



a 501c3 organization

2016



ARF  
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JCHS Fall 2016

**A Year of Many Challenges**

ARF has a difficult year with many changes, but we've accomplished great things with your generous donations:

- Received a \$5,000 Two Mauds grant (with matching funds from Jackson County) for free or low-cost spay/neuter for low-income individuals
- Participated in several vaccination clinics in Sylva and Tuckasegee
- Rescued 209 dogs from the Jackson Shelter and also aided dogs from the community at large
- Transported more than 258 animals to no-kill shelters and rescues (336 since our last newsletter in November 2015) while placing 34 animals in homes locally
- Donated hundreds of vaccines, flea pills, tests, and other critical supplies to Jackson County Animal Control and assisted them with adoptions, publicity, and rescues
- Assisted pets with surgery, heartworm treatments, and road rescue

about its business, and does it so well, you're *not seeing* the fruits of our efforts:

- *Not seeing* stray and homeless animals on our roads
- *Not seeing* pets euthanized at shelters for lack of space
- *Not seeing* animals going without spay/neuter because their owners lack fees
- *Not seeing* abandoned puppies dying of disease & parasites

Because of what you're *not seeing*, ARF needs your help more than ever before. This year, we spent more than \$24,000 in medical and spay/neuter alone and took in far less in donations. We have many wonderful new volunteers, but we can't do it without your help. Please give as generously as you can.

**New Van for ARF**

After almost ten years of renting and borrowing vans and depending on the kindness of strangers, ARF will soon have access to a brand-new cargo van for transferring dogs to no-kill shelters. The Jackson County Board of Commissioners voted to purchase a van that the Shelter, ARF, and other humane organizations can use to further animal welfare. ARF's transports to out-of-town shelters have helped keep the local Animal Shelter from having to euthanize dogs for space for two years.

The van was specially ordered to serve the Shelter's needs and those of Jackson County animal rescue organizations. The 2017 Ford Transit-150 Cargo van will be kept at the Jackson County Animal Shelter.



Before the arrival of this van, ARF had been renting vans to transport animals to these various no-kill shelters where they were quickly adopted. Since November 2015, ARF transported 336 animals. That is 336 Jackson County animals that did not have to be euthanized or remain homeless. Thank you, Jackson County Commission.

Where the Money Goes		
	Cash	Benefits to Jackson County
Spay/Neuter	\$11,520	With Catman2, Jackson County Animal Shelter, and county partners, ARF helped to spay or neuter 910 animals since December 2015
Veterinary Services	\$12,983	includes surgery, emergency care, heartworms, and more for hundreds of pets (also includes donated vaccines, heartworm tests, and health checks for transporting shelter animals)
Foster/Adoption	\$5,045	34 dogs and cats adopted locally; 258 fostered before transport to other no-kill shelters. 205 pets pulled from Jackson County Shelter
Additional	\$3,670	ARF's other continuing expenses include training, insurance, utilities, emergency boarding, mandatory fees, and printing and mailing
Transports (travel)	\$4,890	292 animals transported to other shelters and rescues or adopted locally

To help Jackson County achieve a *virtual no-kill status for dogs* (except for medical and aggression issues) for the second straight year, ARF has had to double its out-of-state transports. Since we aren't reimbursed for these considerable expenses, we've seen a steady increase in veterinary and transport bills with a corresponding plummet in adoption revenues.

We're doing our job so well that the proof of our success is what you *don't see*: stray and homeless animals suffering on our streets. People donate when they see animals in danger. But because ARF quietly goes

Give Local! ARF gets no funds from the ASPCA or other national groups.

## Sea Change for ARF

*Those are pearls that were his eyes. – William Shakespeare*

2016 has been a year of change for ARF.

In December 2015, ARF President Veronica Nicholas was diagnosed with stage 4 glioblastoma (brain cancer). Veronica helped found ARF back in the 1970s, and she is the reason most ARF volunteers are involved today. As President, Veronica was the kind, patient, and always cheerful face of ARF, even when everyone else was cranky. When Veronica's husband Karl brought Mary Adams for her interview in the spring of 1995, Mary visited Veronica's house, crawling with cats and dogs, including tripod dogs, cats born with distemper who flopped about the house, hounds with nervous conditions, and a portly mother Labrador retriever named Lottie who played nursemaid to all the bottle-fed kittens. Veronica cared for them all, and Mary knew she'd come to the right place.

After Veronica's diagnosis, Mary Adams—now Vice President—stepped up to the plate and took over Veronica's ARF responsibilities. In the spring, Mary was diagnosed with stage 2 invasive ductal carcinoma (breast cancer). She underwent breast surgery and reconstruction, lived through four cycles of chemotherapy, started six weeks of radiation, and is scheduled to have a hysterectomy at the end of the year.

During Mary's surgical recovery, ARF volunteers Kaleb and Betsy took over the major fostering and transport planning responsibilities that Mary had been shouldering. Being Mary was a tall order to fill, but they knew it was even more important to Mary to make sure shelter dogs made it out during her absence.

During the summer of 2016, Betsy was diagnosed with terminal metastatic uterine and ovarian cancer. The last thing she said to a shelter volunteer was, "No dogs are going to die as long as I'm alive." And she meant it. With a neighborhood of dedicated volunteers, Betsy took in foster dogs right up until she went into hospice, and the neighborhood continued to

help while she was in hospice. Without Betsy's contagious dedication to the very end, the shelter's two-year streak of no adoptable dogs being euthanized would have ended.

Betsy always stuck her neck out for the "underdog." If a dog was having a hard time in the shelter, she was immediately drawn to it. She never gave up, and she inspired other fosters to not discount the shy or the scared. Betsy passed away in hospice surrounded by friends and family. ARF is forever grateful for her service to the organization and to the animal welfare community. We will always miss her.

As we finish this newsletter, Veronica Nicholas, too, approaches the rainbow bridge, though she still laughs with the same contagious, delighted laugh that has drawn us all into her orbit. Our hearts are breaking.

But she leaves behind ten thousand acts of kindness—the all-night feedings, the bathroom puppies, the gifts and remembrances, the ready welcomings—for which we will always remember her.

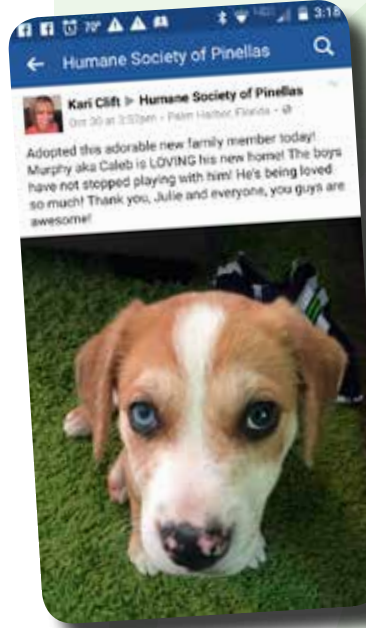
ARF has always been a family—if sometimes a

dysfunctional one. But in 2016, with each dear friend who went through cancer treatment or devastating diagnosis, we truly came together to support each other. All for one and one for all, forever and always.



## Training Tips: Jane Finneran, CPDT

To use punishment effectively, the owner has to have not only a perfect understanding of dog behavior but impeccable timing, as well. If an owner has that, he does not need punishment. Managing a behavior is better than punishing it. Dogs are not born knowing how to live in a house or ride in a car or walk on a leash; they need to be taught. These traits were not bred into dogs through evolution. Instead, dogs evolved behaviors like chasing prey, digging dens, and barking at danger (common complaints about dogs I get each week).



The fallout from punishment can ruin your dog physically and mentally. It may cause harm to the animal (for example, choke chains and prong collars can cause problems with the trachea, thyroid, and even the eyes); it can make the dog fearful and generalize this fear (for example, if the shock collar involves a beep, then stoves, alarms, and timers can also frighten your pet); and it can suppress warning behaviors (for example, punishing a growl can lead to a sudden attack that you don't have time to prevent).

Punishment does not teach the dog to do what we want. Kneeing or kicking a dog that is jumping up does not teach the dog that we want her to sit or put all four paws on the ground. Teaching a behavior that is incompatible with the unwanted act (for example, a sitting dog can't jump) is far more effective.

Finally and most importantly, punishment can lead to a bad association with the person administering the deed. Punishment can

ruin the bond of trust between the owner and dog. The dog now sees the owner as unpredictable, since punishment is often used when the owner is angry. It's even worse when the anger comes after the dog's unwanted act (for example, when the owner comes home to find the sofa destroyed). If the owner yells and hits the dog because his last pair of shoes is ruined, the dog has no idea why; she only understands that the person is ranting and raving uncontrollably. (And no, showing the dog your shoes doesn't help.) Teaching dogs what we *do* want and then rewarding good behavior is really the best way to train.

*The next dog training class will be in January at the Armory in Webster. All proceeds to benefit ARF. Jane Finneran CPDT has been helping dogs with their owners for over 20 years.*

## GIMME SHELTER



This special bonded pair Bear Bear and Bernardo found a wonderful home with the Love & Turner family! These boys were terrified and untouchable by staff when they were surrendered to the Jackson County Animal Shelter. After a shelter volunteer and foster parent managed to gain their trust, the boys spent a few weeks in foster care getting a lot of TLC. Here's their foster dad saying goodbye. Remember, every adoption opens another space for another dog in need, and there are plenty of dogs at JCAS who need ARF's help.

The year 2016 has seen great progress at Jackson County Animal Shelter. With excellent collaboration between ARF and the Shelter, many improvements have been made. The Shelter now has an excellent record-keeping system, including medical records on each animal that are updated daily. In 2015, the shelter began mandatory spay or neuter of every dog and cat available for adoption. In 2016, heartworm testing also began on each dog upon intake, as well as Bordetella (kennel cough) vaccines. All the animals are up to date on vaccines, testing, and worming when they are adopted, and medical care is provided for all animals that are

sick or injured, unless the injuries are too serious to treat.

- **Intake:** 752 animals (this includes wildlife)
- **Dog intake:** 431 (138 owner surrender; 275 stray)
- **ARF pulls:** 205 dogs (336 since last newsletter in 2015) rescued & adopted or transported to no-kill rescues from shelter; 53 rescued from community
- **Transfers to other no-kill shelters:** 29 dogs (ARF facilitated or transported)
- **Pulls by Cashiers Highlands Humane:** 3
- **Dogs reclaimed by owner:** 69
- **Dog euthanasias** (requested, aggression, etc.): 35

Obviously, ARF and Catman are the Jackson County Animal Shelter's best friends. Without them, over 290 animals would have been euthanized just in the first ten months of 2016. Their heroic efforts and tireless work are inspiring, and, of course, costly.

ARF is funded solely by community support, including grants from the public and support from the health department

and county commissioners, but most of its work is paid for by your donations. Though the shelter in Cashiers receives many times more financial support, most of the burden of saving the county's unwanted pets falls on ARF, which has a tiny budget and a tiny band of dedicated volunteers. ARF needs donations to keep going, and they need volunteers (illness, relocations, and mortality have claimed far too many this year). Please help keep the momentum going! Helping ARF saves shelter animals!

	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		Dec. 14-October 15		Nov. 15-October 16	
	Dogs	Cats	Dogs	Cats	Dogs	Cats	Dogs	Cats	Dogs	Cats
Animals Taken In	657	468	537	552	513	389	218	148	432	304
Animals Transferred to ARF or Catman2	80	17	172	61	167	60	197	71	205	69
Animals Adopted	254	134	200	113	201	113	103	95	88	87
Animals Euthanized	223	314	215	275	101	192	28*	111	35*	110

\* all for aggression or severe medical condition

# We're Adopted!

These are just a few of the many dogs and puppies who found homes through ARF from December 2015 through October 2016. This effort takes plenty of work. Each adoptable animal must be treated for fleas and parasites, tested for heartworms and lyme disease or leukemia, given a series of vaccinations, and spayed or neutered. Some animals require many more medical services as well as work on housetraining and socialization. Animals we transport must meet rigorous temperament testing standards and health checks. Additional paperwork must be completed—all before volunteers can be found to ferry the crew through the night until they reach their new homes. Volunteer drivers get a quick afternoon's nap before returning to Jackson County, and the longer transports take about three days.

We take these steps because our small county still has an enormous burden of unwanted animals. As so many well-intentioned rescuers have found, we have far more animals than all of us working together can find homes for.

Please help us. ARF needs money, foster homes, drivers, supplies, fundraisers, and spay/neuter trip assistance. You can save lives!



# My Childhood with ARF

By Mahalia Nicholas

My mother Veronica's first animal rescue was of a tiny, pink bunny that she and her mom kept warm in the oven in a box of cotton until it was big enough to have run of the house. He earned the name Peter Crappertail and lived a large and long life. He had the habit of sleeping in the laundry basket. The first rescue I remember was shortly after we moved to Cowan Street. Some scoundrel dumped a litter of puppies in the kudzu just down the road from our house. Ma distributed all of the puppies—except for one—among friends and neighbors. The runt was bleached white by the sun and had some sort of skin condition afflicting his tail which caused all the hair to fall out. We named him Possum, and he lived with us until I was away at college. He even had a short-lived career in theatre. He made a cameo in a production of *Of Mice and Men*, peeing prodigiously on the stage.

I don't remember exactly when Veronica's involvement with ARF began. It must have been in the late seventies because I was old enough to walk the larger foster dogs down the hill to the Sylva Library on Saturday afternoons for the weekly Pet Shows where folks gathered to adopt or surrender beasts of all sorts. It was at these Pet Shows that Veronica first flexed her still dubious ability to surmise the breed mix of a mongrel puppy. I remember one puppy in particular that she decided was a pure Saluki. That poor dog grew up to look like a cross between a wolf hound and sickly goat.

Susan Clements, Sandy Annabelle, Donna Summers, Sarah Hatton, and Georgia Hickes are all faces I remember from those days. The County Animal Shelter was built around this time, most likely as the result of the pressure of these amazing advocates. The Pet Shows moved to the Ingles parking lot for years before

landing at their permanent home with heated buildings at Bridge Park.

An enormous benefit for me of Veronica's involvement with ARF during my childhood is that there were always puppies and kittens about that needed love and playtime. Neighborhood kids were always dropping by to lend a hand in the playing department. I've been sorting through boxes these past few weeks, and I've found more photos of animals than I have of people, and there are animals in most of the people pictures too! Fosters lived in the kennel off the garage, on the back porch, and eventually in the dog lot the folks added on. The claw foot bathtub in the downstairs bathroom played home to dozens of litters of tiny puppies and kittens over the years as Veronica discovered her knack for bottle-feeding abandoned tiny babies. The tub also once housed a nest of baby wrens. Its oddest occupant by far was an injured blue heron who spent the night there before being taken to a wildlife rehab facility.

My father Karl waded into Caney Fork with Veronica to rescue that particular heron. And he was a partner in many other rescues. I remember once calling Ma on her cell phone to ask Pops a question; she replied that he wasn't available because she had sent him head-first into a storm drain after some stranded beast. Pops tirelessly cleaned more cat boxes than any human being should have to, walked a whole array of geriatric dogs in the rain, toted cages to and from and, in more recent years, drove van loads of dogs and cats to points north and south for adoption. His partnership and patience with Veronica promoted her advocacy for the animals.

The animal count at my folks' house is currently nine cats and three dogs—a precipitously low number compared to historical counts. We don't need any more right now, but it does feel strange not to come home to cages on the porch and babies in the bathtub.

I'm grateful for Veronica's involvement with ARF and all those stray beasties. I learned compassion, observed selflessness and fierce commitment, and got to play with lots of animals throughout my childhood.

I'm sure all the beasties are grateful too.



# A Brief History of ARF

By Veronica Nicholas (updated by Mary Adams)

When Sara Hatton and Jeanette Newsom called Veronica in the late 1970s, Sara greeted her by saying "ARF!", and thus the name was born. Sara, Jeanette, and Veronica were part of the Humane Society, and had been fostering animals in their homes for several years. Sara offered to do a weekly picture and column about the animals for *The Sylva Herald*. Jeanette offered the library as a meeting place for monthly adoption shows.

The Humane Society bought us puppy pens and cat cages and pet carriers. Dr. Homolka, then the only veterinarian in Jackson County, volunteered to teach us to vaccinate cats and dogs and to offer the other "well-baby" preventive care. With Dr. Homolka's support, we developed a monthly reduced-cost spay/neuter clinic at his animal hospital. With ARF foster parents doing the scheduling, record-keeping, anesthesia, prepping animals for surgery, and



*Lucy was a sweet, mild mannered little 2.5 year old Beagle/Terrier mix who really needed help. She was rescued by Jackson County Animal Control with a severely broken femur, a fractured pelvis, and a terrifying coat of maggots and glitter. We knew she needed help right then. Dr. Wall contacted a specialist in Waynesville to pin the leg, but after three months of surgeries, her bad leg was amputated. Once the leg was gone, she was so much happier—and faster! ARF supporters donated to her medical bills, helping Lucy to and out of the operating room and into a loving forever home. Donors like you showed her that people still care. We promised Lucy that from then on, she was going to be treated with respect and dignity—in short, spoiled rotten. Her old life was over. ARF's mission was to give her a new life, and we were only able to do that because of your support. Helping abused and neglected dogs like Lucy is such an important part of ARF's mission. Consider donating to ARF if you'd like to help dogs like Lucy get a second chance.*



hospital care, Dr. Homolka and his staff offered routine care and also emergency care. Veronica worked as a veterinary technician.

As Dr. Homolka's practice grew, Drs. Harriet Shields and Mike Smith joined his practice. By then, they were spread too thin to offer emergency care to ARF animals; the number of pets in our care was also growing. ARF was responsible until the early 2000s for after-hours emergency calls when the shelter was closed.

Eventually, Dr. Paul Kern in Hazlewood took over all the ARF care; Dr. Robert Zemel, then doing relief work for Dr. Kern, started a practice in Sylva in 1990. Later, Drs. Wall, Black, and Bragg purchased Dr. Zemel's Sylva practice, and they offer greatly reduced services to ARF to this day. Soon their spay/neuter efforts were supplemented by the Asheville Humane Alliance. Grants from PetSmart Charities, Two Mauds, The Hennessy foundation, and the county commissioners helped too.

Soon, ARF began sending a few puppies and kittens to Long Island as part of a transfer program. That program grew. ARF's partnership with the Animal Shelter, their transport program, and their free and low-cost spay/neuter services have meant that no dog has been euthanized for space at our shelter for almost two years.

Over the years, ARF has offered care for animals whose families have been jailed, hospitalized, or homeless; provided animal rescue services, petsitting, pet therapy (visits to rest homes, etc.); provided humane education materials and taught classes to elementary, high school, and college students, and nursed thousands of foundlings. The next generation of care-givers promises to carry on ARF's mission and honor the commitment of its founders and volunteers, including Veronica Nicholas, Sara Hatton, Susan Clements, Trish Morgan, Jeanette Newsom, Karen Martar, Joanne Stehling, Annie Harlow, Betsy Ashby, Paul Novak, and so many others.

# Shelter Dog Walking

*There is a hope that a dog injects into every walk. More than a hope—an expectation, really—that this is going to be something wonderful. ~ John Zeaman, Dog Walks Man*

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ARF

Trainer Jane Finneran and the Jackson County Animal Shelter have instituted a new program. Its goal is three-fold. The first goal, in this day of computers, cell phones, and technology, is to get college students up on their feet, walking dogs. Western Carolina University has enough students living on campus to take every dog for a walk every day.

The second objective is to keep students from purchasing dogs—especially puppies—that they do not have time to take care of and that are not allowed in the dorms and most apartments. Students go to pet stores, which take advantage of homesick students and seldom ask many questions. Then, six days or six weeks later, the

dog ends up at the shelter. Instead of buying dogs that will be hard to care for and that will make renting and relocating next to impossible, students who miss their pets at home can use the program to come up and visit with a needy dog or cat.

Of course, the welfare of the dogs is the third goal. The average shelter stray or surrender is a large dog that is under a year old. Not only do long periods of captivity drive the dog crazy, but leaping, howling, stir-crazy dogs don't get adopted quite as easily as tiny puppies or well-groomed lap dogs. Walking helps socialize dogs that have often been neglected—sometimes not even leash trained. It makes them better, more adoptable pets with less likelihood of being returned.



Students must come up to the shelter, fill out a background check and, once it's been processed, attend a 30-minute orientation. See you there!

Please help us continue our efforts by making your financial contribution to assist the animals of Jackson County.

**DETACH AND RETURN WITH YOUR DONATION**

Humane Society of Jackson County (ARF) Donation  
Post Office Box 298, Sylva, NC 28779

You can make a one-time donation or become a sustaining supporter at <http://www.a-r-f.org>

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\$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

**Sustaining members can pay a small amount each month. From our web site, click "help" & follow the link.**