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It all started with one Jack Russell Terrier



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**ON THE COVER:** Dorothy Swann helped Mary Ruth Rogers launch the Columbia-based non-profit, Russell Rescue of Tennessee, two decades ago. They have found homes for over 9,000 dogs with no end in sight. Photography by Micheal Tedesco

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# COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS

## COLUMBIA STATE'S PRYOR ART GALLERY HOSTS EXHIBITION OF LOCAL ARTISTS

Columbia State Community College is pleased to announce that, in collaboration with the Columbia Arts Council, an art exhibition is currently open to the public featuring works by over 50 local artists. The exhibit marks the first local artist show the Columbia Arts Council has organized. The exhibit is open through June 12. For more information: [www.ColumbiaState.edu/PryorGallery](http://www.ColumbiaState.edu/PryorGallery) or Facebook at ColumbiaStatePAG.



**ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENT SHOWCASES SPRING HILL**  
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Dorothy Swann (right) helped Mary Ruth Rogers (left) launch Russell Rescue, and they have saved over 9,000 dogs so far. Photography by Michael Tedesco

# RESCUING DOGS FOR 20 YEARS

**JASON ZASKY**

“We’ve saved over 9,000 dogs thus far,” begins longtime Russell Rescue volunteer Dorothy Swann, who helped Mary Ruth Rogers launch the Columbia-based non-profit two decades ago. “One day we rescued a Jack Russell Terrier, and that was the spark that started the whole thing,” she adds, providing the inspiration for the organization’s name, too.

“We saw that animals at shelters were not getting opportunities to find forever homes,” offers the aforementioned Rogers. “These dogs were unwanted, uncared for, unsocialized, abused, elderly, and sometimes even young and healthy. If they just had the opportunity—and a little more time—they wouldn’t have to be euthanized. It became our goal to help these animals get the chance to go to forever homes.”

At Russell Rescue, the process begins by getting each dog to the vet.

“The dogs are spayed and neutered and microchipped. They have age-appropriate blood tests, they are checked to see that they don’t have any parasites, and they have a dental checkup, if needed. They also get all their shots, and any health issues are addressed. Then they go to a foster home,” explains Rogers, the

next step in finding a permanent home.

“Fosters are the lifeblood of a rescue,” relates Swann, noting that fosters help determine if a dog has a serious issue—or if they just need good care and love.

“During this time period, they will tell us: Is the dog good with kids? Good with cats? Will they walk on a leash? Do they need a fenced yard? Or are they the type that likes to socialize and go on walks through the neighborhood? Everyone adopting wants these questions answered,” she says. “We connect the fosters with the adopter, and they can decide between them if theirs is the best home for the dog.

The hard part is that there are more dogs than foster homes, though Russell Rescue has more than 30 different fosters it can potentially turn to.

“They come and meet the dog, just like an adopter would. And we send them with the crate, the bedding, the flea & tick and heartworm preventative, and any medication and special food the dog might need,” says Swann. “Russell Rescue goes out of its way to make sure the fosters want for nothing to take care of that dog—that they don’t have any expenditures.”

Of course, Russell Rescue is always looking for more foster families.

**NEXT PAGE >**



Photography by Michael Tedesco

“We’re looking for fosters who see the purpose. These dogs may come to them unhappy, shy, have emotional issues, or not be in good health, so they don’t show well in a shelter. The purpose is to get them to the point that they are ready to go to their forever homes,” emphasizes Rogers.

As it turns out, those homes can be found all over the United States and Canada.

“But we require adopters to come to us,” says Rogers, before noting that the adoption fee is three-hundred dollars. “They have to come here, meet the dog, and bring the dog back home. And be pre-approved before that.”

That approval process involves completing an application, as well as a review process that includes a home check and a reference check.

“Then I get to interview them,” says Rogers, “and if they pass me, then we send them to our adopter.”

After that, there’s a foster-to-adopt trial period, which is typically a week but has no firm time frame.

“We want to make sure the dog fits in, and we want to make sure it’s not something the adopter will ever regret. Adopters have as much time as they need to make a final decision,” continues Rogers.

It’s a process that has yielded countless success stories.

“At one point we had an old Jack Russell who was not very friendly to anybody,” recalls Swann, “He was beautiful—that perfect little Jack Russell—but his personality was lacking. People

wanted to look at him, but he snubbed everybody. Then one gentleman in a wheelchair came by, and the dog jumped in his lap. I almost cried because it was a total connection. It was meant to be; they were soul mates,” she recalls.

With that story in mind, Swann says she hopes to see more than a few of the organization’s dog alumni at Russell Rescue’s 20th anniversary celebration on June 6 at Maury County Park.

“It’s going to be so much fun,” says Swann. “We also hope to have dogs that maybe people want to adopt or foster. And we are going to have a doggie kissing booth, as well as “donation dogs,” she says, referring to hot dogs that will be sold to raise money for the organization.

The celebration aside, Rogers hopes that the event prompts more people to consider the idea of helping to save a dog’s life—whether through Russell Rescue, a shelter, or another rescue.

“There are so many animals out there that if they just got the opportunity, they would be somebody’s forever dog,” she concludes. “But because the way the world is, they are out there struggling, and terrible things are happening to them because they don’t get the chance to come to a rescue.”

**RUSSELL RESCUE 20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:**  
June 6, 2026, at Maury County Park, 11 am – 2 pm.

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# Great RECIPES

## Picnic Cherry Limeade



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Recipe adapted from "Southern Living"

Total time: 5 minutes

Servings: 10

1 JAR (10 OUNCES) WHOLE RED MARASCHINO CHERRIES, CHILLED  
6 LIMES, DIVIDED  
1 BOTTLE (2 LITERS) LEMON-LIME SODA, CHILLED  
1/2 CUP TART CHERRY JUICE, CHILLED

DRAIN MARASCHINO CHERRIES, RESERVING SYRUP.  
SET WHOLE CHERRIES ASIDE.

JUICE FOUR LIMES TO YIELD 1/2 CUP JUICE;  
THINLY SLICE REMAINING LIMES.

IN LARGE PITCHER, STIR CHERRY SYRUP, LIME JUICE,  
SODA AND TART CHERRY JUICE. ADD LIME SLICES.

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SERVE OVER ICE AND GARNISH WITH RESERVED WHOLE CHERRIES.

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Hope Carter and Sydni King opened Emerald Cake & Bakery a little more than a year ago. The bakery is open Tuesday through Saturday. Photos provided by Chelsea Phillips Photography

# BAKED IN FRIENDSHIP

## PAM WINDSOR

Hope Carter and Sydni King's friendship began over a shared love of baking and good books. They met soon after Hope started a baking business in her home, and as they began talking more about two of their favorite things, they got the idea to open a bakery with a book component.

"Hope, and I actually bonded over books first and knew we wanted to incorporate that somehow into what we already loved, which was baking," King explains. "We wanted a storefront with all the baked goods where we'd also do custom cakes, then have a section for books where people could relax, read, enjoy the moment, and have a treat."

They opened Emerald Cake & Co in Columbia a little more than a year ago. Open Tuesday through Saturday, the bakery

offers fresh, made-from-scratch cupcakes and pastries that people can carry out or stay and enjoy in-house. They also make a wide variety of custom-made birthday cakes, wedding cakes, and more.

"We've done so many different cakes over the past year," says Carter. "We recently did a cute little underwater baby shower cake with a 3-D whale on top. KPop Demon Hunters are so popular now, we've made quite a few of those cakes in the past few months. And we've created so many different wedding cakes. One of our most popular is a four-tiered cake with a 3-D fondant bow going down the front of it."

They ask that specialty cakes be ordered at least a week in advance. And when it comes to the design, Carter says they work hard to deliver on the customer's vision.

"We always ask that they submit an inspiration photo of anything they like. Sometimes they send us one photo, sometimes

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Emerald Cake & Co. offers an array of artisan baked goods. Photos provided by Chelsea Phillips Photography

**< FROM PAGE 26**

they send us several, and we can combine elements to create a design they like.”

They can also customize cupcakes, although some of those offered on a daily basis already have a huge fan base.

“When it comes to cupcakes, carrot cake is probably our number one seller and then peanut butter after that,” notes King. “Lemon blueberry is a popular one for spring and summer. And while cupcakes do very well for us, overall, cinnamon rolls are our biggest seller.”

Many of their customers enjoy grabbing a pastry and perhaps a cup of coffee and heading over to the Bookery.

“We have a little room with sliding doors, we call our fairy garden doors, and they’re decorated,” says King. “And when you walk in, there’s two comfortable chairs in there, there’s a little fireplace set-up, and there are bookshelves that you can either pick a book off to read, or you can buy the books, or you can bring your own book. We also have a suitcase full of free books.”

In addition to books, there are also items from local vendors for sale, like t-shirts, candles, or jewelry. It’s turned out to be a good

spot to pick up a quick gift, if needed.

Their unique business model has proven successful. After a year in operation, Carter and King are grateful for the support of regular customers, new ones who continue to discover them, and the ability to work together doing something they truly enjoy.

“I really like the creativity of what we do, and while it’s work, it’s fun to be able to do it with your best friend,” Hope says. “We still have people coming into the bakery that are just finding out about us, and once they do, they eventually become repeat customers. A lot of people love the space and the comfort they find here.”

“I think I’m still kind of amazed every day that this is what we built on our own, and people keep coming, and we’re really thankful for that,” says King. “But I also enjoy being here, and it’s fun. They say you don’t work a day in your life when you’re having fun, and I feel like that’s very true.”

*To find out more about Emerald Cake & Co, check out their Facebook page. You can also email Hope and Sydni with questions or custom cake orders at [emeraldcakenco@gmail.com](mailto:emeraldcakenco@gmail.com).*

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