



The ARK

Summer 2003

Virginia Federation of Humane Societies

Preparedness Is the Key

Preparedness to respond to animals in disasters recently took a major step forward. Approximately fifty representatives of animal welfare organizations and animal control agencies from Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Kentucky as well as several representatives of the veterinary community took part in an Emergency Animal Sheltering exercise held at the Rockingham County fairgrounds near Harrisonburg, Virginia the weekend of June 21-22nd. The event was sponsored by the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies and endorsed by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Anne Culver, Director of Disaster Services for The Humane Society of the United States, assembled a team of instructors and trainers from as far away as Iowa, Illinois, and Florida to provide this training. Heading the team were Melissa Forberg and Laura Bevan. Melissa Forberg, co-author of the course, is an experienced team leader for the HSUS National Disaster Animal Response Team and a consultant on

disaster training and response. Laura Bevan, also co-author of the course, as well as several other disaster-related courses including the Disaster Animals' Response Team (DART) training, is director of the HSUS Southern Regional Office in Tallahassee, Florida. Additional instruction was provided by Lynn Mooney, Diane Webber, Ed Tucker and Peggy Allen.

Local arrangements were provided by the Rockingham-Harrisonburg Emergency Animal Response Team (Rockingham HEART) of the Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA. Other organizations who contributed their support included the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the local media. Rockingham County Fire and Rescue personnel provided use of the mobile command unit as center of emergency operations for the disaster simulation and participated in some of the training.

Saturday, June 21st, was devoted primarily to classroom instruction. Topics included introduction to disasters and emergency management, community

planning, types of emergency shelters for animals, human resources, worker health and safety, legal and administrative issues, and media and public relations. The following morning local volunteers provided a variety of their own animals for a disaster simulation based on inland flooding from a hurricane.

Participants gained practical, hands-on experience in taking in and evaluating the condition of dogs, cats, bunnies, lambs, and horses. The animals were provided with identification and placed in areas appropriate to their species. The simulation concluded with instruction on procedures for closing the emergency shelter and returning animals to their owners.

On Sunday afternoon the Day's End Farm Horse Rescue demonstrated horse rescue with the Anderson Sling using a plastic horse model. Demonstration of the Easy Up Sling for rescuing cattle, and the use of a Glide for moving injured or downed animals also was provided during the afternoon event. Participants in the Emergency Animal Sheltering training agreed that knowledge gained through the classroom instruction and especially the disaster simulation developed in them a sense of confidence in being prepared to respond to the needs of animals during and following a disaster. Peggy Allen, president, expressed the appreciation of the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies to the HSUS Disaster Service Team for this educational experience. "As a result more animals' lives will be saved, and in turn, their owners will be spared the anguish of losing their valued companions," she concluded.



In a debriefing of the disaster simulation, training workshop participants listened to a critique of the sheltering of livestock.

VFHS Information

VFHS Officers

Peggy Allen, President
826 Oakwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
pcallen@shentel.net
540-879-3384

Tonya Higgins, DVM, 1st Vice President
Box 1534
Glouster, VA 23061
yellowfarmhouse@aol.com
804-693-2060

Sara Brown, 2nd Vice President
2712 Blue Ridge Terrace
Winchester, VA 22601
sbrown@shentel.net
540-667-2324

Evie Thrift, Secretary
HC-2 Box 577
Plainview, VA 23156
804-785-3109

Virginia Kilmer, Treasurer
2539 Ridge Hollow Road
Edinburgh, VA 22824
vkilmer@shentel.net
540-984-3147

Executive Committee

Ginger Bennett
P. O. Box 733
Warrenton, VA 20188
spca@erols.net
540-788-9000

Robin Starr
2519 Hermitage Rd.
Richmond, VA 23220
rstarr@richmondspca.org
804-521-1322

SPAY VA Director

Teresa Dockery
24237 Mock Knob Road
Abington, VA 24211
dockery@naxs.net
423-968-9136

VFHS Contacts:

Annual Conference
Peggy Allen
540-879-3384

Change of Address

Evie Thrift
804-785-3109

Disaster Preparedness

Peggy Allen
540-879-3384

Humane Education

Peggy Allen
540-879-3384

Laws/Legislation

Teresa Dockery
423-968-9136

Membership Dues

Virginia Kilmer
540-984-3147

Newsletter/Web- site

Sara Brown
540-667-2324

Start Up/New Groups

Peggy Allen
540-879-3384

Shelter Designs/Building Information

Teresa Dockery
423-968-9136

For information about the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies, visit our Web site at www.vfhs.org.

Amazing Grace

For at least two days, Grace lay in the cold dark place, alone and in excruciating pain. Maimed and stuffed into a six-pack size cooler, the young cat was tossed into a field near Christiansburg, Virginia and left for dead.

Fortunately another cat sitting on this blood smeared cooler caught a farmer's attention. Inside the cooler he found Grace lying curled up with a rope tied around her neck, her eyes a bloodied mass of tissue. In desperate hope of saving her life, the farmer took the injured cat to a local veterinarian.

Grace went through two surgeries on her severely damaged eyes and, despite care by an ophthalmologist at the Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, they could not be saved. Pathology reports confirmed the enucleated eye tissue held residue from "BB" gun pellets. Also Grace's tail was found to be broken in several places. Grace stayed at her caretaker's home snug, warm, well on the road to

recovery, and adored by everyone whose life she has touched. She was even nicknamed "The Magic Cat" by the College veterinary staff! Everyone wanted to touch her and cuddle with her to feel the aura of gentleness and love she emanated. She remained a truly remarkable creature whose spirit never wavered and whose greatest pleasure was to be held and loved.

Despite an immediate investigation by the local sheriff's department, a massive media campaign and a \$6,500 reward for conviction in this crime no arrests could be made in Grace's case.

The amount of public awareness and outrage at this incident propelled Virginia Partnership for Animal Welfare and Support (VA PAWS) to the forefront of animal welfare issues in the New River Valley region of Virginia.

VA PAWS established "The Grace Fund", to provide educational programs on the link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence. Some of their past

events were the WSLs Public Forum on animal cruelty laws in Virginia, a Humane Society of the United States sponsored First Strike Workshop held at Virginia Tech, a First Strike Follow-up workshop, visits to local daycare and public schools, animal cruelty public service advertisements in the local paper and continuously run classified advertisements about animal welfare.

Grace was always the center of attention. Whether at a nursing home for pet therapy, the local mall for a fundraiser, or an animal welfare event, people knew Grace and her story and were drawn to her.

She accompanied Lila Borge Wills, her adopted owner, on her visits to schools about animal cruelty and shared her spirit with so many people. She visited a local nursing care facility two times per month for two years.

Everyone just wanted to pet her and see the special personality and "grace" this little cat possessed.

Continued on next page

Grace passed away from renal failure in December, 2002. She was again taken to the Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and they did everything they could to save her life.

She selflessly shared her loving spirit up until her last day by visiting a local elementary school teaching children about animal cruelty (see picture). An unknown congenital renal failure suddenly presented itself and took Grace very quickly.

Even in death, Grace touched so many people. Again, the news media covered her passing, allowing so many to feel the loss of this special creature. Many cards

of sympathy were received, along with acknowledgement of Gracie's importance in VA PAWS's efforts for animal welfare.

Delegate Keister, a local Commonwealth Delegate, was even so moved that he sponsored a bill in the Virginia General Assembly, acknowledging Grace, her life, and VA PAWS.

Grace will never be forgotten and her life and spirit will continue to teach others about compassion, love, and the prevention of violent acts in our community.

Lila Borge Will, (Grace's adopted mom)
President, VA PAWS



Courtesy Floyd Press

On the day before she died, Grace participated in a visit to Floyd County School with Lila Borge Wills and recued mastifs Ben and Gunther.

News from around Virginia

Many organizations from around the State have been very busy and are accomplishing great things. Thousands of animals are benefiting from the improved quality of care and funding being provided for them.

The Lynchburg Humane Society received grant funding. The grant will provide 10 teachers in the area schools with the award winning humane education publication, Kind News. The Shelter will also receive the installation of a much needed computer system.

The Madison County Humane Society has shown progressive efforts in spay and neuter. Through grant funding, they were able to offer assistance through the low cost spay /neuter certificates and the "Spay A Momma Program". In 2002, the Madison County Humane Society provided assistance to over 125 companion animals.

The Floyd County Humane Society held Family Pet Adoption Day at the VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. The Floyd County Humane Society, VA PAWS, Giles County Animal Rescue, Pound Pals of Radford and Dalmatian Rescue of South West VA all joined together for a great day. Approximately 50 companion animals were available for adoption. The veterinary students got to practice and all of

the animals were micro chipped.

The Virginia Beach SPCA dedicated the Princess Foo-Foo Memorial Garden to all of the companion animals that have passed through the doors over the years. The garden is named after a Maltese who served as the pet therapy dog for many years and is located at the north end of the shelter. It features a "Rainbow Bridge" and engraved stones honoring animals and people.

The Twin County Humane Society has made tremendous efforts in animal welfare. Their spay neuter program has enabled them to spay and neuter 114 dogs and 238 cats. They have increased public awareness through the Pet Shelter Appreciation Day, held at the Galax Animal Shelter, and the summer reading program, established at the Galax and Grayson/Wytheville public libraries.

VA PAWS has coordinated many projects in the past year. The organization set up the Spay the Free Pets program and is currently in the planning stages on a feral cat program. Within a 3 month period, 96 dogs were spayed by the fall third year Virginia Tech students. VA PAWS was recognized by the General Assembly for helping animals and education about the link between animal cruelty and human violence.

Shelter Expansion Updates From Around The State

The Alleghany Humane Society is planning to build a new shelter on 4 plus acres that they have purchased in the Low Moor area.

Construction is progressing on the Roanoke Valley SPCA and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society plans to break ground soon on their 32-acre site.

Upcoming Events

July 31–August 3:

Conference on Homeless Animal Management and Policy, St Louis MO
516-833-7767
champconference.org.

September 7–10:

American Humane Association
Conference, Anaheim, CA 800-227-4645
debby@americanhumane.org

October 8-10:

Virginia Animal Control Association
Conference, Natural Bridge, VA 703-449-7277
diane.cook-townsend@fairfax.va.us

November 7–9:

Beastie Bazaar, Ayrshire Farm,
Upperville, VA 540-879-3384
www.beastiebazaar.org.

2003 VFHS Conference Summary

The Virginia Federation of Humane Societies 2003 annual conference took place on March 27-29 at the new, state-of-the-art Richmond SPCA at the Robins-Starr Humane Center in Richmond, Virginia. The over-all theme of the conference was the benefits and importance of all members of the animal care community working together.

Sponsors for the conference were the **ASPCA, Grizzard Fundraising, the HSUS, PETsMART Charities, and the Pet Savers Foundation.**

The **Richmond SPCA** and **VA PAWS** were presented plaques in recognition of their important contributions to animal welfare.

Robin Starr, CEO of the Richmond SPCA, was presented the VFHS' Bravo Award for outstanding accomplishment in the work of animal welfare and dedication to the prevention of cruelty to animals.

Special guests attending the conference were **Dr. Donald Butts**, State Veterinarian and Director of the Division of Animal, Plant and Food Industry Services; **Dr. Suzanne Jenkins**, Assistant State Epidemiologist; **Dr. David Cardin**, Program Manager for the Office of Veterinary Services; and **Dr. Eileen Kellner**, Staff

Veterinarian for the Office of Veterinary Services in the Harrisonburg Regional Office.

The conference was full of varied and useful information, according to the 200 participants from animal shelters, animal control agencies, and other animal-related organizations. Tours of the 64,000 square foot Richmond SPCA included the dog living rooms, cat con-



Kate Pullen and Brian Glover's presentation on Developing a Hoarder Task Force was well attended.

dos and group housing, humane education center, spay/neuter clinic, veterinary and behavioral rehabilitation areas and indoor dog training facility and track. Space around the track was well used by the over 30 businesses and organizations that participated in our exhibit area by displaying and distributing product information and educational materials, and by donating a number of fun and functional door prizes.

New and very well received additions to the customary Friday-Saturday conference were 2 four-hour Thursday afternoon sessions (with no increase in registration fee!) With 16 workshops and the opportunity to obtain 13 hours of continuing education, there was something for everyone!

In a four hour session on *Cats—Their Humane Care and Handling*, **Penny Cistaro** of Whatcom Humane Society in Bellingham, Washington, discussed in detail ways to minimize stress and dis-

ease in shelter cats. Topics covered included: handling, cleaning strategies, ongoing health evaluations, health care and vaccinations, disease testing, behavior evaluation, record keeping, nutrition, equipment that minimizes handling, and euthanasia practices. For those who could not attend the long session, a shorter version was offered later in the conference.

In response to an ongoing and ever-growing request for a special session for administrators, **Jim Tedford** from The Humane Society of Rochester and Monroe County in NY presented a four hour session entitled *Calling All Executive Directors and Animal Welfare Administrators* in which he discussed training, mentoring, delegation, micro-management, discipline, budgeting and strategic planning.

Jim also presented *Shelter Animals Need to be Adopted, Not Rescued* in which he discussed strategies for partnering with other organizations and groups for adopting animals that would otherwise be euthanized. He described establishing goals and objectives for the partnerships, definitions of potential partners, adoption procedures and restrictions, partner responsibilities and the process for terminating partnerships.



Ed Boks of Maricopa County Animal Care and Control (Arizona) offered innovative approaches to resolve animal related issues.



Tonya Higgins displays a dog toy while Jim Tedford announces the winner during one of the popular door prize drawings.

Prefaced by **Teresa Dockery** with statistics that showed the need to address pet relinquishment issues, a general session called *Pets for Life: Project Safety Net* was presented by **Nancy Peterson**, HSUS and **Denise Deisler**, Richmond SPCA. Nancy explained the development and current status of the Pets for Life Training program, a campaign to keep pets and people together. Denise discussed how the Richmond SPCA had adapted the program, and stressed the importance of talking to the owner to determine the real reason for relinquishment, so that other solutions than relinquishment might be found.

Clicker Training in a Shelter Environment was presented by Sarah Babcock, Richmond SPCA and **Virginia Broitman**. Sarah and Virginia explained what clicker training was, how to do it, and its use in a shelter. They then demonstrated the technique using shelter dogs with varying dispositions and behaviors (shy, jumping, etc.)

Sarah also presented *Behavioral Assessment of Dogs* in which she explained what is involved in behavioral assessment and demonstrated the techniques with a shelter dog and puppy. She then provided commentary to a video which showed behavioral assessment of dogs whose behaviors made them unsafe to adopt.

In *Developing a Hoarder Task Force*, **Kate Pullen**, HSUS and **Brian Glover**, Animal Welfare League of Arlington, discussed what hoarders are, utilizing Virginia law and investigative techniques in hoarder cases, and working with other agencies to develop a hoarder task force.

Kate also presented *The Way You Do the Things You Do* in which she talked about the absolute necessity for written Standard Operating Procedures in all sized agencies. A group exercise proved that different approaches to common shelter tasks result without defined processes and procedures. Kate described the problems that arise in agencies when there are no written procedures in place and provided a recommended process for the development of

Standard Operating Procedures.

Betsy McFarland, HSUS, presented *Recruiting, Utilizing and Training Volunteers*, in which she provided step-by-step development of a volunteer program, including finding volunteers, establishing expectations and guidelines, and developing a job description.

Blueprint for a Successful Capital Campaign was led by **Robin Starr**, Richmond SPCA and **Claiborne Robins**, Board Chair, Richmond SPCA. Robin and Claiborne shared pointers and ideas for conducting a successful capital campaign based on their experience and their recent capital campaign which resulted in the Robins-Starr Humane Center.

Teresa Dockery, VFHS, presented a *General Assembly Legislative Update* in which she explained new laws and changes in existing laws which will take effect in July 2003.

In general session *The Role of Animal Control in Reducing Companion Animal Overpopulation* was presented by **Ed Boks** of Maricopa County Animal Care and Control in Arizona. Ed discussed his development and implementation of an animal care and control program that used innovative approaches to utilize public and private resources within his community to resolve animal related issues. He shared management ideas and shelter programs which have dramatically reduced euthanasia and increased adoptions.

Models for Working Partnerships was a panel discussion among **Robin Starr**, Richmond SPCA; **Thomas Chatman**, Richmond Animal Control; **Sharon Cornett**, Richmond Animal League; **Kate Pullen**, HSUS; **Brian Glover**, Animal Welfare League of Arlington; **Carl Shipley**, Gloucester County Animal Control; and **Tonya Higgins**, Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society; with **Teresa Dockery** as moderator. Panel members presented and explained various ways in which animal welfare and animal control groups can work together and with other organizations in urban and rural settings. Both challenges and benefits were discussed.



The conference offered lots of opportunity to network, socialize and follow up with presenters. Presenter Penny Cistaro talks with Susan Bobinsky after the *Cats—Their Humane Care and Handling* session.

In *Community Partnerships for Humane Education* **Ann Gwilliam** from Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society discussed how to create partnerships with community organizations and businesses to reach people of all ages with the message of humane treatment and respect for all animals.

Julie Morris of the ASPCA presented *Long Term Care of Shelter Animals*. Julie stressed that the goal for caring for shelter animals held for longer than two weeks is to improve their condition, not just maintain it. She described the warning signs of stress and methods and strategies for dealing with stress. The pros and cons of communal housing in shelters were provided as well as considerations of foster care.

At the end of the conference, participants were asked to complete an evaluation form regarding this year's conference, and to make suggestions for topics for future conference workshops. The VFHS appreciates the time and energy of everyone involved in making this conference so rewarding – the staff at the Richmond SPCA, the presenters, exhibitors, and participants!

For information about VFHS membership, visit our Web site at www.vfhs.org.

2003 General Assembly Session— Animal Legislation Summary

Passed and signed by governor:

HB 1831—Dangerous Dogs

Delegate Morgan

This bill adds to the definition of “dangerous dog” a dog that attacks or bites another dog and causes serious physical injury to the other dog. Dogs that injure dogs owned by the same person or during hunting are excluded. The current definition of “dangerous dog” includes dogs that attack companion animals other than dogs. This bill entitles the owner of any companion animal that is injured or killed by a dog to recover damages if (i) the injury occurred on the companion animal owner’s premises and (ii) the owner of the offending dog did not have permission from the companion animal’s owner to have his dog on the premises.

SB 895—Companion Animal Rescue Agencies

Senator Watkins

SB 950—Companion Animal Rescue Agencies

Senator Quayle

The compromise language in Senate Bill 950 amends the Code by (i) clarifying the definition of animal shelter as a nonresidential facility; (ii) deleting references to companion animal rescue agencies and adding definitions of home based rescue and foster care provider; (iii) adding requirements for pounds and animal shelters to secure signed statements specifying that none of its directors, operators, staff, or animal caregivers has ever been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect, or abandonment; (iv) removing the State Veterinarian’s authority to conduct inspections of companion animal rescue agencies and foster homes; (v) deleting registration requirements and fees for companion animal rescue agencies and foster homes; and (vi) stipulating that for recordkeeping purposes the release of an animal from a pound, animal shelter or other releasing agency to another pound, animal shelter or other releasing agency shall be considered a custody transfer and not an adoption.

This bill limits animal shelter notification and public accessibility require-

ments to those animal shelters that confine animals not received from their owner or from another releasing agency. This bill also limits notification to the pounds to those animals that the releasing agency finds or that have not been received from an owner.

The provision requiring companion animal rescues to be accessible to the public at reasonable hours and list their address and telephone number in a telephone directory is removed. A provision is included to shift the responsibility of “approving” out of state facilities or home based rescues from the State Vet’s office to the releasing agency. The releasing agency must obtain a statement signed by an authorized representative of the out of state facility or home based rescue specifying that the entity (i) keeps records that comply with 3.1-796.105; (ii) requires that dogs and cats be sterilized; (iii) has secured a statement from each of its directors, operators, staff, etc. that they have never been convicted of animal cruelty; (iv) ensures that the provisions of adequate care and the performance of humane euthanasia, as necessary, are in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Virginia.

A provision is also included to limit the number of companion animals that a foster home can keep to no more than 50. The penalty for failure to comply with the provisions for home based rescues/foster homes, as it relates to 3.1-796.96:5 and 3.1-796.96:6, is changed from a Class 1 misdemeanor to a civil penalty, not to exceed \$250.

The final provision of this bill requires individuals finding a companion animal, within 48 hours, to make a reasonable attempt to notify the owner of the animal and to notify the pound in the locality where the animal was found. The penalty for this provision is civil, not to exceed \$50.

SB 1045—Civil Penalties

Senator Hanger

The civil penalty language for animal shelters that includes the term “operator” in 3.1-796.120 is removed. This language is no longer needed because it is in 3.1-796.96:2.

HB 1598—Rabies Confinement Period

Delegate Morgan

The number of days that a dog or cat shall be confined when it has been bitten or exposed to rabies is reduced from 90 to 45.

HB 1861 - Dangerous Dogs, Delegate O’Bannon

This bill removes the \$50 cap on the mandatory registration fee for dangerous dogs in localities that have adopted a dangerous dog ordinance, and expands the liability insurance provision to \$100,000.

HB 1865 - Abandoning and Dumping Companion Animals

Delegate O’Bannon

Language that was put into the Code last year that made dumping a Class 3 misdemeanor was deleted. New language adds a provision to 33.1-346 that makes dumping a “live” animal the same penalty as dumping a dead animal. The penalty is comparable to a Class 1 misdemeanor.

HB 1398—Litter-Penalty

Delegate Lingamfelter

A provision was included in 33.1-346 that allows the defendant to perform community service in litter abatement activities in lieu of the imposition of confinement in jail.

HB 1866—Cruelty to Animals, Delegate O’Bannon

As a clarification, the language in 3.1-796.115 that gives judges the authority to ban any person convicted of animal cruelty from owning other companion animals was put into 3.1-796.122.

HB 2689—Dog Fighting

Delegate Bell

The amendments add possessing, owning, training, transporting, or selling dogs for the purpose of dog fighting to the dog fighting prohibitions. These acts are Class 6 felonies, as are the acts currently included in the dog fighting section.

HB 2703 Humane Investigators, Delegate Suit

This bill requires humane investigators to report to the local administrative entity that oversees animal control instead of the State Veterinarian.

Humane Investigators who are appointed prior to July 1 can be reappointed if they have completed the required continuing education credits and receive a recommendation from the administrative entity that oversees animal control in the locality where they are seeking reappointment.

A circuit court may appoint a person to fill a vacancy created when a Humane Investigator who was appointed prior to July 1, 2003, is no longer willing or eligible to be a Humane Investigator, provided the person seeking appointment (i) has received a written recommendation from the administrative entity that oversees animal control in the locality

where the Humane Investigator seeks appointment; (ii) has never been convicted of animal cruelty or neglect, any felony, etc.; and (iii) has completed a basic animal control course.

HB 2705—Animal Control Officers, Delegate Suit

This bill clarifies that animal control officers can obtain a warrant as necessary to enforce the Comprehensive Animal Laws providing the execution of such warrant shall be carried out by a law-enforcement officer.

HB 2525—Nonprofit Sales and Use Tax Delegate Orrock

SB 745—Nonprofit Sales and Use Tax Senator K. Miller

This bill alters the procedures for granting sales and use tax exemptions to nonprofit entities by giving the Department of Taxation the administrative duty to grant such exemptions according to cer-

tain broad criteria established by the bill. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2004.

Bills Failed

HB 2474—License Tax Delegate Crittenden

This bill raises the license cap on individual dogs and cats from \$10 to \$30 and the kennel tax from \$50 to \$150.

Bills Stricken:

HB 2704—Holding Periods Delegate Suit

Excludes “collar” as a form of identification for the purpose of determining the holding period for stray animals.

To obtain copies of the bills go to <http://legis.state.va.us> or call 804-796-6984

Spay Virginia Update

Spay Virginia, a project of the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies, was launched in November 2002. Since that time Teresa Dockery, Spay Virginia’s Director, has traveled the state meeting with municipal and private animal shelter personnel, rescuers, feral cat caretakers, animal control officers, veterinarians and other animal caregivers offering assistance in developing a Regional Plan to end the euthanasia of healthy adoptable animals in Virginia.

Under Teresa’s direction, two Regions of the Commonwealth have joined forces to address the overpopulation problem and have formed working partnerships. The Central Virginia Region (Richmond and surrounding counties) is fortunate to have three low-cost spay/neuter clinics. Spay Virginia, through a grant from the Bosack and Kruger Foundation, has provided a transport van for the local organizations to use in transporting animals to and from the clinics.

The Piedmont Region consists of eight organizations in and around the

Charlottesville area that have banned together to bring more spay/neuter assistance to low-income individuals.

Spay Virginia has been awarded over \$49,000 from PETsMART Charities to increase the number of surgeries in the Piedmont Region, expand a transport program for those without transportation, and hire a coordinator. The coordinator will oversee the day to day activities of the program, promote the need to spay/neuter and the available services, and raise funds to ensure that the program becomes self-sustaining.

Members of organizations in the Lower Shenandoah Valley Region are currently working toward a mobile spay/neuter clinic to service that area.

The South Central Virginia Region has purchased a building that will be renovated for a spay/neuter clinic. The clinic will first serve the organizations and animal control and will later serve the public.

Members of the Southwest Virginia Region have joined with organizations

from East Tennessee and are crafting a plan to address that Region’s needs. A stationary spay/neuter clinic is being explored.

Spay Virginia continues to work with other Regions to evaluate their needs and to develop a plan that addresses those needs.

The primary focus of Spay Virginia is to sterilize animals of low-income pet owners, those adopted from animal shelters, and those belonging to people who are unlikely to have them spayed or neutered.

The plan also focuses on methods of increasing adoptions and establishing programs to reduce the number of animals that are relinquished by their owners to shelters and rescue groups.

Through the implementation of a statewide plan the need to euthanize healthy, adoptable animals will be reduced and hopefully eliminated.

For more information about Spay Virginia, contact 423-968-9136 or spayva@vfhs.org.

Virginia Federation of Humane Societies
826 Oakwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801-3924
www.vfhs.org

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The Beastie Bazaar: Bigger and Better

Plans are underway for Ayrshire Farm's Seventh Annual Holiday Party for Animals. It will be held the weekend of November 7th, 8th, and 9th, and includes the fabulous Beastie Bazaar, a shopper's paradise for animal lovers. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

Last year's event attracted thousands of visitors who had the opportunity to browse among artwork, jewelry, pottery, sculpture, books, antiques, and hand-crafted items, all with an animal theme, provided by more than thirty vendors. In addition, nearly one hundred items were on display for a silent auction, which culminated in a frenzy of last-minute bidding.

The beautiful fall weather beckoned everyone to the outdoors to visit the rare breeds of farm animals and to enjoy a leisurely ride in a horse-drawn wagon. Companion animals were available for adoption, and ten lucky dogs and cats found wonderful homes. The large

donation trailer was filled to overflowing by the end of the weekend, and the contents of food and supplies were distributed to ten shelters in the northern Virginia area.

This year's event promises to be bigger and better than ever! Many of last year's vendors will be returning, and new ones will be participating. There will be food and drink concessions on the grounds, and there will be opportunities to visit and photograph the farm animals and to enjoy wagon rides. The donation trailer will be available to receive your gifts of toys, blankets, carriers, and miscellaneous supplies.

Mark the dates of November 7th, 8th, and 9th on your calendars now and make plans to attend this fun-filled family event. We kindly ask that you leave your furry family members at home, though!

The proceeds of this event benefit the projects and programs of the Virginia

Federation of Humane Societies, especially SPAY VIRGINIA, dedicated to developing low-cost resources for spay/neuter surgeries for owners of companion animals. Your one stop shopping spree will have the additional benefit of supporting these important enterprises. For additional information and directions to Ayrshire Farm visit the Beastie Bazaar web site at www.BeastieBazaar.org.



Everything from artwork to jewelry and hand-crafted items will be available at this year's Beastie Bazaar!