



**friends of the
animal shelter**

Jackson County

Supporting the programs of the Jackson County Animal Shelter

November 2020

Pulling together to save lives

Let's start our scary Shelter fire story from Kim Casey's perspective as Program Manager of Jackson County Animal Services:

"Those of us in the Rogue Valley will probably always remember just where we were and what we were doing that fateful day, Tuesday, September 8, when the Almeda Fire tore up the Bear Creek Greenway from Ashland to Medford, jumping Hwys 5 and 99 and destroying over 3,000 homes and businesses.

It was a quiet day after the Labor Day weekend at the Jackson County Animal Shelter and we had just a few volunteers on-site due to COVID restrictions and appointment-only adoptions.

By 2:30 PM, we could see the high winds were pushing the fire to the Shelter, which gave us little time to react and evacuate. Shelter staff and FOTAS volunteers mobilized to transfer 52 dogs (most over 50 pounds) and 36 cats from the Shelter to the Jackson County Expo Park in Central Point. I don't know how we did it, but within 10 minutes, we fit all three dozen cats in our van!

By that time, the fire had reached the trees that line the back of the Shelter, and the wood fence on the dog play yard was on fire! Tall trees, landscaping and structures were burning. There was thick smoke everywhere, and the heat from the fire was melting the doors on the storage units at the back of the Shelter. We thought the building was next!

We realized that we didn't have enough vehicles to transport all the dogs in one trip, so made the



hard decision to take the animals we could, fight the evacuation traffic also heading toward the Expo and backed up from the closure of I-5, and quickly come back. We ended up needing to make multiple trips – worrying about those we couldn't bring in the first caravan. We had only two enforcement trucks, neither properly equipped for transporting multiple animals at a time – nor did we have emergency radios. Staff used an app on their personal mobile phones, which, of course, ceased working during the crisis – so we had no way to communicate and coordinate while shuttling and setting up at the Expo.

But everyone pulled together and the most important thing is we managed to save every animal in our care!"

Foster Families to the Rescue

Once all of the animals were evacuated from the Shelter to the Jackson County Expo, a call went out to Friends of the Animal Shelter foster volunteers, as well as an appeal to the public via social media. The response was huge, heartwarming and fast! By Wednesday afternoon, all kittens, cats, and dogs deemed appropriate for fostering were picked up to be kept safe in their new foster homes. The rest stayed under the care of County staff and volunteers at the Expo.

Continued on page 6

Friends of the Animal Shelter supports the programs of the Jackson County Animal Shelter in Phoenix, Oregon.

We provide hundreds of volunteers to help increase pet adoptions and improve the quality of life for Shelter animals while waiting for their new forever homes.

Because preventing unplanned litters is the first step to reducing pet overpopulation, all Shelter animals are spayed/neutered before adoption.

And to ensure animals get a second chance, the Jackson County Animal Shelter and Friends of the Animal Shelter fund preventative and rehabilitative medical treatments.

All of this is in service to our vision that all adoptable animals in Jackson County find a loving home. And you can help!



Jackson County Animal Shelter
ADOPTIONS and LICENSING
BY APPOINTMENT
(541) 774-6654

5595 S Pacific Hwy, Phoenix
Tuesday–Friday, 11am–4pm
Saturday & Sunday, Noon–4pm

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

As COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Jackson County, and with the flu season upon us, the Jackson County Animal Shelter will continue to embrace social distancing and safety measures by being a “by appointment only” facility.

Minimizing the number of people in the Shelter at any given time helps protect the Shelter staff, Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteers, and potential adopters.

Browse On-line at
www.fotas.org/adopt; then
make an appointment by
calling (541) 774-6654
between 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM,
7 days a week!

We’ll make sure an Adoption Counselor is available to show you around and arrange “meet and greets”.

We realize this process is a little cumbersome, but it seems to be working REALLY well for everyone, including the animals!



© Sunny LeGrand

Apollo



Sunny

View adoptable
animals anytime at:
www.fotas.org/adopt

OUR MISSION

Friends of the Animal Shelter is dedicated to the well-being and adoption of animals at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, the training and recruitment of volunteers, and the promotion of pet health, spay/neuter and education through community outreach.

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fotas-scoop@charter.net

FOTAS Photographers
Richard Jacquot
Vincent Leandro
Sunny LeGrand
Nancy Uravich

Newsletter
Issue: 2020-3
This newsletter is published 3 times a year.
Production:
Vicki Chamberlain
Printer: Pronto Print

Contact Friends of the Animal Shelter
PO Box 1013
Phoenix, OR 97535
(541) 774-6651

fotas@fotas.org
www.fotas.org
facebook.com/fotas

Jackson County Animal Shelter
Kim Casey
Shelter Manager
5595 S Pacific Hwy 99
Phoenix, OR 97535
BY APPOINTMENT
(541) 774-6654

Hours
Tuesday - Friday
11:00 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday and Sunday
Noon - 4:00 pm

Meet our new team members

Building a stronger partnership



Welcome New Executive Director, Lisa James

Friends of the Animal Shelters' programs have increased and become more complicated over time. As programs expand, so does the need for program efficiencies, as well as increased fundraising strategies. This overview requires more time, attention and expertise than a volunteer board can provide, so it was determined that hiring a part-time Executive Director would help FOTAS grow while utilizing our resources responsibly.

Friends of the Animal Shelter is thrilled to welcome Lisa James as our part-time Executive Director. With more than 30 years of experience in executive nonprofit management, Lisa is looking forward to working on Fundraising, Planned Giving, Community Engagement and Board Development.

Lisa began learning about our operations from the Board and Staff on October 1st. Please welcome Lisa by sending her an email at ed@fotas.org.

Welcome Kim Casey, Shelter Manager

The new top dog at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, starting this past June, is former animal control enforcement officer Kim Casey, filling the position vacated by the retirement of Barbara Talbert.

Kim moved to the Rogue Valley in 2018 with her family to become an animal control officer. Hailing from Southern California, Kim brings 25 years of experience in animal welfare to her new role, primarily for a small desert community in the Palm Springs area.

"I've worked in animal welfare for my entire career. I started when I was 19 years old, working in a shelter and eventually being employed as a public servant," Kim said.

"I love animals. I'm really excited for this new role, and I think it's a great fit for the experience that I have. The Shelter and the FOTAS-supported programs here have already been extremely successful, and I don't see a reason to change what already works very well. My goal is to continue to find new resources and ways to expand what we already have going."

Welcome, Kim. Friends of the Animal Shelter is here to support you, as we continue our 30 years of working together to save more lives and help our community find love at the Shelter.



Thank You, Barbara Talbert

In her nearly 8 years as Shelter Manager, Barbara is most proud of the Shelter's live release rate for dogs, which increased from below 50% to 95%, and cats, which increased from 24% to 82%.

Barbara has helped to enrich the Shelter for both animals and people. She brought in progressive programs to help save animals' lives and has been a strong supporter and partner of FOTAS. We thank her for always being actively involved with the Board, Staff and Volunteers, hosting and attending events, and fostering more than 100 of our hard-to-adopt dogs.

Happily, Barbara has already returned to the Shelter as a FOTAS volunteer, as well as re-joining the Board. As a retirement gift to herself and husband, Kevin, they recently adopted their 108th foster dog, Emma.

Kitten Shower SUCCESS

Incubators saving lives

Our annual Kitten Shower went “virtual” this year.

Fostering kittens takes a lot of wonderfully compassionate volunteers, as it is not unusual for us to have 125+ kittens in foster care during the spring “kitten season.”

All of those kittens need to receive some form of medication – whether to treat an illness or prevent one! And kitten milk replacement formula is not cheap! Those growing kittens go through a lot of milk, food, and litter! Not to mention the playpens (to teach them to use the litter box), spay/neuter and other supplies. And the Foster Coordinator, a part-time FOTAS position, helps to keep us all organized.

In fact, fostering kittens costs more than \$25,000 a year.

For the Shower, our big “wish list” item was two incubators. When we get kittens under 4 weeks old, they need to be kept very warm to imitate being cuddled up with mom. Three generous donors allowed us to buy the incubators we need ... and they have already saved many lives. The incubators are actually “bird brooders”



(for eggs) that allow us to maintain a steady humidity level and temperature (close to 100° in the first weeks).

It’s a Miracle!

Two of the neonatal foster mommies, Eliza and Michelle, both had the same reaction the first time they had 1-day-old litters. “It’s a miracle!” Eliza explains, “Yes, we still need to get up every 2 hours to feed them, but now we don’t have to worry about them getting cold or dehydrated, which are the two most common fatal issues with such young kittens. The litters now thrive in their warm and cozy environment.”

To date, the Virtual Kitten Shower has raised \$14,800.

Help us reach our \$25,000 goal for 2020 by sending a check or going to www.fotas.org/kitten-shower to donate.

Recycling PAYS OFF

Through a partnership with the City of Ashland’s Recycling Center, FOTAS is benefiting from you helping to save the planet by recycling.

All cans and bottles with redemption value that are turned into the Ashland Recycling Center are processed by a tireless volunteer and sold to a recycler. The net proceeds are then donated to Friends of the Animal Shelter.

Examples of redeemable items:

- Aluminum Cans (soda, beer, etc.)
- Plastic Bottles (water, soda, etc.)
- Glass Bottles (beer, kombucha, lemonade, etc.)
- No wine or food bottles please

Since July 2019, this effort has already brought in more than \$10,000! And with the word getting out, the monthly average is rising to \$1,500 - \$2,000 per month.

Please take all redeemable cans and bottles to the Ashland Recycling Center. The Center is open Monday - Saturday, 9AM - 5PM, at 220 Water St., Ashland.



REUNITED!

In August, a wonderfully sweet gray and white pit-mix we named "Fester" was picked up as a stray in the Cave Junction area. Strays are always held for a period of time in hopes the owners will contact the Shelter. Unfortunately, no one did, and then the fires broke out – animals were evacuated, and then fostered. And finally, after moving back to the Shelter and made adoptable, friends saw his picture posted on social media and alerted the owner that "Bat" was waiting for him at the Shelter. We always love happy endings!

Please chip your pet

But, we could have reunited them much faster had "Bat" been chipped! Please consider getting all of your animals micro-chipped – and then keep your contact information up to date. The average cost to microchip your animal is \$45. All animals are scanned when they come into the Shelter, and all vets can scan as well. Our goal is to re-unite animals with their owners as quickly as possible. Less worry for the owner and less stress for the animal. Win-win!



Blake UPDATE

From rescued to rescuer

Last year at this time we brought you a story about Blake, a stray dog that was adopted from the Shelter by the California Search Dog Foundation (SDF). Blake, as he is called now, was trained over a 16-month period, and paired with Mike Brice of San Diego Fire-Rescue. Mike and Blake have been training together for the past year and are now being deployed.

At 10:30 am on April 14, two SDF-trained San Diego area search teams, Aide Barbat & Delta and Mike Brice & Blake, were called to Torrey Pines State Park in La Jolla, CA where a portion of the cliff had fallen onto the beach.

This area is popular with runners and beachgoers, so the San Diego County Sheriff's Department called in the canine search and rescue teams to conduct an immediate search, in case someone had been trapped.

According to partner Mike, Blake searched efficiently and thoroughly. "He is an instrumental member of our rescue team," states his partner Mike. Thankfully, no one was trapped beneath the pile of sand and rubble.

Many thanks to the California Search Dog Foundation for keeping us posted on Blake's budding career!



Crafts Fair SUCCESS

With inside events cancelled this year, we want to thank FOTAS volunteer Laura Ahearn for organizing such a successful outside Crafts Fair. And to all of the volunteers who created so many gift-worthy handmade treasures.

Tables filled with a large selection of items were scooped up by eager buyers and brought in \$5,500. Many people and their pets will be getting some wonderful holiday gifts this year.



Fire damaged many of the FOTAS storage sheds and their contents.

As you can well imagine, keeping track of more than 80 animals in so many homes, in addition to the close to 100 kittens already in foster care, was a huge task. Michelle Fox, the FOTAS Foster Coordinator, assembled a team to make sure the animals and foster families were well supported. Barbara Talbert, former Shelter manager, made sure all of the animals were matched up with the foster families in the County database. Michelle concentrated on dogs, while Eliza Kauder focused on cats and kittens (and a few ferrets).

Without access to our usual veterinary services, Michelle and Eliza served as “triage” and many veterinary clinics around the valley opened their doors to help the animals needing medical attention while we waited for the Shelter to reopen its doors almost a month later.

We had to temporarily put adoptions on hold, but Michelle, Barbara and Eliza worked with foster families and potential adopters to move adoptable pets into their new permanent homes quickly.

County Staff Serving Community Animals

In addition to Shelter animals, displaced domestic and farm animals were brought to the Expo to keep them safe while their owners sorted out where they could go. On Tuesday night, Kim and the County staff slept in their cars while taking turns attending to animals and helping new ones as they arrived.

In the meantime, former wildland Fire Fighter and current Enforcement Supervisor Andy Swanson continued to provide updates as he worked through the night to protect the Shelter from encroaching fire. Between these efforts, Andy assisted with evacuation of neighborhoods and provided fire protection for other surrounding structures. By early Wednesday morning, Kim received his exhausted call to report that the Shelter had been spared.

Kim moved her travel trailer to the Expo so that Shelter staff could continue to take care of community animals with a little bit of comfort, and until we could move back into the Shelter two weeks later.

Calm heads and amazing teamwork between County staff and FOTAS volunteers made the best of a terrible situation. We are grateful to County staff, FOTAS volunteers and members of the public who opened their hearts and homes to keep our adoptable animals safe.

Damage to the Dog Yards

Thankfully, the Shelter sustained only minor damage to the building, but there was catastrophic damage to the dog play yards. Fencing was torched and twisted; shelters, shade trees and play equipment were reduced to ashes.

Since most of the yards are not safe, the dogs are spending more time on-leash. They are truly missing the opportunity for “dogs to be dogs,” which helps them learn how to play well with others, while letting off some steam. Both volunteers and our canine buddies are looking forward to the yards being repaired.





What We Learned

If the stray animals found after the fire had a microchip with their owners' contact information, stray cats and dogs could have been returned to their owners much faster, and with much less stress on the animal and their owners.

The good news is that we are researching options for offering low-cost microchips in 2021. In the meantime, our dearest desire is to reunite animals with their owners, so please help us do that by "chipping" your animal today.

Play Yard Matching Fund

Neil Sechan and Matt Messner, long-time supporters and dog lovers extraordinaire, want to make sure the dogs can start playing again soon, and have created a Play Yard Matching Fund of up to \$10,000 to repair and rebuild the yards in honor of their two Shelter dogs, Daisy and Summer.



You can help us rebuild by donating online at www.fotas.org/play-yard or by check, write Play Yard on the memo line of your check.

Photos:

Left - Play yard and all that is left of the volunteer gazebo
Above - Neil with his dogs, Daisy and Summer

A Generous Community

There we were, in a large sand-floored arena at the Expo, surrounded by kennels filled with Shelter animals and pets whose owners had been evacuated to both the Expo and temporary lodging.

How to feed them all? How to house them all?
We did not need to worry.

Businesses, organizations, and members of the community donated their time, services, money, and delivered mountains of food, kennels, leashes, and toys.

Thank you, everyone, for your amazing generosity!

Organizations and businesses:

- American Association of Pet Parents
- AKC Reunite
- Ashland Insurance Co.
- Coral & Tusk
- Coastal Farm and Ranch
- Oregon State Department of Agriculture, Dr. Scott Essex, DVM
- Grange Co-op
- Hills/Science Diet
- Home Depot
- Humane Society of the United States
- Jackson County Community Justice Program
- Jackson County Expo, Helen Funk Expo Coordinator
- Jackson County Sheriff's Department
- Mini Pet Mart
- Mutual of Enumclaw Insurance
- MWI Animal Health Supply
- Nature's Pet Market, Vicki and Mark Pagan, owners and their many generous vendors
- PetSmart Charities
- Southern Oregon Humane Society
- Southern Oregon Kennel Club
- Southern Oregon University Softball team
- Southern Oregon Veterinary Specialty Center
- The Cheerful Vet
- The Sign Dude
- Veterinarians from throughout the Rogue Valley and neighboring counties

Individuals:

- Mary Bjorkholm and her team of friends
- Missionaries and church groups from locations throughout the valley
- Neil Sechan and Matt Messner
- **And countless individuals from the community!**

During the hectic emergency shelter relocation, we weren't able to collect all names or contact information. Please don't hesitate to contact FOTAS with any corrections or additions.

Volunteering at the Shelter During COVID-19

Friends of the Animal Shelter is only as strong as its dedicated volunteers. And, keeping our volunteers healthy and safe, while observing COVID-19 safety precautions, has definitely changed how our volunteers can help.

The number of animals coming into the Shelter has slowed – more people at home means fewer doggie escapades, and fewer strays. That's great news! It means we have fewer dogs to walk, so fewer volunteers are needed. We are able to get our canine friends lots of walkies with our experienced volunteers, so no additional volunteers are needed at the moment.

The number of cats coming in has slowed, and now that we are past the Fall kitten season, fewer kittens as well. Since adoptions are now by appointment only, our experienced Adoption Counselors are able to handle the load.

For the foreseeable future, we will not be adding any new volunteers, with the following exceptions:

- **Clean cat kennels:** Help us keep kitty lodgings clean, and get a few feline snuggles in while you work. It's a "behind the scenes" extremely valuable task, and we'd love your help.
- **Vaccination Clinic:** This popular monthly event (3rd Saturday) offers low-cost vaccinations for cats and dogs to the public. This is an outside event, where you can stay safely distanced from other people. We could use your help with traffic control and obtaining owner and pet information. You will not be interacting with animals, and you can be trained on the day of the event.

We're starting a waiting list for when Volunteer Orientations can start again, so contact the FOTAS office at (541) 774-6651 or fotas@fotas.org to sign up.

Vaccination Clinic, Shelter staff and volunteer veterinarian, Sharon Hopkins



Working Cat Waitlist

The Working Cat Program is currently paused, however, we hope to bring it back online in the future when spay and neuter resources become more available.

In the meantime, several community groups are trapping feral cats, especially those affected by the fires, while looking for barns, sheds and shops to bring them to after they are spayed/neutered.

If you are interested in becoming a caretaker for two or more “working cats” on your property, please provide the following information to workingcats@fotas.org and we’ll share it with those groups:

Name, address, phone, email address, the number of cats (minimum: 2), and where the cats will live.

Experienced mouser.

Seeking full-time employment and lodging.

The Working Cats Program

Finding cats a job and a home.

Want the very latest news and updates?

That’s easy, just visit our website homepage at www.fotas.org to find the most current information on:

- Volunteer opportunities
- Lost and found links
- Facebook rescue resource list
- Vaccination Clinic announcements
- and much more!

The posts are updated frequently to provide current information in these changing times.



Facebook Fire Resources ALERT

Many kind-hearted individuals have created Lost and Found Facebook pages to support animal reunification efforts after the recent fires. FOTAS has created a list of all Facebook pages in an effort to help individuals looking for their pets.

The list is located on our homepage at www.fotas.org

Please share this info!

GETTING WORD OUT

Social media is an amazingly great way to spread information about adoptable pets, fundraising efforts and immediate needs at the Shelter.

Please “like” our Facebook page, and SHARE our posts.



Find us @
[facebook.com/FOTAS](https://www.facebook.com/FOTAS)

Donations

Fundraising during a pandemic is, well, challenging! We have had to cancel all of our in-person events – Paws to Celebrate, Paws for a Cause Dog Walk, the Howl-a-ween Ball and Deck the Paws Crafts Fair, which has greatly eaten into our fundraising goals.

Now, more than ever, we are so very grateful to our donors.
And we can't wait to see you again soon!

Donations: January 9 – November 1, 2020

(We apologize for any errors or omissions.)



Sheryl Abbott
Jan Acord
Jeanie and Gracie Adams
Laura and Steve Ahearn
Jean Ainsworth
Karen Alberts
Rachel Aldrich
Phyllis and Glenn Allen
The Allstate Foundation,
James Nolan
Zorah Krueger-Alper
and Wayne Alper
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Anne and Jim Anderson
Genie Anderson
Marilyn Anderson
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Sunny Anderson
Steven Belsky and
Jacque Anderson
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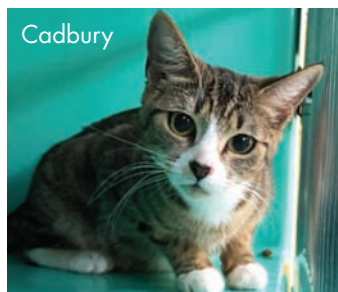
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