

For Immediate Release

For: Furkids Animal Rescue Shelters and Sanctuary and the Athens Area Humane Society

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New Georgia Interstate TransFUR Coalition

Giving Homeless Georgia Pets a Second Chance for Adoption in Northern States

(Atlanta, GA, May 29, 2018) — Some Georgia cats are learning to say ‘you’ instead of ‘y’all.’ That’s because Furkids Animal Rescue, Shelters, and Sanctuary and the Athens Area Humane Society have joined forces to launch the *Georgia Interstate TransFUR Coalition*, an innovative state-to-state animal adoption program. The purpose is to give homeless Georgia pets a second chance at adoption by sending them to Northern states. Cats have a higher chance of being adopted in Northern states than they do in Georgia, because Georgia has an overabundance of homeless cats, while states in the North need more cats to fill loving homes.



The Coalition has sent seven initial transports—a total of 263 rescued cats—from Georgia to animal shelters in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania during the past few weeks. The organization has identified additional shelters in Michigan, Ohio, and Rhode Island, and is continuing to identify more shelters to take in homeless animals from Georgia. The coalition scheduled its next delivery of 50 animals to Massachusetts today, May 29, with weekly transports to follow. The TransFUR van left the Furkids cat shelter Monday and is expected to arrive at Dakin Humane Society, in Springfield, MA, today May 29.

"The animal overpopulation problem in the south, and Georgia, is multi-layered, and it will take a multi-layered approach to help stop the death of healthy adoptable animals. The Athens Area Humane Society is actively attacking the problem by offering low or no cost surgeries to owned animals, educating the public to the problems associated with pet population issues, offering a food bowl program, and continuing our adoption programs," says Jane Stewart, Executive Director, Athens Area Humane Society. "Being able to transport cats from animal control facilities, where their lives are in danger, to no-kill shelters in the Northeast has helped us not only save more lives, but also help get the animal control facilities involved, to show them another life-saving option for the cats. The staff of the Athens Area Humane Society is so happy to be able to help facilitate this program. It feels good to be able to save more animals."

The TransFUR program initially is focusing on cats because there are so few organizations that transport cats from Georgia, and the 2018 kitten season is in high gear. The participating organizations hope to expand the program to transport dogs in the future.

“At Furkids, our staff and extensive volunteer network are exploring ways to be more effective, and save more pets every single day,” said Samantha Shelton, founder and CEO of Furkids. “Through our conversations with other shelters as we sought to share best practices, we were shocked to learn just how few cats some northern shelters have available for adoption throughout most of the year. We’re so accustomed to dealing with a population surplus, especially during spring and summer ‘kitten season’ here in Georgia, that the idea of transporting homeless pets to states with a much higher demand for cats to adopt just made sense. It’s a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with like-minded organizations, and we are thrilled that the Athens Area Humane Society shares our desire to do whatever it takes to find loving homes for all of the animals in our care.”

As of today, the TransFUR Coalition will have transported eight groups of cats and kittens, totaling 313 animals, in a van that was generously donated to Furkids in 2017, and that will serve as the flagship TransFUR vehicle. For each transport, animal control facilities with overpopulations are identified, and animals are pulled, in some cases emptying county shelters. The coalition organizations and the partnering animal shelters have provided veterinary care, microchipping, inoculations, and many animals are spayed/neutered before they are transported so the cats arrive at their new destination ready for adoption.

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ABOUT FURKIDS

Furkids, headquartered in Atlanta, GA, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization that operates the largest cage-free, no-kill shelter in the Southeast for rescued cats and Sadie’s Place, a no-kill shelter for dogs. Furkids also operates one of the only facilities in the Southeast dedicated to the care of FIV positive cats. The Furkids mission is to rescue homeless animals, provide them with the best medical care and nurturing environment while working to find them a forever home. Furkids heals the whole animal, physically and emotionally, restoring its health and its spirit.

Furkids has rescued and altered and adopted more than 25,000 animals since its founding in 2002.

Approximately 1,000 animals are in the Furkids program today, in the Furkids shelters, PetSmart, Petco, and Pet Supermarket adoption centers, and more than 400 foster homes in the Atlanta area.

Furkids is the only animal rescue organization in metro Atlanta that allows children of all ages to volunteer. Furkids volunteer programs are designed to restore the health and spirits of injured and homeless animals while providing healing opportunities for volunteers who are strengthened by the bond of love and care between humans and animals. For more information about our volunteer opportunities and programs, visit www.furkids.org.

ABOUT ATHENS AREA HUMANE SOCIETY

The Athens Area Humane Society is a donor supported no-kill 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to lowering area euthanasia rates through adoption, spay/neuter, and pet retention programs. It is so important to focus on the rescue and care of animals who would otherwise be euthanized. We are a group of animal welfare activists who started Athens Area Humane Society nearly three decades ago. Our mission is to rescue, spay/neuter, and find homes for animals in Georgia and beyond.