

# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



## *Mission Statement*

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*To be a voice for the animals: to educate the public about animal responsibility and ensure that animals are treated humanely and given a “chance.” To ensure that every available resource is used to provide sanctuary for abused/neglected, abandoned exotic and farm animals and to find adoptive homes when feasible.*

## *2017: Another successful year*

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2017 was both exciting and challenging for A Critter’s Chance! The demand for rescue exotic and farm/domestic animals, combined with increased awareness of our organization and the services we provide, led to a greater need for our services in the community. This report will illustrate the results of the critical work accomplished in 2017 to provide a better life for animals in need and to educate the public about the importance of proper care, nutrition and husbandry for exotic and farm animals.

## *Our Programs*

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A Critter’s Chance is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization. Founded in 2006, we are volunteer run and foster based, with locations throughout central Indiana. Our programs include:

**Exotic animal rescue:** Volunteers skilled in care of exotics, such as snakes, lizards, birds, foxes, and mini pigs, provide habitats and diets tailored to the animals’ needs, and provide or seek veterinary care as needed. Spaying and neutering are a top priority when possible.

**Farm animal rescue:** Rescued from abuse, neglect, or hardship situations, farm animals are provided sanctuary and medical care, healthy diets, spaying and neutering when possible, and loving care.

**Adoption:** While some exotic and farm animals are provided permanent sanctuary due to specialized needs, the goal for most is placement in caring adoptive homes.

**Education:** ACC offers education programs and provides information through fundraising events, newsletters, and electronic media, such as our FaceBook page. We provide education on the proper care and handling of exotic pets. We also help people decide what exotic or farm animal is right for them. This education is invaluable in our attempts to curb so many animals being relinquished or abandoned by private owners who cannot provide the proper habitat, diet, or other care needs.

## 2017 Key Accomplishments

### Exotics and Farm Animal Rescues

A Critter's Chance is proud to collaborate with Indianapolis Animal Control and other local animal officers and rescue organizations (both county and private) in rescuing exotic and farm animals. Rescues may include abuse/neglect situations or abandonment. Below are the 2017 listings of Exotic and Farm Animal Rescues.

#### Exotics Rescues

Rabbits	90
Guinea pigs	27
Parrot/Lovebird/Parakeet	23
Other exotic mammals*	16
Turtles/Tortoise	14
Lizards	13
Pet rodents	9
Snakes	7
Pigeons/Doves	7
Peafowl/Guinea	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>

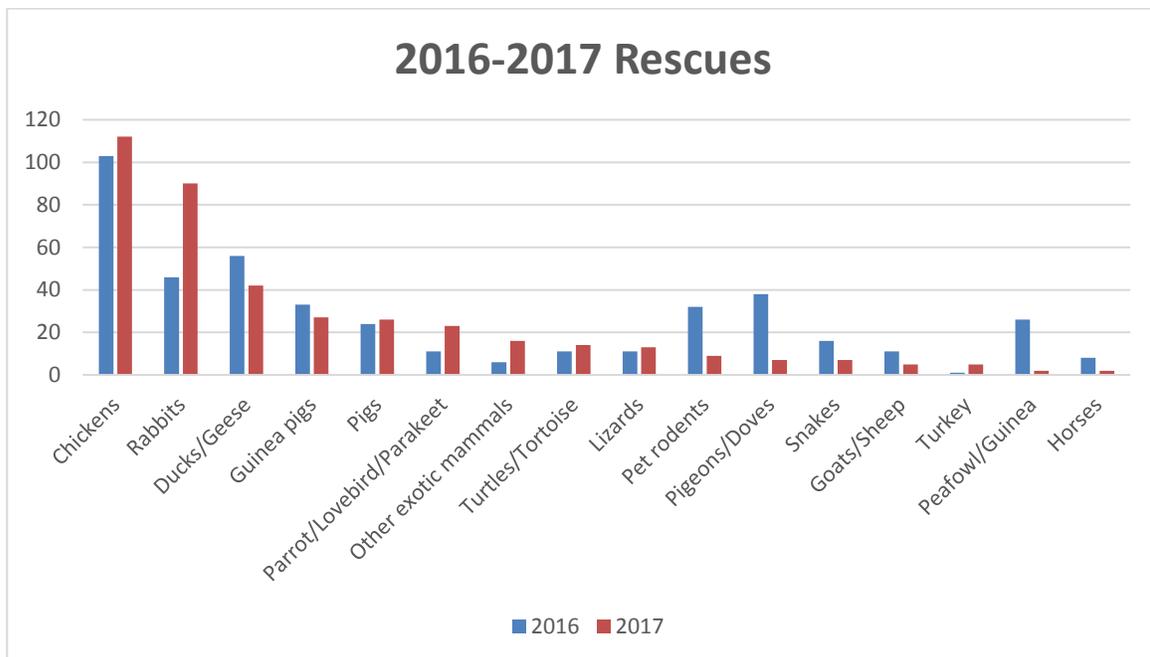
#### Farm Animal Rescues

Chickens	112
Ducks/Geese	42
Pigs	26
Goats/Sheep	5
Turkey	5
Horses	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>

\*Chinchilla, Ferret, Skunk, Coatimundi, Sugar glider



Below is a comparison of 2016 to 2017 rescues.



## 2017 Highlights

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In any animal rescue organization, there are stories of success, and stories of sadness. Each touches our hearts in a special way. Here are some of our 2017 tales, illustrating both.

### Bird rescue May 2017

In May, ACC rescued 41 chickens and ducks confiscated by IACS (Indianapolis Animal Control Services) in a neglect case. Included in the rescue were five broiler chicks. Junior board member Olivia Head, whose family fosters a number of ACC rescues, along with her sister Jesse, adopted four broiler hens. Here is their story:

Hopeless, lifeless, gone. These are the words that used to describe these broiler hens. When they first arrived, they could not walk. They were so top heavy they could move no more than two or three steps before collapsing onto their bare chests, featherless due to constant rubbing on the ground. Adopter Jesse did some intensive research on the genetics of this bird. She discovered that these “meat” birds have been genetically modified to put on weight at a rapid rate. Most broiler birds do not live long because their organs are not able to support their body mass. They reach slaughter age at 16 weeks old - practically babies.

Knowing these animals may not have long to live, Jesse took it upon herself to make sure these animals had the best chance at life. Every day she cut up fruit and veggies for them. Their bellies got dirty easily because they laid down often, so she bathed them regularly.



Almost a year later, these birds are healthy and happy. They have even lost some weight and are able to move around more freely. The past is behind them. Hopeless, lifeless, and gone no longer are words that describe them. They have a new identity. They are lively, emotional, beautiful creatures.



## Flash the Tortoise

Flash, an African Spurred tortoise, was handed over to A Critter's Chance by the DNR after she was found in a dark, cold shed. It was evident by her deformed shell that she was suffering from metabolic bone disease, which is a result of poor nutrition and improper environment. After caring for her and providing her with heat and a proper diet, ACC found a fantastic home for her in Jacksonville, Florida.

There, Flash enjoys heat and sunshine, and is thriving in her new home. The deformation of her shell will never be fixed, but it will not become worse.

A Critter's Chance would like to thank all who donated their time and services to make her transport to Florida happen.



Special thanks to Muncie Animal Care Services for generously donating a transport crate (which was donated to them by Midwest Metals) and to Southwest Airlines for donating a seat on a flight to Jacksonville.

## Zula the Emu

ACC received a call that an emu was roaming the Attica area of central Indiana. ACC volunteers were able to catch her and take her to Purdue University Large Animal Hospital for evaluation. They determined that she had numerous issues, including weakness, malnutrition, and injuries sustained from being hit by a car or animal attack.



We named her Zula, which means Brilliant, and, despite a poor prognosis, Zula was nursed by ACC volunteers with hopes of recovery. She was unable to walk and had difficulty eating, but maintained a friendly disposition while being hand fed and washed. She ultimately succumbed to her injuries and the neglect she suffered by the people who abandoned her, but she will forever hold a place in the hearts of those who cared for her and showed her love and comfort in her last days. We thank Purdue University for their help throughout her ordeal.

## Anna the Mare and her new best friend Andrew



When Anna, a thoroughbred mare, came to ACC in November 2016, she and her colt Skipper were quite emaciated and in need of medical care. With a lot of TLC, both recovered from the neglect they experienced. They grazed the pasture at the ACC foster farm, and began to thrive. An adoption application was received and approved for Anna. Little did we know this would lead to a match made in heaven.

Along came a young man, whose mother had been looking for a horse for him for over a year. Andrew, who has autism, immediately bonded with Anna – it was love at first site. Anna had not been ridden in quite a while, and Andrew was able to expertly take to the saddle with her.

After more training and work together, Andrew plans to ride Anna in Special Olympics in 2018!



## A Heartwarming Bond

## Colton the Rabbit

In 2017, ACC took in 90 rabbits, many from county animal shelters and more than a few from neglect or abandonment situations. ACC strives to educate the public about animal care and stewardship, which includes emphasizing that ownership of certain animals typically gifted at holidays, (such as duck, chicks, and rabbits at Easter), entails a life-long commitment. ACC veterinary care of rabbits includes spaying and neutering when medically possible, a priority for all ACC rescues.

There are many rabbits available for adoption through ACC. One adoption success story that is near and dear to our hearts is that a Colton, a 9-year-old Netherland Dwarf rabbit. Colton came to ACC early in 2017. His former owners had treated Colton for a year after he displayed severe symptoms of an illness. After many vet visits, his overall health was stabilized, but Colton was left with a head tilt, often referred to as wry neck, or torticollis. Board member Laura Vosahlik tells her story of Colton:

On the day that Colton was brought to the ACC farm, I was there volunteering with two children from the school where I work. Colton instantly stole our hearts with his one-eyed gaze. I thought for a second about fostering him, but then considered how hard that might be with two pets already at my apartment, and also decided that I should be fully prepared for this animal's care before making an on-the-spot decision. So we continued our volunteer time by setting up a cage for him at the farm in a separate room, giving him lots of love, and watching him hop around in large, clockwise circles!



Within the first few days of his arrival, ACC took him to the vet to make sure he had a clean bill of health and to get him neutered. The vet reported that Colton was too old to undergo surgery, but the good news was that Colton was healthy, happy, and able to thrive. However, they also reported that his head tilt could not be corrected, and Colton would require a high degree of specialized care in order to maintain his health. Colton's ability to groom himself is severely limited, and his lower leaning eye can get easily infected, so he would need daily grooming and cage cleaning. He also needs a specially monitored diet as he is more prone to GI issues.

As soon as I heard this news about our little friend who had grown on me, I decided that I would take on this level of care for Colton and foster him for a 'short' time. Well, 'short' eventually turned into 'long' and finally into 'permanent.' Colton was successfully adopted from ACC, fitting in perfectly with my dog and cat, and he became my beloved pet.



## Wine with Swine Fundraising Event

A Critter's Chance hosted our first Wine with Swine event – and it was an amazing night! On Oct. 7, 2017, we put our best swine forward to showcase our rescue pigs!



The event was well attended despite incoming storms. Fortunately, the weather cooperated and we had a beautiful evening with farm tours, pig petting, and fun. Vice president Kelly Thomas spoke of our cause, our needs, and the problems in the Indianapolis area of stray and abandoned pigs. Junior board member Olivia Head spoke to the issues of pig ownership education and the importance of spaying and neutering.

We thank all those who donated items for the silent auction, wine, and food for the event. Special thanks to Vegesaurus for catering a vegan meal, Metazoa brewing company for their donation of a keg of beer, and AnimalsInk for supplying promotional items, including the delightful Wine with Swine logo! We plan to repeat this event in years to come!

Throughout the year, ACC has rescued pigs from abandonment and neglect situations. One of the most egregious story is that of Baby Moo.

Adria, a dedicated ACC pig foster and experienced vet tech, took in a piglet that was surrendered to an animal shelter when he showed signs of illness and his owners could not afford to take him to a vet. He was very ill, lethargic and developing pneumonia, when Adria brought him to her home. She syringe fed Pedialyte and a special food/milk slurry throughout the night. Baby Moo was exhibiting neurological symptoms so the next morning, Adria took him to Purdue University. He was diagnosed with a bad respiratory infection and developmental issues due to vitamin deficiencies from starvation.



Baby Moo when first rescued by ACC foster Adria

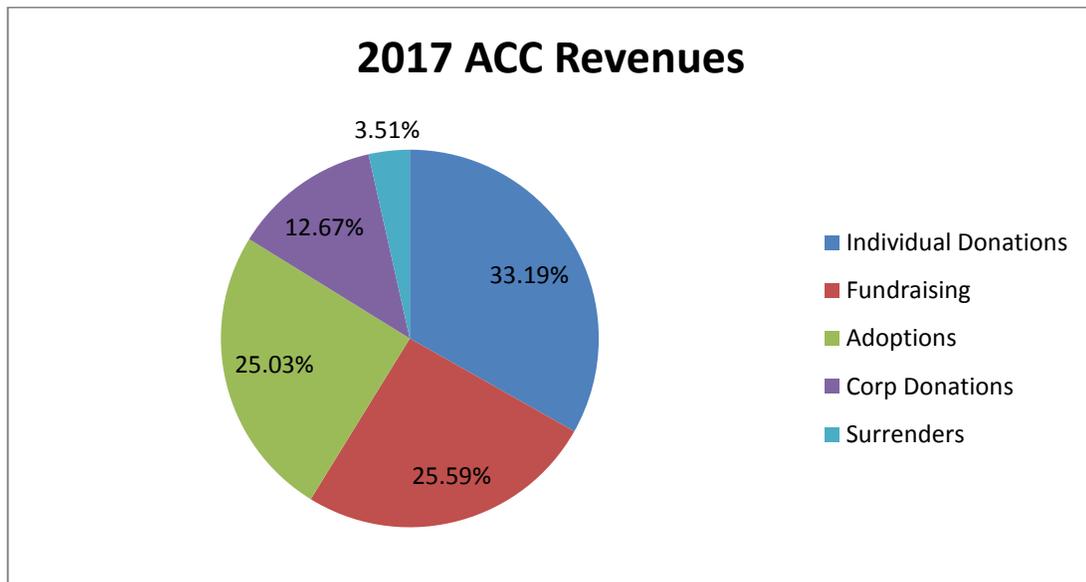
It was a long road of round the clock feedings for several weeks during which it became clear Baby Moo was blind and had no sense of smell. This was likely due to being taken from his mother weeks before he was weaned in order to fetch a higher price because our society is infatuated with the tea cup pig myth. This made feeding him extremely difficult, but through Adria's dedication and never-give-up attitude, he miraculously survived. Today Baby Moo is healthy and happy, able to eat on his own with intense training and a dedicated placement of bowls, and will live out his life with his rescuer Adria. Our dedicated volunteers prove that angels do exist here on earth.



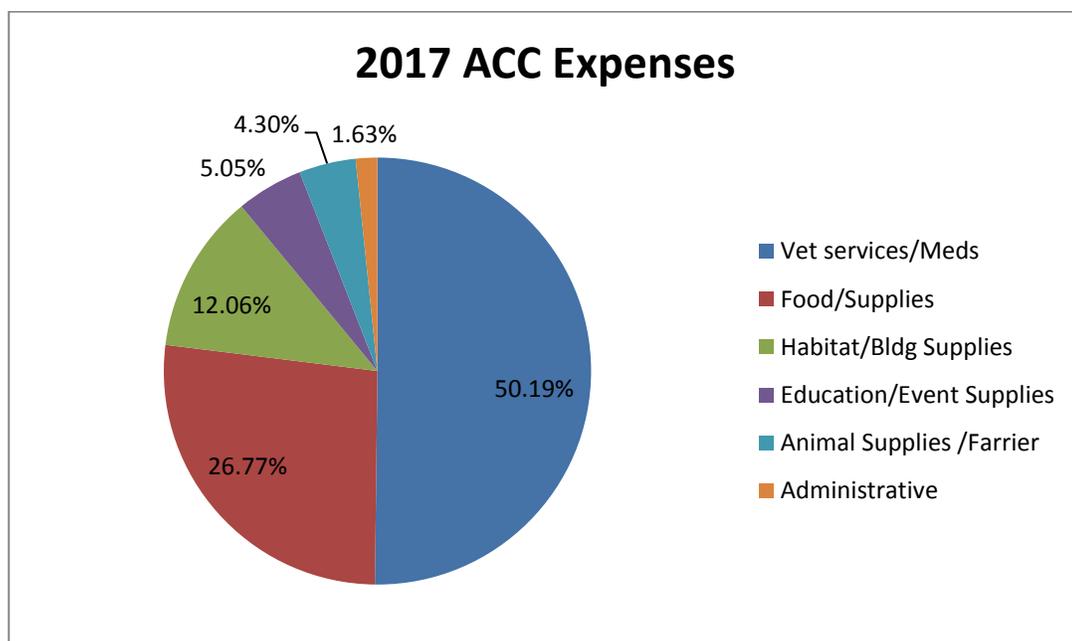
Baby Moo after weeks of care – plump and smiling

## Financial Information

A Critter's Chance revenues based on adoptions and surrenders increased in 2017, a reflection of the greatly increased number of rescues over previous years. Surrender and adoption fees are more than offset by expenses incurred by veterinary care needs, including spaying/neutering, and feeding and housing costs. This highlights the importance of and our dependence on fundraising and donations.



The vast majority of ACC expenses are for veterinary services, food and supplies. Avian and Exotic Animal Hospital of Indianapolis, IN provides exotic and farm animal veterinary services at a discounted cost. For larger farm animals, Purdue University Large Animal Clinic provides a variety of medical care.



# Thank You Donors!

Thank you to everyone who donated time, service, supplies and financial support to A Critter's Chance during 2017! Your dedication is greatly appreciated and helps up provide the care these animals deserve. None of this would be possible without your dedication and compassion!



Not to hurt our humble brethren (the animals) is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission--to be of service to them whenever they require it.

-- Saint Francis of Assisi

## **ACC Board Members**

Amanda Nosie, President  
Kelly Thomas, Vice President  
Kim Krull, Secretary  
Lisa Sbai, Treasurer

Thomas Moore, Events Coordinator and Cage Builder  
Laura Vosahlik, Videographer  
Tammy Somers, Transport Coordinator/Animal Enrichment  
Olivia Head, Junior Board Member and Pig Ambassador