



Contact: Brian Wierima, GCHS Community Relations Coordinator

Phone: 239-332-0364 ext. 319

Email: communityrelations@gulfcoasthumanesociety.org

Website: www.gulfcoasthumanesociety.org

**For Immediate Release (Cutlines: 3 photos of Angus)

GCHS puppy needs heart surgery and your help

It's common knowledge that nothing is deeper than the love in a dog's heart.

But for Gulf Coast Humane Society's rescue puppy, Angus, he needs your help to share that love from his heart.

Angus, a 19-week old Mastiff mix puppy, is scheduled to have a heart surgery procedure called balloon valvuloplasty to help correct an abnormality of his pulmonic valve. The procedure is needed to help save Angus' life.

"Dogs with a moderate to severe form of this condition can have exercise intolerance, fainting with exertion, right sided congestive heart failure, and a shortened life span," said Dr. Wendy Arsenault, who will be performing the surgery for Southwest Florida Veterinary Specialists & 24-Hour Emergency Hospital in Bonita Springs. "The normal pressure in the right ventricle is approximately 16 mmHg. Angus' pressure at his initial evaluation was 153mmHg, which is severe."

Angus' surgery costs will be covered by GCHS' Second Chance Fund, which allows people to donate directly to the care of our sick and special needs animals and helps to alleviate some of the financial cost which comes with their extra care needed. All monies donated to the Second Chance Fund will directly offset the medical cost for those pets with needs beyond routine medical care.

"The Second Chance Fund is the last chance for many of these animals," said GCHS executive director Jennifer Galloway. "The fund was created to help these special needs animals, who have no one else to turn to. Angus is a beautiful puppy and deserves to live a full and healthy life."

Angus has already been capturing hearts during his stay at GCHS and with his foster parents, Derek and Samantha Scott of Fort Myers. His unique large size makes him stick out, but his lovable nature draws many to him.

So it's a no-brainer that Angus is a perfect recipient for the Second Chance Fund.

"Angus is an absolute goofball and very lazy," Samantha Scott said. "He's silly and definitely unaware of his size. He loves to lay under things or crawl into small spaces, like between our pool rafts and the wall they lean against, between the back of the couch and the wall, under the bench in the yard, etc.

"He also rolls - a lot. If he's running, he'll forget to slow down or trip on his large puppy feet and go rolling. Or, if he's lying on something, he'll roll over not realizing an edge is nearby and sometimes roll off. He's also lazy when it comes to getting off of things - couches, benches, beds, etc. He'll use his front legs (often with encouragement) to take the first step and then the back legs just kind of follow behind as he slides down. It's perfect for him because he loves to lay flat on his belly with his back legs kicked out."

The surgery Angus will undergo has an approximately an 85-88 percent success rate. Success is deemed at lowering the obstruction to mild to moderate levels (or by 50-percent) which improves the blood flow to the lungs and reduces the work of the right heart. Angus will continue to have a heart murmur for life, but as long as the blood flow is improved, this is acceptable and to be expected.

It's a surgery which can be complicated, as well, Dr. Arsenault said.

"The surgery can be complicated because the heart muscle is thickened and moving catheters can be difficult, particularly the balloon catheter which is stiff," Dr. Arsenault said. "Because the heart muscle is diseased and thickened, the movement of catheters often causes abnormal heart beats, or arrhythmias. This is the most common complication.

"Sometimes these arrhythmias can be severe and life threatening. Angus will be given an infusion of medication throughout the procedure to help minimize arrhythmias, however, they typically still occur to some extent. He will be monitored very closely throughout for this complication."

Angus has enjoyed home life at the Scotts, which emphasizes the goal of supplying the necessary funds to give him a much improved shot at a happy forever home life.

"Angus took to our other dogs and family immediately," Samantha Scott said. "He's very laid back, but social at the same time. Angus is the epitome of 'gentle giant'. He's pretty lazy but *loves* people. We take him lots of places for socialization and people always end up coming over to pet him. He enjoys all the attention and gladly sits for them, but he especially enjoys children.

"He is a great example of how GCHS has sweet, affectionate, well-behaved dogs. He's also a great example of the variety of breeds available for adoption at GCHS. We love telling his story and where he came from to help educate others in the community."

The cost for Angus' surgery is estimated to be \$2,800 to \$3,200, with initial work-up costs running up to \$500, but Southwest Florida Veterinary Specialists & 24-Hour Emergency Hospital is partnering with GCHS and providing a 50-percent discount.

“We are very appreciative of Southwest Florida Veterinary Specialists & 24-Hour Emergency Hospital and their gracious discount,” Galloway said. “But there still are some major costs for Angus’ surgery and the Second Chance Fund is the best route towards providing that sweet puppy a long and healthy life.”

To contribute to the Second Chance Fund, visit www.gulfcoasthumanesociety.org and click the red “Donate Now” button on the home page with Angus’ photo and story. Your donation will go directly to the Second Chance Fund.

Donations can also be mailed to: Second Chance Fund, c/o Gulf Coast Humane Society, 2210 Arcadia Street, Fort Myers, FL. 33916. Phone calls can be directed to 239-332-0364.

About Gulf Coast Humane Society:

Gulf Coast Humane Society is a regional organization dedicated to helping companion pets find their forever homes, no matter how long it takes. GCHS provides an adoption center, spay-neuter and veterinary clinic, as well as education and awareness to the public about the welfare of homeless pets.

GCHS’ mission is to care for companion pets in need by offering safe refuge, providing medical care and facilitating adoptions. GCHS promotes the concept the “Adopt, Don’t Shop” and help educate the community about proper and responsible animal care, while providing quality, affordable veterinary care.

GCHS Veterinary Clinic: 2685 Swamp Cabbage Court, Fort Myers, 33901; Phone: 239-332-2719

GCHS Spay/Neuter Clinic: 2010 Arcadia Street, Fort Myers, 33916; Phone: 239-332-1573

GCHS Adoption Center: 2010 Arcadia Street, Fort Myers, 33916; Phone: 239-332-0364





