



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](#).

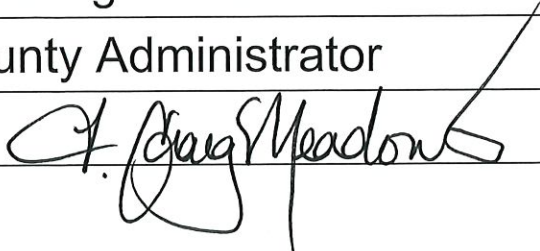
PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Montgomery County
Program Title: Animal Care and Adoption Center Social Media
Program Category: Communications

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 Social Media
Montgomery County, VA
VACo Achievement Awards Program Category: Communications

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 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.” This phrase represents the center’s objectives, which are supported by its social media efforts. The ACAC Facebook page had a soft launch in January 2017 and became very active after the grand opening in April 2017.

A very small group of individuals manages ACAC social media, while balancing other responsibilities, including managing a new, large facility with far more animals. The cost effectiveness and success of the social media effort is proven by metrics. *(Note: Boosts/ads for the page are not used. All engagement is organic. The county’s population is just under 100,000, including two towns and university Virginia Tech.)* As of November 30, 2017, the page has nearly 3,200 followers. Posts with photos and information about lost/found animals have reaches ranging from a couple of thousand into the tens of thousands. So far in 2017, 66% of lost pets were reunited with their owners. Adoptable pet posts typically reach into the thousands. Since the opening of the center, more than 600 animals have found homes. In addition, the ACAC audience of animal lovers has blossomed into a #pawsome community moved to action by generosity and compassion for these animals.

Goal

The primary goal of social media for the The Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) is community engagement and interaction. “*Education. Adoption. Community.*” This phrase represents the center’s objectives, which are supported by its social media efforts. The new center’s primary missions are to increase pet adoptions and to reunite lost pets with their owners. From #AdoptASharkWeek to Ugly Cat Sweaters (the sweaters were ugly, not the cats!) to found-dog posts, social media efforts prove to be one of the most impactful tools for achieving these objectives. In addition, the center uses social media to promote its volunteer opportunities, training sessions, “code red” donation requests, and more. As with any social media, the goal is to increase awareness and engagement but also to create a sense of community among followers. All of this is accomplished with a light, charming, and sometimes humorous tone for the posts and images.

Overview

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 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.*” This phrase represents the center’s objectives, which are supported by its social media efforts. The new center’s primary missions are to increase pet adoptions and to reunite lost pets with their owners. From #AdoptASharkWeek to Ugly Cat Sweaters (the sweaters were ugly, not the cats!) to found-dog posts, social media efforts prove to be one of the most impactful tools for achieving these objectives. In addition, the center uses social media to promote its volunteer opportunities, training sessions, “code red”

donation requests, and more. As with any social media, the goal is to increase awareness and engagement but also to create a sense of community among followers. All of this is accomplished with a light, charming, and sometimes humorous tone for the posts and images.

The ACAC's social media audience is animal lovers in Montgomery County, Virginia. Its main method of reaching that community is via its Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/MC.Pet.Adoption.

A very small group of individuals manages ACAC social media, while balancing other responsibilities, including managing a new, large facility with far more animals. Creative ideas occasionally come at a moment's notice and this group consistently accomplishes a great deal in a short amount of time, particularly for mini-campaigns. The #AdoptASharkWeek campaign, where photos of adoptable dogs and cats dressed in shark costumes were posted on Facebook, was developed and launched in less than two weeks. Over 15 animals were photographed, and 20 animals were adopted in the span of a week. Two days prior to "Black Cat Appreciation Days," promotional graphics were created and a video was shot, edited, and posted. The video was viewed 1,000 times. In total, 18 cats of various colors were adopted from August 17-20, eight of which were black. Both of these events were driven by social media efforts.

Budget

Assigning a dollar amount or budget to our efforts is challenging. No single employee is responsible for managing ACAC social media as their primary responsibility. Two full-timers from the ACAC and, as time allows, one from the Public Information Office contribute to this effort. Aside from staff time, there is no budget. The vast majority of imagery on social media is produced in-house and cooperatively between these two entities. Some specialized photography is curated from free photo services on the web, however, nothing is out-sourced. Typically, the

PIO produces the more time-intensive graphics and videos, including short social media campaigns.

Results

The ACAC Facebook page had a soft launch in January 2017 and became very active after the grand opening in April 2017. The cost effectiveness and success of its social media is proven by metrics. (Note: Boosts/ads for the page are not used. All engagement is organic. The county's population is just under 100,000, including two towns and university Virginia Tech.) As of November 30, 2017, the page has nearly 3,200 followers. Posts with photos and information about lost/found animals have reaches ranging from a couple of thousand into the tens of thousands. So far in 2017, 66% of lost pets were reunited with their owners. Adoptable pet posts typically reach into the thousands. Since the opening of the center, more than 600 animals have found homes. By comparison, 200 dogs in 2015 and 169 in 2016 were adopted from the old facility. Director Eileen Mahan notes, "When we have adoption promotions on our social media, we see an increase in adoptions on not just the animals that we promoted but others as well, for the next three days or so. For the Fluffy Cat Friday event, we had two cats that had been at the shelter for over 3 weeks. They were adopted within 12 hours of their posts."

In addition, the ACAC audience of animal lovers has blossomed into a #pawsome community moved to action by generosity and compassion for these animals. For example on July 20, 2017, a "code red" for dog food was issued on Facebook. That post was shared over 100 times and reached over 10,000 people. Two days later, it is estimated about 1,500 lbs. of dog food was donated to the center! While it may seem like a fluke, a month later, a similar event occurred when kitten food supplies dwindled. Nearly 17,000 people were reached. Two days

Sample posts from Facebook page (MC.Pet.Adoption)



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center
Published by Montgomery Virginia (21) · July 23 · 🌐

It's #SharkWeek! And we're excited to introduce you to our adoptable SharkDogs and SharkCats.

Say hello to #SharkDog Sophia!

#AdoptaSharkDog #MCPetAdoption #EducationAdoptionCommunity



2,950 people reached

Boost Post

 Like

 Comment

 Share

  Montgomery County, VA, Kristi Mallory and 22 others

22 Shares



#BlackCatAppreciationDay is August 17 but we're celebrating into the weekend! Adoption fees will be reduced for black cats during this time.



4,075 people reached

1K Views



 Comment



Share



Modelin Merritt, Karie Lester and 58 others

Chronological ▼

26 Shares



Montgomery County Animal Care and
Published by Shannon Porter [?] · August 30 · 🌐

Through no fault of his own, Grover has been bounced around several times in just two months. Fingers crossed he finally found his forever home today!



1,980 people reached

Boost Post



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center

added 3 new photos.

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · August 13 · 🌐

Wubbie has left the building! I repeat, Wubbie has left the building! After four months in the shelter, our favorite girl was finally adopted.



7,232 people reached

Boost Post



228

Chronological ▾

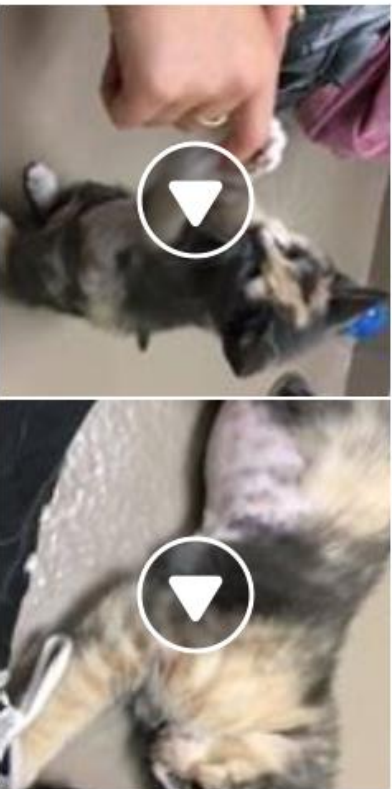
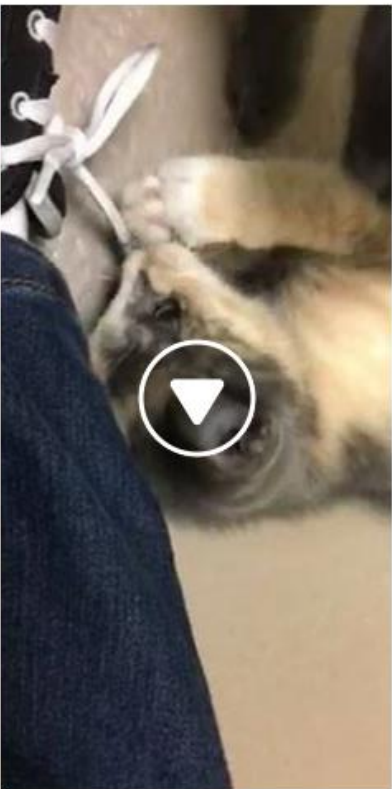


Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center ...

added 3 new videos.

Published by Derley Aguilar [?] · October 14 · 🌐

*** Update: these two were adopted! *** Gelato (grey) and Caramel are frisky kitties--and one of them really likes shoelaces! They are both looking for a forever home. Are you a purrfect match? Thanks to Shelor Motor Mile, ASPCA, and Subaru for making #FreePetAdoptionWeekend a reality!... See More



2,052 people reached

Boost Unavailable



Comment



Share



Shelor Motor Mile, Joshua Dustin Stanley and 23 others

Chronological ▾



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · October 15 · 🌐

Our first adoption of the day was a double - Caramel and Gelato got to go home together!

#MCPetAdoption #SubaruLovesPets

Free adoptions this weekend thanks to... See More



1,659 people reached

Boost Post



Share



Crystal Albert Boyle, Suzanne S. Suit and 51 others

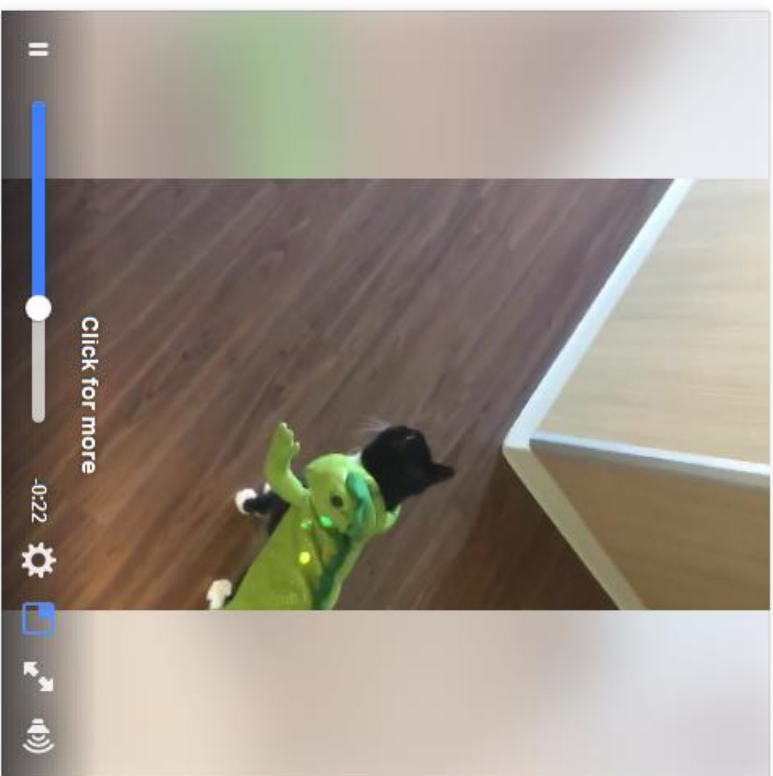
Chronological ▾



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · October 31 · 🌐

Baby MJ is really enjoying touring the shelter to show off her cool dragon costume! Baby MJ is a 1-2 year old spayed female. She is friendly, outgoing, and very tolerant of our human nonsense. Stop by and meet her today!



2,379 people reached

Boost Post

1K Views



Share



Linda Fuller, Cara Boim and 88 others

Chronological ▾

17 Shares



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center



Published by Shannon Porter [?] · September 20 · 🌐

Anyone missing these two goats?? They were roaming around Price St. in Blacksburg and are now being held at the Adoption Center. Please call 540-382-5795 if they are yours!



21,833 people reached

Boost Post



Qiao-Qiao Wang, Sis Cuddly and 59 others

Chronological ▾



 **Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center**

Published by Marilyn Wheaton (7)
Like This Page · July 22 · 0

We are so humbled and grateful for the outpouring of support we received after our post about needing dog food. Thanks to your generosity, we now have about 1,500 lbs of dog food stored in our pantry! In just a few days, we went from having only four bags of dog food to dozens. Thank you so much to all of our supporters, you never cease to amaze us!

Tag Photo Add Location Edit

Like Comment Share

256

13 Shares

Ryea

 Pam

the ne

Edited by

 Like

 Like

for all

Like

Like ·

Like

Write

Write a comment.



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center
added 2 new photos.

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · August 22 ·

Once again we have been completely amazed and overwhelmed by the generosity of our community. After our cry for help, you all came through with so much kitten food that some stores were completely sold out! The cats, kittens, and staff here at the Center cannot thank you enough. You all are amazing!



3,173 people reached

Boost Post



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center

...

added 4 new photos.

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · November 6 at 3:03pm · 🌐

Today's featured Ugly Kitten Sweater cat is Rue! This little girl was found with her mother and her sister under a trailer when she was very young. Rue is about 10 weeks old now and is friendly, playful, and tolerates our dress-up time like a champ. Come by and meet her today!



2,130 people reached

Boost Post



Kaillyncody Slusher, Lola Reynolds and 63 others

Chronological ▾

20 Shares



Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center

...

Published by Marilyn Wheaton [?] · November 17 at 12:47pm · 🌐

Today is Fluffy Cat Friday! The Center is almost at "catpacity" so we will be featuring all of our fluffy, adoptable cats.

Our second featured fluffy cat is Audrey. This sophisticated lady was found locked in a greenhouse in Blacksburg, which was far below the station of a gentilewoman like her. She likes attention but will gently but firmly let you know when she is done being bothered by peasants (unless you have treats, she LOVES treats). Audrey is currently deigning to greet visitors in the lobby, so stop by the Center to see if she deems you worthy of her companionship! Her adoption fee is only \$10.



2,099 people reached

Boost Post



Qiao-Qiao Wang, Sarah Alvarez and 49 others

Chronological ▾