

# NEWS



**ADOPT** **VOLUNTEER** **FOSTER** **DONATE**

**SPRING 2025**

## A LETTER FROM OUR FOTAS BOARD PRESIDENT

A year of promising growth ahead!

**PAGE 2**

## Spring Into Action

**REAL STORIES, REAL IMPACT, REAL FRIENDS**

At Friends of the Animals, this spring is more than a season – it's a fresh start. And we have so many new beginnings to celebrate with you. From major progress at our new Community FOTAS Spay & Neuter Clinic, to tales of resilience from our newest programs, there's fresh purpose and impact in everything we do. Every day of the week, our dedicated team of over 400 volunteers, fosters, and generous donors is working together to improve pet health and bring hope to animals in our community.

In this issue, you'll meet some animals we've rescued, hear stories of the people behind the mission, and the powerful transformations made possible by supporters like you! Whether you're one of our long-time friends or a curious newcomer, there's something inside to warm your heart- and inspire your next step.

As spring breathes new life into our beautiful valley, we invite you to explore our new growth, too. This newsletter isn't just an update- it's a living testament to what happens when empathy leads to action. Our Friends of the Animals are ordinary people who became champions of extraordinary change.

**Let's begin!**



**4**



### **FOSTER Dogs & Cats**

Saving lives through our foster programs

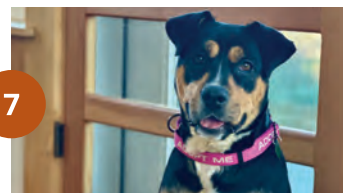
**6**



### **New Clinic is OPEN!**

The Community Spay & Neuter Clinic is ready to serve

**7**



### **Affordable Pet Care**

Vaccinations and Microchips are available now!

View adoptable animals anytime at: [www.fotas.org/adopt](http://www.fotas.org/adopt)

A LETTER FROM  
OUR FOTAS BOARD  
PRESIDENT

Becky  
Cohn



**I'm excited to enter the new year as the President of the FOTAS Board of Directors. I have previously served on the Board as President and have been a FOTAS volunteer since 2012.**

This year promises growth, impact, and renewed energy. We recently welcomed four dynamic new Board members:

**Terri Frazier** – former cat foster coordinator, now volunteer coordinator for our new clinic

**Wendy Murray** – former Working Cats program lead, now heading our new Cat Committee

**Leah McLauflin** – longtime FOTAS volunteer and play group participant

**Lauren Bickers** – Holding Crew member and founder of Dragonfly Dogs, supporting adopted shelter pets

FOTAS strives to improve the welfare of animals, not just at the County Shelter but throughout Southern Oregon.

In addition to our volunteer cadre working with the dogs in Jackson County, we have many other exciting programs currently underway or planned.

**Our top priority is getting the FOTAS Community Spay/Neuter Clinic up and running. We are making great strides and to date have served 432 animals.**

We have created a new Cat Committee, to assist the cats in our community and to bring back our former cat volunteers. In addition to our impressive cat and kitten foster program, we hold monthly Feline Fairs in conjunction with other feline rescue organizations. Plans are underway to house a limited number of felines at the clinic as we seek to find permanent homes for them.

We have vibrant cat and dog foster programs that are helping these animals get into their forever homes.

Finally, our monthly low-cost vaccination and microchip clinics provide needed services to the members of our community with hundreds attending these important events.

None of this is possible without your support and we hope you will continue to volunteer, foster, adopt and donate.

**Thank you! – Becky**

# Friends of the Animals

## STRATEGIC FOCUS

Since 1991 when, Friends of the Animals (FOTAS) was established we have been providing volunteers to help Jackson County Animal Shelter animals get adopted faster, while improving the quality of life while they wait. Now, we are also focused on reducing the number of animals entering shelters at all.

Of course, FOTAS will continue to support Shelter animals, but we know the community needs much more. Our strategic focus is to expand spay and neuter options to decrease “accidental litters,” provide nurturing “homes-between-homes” before adoption, contribute toward pet safety, and create strong partnerships with other rescue organizations. All to help more animals and owners in the Rogue Valley.



**BUG**



**DOBBY**

VIEW ADOPTABLE ANIMALS ANYTIME AT:

[WWW.FOTAS.ORG/ADOPT](http://WWW.FOTAS.ORG/ADOPT)

## Looking for ways to volunteer with FOTAS?

As a volunteer, you are essential in our mission to improve the lives of animals in our care. Our most popular roles – fostering and dog walking – are key to preparing our pets for their forever homes.

By fostering, you offer temporary homes that provide love and comfort, helping dogs and cats become well-adjusted and ready for adoption. As a dog walker at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, you'll give dogs the exercise and training they need to stay healthy and happy while they await their new families.

## OUR MISSION

Friends of the Animals is a 501c3 organization that improves the quality of life for animals in Southern Oregon by facilitating adoptions, medical care, education and resources to our community.

### STAFF:

Megan Ayars, Operations Manager  
Mitzi Scheerer, Development Director  
Liz Obelenus, Support Services Associate  
Dena Vogt, Dog Foster Program Coordinator  
Ray Homen, Cat Foster Program Coordinator  
Eliza Kauder, Vaccination & Microchip Clinic Coordinator  
Victoria Wade, Spay & Neuter Clinic Manager

### PRODUCTION:

Mitzi Scheerer and Robert Frost

### PRINTING:

Pronto Print

### FOTAS PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Samantha Busch  
Katie Falkenberg  
Kelly Sacks  
Brandy Setzer

### CONTACT:

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 1153  
Ashland, OR 97520  
Phone: 541-708-0090  
Web: [Fotas.org](http://Fotas.org) / [fotascclinic.org](http://fotascclinic.org)  
Email: [fotas@fotas.org](mailto:fotas@fotas.org)  
Facebook: Fotas  
Instagram: [Fotas\\_southernoregon](https://www.instagram.com/fotas_southernoregon)





# Foster Dogs

## Saving Lives Through Our Dog Foster Programs

by Dena Vogt, Dog Foster Program Coordinator

At FOTAS, our Foster Program is changing the lives of homeless pets every day. For dogs that struggle in the county shelter environment, fostering provides a bridge to the loving, permanent homes they deserve. FOTAS pays for our foster animal's needs from food, bedding, and tools to vaccinations, spay/neuter surgeries, medical care and training. We take our foster dogs out to the community and adoption events because we also help them find their forever homes.



### Penelope's Journey: From Shy to Shine

When Penelope, a shy Rottweiler mix, arrived at the shelter, the noise overwhelmed her. But in Kelly's calm foster home, she found peace. With love and training, Penelope blossomed – and eventually we found her a forever family. But with her new family, an unexpected hiccup occurred. When they left her at a boarding facility for a trial stay – Penelope panicked and escaped! What followed was a remarkable demonstration of community support. FOTAS volunteers mobilized, spreading the word on social media, posting flyers, and forming search parties. After nearly a week of searching, it was Kelly, her devoted foster mom, who found her. The moment Penelope saw her, she ran straight into her arms, safe at last!



### Sweetpea & Her Surprise Pups

Sweetpea, a nervous Chihuahua, arrived at the county shelter unexpectedly pregnant. Shortly after giving birth to two tiny puppies, she and her puppies were placed with one of our experienced fosters, Barbara. Protective of her babies at first, Sweetpea soon learned to trust Barbara, allowing her to provide the care they needed. Today, her pups Nico and Nala are thriving. All three dogs will be spayed and neutered at the FOTAS clinic, just one example of how our dedicated donors and volunteers make a lasting impact on animals in need.

### JJ: The Resilient Three-Legged Wonder

JJ, a high-energy, affectionate two-year-old Blue Heeler, arrived at the Jackson County Shelter with a broken leg and fractured pelvis. The shelter reached out to FOTAS for assistance. Thanks to our donors, staff, volunteers, and an incredibly dedicated foster, JJ received the medical care he needed. Following surgery to remove his injured leg, JJ bounced back faster than anyone expected – many thanks to his foster mom, Lisa.



## Joey's Journey:

### What a Little Company Can Do

When Joey was adopted in November, we hoped it was his forever home. But something wasn't quite right. He developed PICA, a behavioral condition where cats chew or eat non-food items. His adoptive family tried everything – vets, home adjustments, behavior changes – but nothing helped.

#### Then came a turning point.

Joey returned to his FOTAS foster family and reunited with his sisters. The PICA symptoms vanished. That foster family decided to make it official and make it Joey's home for good.



# Foster Cats

## How FOTAS Fostering is Filling the Gap for Cats in Our Community

By Ray Homen, Cat Foster Program Coordinator

Big purrs and happy tails – 2025 is off to a fantastic start! Thanks to the dedication of our incredible foster families and supporters like you, the FOTAS Cat Foster Program has already rescued over 35 cats and found loving homes for more than 40 cats in 2025.

But these aren't just numbers. Behind every adoption is a story of healing, hope, and transformation. Here are some:

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN  
MORE ABOUT FOSTERING!  
[FOTAS.ORG/FOSTER](https://fotas.org/foster)**



## Join the FOTAS Foster Family

At Friends of the Animals, our foster program wouldn't be possible without our volunteers. Whether it's providing temporary shelter, assisting in medical recovery, or helping a scared pup find confidence, our fosters change lives – one animal at a time. If you're looking for a meaningful way to make a difference, consider becoming a FOTAS foster today. Together, we can save more lives and build a brighter future for the pets of the Rogue Valley.



# Clinic Now Open



## A Game-Changer for Animal Welfare!

By: Vicki Chamberlain, Dedicated Volunteer

The Friends of the Animals Community Spay & Neuter Clinic is officially open! Built with passion and purpose, the clinic operates under ASPCA's best practices to provide accessible, high-quality care.



To ensure that the proper procedures were in place, the Clinic spent February refining systems while launching the new Volume Partner Program. The program provides services to qualifying shelters and non-profit animal rescue groups in an effort to speed up the adoption process for homeless dogs and cats. Within a five-county area, eleven organizations have already expressed interest in becoming Volume Partners. Pricing for these groups has been reduced with FOTAS covering a percentage of the surgery fees. "Helping these non-profits is an important part of our mission," states Board President Becky Cohn. "Reducing the number of animals entering shelters is the reason we started the Clinic."

The Clinic opened appointments to the general public on February 23 via its easy-to-access online appointment portal. Notifications of open appointments were posted on our social media channels. The scheduling link was activated at 8 a.m., and within 20 minutes, 42 appointments had been requested. By the end of the day, 95% of the appointments were filled, and the clinic's social media posts had been shared extensively throughout the animal welfare community.

Currently, the Clinic's surgery schedule is dependent on the veterinarians' availability. The goal, once fully staffed, is to provide surgeries 5-6 days a week, with two veterinarians working each day. We're deeply grateful to our vendors, volunteers, and donors. You've made this possible. We're still seeking support to keep our prices accessible and impact high.



## FOTAS is a nonprofit deeply involved in animal health every day. We see where the needs are – and we act.

Thanks to donor support, we were able to fund 10 full days of feral cat spay/neuter surgeries through SNYP (Spay/Neuter Your Pet), a trusted local organization with the facilities and expertise for this feral cat work – something our new Community Clinic isn't yet equipped to handle.

That funding led to 295 feral cats being spayed or neutered in 2025 – helping control the population and reduce suffering across Southern Oregon.

Your donations don't just support us. They allow us to support others – strategically, compassionately, and where it matters most.

Dear Rebecca + Board -  
Thank you so much for your support of our feral cat program. We much appreciate your funding of 10 surgery days to fix 300 cats. We hope you will soon be up + running in your new clinic + help prevent more unwanted litters in our valley + that you'll be able to join us in helping this most vulnerable population + least supported. Happy 2025! Best regards, Sally

SNYP THANK YOU LETTER  
FROM SALLY MACKLER

# Affordable Care For Pets

**FOTAS cares about your beloved 4-footed companions! We help you help them stay protected from common diseases that can cause illness and death by providing a safe and inexpensive way to get your pets vaccinated.**

We also offer microchips, a permanent form of identification that is injected between the shoulder blades. It is not a tracking device. Comes with a life-time membership; no additional fees.

All at a monthly low-cost as a service to our community. Simply sign up your cats and dogs for vaccinations online – one appointment per pet. Once you sign up, you'll be sent emails and texts to confirm and remind you about your appointments, and where to show up!



**To reduce the stress on you and your pets, you'll stay in your car while you wait in line (approximately 1 hour) and then will meet with professionals to get your pets vaccinated.**

## Vaccination & Microchip Clinics

By Eliza Kauder, Low-Cost Vaccination & Microchip Clinic Coordinator

### **Vaccinations: \$25 per vaccination**

- Feline Rabies
- Feline Distemper/PanLeuk/Upper

### **Respiratory Vaccination**

- Feline Leukemia
- Canine Rabies
- Canine Distemper/Parvo/Upper Respiratory Vaccination
- Canine Bordatella Vaccination (protection against canine upper respiratory infections)

### **Microchips: \$30 per animal**

**Make your appointments today at [www.fotas.org/clinics](http://www.fotas.org/clinics)**

CASH & CREDIT CARDS ONLY.

Friends of the Animals is still the official volunteer organization at the Jackson County Animal Shelter. Our volunteers are there to care for these dogs when they have no one else.

**We'd love for you to meet Dave, one of Friends of the Animals' incredible volunteers at the Jackson County Animal Shelter!**

Dave is an all-star, known for his patience, big heart, and daily walks with dogs of all temperaments. His secret? Showing up with love and consistency. "There's nothing more rewarding than seeing their tails wag and their eyes light up when I arrive," Dave shares. "Each dog has their own story, their own way of showing love, and they're always grateful for the time together." The hardest part? Saying goodbye at the end of the day. If it were up to him, he'd never leave.

To Dave, Friends of the Animals is more than just a place to volunteer – it's a family of compassionate people working together to make a difference.

## **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:**

# Meet Dave

By Liz Obelenus, Volunteer Support Services







Address Service  
Requested

Non-profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 86  
Medford, OR

PO Box 1153, Ashland, OR 97520

We strive for accuracy, but we apologize for any errors or omissions.  
Please contact us with any corrections, address changes, or if you  
would like to be removed from this mailing list at (541) 708-0090  
or email [fotas@fotas.org](mailto:fotas@fotas.org).

## PAWS UP FOR PROGRESS: A BIG CAT UPDATE FROM FOTAS

By Wendy Murray,  
Board Member & Proud  
Cat Enthusiast



MILO & MIA

### Calling all cat lovers, past Cat Room volunteers, and curious friends – this one's for you.

FOTAS has been hard at work behind the scenes, continuing our mission to make life better for the felines in our community. From feral colonies to foster kittens, our reach is growing – and the impact is real.

#### WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED (THANKS TO YOU!)

- 1,200+ feral cats spayed/neutered through our monthly Feral Cat Days at SNYP
- 1,000 cats vaccinated at our low-cost Monthly Vaccination Clinics
- Hundreds of cats spayed/neutered through our mobile trailer – now operating full-time at our new Spay/Neuter Clinic in Medford
- Monthly adoptions at the Rogue Valley Mall, where we also welcome partner rescues to join in
- A thriving Kitten & Cat Foster Program (Check out Ray's update for the full scoop!)

All of this has been made possible by volunteers, donors, and animal lovers like you.

#### WHAT'S NEXT? EVEN MORE LOVE FOR LOCAL CATS

Now that the FOTAS Spay/Neuter Clinic is officially open, we're planning even more ways to support cats and kittens across the valley. And yes – we miss our Cat Room volunteers dearly. The love, attention, and care you gave meant everything to the animals (and to us).

So stay tuned! We'll be sharing new opportunities soon for you to get involved again and help us bring even more healing, homes, and hope to our feline friends.

From all of us at FOTAS – thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we're creating a safer, healthier world for cats, kittens... and yes, even dogs too.