

FUR THE RECORD

2019 FALL NEWSLETTER

2018 AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT INSIDE



Fred, HSSC Alum



A Note From Our Executive Director



Duke, HSSC Alum



As you'll see in our most recent audited financials, 91% of our expenses go to our programs. That means 91 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to our mission. Year after year, the Humane Society of Sarasota County proves our commitment to being good stewards of your gifts. **After all, your generosity powers our organization.**

HSSC is the oldest animal welfare organization in the area. We are proud of our long history and our growing impact. We are advocates for animals, and we support the human-animal bond through outreach and education. Our services save lives and build community. We are committed to excellence and have begun the process of making our new vision for our facility a reality. When we were thinking of a name for our capital campaign for renovation and expansion, we wanted to reflect the fundamentals of our organization. **One phrase encapsulates it all: Humane at Heart.**

Stories like Sunshine's (below) remind us of the far-reaching effects of our work. When an animal is adopted from HSSC, it's only the beginning of a beautiful life. We've found homes for thousands and thousands of animals since 1952, but no two stories are alike. As we continue to grow, we look forward to all the stories yet to be written. **We are Humane at Heart, and we are so thankful that you are too.**

**CHRISTEN BENSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The ☐Sunshine☐ of Your Love: A Happy Tail

A few weeks ago, we received a letter from Ryan Moore, who wrote that his mother, Kay, had passed away in July. While clearing his mother's house, Ryan came across a letter Kay had written to HSSC but never mailed:

☐Dear HSSC, I adopted Sunshine, the big yellow kitty, a few months ago. I have been very ill for a while, and he's been a terrific comfort to me. He is doing well and stays beside me constantly. He is the only cat I have ever seen that insists on sleeping on his back—all the time. I have a feeling he had some bad times, and I wanted you to know he is dearly loved now and keeps me from feeling so alone. So, it was meant to be for me to get that ride to Sarasota just for him. I hope you know how much I love him. Thank you so much.
—Kay Moore

Ryan notes that his mother fell in love with Sunshine and had him for years before he passed away in 2014. ☐Thank you for giving Sunshine a home with my mom. I believe having Sunshine to come home to gave her a quality of life that she didn't have before.☐



Sunshine

Note: We are no longer publishing a listing of memorial and honorarium donations. We made this choice to respect donors' privacy and because the volume of donations is so great that we do not have enough space to print them all unless we use a very small font. When tribute gifts are made, cards are still sent to recipients. If you have any questions, please contact 941.955.4131 x115.

2018 Audited Financial Report

Your Support Makes Lifesaving Work Possible!



Caleb, HSSC Alum

Revenue & Support for Year Ending December 31,	2018	2017
Program Services	1,260,826	1,082,495
Contributions	826,205	883,935
Bequests	657,284	716,963
Investment Income	347,405	280,315
Retail	278,248	238,054
Special Events	140,104	195,477
Grants	26,500	61,460
Other	12,280	659
Total Revenue & Support	\$3,548,852	\$3,459,358

Expenses for Year Ending December 31,	2018	2017
Program Services	2,597,613	2,385,724
Support Services		
<i>Fundraising</i>	138,451	121,430
<i>Administration</i>	110,275	83,013
Total Operating Expenses	\$2,846,339	\$2,590,167

Liabilities	2018	2017
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	182,144	167,509
Unearned Income	10,081	57,498
Total Liabilities	\$192,225	\$225,007

Net Assets	2018	2017
Unrestricted Net Assets	12,865,209	12,977,838
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	988,614	1,484,222
Total Net Assets	\$13,853,823	\$14,462,060

Program Services are 91% of Operating Expenses

'Humane at Heart' Project Gets Started

Construction Underway for HSSC Renovation & Expansion

Thanks to some extremely generous and unexpected gifts, we will be starting our campaign to raise \$8.5 million with \$1.5 million already in the bank. We are using these gifts to begin the repairs phase of the renovation.

These much-needed repairs to our dog kennels include new flooring, acoustical upgrades for noise reduction, and improved drainage—all so our dogs can be more comfortable during their stay at HSSC. Due to the repairs, we have temporarily reduced our intakes by about 30%, but our dog adoption numbers have not been affected.

We will also be building a covered play yard between kennel pods 2 and 3. This area will be for dogs recovering from surgery or illness and for use during inclement weather and construction.

The permitting process is steadily moving along, and we anticipate being ready to break ground on our kennel additions and phase one of construction by January 2020. We are hoping to avoid delays by privately reaching out and securing leadership gifts.

PREVIEWS



Clockwise from top: Exterior view; group cat room with state-of-the-art feline housing; and main lobby with a view of the featured pet area.



Visit www.hssc.org/give/capital-campaign for additional renderings, construction updates, and ways to contribute.



Pod 2 gets a facelift with new flooring, acoustical upgrades, improved drainage, and fresh paint.

HIGHLIGHTS



- New dog pod with 26 kennels (capacity for up to 104 dogs) to accommodate more transports from the most desperate situations.
- Multiple play yards to provide safe recreation for shelter dogs of all sizes, and agility play yards to promote exercise and fun.
- Industry-standard upgrades to water access, drainage, flooring, sanitation, acoustics, ventilation, and holding areas will promote wellness, reduce animal stress, and prevent the spread of disease.
- State-of-the-art in-house veterinary clinic for shelter pets to receive routine and lifesaving medical care, with an isolation and recovery ward for sick animals.
- Laundry, grooming, enrichment, and food preparation stations situated by the animal areas they serve to streamline operations.
- Cutting-edge feline housing with enhanced visibility, increased opportunities for human interaction, and patios for access to fresh air and nature.
- Featured pet area to give maximum exposure to animals needing a little extra help finding their forever homes.
- Inviting reception area that will funnel visitors to the cat and dog areas and provide ample space for completing adoptions.
- Cozy meet-and-greet rooms for potential adopters to spend time getting to know their future pets.
- Multi-purpose education and training center for holding humane education programs, K-9 obedience training courses, and events.

Fostering Hits All the Right Notes

How a Temporary Stay Turned into a Permanent Home



Sarasota plays host to many part-time residents—snowbirds, of course, but also performers and artists who migrate to our fair city to share their talents.

Actor, musician, vocalist, and real-life “Jersey Boy” Nick Anastasia first came to Sarasota in 2016 for a role at Florida Studio Theatre (FST). He happened to stop by the Humane Society of Sarasota County and was impressed by the cleanliness, friendliness, and helpfulness. He immediately signed on as a volunteer.

Cut to two years later. Nick returned to Sarasota in late 2018 to star in FST’s *Unchained Melodies*, an homage to the male harmony (“doo-wop”) groups of the 1950s and 1960s. Offstage, he jumped right back in to volunteering at HSSC. Nearly 20,000 people saw Nick looking dapper onstage over the course of *Unchained Melodies*’ record-breaking run at FST. But at HSSC, Nick was often spotted with dirty paw prints across his volunteer t-shirt—the unavoidable consequence of walking and playing with shelter dogs—and a big smile on his face. He happily spent his free time volunteering and sharing photos and stories of adoptable animals on his social media. As a guest on ABC7’s *Suncoast View*, Nick promoted *Unchained Melodies*, but he spent most of his segment talking about his passion for animals and volunteering at HSSC. He even brought a shelter dog on camera with him.

Nick’s nomadic performer lifestyle had prevented him from having a personal pet. But that didn’t mean he couldn’t foster while he was in Sarasota. When he heard that sweet little Marcie, a two-year-old Boston Terrier mix, was about to undergo knee surgery, he immediately volunteered to foster her while she recuperated.

Like Nick, Marcie had also made a long trip to Sarasota. Surrendered by her original family because they had too many pets, Marcie was fortunate to be included on a transport from an overcrowded Louisiana shelter to HSSC. Petite and friendly, Marcie was a volunteer favorite, and Nick often walked her. Staff and volunteers noticed her limping on her rear leg. Whether her limp came from a genetic condition or a tragic time in her past, we’ll never know. After closer examination and radiographs, our medical staff determined that knee surgery would improve her quality of life. Fortunately, our Medical Director, Dr. Ivan Ivanov, performs orthopedic surgery at our Animal Clinic and is very experienced with knee repair. After surgery, Marcie was prescribed lots of love and a little cold laser therapy (also administered at the Animal Clinic). Nick excelled at the love part. So much so that, when she was healed, he couldn’t bear to give her up. Moreover, *Unchained Melodies* was closing, and he’d be returning to New Jersey. He had to make a choice. In a post on his Facebook page, Nick made his official adoption announcement: “Started my road trip home from *Unchained Melodies* and realized there was someone I truly needed with me.”

Although he didn’t plan on leaving Sarasota with a sidekick, he feels that meeting Marcie (now called Becky Lynch) was fate. “Becky came into my life at a very important time, and I know I was meant to adopt her,” he says. Now Becky joyfully greets him when he returns from stints on the road, and she will always have a furever home with Nick. “She just loves LOVE so much, and every single person who meets her is instantly happier.”

If you’re inspired by Nick and Becky’s story, **consider becoming an HSSC foster volunteer.** As a foster, you choose your own adventure. Some animals require round-the-clock care (bottle baby kittens, for example); others need a quiet space to heal from illness or injury; and some just need to work on their manners or to learn to trust people. Foster volunteers are invaluable, and they increase HSSC’s overall capacity to take in animals, especially the difficult cases. Most foster situations are temporary: the animal returns to HSSC and is eventually adopted into a loving family. We jokingly call stories like Nick and Becky’s “Foster Failures,” but Foster Failures are some of our most-cherished Happy Tails. To learn more about this lifesaving and lifechanging volunteer opportunity, **visit www.hssc.org/get-involved/volunteer/foster.**



Nick Anastasia & Becky

Vickie G. and Karen Z. **“Make Sit Happen”**

Volunteers Keep a Tight Leash on K-9 Obedience Courses

Inside an unassuming building at the back of HSSC’s campus, there’s some powerful training underway.

A half-dozen owners and their dogs are scattered around the room. Leashes are taut, and treats are close. Holding court in the center of the room is a woman wearing duck boots and a treat pouch, the whimsical purple streak in her hair a sharp contrast to her otherwise-practical attire. That’s Vickie G., or “Mean Vickie,” as she’s known at HSSC.

The joke is that Mean Vickie is not mean at all. Her nickname comes from the fact that we have two volunteers named Vicki/Vickie. A more accurate name might be “Stern Vickie” because, as one of our most-trusted volunteers and K-9 obedience course instructors, Mean Vickie means business. She’s determined to help her students (both human and canine) get the most from their six weeks of obedience classes at HSSC.

As the pairs practice leash walking, Vickie watches carefully and provides helpful feedback—“Redirect him when he starts to pull,” and “Regain eye contact.” HSSC believes in positive reinforcement, and Vickie reminds owners to praise and treat their dogs frequently during class and at home.

Although it can be repetitive and frustrating, obedience training is one of the most important things owners can do with their pet. Simple things like sit, stay, and come can mean all the difference between a dog that’s a beloved family pet, and one that’s a menace. And that distinction is important when it comes to keeping dogs in their homes. After all, one of the top reasons animals get surrendered to shelters like HSSC is for being ill-behaved.

Retention is one of HSSC’s core values, and that’s why so many of our programs are geared towards helping owners address issues that may cause them to surrender their pets:



Karen Zinn



Vickie Grosvenor

food insecurity (Pet Pantry Program), medical care (Animal Clinic of HSSC), and behavior (K-9 Obedience Courses). We offer a rotating schedule of obedience courses, and adopters receive a \$10 discount on their first course. Our most popular course is Basic Obedience 1, which is all fundamentals, but we also offer a more advanced course (Basic 2), a Pet Therapy Training Course, and a periodic Agility course.

Vickie G. and fellow obedience instructor Karen Z. have been teaching and working with animals at HSSC for many years. Like so many of our volunteers, they help in several ways. Vickie has fostered hundreds of kittens. Karen also fosters, and she drives Big MAC (our Mobile Adoption Center) to offsites.

And both are go-to resources for our in-house K-9 Behavior Program Coordinators, Lisa Merlet and Corrie Williams. Every shelter dog is assessed after arrival, and those that need behavior modification are put on a training plan. Vickie and Karen work with the behavior dogs, curbing or correcting their bad habits so that these dogs are more attractive to adopters and more likely to stay in their adopted homes. Without help from Vickie, Karen, and our many other seasoned volunteers, it would be impossible to provide the level of individualized behavior care that we do.

When the hour is up, Vickie gives the students exercises to practice at home and reminds them that consistency is key. It’s well-worn advice that she’s dispensed many times over the years, but it still rings true.

Vickie and Karen have “made sit happen” for hundreds of dogs. It’s impossible to say who’s more grateful for these two all-star volunteers: the owners or HSSC.

If you’re interested in developing a stronger bond with your dog, consider one of our affordable obedience courses. See upcoming sessions and register at www.hssc.org/pets/k-9-obedience-courses.

If you have the time and desire to volunteer, we always need help. Learn more about volunteering at www.hssc.org/get-involved/volunteer.

Board of Directors

President
Teresa Jones

Janet Boyden
Lisa Eldridge
Katherine Ferrara
Christopher J. Fowler
Sonia Gibson

Ricky Perrone
Jennifer Poppen
Elizabeth Rabbitt-Stephen
Jaime Still
Thomas Trinchetto, MD
Jay Turner
Caryn Wilbraham

Vice President
Justin Leins

Secretary
Jennifer Steube

Treasurer
Kinga Huse



**Jennifer Steube
& Chance**

Why I Serve...

"When I look into the eyes of an animal, I don't see an animal. I see a living being. I see a friend. I feel a soul."—A.D. Williams

"I proudly serve on the Board of HSSC because the work they do in our community is profound and critical. Not only does HSSC care for and love our shelter pets, but they enrich the lives of those living in our community through our programs such as Pet Therapy and Humane Education. We offer veterinary services through our affordable clinic so EVERYONE has access to quality, affordable pet care. Our furry friends can't speak for themselves. HSSC is their voice." —Jennifer Steube – Vice President, Senior Portfolio Manager – Synovus



Planned Giving Info Session

Planned Giving is a very special way to support organizations and causes you care about, and to also fulfill your own financial goals and objectives. Planned Giving can be a confusing and intimidating subject. It's filled with acronyms and tax language, plus it raises tough questions about our final wishes. At our Planned Giving Info Session on **Wednesday, November 20, from 4-6pm**, we hope to make the topic a little less confusing and intimidating. This is an information-only event where we will have a panel of Humane Society of Sarasota County Board Members who are attorneys, accountants, portfolio managers, and financial advisors and planners. They will provide valuable insight and answer your questions in an informal setting. **There is no cost to attend** and no obligation to make a gift of any kind. This event is appropriate for interested people of all ages and lifestyles. Pre-registration is appreciated but not required. **Visit www.hssc.org/give/planned-giving/2019-info to RSVP.**

CONTACT US