



Virginia Association of Counties

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2018.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Montgomery County

Program Title: Animal Care and Adoption Center Live Release Rate Goal

Program Category: Regional Collaboration

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Jennifer T. Harris

Title: Public Information Director

Department: Public Information

Telephone: 540-381-6887

Website: www.montva.com

Email: harrisjt@montgomerycountyva.gov

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: F. Craig Meadows

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

Animal Care and Adoption Center Live Release Rate Goal
Montgomery County, VA
VACo Achievement Awards Program Category: Regional Collaboration

Executive Summary

The Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) officially opened its doors to the public on April 29, 2017, with a grand opening celebration. The new, publicly owned center has the capacity to house 68 dogs *and* 64 cats. It also provides a community meeting room, office space, surgery facilities, and visiting rooms for prospective pet owners. The former shelter housed dogs and little else.

“Education. Adoption. Community.” – that’s the mission of the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center and the goal is to provide quality care for both cats and dogs and operate with a live release rate of 90 percent or better. Over 130,000 animals entered Virginia’s public animal shelters in 2017. Of these, only 77.8 percent had live outcomes such as adoption, transfer to rescue, or owner reclaim, while Virginia’s privately owned Animal shelters boast a 93 percent live release rate.

Through a variety of creative and collaborative events, like a Free Pet Adoption Weekend; many dedicated volunteers and staff members; and increased community awareness and engagement, Montgomery Animal Care and Adoption Center attained a 96 percent live release rate in 2017. Overall, in 2017, 1,607 animals entered the center and 1,505 animals left through adoption, reclaims, and transfers to rescues. In addition, more than 15,700 community members visited the facility and over 1,600 people signed up to volunteer at the ACAC.

The Goal

Find creative and collaborative ways to achieve the “*Education. Adoption. Community.*” mission of the Animal Care and Adoption Center; increase number of adoptions and community involvement; and maintain a 90 percent or greater live release rate.

Overview

In April of 2017, The Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center opened with a new facility, and created a new mission to be one of the few open admission publicly owned facilities accepting both dogs and cats to operate with a live release rate of 90 percent or better. Prior to 2017, the Montgomery County Animal Shelter was not equipped to receive and provide care for cats, making this a new and necessary service to the community. Over 130,000 animals came into Virginia’s public animal shelters in 2017. Of these, only 77.8 percent had live outcomes such as adoption, transfer to rescue, or owner reclaim, while Virginia’s privately owned Animal shelters boast a 93 percent live release rate.

To accomplish the mission of operating a shelter that accepts both cats and dogs with a 90 percent or greater live release rate, the Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) needed to increase owner reclaims, transfers to rescue, and most importantly adoptions. The ACAC staff works incredibly hard to return as many stray animals as possible to their owners, using any form of identification the animal may be wearing, social media, and word of mouth. As a result, 24 percent of the animals that entered the center in 2017 were returned to their owners. The ACAC rescue coordinator manages a large network of animal rescuing organizations that were contacted whenever possible to place 13 percent of our animals into rescues in 2017. This leaves a huge

chunk of our shelter population waiting for adoption, and increasing pet adoptions is the Center's daily challenge.

To address this daily challenge, the ACAC hosts regular adoption events throughout the year, and by far the most successful events were the Free Adoption Weekends sponsored by the ASPCA and Subaru Loves pets, in partnership with Shelor Subaru in Christiansburg, Va. In June of 2017 The Center was invited to apply for a national fee waived adoption grant through the ASPCA and Subaru. This grant is offered to nonprofit or government-run animal shelters in order to waive all adoption fees as part of a two-day event in partnership with a local Subaru Dealership. Shelor Subaru in Christiansburg was happy to partner for the event, and the ACAC applied for a \$2,500 grant.

During the ACAC's first Free Adoption Weekend, 29 cats and dogs found new homes. Overall, in 2017, 1,607 animals entered the center and 1,505 animals left through adoption, reclaims, and transfers to rescues. Other outcomes of events like the Free Pet Adoption Weekend included increased community awareness and volunteers. In 2017, more than 15,700 community members visited the facility and over 1,600 people signed up to volunteer at the ACAC. With the help of our community and wonderful collaborative events like the Free Adoption Weekend, the Montgomery Animal Care and Adoption Center attained a 96 percent live release rate in 2017.

Budget

Aside from staff time to apply for the grant and to assist in planning the Free Pet Adoption Weekend, no money was spent on this event. When the Animal Care and Adoption Center was awarded the grant in July of 2017, several Montgomery County departments worked together in the planning and execution of this event with the County's Adoption Rescue

Coordinator and the Public Information Office taking the lead in planning the October 14, 2017, Free Pet Adoption weekend event. The Public Information Office developed and implemented local media and social media campaigns to advertise and promote the event. Montgomery County's Planning Department assisted with printing signage, and the Finance Department assisted in fund allocation.

The day of the event we had all our staff and volunteers on board and not only was social media a buzz due to the event, but also our facility was very busy with visits from the community looking to give some of our county's homeless cats and dogs a furever home. In addition, Shelor Subaru partnered with us on the event, set up a table, and handed out Subaru pet adoption boxes, as well as posted about the event on social media throughout the weekend.

Finding furever homes for nearly 30 homeless pets was a great return on a small investment of manpower to assist with planning and promotion and no actual budget dollars spent.

The Results

During the ACAC's first Free Adoption Weekend, 29 cats and dogs found new homes. Overall, in 2017, 1,607 animals entered the center and 1,505 animals left through adoption, reclaims, and transfers to rescues. Other outcomes of events like the Free Pet Adoption Weekend included increased community awareness and volunteers. In 2017, more than 15,700 community members visited the facility and over 1,600 people signed up to volunteer at the ACAC. With the help of our community and wonderful collaborative events like the Free Adoption Weekend, the Montgomery Animal Care and Adoption Center attained a 96 percent live release rate in 2017.

Promotional Items and Social Media

Printable flyer



Facebook cover image

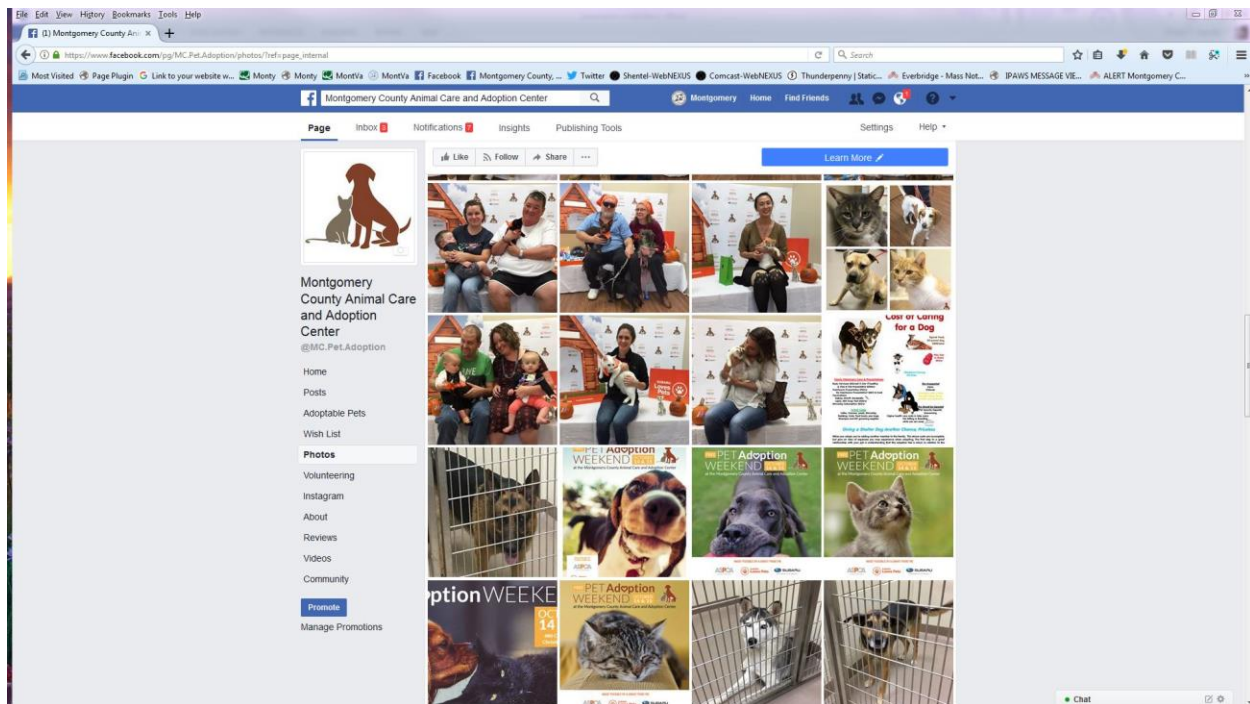
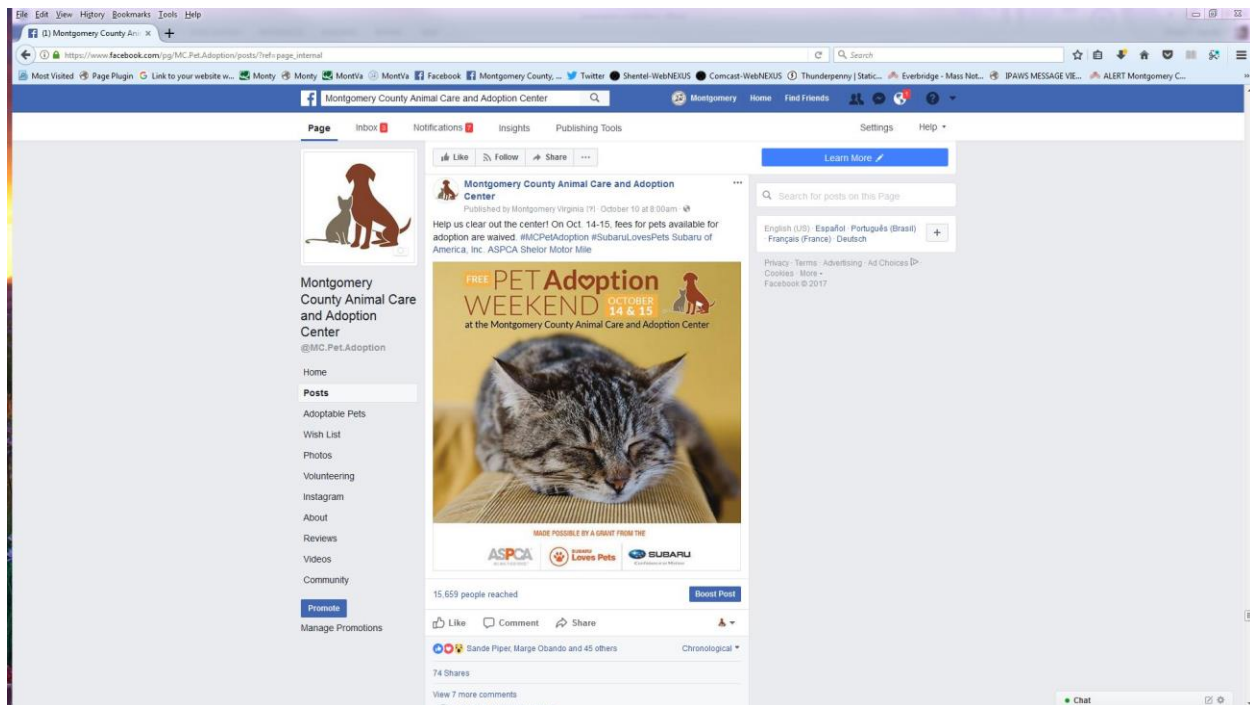


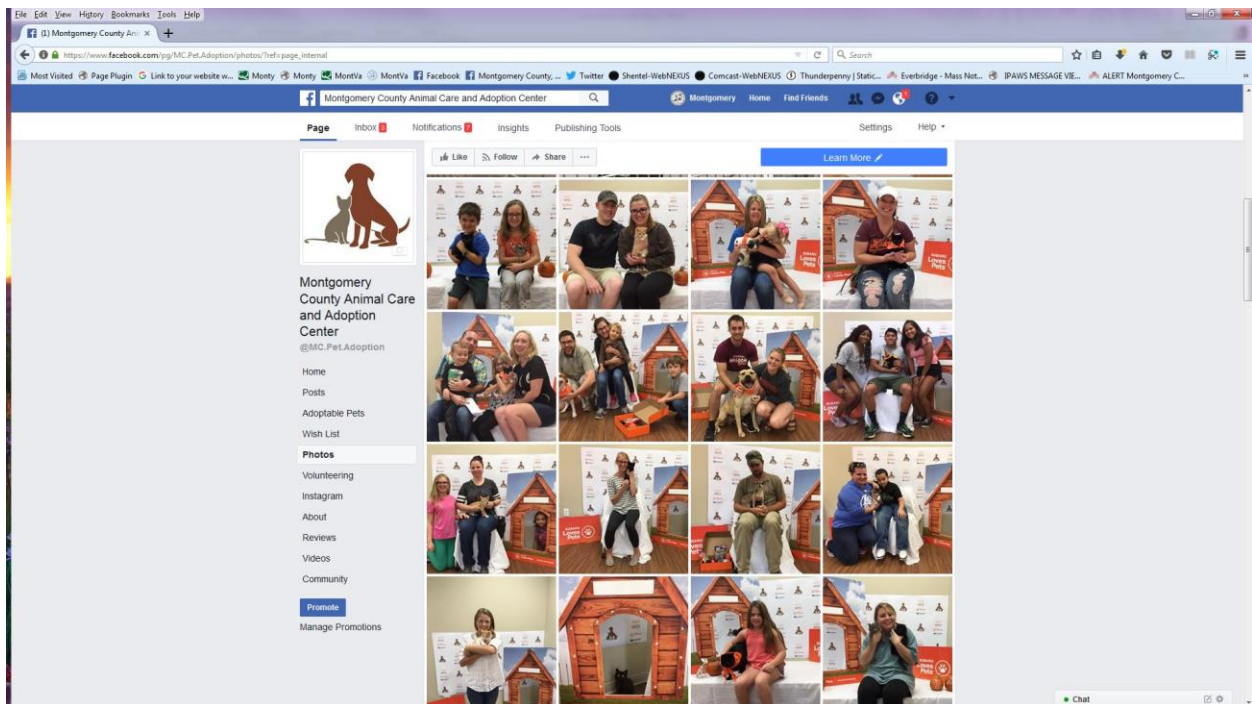
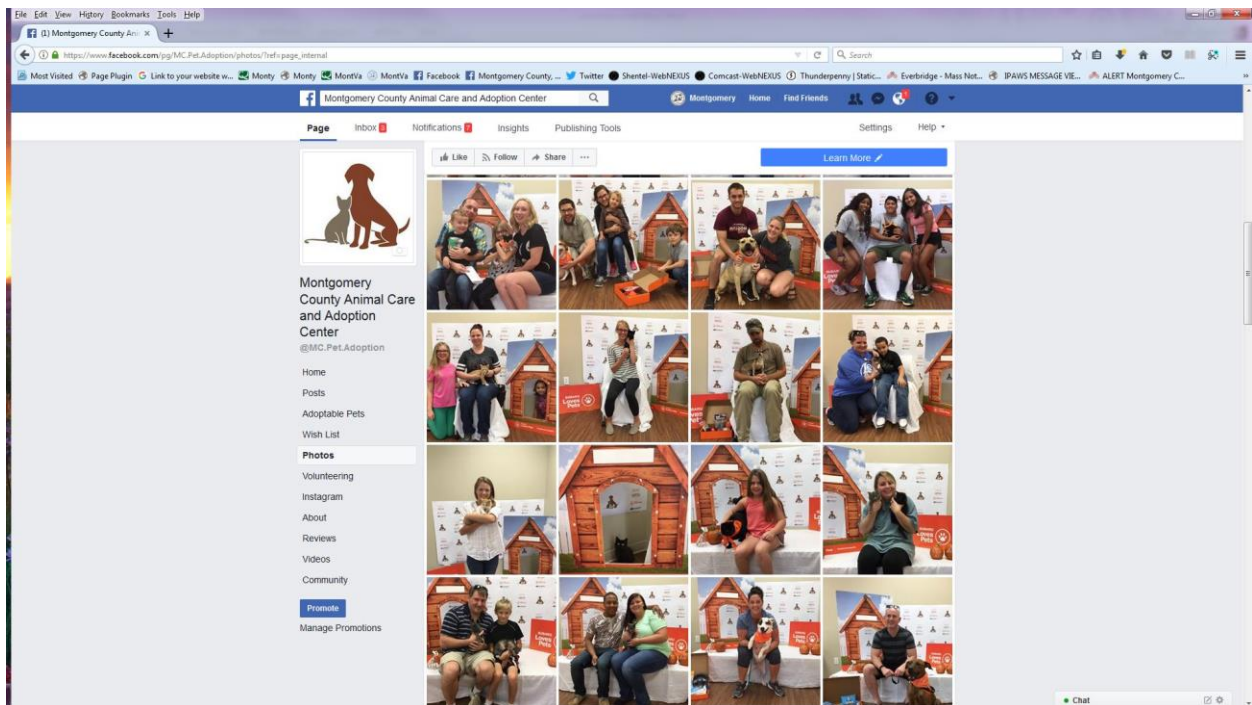
Social media promotions

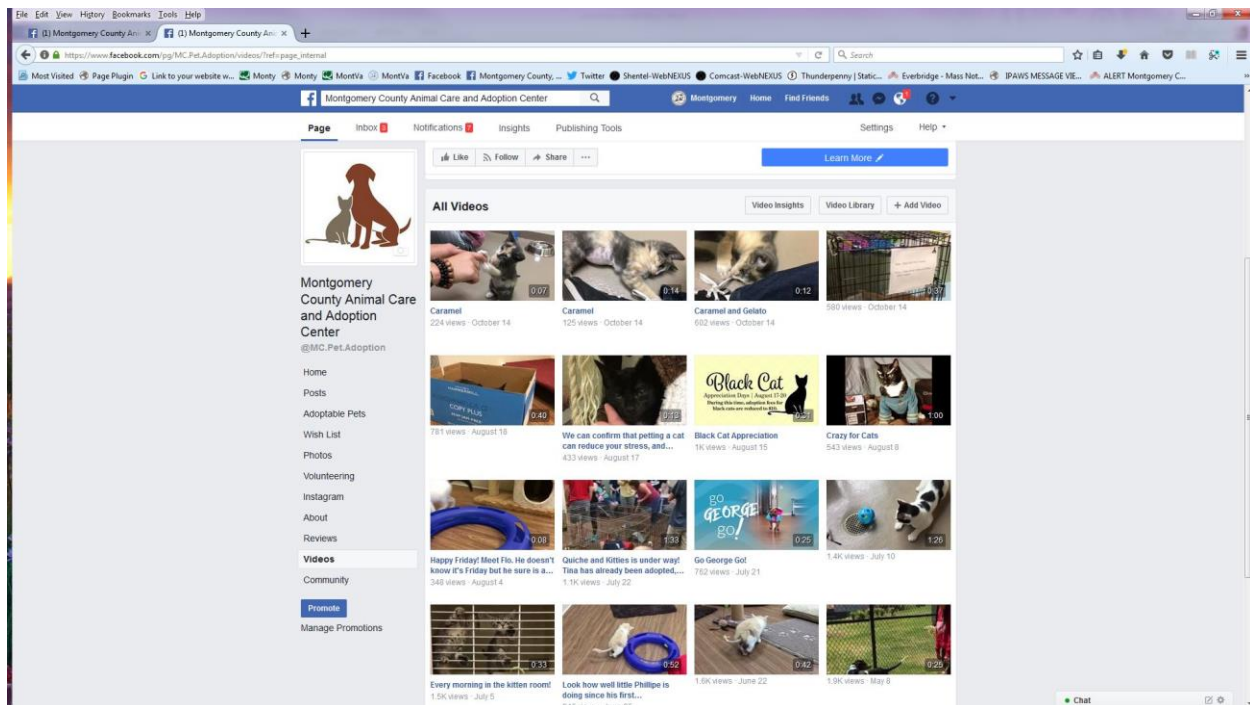


WMCC slide









Local Media Coverage

Adoption fees waived at ACAC this weekend

News Messenger, October 14, 2017

The ASPCA, Subaru Loves Pets Fee-Waived Adoption Program, and Shelor Subaru are sponsoring a free pet-adoption weekend at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center in Christiansburg at 480 Cinnabar Road, Christiansburg, Virginia. The Adoption Center will stay open extra hours from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. today, October 14 and Sunday, October 15 for the free pet adoption event. Spay surgery and shots (if the animal is old enough) can cost \$70 for male dogs, \$75 for female dogs, and \$60 for cats, but this weekend, all adoption fees will be waived for adoptable pets, paid for by the sponsors. "Please help us empty the Animal Care and Adoption Center this weekend and provide homes for the adoptable cats and dogs!" a Montgomery County announcement said. Shelor Subaru will also be providing new pet-parent giveaways at the event. "The Subaru Loves Pets Fee-Waived Adoption Event is a great opportunity to help the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center find homes for all adoptable cats and dogs during the weekend of October 14 -15," the county announcement said.

<https://montcova.com/>