



## **New low-cost spay/neuter clinic opens**

### **- St. Augustine Humane Society offers more affordable options for dogs and cats -**

St. Augustine, Fla. – September 30, 2014 - St. Augustine Humane Society has opened the first low-cost, high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter clinic in St. Johns County. The clinic will provide pet owners with more affordable services to fix their dogs and cats.

Located at 1665 Old Moultrie Road in St. Augustine, the Society's veterinary clinic received \$48,500 in funding from PetSmart Charities for start-up equipment and supplies to the clinic which is anticipated to perform more than 5,000 surgeries annually. In addition to the PetSmart Charities funding, the organization is the recipient of the Florida Animal Friend Grant, which is providing more than \$14,000 in free surgeries for qualified pet owners. For more information, call 904.829.2737. Visit the website at [www.staugustinehumanesociety.org](http://www.staugustinehumanesociety.org).

“Our goal is to make spay/neuter services more affordable to pet owners who might not otherwise be able to sterilize their pets,” says Carolyn Smith, St. Augustine Humane Society's Executive Director. “With thousands of homeless and unwanted dogs and cats being euthanized every year, these services are essential to solving our homeless pet overpopulation problem.”

### **Increased Access to Services**

The Society operates a wellness clinic one day a week for pet owners in financial difficulty, and now the surgery clinic is also open one day a week, with expansion plans for three days a week. Spay /neuter surgery fees will range from \$35 to \$85, depending on the size, gender, and type of pet. Financial assistance is also available to those who qualify.

The wellness clinic is open every Wednesday from 9 am to 4 pm, and the new surgery clinic is open every Tuesday from 8:30 am to 4 pm. Pet owners must pre-register and prepay for spay/neuter surgery.

### **National Model of Care**

Part of the PetSmart Charities grant funding includes specialized training for Humane Society staff at the Humane Alliance in Asheville, NC, the nation's only training center for organizations to learn how to open and operate high-volume, high-quality, low-cost spay/neuter clinics. With funding from PetSmart Charities, Humane Alliance has trained or mentored 95 organizations nationwide, resulting in 1.25 million spay/neuter surgeries since 2005.

“It is an honor to be accepted into this elite program,” says Tammi Smith, St. Augustine Humane Society’s Clinic Manager. “The Humane Society staff has been preparing and training remotely for several months leading up to the opening of the surgery clinic,” she said. “Our team is excited to participate in a follow-up training in Asheville in December.”

### **Strong Local Support**

St. Augustine Humane Society has also received local support in preparation for the surgery clinic’s opening. According to Carolyn Smith, local tradesmen and construction companies have helped the clinic’s expansion efforts by supporting the growing organization with donations of their time, expertise, labor and materials. Donations were provided by Dick Pittman Roofing for a full roof replacement at no charge along with L. Wernick & Sons, Inc. and ABC Supply for donation of construction materials. Bill Gregory Tile is continuing to donate substantial tile work, and Dennis Schmidt is providing general and structural repairs at no charge. To donate and view the Humane Society’s renovations wish list, visit the website at <http://www.staugustinehumanesociety.org/renovations.html>.

In addition, the organization is currently underway with a tribute tiles campaign as an additional fundraiser to support the new clinic, and ongoing programs and services. For more information on how to obtain a Paw Print Tribute Tile, visit the website at [patronpaws@staughumane.org](mailto:patronpaws@staughumane.org)

“We are so pleased that PetSmart Charities and so many local businesses support the St. Augustine Humane Society and its mission to reduce the relinquishment rate of pets to shelters through various assistance programs,” said Carolyn Smith. “The goal of the non-profit is to spay and neuter pets and keep them healthy and in loving homes instead of surrendering to a temporary shelter for housing, and prevent euthanasia.”

### **About St. Augustine Humane Society:**

St. Augustine Humane Society promotes healthy responsible lifelong pet ownership by serving the medical and rehabilitative needs of companion animals in our community. The nonprofit’s programs are designed to strengthen human-pet relationships by reducing the need for pets to enter shelters. The goal is to encourage the humane treatment of animals, avoid overpopulation, and prevent animal cruelty. The Humane Society’s resource center includes a wellness and preventative care clinic, affordable spay and neuter efforts, grooming facility, and a pet food pantry. These and other services enable local pets to live happily and healthfully in their homes for life. Business hours are Monday through Friday from 9 am until 4 pm. Closed on Saturday and Sunday.

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