



# THE WAGGING TAILS

## A Letter From Our President

2017 completes Paws-Ability's 11th year. We got started when 7 friends organized a Mardi Gras party to raise funds to buy pet food for the Brunswick County Meals on Wheels for Pets program. This program helped provide pet food for seniors' beloved companions. We soon realized there were many people out there who care a great deal about the needs of animals. We saw a need and Paws-Ability was born!

Of course, our first steps were to "stop the bleeding." We realized the core problem was too many animals. Brunswick County had the fourth highest euthanasia rate out of North Carolina's 100 counties. It was disgraceful and it was unnecessary. We set out to tackle the need for spay and neuter services to reduce the number of homeless animals. We arranged for the NC State Veterinary School to bring a mobile unit to Brunswick County to provide two days of free spay and neuter surgeries on cats, since cats seemed to be driving the euthanasia rate at that time. Next, we negotiated reduced rates with local veterinarians to continue to offer spay and neuter services to further reduce the number of unwanted animals. We wrote and were awarded grants to pay for spay and neuter services. Lots of them! We were on a roll and we began to see a reduction in our county's euthanasia rate.

Again, we studied the animal welfare picture in Brunswick County and addressed the shortfalls systematically. We knew that the citizens of our community needed to be better informed. The rescue groups were promoting the "adopt, don't shop" philosophy and we decided to go further up the chain and educate our children. Four years ago, we introduced our own Pet Education Program (PEP) to fourth grade students in three of Brunswick County's elementary schools. As funds are available, the program will continue to grow to other schools. We believe children deserve to learn about respect, responsibility and compassion for animals and they are the pet owners of tomorrow. Teaching compassion and responsibility will change the way a child will treat an animal for the rest of his or her life.

The next request came from Hope Harbor Domestic Violence Shelter.

*continued on page 2*

December, 2017  
Volume 9, Issue 3

**Save the Dates!**

**Next Paws-Ability Meeting**  
**Tuesday,**  
**January 30, 2018**  
**6:30**  
**Ocean Isle Beach**  
**Town Hall**

**Mardi Gras for Paws**  
**Tuesday**  
**February 13, 2018**  
**Reservations Required!**

Inside this issue

- Legislative Update...3
- Charlie Kitty Finds a Home.....4
- Is Your Cat Head Pressing?.....4
- Pet Education Program Expands to Three Schools.....5
- 7th Annual Bicycle Poker Run.....6
- Holiday Cards.....7

*"We learned that often women would not leave an abusive situation because it meant leaving behind a cherished family pet. The women knew that these helpless animals would be next in the line of abuse."*

*Stella's Touch will assist responsible pet owners of limited means whose pet is facing a medical need that is otherwise financially out of reach of the pet owner.*



Stella

#### *President's Letter—continued*

We learned that often women would not leave an abusive situation because it meant leaving behind a cherished family pet. The women knew that, if left behind, these helpless animals would be next in the line of abuse. We raised funds and teamed with the Shallotte Rotary to construct an attached, climate-controlled kennel added to the domestic violence shelter. Now women can take their children and their family pets when they seek refuge at Hope Harbor. Paws-Ability addresses health needs of the pets while each family takes responsibility for the daily care of their own pet. When they are ready to begin a new, independent life, all can then leave together as a cohesive, healthier family.

Gracie's Hope is another one of Paws-Ability's programs that have helped to make a difference. Funded in memory of Gracie, a beloved pet who was adopted with heartworm and who later succumbed to this malicious disease, this program provides funds to qualified rescue groups who accept heartworm positive dogs to foster, from the county's animal control facility.

2017 Mardi Gras for Paws allowed Paws-Ability to fund a medical program for our Search and Rescue dogs who serve our community so well. Not only a medical fund, but we provided life jackets and leads for EACH BSAR dog to be used in water rescues.

Stella's Touch is our newest special program. Funded by a local family who wanted to make a difference in their new community, Stella's Touch will assist responsible pet owners of limited means whose pet is facing a medical need that is otherwise financially out of reach of the pet owner. We are proud to be the administrator of such a fund and take our fiduciary responsibilities seriously and conservatively. Paws-Ability has proven itself to be a good steward of the money entrusted to us by our supporters as they see how our programs are changing animal welfare in Brunswick County.

So, you see the pattern here in the life of Paws-Ability! Along the way, our membership has grown to over 500 family members and over 140 business members. We are a 501(c)(3) organization with over 97cents of each dollar donated going directly toward improvement of animal welfare. Our fundraising events occur throughout the year now, helping Paws-Ability support the efforts of rescue groups in a more steadfast way. We are proud of our record of funds management, having no paid staff, and no buildings or facility to maintain. We are an effective team of committed volunteers!

Thank you for being a member of Paws-Ability. Thank you for supporting us in so many ways as we work for change. You have attended our events, you have sponsored our events. You have bought T-shirts and Christmas cards. You have answered the plea for funds to help for dogs like Rufus get the

*continued on page 3*

*President's letter—continued*

eye surgery to restore vision and Olive to get her legs fixed so she can walk.

As you consider your end of the year charitable giving, please remember the animals. They have no voice and their welfare depends on us all.

Paws-Ability depends on your support and on your donations. We need your support to continue our work in so many ways.

Respectfully,  
Janie Withers, President

## Legislative Update

Seasons Greetings from the Legislative Branch of Paws-Ability, Advocates for Animal Rights (AFAR)

We have been very busy lately working with Leland Town Council members to accomplish an ordinance change to further protect animals. After the disappointing treatment by the Brunswick County Commissioners, AFAR regrouped and began a different approach to the problem by going to the municipalities in the county. Leland, the largest city, was our first choice and they have shown interest in and have been responsive to our requests. Leland Town Council is already considering changes to their animal welfare ordinance and we hope to see that law adopted very soon.

After Leland we intend to if is the issue to other towns in our county, all of which have hundreds of residents who signed our "Unchain Brunswick" petition.

We will not give up the fight to assure all animals in Brunswick County their rights to humane treatment through laws that spell out these rights. Changes in Animal welfare ordinances is proving to be of importance to the citizens of Brunswick County.

Many blessings and love to you and your family in this holiday season and many more in the new year!

*Kimberly Sherwood,  
Founder, Advocates for Animal Rights*



We've been busy in 2017!

This is a list of all the activities and fund raising events Paws-Ability participated in in 2017!

\*\*\*\*\*

Mardi Gras Party  
Photos with the Easter Bunny  
BandFest  
Bicycle Poker Run  
Oyster Fest  
OktoberFest  
Halloween Party  
Photos with Santa  
Belk Charity Days  
Pet Education  
Cat Houses  
Stella's Touch  
Gracie's Hope  
Holiday Cards  
Pro Active Real Estate  
Great Clips

The Petition

Our petition states:

We, the undersigned, are all residents, voters, and/or taxpayers of Brunswick County, North Carolina. We urgently request the County Commissioners of Brunswick County: Frank Williams, Pat Sykes, Mike Forte, J. Martin Cooke and Randy Thompson, adopt an ordinance to ban tethering of animals in Brunswick County, North Carolina. We additionally request funds be appropriated to the Sheriff's Office budget to cover the additional personnel needed to enforce this new ordinance. We also support a local act putting this issue on the ballot.

## Charlie Kitty Finds a Home

I was just 5 weeks old when my journey to find a home started. My to-be foster Mom was contacted by a friend to see if she would take me in. When I was about two days old, my real mom went out to find food and she never came back! She left me on a sidewalk and I was very scared.



Charlie Kitty

Those first few days weren't fun for me or Mom. I couldn't see (my eyes were still closed), I couldn't hear well (my ears were still turned down), and my tummy hurt whenever I rolled over because my I still had my umbilical cord. Mom fed me every two hours 'round the clock, giving me 'cat milk' from what she called a tuberculin syringe. It was very small and didn't have a nipple; she just squirted a drop or two at a time on my tongue whenever I whimpered for more. Mom and I didn't know if I was going to 'make it' through that first week!

Mom took me to the cat doctor after a few days, because I was having a tummy ache. The doctor swabbed my tush and looked at it under the microscope, because she thought I might have worms. (Ugh!) Although they didn't see any, Mom agreed to let them give me a drop of a yummy banana tasting medicine just in case. They also weighed me. I was 2 ounces!

Living the 'good life' with Mom went on for three months. I grew bigger and stronger, and, if I must say so myself, more handsome! I loved life with Mom, especially snuggling her neck just before she put me to bed every night. However, it just wasn't possible to live with her forever.

I'm happy now too! I have a new home with a wonderful family thanks to Cat Tails adoption program in Ocean Isle Beach. Plus, the family also adopted Lester, a friend I made while at Cat Tails! We cuddle and play together every day.

I thank goodness for my 'first' mom for taking me in, and for my new forever family. Life is good!

*Charlie Kitty—helped by foster mom Anne Von Der Heide*

### Bet You Didn't Know...

Did you know that there is an American Museum of the House Cat right here in NC?

More than 5000 curiosities from around the world are on display in this cat-centered museum in Sylva, NC. Dr. Harold Sims, a retired biology professor, is sharing his 30-year collection of all things cat with the rest of the world.

All profits from the museum go to Catman2 Shelter, a cage-free, no kill adoption center in Cullowhee.

For times and admission fees: 828-476-9376 or <http://www.catman2.org>.

## Is Your Cat Head Pressing?

Cats who exhibit head pressing behaviors —compulsively pressing the head against a wall or other surface for no apparent reason — may be suffering from damage to the spinal system. (Rubbing or bumping the head against a human or inanimate object as a sign of affection is normal.)

Your vet can determine the condition by urinalysis, an MRI or a fundic exam of the retina.

Treatment varies and will be recommended by the vet.

Contact your vet immediately if your cat is head pressing.

*Source: "How to Treat Head Pressing in Cats" By Dr. Katy Nelson, DVM; <https://www.petmd.com/cat/conditions/neurological/how-treat-head-pressing-cats>.*

# Pet Education Program Expands to Three Schools

In 2017, the Pet Education Program (PEP) expanded to three elementary schools in Brunswick County: Jessie Mae, Waccamaw and Supply Elementary Schools. Sponsored by ATMC, BEMC, First Bank, SBI Rotary and Shallotte Rotary, this popular program teaches fourth graders how to be responsible pet owners by properly caring for their pets, what they can do to end pet overpopulation and how to respond when they encounter animals.

Anne Overcash, Derrilyn Harbeston and Anne Von Der Heide managed a team of about 20 volunteer teachers to present at the six-week program at the schools. Each participating student received a certificate of completion, and T-shirt with "The Promise" and sponsor's names on the back.

Each student submitted an essay describing what they learned through this program. Four winning essays were printed in The Brunswick Beacon. Each participating student was given a T-shirt with "The Promise" on the back and a certificate of completion.



## Two New Activities for Paws-Ability in 2017

Paws-Ability's first Band Fest was held on June 4, 2017 at Sunset Beach Waterfront Park. Two local and popular bands, Mike's Garage Band and the Sea and Sand Band, donated their time and talents to benefit the welfare of animals in Brunswick County. On this beautiful day, people visited the various vendors and listened to the music while watching the boats go by on the Intercoastal Waterway.

Best of all, 27 animals were adopted!



A very busy October saw funds raised during the month at Great Clips and Pro Active Real Estate. Efforts ended with Paws-Ability's OktoberFest in Calabash. Attendees were treated to a true Oktoberfest celebration including fresh brewed OktoberFest beer, pretzels and brats, entertainment by the Harbour Towne Fest Band, dancing, arm wrestling contests and even a wiener dog race.



## 7th Annual Bicycle Poker Run

October 14th was a perfect day for this fun-filled afternoon of friends, food and entertainment on Ocean Isle Beach. Over 300 people rode bikes, walked, ran or rode in golf carts to 12 sites sponsored by local businesses where they drew a playing card to make a poker hand.

The winner of the best hand was Shay Godwin and the children's winners were Brynn Abushraka and Dylan Stevens. Debbie Foster won the raffle for the bicycle donated by Island Hopper Bicycle Shop.

Radio station Carolina Country 93.9 broadcasted all day from the event. The day continued with food donated from Fibber McGee's Irish Pub, Papa John's Pizza and Seaside Bakery and Wine Shop while Randy Knight's Parrot Party entertained Margarittaville-style from the center stage.

The festivities ended with nearly everyone participating in a conga line twisting through the food tent. An army of volunteers worked for many months on the Bicycle Poker Run to make it a fun day and huge success so Paws-Ability can continue to help animals and improve animal welfare in Brunswick County.







Paws-Ability is a volunteer-based non-profit organization that raises money to aid existing animal shelters and animal rescue groups and fund spay and neuter programs within Brunswick County, North Carolina.

Paws-Ability also promotes responsible pet ownership and educates the public on legislative issues of concern to our community regarding companion animals.

*The Wagging Tales* is published by Paws-Ability  
P.O. Box 6174  
Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469

Editor—Ellen Lehrer  
Contributors—  
Janie Withers  
Kim Sherwood

Paws-Ability Officers

President—Janie Withers  
Treasurer—Bunny MacKinnon  
Director—Anita August  
Director—Sue Lobo  
Director—Mercy McCurdy  
Director—Mary Beth Mount

Have an article or an idea for a story you would like to see in "The Wagging Tales?"

Email it to:  
info@paws-ability.org.

Visit us on the Web at  
[paws-ability.org](http://paws-ability.org).



**Paws-Ability 2018 Membership Application**

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP \$10**

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$15**

**BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP \$50**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Interests: I have interest in or would like to volunteer in the following areas:

- Media Publicity     Fundraising     Membership
- Computer Work     Newsletter
- Various Fundraising Events
- Legal Issues

Mail checks made out to Paws-Ability to:

**Paws-Ability**  
**P O Box 6174**  
**Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469**

Paws-Ability membership is a tax deductible expense.