



509 Centennial Blvd  
Voorhees, NJ 08043  
856-424-2288  
[www.awanj.org](http://www.awanj.org)



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Media Contact:

Maya Richmond, Executive Director  
856-424-2288, ext. 109  
802-598-3658 (cell)  
[director@awanj.org](mailto:director@awanj.org)

## **AWA Wins Petco Foundation Holiday Wishes Grant**

*Pet adoption story awarded \$25,000 to save more animal lives*

December 10, 2014

Voorhees, NJ– The Petco Foundation in partnership with Halo, Purely for Pets, announced the winners of its second annual Holiday Wishes grant campaign, designed to help the most dedicated animal welfare groups succeed in their mission to save pets' lives – at the holidays, and year round.

Animal Welfare Association, Inc. (AWA) received a winning grant award of \$25,000 to support its life-saving efforts. Additionally, AWA was awarded with a pet food donation of 2500 meals from Freekibble.com and Halo, in partnership with the Petco Foundation.

AWA's winning story is the celebration of Attie, a cat who was found in a foreclosed home by a young man sent to take insurance pictures. The man heard a faint meowing and realized it was coming from the attic. He opened the hatch, and found Attie, so weak she was having trouble walking. The man refused to leave Attie behind even though his co-workers were in a hurry to get the job done. Knowing that she was in need, he brought her to AWA where she was examined and found to be underweight and dehydrated. The man agreed to sign her into our care, gave her a hug and kiss goodbye and wished her the best. Once Attie was healthy, a loving school teacher came into the shelter and gave her a forever home because she knew that an attic was no place for Attie. Because we are a community of caring people, Attie had a happy ending. (Read Attie's full story below)

A stakeholder and media event with AWA and Petco Foundation will take place at 10:00am on Thursday, December 11, 2014 at AWA, 509 Centennial Boulevard, Voorhees, NJ, 08043.

For more information about AWA or the Petco Foundation Holiday Wishes Grant Campaign, visit [awanj.org](http://awanj.org) or [www.petco.com/holidaywishes](http://www.petco.com/holidaywishes). You may also contact Maya Richmond, 802-598-3658 or [mayar@awanj.org](mailto:mayar@awanj.org). Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) or by using the campaign hashtag, #HolidayWishes2014.

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**Animal Welfare Association** is South Jersey's oldest private, non-profit, 501(c) 3 animal welfare organization. Through a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, pet therapy, and humane education, AWA is dedicated to eliminating animal suffering, promoting the importance of the human-animal bond, and improving the role of animals in the well-being of people. In 2013 over 16,000 pets were served through AWA's No-Kill programming.

## Out of the Attic and Into A Heart

The power had been turned off for days when three insurance adjusters arrived at a foreclosed home to take pictures. The place was dark and quiet inside. Room by room they worked their way through the lower level snapping shots and chatting about how long the house had been abandoned. As they worked, a faint meow could be heard. As one of the men turned to go upstairs, the meows became louder. Arriving at the staircase landing he realized the sound was coming from the attic. He pulled down the attic hatch and held up his flashlight. Two green eyes reflected out of the darkness. There he found a weak, dehydrated, barely able to walk, kitten. Scanning the attic he noticed a broken window and surmised that the cat found her way into the attic but couldn't get out.

Although his co-workers were in a hurry and urged him to "leave the cat, she will be ok," he refused. He knocked on a neighbor's door asking for cat food and water and if anyone recognized "Attie". Despite many comments of wasting his co-workers time, he still refused to leave her behind. Wrapped in his fleece coat and cradled on his lap, he decided to bring Attie to AWA, saying "I could never leave that house knowing she was in need." When Attie arrived, she was in dire need of medical attention. She was dehydrated. Her fur was dull. Her paws were dirty and her nails worn. Her organs were desperate for fluids and her body in need of care, yet her spirit seemed peaceful. It was as if she knew she was going to make it and was no longer in danger of dying alone in that dark attic.

After nearly ten weeks of arriving at AWA, Attie was fully recovered and ready for adoption. She sat stoically poised and draped in a pink boa for her profile picture. A loving school teacher with a toddler in tow came into AWA looking to adopt a cat. After they met nearly all the cats in the Cat Room, Attie stood up in her cage, rubbed against it, purred, rolled over, and let out a magical "meow" as if to say, "What are you doing? I am RIGHT HERE!" In no time, we were packing up her toys and Attie was heading for her new home. The staff in the adoption center clapped and cheered for Attie's happy ending! Her family reports that Attie is the most inquisitive cat and likes to explore. She often seeks out tiny little recesses, but avoids the attic. She loves a good nook and finds the ones that are beaming in sunshine. "She will never stray too far or sleep too long in her nook because the moment she hears voices, she meows, runs to greet us, and rolls on her back asking for a belly rub." Attie's journey to her new home was started thanks to a caring man who stood up to jeering comments from his coworkers, and ended with the love and attention of a new family.

