

Humane Society of West Alabama
News Release

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For Immediate Release

A New Chapter for Tuscaloosa's Animals in Need

Humane Society of West Alabama Opens Cage-Free Cat House and Expanded Campus This
October

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA, OCT. 9, 2025 — On a once-empty patch of land in Cottondale, the Humane Society of West Alabama (HSWA) is writing a powerful new chapter in animal welfare. Beginning this October, the nonprofit will open a state-of-the-art cage-free Cat House, part of a major expansion aimed at transforming how West Alabama rescues, cares for, and rehomes its most vulnerable pets.

Set on a newly acquired 13-acre campus, the facility will serve as the region's first dedicated, open-concept adoption center for cats, complete with sunlit cat patios, interactive indoor spaces, and group lounges. The move represents more than just a new building; it's a step toward addressing the urgent need for humane, long-term solutions to overcrowding, abandonment, and pet homelessness in the Tuscaloosa area.

Brian Gaerity, executive director, said, "It 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."

Founded in 1971, HSWA has remained a steadfast no-kill, all-volunteer rescue group saving thousands of cats and dogs over the years. The organization has operated from small, separated facilities, but the Cottondale campus marks a transformational shift in how HSWA serves the community.

“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,” said Tina Miller, HSWA board chair. “We call this bold, aggressive action plan to develop a new Animal Adoption Center for Tuscaloosa County Unleash the Possibilities.”

Under the campaign titled “Unleash the Possibilities,” HSWA has launched a \$3.38 million initiative to consolidate all services onto one site. In addition to the new Cat House, the campus will also feature a repurposed Home for Canine Care, with live-in caretakers, fenced outdoor play yards, indoor-outdoor dog runs, and interactive meet-and-greet spaces. “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.

HSWA’s new Cat House will double its capacity, allowing the organization to house up to 80 cats and 22 dogs at any given time. The new setup reduces stress on animals, facilitates more successful adoptions, and makes the shelter experience more humane for everyone involved. “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,” said Gaerity. Cats are grouped into shared living rooms with access to outdoor patios, climbing structures, and

soft resting areas, which will help potential adopters see the cats' personalities in a relaxed, social setting.

The canine side of the facility will also benefit from upgrades, including larger play areas and more structured meet-and-greet spaces where potential adopters can interact with dogs one-on-one. The campus will also offer expanded parking, signage, and volunteer areas, improving efficiency and experience for the many residents who donate their time, energy, and resources. Gaerity stated "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."

Since 2003, HSWA has facilitated over 2,000 cat adoptions and more than 1,600 dog adoptions. "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 said.

The new Cat House and expanded campus will open to visitors beginning in October, offering a first look at the upgraded facilities and programs. The opening presents unique photo and video opportunities, including footage of cats exploring their new cage-free environments, dogs playing in fenced outdoor areas, behind-the-scenes views of animal care routines, and interactions between volunteers and adoptable pets. Guided tours of the new facilities will also be available. Key spokespeople for interviews include Tina Miller, board chair; Brian Gaerity,

executive director; Grace Harwell, communications coordinator; and long-time Humane Society of West Alabama (HSPA) volunteers and adopters. On-site information and interview requests can be coordinated through Grace Harwell at grace.harwell@hswa.org or (770) 757-2103.

“We want the cat house, and the entire farm, to be as welcoming to people as it is to cats,” said Gaerity. Members of the media are encouraged to visit the new Cottdale campus, cover this significant development in West Alabama’s animal welfare story, and help spread awareness about HSPA’s mission.

To schedule interviews or arrange a tour, please contact:

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