

Animal Tails

ANIMAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION • SPRING/SUMMER 2026



**CORPORATE
CUDDLES**



**VETS ON
WHEELS**



**EDUCATION
PROGRAMS**



**KITTEN
YOGA**



**FUN EVENTS FOR
PETS & PEOPLE**



ADOPTIONS

Dear Friends,

Spring is a season of new beginnings, and at AWA there is so much to celebrate.

As I look back on 2025, I am incredibly proud of what we accomplished together. Thanks to the support of our staff, volunteers, donors, adopters, and community partners, we helped more animals find loving homes than ever before. Every adoption represents a second chance and a brighter future for a pet in need.

Spring also marks the beginning of kitten season—our busiest time of year. Each year, hundreds of vulnerable kittens arrive at AWA in need of care, foster homes, and ultimately loving families. While kitten season brings challenges, it also highlights the incredible compassion of our community. From fosters opening their homes to adopters welcoming new family members, it truly takes all of us working together to save lives.

While adoptions remain at the heart of our work, we are also focused on strengthening our community's ability to care for animals in times of crisis. This year, we partnered with Camden County to begin developing an Animal Emergency Response Team (CART). This initiative will help ensure that animals and their families receive support during emergencies and disasters, creating a safer and more prepared community for everyone.

Meow There!

Paul here, Chief Affection Officer at AWA, professional napper, and full-time observer of all things happening outside my favorite window.

I wanted to take a moment (between naps, of course) to give a very special shoutout to our incredible friends at Holman Enterprises. They recently spent the day here at AWA getting their hands dirty—digging, clearing, lifting, and putting their impressive human strength to excellent use. Thanks to their hard work, we now have space for our second pollinator garden! And get this...they helped create our first one last year, too.

Now, let me tell you why this matters to me personally. My bed, strategically placed for maximum comfort and optimal viewing, looks directly out onto these gardens. The first one has already become prime entertainment. Monarch butterflies drifting by, bees buzzing about...it's what we call "enrichment" here at AWA. With this second garden, I expect my viewing experience to improve significantly. Truly, it's a gift that keeps on giving.

As we head into another busy season, I want to thank you for being part of the AWA family. Your generosity, compassion, and commitment make this work possible. Together, we are creating more happy endings, keeping more families together, and building a stronger, more compassionate community for animals.

Thank you for helping make all of this possible.



Laura Houston
Executive Director



But beyond my own enjoyment, these gardens will create important habitats for pollinators like bees and butterflies—small creatures doing very big work. And none of it would be possible without dedicated volunteers like the team from Holman Enterprises.




Honestly, what would we do without volunteers? They are everywhere—helping animals feel safe and loved, educating young humans, assisting at events, walking dogs, socializing cats, and tackling projects that make our home even better. Their impact is felt in every corner of AWA.

So from me, and all my fellow furry residents, thank you for making a difference. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have butterflies to watch.

With gratitude,

Paul, CAO 

 @paulie.wogs

AWA AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- NAWBO Gala Recipient
- WBEC East Passion Project
- Business Rate Best of 2026
- Best Animal Shelter in South Jersey
- Laura Houston - Innovate 100 Honoree



Thank You Paws & Feet Sponsors!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



KIBBLES & BITS

The volunteers of Kibbles & Bits have made an extraordinary impact at AWA through their unwavering generosity, hard work, and commitment to our mission. Through their successful yard sales and auctions, they have raised significant funds that directly support the animals in our care, but their contributions go far beyond fundraising alone. Both as individuals and as a dedicated group, they have touched countless programs and areas throughout AWA over many years. Their kindness, creativity, and willingness to give their time and talents have helped strengthen our organization and improve the lives of so many homeless animals. [Thank you Kibbles & Bits!](#)



AWA'S MISSION

To eliminate animal suffering, promote the importance of the human-animal bond, and improve the role of animals in well-being of people.

2025 LIFESAVING IMPACT

ADOPTION CENTER

- 2,504 - Pets adopted
- 1,696 - Shelter pets spayed or neutered
- 2,245 - Shelter medical cases
- 386 - Shelter pets that received behavior help
- 823 - Behavior consultations and training

PET CLINIC

- 18,159 - Vaccines administered
- 3,188 - Wellness exams performed
- 2,886 - Spay/neuter surgeries

VETS ON WHEELS

- 1,524* - Pets received care

PET RETENTION ASSISTANCE

- 834 - Pets helped
- 720 Cats, 64 Dogs, 50 Small Animals

PET FOOD PANTRY

- 1,729 - Households served
- 3,453 - Cats fed
- 1,113 - Dogs fed

TRANSPORT PROGRAM

- 18 - Partner organizations
- 1,748 - Lives saved via transport
- 1,040 Cats, 639 Dogs, 69 Small animals

VOLUNTEERS

- 11,953 General hours - 37,436 Foster hours



*Includes Doses for Dogs & Paws & Feet

FROM FEAR TO HOPE

Some stories are difficult to tell because of the heartbreaking cruelty animals have endured. But even in the darkest situations, there can be hope, healing, and ultimately a happy ending.

Recently, AWA welcomed two young German Shepherds, Renly and Greta, rescued from a horrific hoarding situation in Columbia, PA. In total, 93 animals — 76 dogs, 15 cats, and 2 rabbits — were found living in unimaginable conditions. The neglect and suffering these animals endured is truly heartbreaking.

When Renly and Greta arrived at AWA, their condition told the painful story of the lives they had been forced to live. Their fur was so severely matted and caked with excrement that both dogs had to be completely shaved. Painful skin infections covered their bodies after spending so much time lying in urine-soaked crates. Their muscles were weak from confinement, and only now are they beginning to stretch and fully use their back legs again.

Perhaps most heartbreaking were the marks worn into Renly's teeth, evidence of his desperate attempts to gnaw his way out of his crate. At just two years old, Renly should weigh close to 75 pounds, yet he arrived weighing only 46. Greta, only one year old, was also dangerously underweight.

Today, both dogs are receiving compassionate medical treatment and working closely with AWA's behavior team to overcome the trauma they experienced. Loud noises and everyday activities still frighten them, and they startle easily as they learn that the world can be safe again.

Yet despite everything they have endured, Renly and Greta continue to show the resilience and sweetness that make dogs so extraordinary. Each day brings small but meaningful victories — a relaxed posture, a curious glance, a gentle tail wag. At first those tails moved slowly and cautiously, but with each passing day, their confidence grows stronger.

Their journey to recovery will take time, patience, and love, but Renly and Greta are finally getting the chance every animal deserves: the chance to heal, to feel safe, and to discover what it means to be loved.



GRETA & RENLY



RENLY GETTING SHAVED



KITTEN GETTING AN EXAM

KITTEN SEASON IS IN FULL SWING

It is that time of year when AWA welcomes some of the cutest, but also the most vulnerable, babies into our care. Kitten season keeps our shelter medical team constantly busy caring for fragile newborns and monitoring their health around the clock.

Behind the scenes, our dedicated volunteers are also stepping up in extraordinary ways, often sacrificing sleep to bottle-feed abandoned kittens every two hours throughout the day and night. Their compassion, patience, and tireless commitment give these tiny lives the chance to grow stronger, healthier, and one day find loving homes.

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS LONG STAY PETS

Some pets who arrive at AWA find their new families almost immediately. Others, like Shortie, Smudge, and Nick, need a little more time for the right person to come along. Thankfully, because of the compassion and support of our community, there is no rush. They can stay safe, cared for, and loved for as long as it takes. We know that when the time is right, the perfect family will find them, and their happy ending will begin.

AFTER 286 DAYS: A HOME FOR SHORTIE

March 23rd was a joyful and emotional day for the staff and volunteers at AWA as we watched Short Stack ("Shortie") leave the adoption center with his new family. This big, silly, lovable guy had been with us for 286 days. He came to AWA from a local shelter partner in need of the specialized medical care our veterinary team could provide. While we don't know much about his past, we do know he had been tied to a tree, and his collar had become painfully embedded in his neck. In addition to healing from this injury, he also needed dental care. Thanks to generous supporters like you, Shortie was able to receive the surgery he needed right here at AWA's Pet Clinic.

Despite everything he had endured, Shortie inspired everyone who met him. Gentle, trusting, and full of playful energy, he quickly became a favorite among staff and volunteers. We are so happy Shortie found the perfect home filled with love and adventure.



SMUDGE FINDS HER FAMILY

For nine long months, Smudge, a sweet two-year old waited patiently at AWA for the family who would finally take her home.

Smudge's adorable little zigzag of black fur across her face made her one of a kind, but it was her loving heart that truly captured the attention of everyone who met her.

As the months passed, the staff and volunteers grew especially fond of Smudge and hoped her perfect match would come along soon. Then one wonderful day, it finally happened. A family met Smudge, fell in love with her sweet personality, and knew she belonged with them.

A HOME AT LAST FOR NICK

Nick, a handsome two-year-old white rabbit with striking red eyes, waited nearly a year for the day his forever family would finally find him. Thanks to the compassion and support of dedicated donors, animals like Nick who need a little extra time are able to stay safe, cared for, and loved at AWA while they wait for the perfect match.

After many months of patiently waiting, Nick's happy ending finally arrived. It was a joyful day at AWA when he hopped out the doors with his new family and began the next chapter of his life surrounded by love.





P.A.W.S. VOLUNTTERS AT WORK



P.A.W.S. PROGRAM EVOLVES

Inclusion has always been central to AWA's mission, and the evolution of the P.A.W.S. (People Achieving With Support) Program represents a deepened commitment to ensuring individuals of all abilities have access to meaningful education and workforce development opportunities. Each group of students is assigned different tasks around the shelter in support of the pet clinic, adoption center and development. The students perform tasks such as cleanings in the departments, supporting admin work, or even socializing with our animals. Students rotate through a variety of tasks, either individually or in small groups, depending on their comfort level and ability. Each task is intended to promote success while still encouraging growth in independence and responsibility. Throughout the day, participants are encouraged to practice essential workplace skills such as time management, task completion, following multi-step directions, communications, teamwork, and adaptability. Every aspect of the P.A.W.S. Program is intentionally designed to build transferable skills that extend beyond the shelter environment.

LEARNING, SHARING & CONNECTING

Thanks to the generosity of a dedicated donor, nine AWA staff members had the incredible opportunity to attend the Animal Care Expo this past April in Pittsburgh. This nationally recognized conference brought together animal welfare professionals from across the country, providing an inspiring week filled with education, collaboration, and new ideas that will directly benefit the animals and people we serve every day at AWA.

Representing several departments—including development, marketing, animal care, and behavior—our team members participated in a wide variety of informative seminars, roundtables, and engaging discussions led by respected voices in the animal welfare community. From innovative sheltering practices and behavior support strategies to fundraising trends and community engagement, the knowledge gained throughout the week will help strengthen and enhance many areas of AWA's mission.

Beyond the educational sessions, one of the most valuable aspects of the Expo was the opportunity to connect with colleagues from shelters and rescue organizations nationwide. Sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and learning from one another provided fresh perspectives and renewed inspiration that our staff will bring back to their work here at AWA.

Professional development opportunities like this are invaluable. By investing in the people who care for animals every day, this generous gift ultimately helps improve the lives of the homeless pets who depend on AWA for compassion, healing, and hope. We are deeply grateful for the support that made this meaningful experience possible.



AWA STAFF ENJOYING THE EXPO

UPCOMING AWA EVENTS

BARKING LOTS SIPS & BREWS

June 26th & August 7th - 5:30 - 8:30pm

Join us for some summer fun at AWA's campus. Enjoy food trucks, local brews, live music, corn-hole, and more! Fun for all ages!

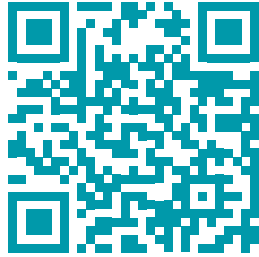
FREE Admission - Drink Tickets Sold to 21+

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

July 25th - 4:00pm - 7:00pm

Come for a FREE night of fun outside at AWA! We will have a special character appearance, the AWA Pretend Pet Clinic, face painting, a family scavenger hunt and more! Enjoy treats from hotdog, popsicle, and cotton candy vendors.

Scan to stay
up-to-date
on all events
at AWA.



EDUCATION PROGRAM AT AWA

WAGS & WIGGLES

This grown-up-and-me class for ages 2-4 includes story time, crafts and other activities focused on teaching the next generation of animal lovers!

KIDS DAY OFF CAMPS

Kids have a day off from school? AWA's Day Camp provide a fun day of games, crafts and more from 9-3 on school holidays and breaks. A fun alternative to other childcare!

TALES WITH TAILS

Children 5+ can read to AWA's animals! Kids work on developing their reading skills while animals are comforted by their voices and are able to interact with new people.

KID'S NIGHT OUT

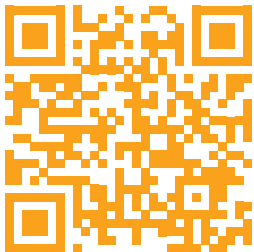
Need a night out? Drop your little animal lover off at AWA for an evening of fun. Your kids will have a blast while you enjoy a few hours to yourself.

ANIMAL ACADEMY

A chance for homeschoolers ages 5-17 to engage in experiences unlike any found in a traditional school environment or home classroom.

STEM IN SCHOOLS

A unique 2-hour in-school STEM Education program for grades K-12, focused on animal welfare topics infused with STEM principles.



Scan for all
the education
programs
offered at AWA

HOMELESS ANIMALS NEED HELP

With your generous gifts, homeless animals find a safe and loving place as they wait for adoption into their forever homes.

PET SPONSORSHIP

The animals in our Pet Sponsorship program are in the most need. They may be having a difficult time being adopted due to age, breed, or size, or have medical or behavioral challenges making it harder for them to find homes.

CONSTANT COMPANIONS

Monthly giving helps AWA spend more time and resources on lifesaving initiatives, and less time fundraising. For only \$10 a month (\$0.33 per day) you can help provide food, medicine, and care.

CELEBRATION WALL

Honor a beloved pet, past or present, with a place on AWA's Celebration Wall. For an \$85 one-time donation, you can celebrate any animal—whether they were adopted from AWA or not. More information at awanj.org/donate/celebration-wall

HEALING HEROES FUND

This fund is available for animals with extraordinary medical needs. With funds available, medical care and treatment can begin immediately without the delay for fundraising.



To donate online
please scan the
QR Code with
a mobile device.

PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT TO SAVE LIVES!

Name _____

Address _____

City/ST/Zip _____

My gift of: \$ _____ Check enclosed

Charge my card: VISA MC Amex Discover

Card number _____

Expiration date _____ CVV _____

Name on card _____

Animal Welfare Association, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your gift may be 100% tax-deductible according to federal regulations. Federal Tax ID: 22-1752792



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2026 Spring/Summer Newsletter

FINDING FOREVER LOVE AT AWA

