable, and the companion animals enjoyed the day as much as those of us who attended. The annual Animal Night for the gentlemen and its companion Ladies Night fundraiser soon became the talk of the town.

Seldom does one person leave such an enormous and enduring legacy. Ursula's presence was felt by every animal fortunate to have been touched by her kindness and the greatness of her unselfish heart. Her memory will live in our hearts forever as her star now shines amongst the brightest of those in the night sky. She belongs to the angels now – but we are better animal advocates for having had her in our lives.

Article submitted by Gina Lynch

Fairfax County Animal Shelter



The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is celebrating a major milestone – having Trapped, Neutered and Returned (TNR) over 7,000 community cats over the last ten years. Fairfax's humane approach demonstrates that the highest level of animal welfare occurs when progressive communities collaboratively work together to improve the lives of animals. Fairfax has been successful in weaving together the shelter's resources, the local community, and the dedicated animal advocates into a seamless operation that benefits the community cats. By reducing the population of cats entering the shelter, they save money and are thus able to more effectively use their resources on other programs for animals. Congratulations on a job well done!! In December, the Shelter received the prestigious Oliver Award from Alley Cat Allies President, Becky Robinson

From left to right:

Dave Rohrer, Fairfax County Deputy Executive

Gina Lynch, Chair, Animal Services Advisory Commission

Karen Diviney, Fairfax Shelter Director

Becky Robinson, President and Founder, Alley Cat Allies



Article submitted by Gina Lynch

2019 VFHS Annual Conference

March 28-30 in Virginia Beach at the Founders Inn & Spa

Click [HERE](#) for more information.



The Virginia Federation of Humane Societies is excited to announce that our 2019 animal welfare conference will be held at the gracious and very pet-friendly Founders Inn & Spa in Virginia Beach on Thursday, March 28 thru Saturday, March 30, 2019. We hope to see you there!!!

We love spreading the good news we hear from our members, so please submit any news and/or pictures for publication in the newsletter. Send them anytime to: garlandcarr14@gmail.com.



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