The What?
Many of you will read this and say to yourself “I never knew this place existed.” If so, then our newsletter has been successful! Too many residents of Hampton Roads, let alone Norfolk, do not know about NAMC, but we are working very hard to change that. A recent survey found that only 18% of companion dogs and 16% of companion cats were actually adopted from a shelter. We would like to raise those numbers, and to do that we need your help!

Did you know that we receive an average of 5,000 animals each year? Many of these are stray animals that are never reclaimed by their family, and others are animals that were turned in to us by their family. That means we need people who have lost their pet to know to check with us, and we need people who want a four-legged friend to come to us first—not a pet shop or backyard breeder.

Contrary to popular myth, shelter animals are not “rejects!” Did you know that the main reasons for surrenders are because people are moving and can’t take their pet, people discovered they were not allowed to have pets where they live, a family member is allergic to dogs or cats, and people realize they do not have enough time to properly care for their pet. You really can find happy, loving, well-adjusted animals in shelters!

We are working hard to increase not just adoptions, but permanent adoptions. It is important for us to know that you are ready to make the commitment (average of 12 years) of caring for an animal, that you are taking care of animals you already have, and that you know how to let the adopted animal settle in and adjust to his/her new home.

We serve the City of Norfolk in several ways: protecting companion animals from abuse and neglect, housing stray or surrendered animals, assisting citizens in recovering lost pets, providing an adoption center, and educating citizens (adults and children) about responsible pet ownership.

NAMC has so many great animals just waiting for another chance. Do your heart (and theirs) some good, and come find your new best friend at NAMC!

Ask an ACO (Animal Control Officer)
I think my neighbor’s animals are neglected, but don’t know what the law says. What should I do?

The municipal code of Norfolk states that people must provide animals with proper food, water, shelter, and veterinary care. It is also against the law for an animal to be chained outside for more than 12 hours. Violations are punishable as a misdemeanor. If you are uncomfortable talking with your neighbor about your concerns, that is a good first step. If you are not, or the problem persists, call us at 664-PETS so that an officer can be dispatched to assess the situation and follow-up with the pet’s owner.

Did You Know…
...how quickly a pair of unaltered animals can reproduce?

• A female cat can have her first litter of kittens when she is just five months old, can have 3 birth cycles per year, and 4-6 kittens per litter. That amounts to 420,000 new cats in 7 years!

• A female dog can have 2 birth cycles per year, with 6-10 puppies per litter. That amounts to 67,000 new dogs in 6 years!

• Dogs and cats certainly outnumber humans, which leads to the obvious conclusion: there aren’t enough homes out there for these dogs and cats! Be a responsible neighbor—alter your animals, and educate others about the importance of curbing pet overpopulation.

• The cute puppy or kitten obtained on impulse is the adult dog or cat that is turned into a shelter because there is no longer enough time to care for him/her, or because the novelty has worn off, and the family has lost interest in the animal. Please carefully consider the obligations of pet ownership before bringing one home!

(Source of data: Humane Society of the United States, www.hsus.org)

In Need of Some TLC

We are proud to announce the development of a foster program for shelter animals who may need extra care, or who have been at the shelter for a long period of time. Foster homes provide the time and attention that cannot always be given in a shelter environment. The foster home also provides a transition for the shelter animal back into a home situation. If you are interested in learning more about fostering for NAMC, please contact Twanesha Murray (441-5505, twanesha.murray@norfolk.gov) and we will contact you when an informational meeting is held.

Where Your New Best Friend is Waiting!
5585 Sabre Road (near Janaf)
664-PETS
www.norfolk.gov/animals
From Military Highway, turn onto Lowery Road (between Walgreen’s and Ruby Tuesday). The shelter is just around the curve on your left.

Please visit namc.petfinder.com for pictures and bios of most of our animals.

Adoption Hours:
Monday-Saturday: 11:00am-4:00pm

Adoption Fees:
Dogs/Puppies: $90
($31 if already spayed/neutered)
Cats/Kittens: $76
($26 if already spayed/neutered)
Rabbits: $15
Guinea Pigs/Hamsters: $5
Birds: varies

As a city agency, NAMC does not actively raise funds for the shelter. However, if you would like to help the shelter’s animals, please consider donating to the Medical Fund for Animals, a 501(c)3 non-profit whose purpose is to raise funds for the medical care of NAMC animals. Donations are tax-deductible, and may be sent to:
The Medical Fund for Animals
211 Carlisle Way
Norfolk, VA 23505

Shelter Wish List:
• Purina Dry Food (Dog, Puppy, Cat, Kitten Chow), Authority Canned Kitten Food, Timothy Hay, Rabbit Food, Grooming Supplies, Dog & Cat Toys, Collars, Slip Leashes, Blankets, Towels

Coming Soon…
• Information about NAMC’s program for distributing free dog and cat food to low-income citizens, senior citizens, and rescue groups.

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Meet Stanley, a Canine Good Citizen and Certified Therapy Dog with Therapy Dogs International. What does an accomplished dog like this have to do with a city shelter? Everything! When I rescued an unruly young stray Lab/Wheaten mix from Norfolk Animal Management Center (NAMC) in 2001, I never dreamed I had so much potential. I just knew that this dog who had been labeled as unadoptable was very friendly and smart.

Once rescued, Stanley bounced from foster home to foster home. Although his foster parents loved him, they couldn’t deal with his high energy and independence. Fortunately, K-9 New Life Center agreed to keep him temporarily. It was there that he met and captivated Kathy Galvin and her husband David Adkins, volunteers with K9 NLC. After fostering Stanley in their own home (later dubbed “Camp Stanley”), Kathy and David became smitten, and adopted him in 2002. For the next year, Stanley attended various canine training courses, a beginner course in agility, and went on to earn his therapy dog certification. He has visited patients at the VA hospital in Hampton and has participated in two March of Dimes walks on the Virginia Beach boardwalk.

Stanley is a regular at dog parks and beaches, and everyone in the local dog community knows and loves this funny, sweet boy. “Everywhere he goes, he makes people smile just by being Stanley,” explains Kathy. He is intensely devoted to his humans and has never met another dog he didn’t like. Stanley is so good with other dogs that he serves as a “dog temperament tester” for newly rescued K-9 New Life dogs. Clearly, this once “unadoptable” dog demonstrates the potential that exists in so many dogs found in shelters everywhere.

Stanley’s story goes full circle back to NAMC. Kathy and I became friends, and we are both long-time NAMC volunteers. Rescuing Stanley brought me a good friend, and brought both of us back to where I found him to help more dogs like him find homes.

Way to go, Stanley! As Kathy and David are often heard saying: “That’s my boy!”

Looking For Volunteers

Did you know that NAMC has a volunteer program, and we’d love for you to join us? You can help the shelter animals in many ways: walking and playing with the dogs, cuddling the cats, bathing and grooming animals, and assisting visitors in meeting our animals. All you need is some extra time and a big heart!

Interested? Please stop by the shelter to complete an application (or you may download a copy from www.norfolk.gov/animals). After you attend an hour long orientation session, you’ll be ready to go!

Bubba’s Cat Tales

Bubba has been the office cat of NAMC for several years. He had a hard time finding a home because he is FIV positive. His cousin, Tomato the Cat, was a successful writer for Best Friends magazine, so Bubba felt entitled to a column in our newsletter.

Something strange has been going on here at the shelter recently. It all started when the dogs sounded like they were barking a lot closer to the office than usual. It’s not like I’m afraid of them or anything, but it was annoying when I was cat-napping. So one night I ventured out and discovered three DOGS out in big cozy pens in the main corridor. Boy, did those dogs think they were something special (but not as special as me, because I live in the office)!

When the shelter is open, these dogs get an awful lot of attention, and they seem to go home with families a lot quicker. Once they leave, a new dog moves into the pen. If that wasn’t enough, not long after that I heard a lot of commotion over near the cat room. By the time I snuck out to investigate, I found the cat room as I remembered it was GONE! They moved over to a bigger, brightly-lit room where they can all be seen a lot better. That was just great! Then, someone even thought to make a special entertainment stage for them in the center of the room. Every now and then, those very cute, sometimes annoying things you refer to as kittens get to hang out in a play area. They don’t know what they’re doing, but it sure amuses the adult cats to no end. And the people who come to visit love it too.

I can’t reveal exactly what my next column will be about, but I’ll give you a clue … MEET me at the back of the cat room, and you’ll understand!

Cats Are TopDog When It Comes to Adoption!

* cats are better suited to apartment living than dogs.
* cats are great companions for seniors or people with demanding, erratic work schedules because they are so much more self-sufficient!
* many dogs and cats amicably co-exist, and even the most avowed cat-hating dog has been known to convert

Stop by our cat room and take a peek at our fabulous felines!