



.....

Saturday, June 13, 2026

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM EDT

.....

All times are U.S. Eastern Time

atlanta hu♥ane society

1551 Perry Blvd NW, Atlanta, GA 30318

9:00 –9:30 AM ET

Check In Opens

9:30 –9:45 AM ET

Conference Welcome

Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Central

Welcome to the Whole Cat Workshop. The event will begin with a welcome address. We will also review the program schedule to ensure all attendees are prepared for the sessions. Please join us promptly to facilitate a smooth start to the conference.

9:45 - 10:15 AM ET

2026 Big Ideas for Georgia Animal Welfare - High-Impact Strategies to Reduce Shelter Intake, Help Pet Owners and Save Lives

Marci Reynolds, Director, Development and Marketing, Planned PETHood of Georgia

Georgia's animal welfare system is under increasing strain. More than 150,000 cats and dogs entered Georgia shelters in both 2024 and 2025, and tragically, more than 30,000 died in municipal shelters each of those years. Caring for these animals cost taxpayers an estimated \$100 million annually — and early indications suggest little has changed in 2026.

In this session, Marci Reynolds of Planned PETHood of Georgia will discuss a white paper she published earlier this year outlining a clear, actionable roadmap for reducing shelter intake across Georgia, centered on three key strategies:

- Improve access to existing resources that help families keep their pets.
- Unify the animal welfare community to increase statewide impact.
- Scale affordable spay and neuter — including TNVR (Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return) — which, while not a new idea, remains the single most powerful, proven strategy for reducing pet overpopulation.

Led and sponsored by Planned PETHood of Georgia, the white paper draws on the experience and feedback of a cross-section of Georgia animal welfare leaders, experts, and advocates, combined with local and national research and data.

Real progress requires moving out of silos and working more collaboratively — aligning efforts and resources to achieve greater impact. Georgia cannot afford to wait. Without immediate, coordinated action, the financial and humanitarian consequences of this crisis will only deepen. Lives are on the line.

About Marci Reynolds | Marci Reynolds brings more than a decade of hands-on animal welfare experience in Georgia, with work spanning rescue operations, community outreach, fundraising, and program development.

As Director of Development for Planned PETHood of Georgia, she leads fundraising, donor engagement, marketing, and community partnerships that help expand access to affordable veterinary care, spay/neuter services, and other lifesaving programs across the state. Her work includes grant strategy, corporate sponsorships, fundraising campaigns, public relations, and overseeing the organization's development and marketing efforts.

Marci is especially passionate about the bigger picture of animal welfare in Georgia — including the growing challenges of pet overpopulation, shelter intake, and access to care — and believes meaningful progress happens when nonprofits, shelters, rescues, veterinarians, and animal welfare professionals work together toward shared solutions that save lives.

Before entering the nonprofit sector full time, Marci spent more than 20 years in senior corporate leadership roles, experience she now applies to strategic fundraising, partnerships, and sustainable program growth in animal welfare. She holds an MBA from Bentley University and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Duke University. Marci resides in Duluth, Georgia, with a small pack of rescue animals.

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM ET

Cat Math

Stacy LeBaron, Founder of Community Cats Central and Host of The Community Cats Podcast

How many cats in your community actually need to be spayed or neutered — and how close are you to making a real dent in the population? Cat Math: Data that Determines Success gives advocates and organizations the tools to stop guessing and start planning. Using the Community Cat Pyramid and the Community Cat Calculator, this session walks attendees through how to assess their community's spay/neuter needs, set meaningful goals, and measure progress over time. Whether you're just getting started or looking to scale your impact, you'll leave with a data-driven framework for turning passion into results.

About Stacy LeBaron | Stacy LeBaron has been involved in animal welfare for over 30 years and considers herself a feline entrepreneur. She hosts the Community Cats Podcast, a weekly show with over 500 episodes featuring nationally and internationally renowned experts on cat overpopulation and feline welfare. Through the podcast, Stacy has built a robust virtual education platform including three weekend conferences, day-long topical sessions, and three certification programs covering TNR, Surrender Prevention, and Return to Home. She also founded the Community Cats Grants Program, which has helped more than 200 grassroots organizations build fundraising skills and raise funds for spay/neuter surgeries — a program now part of the United Spay Alliance.

Stacy is a partner at the Community Cat Clinic in Woodstock and Duluth, Georgia, and holds leadership roles at PAWSitive Pantry, the Vermont Humane Federation, the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society, Community Cat Champions, and the United Spay Alliance. She previously served for 16 years as President of the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society and is the current administrative trustee of the LeBaron Foundation. She is also available for individual and group consulting using the Community Cat Pyramid and Community Cat Calculator.

Her mission: to help people turn their passion for cats into action. Stacy graduated from Vassar College with a degree in Urban Studies and lives in Vermont and Switzerland with her husband.

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM ET

The Power of Partnerships

Lori Trahan, Fix Georgia Pets

Partnerships can transform your TNR efforts from one or two cats a week to 30 or more in a day! In this session, the speaker will highlight two large-scale TNR events that took place in Georgia and how partnerships with other organizations made them possible — and successful. Trapping CAN be a team sport!

About Lori Trahan | Lori has been involved in cat rescue since 2000, when she began volunteering with Good Mews Animal Foundation and started doing TNR on her own. After leaving Good Mews in 2023, she was hired by Fix Georgia Pets to assist with fundraising. Under her leadership, Fix Georgia Pets launched a large-scale TNR program in 2025 that has neutered 338 cats across two events to date.

Lori is also an active Red Rover Responder, working in their Animals in Disaster and Coastal Cats programs, and serves as a TNR Neighborhood Ambassador for Atlanta Humane Society. Professionally, she holds a PhD in Counselor Education and works as a Data Analyst at Kennesaw State University and as a Coach Educator for the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

Lori lives in Villa Rica with her indoor clowder — many of whom proudly rock the ear tip — manages her neighborhood feral colony, and trains others in TNR on request.

..... 12:00 - 1:00 PM ET | Lunch Break

1:00 - 2:00 PM ET

Not Us vs. Them: Creating Real Partnership Between Clinics and Rescues

Paula Escobedo, Practice Manager, Community Cat Clinic

Focusing on the common goal of helping cats, this session explores the challenges, misunderstandings, and operational pressures that can create friction between veterinary clinics, rescues, and TNR programs. Attendees will get a behind-the-scenes look at clinic workflow, why surgical days fall behind, and what helps partnerships succeed long-term — along with practical strategies for improving communication, setting mutual expectations, building trust, and creating collaborative systems that ultimately save the relationship and help more cats.

About Paula Escobedo | Paula Escobedo is a veterinary practice manager and advocate for improving access to care for cats, with a strong background in leadership, team development, and organizational management. She combines her expertise in people operations with a passion for advancing quality feline care. Through her work with the Community Cat Clinic, Paula focuses on building sustainable partnerships between clinics, rescues, and TNR organizations while fostering compassionate leadership, positive workplace culture, and patient-centered care. She is dedicated to creating collaborative solutions that support veterinary teams, rescue partners, TNR efforts, and the communities they serve.

..... 2:00 - 2:15 PM ET | Break

2:15 - 2:45 PM ET

DeKalb County and LifeLine Animal Project: Scaling Prevention Through Partnership

Michelle Long Spears, DeKalb County Board of Commissioners

Rebecca Guinn, LifeLine Animal Project

Commissioner Michelle Long Spears has made animal welfare a central priority in DeKalb County, building one of the most ambitious public investments in prevention in the country through a sustained partnership with LifeLine Animal Project.

LifeLine is Georgia's largest animal welfare nonprofit, operating the open-admission public shelters for both Fulton and DeKalb Counties. The organization is the highest-volume spay/neuter provider in the state and manages one of the largest foster networks in the country. In 2025, LifeLine performed 20,657 spay/neuter surgeries across all locations; over its history, its free-standing clinics have performed more than 225,000 surgeries, including over 70,000 community cat procedures. LifeLine has supported community cat caretakers for more than 20 years through free and low-cost spay/neuter, trap loans, and networking, and cares for approximately 46,000 animals annually on a \$28 million budget.

Commissioner Spears' office began investing in targeted prevention before the larger initiative took shape, funding HGHVSN wet labs at LifeLine's clinic facilities where 16 veterinarians received hands-on training, spay-a-thons serving 195 animals in May 2025 and 144 more in the fall, and 436 community cat vouchers.

In 2025, Commissioner Spears championed more than \$1.18 million in annual county funding to dramatically expand free spay/neuter, mobile veterinary care, and community outreach through LifeLine. The investment scales SNIP DeKalb (Spay Neuter Impact Program) from 1,000 free surgeries annually to 4,800 in 2025, reaching 6,000 by 2027 — approximately 1,500 of which will be community cat surgeries. All surgeries are performed at LifeLine's clinics with expanded hours, including weekends. The initiative also funds wellness services through LifeLine's mobile veterinary unit in high-need neighborhoods and access to care for sick and injured pets through LifeLine's full-service clinic.

The initiative includes a Community Cat and Pet Resource Hub: a dedicated space for a community cat food pantry, large-scale trap loan program, trapping and cat-shelter building workshops, hands-on trapping assistance, and ongoing caregiver support. The hub also serves as a base for weekly pet food banks and LifeLine's community engagement staff working in targeted neighborhoods.

This presentation will cover how the partnership was built, what each component is designed to deliver, and how the pieces connect — including LifeLine's community cat infrastructure, the HGHVSN wet labs and the veterinary capacity they are building, the spay-a-thon model, the resource hub, and how LifeLine's mobile veterinary and outreach programs reach families and caretakers directly.

LifeLine has been doing this work for more than two decades. DeKalb County's decision to invest at this level is a recognition of what becomes possible when public funding meets proven infrastructure.

About Michelle Long Spears | Commissioner Michelle Long Spears is a lifelong advocate for community, equity, and environmental stewardship. Raised in the American South, she turned humble beginnings into a purpose-driven career in service — starting at the YMCA and later founding NP Voice, a consulting firm dedicated to advancing social impact through collaboration and resource development.

In 2022, Michelle was elected District 2 Commissioner on the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners. Her legislative work focuses on key issues including housing, health and human services, animal wellbeing, women's empowerment, and conservation.

She holds degrees in sociology, communications, business, and public policy, and is a proud graduate of several regional leadership programs. Michelle lives in Brookhaven with her husband, bonus children, and their beloved pets.

About Rebecca Guinn | Rebecca Guinn is the Founder and CEO of LifeLine Animal Project, Georgia's largest animal welfare nonprofit. She founded LifeLine nearly 25 years ago with a single mission: to end the shelter

euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals. Under her leadership, the organization has grown from a startup into the architect and operator of Atlanta's lifesaving animal welfare system — managing the public animal shelters for both Fulton and DeKalb Counties, building the highest-volume spay/neuter operation in the state, and developing the community outreach and prevention programs that keep animals out of shelters in the first place.

Today, LifeLine employs more than 300 staff and cares for approximately 46,000 animals annually across its shelters, clinics, and the greater Atlanta community. Before founding LifeLine, Rebecca practiced as a white-collar criminal defense attorney. She lives in DeKalb County.

2:45 - 3:15 PM ET

State of the State- The Georgia Cat Map

Lori Trahan, Fix Georgia Pets

Join Mike for an engaging discussion of best practices for trapping, taming and preparation of feral kittens to put them into the arms of a prospective adopter.

3:15 – 4:00 PM ET

Panel - Moderated by Mavis Wolf

Mavis Wolf (Moderator), Community Cat Program Manager at the Atlanta Humane Society
Katherine Linn, Neighbor Ambassador at the Atlanta Humane Society's Community Cat Program
Lori Trahan, Fix Georgia Pets
Julie Sims, President and Co-Founder of Kudzu Cat Alliance
Cheryl McCormick

Challenges facing community cats and TNR advocates – including rising costs, sparse resources, underserved communities, and an unending parade of cats needing help - can sometimes feel overwhelming and insurmountable.

By embracing and developing skills like creativity and resilience at a personal and organizational level, community cat advocates can establish a solid foundation to grow their programming, adapt to hardship, and better support the wellbeing of both humans and cats.

In this session, our panel of animal welfare professionals, independent trappers, and spay/neuter advocates will share their experiences working in the community cat space and how they have utilized skills like resilience and creativity to grow, amplify their impact, and increase positive outcomes for community cats in Georgia.

About Mavis Wolf | Mavis is the Community Cat Program Manager at the Atlanta Humane Society. She oversees community initiatives providing TNR surgeries and resource support for community cats and kittens, a year-round workshop and humane education series for the public, and additional in-kind supplies and veterinary care to dedicated TNR advocates through the Neighborhood Ambassador Program. Since 2022, the AHS Community Cat Program has spayed and neutered over 7,000 community cats.

About Katherine Linn | Katherine began doing TNR in 2003. In 2022, she ramped up her efforts and assisted Rockdale Animal Services in launching a county funded TNR program. She is beginning her third year as a Neighbor Ambassador with Atlanta Humane Society's Community Cat Program and is a two-time graduate of the CCC Community Cat Program Management course. In the last four years, Katherine has TNR'd over 800 cats and has facilitated the adoption of over 200 community cats and kittens from Rockdale county.

About Julie Sims | Julie is President and Co-Founder of Kudzu Cat Alliance, a nonprofit based in Cobb County dedicated to the humane management of free-roaming unowned cats. Since 2019, Kudzu has TNR'd over 2,700 cats and has expanded into an array of programs supporting community cats and the people who care for them, while creating a network of partners, supporters, and volunteers that sustain and enable the work that Kudzu does. Julie is a graphic designer by trade and, together with her husband Dave, owns The UltraMind, Inc., a design and web development company.

About Cheryl McCormick | Cheryl McCormick, Ph.D., is the CEO of the Athens Area Humane Society and former board chair of Felidae Conservation Fund. She holds a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of Georgia, with additional degrees in Environmental Science and GIS & Remote Sensing, a CFRE credential, and an executive coaching certification. Her lifelong obsession with cats started as a toddler with her Siamese cat, Captain Nutter Butter.

4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

Spotlights

This is your time to share about your organization or the work you do. Come prepared to speak for 60 seconds with fellow attendees!