



HASS Report: Dec 2020–Jan 2021

HASS Pilot Shelter, BARCS, Featured in National News Because of New Temporary Boarding Program



After a massive natural gas explosion of several homes in Baltimore, Maryland last October, one of the injured homeowners and his dog were finally reunited this week. BARCS Animal Shelter was able to offer their support by giving temporary housing to the dog, Barak, while his dad recovered in the hospital from his injuries caused by the explosion.

Foster families stepping up during the pandemic to take in healthy pets that do not need to be in the shelter has had a ripple effect on people and pets in crisis situations, like Barak's. With more empty kennels in shelters, animals in need of temporary boarding have a place to go. Kudos to the BARCS team for offering this new temporary boarding program that kept Barak and his dad together.

What a powerful illustration of the power of the HASS model of animal sheltering.



Big News

- **New EC members:** [Dr. Jyothi Robertson](#) and [Dr. Michael Blackwell](#) have joined the Executive Committee.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Glossary:** The [Human Animal Support Services Glossary](#), created by the [HASS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee](#), is now publicly available on the HASS website.
- **New Staff:** [Katie Jarl](#) began in her role as the Director of Government Affairs and Policy. [Jamie Case](#) started in the role of Data Coordinator.
- **Technology Catalogue:** The Tools and Technology Working Group created a [HASS Technology Catalog](#), allowing animal shelters quick access to the technology solutions that exist for each operational area and program in their organization.



- [The Keeping Families Together Eviction Response Toolkit](#) is publicly available. This resource is a comprehensive toolkit for shelter professionals to help prevent family separation of human-animal families facing housing insecurity or eviction.
 - This toolkit was a collaborative effort among HASS, HSUS and AAWA, and written with the help of the Keeping Families Together HASS working group.
 - Thanks to the funder of this project, Spring Point Partners.
- The HASS Elements Toolkits, jam-packed with references and sample documents, are being completed by the HASS team and working groups.
 - Toolkits are scheduled to be publicly available on the HASS website in February with the launch of our new Learning Center.
 - Thanks to all the working group members and pilot shelters who reviewed these documents and provided valuable feedback.
- More than 260 new organizations signed up to receive implementation support for elements toolkits that will be released in February.
- The HASS project now touches 50 US states!

Did you know?

- From the data we received from the Tier 1 shelters, we learned most have excellent resources for in-shelter behavior support and enrichment for shelter dogs.
 - Most of the shelters have less developed resources when it comes to community behavior resources and peer-to-peer support for both foster caregivers and adopters. Save rates and average lengths of stay are similar for cats and dogs.
- For the calendar year of [2020 our pilot shelters saw a 37% decrease in intake for dogs and 40% decrease in intake for cats](#) as compared to 2019.

HASS Working Groups

In December and January, 50 new industry professionals joined HASS working groups, bringing the total number of project participants to over 700. HASS now has 41 states represented within our 36 working groups.

Media and Engagement

- 2,656 people are now following HASS on [social media](#) and 19,628 people are subscribed to receive HASS and AmPAI updates. People viewed [HASS blogs](#) 2,970 times.
- HASS and HASS Pilot Shelters were featured in the media several times, including stories about COVID relief initiatives at [Lifeline Animal Project](#) (twice!) and [Pima Animal Care Center](#). Our funders were featured at [InsidePhilanthropy.com](#), and [Kristen Hassen](#) was featured for receiving the 2020 Maddie's Hero Award.
- HASS published one blog in January: [Shelter pets still need you! Volunteer positions that every shelter could use right now.](#)

HASS and American Pets Alive! (AmPAI) December/January Educational Opportunities

- HASS hosted three webinars in December including an [interview with Katja M. Guenther](#), author of *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* a [cat intake webinar sponsored by Best Friends](#), and a presentation on [Building Programs Based on Intake Data](#).



- In January HASS hosted the [Let's Talk About Cats](#) webinar with Monica Frenden and Peter Wolf, and [a second webinar with Dr. Katja M. Guenther](#) to continue unpacking *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals*.
- HASS hosted three Wednesday Summits that covered the following topics:
 - [Keeping Families Together](#)
 - [The Eviction Crisis](#)
 - [Partnering with Domestic Violence Organizations](#)
 - [Keeping Families Together Eviction Response Toolkit](#)
 - [Transforming a Shelter Clinic into a Foster Clinic](#)
 - [Supported Self-Rehoming](#)
- Maddie's Monday calls hosted by HASS broke a record with over 175 attendees joining our first call of 2021.
 - These calls included a community engagement discussion with Shakela Brown (HRA) and Danitra Campbell (Cinci CARE), an interview about removing barriers to adoption with One Tail at a Time, an overview of the KFT Eviction Response Toolkit, and a celebration with the [Million Cat Challenge](#) for reaching their three million cats saved benchmark.
- Friday Leadership Round Up calls included an interview with Katja Guenther, updates from national organizations, and a discussion with Red Rover and Presspoint CRM.
- To view the recorded Monday and Friday calls and to see the schedule of upcoming events, visit the [HASS Calendar of Events](#).
- The [Maddie's Learning Academy Instructors](#) offer support to HASS partner shelters. They are now scheduling support services, remote visits, and learning opportunities.

Pilot Shelter Updates

- **BARCS** in Baltimore (Director, Jen Brause) Barak, a very special shelter resident, was reunited with his dad after nearly four months of emergency boarding at BARCS. Back in October, Baltimore made national headlines when several neighboring houses in our city exploded. One of the homes belonged to Barak and his dad and by a miracle they narrowly survived the disaster. Barak was transferred to BARCS and his dad to shock trauma where he was put into an induced coma for life threatening burns. With more empty kennels in their shelter because of the increase in their foster program, animals in need of temporary boarding have a place to go in the shelter. Kudos to the BARCS team for offering this new temporary boarding program that kept Barak and his dad together. What a powerful illustration of the power of the HASS model of animal sheltering. Watch the video [here](#).
- **Cabot Animal Support Services** (Director, Mike Wheeler) has been fundraising for microchip scanners to be placed at each fire station and feed store in the city. This would mean that community members would not have to wait until the shelter is open to have a found pet scanned for a microchip.
- **Charlotte Mecklenburg** (Director, Dr. Josh Fisher) finished the year at a 90% Live Release Rate for 2020. Dr. Fisher credits this to everyone working together to make Charlotte-Mecklenburg a sustainable community for pets and people.
- **Cincinnati Animal Care** (Director, Carolyn Evans) Animal control officers are beginning to implement HASS approaches to field services, providing support for struggling families. In one



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instance, officers provided a dog house to a family rather than simply citing the family for lack of shelter for their pet.

- **Dallas Animal Services** (Director, Ed Jamison) achieved a live release rate of 90.1%, the highest it has been in a single calendar year in DAS history! Home To Home™ Dallas has seen over 180 pet rehoming submissions since launching in late November. In December, DAS hired a new Field Volunteer Coordinator whose role will be to increase outreach in the Dallas Community utilizing field specific volunteers and an additional Manager II in field to oversee new HASS related programs that will ultimately help keep pets and people together.
- **Denver Animal Protection** (Director, Alice Nightengale) After 30+ years, Denver voters voted to allow pit bull-type dogs in the City with a permit. Denver Animal Protection started public breed assessments and issuing restricted-breed permits on January 2. Additionally, DAP can now directly adopt pit bulls (previously, they had to be transferred to other organizations for adoption). The very first pit bull, Gumdrop, was adopted the first weekend.
- **El Paso Animal Services** (Interim Director, Ramon Herrera) celebrated the highest-ever live-release rate of 92.54% (December.) EPAS also won the [2020 Diane & Bob Hoover Innovation Award for the Pet Finder Map](#), an interactive tool available to the community that offers a centralized location to view lost and found pets as pinpoints on the city's map as well as free microchip scanning locations.
- **Fresno Humane Animal Services** (Director, Teri Rockhold) was contacted by a woman who had been turned away by several local shelters and veterinary offices for medical assistance for her dog that had been hit by a car. She had resigned herself to the fact that she'd have to relinquish "Fatso" to get him the care he needed. Instead of having to give up her loving pet, FHAS HASS'ed this situation and Fatso saw a veterinarian partner. After several x-rays it was determined that all Fatso needed was a round of antibiotics and some restricted activity.
- **Greenville County Animal Care** (Director, Shelly Simmons) held their biggest holiday fundraiser to date. They were able to raise enough money to start building a mobile shelter, which will allow them to support families by taking the shelter to them and provide veterinary care, spay/neuter, food assistance and more.
- **Guilford County Animal Services** (Director, Jorge Ortega) have partnered with two local low cost spay/neuter clinics who are working to help their community pet owners in keeping their pets safe and healthy in the homes. These pet owners also have received food, litter, and pet beds through their Gate City Pet Project. To date, 30 owned pets and 90 community cats have been spayed and neutered.
- **Humane Rescue Alliance** (Director, Lisa LaFontaine) The Humane Rescue Alliance continued with a 100% success rate for their MART (Missing Animal Response Team) Program. MART is activated when a foster or newly adopted animal gets lost. Using flyers, community networking, field response and a strong group of volunteers, a lost dog named Luna was safely returned to her new adoptive home. Luna took a big nap and her owners were relieved to have her back safe and sound.
- **Kansas City Pet Project** (Director, Teresa Johnson) Building on the HASS foster-centric model, KC Pet Project increased their foster program by 44% in 2020 to 2,513 cats and 1,891 dogs.
- **Los Angeles City Animal Services** (Director, Brenda Barnette) The Los Angeles City Council approved the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) regarding free-roaming cats at their December 9 meeting. This has been a long journey and LA Animal Services is grateful to the Mayor's Office, the City Council, the Department of Engineering, the City Attorney's Office, the Board of Animal Services Commissioners, ICF Consulting, Margaret Slater, DVM, Ph.D., Senior Director,



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Research Strategy & Research at the ASPCA®, and the CAOs Office with special notice of Council members Koretz and Blumenfield for their support. LA Animal Services also reached a milestone at the close of 2020 by achieving a 90.5% save rate.

- **Lifeline Animal Project** (Director, Rebecca Guinn) With the increase of animals in foster care, they extended care beyond the shelter and into the community. Fulton County Animal Services clinic team brought vet care directly to Pets for Life clients' homes. In December they visited 32 pets in their homes to receive simple veterinary care such as vaccinations, ear and skin treatments, and exams. They are gearing up to start their Safety Net Foster Program, and they are doing so by being part of a research project being led by Virginia Tech and Arizona State University. They Expect to launch and be up and running by 1/31. Their euthanasia numbers are significantly down and their number of animals in shelter has remained low, thanks to incorporating behavior programs, focusing on fostering, and great community outreach efforts by animal control officers, the Pets for Life team, and Community Caseworkers.
- **Michigan Humane** (Director, Matt Pepper) implemented a new Safety Net Foster program. They will be focusing on the housing crisis in Detroit and establishing practices to assist in keeping families together. MH had more than 90 foster families sign up to be a part of this program. With the support of Maddie's Fund, MH also kicked off their Navigator training, where 20 of their customer facing staff (clinic, shelter and community outreach) will receive a 5 week (90 minutes/week) training on assisting families on a wide variety of human and animal health and basic needs services.
- **Oakland Animal Services** (Director, Ann Dunn) Oakland Animal Services is continuing to roll out their Finder Foster Program. They started the pilot program in October 2020 and so far 17 animals have been kept out of the shelter via the Finder Foster Program: 3 were reunited with their owner, 2 were transferred to a partner organization, and 12 were adopted by the finder or finder's friend.
- **Palm Valley Animal Society** (Director, Donna Casamento) was able to increase staffing in their foster department as a result of funds acquired through the Maddie's Fund HASS Grant. As a result, their foster placements increased by 70% during a two week period and are continuing to grow. Over the last month, they have been rebuilding the entire intake program and identifying specific data collection points to better enable us to track our progress as they "HASSit".
- **Pima Animal Care Center** (Director, Monica Dangler) were able to [reunite a family with their cats!](#) Mom was hospitalized since September for cardiac arrest. She lost her job, home, but not her cats. Their outreach team of volunteers ["adopted" a family for Christmas](#) and are also [handing out packs](#) for folks in crisis or who are experiencing homelessness.
- **San Diego Humane Society** (Director, Gary Weitzman) has added a housing support tile to their community support services page of our website. This section contains our new housing FAQ, recently updated pet-friendly housing list and other useful links. In December SDHS began distributing pet jackets to their Community Pet Pantry partners and directly to community members. In 30 days they gave out 1,800 jackets and sweaters, many of them going to unhoused pet owners. On the data tracking side they made some adjustments to their database for COVID specific relinquishment and emergency boarding data tracking. This data will help identify and prepare preventative programs and areas of focus.