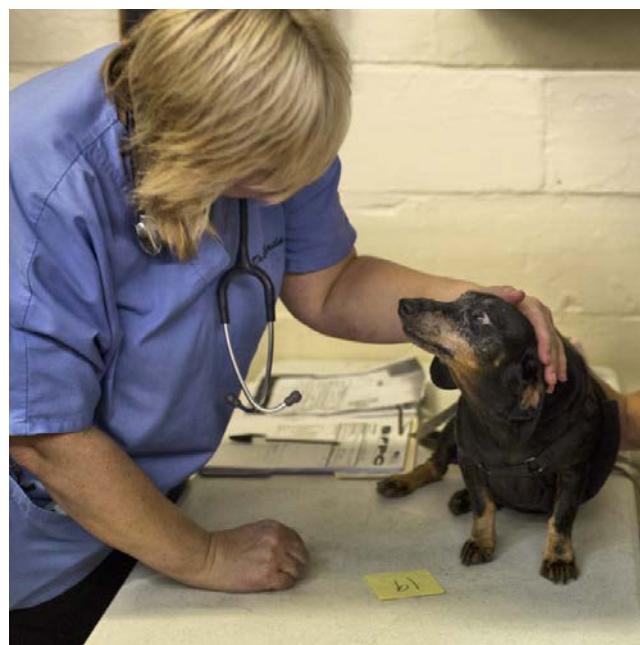


St.
Francis
Pet
Care

2015

Annual Report of St. Francis Pet Care, Inc.
January 1, 2015–December 31, 2015

Annual
Report



Mission

The charitable mission of St. Francis Pet Care (SFPC) is to help people in our most vulnerable communities remain together with their pets so both can benefit from the human-animal bond. To this end, we provide primary non-emergency veterinary care to the companion animals of homeless persons, veterans referred from the VA, and very low income residents of Alachua County, Florida. We work to reduce the number of companion animals turned into shelters because their owners can no longer afford their care, and to increase the proportion of spayed and neutered pets in the population we serve. We educate our clients in responsible pet care and help them improve the lives of their pets. We do visits to homes and tent cities when necessary to ensure the well-being of the animals and reduce the incidence of zoonotic diseases. We also provide an educational opportunity to students in the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine, who help at our weekly clinic as part of their rotation in the Veterinary Community Outreach Clerkship.

Services

St. Francis Pet Care provides free primary non-emergency veterinary care and services to responsible but homeless or very low income pet owners at our weekly Clinic in downtown Gainesville and through outreach to tent cities at Grace Marketplace/Dignity Village and other locations.



Primary veterinary services provided include exams, treatment, vaccinations, and microchip implantations. Our vet technicians draw blood, run heartworm tests, and do nail clipping. Patients are provided with medications for common ailments such as ear infections, skin conditions, and arthritis pain. Clients are requested to come in monthly to pick up doses

of flea and heartworm preventives, and they can get free pet food weekly. Pet supplies (leashes, collars, harnesses, coats, beds, cat litter, toys and treats) are offered when available.

A major objective of SFPC is to teach responsible pet ownership and to encourage the spaying and/or neutering of all cats and dogs. Clients are allowed to have no more than two animals in the program at any one time, and in order to be accepted as clients, all

animals in their household must be spayed or neutered. SFPC arranges and pays for intact animals to be sterilized and in some cases provides transportation to and from the surgery.

We also reserve a relatively small amount of money to reimburse local animal hospitals for pet care when our patients require diagnostics or treatment that is beyond our capability to provide at Clinic. Since funds are not available for all animals who might benefit, decisions about special cases are made consultatively by veterinarians and clinic staff.

Staff

St. Francis Pet Care is an all-volunteer organization.

Veterinary care at the Clinic is provided by local veterinarians and veterinary technicians who donate their time, and by veterinary students in the Veterinary Community Outreach Clerkship elective at the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine, supervised by faculty.

Non-veterinary functions are handled by other regular Clinic volunteers. These include dispensing flea and heartworm preventives under supervision, bagging and dispensing pet food and treats, scheduling spay/neuter surgeries, providing transportation to and from surgery, screening potential new clients, cleaning the clinic and outdoor area, maintaining inventories, and record keeping. A volunteer photographer takes photographs of patients and their owners for our files and for use in publications and social media; printed copies are given to clients.

Volunteers perform all administrative functions including paying bills, thanking donors and maintaining a donor database, and complying with state and federal reporting requirements. Other volunteers organize and/or participate in fundraising and promotional activities, such as tabling at events, designing brochures and other printed information, maintaining the website, and keeping an active social media presence.

Eligibility

SFPC only sees pets belonging to individuals who meet our eligibility criteria and have attended a screening and orientation session. To be eligible for SFPC services, a person must live in Alachua County, be homeless or have documented low income status, and

must own no unsterilized cats or dogs. We do not take college students into the program.

As documentation of low income status, we accept participation in SNAP (food stamps), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), referral from a physician or social worker, Section 8 housing, HUD/VASH, and Medicaid.

We do not take puppies as patients to discourage puppy mills and to encourage the adoption of older animals. If an otherwise eligible person has a pet of any age that is not spayed or neutered, we will arrange for the surgery, subsidize the expense, and if necessary provide transportation. If the animal is a puppy, we will handle the spay/neuter surgery and the initial round of vaccinations, but the owner must apply to enter the program when the dog is a year old.



Only two pets per household are allowed into the program, and we strongly discourage clients from acquiring more than two animals. Clients must not breed or sell animals.

Pet Food

In 2015 we distributed \$21,780 worth of good quality dog and cat food, most of it donated, to the animals in our program. The cost of pet food varies widely depending on the brand and where it was purchased, but using an average of \$1.50 per pound of kibble, this amounts to 14,550 pounds or 280 pounds per week.

Our arrangement with Pet Food Ltd, a large distributor in Tampa, ended early in the year as the company changed hands. One of our veterinarians was able to connect us with a group at Nestle Purina which has donated enough Purina ProPlan Savor to provide for about 70% of our pet food needs since May. Supplemented with donations from individuals and from pet food drives organized by supporters, this has allowed us to spend only \$765 from our budget on pet food. We are very grateful to Nestle Purina.

Grace Marketplace/Dignity Village

In 2014 the Empowerment Center opened on the campus of the old Gainesville Correction Institution, consisting of Grace Marketplace and Dignity Village. Grace

Marketplace is run by the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry. It has an indoor dormitory and an outdoor shelter pavilion together capable of housing nearly 100 people. Only service animals are allowed at Grace. Dignity Village is a tent city on adjacent property which experienced explosive growth in 2015. Dignity Village is not formally part of Grace Marketplace and is managed by the City of Gainesville.

Although both Grace and Dignity have transient populations, at any given time there are 30-40 pet dogs and cats on the campus. SFPC began offering limited veterinary outreach at the Empowerment Center in 2014 and made a major effort to expand and formalize outreach services in 2015. It has been a difficult process requiring a lot of trial and error, but substantial progress has been made.



At the beginning of the year, the greatest issue was establishing trust between outreach volunteers and the homeless population. Most were eager for their pets to get distemper and rabies shots, but some were reluctant to give flea and heartworm preventives to their dogs – one man even believed heartworm preventive actually caused heartworm disease. For the large part, this is no longer a problem, owing to the continued presence of volunteers from SFPC and the Home Van Pet Care Project, another local non-profit focused on pets of the homeless. Veterinarians, vet techs and lay volunteers from both organizations hold a prescheduled outreach clinic at Grace/Dignity monthly, and it is well attended.

Initially, many residents were unwilling to spay or neuter their animals, and we struggled to find a combination of carrots and sticks that would incent them to agree to surgery. During the course of the year a set of rules were instituted for Dignity Village, and SFPC along with the Home Van Pet Care Project was instrumental in getting a section of rules pertaining to animals included. Now the rules are clear that intact pets cannot remain at Dignity, and pet owners will generally cooperate with us to get their pets sterilized. Steve Belk, the Dignity Village Project Manager, has worked closely with SFPC and the Home Van Pet Care Project and effectively enforces the rules pertaining to pets.

Other pet-related rules stipulate that pets must be vaccinated for rabies and (for dogs) distemper and parvovirus. Dogs must be restrained when outside, either in a pen, on a leash or on a tie-out. They must be humanely treated and have access to water and shade.

While some issues have been largely overcome, others remain. Animals at Grace/Dignity change hands frequently, and it is hard to keep track of ownership. It is

not unusual for ownership of a pet to be contested, each party claiming the dog belongs to them. Record-keeping continues to be troublesome as SFPC pet records are maintained on paper. Most clients are only seen at our downtown Clinic building but those living at Grace/Dignity are also seen at the monthly outreach clinics. We instituted a system where animals at Grace/Dignity have two patient folders, one kept at the downtown clinic and one used at the outreach clinic. Keeping the two folders of records in sync has been a challenge, and we are looking at other ways of handling the situation.

Our long-standing policy of no dogs under one year old in the program has had to be bent to care for the puppies that inevitably show up at Dignity Village.

Better coordination is needed so that SFPC provides vaccines, flea and heartworm preventives, and other pharmaceuticals needed at the outreach clinic. The vets who staff that clinic should not be burdened with providing their own supplies.

New Building

At the start of the year we were actively investigating options for a new clinic building to put on property we purchased behind the St. Francis House. SFPC made the first payment on the lot in 2014 and the second, final payment in October 2015. A new building is necessary because the rental building that Clinic now occupies is unfit for



purpose. It is impossible to keep clean, as debris falls from the skylight, the roof leaks, and the ceiling tiles disseminate mold. It is so cramped that we need to use a food storage area as an exam room, and when Clinic is very busy, the bathroom is converted to an exam room by unfolding a wooden table over the sink. There is no functional heating, and although we installed a window air conditioning unit in 2015, it is not

adequate to cool the building in the summer. It is also relatively expensive, but other suitable rentals are not available in the downtown area. SFPC is committed to the neighborhood we are in, because it is proximate to the main (Rosa Parks) downtown bus station and convenient to our many clients in HUD/VASH, Section 8 housing and area camp sites.

SFPC volunteers investigated modular buildings, “pods” retired from use by the Alachua County schools as auxiliary classroom buildings, and even an old house available for the price of moving it off of the property it occupied. When these options were found to be less cost-effective than we’d hoped, attention shifted to new construction. A newly

formed Building Committee worked for months to draft a floor plan and exterior rendition of a new building that was ultimately approved by all involved. A capital campaign to fund the construction of the building will be initiated early in 2016.

Events and Public Relations

SFPC launched an email newsletter and sent three issues in 2015: Spring (June), Summer (August) and Fall (October). The newsletter goes to a list of 217 subscribers.

Daytime Dogs and Friends made us the beneficiary of the April “Canines and Cocktails for a Cause” at Chopstix Bistro. At this lovely event, people can sit outside with their dogs, sample free hors d'oeuvres, and order drinks and/or food, with the entry fee donated to a charity (in this case SFPC).

Over the Memorial Day weekend, the local-band-made-good Less Than Jake held a “Wake and Bake” music festival and promoted St. Francis Pet Care throughout. It turns out that the “Jake” in the band’s name refers to the drummer’s dog, and the musicians are all pet lovers. They encouraged fans to donate money, pet food and pet supplies.

SFPC volunteers tabled at the annual Pride Festival, the Downtown Festival and Art Show, and the first annual Animal Fair at the Carson Spring’s Wildlife Conservation Foundation Preserve.

More Than a Clinic

The mission of St. Francis Pet Care is to help keep people and their pets together. The primary way we accomplish this is by taking care of pets through our weekly veterinary clinic. Sometimes, however, we have to take care of people too.

Often our volunteers provide transportation. Nancy* lives at Grace Marketplace and has serious health issues. Volunteers have driven her to and from the emergency room several times, kennelled her dog while she was admitted to the hospital, and transported the dog to and from a local animal hospital. One thing we learn through SFPC is that the safety net that is supposed to catch people before they fall into poverty is fragile. Nancy is well educated and had a professional job before she became sick herself, lost her job and her health insurance, and became homeless. Now too ill to work, she awaits a ruling on her disability claim.

One of our clients, Diane*, has been trying to get approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for years based on her intellectual disability. Because of her disability, she was unable to complete the paperwork required. An SFPC volunteer helped her fill out and submit the application forms. She was then required to appear in court in Jacksonville for a hearing. We’re not certain how a homeless woman in

Gainesville with no transportation and an IQ low enough to qualify for disability was expected to get to the hearing, but an SFPC volunteer drove her there and back.

Karen*, a homeless woman who has been in our program for years, was diagnosed with cancer early in 2015. After her surgery she was able to stay in an independent living facility while undergoing radiation treatment. When she had to leave, sick and in pain, she was planning to walk several miles back to her tent. Two volunteers who were taking Karen's dog from Clinic back to her campsite discovered this almost by accident. They went out to the independent living facility, got Karen and drove her home to her tent. Subsequently our volunteers have driven her to the hospital for check-ups and to the pharmacy to pick up prescriptions.

Sally* had a terrible mouth. Her teeth were so bad they caused her pain, prevented her from eating properly, and made her hard to understand. She did not qualify for a local free dental clinic because she receives Medicaid, even though it is difficult to find dentists in our area who accept Medicaid. An SFPC volunteer found a Medicaid dentist, got Sally qualified over the phone, and drove her back and forth to the four visits required have all of her teeth pulled and dentures made. Unfortunately the dentures did not fit properly and must be remade, but at least Sally's gums have healed and her mouth is no longer a constant source of pain.

Occasionally our clients have to give up their pets despite our help. Although we aren't an animal rescue, we do our best to rehome these animals when we can, giving priority to other clients who may have lost a pet. In 2015 we were able to place half a dozen animals. Our favorite story concerns a gentleman who had to move out of town for health reasons to a place where he couldn't take his dog Lefty. Lefty is a sweet and playful boy who gets along with humans, dogs and cats, but he was difficult to place because he's old (12 years) and big (120 pounds) and had some health issues (a tumor on his eyelid). We were lucky to find him a wonderful foster home, and with funds from the Banfield Charitable Trust (see "Grants," below), we were able to reimburse a local veterinary practice to remove Lefty's bad eye. Unable to find a home for him through the usual local sources, we posted Lefty's plight on a national Facebook page, Susie's Senior Dogs, and got inquiries from around the state and the country. By the end of 2015 we had approved an adoptive home in Tennessee and were working to arrange transportation. (Watch our Facebook page for the end of this story!)

Occasionally we try to rehome animals that do not belong to our clients. A stray puppy roaming near the downtown library was brought to Clinic by a young man just passing by. Our vets checked that the dog was healthy and had no microchip, then took him to Oaks Animal Hospital where he was kenneled until he was adopted. In the summer a client brought in a puppy (not hers) who was very sick and clearly neglected, the only survivor of a litter of seven. Our veterinarians treated the puppy and a volunteer took her home and nursed her back to health. A few months later the very healthy and happy pup was adopted to a loving home.

The saddest part of our jobs is dealing with the death of pets, especially when the veterinarian has to recommend euthanasia. SFPC cannot euthanize at our Clinic, but we reserve a small amount in our budget to pay local veterinary practices to euthanize animals when that is the most humane alternative. In 2015 we euthanized five pets belonging to our clients.

In possibly the strangest, if not saddest, story of the year, a man who was not a client of our program came to Clinic one Tuesday and said he needed help with his old three-legged dog. The dog could not move her hindquarters, wasn't eating or drinking, and he feared she had to be put to sleep. An SFPC volunteer offered to drive the dog to a veterinarian after Clinic closed. By the time she got there several hours later, the man, clearly grieving, was drunk and belligerent and refused to let her near the animal. Our volunteer couldn't leave the dog in that state, so she called Animal Control. Animal Control called for a police escort. Before they got there, another patrol car visiting the same apartment complex for an unrelated reason had already restrained the pet's owner for disorderly conduct. The Animal Control officer gently moved the dog into our volunteer's car, and she took her to a veterinary hospital. In the end the dog was euthanized. The owner, sober and released from jail the next day, was apologetic and grateful for our help.

*These names have been changed to protect the privacy of our clients, but the stories are true.

Statistics

Clinic was held every Tuesday of the year from eight in the morning to noon, with veterinarians present from ten to noon. Screening and orientation sessions for new clients were held every other month. On average we scheduled 50 people for each session, and had about 50% attendance.

During 2015, we took in 180 new clients and 258 new patients (pets). At the end of 2015, SFPC had 398 active clients, up 61 from 2014, and 258 active patients, up 59 from 2014.



Only 93 patients were inactivated in 2015, about half as many as in 2014. Animals become inactive when their owners have not been to Clinic for twelve months. The most common reasons are that the owner has moved out of Alachua County or given

the pet to someone else, but not infrequently our clients find the resources to transfer to a private veterinary practice and request us to send copies of their veterinary records.

Clients and patients, 2015 compared to 2014

	2015	2014	Difference
Active Clients	398	337	+61
New Clients	180	Not tracked	N/A
New Patients	258	199	+59
Active Patients	679	513	+166
Inactivated Patients	93	199	-106
Inactive Patients	1740	1683	+57
Total Patients - Active and Inactive	2419	2196	+223

Eligibility for SNAP (Florida cash and food assistance, colloquially known as “food stamps”) remained the largest single qualifier for clients in our program. The number of clients in Section 8 housing nearly tripled and the number of homeless clients was up slightly, but other categories saw small decreases.

The homeless center at GRACE Marketplace and the campsite Dignity Village had only just opened at the end of 2014, when we had 5 clients residing there. At the end of 2015 that number was up to 22, offset by a decrease of 14 in homeless not living at Grace/DV. However, the population at Dignity Village has been fluid, with people moving in for some period of time, leaving for other tent sites, and in some cases returning. The end of year count is just a point-in-time snapshot.

Active client eligibility by category, 2015 compared to 2014

	2015	2014	Difference
SNAP	237	164	+73
Section 8	11	3	+8
Dr. Referral	15	25	-10
HUD/VASH	8	11	-3
IFH	4	7	-3
SSDI*	0	66	-66
SSI*	61	0	+61
VA Referral	15	17	-2
Verified Homeless (Not at Grace/DV)	25	39	-14
Verified Homeless (Grace/DV)	22	5	+17
Total	398	337	+61

* SSDI no longer accepted for eligibility in 2015. Adjusted to show number of clients on SSI instead, which we do still accept.

Counts of services provided were up significantly from 2014 totals. Pet visits to veterinarians increased more than 11%, while monthly distribution of flea and heartworm preventives was up 20%. Food distribution more than doubled, although it is possible some of this increase can be attributed to better record keeping. Clinic staff, however, were very aware of the increased demand for veterinary visits and medications. We would like to attribute the significant increase in distribution of flea and heartworm preventives to our active efforts at client education. It is also possible that a new policy initiated late in 2015 had a small effect and will have an even larger effect in 2016. If a dog is tested for heartworms and found negative, and the owner subsequently misses 60 days of heartworm preventive, the pet must be retested at the owner's expense (\$5.00).

When a client sees a vet at Clinic, s/he can also get heartworm and flea preventives and pet food. In our statistics, we simply record a vet visit. Similarly when a client doesn't need to see a vet but comes to pick up monthly heartworm and flea preventives, s/he can also get pet food. We record this as a "meds only" visit. Clients who need nothing but pet food are recorded as "food only" visits. As a result, the amount of flea/heartworm preventives and food distributed is underrepresented in the chart below.

Vet visits, meds pickup and food pickup, 2015 compared to 2014

	2015	2014	Difference
Client vet visits	840	748	+92
Dog vet visits	827	745	+82
Cat vet visits	210	185	+25
Total pet vet visits	1037	930	+107
Client visits meds only	1545	1266	+279
Dog meds	1770	1460	+310
Cat meds	510	428	+82
Total meds	2281	1894	+387
Client visits food only*	950	518	+432
Dog food only*	1035	359	+676
Cat food only*	556	355	+201
Total food distributions	1591	714	+877

*New category in 2014

We are grateful to have received a grant from Florida Animal Friends (FAF), the license plate grant, to spay and neuter pets of qualified individuals (people who met the residency and income qualifications of our program). The grant runs through August, 2016, and includes four partners: Operation PetSnip (formerly No More Homeless Pets), Micanopy Animal Hospital, Oaks Veterinary Hospital, and All Cats Healthcare Clinic. People referred to Operation PetSnip generally made their own appointments and provided their own transportation.

Pets of homeless clients and clients without transportation, and animals less than 20 weeks old were sterilized by the UF Veterinary Community Outreach Program. In these cases SFPC volunteers arranged the appointments and transported the animals to and from surgery.

Spay/Neuter 2015 Totals

	Male	Female	Total
UFVCOP - dogs	29	31	60
UFVCOP – cats	4	7	11
NMHP - dogs	4	8	12
NMHP – cats	1	0	1
Other FAF Partner	2	2	4
Total	40	48	88

Grants

SFPC received a 2014/15 **Gainesville Community Grant**, which reimburses \$20 for each client visit to a Clinic veterinarian up to a total of \$3000. The Gainesville Community Grant program is open to non-profit community organizations providing eligible services to needy individuals and families. Only services to residents of the city of Gainesville proper qualify for reimbursement.



A grant award from the **Banfield Charitable Trust (BCT)** added \$10,000 to the same amount put aside from our own budget for Special Cases. The BCT funds allowed us to treat 18 animals. Procedures performed included three dental exams with extractions, two tumor removals, ten advanced diagnostics (xrays, lab work, etc.), one amputation, one enucleation, and one emergency spay.

Florida Animal Friend awarded SFPC a 2015/2016 grant of \$13,130 to pay for the spaying and neutering of 120 dogs and cats. The surgeries are performed by our partners Operation PetSnip (formerly No More Homeless Pets), Micanopy Animal Hospital, Oaks Veterinary Hospital, and All Cats Healthcare Clinic.



Shout-outs

St. Francis Pet Care values all of our donors and supporters, many of whom have been friends of our organization for years. It is not possible to thank them all individually here, but we do give a great collective THANKS!

We would like to particularly acknowledge a few businesses and organizations that have helped us this year:

Archer Animal Hospital, for a large donation of pet food.

Chuck Siegel and **Daytime Dogs and Friends**, for featuring SFPC at Canines and Cocktails for a Cause.

Gainesville Animal Hospital East, for many donations of pet food, medicines and supplies throughout the year.

Michelle Hagan and the **Humane Society of Levy County**, for a large donation of food.

Hunter Printing in Lake City, FL for free and deeply discounted printing of our brochures.

Less than Jake, for an amazing Memorial Day Weekend.

The St. Louis office of **Nestle Purina**, for keeping us supplied with Purina ProPlan.

Manager Shawn Kelly and **PetSmart Millhopper**, for making us the beneficiary of two special PetSmart promotions.

S & G Pavement Marking, Inc. for many helpful things, including providing storage for pet food and driving to Tampa to pick up food from a distributor.

Joe Peurrung and the **Security Safe Company** for providing free security monitoring since we moved into our current rental building.

Temple Shir Shalom, for bagging and donating hundreds of pounds of pet food for their Mitzvah Day.

Joe Vasques and **SkyFrog Tree Service** for clearing a mountain of debris from our lot behind the St. Francis House.

St. Francis Catholic High School, whose student leadership has conducted a pet food drive for us each year for several years.

Anna Astengo and her colleagues in the **UF Health Shands Human Resources Department** for making us their special cause, organizing food drives and much more.



This young man, shown with his mom and two very happy clinic volunteers, asked his friends and family to give him donations for SFPC instead of birthday presents!

Balance Sheet

SFPC unaudited 2015 balance sheet as of December 31, 2015

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Bank checking account	25,388.44
PayPal account	2,714.80
UF Foundation	731.21
Total Current Assets	<hr/> 28,844.45
Fixed Assets	
Furniture and equipment	2,651.07
Total Fixed Assets	<hr/> 2,651.07
Other Assets	
Real property	55,000.00
Total Other Assets	<hr/> 55,000.00

TOTAL ASSETS **86,495.52**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts payable	4,049.54
Total current liabilities	<hr/> 4,049.54
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan	5,000.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<hr/> 5,000.00
Total Liabilities	9,049.54
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Net Assets	77,445.98
Total Net Assets	<hr/> 77,445.98
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	<u>86,495.52</u>