

Approximately 70 million cats and dogs are currently homeless in the United States. Each year, only about 4.6-6 million of these animals pass through shelters where less than a quarter of them are adopted, while another 920,000 are euthanized. Of the mere portion of adopted animals, most of them are puppies and kittens. People are not as likely to adopt senior animals; senior dogs have a 25% adoption rate compared to the 60% rate of puppies. While kittens have an 82% chance of being adopted, cats over 18 months old have only a 60% chance, which continues to decrease as they age.

Animal homelessness and abandonment are major problems across the states, especially with older pets, but Joyful Pets Rescue is doing what it can to help combat these issues. We are asking for support for their efforts through a \$1,800 grant, which will be used to host a community fundraising event for Joyful Pets Rescue on May 31, 2025. This fundraising will be used specifically to waive adoption fees for senior animals in hopes of increasing their adoption rates. This event is also meant to spread awareness on these issues and inform the public on how they can help, such as through fostering.

Joyful Pets Rescue is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to rescue and rehabilitate homeless and abandoned animals. It was founded in 2014 by Lauren McCarron and is based in Amherst, Massachusetts, though its influence goes much further. Joyful Pets Rescue works with individuals all across the country to create a perfect match between owners and pets. Every animal in their shelter has been rescued, given any veterinary care necessary for a clean bill of health, and is prepared to go to their new home. Joyful Pets has a foster coordinator to find temporary homes for animals needing more time and care before they are ready for a forever home. They also have affiliate links with Chewy and Amazon, so all purchases made through these links will have a portion of their profits donated to Joyful Pets and their cause.

Lauren McCarron was initially inspired to create this organization after discovering that the shelter down the street from her home in New York City was a kill shelter. Now Joyful Pets serves a wide variety of demographics, especially animal-lovers who are anti-kill shelter and those who are interested in fostering rescues in a safe and loving environment. The organization's mission statement is as follows: "Our team of dedicated animal caretakers is trained in rescuing, rehabilitating, fostering, and rehoming abused and abandoned animals. Each day, we work to ensure that every animal we rescue is happy, healthy, and well cared for in temporary foster homes until they are adopted. Our strong network of supporters and volunteers means that we can meet the unique needs of each animal that comes through our doors."

Joyful Pets Rescue has previously been recognized by the GuideStar Exchange as a Bronze Participant. This means their website was informative enough to provide visitors with an explanation of their organization, contact information, a mission statement, and information for donors. This year, they have been upgraded to the Silver Seal of Transparency on the GuideStar website. This award recognizes the organization's commitment to transparency of where funds are going and what they have accomplished, as well as their inclusion of all the information needed for their previous Bronze Seal.

To incentivize pet owners to adopt senior animals, our goal is to raise enough money to waive the adoption fees of at least 15 cats and dogs, which averages out to about \$150 per pet. This money will be acquired through admission fees to a community "Paint Your Pet" night, which will be held on the grounds outside of Joyful Pets Animal Rescue Center. At Paint Your Pet, attendees are encouraged to bring a photograph of a pet in their life to use as a reference for their painting. There will be a required admission fee of \$15 plus a donation box for anyone willing to put a little extra into helping this cause. The event will also include a food truck that

attendees may choose to enjoy refreshments from. This event is not only a fun activity for families and animal-lovers of all ages, but there will also be volunteers from Joyful Pets there to run information sessions on fostering and adoption. To put our event and cause into the public eye, we will buy local advertising space on social media and hang up flyers around town. To run this event, the budget follows as such:

Cost	Description	Amount
Event set up	Outdoor event tent , tables, chairs (rentals for day)	\$330
Painting supplies	Canvases (2 packs of 40), paint (2 orders), brushes , paper towels	\$198
Marketing	Flyers + Social Media Ads	\$50
Catering	Food truck (this covers the truck & employee(s) - attendees will pay for their food/drinks if they wish to purchase anything)	\$800
Decor	Ribbons, posters, tablecloths, and balloons	\$200
Total Cost:		\$1578
Emergency funds	We will ask for a little extra to have some “just in case” money - if unused, it will be included in the donations to Joyful Pets	\$222
Total + emergency funds		\$1800

The cost of supplies is estimated according to our anticipated 75 attendees. If the full \$1800 grant request is not fulfilled, the canvas and acrylic paints may be swapped out for watercolor painting. It is ideal to have canvases as they are more durable and would give guests a higher quality project, but it would cost significantly less to get paper and watercolor paints. In the scenario our funding does not cover the painting supplies, we will first reach out to art supply stores to request donations. If these requests are declined, we will move forward with the watercolor plan instead.

Joyful Pets is incredibly grateful for your time and this opportunity for support. By putting on this event, we will raise an incredible amount of support and awareness for the low adoption rates of senior animals. We hope you will consider a supporting grant of \$1,800 for our Spring 2025 event and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sources for statistics:

Bundy, Brooke. "How Many Homeless Dogs & Cats Are There in the U.S.? 2025 Statistics &

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<https://www.dogster.com/statistics/homeless-dogs-cats-statistics#:~:text=An%20estimate d%2070%20million%20dogs,the%20animal%20shelters%20each%20year.>

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