

LetLoveLive.org

Annual Report



Let Love Live

2018



**I can't promise I will be with you
until the end of your life, but I can
promise I will love you until
the end of mine.**



Let Love Live



VISION

We envision a world in which every animal has a safe and loving home, access to quality veterinary care, and where the unfailing love and devotion of pets are reciprocated by humans



MISSION

We strive to improve the lives of pets by giving homes to abused, abandoned, and neglected pets while fighting for their well-being through vigorous legislative effort, humane education and by offering affordable veterinary care for all.

....to ensure respect for animal's lives through education and action in our community.

VALUES

Integrity

Always act honestly, ethically and transparently for the benefit of the community's abandoned and neglected animals to ensure the highest wellbeing.

Knowledge

Sharing our skills and spreading awareness of our mission to help reduce pet overpopulation

Commitment

Dedication to Aiken and beyond as a resource center for the community's abandoned animals, as well as personal pets.





**Board of
Directors**

Barbara Nelson, *President and CEO*

Mary Guynn, *Chairman*

Russ Richardson, *Vice Chairman*

Ted Cummings, *Secretary*

Michael Sullivan, *Treasurer*

Gary Albrecht

Marilyn Brady

Owen Bramlett

Sharon Brown

Sharer Dale

Charles Doremus

Amy Hebert Doremus

Robert Fine

Pam Gleason

Nancy Goldmark

Lisa Handy, VMD

Lorian Peralto-Ramos

Jack Roth

Al Sorensen

Jill Thomas

Steve Young

From
the CEO

Hello friends,

2018 was a year of learning for nearly all of us at the SPCA Albrecht Center for Animal Welfare. We adjusted our financial tracking to give us a clearer picture of how the three divisions of Shelter, Veterinary Clinic, and Thrift Stores perform; allowing us to be more nimble in making up losses caused by the cost of medically treating, caring for, and creating good outcomes for the unwanted, homeless animals that entered our doors.

Ninety-eight percent of the animals that came to us were saved. Those that weren't saved were either near death when they arrived, medically untreatable, or in one case too psychologically damaged.

Although many people believe that donations support shelter operations, that is not generally true. General donations fall very far short of funding the Shelter operations loss, so we work hard to manage Thrift stores to funnel net income into the Shelter operation. This year, with the help of experienced Board Members and supporters we relocated the Mitchell Center Thrift Store. It is now enjoying the reputation of being the most fun, best place to shop for almost anything in Aiken, while appreciating the fact that it's a store "Where Shopping Saves Lives". While only open for half the year, it still managed to contribute over \$185,000 in net income to our bottom line.

The Veterinary Care Center functions as both a high volume spay and neuter clinic and a public general practice clinic in addition to its role in caring for our residents. The fact that it makes any net at all is certainly welcome. This coming year, our intention is to expand our hours for both walk in and appointments and offer more services. Towards that effort, we are adding two veterinarians with accompanying support staff to keep up with the demand for spaying and neutering and reaching clients who are unaccustomed to regular veterinary care for their animals.

The Externship Program for 4th year veterinary students to do their clinicals with us is robust. Students from across the USA, England, Australia, and Scotland have all joined us for two to three week periods of time in which they improve their surgical skills, become exposed to shelter medicine, and shadow our doctors in client consultations. A wealth of experience is gained in their time with us. The program is currently booked through May of 2020.

Advocating for improved animal welfare legislation at all levels of government continues. At our suggestion, the City of Aiken wisely passed a Humane Tethering ordinance establishing rules and regulations for the way dogs are tied outdoors. We continue to work with the South Carolina state legislature on the same legislation as well as continuing to press all levels of government that have not already done so, to pass ordinances that encourage spaying and neutering by charging a fertile dog fee for the risk of that animal contributing to the unwanted, homeless population. Those communities that have done so have experienced great success.

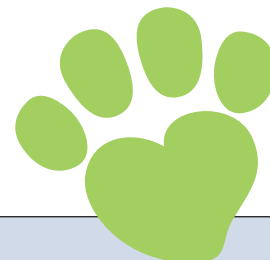
I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support. Together we are most definitely making this a better world for all.

Best Wishes,

Barbara L. Nelson and Ruby



Barbara L. Nelson, President and CEO





High-Quality Veterinary Care for Public and Shelter Animals

The SPCA Albrecht Center's Veterinary Care Center opened to the public for general practice in the Fall of 2015 for the welfare of both abandoned and personal pets, who otherwise would not be able to receive quality veterinary care. From vaccinations to spaying and neutering to offering medications, the Veterinary Care Center provides the community's animals with the best possible care at affordable prices. We take pride in the quality of care and customer service we offer.

Incoming Associate Veterinarians, Dr. Barbara Klimt and Dr. Robyn Barton, are dedicated professionals who are passionate in their love of animals. They and their professional staff are responsible for the medical care and supervision of the shelter animals and beloved pets from the general public, who visit the Veterinary Care Center each day.



*Dedicated professionals who
are passionate in their love
of animals*

In 2018, we performed...



2,808
Spay/Neuter

229
TNR Surgeries

6,000
Vaccinations

2,400
Vet Exams

2,300
Microchips



Veterinary Externship Program

The SPCA Albrecht Center for Animal Welfare is more than an animal shelter. It is a place of learning about behavior and respect for animal lives, the people who love them and those who want to help them. We are unique in that our Veterinary Care Center serves as a platform for fourth-year students to study shelter medicine, hone surgery skills and shadow their teachers, Dr. Klimt and Dr. Barton, as they practice in general medicine to the public.

The SPCA Albrecht Center hosts 12 veterinary resident students throughout the year for this competitive two- to three-week training period. Students from across the USA, England, Australia, and Scotland have all joined us for this unique opportunity in which they improve their surgical skills, become exposed to shelter medicine, and shadow our doctors in client consultations, at no cost to the students. A wealth of experience is gained in their time with us. The program is currently booked through May of 2020.

Extern student diagnosing a cat with our new Tono-Pen for ocular exams



Students are given the opportunity to further their education with opportunities like:

- Admissions and discharging of patients with staff
- Examinations of clinic and shelter animals with the veterinarians
- Treatments of patients with staff
- Assisting in anesthetizing patients for surgery
- Assisting in surgical preparation and surgery as needed
- Socializing with shelter animals under the direction of our Adoption Coordinator
- Assisting with Phideaux University animals
- Assisting in feeding and walking animals as needed
- Performing lab blood tests and fecal parasite identification

**The program is
currently booked through
May 2020.**



Positive Reinforcement Training for a Stress-free Future

It is the responsibility of the SPCA Albrecht Center to ensure that the animals in our care are prepared for adoption and are adopted to the loving homes that they deserve. We do this through veterinary care, humane education, adoption counseling and training, which are all made possible by our passionate staff, volunteers and supporters. Training has proven to be a tipping point in keeping our dogs in their new homes since many times they are returned as a result of stress-induced behaviors, such as inappropriate urinating, separation anxiety, running away, chewing or simply being too hyperactive.

Alongside our dedicated volunteer team, Canine Behaviorist Michelle Jurnak works countless hours with the shelter animals to help with behavior shaping through positive reinforcement. Some dogs come to the shelter already showing signs of stress, and others don't start developing signs until some time in the shelter, no matter how much love and time we dedicate to each individual animal. However, through the power of positive reinforcement training, we can reverse these stress symptoms so that all of our adoptable animals stay happy and healthy, both mentally and physically.

To continue this training outside of the shelter walls, our Canine Behaviorist, staff and volunteers educate potential adopters about training techniques and enrichment, especially during the transition period from shelter to new home. Through meet-and-greets with families and their pets, providing alternatives to surrendering and one-on-one sessions with Michelle, we take the steps necessary to keep our animals in their homes forever.



Major's Happy Tail

Finding Hope for a Long-term Resident

As a stray, Major came to the SPCA from a not-so-happy past. He clearly distrusted humans and did not enjoy the company of other dogs. Though this normally would have disqualified him for adoption, we saw his potential and decided to give him the extra time and care he needed to ensure his success.

Staff and volunteers quickly stepped up to work hands-on with Major, and thus began his training journey. Major started with the basics to help build his confidence and trust humans again. 'Sit,' 'down,' 'heal,' 'bed,' and 'touch,' were among the basic commands Major mastered with the help of his trainers. Knowing Major did not get along well with other dogs, he was also taught to trust a muzzle, by slowly introducing him to the muzzle and helping him understand it wasn't a punishment. To take it a step further, Major was also trained in the SPCA's agility field and learned the balance beam and jumps.

Over his months of training, Major became a brand new dog. He loved his time with humans, wanted cuddles and attention, and his future was growing brighter each day. Staff, volunteers and supporters were dedicated to his success and anxious to see Major in a home.

However, despite all of his training and 'Calls to Action' on social media, Major remained without a home for two years. The days, weeks and months went by, but we never lost hope that he would soon find the loving home he deserved. Volunteers continued their work with Major so he didn't revert back to his old ways, until one day one of those volunteers decided to adopt him!

Susan Fichtner grew fond of Major during her time working with him over the past two years. She saw firsthand his transformation and knew he would make his adopter a wonderful companion. Susan had a couple of pups already, so she knew the challenge would be integrating Major into her already established fur family. After careful consideration with SPCA staff, she came up with a plan to bring Major home and there he lives to this day with his new forever family.

Susan was Major's 'hope' he had been searching for his whole life. She is a true testament that one person can make the world of difference in the eyes of an animal. The SPCA is humbled by the kind spirits of our adopters, volunteers and staff that refuse to give up on our animals and open their hearts and homes to dogs like Major.





The Numbers Show the Progress

In 2018, the SPCA Albrecht Center took in 351 fewer animals than the previous year. This was contributed to the efforts of our community's growing TNR and spay/neuter programs, as well as education efforts and resources to keep pets in homes and out of shelters. This year's lower adoption numbers meant we had fewer animals to adopt out, while still maintaining a nearly 98% SAVE RATE.



2018 Adoptions

1,005 < 515
Cats
507
Dogs


2017 Adoptions

1,054 < 608
Cats
693
Dogs



A Tribute

Superman: The Power of A Pup's Resilience



Four years ago, an emaciated pit bull was found by the Saluda County Sheriff's Department, chained to a stake, starving, barely able to walk, and not far from his two deceased friends, who had starved to death on their chains. At the Sheriff's Department's request, the SPCA Albrecht Center for Animal Welfare sent two Veterinary Technicians to free the dog from his chain and bring him to their Veterinary Care Center. His prognosis was dim. Not only was he starved to the point of being a bag of bones, but he also had an advanced case of heartworm disease.

The SPCA's veterinary team went to work and miraculously, he lived. In tribute to his courageous spirit, he was named Superman. Due to his ongoing recovery and pending court case, he resided in our shelter; cared for and loved by our staff and especially by long-time SPCA volunteer, Susan Cohen. Susan rarely missed a daily visit with Superman, taking him on walks around our facility and keeping his training in check.

Despite his six-month prognosis, Superman lived in our care for four years! He was pampered and loved and amazingly returned that love, even after his horrible past. He fought hard and taught us the power of resilience. Sadly, in October, Superman peacefully crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

Superman will be missed by all that knew his courageous story, but his spirit and strength will live on in our hearts forever. We are convinced that LOVE is what has kept him alive. It is what we do here at the SPCA Albrecht Center, and with the continued support of our community, it is what we will keep doing for other animals like Superman. Fly high, sweet Superman. You will be remembered forever.



Superman with volunteer Susan Cohen





Saving the Most Vulnerable in Times of Crisis

Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael caused heartbreaking destruction and displacement to both humans and animals along the Atlantic. Many South Carolina shelters prepared for the worst as these hurricanes charged towards the coast. By moving coastal shelter's animals inland, they would be safe from the eye of the hurricane and the strong storm surge that was predicted to follow.

Every year, hurricane season threatens the safety of the most vulnerable and the SPCA Albrecht Center is there to step in and aid in the efforts to move animals out of harm's way. This year, we assisted with three transports of animals from Charleston Animal Society, bringing in a total of 27 dogs and three rabbits and housing them in the Marr Education Center.

Luckily, the storms did not affect Charleston as badly as anticipated, but the efforts did not go to waste. By freeing up space at Charleston Animal Society, they were able to deploy their rescue staff with vast resources to areas that were critically hit by Florence and Michael to rescue animals that were left behind. They ultimately took in 43 dogs from North Carolina and transported dozens more out of disaster zones to inland shelters.

The ripple effect of kindness during catastrophes like these is a beautiful contrast to the destruction. The SPCA experienced an outpouring of love and support for the dogs we took in. We received countless donations of supplies and monetary support, and had numerous volunteers show up to give these pups time out of their temporary crate housing. All of the animals we took in found loving homes within months of being transported to our facility.

Times like these are proof of the bigger picture we are all working towards for the animals, and proof of how our community makes all things possible. The SPCA Albrecht Center thanks you for cheering us on in times of victory and stepping up in times of crisis. Our animals depend on your kindness and you never let them down.



Holly, one of the transported dogs from Charleston ahead of Hurricane Florence



Dogs being loaded at Charleston Animal Society to be transported to the SPCA Albrecht Center

Thrift Store

Where Shopping Saves Lives

With the relocation of the Mitchell Center Thrift Store to another, more visible location within the shopping center, along with a complete revamping of our sales floor plan and upgrading of the retail display, we saw an enormous increase in sales.

An important part of our strategy and theme while relocating was to better communicate to the public that the Thrift Stores are "Where Shopping Saves Lives." We want to always keep in our shoppers and donors minds that the Thrift Stores fund the operation of the shelter, thereby saving the lives of the innocent creatures whose lives are in our hands.

Customer service, an enjoyable shopping experience, great deals on valuable products, and a respect for the items that our donors contribute to us to sell on behalf of the animals, are all elements of our company philosophy. Thank you to all who have and continue to make the Thrift Stores successful.





Building a Brighter Future for Animals

At the City Level:

Since 2005 we have worked with elected officials to encourage ordinances and legislation aimed at reducing shelter admissions, enacting stronger abuse laws, and improving Return to Owner rates.

The City of Aiken has historically been responsive to listening to solutions. In 2005 Aiken City Council overhauled its animal registration regulation by creating a differential fee based on whether a dog was fertile or not and whether it was identifiable by microchip or not. At the same time the city set aside adequate funding for low cost spay/neuter vouchers for low-income families. In addition, our organization ramped up its ability to perform spay/neuter surgeries at a higher volume for the general public.

The effect of these changes was immediate. Return to Owner Rates dramatically increased and the population of dogs being

HSUS SC State Director, Kelsey Futrell came to talk at the SPCA. She has been very involved with legislation this year, it's her main focus.



admitted to the SPCA from city sources declined. In ten years the population of admitted dogs decreased from over 600 to just over 300. Now, twelve years later the citizen resident population of the city has increased by many thousands; however the stray dog intake has stabilized to just below 300.

In 2018 the City of Aiken took another step forward to protect the health and welfare of animals by passing a Tethering Ordinance regulating the method and conditions under which a dog can be tied outdoors.

At the County Level:

In addition to working with the City of Aiken to implement solutions, we have encouraged County officials to enact similar initiatives. As a result, the County enacted its own voucher program in 2006 and continues it to this day. The Albrecht Center performs the vast majority of the voucher program surgeries and prioritizes our scheduling of surgeries to meet the large demand. Aiken County Animal Services Officers are diligent in their distribution of the vouchers, however the Spay/Neuter program has not been enough to reduce intake to the Aiken County Government Shelter significantly enough to prevent overcrowding. To this day we continue to encourage the County to focus on solving the problem of an overpopulation of unnecessarily fertile dogs by passing a registration ordinance aimed only at those owners whose dogs create the risk of reproducing unwanted puppies.

At the State Level:

At the State level, our CEO was appointed to the Pet Care & Humane Treatment Study Committee representing non-profit animal shelter administrators. This committee was tasked with reviewing current abuse and neglect laws, providing solutions to over population of unwanted pets, and any other issues that dealt with improving animal welfare in the state of South Carolina. The committee heard months of testimony from law enforcement, rescue groups, shelter administrators, prosecutors, and any other interested parties. After hearing testimony and debating the issues the committee put forth a comprehensive bill.

This bill was introduced in 2018 as Senate Bill 841 and included the following. It established regulations for humanely tethering dogs, established shelter guidelines and inspections for the health and welfare of animals, required magistrates to have training in animal cruelty violations, established definitions for Trap Neuter Return of Community Cats, addressed compensation to sheltering facilities in criminal cases where animals are being held for extended periods of time during court cases, reduced the length of stay in shelters for live outcome animals to reduce overcrowding, and made it easier for out of state veterinarians to provide aid during state and federally declared emergencies.

The bill passed the Senate quickly and unanimously. It then passed to the House where it was held up in House Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee. Unfortunately, bickering over the Humane Tethering section, emotions and lack of common sense prevailed and the bill died in committee. It has been reintroduced in the 2019 as S. 105. We will continue our efforts to work with elected officials who misunderstood the bill and to work with those who supported the bill. We are fortunate here in Aiken that our elected officials were supportive and worked hard for its passage.



The Backbone of the SPCA Albrecht Center

In 2018, our incredible volunteer team of approximately 300 volunteers contributed over 11,400 hours of service to help the SPCA Albrecht Center and our animals, 'filling in' approximately six full-time positions. With only a small group of paid staff, our volunteers are vital to ensure our animals receive the best quality of care. Whether our volunteers are working onsite at the shelter directly with the animals, or offsite at one of our SPCA Thrift Stores, every second of their generously given time makes the world of difference to our organization.



220 Active Volunteers

90 New Volunteers

11,464 Total Hours

Breakdown of Volunteer Hours

Thrift Shops: **5,124**

Phideaux University*: **2,792**

Cat Care and Socialization: **1,058**

Fostering: **897**

Events: **443**

Off-Site Adoptions: **490**

Pet Photography: **115**

Paws for Reading: **70**

Office Administration: **65**

Donation House Collection: **38**

Humane Education: **80**

DIY Service Projects**: **46**



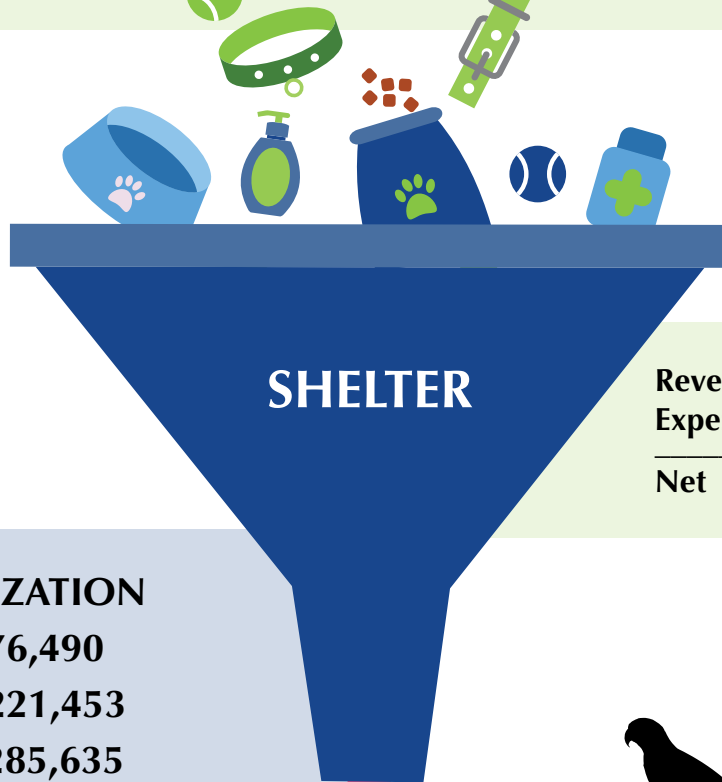
**Phideaux University Includes Read and Relax, Dog Walking, and Dog Training and Enrichment*

***DIY Service Projects include creating items for the shelter animals like blankets and cat scratchers as well as coordinating item donation drives.*



Revenue	\$790,298	40.25%
Expense	\$713,808	36.60%
Net	\$76,490	

Revenue	\$491,020	25%
Expense	\$269,567	13.8%
Net	\$221,452	

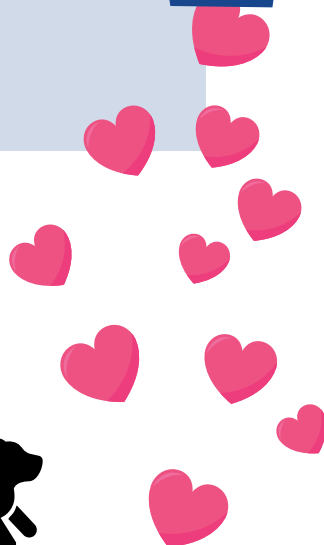


Revenue	\$682,101	34.7%
Expense	\$967,735	49.6%
Net	-\$285,635	

TOTAL ORGANIZATION

Clinic	\$76,490
Thrift Store	\$221,453
Shelter	-\$285,635
Net	\$12,308

98%
SAVE
RATE



Plans for
2019

Carrying Our Mission Into the New Year

Operating an Animal Shelter is by its very nature a financially challenging business. It is impossible for revenue from adoptions to equal the cost of care, medical treatment, facility maintenance, and labor costs. That is why many shelters are in poor physical condition and are short of labor. It is expensive to build a hygienic, animal centric facility to house animals and it is just as expensive to have medical treatment facilities, and skilled, trained personnel to market, conduct behavioral training for dogs, and clean kennel and colony areas.

Monetary contributions are a small percentage of our revenue and we are not supported by the government or the ASPCA. Therefore we must be resourceful to generate reliable revenue to support shelter operations.

Our organization has three divisions. They are the Shelter, Veterinary Care Center (VCC), and Thrift Stores.

Net revenue from the VCC and Thrift Stores support the losses from the Shelter Division. In 2019 the VCC will increase its staff, which will allow us to increase the volume of spay/neuter surgeries as well as general practice clients and expand our hours of operation to better serve the public.

While all of this translates into many hours of hard work, resourceful and flexible thinking; we are dedicated to our mission, our vision, and to the values under which we operate. We are thankful to the individuals who support the Albrecht Center either through direct contributions, helping with their expertise, or just their tireless hours of unpaid labor as volunteers and cheerleaders. Most of all, we are thankful for the love we can give to the homeless, abused, and neglected animals who ask nothing in return.





Paw-ty for the Pets

Save the Dates

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Volunteer Luncheon/Serena's Star

1 – 3 pm

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Kitten Season Event

All day

TUESDAY, MAY 7

Thrift Store Party – Spring

(sponsored by Carolina Equine & Aiken Saddlery)

6 – 8 pm

SATURDAY, MAY 18

Dog Wash

9 am – 12 pm

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

Yappy Hour

(sponsored by Family Pharmacy)

6 – 8 pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

Dog Wash

9 am – 12 pm

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10

Yappy Hour

(sponsored by Cummings Insurance of SC)

6 – 8 pm

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7

Yappy Hour

(sponsored by McDonald's)

6 – 8 pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

Yappy Hour

(sponsored by Aiken Saddlery)

6 – 8 pm

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Thrift Store Party – Fall/Winter

(sponsored by SMBG&M & AutoTech, Inc.)

6 – 8 pm



We Need You!



DONATIONS | ESTATE PLANNING | FOSTERING | THRIFT STORE



Caring for homeless dogs and cats
for more than 80 years.

Shelter: (803) 648-6863

Vet Care: (803) 648-6864

Tax-exempt 501(c)3 non-profit organization

199 Willow
Run Road
Aiken, SC
29801

Let Love Live

We do not receive government funding, or any regular funding from national humane organizations such as the ASPCA or the Humane Society of the United States, completely separate organizations. To continue our important life-saving work, we rely solely on sales from our Thrift Shop locations, support from businesses in our community, and from special people like you. Every donation enables us to help the many animals in our care, and support the programs we provide to the community.



Help today by calling **803.648.6863**
or visit **LetLoveLive.org** for more information.