

No-Kill Shelter Faces Struggles

St. Francis Animal Rescue Center in South Carolina currently finds itself in a financial bind.

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St. Francis Animal Rescue Center in Rock Hill, S.C., home to 83 homeless cats, will move into a new facility after the first of the new year — if its owner and operator, Charlene Rodriguez, can come up with the funds to make it to 2007. “We are trying very hard to stay open, even though we are having a terrible time, right now, financially,” she says.

What started as a kind gesture to help the stray cats in her apartment complex turned into a shelter to care for the abandoned cats in her town. Rodriguez found a facility near her home to house the cats and follows a strict no-kill policy. She has supported the shelter with her own money while she waits for official 501c3 non-profit status. Though she receives support from an assistant and several volunteers, recent events have strained the shelter’s meager finances.

“We have to relocate by the end of January,” Rodriguez says, explaining that the moving costs alone will total more than \$2,000. “Because of renovations being done to the building, we have had no adoptions for months, which has seriously hurt our income.”

Other expenses have come in the form of medical bills, including those for a kitten with a liver shunt and for a litter of kittens brought to the shelter already suffering from pneumonia. Rodriguez has organized events to raise funds to cover these expenses, but she still comes up short.

However, Rodriguez remains hopeful and committed to her feline charges. “We have 83 animals at the moment, and we welcome any chance to find them a good home,” she says.

To learn how you can help the St. Francis Animal Rescue Center or to find out how to adopt one of the cats, email Charlene Rodriguez at stfrancisanimalrescue@yahoo.com, or call her at (803) 554-0705.