

Richmond Hill: 10221 Ford Ave. • PO Box 1239 • Richmond Hill, GA 31324 • Phone: 912.756.2668  
Pembroke: 29 E. Bacon St. • PO Box 788 • Pembroke, GA 31321 • Phone: 912.653.4570

Wednesday, DEC 27, 2006

## Your Community

[Headlines](#)

[Sports](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Engagements/Weddings](#)

[Obituaries](#)

## Channels

[Classifieds/Public Notices](#)

[Weather](#)

[Subscribe Here](#)

[Place a Classified](#)

[About the Bryan County News](#)

## Submit News

[Engagements/Weddings](#)

[Community/Church](#)

## Regional Newspapers

[Statesboro Herald](#)

[Hinesville Coastal Courier](#)

[Effingham Herald](#)

[Connect Savannah](#)

## Useful Links

[Bryan County Georgia](#)

[City of Pembroke](#)

[City of Richmond Hill](#)

[Pet adoption/Georgia Animal Rescue](#)

[Bryan County Schools](#)

[Richmond Hill-Bryan County Chamber of Commerce](#)

[North Bryan Chamber of Commerce](#)

## Angels spread no-kill message



Joy Bohannon looks at Rocket, the badly abused dog she recently rescues. Rocket is now well and plays with others.

Joe Joshi 17.AUG.06

Georgia Animal Rescue and Defense (GARD) began almost a year ago when Joy Bohannon and her husband Philip Rutherford moved to Ellabell Ga from Vermont. Today, they have more than a handful of dedicated volunteers (we call Angels) working together to save animals at risk of euthanasia.

“We have grown into a small group of caring individuals continuing to help homeless pets in need. We are a non-profit volunteer rescue effort dedicated to saving homeless animals and finding their ‘forever home.’ It is a very rewarding effort,” said Bohannon.

GARD is funded entirely by donations from individuals and businesses. Family or corporate sponsorship of specific animals also is welcome. Bohannon and her Angels work tirelessly 24-7 to rescue abandoned cats and dogs all over Bryan County. They also care for abandoned pets in the county’s two animal shelters where they volunteer their time. They also have made several trips to Vermont with a truck full of cats and dogs. All have found loving homes in Vermont, which has a spay and neuter policy strictly enforced. The next trip to Vermont is scheduled for early September.

The Angels helping Bohannon are: Jeanine Davis, Carolyn Parrish and Diana Cuadrado. Bohannon’s 14-year-old son Shane and his friends James Robinson, 15, and Parrish’s daughters Emma Prutz, 12 and Anna Prutz, 11, also have a deep love for animals and are always helping out.

So many of the rescued animals are malnourished or injured. “Think about it: our pets can suffer from accidents and disease, just like we do, and they need medical attention. Our pets are part of our families.

[Bryan County Family Connection](#) **NEW**

[Take a 'Quantum Tour' of Bryan County](#)

[Guest Book](#)



[Guest Book](#)

[Email Us](#)



[Email Us](#)

[Effingham Herald](#)

[National/International News](#)



[Tell Us What You Think!](#)

Do you agree with the new school location near Carver?  
Yes, it's the perfect location  
No, south Bryan is better served with a K-5 school



We want the best possible veterinary care for these hairy, four-legged friends,” said Davis.

GARD is an organization committed to developing a comprehensive, community-based resolution to prevent euthanasia of adoptable companion animals. Understanding the euthanasia problem is the first step toward obtaining this goal. The traditional response of “spay or neuter your pet” fails to address some of the realities of how animals end up in shelters in the first place.

Bohannan and her Angels are committed to working with the public and shelters to discover the real causes of companion animal euthanasia and to developing effective programs that can be implemented now to help reduce the percentage of adoptable animals destroyed each year.

“Our mission is to end the suffering of dogs and cats resulting from abuse, neglect, ignorance and pet overpopulation,” said Parrish. To achieve this goal, Bohannan and her Angels are calling for the humane treatment of animals through (1) rescue of abandoned, neglected, and abused animals; (2) a spay/neuter assistance program; (3) promotion of community awareness through humane education and (4) initiation and support of positive changes in local community municipal codes and state law regarding animal protection.

Many of the animals the Angels rescue would not otherwise survive. Some cats and dogs are injured and unable to get the help they require to heal. Others were abused animals that don't know comfort, kindness and love.

Rocket is a large, loving dog who was rescued recently. He was abused badly, was malnourished and on the verge of death. His teeth had been filed down to the roots. His right hind leg was broken

With a lot of tender loving care, medical attention and good food, Rocket is on his way to a miraculous recovery.

Because of breeding and human behavior patterns, summer traditionally sees an epidemic of lost or abandoned animals. Shelters are overloaded and thousands of animals have to be put down.

Several pups were recently saved by the kindness of a stranger. The pups were found abandoned on Hwy 204, suffering from malnourishment, their paws swollen from scorching concrete in 104-degree heat.

“An 18-wheeler was about to run over them,” said Bohannan. “Out of the kindness of her heart as an animal lover, this stranger stopped to save them and phone us. We call them the ‘Bucket Puppies’ because we kept them in a bucket at first. They were close to death from dehydration and starvation. They were in terrible, terrible shape.”

All the Bucket Puppies were nursed back to health and adopted. “They’ll all be loved by their new owners,” said Bohannan, “but their misery could have been avoided.

“Only a few months old and having gone through all they’ve had to go through ... starving and everything ... If the people who owned the mother dog had been responsible and had her spayed, we wouldn’t be dealing with this horror,” said Bohannan.

GARD preaches the gospel of spay and neutering. Their vet has given them coupons and will perform 43 procedures this day and they only take minutes.

Male dogs not neutered have a good chance of developing testicular cancer and spayed and neutered animals cannot breed offspring who may wind up abandoned, and euthanized.

This is the season when more litters are born, and more humans, with play plans of their own, want to ditch their pets. Too many dogs and cats wind up at the GARD shelter.

During these summer months, as many as 100 lost and abandoned pets a day may be brought to shelters in Bryan County, where we only have room for a few hundred pets.

GARD also is a big advocate of an implanted microchip that can match the animal to its owner. Tags might get lost, the chip won't.

“If they have that microchip, even if they lose their tags or collar, we’re able to get them back home because that microchip is permanent,” Cuadrado said. “It’s about the size of a grain of rice. It’s planted under the skin between the shoulder blades.”

A few quick seconds with a scanner can read the chip and a computer check runs down the rightful owner.

Richmond Hill resident Helen McGee decided to get a chip for her terrier Chico, after talking to other pet owners at the vet in Savannah.

“A lot of them had their dogs microchipped and they recommended, especially with the amount Chico and I travel, and she was going to be able to run free in the country, that it would be a good idea to get her microchipped, because if something did happen, there would be a much better chance of her coming home to me,” McGee said.

And there was nothing to it.

“She didn’t cry or anything, it didn’t hurt her at all,” McGee said.

“Tags can be removed,” said Davis. “And Georgia law says if you feed a dog or cat for two weeks, you own the animal. So microchips and tattoos are the only answer.”

“One more word about the dog days of summer is heat,” said Cuadrado. “It can kill lost or abandoned animals. And it’s even tough on pets with their owners. Pets belong in the shade, not in parked cars. Remember, small animals need much more water than big people.”

She said, “a good rule of thumb to use is if you’re going to drink one of those little bottles, you should have a gallon for your dog. We’re going to be able to hold a lot more moisture than they are.”

Cuadrado said dogs and cats only pant to keep cool. Humans sweat.

The sad truth is that a no-good end comes to too many lost and abandoned animals, despite the best efforts of so many good-hearted people like Bohannon and her Angels.

You can help these pets by donating one or more of the items in the wish list that follows:

- Pet food
- milk for cats
- Vaccines, heartworm and other medicines
- microscopes
- dog houses and fences
- scanner to read microchips
- blankets
- towels.

Bohannon and her Angels are also looking for land to construct a new no-kill animal shelter.

For details call 653-2480 or 858-2417.

Bohannon says her vet bill alone is \$7,000 and she hopes to pay it off with donations. “The sale of cats and dogs is never enough to meet expenses,” she said. “That is why we have never considered that option. Even breeders never make money that way.” - Bryan County News