



2024 GRATITUDE REPORT



fwacc

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It is our mission to serve our community in a humane, public safety capacity while working to keep pets with loving families by providing educational opportunities and resources or facilitating re-homing or adoption when necessary.



(260) 427-1244



FWACC.org



3020 Hillegas Rd, Fort
Wayne, IN 46808

A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

As we share our gratitude report for 2024, I thought I would take a moment to give a shout out to everyone who helps make it possible for us to provide care for the animals we see every day.

We are grateful to the **City administration and City Council** for providing us with a budget to be able to have a building, staff, and basic supplies to handle the over 11,000 animals we see enter our doors. Our heart goes out to the hundreds of **volunteers** who dedicate their time to help fill the gaps in our daily tasks needed to care for the animals. Thank you to the hundreds of **foster families** who have literally opened their homes to over a thousand animals that otherwise wouldn't have space here at the shelter.

Thank you to our **shelter and rescue partners** who were able to pull over 800 animals from our care and place into their adoption programs. To our **dedicated staff** who show up each day to work hard and provide these animals with the best possible care and resources available to us, thank you. We're grateful for **our community** who help call in concerns of animal neglect, report potentially lost pets, as well as those who adopt from our shelter and off-site locations. Finally, thank you to **our generous donors** who fill our Amazon Wish List, respond to calls for action through our social media, or who financially help to ensure we can continue to offer our lifesaving programs.

Our *adoption, foster, pet retention, outreach programs*, and of course our *angel fund* which enables the crucial medical care and treatments the animals rely on, come from the financial support of donors.

The saying, **"it takes a village"** is evident with all of the people and groups we rely on to continue our efforts to provide the best possible outcome for every animal we encounter. Words cannot truly express our gratitude, but our 'thanks' comes from the bottom of our hearts to everyone involved.

Sincerely,

Amy-Jo Sites





DISPATCH TEAM



The dispatch team is a remarkable blend of compassion, efficiency, and expertise, playing a crucial role in maintaining community safety and animal welfare. Their ability to swiftly assess emergency situations, coordinate with field officers, and communicate effectively with the public demonstrates not only their commitment to service but also their understanding of animal behavior and public safety protocols. The dispatch team manages high-pressure scenarios with poise, balancing the needs of animals in distress with the concerns of the community. Their dedication ensures that every call is met with prompt action and a humane approach, making them an invaluable resource in the protection and care of animals and residents alike. ”

- Jeff Green, Office Supervisor



Received **43,836** calls in 2024!

Out of **1,173** owner surrender appointments, our dispatch team helped prevent **529** of them through our pet retention program.

This caring team also consoled **647+ people** as they brought their beloved pet in for our low-cost euthanasia service.



FIELD DIVISION



946 cases were taken to court
Investigated **123** animal cruelty cases
36 cruelty cases are still being investigated and/or in the process of preparing State Level charges
Helped **1,164** wildlife
Helped **6,464** stray/lost animals
Helped report a combined **1,335** bites to humans and animals
Responded to **22,313** calls for help in Fort Wayne and New Haven

“Our officers are dedicated to our community, helping to provide support where they can. They are passionate about what they do, and work to make a difference in the lives around them every single day. I am so proud to work with such a phenomenal group of people and in a community that supports us.”

– **Mandi Steadman, Field Coordinator**



MEDICAL TEAM



Their tag line will always be “small but mighty.” There are days I am truly unsure how we accomplish our insurmountable list of medical tasks with so few staff. Each day, they reprioritize their tasks based on an animal’s wellbeing and ensure animals are handled in the most stress free, caring manner. This team sees some of the toughest situations when animals arrive to the shelter and they continue to handle their work with grace. ”

- Laura Rowe, Deputy Director of Medical and Shelter Operations

3,905

SPAY & NEUTER SURGERIES

1,095

***COMMUNITY CATS STERILIZED**

*Original intent was community cat but some cats' pathways were changed. Ex: going into the adoption program or working/barn cat program.

16.3

NUMBER OF AVG. SURGERIES PER DAY

4,025
TOTAL SURGERIES PERFORMED



ANGEL FUND

Meet Nina



Before



Our **Angel Fund** was Nina's only hope to receive the lifesaving medical care she was in dire need of. She was *starved* and had an *untreated skin infection* that made her skin *crack and bleed* after just a slight touch. Because of donations to our Angel Fund, our dedicated team was able to save her and show her that humans can be kind.

Nina received a specialized feeding plan, fluids, antibiotics, and medicated baths once she was feeling a little better. This care was continued in her loving foster home where she was *spoiled* and *cherished*. She lived with other dogs, a cat, met horses and chickens and had the freedom to just be a dog with zero worries.

After Nina was fully rehabilitated, she wiggled her way into a very loving home; a home where she will *never* have to feel unloved or worry when her next meal will come.

Our **Angel Fund** provides second chances every day and we couldn't make that happen without **YOU**.

In foster care



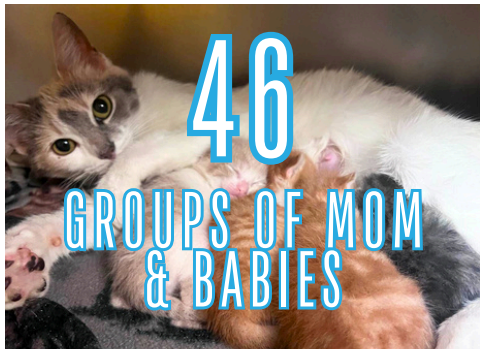
In her loving home...





We have the best foster families! In my 20 years of working in the animal industry, I have never encountered such a compassionate and loving group of people. We absolutely could not place the most vulnerable animals into forever homes without the help and support of our foster families. Their dedication is what makes our program a success.

- Gina Thomas, Foster Coordinator



1,405 total animals saved through fostering

209 active foster families

ADOPTION TEAM



As the new supervisor of the adoption department, I have been completely blown away by my team; they have all been so kind, patient and understanding as I learn my new role. The connection they have with each other is extremely special which empowers them to divide and conquer tasks with ease, even on the most difficult days. They are all hard workers, compassionate, have great integrity, and offer much-needed humor to deal with the hard days of animal welfare. I am grateful to be working alongside such an amazing team of lovely humans!



- Emilee Smith, Animal Programs Supervisor



Adult - 1,004
Kitten - 1,504



Adult - 373
Puppy - 146



Rabbit - 49
Small mammal - 57
Bird - 62
All others - 11

3,206 TOTAL PETS ADOPTED

1,123 pets adopted at our offsite partner locations



Black Forest Cat Café, PetSmart (2),
Pet Supplies Plus (3), Covington Veterinary
Hospital, Westside Animal Hospital,
New Haven Pet Hospital



735 ADOPTIONS MADE POSSIBLE BY BISSELL PET FOUNDATION'S EMPTY THE SHELTERS



VOLUNTEER TEAM



I cannot express how proud and grateful I am of our volunteer team. They come in every day to ensure that our animals are safe, clean and healthy, that supplies are always available and that every animal is loved. Our volunteers are special people and I am lucky to have the opportunity to work with them every day. ”

- **Jeoff Dingeldein, Volunteer Coordinator**



14,772

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

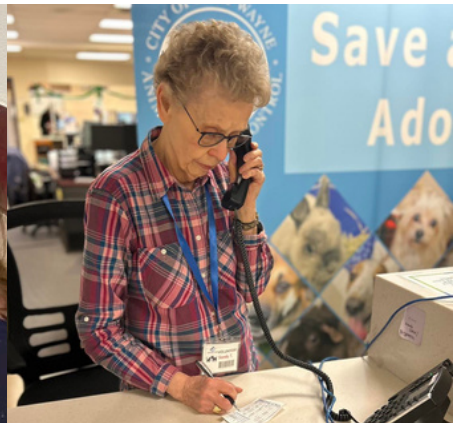
TOTAL ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

136

2,134

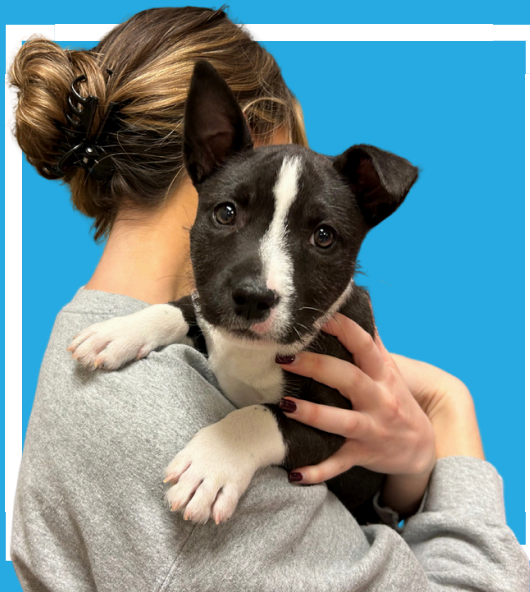
LAUNDRY VOLUNTEER HOURS

#1 volunteer position for most hours logged





COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Community outreach and education is such an important piece of FWACC. This team makes every effort to share shelter insights with our social media followers, potential grantors, in the community and in schools. These stories are sometimes hard to hear and include those of loss and of cruelty, but also moments of celebration for lives saved, new beginnings and accomplishments. We are a tiny but mighty team, doing big things.

- Tyna Reiter, Humane Education Coordinator – PIO

Through our established humane education youth programs such as our spring, summer and winter camps, tours, classroom visits, read to the animals, and animal care teens volunteering, we educated a grand total of **1,068 students!**

Through community events such as JA JobSpark virtual, Open Streets, Touch a Truck, Safety Fair, career fairs and more, we were able to reach approximately **16,000 community members!**

32
media
interviews

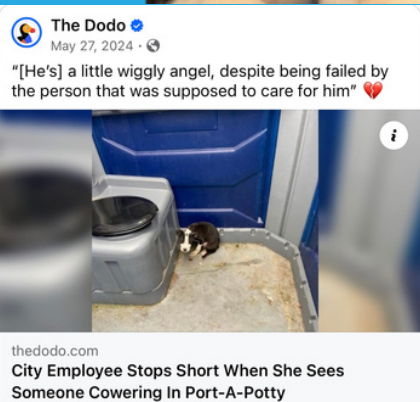




LOUIE FROM A PORTA-POTTY TO PEOPLE MAGAZINE

Little Louie was **found abandoned** in a portable toilet in May of 2024. Thankfully a fellow employee of the City of Fort Wayne from Right-Of-Way found him and called FWACC for help. ACO Baird picked him up and brought him to our shelter for the medical attention he was in dire need of. Louie was very *underweight*, his legs were *urine stained*, and he had *overgrown nails*. He was estimated to be **only 8 weeks old**.

Luckily, Louie was in good spirits and our staff was able to help him safely gain weight before he went **into a loving foster home** to grow physically and mentally. After a few months in recovery, **Louie was on his way to his new, loving home!** His transformation story touched many hearts; he made it to local and global news! Louie's story is a reminder of why we come to work each day; **to be a voice for the voiceless.**



People

Malnourished Puppy Abandoned in a Portable Toilet Acts Like a 'Wiggly Angel' After His Rescue



Louie in foster care



Louie's adoption day!

Louie is just 1 of the over 10,000 animals our animal care specialists cared for in 2024.



“The animal care team are some of the most driven and kindest staff we have on our team. Each day they show up knowing the work they do is often unseen but is so deeply critical to the health and welfare of our animals. Sometimes we laugh together, sometimes we cry together, but the work gets done. This shelter could not run without the animal care team.”

- Laura Rowe, Deputy Director of Medical & Shelter Operations

HOME SWEET HOME

A MICROCHIP SAVES THE DAY



Loki reunited after 2 years



Asa reunited after 2 years

At Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control, we have the privilege of seeing pet owners reunite with their missing pets. While it is special each time, some stories really stick with us and serve as a reminder to *microchip your pets*. Microchips help create reunions like the ones pictured here.

In 2024, we received 6,464 *lost pets*. Of those pets, 1,765 *were reunited* with their owners. That means *only 27%* of the lost pets that came to FWACC went back home to their families. We must do better as a community in order to alleviate the high volume of animals in animal shelters and rescues.

Microchips serve as permanent form of identification, thus making it the *most effective form of ID*.

At FWACC, we offer *microchipping services for \$15 per pet*. Pet owners do not need to live in Allen County to utilize this service, they just need to present their pet's rabies vaccine records.



Pua reunited after 1 year



Diesel reunited after 5 years



Snowball reunited after 8 days

In January of 2024, two labrador retrievers were rescued from a freezing pond by Fort Wayne Police Department's Officer Hullinger. Ironically, Officer Hullinger started his law enforcement career as an animal control officer with FWACC before becoming part of FWPd. Both dogs were thrilled to be saved and hopped right into Officer Hullinger's warm vehicle. An animal control officer was able to transport them to FWACC to wait for their owner to claim them. However, days passed by, and unfortunately an owner did not come forward.

The labs and Officer Hullinger became recognized by news channels across the U.S. Because of this, a couple from out of state drove to Fort Wayne to give both of the dogs a loving home together. Our adoption team did a dog meet and greet with the couple's personal dog and it all went well. To make this adoption even more special, Officer Hullinger was there to see the pups he saved and meet the family who adopted them.

Our 11 animal control officers respond to calls within the city limits of Fort Wayne and New Haven seven days a week. We have limited animal control officers available on the weekends, so we are grateful for our partnership with FWPd and the officers that are always willing to help, like Officer Hullinger.



WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



In February of 2024, officers from Fort Wayne Police Department responded to an urgent call that involved a German Shepherd who was wounded by a gunshot. Police Officer Diaz thought quick on his feet and placed a tourniquet on the dog to stop the bleeding. The dog was then transported to our local emergency hospital and once stabilized, Animal Control Officer Taylor brought the dog to FWACC. Our veterinarian, Dr. Riebe, determined after examining the dog's x-rays that two of his toes were shattered and needed amputated. Our adoption team eventually named him Jack Jack and he loved meeting new people, playing with other dogs in playgroup and getting many treats to help him feel more comfortable during his recovery. He was a big teddy bear who didn't know a stranger and stole the hearts of one family who decided to bring him into their home permanently.

In September, we facilitated a reunion with the police officers that arrived on scene along with Officer Diaz who saved Jack Jack's life. Some of our medical team, adoption team and ACO Taylor were also present. It was a heartwarming reunion that made its way to WANE 15. We were happy to see everyone's faces light up when they saw Jack; he is a ray of sunshine! We are grateful to have our partnership with FWPd to help make an even greater difference in our community.



YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS!



Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control heavily relies on donor dollars to provide care for the 10,000+ animals who passed through our shelter last year. Less than 1% of the budget that feeds, vaccinates, and provides medical care for our shelter visitors is funded through tax payer dollars. You are truly making an impact and saving lives with your donations.



A gift that keeps giving long after you pass... We are thankful for the opportunity to turn your gift into your legacy. Bequests are a powerful tool to ensure the work that we do continues long after you are here to see it. If you are not sure of the many ways you can contribute, we would love to speak with you.

You can also learn more by visiting our donations page on our website: fwacc.org



Why not have the cake and eat it too? The in-person connections we get to make with our supporters at our fundraiser events means so much. We enjoy having fun with you and learning about why you support FWACC. If you have not yet attended one of our fundraising events, we hope you join us for the next one!

Photograph from Howl-O-Walkoween 2024 – A Humane Education Fundraiser

2024 FWACC STATISTICS



Beginning Shelter Count 1/1/24

Dogs	Cats	Other	Total
60	136	12	208

Animal Intake	Dog	Cat	Other	Total
Stray at Large	2,150	4,221	93	6,464
Relinquished by Owner	609	888	121	1,618
Owner-Intended Euthanasia	470	203	14	687
Transferred in from Agency	28	137	0	165
Other Intakes	765	638	83	1,486
Total Intakes	4,082	6,223	323	10,628
Live Outcomes	Dog	Cat	Other	Total
Adoptions	519	2,508	179	3,206
Returned to Owner	1,363	394	8	1,765
Transferred Out	393	411	24	828
Returned to Field (Community Cats)	0	991	0	991
Other Live Outcomes	3	7	1	11
Subtotal Live Outcomes	2,278	4,311	212	6,801
Other Outcomes	Dog	Cat	Other	Total
Died in Care	4	75	5	84
Lost in Care	0	2	0	2
Shelter Euthanasia	1,266	1,505	72	2,843
Owner-Intended Euthanasia	455	202	14	671
Subtotal Other Outcomes	1,270	1,582	77	2,929
Total Outcomes	3,548	5,893	289	9,730
Live Release Rate	73.65%	75.75%	77.09%	75.50%
Ending Shelter Count 12/31/24	85	129	20	234

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Amy-Jo Sites
Director

Lisa Cain
Deputy Director of
Field Operations

Laura Rowe
Deputy Director of Medical
and Shelter Operations

Emilee Smith
Animal Programs
Supervisor



Tyna Reiter
Humane Education
Coordinator - PIO

Jeff Green
Office Supervisor

Gina Thomas
Foster Coordinator

Jeoff Dingeldein
Volunteer Coordinator

COMMISSION BOARD

Kody Tinnel
President -
Mayor Appointee

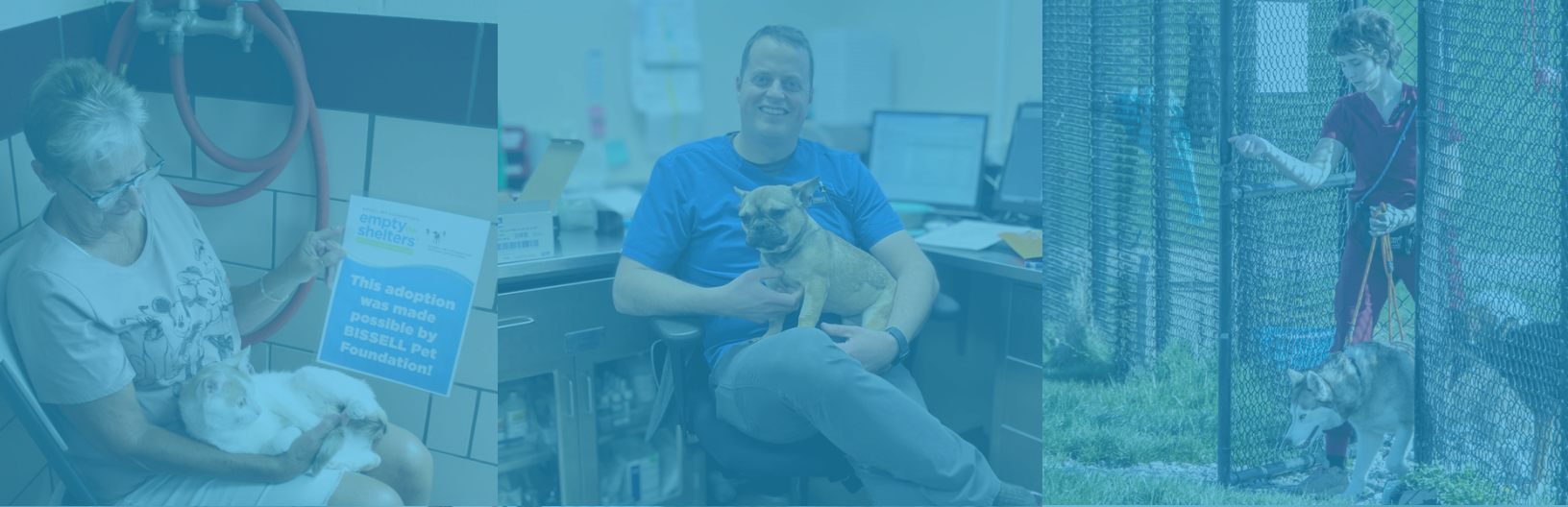
Dot Brandenberger
Vice President -
Mayor Appointee

Aaron Collins
Secretary -
City Council Appointee

Don Ross
Commissioner -
City Council Appointee

Paul Smith
Commissioner -
Mayor Appointee

The commission board acts as a citizen advisory group for the Fort Wayne Department of Animal Care and Control, advising the Mayor, and the Animal Control Director on policy and department direction.



fort wayne
animal care
and control

Thank you!



Stay Connected



@FWACC



YouTube

@fortwayneanimalcare
control8324



@fwanimalcontrol

