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Volume 2, Issue 9, September 2025

Help Us Begin Our Next Decade

Special note from FOCCAS Volunteer Debbie Holloway

I would like to share that Focus On Cumberland County Animal Safety (FOCCAS) is celebrating its tenth year as an animal rescue. Over the years, more than 2,000 dogs have found their forever homes through FOCCAS.

Most animal rescues do not survive ten years due to many factors, especially funding. We have been fortunate to receive generous donations and grants. FOCCAS received \$12,000 from the Patricia & Edward J. McGavock Humane Treatment of Animals Fund, administered through the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee. The focus of the grant is to provide assistance, including food, shelter, and medical care, to owners so that they can keep their pets in their homes, rather than surrendering them to rescue, and to expand our foster base. Many volunteers have come and gone in ten years, but I can attest to the great crew we have now. We average 1200 volunteer hours per month. We wear many hats as needs arise and prove that our dedication can get us from where we are to where we need to be. I am not a young person, and I have turned into a dog wrangler with dogs of all weights. I am sharing all this to say that we desperately need new volunteers for our rescue.

There are so many needs, especially for foster families. Fostering dogs in rescue is the lifeblood that allows us to take in more rescues. As a foster, you work with the dog and teach basic commands, as well as how to be a good dog. It is rewarding beyond measure.

If this information has touched your heart and you would like to help, please reach out to learn more about volunteering and [fostering](#). If you wish to [donate](#), we would greatly appreciate it as well. It takes a great deal of money to operate this rescue. Even a \$10.00 donation helps and is appreciated.



Rabies Clinic - September 27

Best Friends Animal Hospital partnered with Upper Cumberland Federal Credit Union to offer a low-cost rabies clinic on September 27, 2025 from 8 to noon, at their location on 225 Sparta Highway. The cost is \$5 per pet, and your pet will receive a 1-year vaccine, certificate, and tag. Upper Cumberland Federal Credit Union Members can receive FREE service when they present their member card.

Our Recent Adoptions



FOCCAS Volunteer Sara Irwin Wins People's Choice

Way to go, Sara! Sara Irwin placed second runner-up and People's Choice award in the Ms. Senior Cumberland County Queen pageant. About 17 members of the FOCCAS family were there to support Sara, along with her daughter, Michelle, who traveled from Kansas to surprise her.

Sara has been a volunteer with FOCCAS since 2019. She started by fostering small-breed puppies and dogs, as well as a few mothers and their puppies. She later got involved as FOCCAS Event Coordinator.

Sara was born in Muncy, Indiana, and moved to Fentress County in 1979. She has three children: Bunny, a professor at the University of Louisville; Matthew, an electrician in Crossville; and Michelle, who, along with her husband, owns a carpet store in Wichita, Kansas. She has 12 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

Sara decided to run in the Miss Senior Cumberland County Pageant for two reasons:

- 1) An opportunity to showcase animal rescue and advocate the importance of spaying and neutering.
- 2) An opportunity to work with veterans. She will be visiting the Nashville Veterans' Hospital to meet with disabled veterans and discuss how a wheelchair does not limit what you can do. Her favorite quote, from Ralph Waldo Emerson, is "To know you have helped even one life breathe easier to live, that is to have succeeded."

Sara plans to continue her work in animal rescue and enter the 2026 Miss Senior Tennessee Pageant, held at the Palace Theatre.



Happy Tales

We love seeing and hearing the wonderful stories you share of your FOCCAS pets. It warms our hearts to see how happy the pets and the people are now that they have found their furever homes. Please share your pictures and stories with us at foccasnewsletter@gmail.com.



Bama has turned out to be the best pet ever!!! I built a fortress in the backyard due to him jumping the fence constantly. Then if he went out in the rest of the property, I had a lead attached to a foldable grocery cart so he couldn't jump the fence. Now, he considers our place his property and he doesn't want out. He is off the charts with intelligence. He looks after the girls (dogs) constantly. Nothing moves here without him letting us know. One of the girls just went blind due to diabetes (we intend to have the lens in her eyes replaced) and he herds her so she doesn't get lost or hurt. He is very sensitive too. I cannot say enough great things about him. He is the Best! A far cry from the dog tied to a doghouse in the mud in Alabama. He and my husband are inseparable. PS: it turns out he is a Kerry Blue!

FOCCAS Awarded \$1200 from Tennessee Animal Friendly Grant for Spay/Neuter

For the past 5 years, FOCCAS has received, on average, \$1200 from the Tennessee Animal Friendly Grant for Spay/Neuter. The grant is funded by the sale of the Spay/N Neuter license plate. Many other rescues in our area benefit too. [Please sign up today for your Spay/Neuter plate and tell your friends as well.](#)



Tennessee specialty license plate sales help pet owners have access to low-cost spaying and neutering services. Funds from the Animal Friendly - Spay and Neuter Saves Lives license plates go to Animal Friendly Grants, a program administered by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Animal Health Division.

Animal Friendly Grants are available to government shelters or 501 (c) (3)s, like FOCCAS, in Tennessee that provide low-cost spay and neuter services. Grant awards are based on the number of animals the organization serves and the number of counties it serves. Shelters and organizations that serve distressed counties are prioritized. The reimbursement grants are for spay and neuter procedures only and do not cover other types of services or overhead expenses. The procedure must be performed by a clinic in Tennessee with a veterinarian who is licensed in Tennessee.

A Great Turn-Out for 127 Yard Sale – We Raised \$2,000

Our Volunteers have done it again....exceeded all our expectations. We held a yard sale at Mark's office at 707 S Main St, during the 127 Yard Sale. Great items were donated and purchased as well as some very tasty treats. Our volunteers made this all possible, thanks to Susan Regan, Sue Gryzewski, Debbie Holloway, Roger Holloway, Sara Irwin, Cheryl May, Mitch Mumma, Jill Burd, Jere Burd, Mary Ann Hollywood, Darla Caswell, Marita Rumpf, Sally Prather, Pam Westerdahl, Melody Livingston, Jayce Denton, Bunny McDonald, Jeanne Ruppel, Marti Nolan, Susan Stiles, Jillian Bunday, and Bryan Bunday. A special thank you to Flowers Bakery for all the yummy cakes.



A Special Visit to Good Samaritans

Thank you to this group for helping to share some of our sweet dogs with the residents of Good Samaritans recently. The dogs were well-behaved and well-received. Fingers crossed, they will adopt one of the babies.

The dogs were treated to a visit to the dog park afterwards as a reward for good behavior!



Focus On Cumberland County Animal Safety

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