

# *2014 Annual Report*



Our Companions Animal Rescue  
P.O. Box 956 Manchester, CT 06045-0956  
(860) 242-9999 • [OurCompanions.org](http://OurCompanions.org)



# 2014 Summary of Operations

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## A Letter from Board Chair

Dear Friends,

In 2014, the Our Companions family rallied like never before and we couldn't be more touched, proud and honored. There are countless examples of this dedication; allow us to highlight just a few.

First and foremost, there was the tremendous participation in the 2014 Companions Challenge! Our goal for 2014 was \$800,000, up from \$650,000 the year before – a sizeable increase. With more than 99% of our operations funded through donations, the fundraising stakes are high. And with two facilities, dozens of cats and dogs in our care, many of whom have special needs, and hundreds of people and animals depending on our various programs and services, those stakes have never been higher. Knowing this goal was a stretch, likely just beyond our reach, we employed the Challenge as a means of galvanizing support. It worked.

We are so happy to report that we not only met the Challenge – procuring the \$100,000 in Challenge gifts – we exceeded our goal, raising nearly \$850,000. So many in the OC community sustained or even increased their contributions in 2014, and we were humbled by this generosity. And now we begin 2015 in a position of great strength, poised to help even more animals than ever before.

There are several other ways in which OC was championed in 2014.

Throughout the year, countless members of the OC family donated desperately needed items for the Sanctuary from food to beds, to litter, to cleaning materials. Also in 2014, a record number of constituents agreed to include Our Companions in their estate plans. The Forever Home Society, which recognizes those who have made a provision for Our Companions in their estate plans, grew by 21%, and now boasts nearly 80 members. Thoughtful support of this nature ensures that Our Companions will be aiding pets in need for generations to come.

We would also like to express our gratitude to our adopters- some of our animals have special needs and require extra love, support, and care, and our adopters have always humbled me in their ability to open their heart and home not only to a rescued animal, but one that may also have special needs.

Lastly, we would like to recognize those who represent the backbone of Our Companions, our dedicated, tireless, selfless volunteers, now over 400 strong. Their commitment to our mission is inspiring.

Donors, adopters and volunteers allow us to keep our bold promise, to do the right thing for animals, regardless of the challenge or the cost. We are so excited to continue on this journey and together we look forward to seeing what 2015 will bring.



Sincerely,

Valerie Friedman  
Board Chair



# Our Companions 2014 Accomplishments

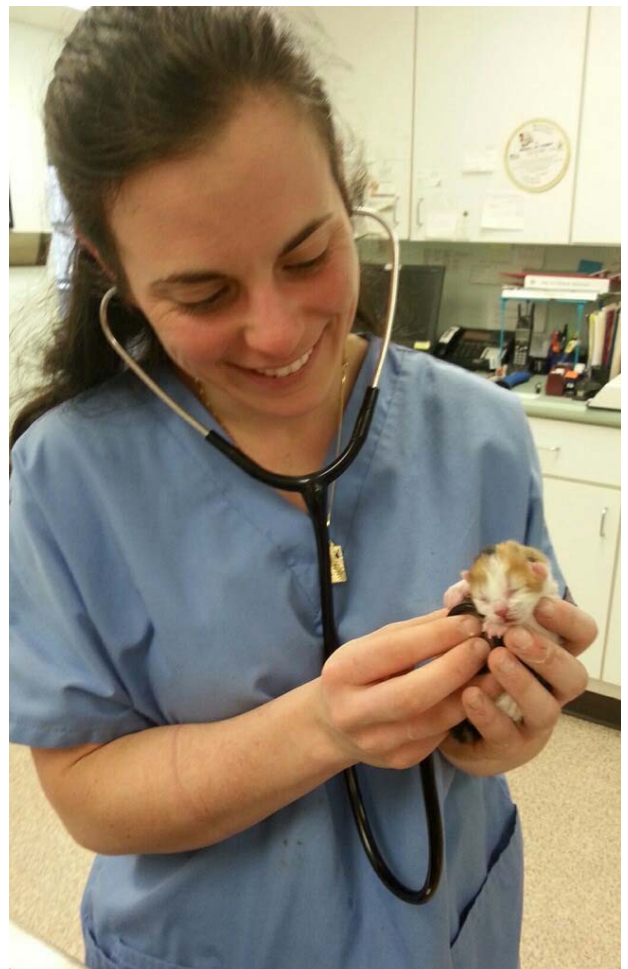
Our Companions Animal Rescue has made continuous progress during the last twelve years and is rapidly developing into one of the leading and most trusted animal welfare organizations in this state. The key accomplishments in 2014 are listed below:

## **Pet Rescue and Adoption**

- Opened two additional Canine Cottages at the Ashford Sanctuary and expanded the Feline Sanctuary
- Rescued and found loving homes for more than 150 pets. 35% of adopted pets were considered special needs due to medical or behavioral reasons, including pets that are blind, deaf, FIV positive, Feline Leukemia positive, and those with neurological conditions. In addition to cats and dogs, small and unique pets were helped as well including: 6 rabbits, 2 guinea pigs, and 1 lizard.
- Responded to approximately 4,500 calls and emails for assistance or adoption on the Animal Helpline
- Created special marketing campaign and humane education program for FIV + cats, leading to the adoption of 13 FIV + cats in 2014 and assisting with others rescued by members of the community
- Held 12 Adoption Events at the Valerie Friedman Program Center
- Expanded media promotions for adoptable pets and/or adoption events to include: 3 local newspapers, 3 radio stations, 8 online calendars, 7 veterinary practices, poster distribution, social media venues, lawn signs, e-mail blasts, Petfinder, Adopt-a-pet ,and press releases
- Provided veterinary assistance for 11 owned pet cats and cats who are guests at the Sanctuary, including specialized treatment or surgical procedures through Feline Fur-Get-Me-Not fund
- Provided veterinary assistance for 5 sick or injured dogs, including specialized treatment or surgical procedures through Canine Cricket Fund. In addition, specialized medical care was provided for 3 dogs at the Sanctuary
- Formalized Placement Assistance and Adoption Program for rabbits, successfully finding new homes for 6 rabbits
- Fully integrated Shelter Pro software to track data regarding pets handled by Our Companions

## **Public Education & Volunteer Support**

- Expanded Special Events volunteer staff to 70 volunteers
- Organized volunteers to attend 14 public events
- Held 6 Sanctuary land maintenance events with 49 volunteer participants
- Increased Sanctuary cat volunteers by 29, giving us 62 total volunteers trained to care for the feline guests
- Increased Sanctuary dog volunteers by 32, giving us 71 total volunteers trained to walk, socialize, and care for the canine guests.
- Trained 171 new volunteers to bring us to a total of 425 active volunteers
- Constructed a Pavilion at our Ashford Sanctuary to be used as a gathering place for visitors and for group events
- Held the second annual Volunteer Picnic and Sanctuary Birthday Party for our volunteers
- Hosted over 500 visitors to our Sanctuary during our weekly Public Visiting Hours



# Our Companions 2014 Accomplishments

## Feline Sterilization and Support Programs

- Sterilized 120 feral cats through our Sterile Feral Program
- Provided veterinary assistance for 17 injured feral and friendly stray cats
- Increased Sterile Feral equipment inventory by 10 isolators
- Successfully partnered with 3 high volume/high quality spay/neuter clinics for TNR
- Held monthly Trap-Neuter-Return Group Training Classes attended by 58 colony caregivers
- Held individual Trap-Neuter-Return trainings for 11 colony caregivers in need of more immediate assistance (sick or injured cats, young kittens)
- Issued 58 sterilization and wellness visit vouchers for friendly cats and kittens
- Established Feral Cat Food collection and distribution areas at the Program Center
- Distributed over 5,340 pounds of food for 19 feral cat caregivers with managed colonies

## Canine Behavior & Rehabilitation Programs

The Canine College Program utilizes dog trainers and volunteers who are interested in behavior to take part in a comprehensive curriculum to learn how to help dogs through training and behavioral modification work. Our Canine College trainers use their skill to help dogs in the community who need training assistance.

Thanks to our Valerie Friedman Program Center in Manchester, Canine College has been able to expand and build our unique classroom training programs focusing on Our Companions training philosophy and dog/human communication for volunteers participating in the program. Below are some specific accomplishments:

- Offered New classes such as Focus on Focus, Tricks, and Puppy Classes
- Held (32) 8-week training classes
- Expanded participation in Canine College to include 65 volunteers
- Twelve volunteers completed the new Canine College Curriculum to become Dog Training Assistants. With these newly trained volunteers, we were able to provide additional individual attention to clients during classes
- Two volunteers graduated to become Head Trainers in 2014
- Increased the number of classes and schedule availability to reach a total of 193 clients. Many of those who attended were in need of Our Companions classes focusing on relationship building to keep their dogs in their homes
- Continued to provide free behavior evaluations and training consultation with Animal Control Officers and other non-profit animal welfare organizations on hard-to-place dogs whenever requested



# Our Companions 2014 Accomplishments

## Canine Behavior & Rehabilitation Programs (Continued)

- Facilitated volunteer attendance at canine behavior seminars with nationally known dog training experts, and continued the Canine College volunteers' education by holding monthly meetings, and reading and discussing books on a wide variety of canine topics
- Conducted 126 canine behavioral evaluations for adoptable dogs including dogs from local pounds needing assessment and assistance with placement
- Several staff members attended the annual conference for the Association for Professional Dog Trainers held in Hartford, CT
- Held 5 private dog training sessions for dogs who could not participate in class
- Expanded the Buddy Project, a program that teaches special needs and at-risk youth how to train homeless dogs to increase their adoptability. 35 training sessions were held, with 4 partner agencies participating

## Financial Development Highlights

- Once again set a record for the Annual Fund, raising \$850,000; second year in a row to achieve a 15% increase over the prior year
- Successfully met the 2014 Companions Challenge
- Established a quasi endowment of \$500,000 comprised of fund reserves and new unrestricted gifts
- Achieved a 52% renewal rate in the Annual Fund, the first time to ever renew over 50% of donors
- Total donation income in 2014 totaled \$1,280,071 the most cash raised in a single year and the second year in a row to raise over \$1M
- Increased the number of Forever Home Society members, our planned giving society, by 50%
- Procured grant funding for a new pavilion at the Ashford Sanctuary







# Our Companions 2015 Goals

Below are the goals that Our Companions has targeted for achieving in 2015

## Program Goals

- Find loving homes for 200 pets
- Formalize Small Animal Assistance Program
- Expand use of Shelter Pro Software to use Reporting Functions for increased efficiency
- Add one new Veterinary Partner for the Friendly Feline Voucher Program and the Sterile Feral Program
- Increase Cat Sanctuary Volunteer tuck-in staff by at least 15-20 new volunteers
- Increase the Sanctuary Dog volunteers to 100 active volunteers
- Develop a comprehensive multi-media orientation and training program for the Sanctuary Dog volunteers
- Rebrand all adoption marketing material for the adoption program and Meet and Greet events
- Hold monthly Meet & Greet events at the Valerie Friedman Program Center
- Hold a large Community event at the Program Center
- Expand Educational Outreach and Caregiver Support services in Sterile Feral Program
- Expand Humane Education Program, including an option to tour the Ashford Sanctuary
- Create new volunteer position to act as Sanctuary Ambassador during public visiting hours
- Complete and place printed copies of the Sanctuary Dog Volunteer Manual in each dog cottage
- Establish a Gardening Club at our Ashford Sanctuary
- Increase our Facility Support Volunteer base at the Ashford Sanctuary for land maintenance and routine repairs to 5 volunteers helping out on a weekly basis
- Hold 8 land maintenance events at the Ashford Sanctuary
- Increase the number of Head Trainers in Canine College and number of classes
- Offer additional advanced dog training classes
- Develop the Our Companions Positive Training Guide for the Canine College Program, and our clients
- Create the Canine College lending library
- Implement the ACO Program to help local animal control officers increase the adoptability of their shelter dogs
- Train 5 Head Trainers and add 15 additional Canine College volunteers
- Establish a Movie Night for Canine College volunteers to watch Dog Training DVD's in a group setting
- Facilitate a Study Group for those volunteers interested in pursuing Certification from the Certification Council of Professional Dog Trainers



## Development Goals

- Raise \$900,000 for the Annual Fund
- Increase the Forever Home Society by 25%
- Begin soliciting lead gifts for Phase 3 of our multi-year, multi-phase capital campaign at the Ashford Sanctuary



## Key Developments in Our Companions History

Our Companions Animal Rescue is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) organization that was founded in May 2002, with a mission to end the unnecessary euthanasia of pets in Connecticut.

Fundraising and marketing programs were established which have resulted in the organization's growth, progressing from an initial annual amount of \$39,000 raised in 2003, to total of \$1,254,236 in 2014.

In December 2002, Our Companions received a gift of 43 acres of land (a former factory farm) in Ashford, CT. A plan was conceived to develop this land into a domestic animal sanctuary with pet housing, adoption, and pet rescue facilities.

During 2008, Our Companions raised over \$300,000 for the "Demolition" phase of the capital campaign to remove the factory farm buildings and prepare the site for construction.

Between late 2009 and 2011, Our Companions successfully raised nearly \$1,000,000 for "Phase One" of the capital campaign. This campaign not only funded the construction of the first Sanctuary rescue cottage, garage, and gazebo, but also a vast amount of site work to support the first rescue cottage and several more animal housing cottages to be build over the coming years. In 2013 Our Companions completed a \$630,000 capital building phase resulting in the construction of two additional animal housing cottages.

Other important developments in Our Companions' history include the creation of a number of programs specifically targeting the root causes of pet homelessness, including: canine behavioral training, sterilization programs, political advocacy programs, volunteer training programs, community education programs, rescue and adoption services.

The Animal Helpline has also been established, staffed by trained volunteers, to assist pet owners with a variety of animal welfare related issues, and handles approximately 4,000 calls each year. The positive response to the Helpline has been overwhelming, which demonstrates the strong need that exists for public education and animal welfare assistance programs.

Our Companions also assisted in founding the Animal Welfare Federation of Connecticut, which is a coalition of animal welfare organizations in Connecticut. Our Companions also was integral in the creation of Connecticut Votes for Animals, a 501(c)(4) organization that is leading the animal protection movement through legislation.

In 2012 Our Companions opened the Valerie Friedman Program Center in Manchester, CT. In addition to housing the organization's administrative offices, this 6,000 square-foot facility is home to the Animal Helpline call center, canine behavior and training programs, humane education program, low-cost spay/neuter services, and pet adoption services.

Our Companion's Board of Directors provides oversight, and utilizes over 400 dedicated volunteers who deeply believe in Our Companions mission is to do the right thing for animals, regardless of the challenge or cost.





# Our Companions Programs

Our Companions Animal Rescue currently operates many programs that target the root causes of pet homelessness. These programs include:

## Family-friendly adoption programs

We know that a proper home exists for most animals - it just takes patience, resources, and a commitment to find it. Over the past 10 years, we've found peaceful, loving homes for some of the state's most difficult-to-place animals – animals most organizations would have given up on. Pets are rescued and adopted through our private rehoming program and through our Ashford Sanctuary.

## Group and private training programs

Behavior problems with dogs are a leading reason why dogs are relinquished to shelters and euthanized. Many adoptions fail due to a lack of training and preparation for both the family and the pet. Our proactive training program is designed to “save the home” of dogs at risk of being given to a shelter or returned after adoption.

## Affordable spay neuter programs for cats and feral cat colonies

It is estimated that there are between 200,000 and 400,000 outdoor, homeless, and free-roaming cats in Connecticut. While the actual population is unknown, there is no question that overpopulation is the leading problem facing cats in Connecticut. Our sterilization programs target the source of this grave problem which contributes to unimaginable suffering of outdoor cats.

## Political advocacy efforts

According to the 2010 Animal Legal Defense Fund's “State Animal Protection Law Rankings”, Connecticut is only 35th in the nation compared to other states in overall strength and comprehensiveness of animal laws. Animal rescue organizations have been operating for centuries, yet the problem of animal suffering persists because the laws that protect animals need to be dramatically improved.

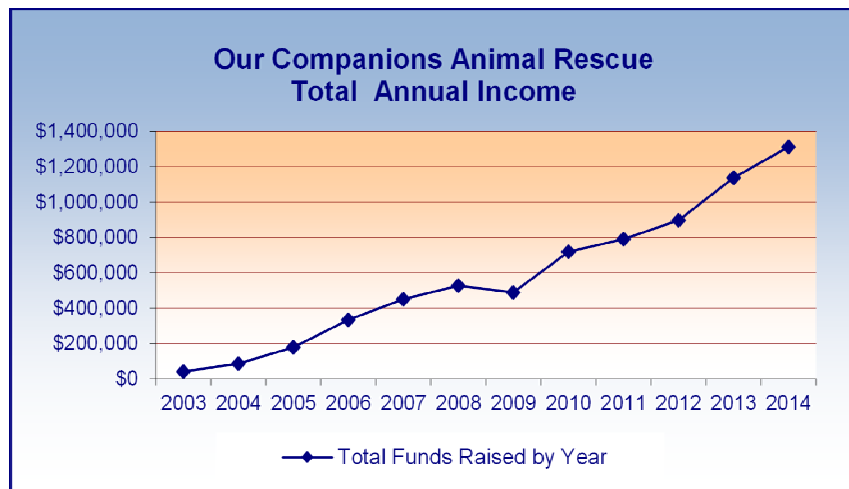
## Humane Education programs

Educating our citizens, families, and children is a critical tool in creating a more humane future for animals and people in our society. Our Companions' humane education programs strengthen the human/animal bond and are a critical component in meeting our mission of ending unnecessary suffering and euthanasia.



## Our Companions Animal Rescue 2014 Financial Results

Our Companions Animal Rescue completed the year 2014 financially strong, which is confirmation that the organization has been able to continue to develop a positive reputation and trust within the community. Our Companions is primarily funded through private donations and as the revenue and growth chart indicates below, the organization's commitment to do the right thing for animals is resonating with a growing segment of the population. Total donation income from all sources was \$1,280,071 in 2014, which was up 64% from last year's total income of \$817,056. Total income for the past 10 years has shown a positive growth pattern, and has increased on average by \$122,000 per year. It's the integrity and dedication of Our Companions employees and volunteer staff that has fueled this growth and enabled Our Companions to become one of the largest and leading humane animal rescue organizations in this area.



As the organization has grown, so have the expenditures, and total expenses were \$899,633 last year as compared with \$628,488 for the previous year. This included \$108,382 in depreciation expense so that net cash expenditures were \$791,251. The employed staff has grown to 8 full-time and 9-part time employees, who all have contributed significantly to Our Companion's success. Of course it's the animals that are the main priority and last year \$72,691 was spent on veterinary care and another \$21,742 was expended for animal food and other related supplies.

Our Companions maintains two facility locations, the Animal Sanctuary in Ashford and the Valerie Friedman Program Center in Manchester. For 2014, total actual expenses were \$899,633 compared to the budgeted total of \$898,629, which is a variance of only \$1,004, less than 1%. In the other income/expense category, there was \$4,333 in interest and dividend income, a realized loss on investments of <\$2,506> and an unrealized loss on investments of <\$2,930>. Net income for 2014 was \$379,335, and \$487,747 before depreciation. In conclusion, the management team at Our Companions was very pleased with the 2014 results and will continue to strive to assure that similar results be achieved in the future.

On the balance sheet side, Our Companions finished the year with a total of \$1,254,236 in restricted and unrestricted funds, and an insignificant amount of outstanding liabilities (\$9,769). One significant change in 2014 was that \$500,000 was placed in a Board Restricted Fund and invested in Vanguard funds in the hope of achieving some investment earnings in the future.



## Our Companions Animal Rescue Comparative Income Statement

For the 12 month periods ended 12/31/14 and 12/31/13

	<u>12 Months Ended 12/31/14</u>	<u>12 Months Ended 12/31/13</u>	<u>Over / (Under) Vs Prior Year</u>	<u>Over / (Under) %</u>
<b>Income</b>				
Animal Program Fees	22,948	16,511	6,437	39%
Donation Income - General	850,064	738,480	111,584	15%
Donation Income - Board Designated	372,059		372,059	
Donation Income - InKind	-	58,654	-	
Donation Income Restricted Grants	35,000	3,411	31,589	
Net Merchandise Sales	-	-	-	
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>1,280,071</u>	<u>817,056</u>	<u>521,669</u>	64%
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>				
Salary Expense	367,413	227,086	140,327	62%
Payroll Taxes - Fica & Suta	31,386	19,420	11,966	62%
Veterinary	72,691	50,507	22,184	44%
Pet Care Expenses	21,742	10,842	10,900	101%
Printing	7,493	5,283	2,210	42%
Postage	16,899	11,757	5,142	44%
Insurance	36,935	23,835	13,100	55%
Promotional	7,565	5,054	2,511	50%
Professional Fees/Consultants	20,531	19,917	614	3%
Information Technology Services	43,020	32,279	10,741	33%
Utilities	28,163	27,086	1,077	4%
Office and Facility Supplies	32,626	22,889	9,737	43%
Rent & Lease Expense	41,025	40,950	75	0%
Repairs & Maintenance	7,952	4,960	2,992	60%
Conference & Seminar Registrations	1,664	856	808	94%
Event & Trade Show Fees	310	467	(157)	-34%
Advocacy	1,670	1,744	(74)	-4%
Educational Materials	13,092	13,873	(781)	-6%
Stewardship/Cultivation	973	232	741	319%
Training Program Expense	24,419	14,110	10,309	73%
Volunteer Expenses	1,458	1,553	(95)	-6%
Miscellaneous Expense	898	452	446	99%
Bank Fees	6,502	4,930	1,572	32%
Travel & Meal Expense	4,824	6,039	(1,215)	-20%
Depreciation Expense	108,382	82,367	26,015	32%
<b>Total Administrative Expense</b>	<u>899,633</u>	<u>628,488</u>	<u>271,145</u>	43%
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>380,438</b>	<b>188,568</b>	<b>191,870</b>	-102%
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>				
Interest & Dividend Income	4,333	1,675	2,658	159%
Realized Gain/Loss on Investments	(2,506)	274	(2,780)	
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	(2,930)	231	-	
<b>Total Other Income &amp; Expense</b>	<u>-1,103</u>	<u>2,180</u>	<u>(3,283)</u>	-151%
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><b>379,335</b></u>	<u><b>190,748</b></u>	<u><b>188,587</b></u>	-99%





**Our Companions Animal Rescue**  
**Comparative Balance Sheets**  
**For the Period Ended 12/31/14 and 12/31/13**

	<b>12/31/14</b>	<b>12/31/13</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
General Fund Cash on Hand	750,317	792,354
Board Restricted Fund	500,100	
Capital Campaign Funds	2,815	3,427
Other Restricted Funds	<b>1,004</b>	
<b>Total Cash &amp; Short Term Investments</b>	<b>1,254,236</b>	<b>795,781</b>
 <b>Prepaid Expense</b>	 5,606	 7,556
 <b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Land	456,400	456,400
Land Improvements	254,797	204,482
Buildings & Improvements	1,582,357	1,566,100
Vehicles	22,895	22,895
Furniture, Fixtures, Equipment	61,154	61,154
Machinery & Equipment	23,876	17,080
Construction In Progress	-	6,500
Accum Depr - Furn, Fixt, Equip	(212,551)	(104,169)
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>2,188,928</b>	<b>2,230,442</b>
 <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,448,770</b>	<b>3,033,779</b>
 <b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Federal Withholding Liability	7,577	4,531
State Income Tax Liability	1,062	719
Ct State Sales Tax Liability	1,130	863
<b>Total Payroll &amp; Sales Tax Liabilities</b>	<b>9,769</b>	<b>6,113</b>
 <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>9,769</b>	<b>6,113</b>
 <b>Equity</b>		
Retained Earnings	3,027,666	2,517,019
Net Income	411,335	510,647
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>3,439,001</b>	<b>3,027,666</b>
 <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>3,448,770</b>	<b>3,033,779</b>



## Our Companions Animal Rescue

### 2014 Officers & Board Members

#### **Officers:**

Valerie Friedman	Board Chair
Andrea Dobras	Secretary
Leigh Ann Kissner	Treasurer

#### **Board of Directors:**

Risa Davidson  
Diana Garfield  
Marie Joyner  
Mitchell Linker  
Susan Linker  
Chris Shivery  
Kathy Sullivan  
Tom Weidman  
Kim Zimmermann

#### **Advisory Board:**

Janet Bailey  
Maria das Neves  
Pat Foley  
Jamila Hadj-Salem  
Linda Hatten  
Lisa Holzwarth  
Gretchen LaBau  
Anne Llewellyn  
Lauren Mascola  
Alex Oldershaw  
Damon Scott  
Maneesh Shanbhag  
Ed Young  
Adam Zweifler





## Our Companions Animal Rescue

### Contact Information

#### **Mailing Address:**

Our Companions Animal Rescue

P.O. Box 956

Manchester, CT 06045-0956

Phone (860) 242-9999

Fax (860) 331-8555

#### **Facility Locations:**

Ashford Sanctuary

46 Floeting Road

Ashford, CT 06278

Visiting Hours: Saturday, 1PM-3PM and by appointment

Valerie Friedman Program Center

34 Sanrico Drive

Manchester, CT 06042

Hours: M-F 9AM-5PM and by appointment

#### **Website**

[Ourcompanions.org](http://Ourcompanions.org)

