

2015 Annual Report



St. Croix Animal Welfare Center
their hearts are in our hands



2015 has been a year of great change for the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center. New leadership, programs and policies have lead to historic increases in lifesaving and renewed promise of continued success.

The Board of Directors and staff extend their deepest gratitude to our donors, supporters and volunteers.

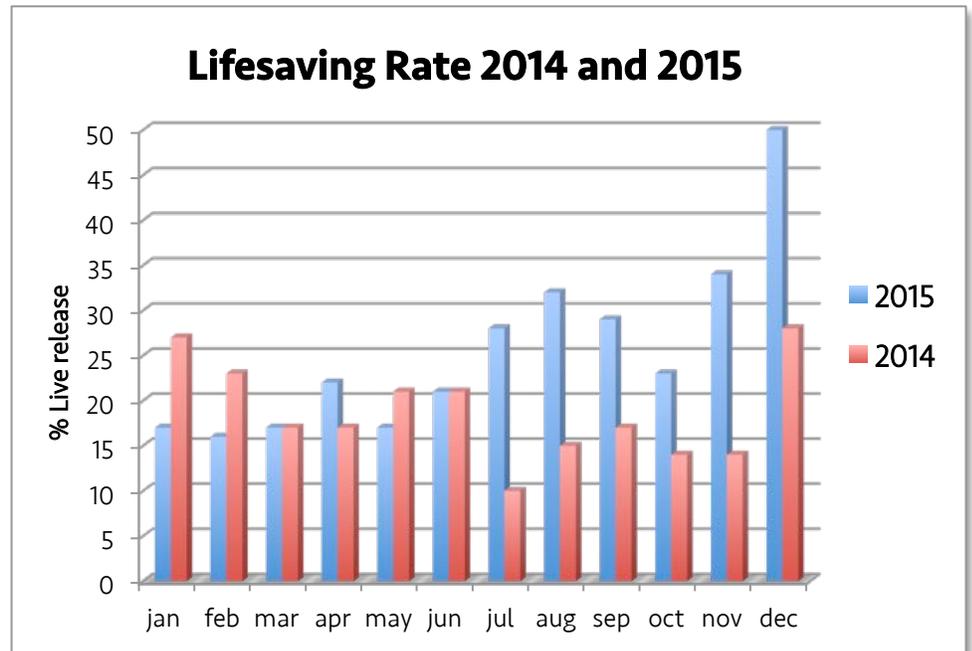
History and Function

Founded in 1973, the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center (SCAWC) provides and promotes the humane treatment of animals through humane education, animal protection and community service. Our duty is to the orphaned, abused, neglected and otherwise unwanted animals of St. Croix, US Virgin Islands.

The SCAWC in the **only open-access** sheltering facility for companion animals on St. Croix and provides sanctuary for all stray pets, under our contract for animal control services. We are a private non-profit and depend heavily on donations to fulfill our mission.

Report Contents:

1. Mission and History
2. New Leadership
3. Increased Lifesaving
4. Expanding Programs
5. Meet Our Board
6. Financials
7. Statistics



New Leadership

In mid-2015, the SCAWC added two new employees in leadership roles to expand, improve, and oversee shelter operations and programs.

Therese Donarski

Therese has been a resident of St. Croix for 25 years and actively involved in Animal Welfare for the past 12. She holds a Master's Degree in Expressive Arts Therapies and was previously employed as a therapist with Lutheran Social Services and The Queen Louise Home for Children, The Women's Coalitions of St. Croix, and the Department of Human Services.

Therese is Shelter Coordinator for the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center and had been Education Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator for 6 years. She formed the Humane Learning Center under the St. Croix Foundation to continue providing Humane Education lessons about responsible pet ownership, safety around animals, the importance of spaying and neutering and the connection between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence to students on St. Croix from Kindergarten through High School. Therese averaged 400 lessons per year for 11 years.

Therese has assisted with the Pets from Paradise program since its inception and is the Coordinator for off-island transfers under the Healing Paws Sanctuary. She has fostered a few dozen pets along the way. Current pets are Gypsy Cat, age 20; Minnie 17, Winky and Laney 9, and Clara age 6.

Married to Martin Henle, they enjoy snorkeling, kayaking and of course walking dogs! Therese is also an artist and likes to make jewelry from Sea Glass found on the beach.

Dr. Michelle Mehalick

A graduate of North Carolina State, Dr. Mehalick first came to St. Croix in 2008, as a full time associate at Island Animal Clinic. In 2009, she accepted the additional position of veterinarian at SCAWC, which began her career as a shelter veterinarian.

In late 2012, Dr. Mehalick returned to the states where she worked for a high volume spay/neuter and wellness clinic in Los Angeles. She then opened a full time veterinary clinic for Animal Friends Rescue Project in Monterrey, CA.

When the shelter in her hometown of West Chester, PA was going through some troubled times she happily accepted the position of Medical Director. She built the shelter's first in-house surgery suite, and collaborated in the development low-cost spay/neuter and wellness program for the public, and a free-roaming cat TNVR program. But St. Croix was calling her back, and in May 2015 Dr. Mehalick returned to the SCAWC.

Dr. Mehalick loves surgery and in her free time enjoys hiking with her dog, traveling, any activities on or near the water, painting, and soap and wine making. A regular kitten foster home, her record is 80 kittens in 1 year! She has one dog, Neptune (age 5), and 3 cats: neurologic Noodle (6), three-legged Fresno (2) and the ancient Father Thyme (20+?). Neptune, Noodle and Father Thyme were adopted from the SCAWC.



Increased Lifesaving

At the end of the day, the number one goal is to move as many animals out of the shelter as possible. The shelter is a temporary bridge between homelessness and a forever home. Increased lifesaving follows from decreasing the number of animals entering the shelter and increasing the number of animals leaving alive.

Increasing Outgoing Animals....

Increased Adoptions
Off-island Transfers

Decreasing Incoming Animals...

Pet Retention Programs
Spay and Neuter Initiatives



In the second half of 2015, we achieved a 108% increase in lifesaving...

Decreasing Barriers to Adoption

We often hear that there are not enough “good homes” on St. Croix, but we believe there are many excellent homes. In 2015 we saw a significant increase in local adoptions by reducing adoption fees, increased proactive adoption counseling and ensuring that the majority of the animals on our adoption floor are “ready to go” when met by potential adopters.

“Pets” to “Paws” off-island Transfer

The SCAWC has for many years maintained a “Pets from Paradise” program, transporting our animals to sister shelters in the states. In September of 2015, this program became “Paws from Paradise” and was taken over by our animal welfare partner, Healing Paws. Transfer of the program to Healing Paws allows us to devote more resources to local programs, but still allows our animals to have a second chance in the mainland.

Pet Retention Programs

Half of our dogs come in as owner surrenders, most often for the reason of “too many” or health concerns. In 2015, we began offering reduced cost or free spay/neuter and minor medical care to help keep pets in their homes and break the cycles of repeated unwanted litters. Our growing veterinary program provides a resource for pet owners to access affordable care. Since September of 2015, the SCAWC has offered in house low-cost spay and neuter two days a week, with additional wellness services including vaccines, flea, tick and heartworm preventives, deworming and microchipping.

Expanding Programs

Veterinary Clinic

In September of 2015 the SCAWC began offering low-cost spay/neuter and wellness care (heartworm testing/preventives, deworming, vaccines) to the public. Our patients and services have steadily grown and expanded. We now boast in-house blood machines and new services are added everyday. Our vision is for a full-service sliding scale clinic, which will help keep animals in their homes and promote responsible pet ownership, while producing revenue that can directly support shelter programs.

Half of the dogs entering SCAWC each year are surrendered by their owners, most often for the reason of “too many” or “poor health”. The low-cost clinic provides affordable treatments for many of these animals and more importantly, prevents them from becoming sick. In many cases, the cost of treatment is less expensive than accepting and re-homing the animal.

Open to anyone, the low-cost clinic focuses on owners that have never sought veterinary care.

Clinic patients, a Chihuahua and her pup recover from a C-section. Momma was spayed at the time of surgery



Free-Roaming Cats

With the development of our low-cost clinic, we now offer FREE spay and neuter to free-roaming or feral cats. Feral cats are unable to be handled, and behave as wild animals. Free-roaming cats are any cats that go outside; they may or may not have an owner or caretaker and may be friendly or feral. We have seen a steep downward trend in the number of cats brought into the shelter in recent years – though counts and reports in the community indicate that the numbers of feral and free-roaming cats is high and potentially increasing. We suspected that many community members choose not to report or surrender free-roaming cats for fear that they will be euthanized. Sadly, in the past this was often the only choice. Using a tried and true Trap-neuter-return (TNR) program, cats are sterilized, vaccinate and dewormed – then returned to where they were living unable to reproduce. While feeding free-roaming cats is certainly an act of compassion that we see very often on St. Croix, feeding unaltered cats promotes overpopulation, disease spread and ultimately has the opposite effect of helping the cats. The TNR program provides a humane alternative to euthanasia and unburdens caretakers with the cost of sterilization.



Feral and free-roaming cats that have been sterilized are visually identified with an “ear tip”, typically a straight cut across the left ear

Volunteer Programs

Thanks to a generous private donation the shelter was able to add a part time volunteer coordinator to our staff. Volunteers support the shelter in many ways; from helping to care for the animals, record keeping/data entry to representing the shelter at events and picking up donations. The long standing youth volunteer programs allows high school students to volunteer after school and during summer vacation to learn about animal care. Some volunteers complete more intensive training to prepare them for careers in as veterinary technicians or to gain experience as prerequisites for technical and professional programs.



Volunteers escort SCAWC pups at the St. Patrick's Day Parade

New Flea Market West

Our Christiansted flea market has always provided a steady source of revenue to help cover operational costs. We are very excited to announce plans for a NEW additional flea market in a west end location. We have secured a location near plaza west for this new venture.



Mary Jo Anthony was half way through a veterinary assistant program when she and her husband relocated to St. Croix. She began volunteering at SCAWC in surgery to pick up where she left off. Mary Jo was hired as a part time animal care technician, but still volunteers her time in surgery while she gains the skills and experience to become a veterinary assistant. A three time "foster failure", Mary Jo has adopted 2 dogs and a cat from SCAWC.

Cruelty Investigation

Convictions for animal cruelty on St. Croix have been historically difficult, but thanks to the efforts of VIPD Detective Daniel Rodriguez, this is starting to change for the better. As the SCAWC is unable to issue citations and bring charges on its own, the involvement of Detective Rodriguez and the VIPD is critical to enforce existing animal cruelty laws.

Detective Daniel Rodriguez graduated from the St. Croix Central High School in 1984 and shortly thereafter enlisted in the US Army, serving 4 years as an Airborne Field Artillery soldier. Upon returning home, he joined the VI National Guard and served 17 years as a Military Police and Airborne Infantry soldier, including a deployment for Operations Enduring Freedom before retiring as a Staff Sergeant.

In 1995 he began his law enforcement career with the Virgin Islands Police Department working in several units to include the Special Reaction Team, Police Training Academy, Juvenile and Criminal Investigation, Immigration Custom Enforcement Task Force Agent and is currently in the Economic Crimes Unit (White Collar Crime).

His love for animals has driven him to assist local animal organizations in handling animal cruelty and neglect cases as well as responding to Crime Stoppers tips regarding to animal related concerns, several of which have led to arrests or fines.

Currently he is in the process of becoming a certified Humane Investigator through training provided by the National Animal Cruelty Investigation School.

Detective Rodriguez future goal is to investigate animal cruelty cases on a full time basis on the island of St. Croix, enforce the many animal related laws that exist in the Virgin Islands and continue to bring justice to those who can't speak for themselves.



Before and After...

Cowboy's Story...

Emaciated, anemic and unable to stand, Cowboy was rescued from a yard where he had been neglected almost to the point of death. Weighing just 26 pounds, Cowboy required a blood transfusion, antibiotics, parasite control and intensive nursing care. Several months later Cowboy had doubled his weight and finally found the loving home he deserved!



Meet our Board

Polly Baxter has been involved with non-profit accounting for more than 40 years and has seen it evolve in its standards and processes as the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants has generated more exacting standards for non-profits. Retired from the Federal National Mortgage Association, she moved to St. Croix in 2007 and served as an accounting volunteer for both the St. Croix Landmarks Society and the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center. She was elected to the Board and at the last annual meeting and subsequently elected as Treasurer.

Donna Cascarelli has been on the SCAWC Board since August 2014. She has lived on St. Croix for 36 years and has been an active volunteer for the AWC, heading their stateside adoption program for 4 years, creating the "Cats Fifth Avenue" shop for the AWC Flea Market, and helping with spay/neuter, adoption events, and fundraising. Donna has attended national and international conferences hosted by HSUS, Best Friends, and the Institute of Humane Education. Donna is currently the administrative supervisor for the local office of a holding company. She lives with her two cats, Lucifer and Barney, her dog, Spirit, and at least one or two foster dogs to make sure there are always plenty of tails wagging!



Paul Chakroff is currently a partner of Solar Delivered and a Renewable Resource and Environmental Consultant. Paul brings over 30 years experience in animal welfare both on St. Croix and in Ohio, including being a past executive director for the SCAWC.

Sali Gear grew up on St. Croix and was volunteering for the shelter soon as it opened in 1973. Her passion has always been animals and, after 23 years in the Navy, Sali remained in Virginia Beach, VA. At her Calypso Run Farm she teaches horseback riding and promotes humane education with her rescued horses and 5 rescue dogs. In the last four years she has re-homed over 250 Crucian dogs locally and every year sponsors a "Crucian Confusion" party where island dog adopters and their dogs come for a day of fun! She travels regularly to the island to continue the cause of the St. Croix AWC.



Michael Meluskey has been a member of the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center Board since early 2012. The former board president of SCAWC, he is also the Founder and CTO of Broadband VI (which provides the shelter with free Internet). He and his wife, Dr. Laura Bailey (veterinarian), live at their "ranch" with their 3 year old son Bailey, 3 horses, 7 tortoises, 2 chickens, 2 ducks, 2 dogs, 3 cats and Wilbert the mini-pig (pictured on right...that's Mike on the left).

Beth Moss joined the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center Board in 2014 as a general member, served briefly as Interim Secretary and then as President from January 2015 to the present. She moved to St. Croix in July of 1993, practicing trial law until her retirement at the end of 2008. She lives in Christiansted with her husband, Bill Mahar and their two cats, Bomba and Bookie (Shelter strays who they bottle fed as kittens).



Diane Williams joined the SCAWC Board in December, 2016 after retiring from 45 years of teaching. She and her husband Tom moved here in 1990 and have enjoyed the company of many island cats and dogs over the years. They currently live with 4 rescue dogs and 4 rescue cats. That's Shelter dog Yaz, also known as Smartypants, in the picture.

Financials

	Dec 31, 15
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · Cash	171,013.63
Total Checking/Savings	<u>171,013.63</u>
Accounts Receivable	
1100 · Accounts Receivable	125,000.00
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>125,000.00</u>
Other Current Assets	
1010 · Investments	161,570.06
12000 · Undeposited Funds	11,086.00
1299 · Prepaid Expenses	1,666.67
Total Other Current Assets	<u>174,322.73</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>470,336.36</u>
Fixed Assets	
1400 · Fixed Assets	365,516.01
Total Fixed Assets	<u>365,516.01</u>
Other Assets	
1500 · Other Assets	863.74
1700 · Prepaid Insurance	3,266.23
Total Other Assets	<u>4,129.97</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>839,982.34</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
1600 · Accounts Payable	3,447.96
Total Accounts Payable	<u>3,447.96</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
2100 · Payroll Liabilities Payable	4,871.07
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>4,871.07</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>8,319.03</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>8,319.03</u>
Equity	
3001 · Unrestricted Net Assets	756,033.94
Net Income	75,629.37
Total Equity	<u>831,663.31</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>839,982.34</u>

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income	
Contributions	120,131.21
Bequests	18,500.00
Membership	3,325.00
Event Income	24,814.88
Financial Income	1,580.20
Operational Income	151,470.00
Program Income	14,145.00
Sale Income	889.79
Flea Market Revenue	136,044.62
PayPal	2,722.79
Uncategorized Income	578.55
Total Income	474,202.04
Gross Profit	474,202.04
Expense	
Financial Expenses	524.47
Maintenance Fees	522.69
Event Expense	5,736.17
Program Expense	32,377.08
Operational Expense	80,319.08
Payroll Expenses	216,129.81
Premises Expense	26,574.32
Sales Expense	32,631.95
Fundraising Expenses	286.00
Returned Check Expenses	130.00
Reimbursed Expenses	108.00
Petty Cash Expense	50.00
Reconciliation Discrepancies	-132.88
*Uncategorized Expenses	26.55
Membership expense	895.00
Total Expense	396,178.24
Net Ordinary Income	78,023.80
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Unrealized Investment Gains	286.16
Total Other Income	286.16
Other Expense	
Prior Years Adjustment	2,680.59
Total Other Expense	2,680.59
Net Other Income	-2,394.43
	75,629.37

Statistics (2015 year)

INTAKE

	Dogs	%	Cats	%	Total	%
Owner surrender	867	50.5%	275	33.5%	1142	45.0%
Stray	821	47.8%	543	66.1%	1364	53.7%
Adoption Return	14	0.8%	3	0.4%	17	0.7%
Seized	9	0.5%	0	0.0%	9	0.4%
Transfer in	6	0.3%	0	0.0%	6	0.2%
TOTAL*	1717		821		2538	100.0%

OUTCOMES

	Dogs	%	Cats	%	Total	%
Adoptions	217	13.1%	129	15.8%	346	14.0%
Return to Owner	77	4.7%	14	1.7%	91	3.7%
Transfer Out	140	8.5%	13	1.6%	153	6.2%
Euthanasia	1218	73.7%	660	80.9%	1878	76.1%
TOTAL*	1652		816		2468	100.0%

*Does not include wildlife intake and DOA (Dead on arrival)

Most common reason for Euthanasia

Dogs

Aggression	219 (18%)
Severe medical	186 (15%)
Feral/Fearful	168 (14%)
Heartworm	147 (12%)
Too young	122 (10%)

Cats

Feral	424 (64%)
Too young	65 (10%)
Severe Medical	55 (8%)