

Animal Tails

ANIMAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION • FALL/WINTER 2026



Dear Friends,

As the days grow shorter and we settle into fall, I find myself reflecting on just how much happens at AWA throughout the year.

As Paul shared, kitten season brings an incredible number of tiny, vulnerable animals through our doors. But kittens are just one part of the AWA story. Every day, dogs, cats, rabbits, and other small animals arrive needing medical care, compassion, and a second chance.

It takes a village to care for them. Our veterinary team provides lifesaving medical care, staff help each animal find the right home, volunteers give their time and love, and foster families open their homes to animals who need extra support. And increasingly, our work extends beyond AWA's walls through affordable veterinary care, community outreach, humane education, and programs like VOW—Vets on Wheels—that help families keep the pets they love.

That is what makes me so proud of AWA. We aren't simply finding homes for homeless animals—we are working to create a community where fewer animals become homeless in the first place.

As we head into the holiday season, I am especially grateful for the incredible community that makes this work possible. Every adoption, foster placement, medical procedure, community pet served, and second chance is made possible because people like you choose to care.

Thank you for being part of the AWA family and for believing that every animal deserves kindness, compassion, and the opportunity for a happy life.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Laura Houston".

Laura Houston
Executive Director



Meow There!

Paul here! The rush of kitten season is starting to ease a little. While kittens can arrive at AWA throughout the year, they typically arrive in the largest numbers from early spring through late summer.

Who doesn't love kittens? I was one myself years ago (although I'll be turning 4 on January 12, so I'm practically a grown-up now!). These little bundles of cuteness may be adorable and cuddly, but they also require a tremendous amount of care and support from AWA's medical team, Adoption Center staff, volunteers, and foster families.

While I'm grateful to everyone who helps care for these adorable babies, I must give a very special shout-out to our foster families who open their homes to the most vulnerable kittens—bottle babies. These tiny kittens need round-the-clock feeding, and plenty of love to help them grow strong and thrive. Without these incredibly dedicated fosters, AWA simply could not save as many lives as we do.

And, of course, kittens aren't the only animals counting on AWA. Throughout the year, dogs, cats, rabbits, and other small animals arrive needing medical care, a safe place to stay, nutritious food, comfort, and the opportunity to find a loving home. It makes me so happy to see these once-homeless pets begin their next chapter—one filled with love, companionship, and security.

Hopefully, they don't have quite as many responsibilities as a Chief Affection Officer! Just kidding, I absolutely love the work I do here at AWA. I feel very lucky to have such a wonderful extended "family," including my co-workers, volunteers, Camp Tails & Whiskers participants, and everyone who has fallen in love with me through my Instagram adventures.

I hope you enjoy the stories and updates in this newsletter. As always, please know that your generosity and commitment to AWA and animals in need help make all this possible. From tiny bottle babies to long-term shelter residents, every animal deserves the chance to feel safe, loved, and home.

With lots of purrs,



Paul, CAO
Chief Affection Officer



 @paulie.wogs



MAYA IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Maya, a young volunteer at AWA is fundraising to help the animals at AWA. She says, "Since I was younger I have loved anything to do with animals. I have decided to raise money for AWA, a no-kill shelter near my house. With the funds I raise I will purchase supplies off of AWA's wishlist to help support the animals they care for. For the last few years, I have gone to AWA camp programs, and recently I started volunteering there. As a volunteer, I have gotten to help the animals be less afraid of people so that they can have a better chance to get adopted."

PAWS & FEET 2026 WAS A SUCCESS

In 2026, AWA's Paws & Feet brought our community together once again for a fun-filled day celebrating the special bond between people and their pets. Held May 30th at Cooper River Park, the event featured the 5K Run/Walk, one-mile Wag n' Walk, local vendors, food, music, family activities, raffles, and even low-cost vaccines through Doses for Dogs.

We are so grateful for every step, wag, and donation that helped raise over \$120,000 to support AWA's lifesaving programs and the animals and families in our community.

A BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIP

At AWA, we believe that caring for animals today also means investing in the future of animal welfare. That's why we're proud to partner with the Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine at Rowan University to give veterinary students valuable, hands-on experience in shelter medicine.

Through this partnership, veterinary students gain confidence performing physical examinations and wellness assessments for AWA's shelter animals. These real-world experiences help students build valuable clinical skills while providing compassionate care to animals in need.

This collaboration benefits everyone involved. Students gain practical skills that will help prepare them for their future careers, while AWA's animals receive compassionate care and attention from the next generation of veterinary professionals.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



DIANE RUBINCAM

Diane does it all! You can usually see her around the clinic helping with appointment confirmation phone calls and/or vaccine clinic check-in on Tuesdays and Saturdays. She is also very involved in AWA events, giving tours to new volunteers at Volunteer Orientation, and she is part of AWA's Pet Loss Support Group team. We thank Diane for all she has done and continues to do for AWA!





Gardevoir

A SHY GIRL GOES HOME

Six-year-old Gardevoir arrived at AWA with medical needs. She came with her kitten, who quickly found a home, but Gardevoir needed treatment for severe dental disease. Her dental surgery required multiple extractions, performed by Cherry Hill Animal Hospital, but thankfully, that is now behind her, and she can enjoy a much more comfortable life.

When Gardevoir first arrived, she was frightened and shy, so she found a quiet place in one of the Development Department offices where she could feel safe. With time, patience, and plenty of gentle encouragement, she slowly came out of her shell and began showing us her sweet personality. Before long, her curious and affectionate side began to shine through. Today, Gardevoir is enjoying life as a pampered cat in her new home, where she can finally relax, feel safe, and be loved.



AWA's Healing Heroes fund is honoring Courageous Warrior (CW) by carrying forward his legacy of resilience, love, and second chances. His journey touched the hearts of everyone at AWA, and his story is a reminder of the extraordinary care made possible through compassion and generosity. Through Healing Heroes, CW's legacy will continue to help other animals facing extraordinary medical needs receive the care, comfort, and chance they deserve.



THE LONG WAIT IS OVER

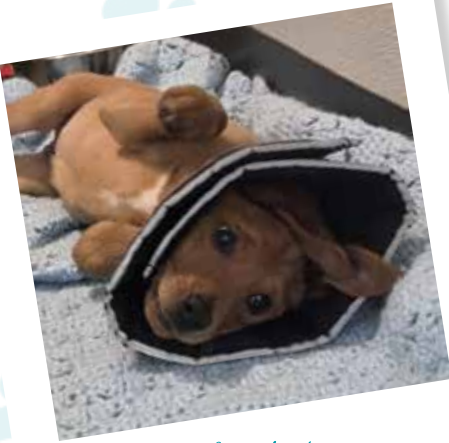
Scott Pilgram, a four-year-old Retriever mix, arrived at AWA through our transport program from one of our out-of-state rescue partners. His journey to New Jersey gave him a fresh start and a greater opportunity to find the loving forever home he deserves.

Scott Pilgram, a smart and friendly dog loved to learn new things. Our behavior team worked closely with him to build his confidence, strengthen his skills, and help him become the very best companion he could be. One of his favorite parts of the day was stretching his legs on long walks along AWA's trails, where he enjoyed exploring the outdoors and spending time with our staff and volunteers.

Scott Pilgram was one of AWA's longest-stay residents, having spent 254 days until his perfect match came and took him home.



Scott Pilgram



Swiss



Gouda



Mozzarella

THREE CHEESES RECEIVE LIFESAVING CARE

When Swiss, Gouda, and Mozzarella arrived at AWA, these three adorable puppies were facing a serious challenge. All three were diagnosed with parvovirus, a highly contagious and potentially life-threatening illness that can be especially dangerous for young puppies. They needed round-the-clock care, medication, supportive treatment, and plenty of love from AWA's medical and animal care teams. Despite how sick they were, these little fighters never gave up!

With dedicated care and lots of TLC, Swiss, Gouda, and Mozzarella fought their way back to health. Before long, their puppy personalities were shining through again, and they were ready for the next chapter of their lives. Best of all, each of these sweet pups found a loving home! Their journey from sick puppies to happy, adopted companions is a wonderful reminder of what compassion, lifesaving care, and a second chance can make possible.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

When Stevie arrived at AWA, he was just over a month old and had already endured more than any kitten should. Severe infections had damaged both of his eyes, leaving him essentially blind. A double enucleation was necessary, but before he could undergo surgery, Stevie needed to grow stronger and gain weight. Two of our staff members welcomed him into their home to foster, giving this tiny kitten the loving care he needed to prepare for surgery.

Thankfully, the procedure was successful. Just two days later, Stevie was already playing, exploring, and showing his resilient spirit. Despite everything he has been through, he remains sweet, affectionate, and trusting. It didn't take long for Stevie to leave AWA for his new home.



Stevie



ANIMAL ACADEMY: LEARNING, GROWING, AND CONNECTING AT AWA

The Education Department is excited to welcome home-school families back to AWA for another year of Animal Academy! This instruction-focused home-school program is designed to give students the opportunity to learn about animals while building curiosity, compassion, and empathy along the way. Each month, students dive into a new animal-related topic through engaging lessons, hands-on activities, discussions, and take-home worksheets that allow them to continue exploring what they learned long after they leave AWA. From discovering the incredible ways animals use their senses, learning how wildlife survives the winter to exploring invasive species, pollinators, why animals play, and the important role even the smallest creatures play in our ecosystems, every lesson is designed to help students better understand animals and the world around them.

This year, we're excited to introduce an entirely new lineup of topics and expand the program to include both January and June classes, giving families even more opportunities to learn with us throughout the school year. One of the best parts of Animal Academy is what happens beyond the lessons themselves. Since many of our families return month after month, students have the opportunity to build relationships with one another, become familiar faces around AWA, invest in the animals we care for, and grow alongside our Education Department throughout the year. We love watching students become more confident in sharing their ideas, asking thoughtful questions, and developing a deeper appreciation for animals with each class. AWA's Animal Academy is about more than learning facts, it's about helping the next generation become thoughtful, compassionate people who understand that every animal has a story, has unique needs, and has a place in our world. We are so excited to continue growing with our homeschool community and can't wait to see what this new school year brings!



SUPPORTING CAMDEN'S COMMUNITY CATS

One of the highlights of this year was partnering with local community cat trappers through four dedicated "Feral Tuesdays" focused on Camden City.

Together, in June and July, we helped 128 community cats receive spay/neuter surgery. This effort brought together AWA's team, community trappers, and support staff, working together to make a meaningful difference for cats and the people who care for them.

Every cat who is spayed or neutered represents fewer unwanted litters and a healthier future for community cats. We're grateful for the partnerships that make this work possible and proud of what we can accomplish when we work together.

128 cats from Camden were spayed/neutered with more clinics scheduled through the remainder of the year.



UPCOMING AWA EVENTS

HOWL-O-WEEN BASH

Saturday, October 16th, 5pm to 8pm

Join us for a night of ghoulish fun for all ages! Spooky vendors, free activities and crafts for little monsters, trunk or treat, eerie cocktails and wicked music await you! Come creep it real and raise money for animals in need!

DRAG SHOW

Friday, November 13th, 6pm to 9pm

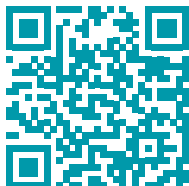
Location: Collingswood Grand Ballroom

315 White Horse Pike, Collingswood, NJ 08108

Join us as this sensational star-studded cast of some of the fiercest drag performers from Drag Queen Entertainment bring you an incredible evening. Including: parodies and performances, side splitting laughter, high-end basket raffles, 50/50 raffles, buffet dinner, and a cash bar.

Show starts at 7pm. 21+ Event

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!

PAWSITIVE KIDS CLUB

Kids 5-7 will learn about animal safety, care and compassion in a fun and interactive environment they love!

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 home-schoolers 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

Every day, animals arrive at AWA looking for something they may have never had before: a safe place to rest, caring people to trust, and the chance to find a loving home. Your support helps make that possible. From nutritious meals and comfortable shelter to medical care, enrichment, and the dedicated work of our animal care and adoption teams, your generosity provides the resources these animals need while they wait for their happy endings.

When you give to AWA, you're helping more than one animal, you're helping strengthen our community and giving more pets the opportunity to thrive. Every donation, no matter the size, makes a difference and helps AWA continue providing lifesaving care, compassionate services, and hope to animals and the people who love them.

Please consider making a gift today and help give a homeless animal the care, comfort, and second chance they deserve.



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 Fall/Winter Newsletter

FINDING FOREVER LOVE AT AWA

