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TOP STORY

## Lucky Dog Animal Rescue breaks ground on Florence location

**Ardath Arvidson**

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Participating in the Lucky Dog Animal Rescue groundbreaking for its new South Carolina Campus in Florence are: Flor Zuckerman; Stephanie Moore; Mirah Horowitz, executive director; Satyam Pachori and Marion Wooten.

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FLORENCE, S.C. — Lucky Dog Animal Rescue broke ground on its new South Carolina campus Thursday at 2508 N. Williston Road.

Executive Director and founder Mirah Horowitz joined local team leader Stephanie Moore and others in the ceremonial groundbreaking at the property, just off I-95 in Florence.

Lucky Dog purchased the property last February, Moore said. She said it is a perfect location for them because most of their dogs are transported north on I-95 to their forever homes mostly in the Virginia/Washington, D.C. area.

Moore, who will be in charge of the Florence site, said they are hoping for a fall opening of phase I of the project.

Phase I of Lucky Dog's campus will include a transfer building to temporarily house rescue dogs before their transfer, a spay/neuter clinic, and an infectious disease ICU to treat puppies and dogs with parvovirus, distemper and other infectious diseases. A building on the property focused on the treatment of cats with ringworm has already been renovated for that purpose.

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Since its founding in May 2009, Lucky Dog Animal Rescue has saved more than 21,500 at risk dogs and cats, according to its website.

Lucky Dog relies on an extensive network of more than 2,000 volunteers in the DC metro area and in Florence to support Lucky Dog's mission and operations.

“We have helped save more than 10,000 dogs and cats from Florence County in the past 12 years,” Horowitz said. “This rescue campus is the next step in Lucky Dog’s ability to bring positive change to the people and pets of the region. It is the culmination of many years of hard work, planning, and a deep desire to remedy the dire situation many pets face not only in Florence County, but much of the rural south. We can’t wait to get started.”

She said they began talking about having a facility in Florence about five or six years ago and had originally planned on another piece of property but when this one came open it was ideal.

Several large grants and sponsors have been secured for financing of Phase I, Moore said, but they are still looking for local donors and sponsors.

Phase two will add a cat rescue building and a second dog kennel building.

Moore said they hope to be strongly staffed with volunteers, but there will be some paid employees. She is a full-time employee.

Moore said she has always been involved in fostering animals. She volunteered to be a transport driver. Her involvement with Luck Dog grew from there.

Volunteer Kate McBride of Florence who came out for the event said she started fostering dogs and cats in 2016 and has probably fostered more than 100 animals since she started.

A nurse, Moore said she tends to get some of those with medical needs such as amputations and those who are sick.

Florence Mayor Teresa Myers Ervin spoke and took part in the ground breaking. She thanked Horowitz for being a visionary. She said pets give unconditional love, and they let you love them.

Moore said they pull a lot of their animals from Florence County Environmental Services.

Lucky Dog Animal Rescue's website states it is "an all-breed animal rescue that saves homeless and abandoned animals from certain euthanasia. Volunteer-powered, Lucky Dog rescues and rehomes approximately 2,500 at risk dogs and cats annually."

Fundraising will include an opportunity to name buildings, sections of building, spaces within and sponsorship of care with your donations.

The campus will greatly increase Lucky Dog's lifesaving capacity and provide important resources to the people and pets of Florence County.

Lucky Dog rescues at risk dogs and cats from high-kill shelters in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, West Virginia and Puerto Rico.

To learn more about the Lucky Dog Animal Rescue, visit **[stephans@luckydoanimalrescue.org](mailto:stephans@luckydoanimalrescue.org)** or **[www.luckydoganimalrescue.org/Florence-south-carolina-campus](http://www.luckydoganimalrescue.org/Florence-south-carolina-campus)**.

By Ardath Arvidson

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