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**Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council Minutes**  
**Monday, February 23, 2026 – 7:00pm-9:00pm**  
Innovation Square; Webex

**Present:** Jeanne Aulbach, Gail LaBerge, Nahum Nicholas, Lauren Tringali  
**Absent:** Tonya Anderson, Erin Martin, Dr. Tameka Womack

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome / Announcements
3. Approval of Agenda  
{Action: Approved; Motion: LaBerge; Second: Nicholas: Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}
4. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting –October 6, 2025  
{Action: Approved; Motion: LaBerge; Second: Nicholas: Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}
5. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting –November 10, 2025  
{Action: Approved; Motion: Nicholas; Second: LaBerge: Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}
6. Election of Officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary  
The Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council made a motion to move all elections to the next meeting.  
{Action: Approved; Motion: Nicholas; Second: Aulbach: Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}
7. Animal Welfare & Enforcement Updates
  - Updates from the Director
  - Center Operations
  - Special Operations
  - Field Operations
  - Medical Services and Intake Operations
  - Community Outreach
8. Old Business
9. New Business
  - Meeting Dates for 2026  
The Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council made a motion to meet on Monday, April 13 or April 20, 2026; Monday, July 13, 2026; Monday, October 5, 2026, and January 11, 2027.  
{Action: Approved; Motion: LaBerge; Second: Nicolas; Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}

- Discussion of a review of the GAAC Bylaws  
The Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council made a motion to move the discussion of a review of the GAAC Bylaws to the next meeting. {Action: Approved; Motion: LaBerge; Second: Aulbach: Vote: (3-1); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Tringali-Yes; Nicholas-No}
- Discussion of the process for a FAQ page  
The Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council made a motion to request that Nahum email a list of FAQ website question ideas to each board member individually as well as Lisa Howell with AWE. {Action: Approved; Motion: Nicholas; Second: Tringali: Vote: (4-0); Aulbach-Yes; LaBerge-Yes; Nicholas-Yes; Tringali-Yes}
- Discussion of new locks on dog runs and cleaning of shelter vents
- Discussion of permanent vet staff vs. contractor

## 10. Public Comments

## 11. Adjournment

The chairperson declared the meeting adjourned.

# Gwinnett Animal Advisory Council

February 23, 2026





# Director Updates

[Katrina.Helman@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Katrina.Helman@GwinnettCounty.com)

678.226.7729





## Director's Key Messages

- \$7.3 Million 2026 Operating Budget
- 453 Open Records Requests in 2025
- Adoption Fees Reinstated
- Adoption Time Analysis
- Team Updates
- Updated Website Content

# Weekday Adoption Promotions

## Move-In-Monday

- 50% Off all adoption fees; (non-Yappy Hour Mondays)
- Adoption fees waived during Yappy Hour

## Two for Tuesdays

- Any bonded pair or any new friends for the cost of one (puppies and kittens excluded)

## Whisker Wednesdays

- Adult cats' adoption fee waived

## Cure-Their-Heart Thursday

- Adoption fees waived for heartworm positive dog adoptions

## Fetch-Me-Friday

- Appropriate toy for the species

# 2025 Adoptions Time Analysis

	11:00am – Noon	1:00pm – 3:00pm	4:00pm	5:00pm/After Hours*
<b>January</b>	160	76	23	0
<b>February</b>	126	69	8	1
<b>March</b>	159	76	14	4
<b>April</b>	133	57	13	1
<b>May</b>	195	121	43	1
<b>June</b>	182	143	27	2
<b>July</b>	179	134	40	9
<b>August</b>	168	125	19	3
<b>September</b>	188	123	26	5
<b>October</b>	206	143	39	4
<b>November</b>	179	132	25	1
<b>December</b>	180	79	20	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,055</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>31</b>

\*Stat includes Yappy Hour Events and when adopter arrived during standard public hours, but adoption completed after 5:00pm

# Adoption Time Analysis Findings

## Key Findings

- 56% of all adoptions occurred between 11:00am – Noon
- 35% occurred between 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 9% of adoptions occurred at or after 4:00pm, including <1% for after hours

## Key Takeaways

- Adoptions remain consistent across the day, with no flattening of adoption activity during months where we would expect adoptions to decrease.
- Adoption volume peaks in late spring through early fall (May – October).
- Initiatives like Yappy Hour (where adoption fees are waived) is a strategic effort to increase after hour adoptions and event attendance.

## Available Positions vs. Vacant Positions By Section

<i>As of 12/31/25</i>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>% Filled</b>
Kennel	26	3	<b>88.5%</b>
Field Services	17	1	<b>94.1%</b>
Medical and Intake	4	0	<b>100%</b>
Special Operations	6	1	<b>83.3%</b>
Outreach and Programming*	10	0	<b>100%</b>
<b>AWE Overall*</b>	64	5	<b>92.2%</b>

*\*Seasonal Summer Camp and Division Director Positions Not Included*

# Team Updates

## Promotions

- Eldred Henfield (ACO III) Field Training Officer

## New Hires

- Animal Control Officer (3)

## Vacancies

- Day Field Coordinator
- ACO III – Bite Officer
- Animal Control Officer FT (2)
- Animal Control Officer PT (1)

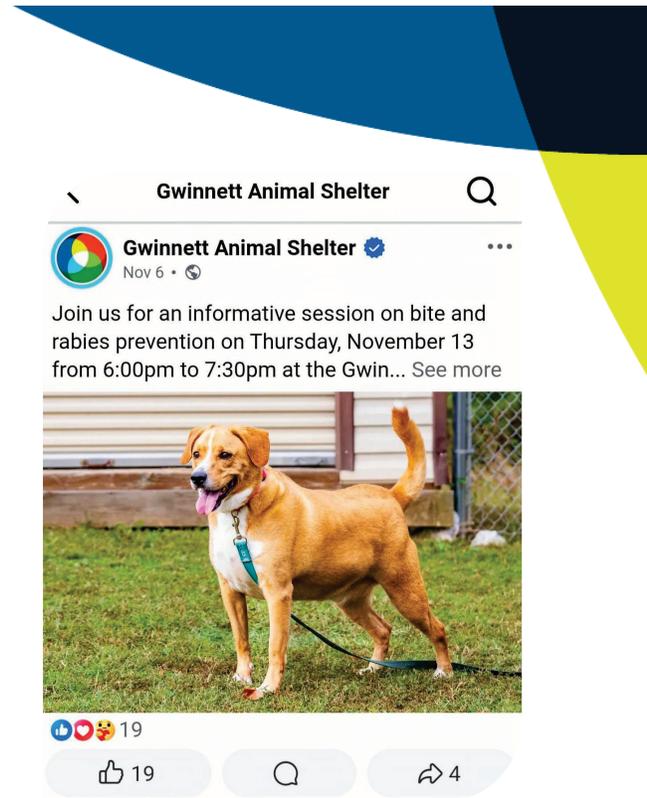


# Team Training

- De-escalation and Verbal Judo
- Tourniquet Training
- Animal Behavior Fundamentals
- Court and Court Dates
- Probation, Officer Responsibility
- Collecting Evidence and Mock Scenarios

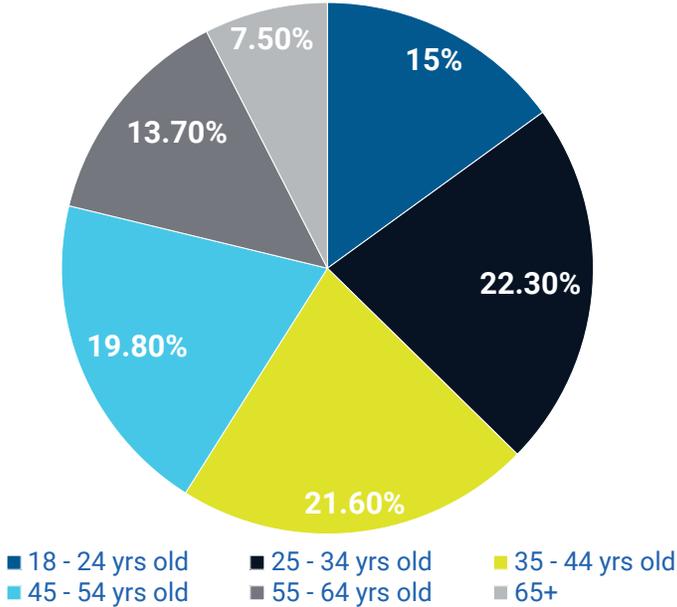
# 2025 Social Media Recap

- 17,361,139 Million Views
- 480,431 Content Interactions (+132.1%)
- 35,845 Total Followers
- 4,752 (New) Follows
- 32,043 Link Clicks (+1.1%)
- 446,226 Visits (+30.7%)



# 2025 Website Recap

Website Demographics



- 3,165,725 Views
- 293,583 Users
- 2.5M (82.2%) Mobile device views
- 241,702 (40.3%) Organic search

# Continuing the Momentum into 2026

## Key January 2026 Metrics

- 94.20% Percentage Saved
- 1,545 Calls for Service
- 375 Impounds (road and shelter)
- 228 Adoptions; 23 sent to rescue; 90 returned to owner
- 53 Bites Reported
- Helping Paws Youth Program Launch
- Heart to Paws Special Event – 26 Adoptions (February)

# Updated Website Content Coming Soon

- Dog Breed Characteristics and Behavior
- Know Before You Go
- Things to Consider Before Adopting
- Content Currently in Development:
  - FAQ and Bites Prevention

**UPGRADES COMING TO THE BILL ATKINSON ANIMAL WELFARE CENTER**  
Renovation construction of the Bill Atkinson Animal Welfare Center has begun. The center will remain open with regular business hours, providing full services and accepting donations.  
There will be intermittent parking area closures, please use caution when visiting the center and obey all posted signage. Parking or standing in line before 7:30am will not be allowed.  
For more information, call 770.339.3200.



<b>Adopt a Pet</b> Discover available shelter pets! <a href="#">Learn More</a>	<b>Foster a Pet</b> Share your home with a shelter pet! <a href="#">Learn More</a>	<b>Donate or Volunteer</b> Make an impact in a shelter pet's life! <a href="#">Learn More</a>	<b>Events &amp; Activities</b> Explore our upcoming happenings! <a href="#">Register &amp; Reserve</a>
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Animal Shelter	Outreach	Adoptions   Fosters
Lost Pets	Owner Surrender	Ordinances   Complaints
Rescues and Partners	Rabies and Other	

# Center Operations

Angela.Hutchins@GwinnettCounty.com



# 2025 Center Highlights

## Animal Outcome and Care

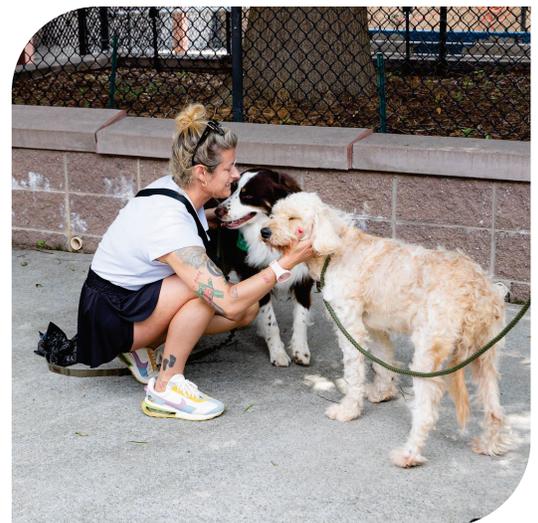
- 3,777 Total Adoption
- 93.34% Live Release Rate (1.5% increase from 2024)
- 93.83% Canine Live Release Rate (2.6% increase from 2024)
- 91.90% Feline Live Release Rate (0.17% increase from 2024)
- 6.66% Euthanasia Rate (17.6% decrease from 2024)

## Engagement and Operations

- 20,941 Visitors
- 1,616 Return to Owners

## Operational Excellence

- Only Closed Three Days for Infectious Disease Control
- Revamped Kennel Officer Training Program



# Center Visitor Analytics October – December 2025

## 5,752 Center Visitors

- 600 Google
- 1,178 Other (previous adopter, drove by/live nearby, etc.)
- 43 Gwinnett County employees/family members
- 735 Word of Mouth
- 253 Animal Welfare/County Social Media Platforms

## 1,027 Adoptions

- 75 Pitt Bull Types
- 36 Shepherd Types
- 34 Lab Types
- Yappy Hour: Seven Adoptions

## 376 Return to Owners



# Top Animals in Our Care

As of 12/31/25	Cats	Dogs	Kittens	Puppies	Other
Available to Adopt (includes In-Foster)	9	107	13	11	1
Awaiting Behavior Assessment/Retest	0	4	0	0	0
Awaiting Transfer/Rescue	0	0	0	0	0
Awaiting Vet Exam	0	0	0	0	0
Awaiting Spay/Neuter	0	0	0	0	0
Bite Quarantine	1	4	1	0	0
In-Foster: Protective Custody/Hold	0	0	0	0	0
Vet Care	1	0	0	0	0
Protective Custody/Hold	2	25	0	7	0
<b>Total Animals in Care: 209</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Animal Welfare & Enforcement Shelter Report for 12/31/2025

# Center Operations October – December 2025



# Euthanasia by Species

## October – December 2025

Animal Type	In-House Q4 2025	Outside Vet Q4 2025	Total for 2025	Total for 2024
Dog	53	1	236	329
Puppy	0	0	19	25
Cat	13	9	89	80
Kitten	14	3	98	73
Bird (wildlife)	1	1	16	6
Mammal <i>(i.e., racoons, bats, opossums)</i>	11	0	58	72
Marsupial	3	0	24	15
Fowl (rooster)	1	0	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>544</b> <i>(includes 3 bunnies)</i>	<b>601</b>

## Animal Enrichment October – December 2025

- Employee Provided Enrichment
  - 141 Hours to dogs
  - 40 Hours to cats
- 31.75 Hours of Additional Enrichment provided by Volunteers
- 17 Dogs in Outreach Activities
  - 77 Hours of additional enrichment



# Animal Behavior Assessments October – December 2025

- 95 Animals Assessed
  - 177 Total assessments  
July-December\*
- 50 Assessment Hours
  - 1,161 Total assessment  
hours for July-December\*



*\*Assessment metrics (animals and hours) tracking implemented July 2025.*

# Special Operations

[Michael.Chatham@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Michael.Chatham@GwinnettCounty.com)



# 2025 Special Operation Highlights

## Community Education

- Bite and Rabies Prevention

## Special Operations

- 1,805 Special Operations Cases
- 30 Dogs Declared Dangerous
- 11 Dogs Declared Vicious

## Rescue Stats

- 582 Animals Sent to Rescue
- 91 Rescues Collaborated With



# Dangerous/Vicious Dogs October – December 2025

## **21 Dangerous Dog Cases**

- 14 Declared dangerous
- Seven pending investigations

## **Five Vicious Dog Cases**

- Four declared vicious
- One case pending investigation

# Rescues, Neglect, Court, and Probation October – December 2025

	Q4 2025	Q4 2024	2025 Total	2024 Total
Sent to a Rescue*	136	37	582	429
Neglect Cases	148	195	693	836
Court & Probation	94	75	286	326

\*Collaborated with 34 different rescues from October – December 2025

# Rescue Pleas October – December 2025

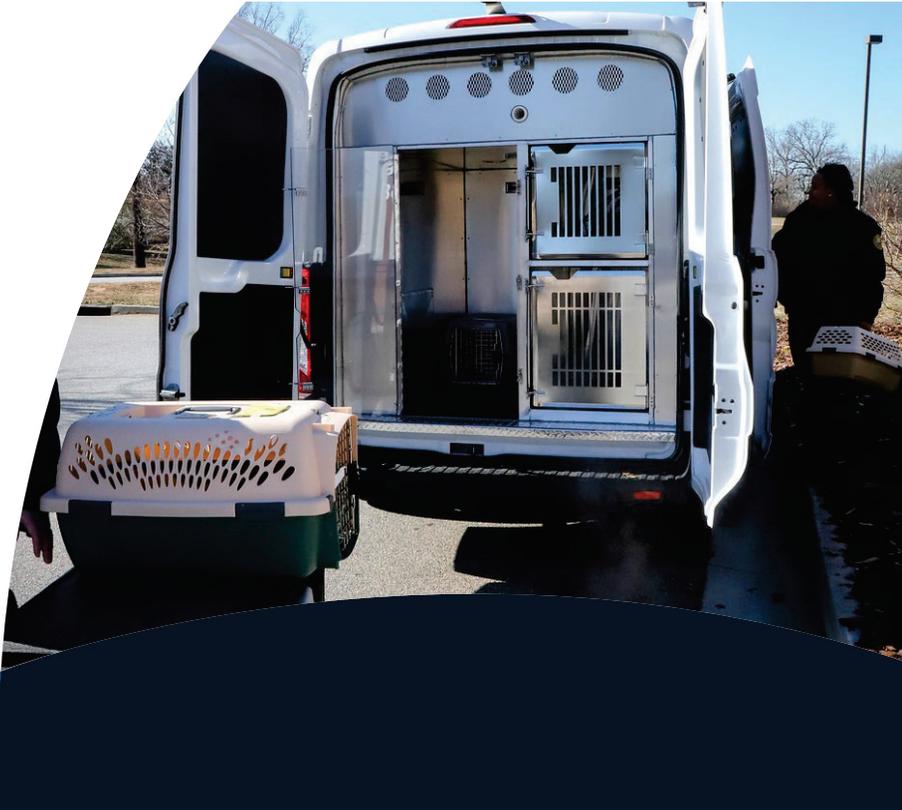
Received a Rescue Plea	Adopted	Fostered	Euthanized	Total Sent/Pulled for Rescue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 88 Dogs</li><li>• 13 Cats</li><li>• <b>101 Total</b></li></ul> <p><i>Multiple pleas sent</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 Dogs</li><li>• 7 Cat</li><li>• <b>19 Total</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 Dogs</li><li>• 3 Cats</li><li>• <b>8 Total</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 Dogs</li><li>• 0 Cats</li><li>• <b>3 Total</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 70 Dogs</li><li>• 5 Cats</li><li>• 1 Other</li><li>• <b>76 Total</b></li></ul>

# Bites and Rabies Comparison October – December 2025

	Q4 2025	Q4 2024	Total for 2025	Total for 2024
<b>Animal Bites</b>	201	214	826	806
<b>Positive Rabies Cases</b>	1	2	4	11

# Field Operations

Ira.Tolbert@GwinnettCounty.com





## 2025 Highlights

- 21,656 Calls for service
- 1,523 Citations
- 514 Animals returned in the field
- 292 Barking Dog Complaints Received
- 239 Leash Law Complaints Received

# Field Operations October – December 2025

	<b>Q4 2025</b>	<b>Q4 2024</b>	<b>Total for 2025</b>	<b>Total for 2024</b>
<b>Animals Saved</b>	1,539	1,131	<b>5,975</b>	<b>5,649</b>
<b>Calls for Service</b>	5,419	5,654	<b>21,656</b>	<b>21,268</b>
<b>Returned in Field</b>	149	96	<b>514</b>	<b>511</b>
<b>Citations Issued</b>	333	405	<b>1,523</b>	<b>1,617</b>
<b>Picked up on Road</b>	800	619	<b>3,295</b>	<b>2,999</b>
<b>Dead Animals</b>	269	622	<b>1,384</b>	<b>1,822</b>

# Top Field Citations Issued October – December 2025

- 139 No Restraint 10-71(a)
- 56 Attacks Without Provocation 10-8(a)(4)
- 54 Duty to be a Responsible Owner 10-7(a)
- 38 Damage to Property of Non-Owner 10-8(a)(2)
- 19 Failure to Vaccinate for Rabies 10-143(a)

# Unlicensed Breeding/Selling Without a License October – December 2025

## Why Citations Not Issued:

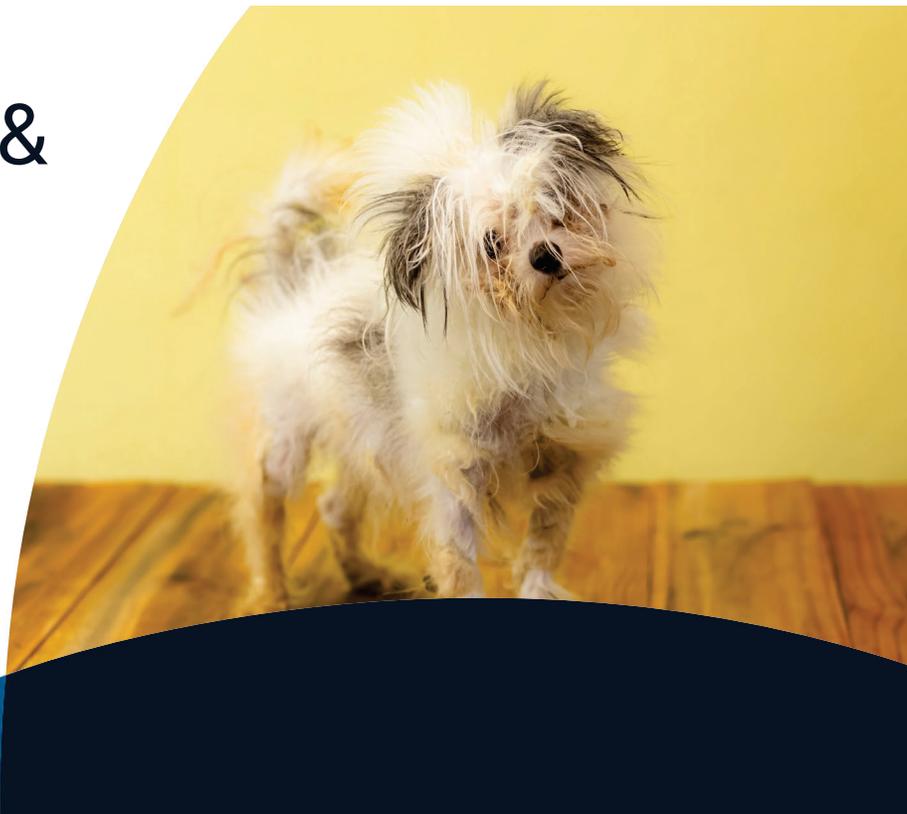
- Insufficient evidence for court
- One person was licensed by Georgia Dept of Agriculture

## 2025 Top Reasons:

- Insufficient evidence for court
- Witnesses not willing to testify
- 3rd and 4th party information supplied with no evidence

# Medical Services & Intake Operations

[Brittany.Arnold@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Brittany.Arnold@GwinnettCounty.com)



# 2025 Highlights

## Animals in Foster

- 501 Dogs/Puppies Sent to Foster
- 603 Cats/Kittens Sent to Foster
- 123 Fostered Animals Adopted
- 123 New Fosters

## Promoting Foster Animals

- New Foster Program Being Explored: 2-Day foster (open to approved AWE fosters only)
- Gallery of foster animals along walls in kennel
- Collaborate with Outreach & Programming section for social media campaign and videos



# 2025 Highlights

## Community Cat Program

- 1,284 Cats TNR'd
  - 7,704 Estimated Births Prevented

## Owner Surrender Requests and Acceptance

- 2,470 Requests Received
- 297 Animals accepted (138 dogs, 144 cats, 15 other)



# Return to Community Cat Program October – December 2025

Month	2025	2024	Total for 2025
October	130	144	<b>1,284</b>
November	116	104	
December	73	82	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>330</b>	
<b>Average Per Day</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Available Spots Filled</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>84%</b>

# Owner Surrender Emails Received October – December 2025

Month	Q4 2025	Q4 2024	Percentage Change	Total for 2025
October	235	140	+67.8%	2,470
November	289	153	+88.8%	
December	201	199	+1%	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>+47.3%</b>	

Q4 2025: (35 dogs, 41 cats, 1 other) Animals accepted from approved requests

# Foster Program October – December 2025

	<b>October 2025</b>	<b>November 2025</b>	<b>December 2025</b>	<b>Q4 2024</b>	<b>Total for 2025</b>
<b>Adopted by Foster</b>	5	16	8	29	<b>123</b>
<b>Sent to Foster</b>	48	50	26	N/A	<b>1,104</b>
<b>New Fosters</b>	9	13	14	N/A	<b>123</b>
<b>Home Visits</b>	11	11	11	38	<b>154</b>
<b>Foster Hours</b>	7,379	7,195	5,836	28,994	<b>71,602</b>

# Community Outreach

[Lisa.Howell@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Lisa.Howell@GwinnettCounty.com)



# 2025 Highlights

## Community Outreach

- 181 Outreach Hours
- Pet Food Assistance Program
  - 5,310 Pounds of food distributed for 580 pets
- Adopt A Senior Dog Campaign in November
  - 41 Senior dogs left the shelter (11 adopted, 22 reclaimed, 8 sent to rescue)

## Animal Education

- Electronic Newsletter Launched
- Dear Tabby & Take Over Tuesday Launched

## Promotion of Shelter Animals

- Foster Social Media Campaign
- Pets of the Week on County Instagram
- Touch Screen Video Players



# Programs, Partners and Social Media Impact

## AWE Programs

- 255 Dogs used in Dog Day Out, Bark Break, or off-site event/appearance
- 188 Adopted, 29 transferred, 10 fostered, 6 in fostered, 2 reclaimed

## Social Media

- 22 Dogs featured in Foster Campaign
  - 11 Adopted, 2 transferred, 3 fostered
- 79 Dogs featured in Pets of the Week on Instagram
  - 42 Adopted, 9 transferred, 10 fostered

## Corporate Partners

- 10 Dogs received spa day from WoofGang Bakery and Grooming Spa
  - Seven Adopted, 2 transferred, 1 fostered to adopt
- Nine Dogs fostered at Pet Suites
  - Six Adopted, 1 transferred, 1 foster to adopt, 1 in foster
- Three Dogs fostered by GoodDog Gwinnett
  - Two Adopted, 1 fostered



# 2025 Volunteer Highlights

- Shadow Shift Offerings Expanded
- 326 Volunteers (229 regular volunteers, 97 Single Day)
- 235 Dogs identified needing additional enrichment
  - 337.25 Additional enrichment hours
  - 235 Left the shelter



# Events, Appearances and Outreach October – December 2025

## Events

- Three Yappy Hours (Pet Trick or Treat, BARKSgiving Meal Prep, Home for the Holidays)
- Planned Pethood Vaccine Clinic

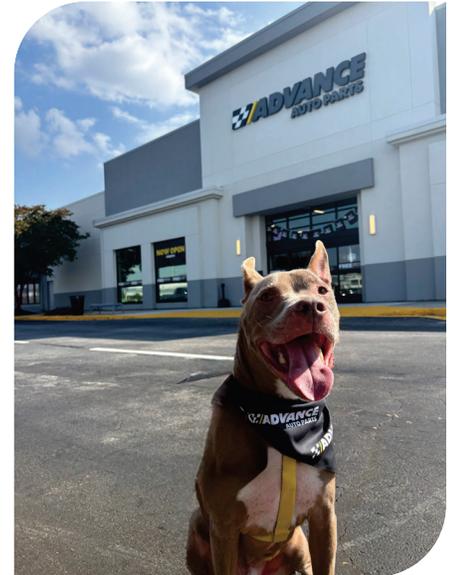
## Community Appearances

- 11 Adopt a Senior Dog Community Appearances
- Yellow River Trick or Treat Fall Festival
- Senior Services Wellness Fair

## Partnership/Collaboration Appearances

- Three Educational (PetSuites, Advanced Auto Parts, Pet Supplies Plus)
- Keybo Building Bridges Thanksgiving Food Giveaway
- Chairwoman's Gwinnett County Stand Down Event

**77 Outreach hours; 17 dogs (11 adopted, 2 rescued, 3 fostered)**



# Upcoming for 2026

## **Outreach Programs**

- Helping Paws Youth Program (Launched in January)
- Adaptive Volunteer Opportunities for Individuals with a Disability (In development)

## **Events**

- Foster/Volunteer Focused Events
- Cat Enrichment Lab will be offered after Purrs and Paws Event

## **Volunteers**

- Researching feasibility of offering Shadow Shifts and/or Orientation during week



# Thank You

[GwinnettAnimalWelfare.com](http://GwinnettAnimalWelfare.com)  
[@GwinnettAnimalWelfare](https://twitter.com/GwinnettAnimalWelfare)

