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Turn your trash into treasure to help shelter animals

WESTAMPTON, N.J. – More than 650 animals have been adopted so far this year at Burlington County Animal Shelter. This success is due in part to items that most people throw away: used ink and toner cartridges donated by businesses and residents.

Donated cartridges help pay for materials that advertise events and adoption promotions sponsored by the Friends of the Burlington County Animal Shelter (FOBCAS), an all-volunteer, non-profit group dedicated to helping the animals at the shelter find permanent homes.

“We recycle the ink cartridges and get rebates,” said Sharon Stevenson FOBCAS treasurer. “Then we use the rebates to pay for adoption posters, event flyers, signs and all printing materials.”

FOBCAS accepts ink and toner cartridges of any size, new or used. People can drop off cartridges labeled "FOBCAS" at the Burlington County Animal Shelter, 35 Academy Drive Westampton (off Woodlane Road behind the county facilities complex). The shelter is open noon to 4 p.m. every day except Thursday, when it's open from noon to 7 p.m. After hours donations can be left at the shelter's front door.

FOBCAS sponsored or participated in 20 events this year, including the ever-popular Raining Cats and Dogs Pet Festival at the shelter.

“All the paper materials we needed for these events were free because of the toner and cartridge recycling program,” said Stevenson. “The flyers we hand out at these events raise awareness about adopting from the shelter.”

The ink program has been a great success so far, but this summer is looking bleak.

“Cartridge donations have been really light this summer,” said Stevenson. “I'd like to encourage both individual people and businesses to donate. Please don't throw away ink cartridges and toner that FOBCAS can turn into money to help the shelter animals.”

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Friends of the Burlington County Animal Shelter is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization that works with the shelter to care for animals at the shelter and place them in adoptive homes. For more information, visit: www.friendsofbcas.org or follow FOBCAS on Facebook: www.facebook.com/FOBCAS.