

MOST APATHETIC ANIMAL SHELTER AWARD

The Pool

Many shelters around the country were competing for the dishonor, however Bartow County's lack of effort, organization and programs, high euthanasia rates, lack of medical care, and mismanagement of the almost one million dollar budget made them a contender from the onset.

Key Winning Points

Bartow County's refusal to review current shelter practices or consider adopting a more up to date, effective, and humane shelter management program quickly allowed them to move to the top of "The Most Apathetic Animal Shelter Award" contenders.

Numbers Don't Add Up

Peter Olson, County Administrator:

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Most Apathetic Shelter

R.U. Sikuvit, I Am, a vocal animal advocacy group working toward responsible and accountable shelter management, awarded Bartow County Animal Control "The Most Apathetic Animal Shelter Award" today.

As the organization contractually obligated to provide "programs and services for the humane treatment of animals within Bartow County", Etowah Valley Humane Society shares in this distinction.





Money Used to Line the Pockets of People

The overwhelming amount of the monies Bartow County allocated to care for the animals in their charge went in the pockets of the people charged with providing programs and services for the humane treatment of animals within Bartow County.

- 83.5% Employee Pay and Benefits
- \$697,998.49

No Operating Charter

"There is not an operating Charter."

Employees Instructed

"Devote your time and attention to the best interest of the County Government."

County Administrator

Peter Olson

"It is unfortunate we have to have an animal control department at all, because all the problems come from irresponsible pet owners."

The Numbers Don't Add Up

Peter Olson, County Administrator

Rescue Groups Supporting the Shelter Ask

Rescue groups supporting the shelter have been asking Bartow County to better utilize not only the budget at their disposal, but the resources available to them from the community to lower disease rampant in their facility, re-home surrendered animals, manage the unwanted animal population, return more lost pets to their family, and, among other items, lower the euthanasia rate, one of the highest in the Metro Atlanta area.

The Set Up...Is A Set Up

The set up of Bartow County's Animal Management Program is the root of the many problems prevalent as it provides the opportunity for the organizations charged with responsible animal management to hide what's really occurring in Bartow County.

It's a sore point within the community, too, with many members not understanding there are two separate entities, two separate sets of books.

To Clarify The Separate Entities

Bartow County Animal Control (BCAC) intakes unwanted, stray and/or lost animals.

Etowah Valley Humane Society (EVHS) is contractually obligated to provide "effective programs aimed toward encouraging adoption and proper care of (these) domestic animals...(and) such programs and services...be expanded and improved".

What's The Problem?

The only way out of BCAC is through EVHS - through an effective program. But, EVHS, is a small rescue on it's own focused on placing the animals in their charge while doing what they can for the animals at BCAC.

EVHS doesn't have the resources, knowledge or ability to handle all the animals of Bartow county.

Two Entities Reporting As One

The opportunity to hide behind one another is exactly what's occurring in Bartow. EVHS speaks for BCAC, reporting numbers without specifying the facility those numbers are associated with.

Georgia Sunshine Laws

"All private entities that carry out governmental functions are subject to Open Records provisions of the Sunshine Laws."

Cent. Atlanta Progress, Inc. v. Baker, 278 Ga. App. 733 (2006)

Transparency

"After all, transparency and access to government are critical to a thriving democracy."

Sam Olens Attorney General of Georgia January 2014

Openness:

"Georgia has a long and proud tradition of encouraging openness in governmental meetings and records. As Chief Justice Weltner stated in the case of Davis v. City of Macon: "Public men and women are amenable 'at all times' to the people, they must conduct the public's business out in the open."

A Citizen's Guide to Open Government

The Georgia Constitution:

The Georgia Constitution states that public officials are "servants of the people."

What are The Numbers of Each Entity?

Under Georgia Sunshine Laws/Open Records Act the information was requested.

EVHS refused to comply: "EVHS is a private 501c3 non-profit organization (Tax ID#: 58 2261919) and not subject to (such) requests."

Even though EVHS carries out government functions for Bartow County - the only way out of BCAC - EVHS doesn't see the obligation to disclose what's happening to these animals.

As far as The County, Peter Olson responded, "I have attached a summary of euthanasia... the numbers do not add up."

It's Bartow County's Dirty Little Secret no one wants to tell.

Then There's The Matter of Mis-Reporting

"We are now into our 8th consecutive year of reducing euthanasia from a high of 82% in 2010 to 20% now." Bryan Canty, EVHS.

"We were only two lives away from designating the entire county "no-kill!" Bryan Canty, Director of EVHS.

"Over the last several years, the overall euthanasia rate has declined from 82% to 29%." Peter Olson, County Administrator.

"We haven't lost any this year." EVHS employee.

Who's Telling The Truth?

Better yet, what happened to the animals making up the nine percent difference between EVHS and BCAC reporting? The 350+ animals no one cares to account for?

If one were to believe the other statements what happened to the 1,000+ animals unaccounted for last year?

What Was Done to Drastically Reduce The Numbers?

There are No Effective Programs or Services in Place at BCAC.

No animals get treated. No pet adoptions allowed. No foster programs. No owner reclaim programs. No effective, advertised or promoted low cost spay/neuter programs.

EVHS doesn't have much more to offer, though contractually, should.

GA SPOT

<http://www.spotsociety.org/shelter-stats/>

Owner Reclaims

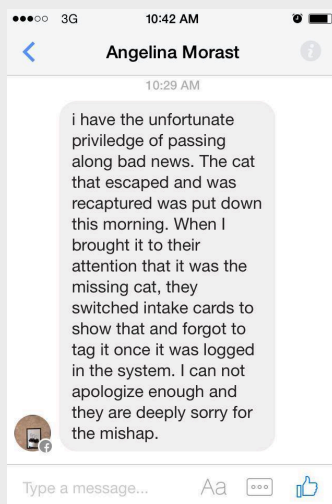


Malena Evans

There is no "public list".

EVHS employee.

Forgot or Apathetic?



Not There?



Rescues Supporting County

Rescues supporting Bartow County do the work of EVHS pulling over 1,800 animals last year, over 40% of the number of intakes at BCAC GA SPOT reports. An increase since 2010 of over 150%.

And EVHS Treat Rescues Doing Their Work with Hostility

"I've tolerated your ignorance, but now it just appears you seriously lack grey matter." The Director of EVHS, Bryan Canty, in response to a rescue's complaint BCAC euthanized 8 animals the rescue had confirmed a commitment to - not 1st or 10th time this has occurred.

"Any negativity will be removed and the person will be warned then banned." EVHS.

EVHS, Bryan Canty, has banned many rescues from rescuing animals at BCAC after expressing their concerns with the broken system.

"My bark is NOT worse than my bite!" Bryan Canty, Director of EVHS, in response to a call for change in Bartow.

What Bartow County Can't Tell The Public

Bartow County can not tell the public what is happening to the animals while in their charge or what ultimately happens to them.

Not All Animals Are Reported

Not all animals are reported as being in the charge of Bartow County Animal Control. Even healthy adoptable animals don't make the list provided to rescues.

Animals disappear from the list provided. Animals posted as being available to rescue disappear without an explanation.

Duplicate intake numbers are issued - two different animals assigned the same number.

Adequate Time Not Provided

Owner surrender cats have 48 hours from time of intake to rescue transport or euthanized.

False Test Results Reported

Cats are reported as testing positive for FeLV or FIV, but on retest negative results are obtained.

Money Spent on Animals

Less was spent on food and medicine for the animals than was spent on groundskeeping.

\$12,709.52 of the almost million dollar budget was spent on veterinarian fees...

Which includes the cost to euthanize over 1,100 animals.

Director of Humane Society

Bryan Canty:

"When I took over the director's position...on June 28, 2010, I had no idea what I would be in for..I had no prior experience in the animal field and was not an animal person."

Doesn't Respect People Either:

Charged with simply battery: Pulls pants down in front of others on court ordered female probationer serving sentence at EVHS.

EVHS fires Canty, but quickly rehires after lawsuit quietly goes away.



Allegations of Dog Fighting

Missing, hidden, disappearing, incorrectly categorized, unaccounted animals AND allegations of Dog Fighting.

The Director of EVHS sporting a personal logo of crossbones and a vicious red eyed fighting dog. Threatening comments and behaviors.



"Perhaps it's time they learned that they shouldn't hunt that which they cannot kill." Director, Bryan Canty.

Motive, Opportunity and Means

An in-house incinerator in use.

Marking Territory?

Is Canty just marking his territory with his threats or is the Dog Fighting allegation one that should be investigated?

At The Very Least

With Canty's track record, even if Dog Fighting can't be proven, his behavior should not be tolerated by Bartow County.

Is It All About The Money?

From Dogfighting or The Budget?

The overwhelming amount of the monies Bartow County allocated to care for the animals in their charge went in the pockets of the people charged with providing programs and services for the humane treatment of animals within Bartow County.

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Compared To:

\$12,709.52 spent on the animals - including the cost to euthanize them.

DeKalb County

DeKalb County had a similar problem to that Bartow County is now experiencing. High kill rates, low adoptions, record number animal surrenders...same issues.

What Did DeKalb Do?

They brought in an organization that was capable of designing and implementing:

Effective programs aimed toward encouraging adoption and proper care of domestic animals.

They expanded & improved the programs to meet the growing demand for such services.

The same thing EVHS is contracted to do, but isn't.

LifeLine Animal Project

LifeLine Was Founded with The Single Purpose:

To end the euthanasia of healthy and treatable dogs and cats in metro Atlanta shelters.

And, Lifeline has been wildly successful – saving nearly 40,000 animals in the last three years of managing DeKalb and Fulton County Animal Services.

Bartow County and Metro Atlanta

Bartow County is no longer a frontier land that can do away with nuisance animals appearing on their landscape.

According to their Chamber of Commerce they are a “vibrant community”, have “country charm”, “international sophistication” and an “unmatched quality of life”.

It's Time For Bartow County

It's time for Bartow County to bring that “country charm” and “international sophistication” to the animals of this county as well.

How?

There's lots of ways to make this system better. But, it starts with losing That Apathy the Bartow County Government lives in.

Give The Animals and Rescues a Life Line

There's a plethora of successful shelter management programs throughout the country. And, as the rescues have proven, there's lots of help out there, lots of folks that want to aid the animals of Bartow.

LifeLine Animal Project

Bartow County doesn't have to bring in LifeLine Animal Project, but the animals and rescues supporting these animals Need a Life Line.

Enough Already

Enough Apathy. Enough Hiding. Enough Misreporting. Enough Threatening. Enough Mismanaging. Enough Killing. Enough Lining the Pockets of The People Charged with The Care of These Animals.

It's Time

It's time to have a responsible, ethical and caring organization in charge of the money and care of the animals of Bartow County.

Out with BCAC and EVHS.

It's Your County

Assess for yourself if the way in which BCAC, EVHS and Bartow County Government act in regard to its animals. Is it in accordance with your own values, ethics, morals and the responsibility you carry as a member of this community? If it doesn't, Speak Up.