

# CAT DEPOT **Connection**



cat depot®

FALL

**2024**





We have tremendous gratitude for all the donors who came together and helped the Hamilton County dogs last month.

Read on to learn about the incredible fun of Critter Camp and our ongoing need for Food Bank donations.

Do you have community cats in your area? Take a look at how our TNVR program can help.

Make sure to mark your calendars and check out some of the events we have coming up throughout the remainder of the year.

Warm Regards,  
**Cat Depot Family**

## Cat Depot Goes to the Dogs

**Claudia A. Harden, Director of Communications & Development**

So how does Cat Depot get taken over by dogs? You just answer the phone.

That is exactly what happened when Cat Depot's Sr. Director of Operations Diana de Veer answered her phone the afternoon of August 13, 2024. The reason for the call was to ascertain if our Community Center, located across the street from the main shelter, could be used to house 20+ dogs from an awful situation in Hamilton County, Florida.

An elderly woman who had been working with Hamilton County Animal Control prior to Hurricane Debby had fallen gravely ill and needed assistance with the removal of the many dogs now residing on her property. She was living in her car and doing all she could to care for herself as well as her beloved dogs.

Animal Control Officer Bonney jumped into rescue mode and began reaching out for assistance in trapping and relocating the dogs. With the assistance of the Florida State Animal Rescue Coalition (FLSARC), Florida Association of Animal Welfare Organizations, Humane Society of the United States, and Slomba Shelter Solutions, a dream team of animal welfare professionals was quickly assembled to trap, provide medical assistance, and house the dogs.

Along with Officer Bonney, volunteers and staff from Florida Urgent Rescue (FUR), headed up the trapping of the dogs. Pre-storm, five dogs were removed from the property and transferred to local shelters and foster organizations with a couple of them being adopted by rescue volunteers.

Mother Nature decided to throw a wrench into everyone's plans when Hurricane Debby bore down on Northern Florida. All rescue efforts for the dogs had to cease until after the storm passed.

After the storm, trapping began again in earnest however the timeframe for completion was moved up considerably. Residents surrounding the property had been threatening to harm the dogs and one was shot and killed before trapping could begin again.





As dogs were being trapped, a plan for providing veterinary care was being arranged. Enter the Florida Veterinary Medical Association in conjunction with the Florida Veterinary Corps. A team of volunteer veterinarians were on standby to provide immediate care and assessment of the dogs as soon as they reached a safe location.

Hamilton County's animal shelter was not an option due to the influx of animals needing assistance following Hurricane Debby. Call after call was made to local shelters however, they were also suffering from not just lack of space but bandwidth to provide a safe, stable location for two weeks of mandated quarantine for the dogs. And that is where Cat Depot comes back into the story.

After a quick phone call to Claudia Harden, Cat Depot's Director of Communications & Development, to discuss how and for how long we could assist, Diana gave the ok to have the dogs transported to Cat Depot.

Our Community Center is not just the heart of our humane education programming but the headquarters of our Community Food Bank. To make this rescue happen, staff had to quickly find new locations to hold several fully booked upcoming programs. Thankfully, no programming had to be cancelled due to their quick thinking and ability to adapt.

In addition to tables, chairs, audio-visual equipment, and countless programming supplies, 3,000 pounds of dry cat food and over 2,000 cans of wet food were relocated to make room for the dogs.

With the assistance of volunteers from FLSARC, a makeshift care center was created to provide the dogs with a safe place to land.

And, just like that "Dog Depot" was born.

Eleven dogs arrived on the evening of August 15 with seven more dogs arriving the next night. Following initial medical assessments by Florida Veterinary Corps veterinarians, each of the dogs received vaccines, dewormers, flea/tick preventatives, as well as a name.

For the next two weeks, and thanks to the tireless efforts of FLSARC volunteers and our very own veterinary staff, the dogs received the much-needed daily care they required. From treating puncture wounds and an infected abscess to ensuring a broken leg was stable, the medical team provided the dogs with the care needed to heal before sending them on the next phase of their journey.

Each of the dogs has now been transferred to one of our statewide shelter partners where in addition to being spay/neutered they will continue to receive love and care until they find their forever homes.

Cat Depot would like to thank our rescue partners for their efforts in making this endeavor a success.

And most of all we would like to thank you, our Cat Depot family. The outpouring of support our participation in this rescue effort received has humbled us and left us truly thankful for our community of supporters. Without your dedication to our lifesaving mission none of this could have been possible.

For information on how you can further support Cat Depot and our lifesaving mission, please contact Claudia Haren by calling (941) 366-2404 x302 or emailing [claudiah@catdepot.org](mailto:claudiah@catdepot.org).

**Scan to see all our rescue partners who made this effort possible**





# Critter Camp 2024

## Ellie Levine, Humane Educator

Learning, crafting, and petting – Critter Campers had an educational and creative experience this summer! This year, 6 weeks of Critter Camp were offered to children aged 8-14. It was great to see familiar faces from previous summers, as well as lots of new ones.

Every day, campers learned anything from breeds of cats, to the history of animal shelters, to famous cats throughout history, to careers in animal welfare. Campers also got to express their creative side each day by making crafts such as cat family paintings, shrinky dink ID tags, cat mugs and coasters, pop-up cards, cat friendship bracelets, and cat piggy banks. On top of that, campers learned 10 new cat trivia facts every day, making them even more knowledgeable ailurophiles (cat lovers). They also learned lots of animal-themed yoga poses and completed service projects for the cats at the shelter – check out our YouTube channel to see some of the fun kitty condos and other toys we made this summer! Critter Camp also had weekly guest speakers from some wonderful local animal organizations, including Big Cat Habitat, Top Tier K-9, Webb's Wildlife, and Satchel's Last Resort. We also got to meet some of the incredible foster families and their kittens and got to learn about fostering kittens. And everyone's favorite part of Critter Camp is the weekly visit to the shelter! We got to meet so many sweet adoptable cats at the shelter, and some of us even adopted a cat during our visits!



## SAVE **the** DATES

AUG-  
OCT

CAT DEPOT'S FALL  
FELINE FUN RUN

OCT  
16

CRAFTY CATS DIY  
WORKSHOP

OCT  
23

HALLO-WINE AND  
KITTY TIME

DEC  
2

GIVING TUESDAY

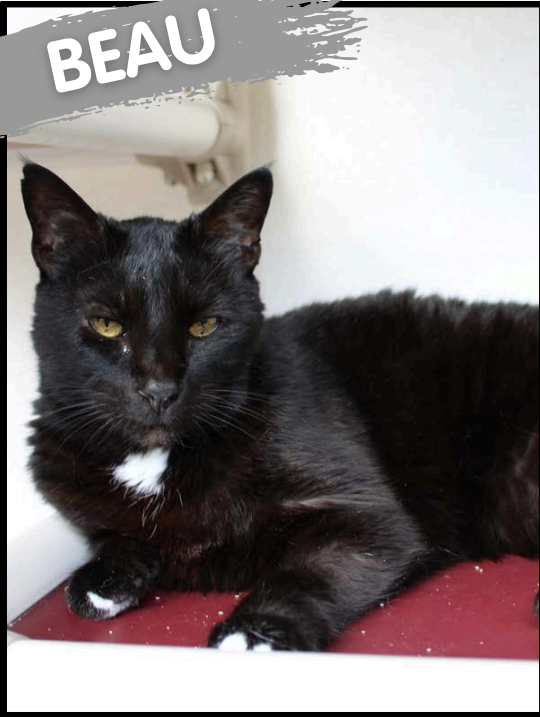
The fun doesn't stop just because summer is over! There are fun programs for kids at Cat Depot all year long! Sign up for Reading to Rescues, Nama-Stray Yoga, or one of the upcoming art events and meet some of the shelter cats while supporting Cat Depot's life-saving mission.

Scan the QR  
code to see all  
of our upcoming  
events!



EVENTS

BEAU



## Senior Cats

**Lex Bender, MSW, Adoption Counselor**

Every day Beau sits by the front door waiting for visitors to come by. He's loving, affectionate, and laid-back. He doesn't scratch or bite. His senior bloodwork was great, his teeth are clean, and a donor has provided his future owner a \$250 credit at the Rose Durham Cat Care Clinic to cover his continued care. But despite his many wonderful qualities, he and his brother Cooper have been at Cat Depot for the past five months.

Beau and Cooper have a familiar story: these two senior cats were brought to Cat Depot after their elderly owner was no longer able to care for them. The brothers had been in that home since they were kittens twelve years ago, and at first they struggled to adapt to the shift from home to shelter.

They've come a long way from hunger strikes and hiding in the litter box, and these days you can find both cats sleeping on the cat tree or sunbathing on the patio.

Unfortunately, 44% of senior cats relinquished to Cat Depot by their families come for the same reason: their owners are no longer able to care for their pets due to death or failing health.

With an average lifespan of at least 14 years, many cats are spending most of their lives as 'seniors'. An eight year old cat will likely live at six more years, and may live for another ten or twelve years. A combination of better veterinary care and the rise in spay/neuter has extended the lives of senior cats while reducing the number of unwanted kittens born each year. This has resulted in a population of companion cats that is older than ever before, and shelters are increasingly full of senior cats in good health with years of life ahead of them.

Beau and Cooper are a great pair of cats, but it's not just them who need our help. There has never been a better time to welcome a senior cat into your home and into your family.

COOPER



Scan the QR code to begin the adoption process for a senior cat!



Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) is a program in which free roaming cats are humanely trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated for rabies and other feline viruses, microchipped and then returned to their outdoor home to live out their lives. TNVR involves a caretaker who provides food, adequate shelter and monitoring of the cat's health. TNVR has been shown to be the least costly most efficient and humane way of stabilizing community, feral, outdoor cat populations.

TNVR services are provided through the Cat Depot Shelter Medical. Please contact 941-366-2404 for information.

This application does not guarantee acceptance or surgery space for a TNVR surgery date. You will be contacted by a staff member for further details and scheduling. Fees may apply for surgery procedures.

**Scan the QR code to learn more about our TNVR program!**



## Food Bank Donations

The goal of our food bank is to help keep cats in their homes and to help feed community/free-roaming cats throughout Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Cat Depot is aware that some families in our community might need assistance in feeding their beloved pets due to financial hardship.

We have provided life essential supplies such as wet and dry food, for more than 86,300 thousand cats in Sarasota and Manatee Counties since 2014! Our food bank also gives us the opportunity to make connections with those who take care of community/free-roaming cat colonies to ensure the cats are getting spayed/neutered! Our Community Food Bank is an essential program, and we need your help to keep the food stocked!

Please consider donating today to help us help cats in our community! Visit [catdepot.org/food-bank/](http://catdepot.org/food-bank/) for ways to donate!



[www.catdepot.org](http://www.catdepot.org)

***Cat Depot's mission is to save lives, find loving homes, and provide resources and education to improve the destiny of homeless cats.***

*Photography: Peyton Davis, Ellie Levine, Georgia Sanacore, FL SARC*