

Blog Post

A New Home for Hope: Humane Society of West Alabama Expands with Cage-Free Cat House and Animal Care Campus

For more than fifty years, the Humane Society of West Alabama (HSWA) has been a cornerstone of compassion in Tuscaloosa. Founded in 1971, the no-kill, all-volunteer rescue group has rehomed thousands of dogs and cats, offering second chances to animals who might otherwise be lost to overcrowded shelters. This October, HSWA celebrates its most ambitious step yet, the grand opening of a state-of-the-art 13-acre campus in Cottdale, complete with a cage-free Cat House and expanded facilities for canine care.

Tina Miller, HSWA board chair, said, “The next four years will bring much needed expansion of HSWA’s ability to provide animal rescue, care, and adoption services to a growing population of homeless and neglected cats and dogs. We call this bold, aggressive action plan to develop a new Animal Adoption Center for Tuscaloosa County Unleash the Possibilities.” The expansion, part of the Unleash the Possibilities campaign, represents a \$3.38 million investment in humane care and sustainable growth for the organization and the community it serves.

The new Cat House will double HSWA’s capacity, housing up to 80 cats in open-concept rooms with sunny patios and climbing structures. Visitors can meet cats in relaxed settings designed to showcase their personalities, helping potential adopters make better matches. The Cat House will feature fenced outdoor play yards, indoor-outdoor runs, and live-in caretakers who ensure consistent care and enrichment.

According to Executive Director Brian Gaerity, “The farm and the new cat house (which will be officially known as the ‘Hudson House for Feline Care,’ after the primary donor for the

house) will allow us to care for more cats, more efficiently, and in a substantially better environment for both humans and cats.” The campus “will mark the first time in our history that all of our facilities will be in one location... We have designed the space to be flexible, easy to maintain and highly resistant to odors and damage. The house and parking area are also ADA compliant.”

HSWA’s growth comes at a critical time; over 15,000 animals were euthanized in Alabama in 2022, underscoring the importance of no-kill shelters like HSWA. Partnerships between HSWA and the Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter have already helped reduce local euthanasia rates by over 80% since 2016. “It will provide more welcoming space and capacity for our animals, our volunteers who care for them, and our guests who seek to adopt,” Miller said.

Community support is the heartbeat of HSWA. Every dollar donated goes directly toward animal care, and volunteers power every adoption, feeding, and rescue effort. “The Humane Society of West Alabama is excited about the opportunities that lie ahead, and we are committed to meeting the challenge of providing animal rescue, care and adoption for Tuscaloosa County,” Miller added.

“When the new dog barn opens next year, we will have achieved something we could only dream about a few years ago: a consolidated campus of high-quality facilities for dogs and cats that will create substantially more opportunities for abused, neglected and abandoned animals to become healthy, happy and long-term companions to loving humans. We want all dogs and cats to thrive side-by-side with people who care for them. Our new facilities will get us, and the West Alabama community, closer to that vision,” Gaerity said.

You can help make that vision a reality. Visit <https://humanesocietyofwa.org/> to donate, volunteer, or adopt a new furry friend today. Together, Tuscaloosa can truly unleash the possibilities for animals in need.

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Images:

- HSWA's new Cat House in Cottdale
- Cats lounging in cage-free spaces
- Volunteers greeting visitors at the new campus