

## LOCAL

# Abused, neglected and abandoned pets hope to find new homes at Barktoberfest, Howl-o-Ween



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Pensacola News Journal

Updated Oct. 13, 2025, 12:12 p.m. CT

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## Key Points

On Oct. 18, the Pensacola Humane Society will host its annual Barktoberfest event at Seville Square

The Escambia County Department of Animal Welfare hosts its "Howl-o-Ween" event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 25 at the Animal Welfare and Adoption Center, 200 W. Fairfield Drive

Currently, all the shelter's 105 kennels are full, as are the 15 temporary kennels the shelter must use

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You want [Halloween](#) horrors? No you don't. Not this horror.

There's a Great Dane recovering in an animal hospital in Panama City after being horribly abused and discovered less than two months ago. Sydney is the dog's name, and, to put it bluntly, she can't poop because she had been sodomized so sadistically that, well, it's horrible.

"She looked like death," said Katie King, an animal advocate with the [Northwest Florida Great Dane Rescue](#). "She had so much scarring that she wasn't able to poop. She wouldn't eat anything because she was so backed up."

Just a week or so earlier, another dog that had been hit by a car in Walton County ended up in an animal shelter with a broken pelvis. Finally, Northwest Florida Great Dane Rescue got control of the dog, Odie, and he's up for adoption.

The rescue mission will get Sydney when she is medically ready and King hopes that someday she will find a loving home that she deserves. The dog already has gone through two surgeries, and [Northwest Florida Great Dane Rescue](#) is paying for her care.

"Those two were just in a month and a half," King said. "And that's just one breed of dog. Imagine what it's like with all the breeds. Shelters nationwide are filled, and a lot of dogs are just turned out on the streets or dumped in the woods because there is nowhere to take them."

Northwest Florida Great Dane Rescue held its annual fundraiser, Danetoberfest on Oct. 4 at Seville Square. The group was able to raise \$15,000 through sponsorships, donations and merchandise sales. NFGDR also received 10 applications to adopt. Currently, the group has about 25 to 30 Great Danes available for adoption. They are now kept by group volunteers.

But Danetoberfest was just start of the pet-themed events coming up that will feature dogs for adoption.

## **Barktoberfest is Oct. 18 at Seville Square**

On Oct. 18, the Pensacola Humane Society will host its annual [Barktoberfest](#) event at Seville Square and adjoining Fountain Park. The pet-friendly event begins at 10 a.m. and will feature some of the dogs that are available for adoption through the Humane Society, as well as food trucks, vendors, games and much more. The event is a fundraiser and showcase for the Pensacola Humane Society, which last year adopted out more than 700 dogs and cats.

Barktoberfest usually brings more than a 1,000 animals lovers, most bringing their own dogs, for the event, which features plenty of pet-friendly activities such as obstacle courses, training demonstrations and dog races.

**Danetoberfest in downtown Pensacola:** [Great Danes available for slobber kisses, adoption at Danetoberfest in downtown Pensacola](#)

## **Howl-o-Ween is Oct. 25 at shelter**

The Escambia County Department of Animal Welfare hosts its "Howl-o-Ween" event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 25 at the Animal Welfare and Adoption Center, 200 W. Fairfield Drive.

During this adoption event, adoption fees will be waived for all dogs, cats, puppies and kittens at the shelter. But a \$15 fee is applied for licensing fees. Normally, cat adoptions cost \$25 through the shelter, and \$50 for dogs.

Currently, all the shelter's 105 kennels are full, as are the 15 temporary kennels the shelter must use.

"We have a capacity issue like every shelter in the country," said John Robinson, Escambia County Animal Welfare director. When they're in a pinch, the shelter will construct crates out of wire.

"We've been in a pinch for about two years," he said. "We've been full for about that long."

Escambia County took in nearly 4,000 animals, last year. More than half were strays and another 1,100 were surrendered by their owners.

About 2,000 of the total number of animals were adopted.

Still, dogs are sometimes euthanized at the shelter for health and behavior issues.

In September, 118 dogs were taken in by the shelter joining the dogs already there, and 21 were euthanized. There were 19 dogs reclaimed by their owners in September, and 54 were adopted—just over half the number of the 100 cats that were adopted during the same period. When the month ended there were still 199 dogs and 117 cats in the shelter.

"We're hoping (Howl-o-Ween) will allow us to get some animals placed and give us some breathing room," Robinson said. "We're going to do some things different to

really showcase them."

He said that includes a "doggie parade" outside the facility.

"Inside, there's barking and it's so loud and frankly, it can be chaos, so we thought this would give people a better chance to truly see the dogs," Robinson said. "We have some great dogs available."

Blake White, CEO of the Pensacola Humane Society, said his organization probably receives 70 phone calls and emails each day from people wanting to surrender their pets. Often it's because of finances, job situations or they have moved into a living space that doesn't allow pets.

"There's a component of neglect in some cases," White said. "But most times it's some other factor such as not being able to care for the animals or a living situation has changed."

The Pensacola Humane Society usually has 100 or dogs under their care, most with foster families. The Pensacola Humane Society has 19 dog kennels, almost always full.

"We get animals left here and abandoned, and we take them in," he said. "The demand for our services and intake is huge. It's five times our daily capacity and it will not let up. I wish it would, but it doesn't."