



Florida Voices for Animals, Inc.

PO Box 17523 Tampa FL 33682 www.FloridaVoicesForAnimals.org
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Oct/Nov/Dec 2026

GOOD FOOD. BIG IDEAS. A KINDER TAMPA BAY.

Plant-powered food • vendors • speakers • live music • animal rescue



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

11 AM TO 5 PM

PERRY HARVEY SR. PARK

1000 E. Harrison St., Tampa, FL 33602

FOOD, COMMUNITY & COMPASSION

2026 Tampa Bay Veg FEST at the table

Vegan food, speakers and cooking demos fill the day at Perry Harvey Sr. Park. Come for live music, food samples, animal rescues, kid zone and yoga.



Speakers

IDEAS FOR HEALTH & COMPASSION

11:30 AM–12:15 PM

Scott Harrington, DO

The Joyful Vegan: Thriving at Every Age

1:00–2:00 PM

Renee King-Sonnen

Confessions of a Vegan Cattle Rancher

2:00–2:45 PM

Smiriti Banthia, MD

Cardiovascular Code: Rewiring Heart Health with Plants, Motion, Sleep, and Serenity

Live music

Jofurky 10:45–11:30 AM

CopperWing Band 12:15–1:00 PM

Brian Brown 2:45–3:30 PM

In the kitchen

COOKING DEMOS & CONVERSATION

11:00 AM **Ellen Jaffe Jones**

Athlete, author, emcee

I Plan to Die on the Track, Not in a Nursing Home

11:30 AM **Deb Griffin**

PCRM Food for Life Instructor

Dump and Bake Risotto Casserole with Broccoli and Shredded Carrots

1:00 PM **Kyoko Faison**

Pure Kitchen, Tampa

Curry Fried Rice

2:30 PM **Johnny Douglas**

My Hungry Vegan Cafe

Rooted Chickpea Stew

4:00 PM **Kristi Capone**

Avocado St. Pete

Chickpea Salad and Skewers with Avocado's Famous, Vegan Pepperoni

With thanks

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PCRM
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Song Printing
Staycation TampaBay
Talking Animals, WMNF
Tampa Bay Times
Trinity Yoga Wellness Center
Vet Emergency Group
WMNF, 88.5 FM

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Cathy Unruh
Liza Carter & Jerry Fletcher
Myriam & Bill Parham
Trevor Chin
Laura Pennington

SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTORS

Espat Law, P.A.
Sarasota Vegan Society

Environmental Panel

3:30–5:00 PM

Max Chesnes

Environment Reporter
Tampa Bay Times
Panel MC

Elise Bennett

Sr. Attorney & Director
Center for Biological Diversity
Florida Panther Issues

James Scott

Chair,
Suncoast Sierra Club
Florida Black Bear Conservation

Alyssa Huffman

Healthy Gulf
Rice Whale Conservation

Yoga

CLASSES THROUGHOUT THE DAY

11:00 AM **Chris Eaton**

Trinity Yoga Wellness Center
Beyond the Plate: Breath, Meditation & Immersive Sound

2:00 PM **Kate Benedetto**

House of Light
Finding Gratitude in Nature

12:00 PM **Christine Ferro**

House of Light Yoga
Cultivating Compassion

3:00 PM **Jenny Roberts**

Bliss Fit Yoga
Reggae Vinyasa

1:00 PM **Chris Eaton**

Trinity Yoga Wellness Center
Nutrition & Consciousness

4:00 PM **Bryan Bell**

Conscious Fitness
Conscious Fitness & Mobility



PLAN YOUR DAY

We'll see you
at the park

November 14, 2026

tampabayvegfest.com



Lunch & Learn with Dr. Scott Harrington, DO

8/29/26



Our Lunch and Learn continues to be a huge success. Our most recent one was held at World Vegan Cuisine in St. Petersburg.

Over 50 attendees gathered to enjoy a delicious buffet lovingly prepared for us by their amazing staff. Dr. Harrington spoke about how a whole-food, plant-based diet can prevent and often reverse common health problems like heart disease, obesity, heartburn, constipation, and diabetes with practical steps attendees can begin to use immediately. He shared the data and the facts were clear to the audience, what we eat does matter in the short and long term. A quick 'saliva' sample test was provided to all, which showed we can all eat more nitrate-rich green leafy vegetables to improve our blood flow and heart health.

Dr. Harrington used humor and fun anecdotes that kept the audience engaged and laughing while learning this important information.

Saving Florida's Black Bears, One Bear at a Time

Even though Florida's black bears are still recovering from near extinction, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) continues to ignore the science and has authorized another bear-killing season this year.

Florida Voices for Animals has joined with other animal advocacy and conservation groups in a campaign to protect bears by applying for bear hunting permits to keep them out of the hands of hunters. A limited number of permits are available, so every application submitted increases the odds that one will be awarded to a bear advocate instead of a bear killer. Every permit won saves the life of a bear. In 2025, it's estimated that up to 70 bears were saved through these efforts. Until the FWC is reformed and bear hunting stopped for good, we will continue our work to save our beloved black bears, one bear at a time.



A labour of love: Caring for FVA's community cats. *(By Laura Pennington)*

Thank you to the donors, feeders, fosters, and caretakers helping cats heal, thrive, and find loving homes.



We thank the people who donated to our medical fund for community cats. Cats and feeders are deeply grateful. The donations have worked wonders for medical needs. FVA cares about all forms of exploitation, including cats, dogs, our closest companions. FVA created a surgery fund for community cats cared for by board members. FVA and its supporters have helped pay for needed dental work for a cat and several cats with terrible wounds inflicted by other animals or nature.

We feed, trap, neuter, vaccinate and return (TNVR) feral cats that show up in our colonies as labor of love. We rejoice when we find a cat a loving home, or heal a sick animal in need of veterinary care. We apply flea medicine if needed. We worry when a cat goes missing, or a storm is coming. When the cold weather comes, we give them a straw bed to sleep in. These cats live difficult lives, where humans, flooding, or new construction will displace an existing colony. We trap domestic cats that misguided people dump in the park where we feed and find fosters for them. Two of the cats that were found at Al Lopez Park were adopted by loving homes. Seeing that makes it all seem worthwhile. Sadly we can't find fosters for all adoptable cats and kittens, and must return them outside, which is heartbreaking. Many cats are not adoptable and must live outside, but we love them just the same. Seeing them cautiously approach the food, and gradually grow their trust is very gratifying. One of our feeders wrote a book called *The Boy Who Went to Live with the Cats*, which really captured the joy and heartbreak of being a cat feeder.

We caretakers of the FVA cats asking you again, to help us. Any donation big or small would be greatly appreciated for the care, and feeding of our beloved felines. We also eagerly welcome any new feeders or fosters that are interested in helping. We have a few locations that we could use help with, and are willing to work with your schedule. We think you will find it well worth the effort that you put in. If interested, please text Laura P at (813) 340-7562 and Suzanne H at (813) 857-2329.

Meet our NEWEST board member: Kelly Patton!



Kelly has loved animals all her life. She learned compassion for animals at a young age from her mother, who she assisted in nursing injured wildlife back to health and in fostering and transporting rescued dogs. Originally from Nebraska, Kelly spent her summers as a child on her Aunt and Uncle's farm, where she helped care for horses that were rehabilitated after being rescued from the racetrack. She instantly bonded with the horses and loved caring for them, as well as all the other animals that lived around the farm. Despite her mother's warnings, Kelly would often climb the fence to a neighboring farm and spend her afternoons with the cows who lived there. She would pet and play with them, and felt a deep connection when she looked into their eyes. It was devastating when they were taken to be slaughtered, and Kelly was inconsolable. At the age of 12 she vowed never to eat meat again and has been mostly vegan for about 33 years. After moving to Florida in 2018, Kelly discovered a passion for the wildlife here.

She was deeply concerned to see a resurgence of hunting bears in Florida, and spoke out against it at protests and at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) meetings. She helped Florida Voices for Animals (FVA) start a postcard campaign to the FWC opposing the cruel, unnecessary, and unscientific bear hunt in Florida.

In her professional life, Kelly is a home infusion pharmacist and works closely with patients and doctors to clinically manage IV therapies. Her career has taught her compassion for humans as well as animals. In her personal life, Kelly enjoys spending time in nature, escaping through a good fantasy novel, and taking online classes about a variety of subjects including animal activism, philosophy, nature, and spirituality. She lives in Saint Petersburg, Florida with her husband Chauncey and adopted dog Lexie.

Elizabeth Olson Finds Ways To Boost Spay/Neuter Numbers, While Making Prosecution Of Cruelty Cases More Effective

Expressed simply, **Rescue Pink's** mission is to reduce euthanasia and pet homelessness by promoting and funding spay/neuter programs. Partnering with top-tier veterinary clinics, Rescue Pink has sponsored high-volume events, fixing up to 60 animals in a single day. (Their motto: "NO BIRTH is the first step to NO KILL") Since its founding, Rescue Pink has helped well over 2,200 dogs and cats through spay/neuter, medical care, fostering, and rehoming.

The **Animal Justice Task Force** functions as the legal and advocacy arm of Rescue Pink, which Olson created to bring accountability, transparency, and urgency to animal cruelty and neglect cases. Indeed, as **The Tampa Bay Times** chronicled in an extended story earlier this year, Olson has dramatically altered the animal cruelty landscape of Central Florida, particularly when it comes to the manner of prosecuting cases, demonstrating a more fastidious and tenacious approach. This helps ensure convictions and significant sentences. In addition to notable media coverage, Olson has been recognized for her tireless work in other ways, including receiving the Animal Hero of the Year award from Florida Voices for Animals, and the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award from Pinellas County Animal Services.



Duncan Strauss from WMNF Talking Animals Show interviewed Elizabeth Olson on Aug 26th

Tune in @ **88.5 FM every Wednesday from 11:00am—12:00 noon!** (also can be heard in the archives)



Good news for animal justice

I am sharing good news with all you caring people! We now have a dedicated organization to follow up on animal cruelty cases, citations, penalties and court dates. Let us help Elizabeth Olson with this major undertaking and support the Animal Justice Task Force in holding those responsible accountable.

Marilyn Weaver, Kindness Starts with me
Executive Director, League of Humane Voters FL

Spaying and neutering help reduce euthanasia and overcrowding in animal shelters.

NO BIRTH is the first step to NO KILL. www.nobirthmovement.org

Rescue Pink's Animal Justice Task Force



Together for animals

The Animal Justice Task Force has been officially accepted into the Animal Cruelty Network of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, a prestigious national organization.

An incredible 45-minute call with one of their prosecutors, who specializes exclusively in animal cruelty cases, showed us the passion and dedication behind this work. This is exactly the support we have been hoping for!

Through this membership, we can confer directly with specialized prosecutors across the country, including one from the Florida Attorney General's Office.

This is a pivotal moment for our Task Force and every animal who deserves justice.

We cannot wait to learn, grow and advocate alongside this remarkable group. The fight for animal justice just got a whole lot stronger! Scan the QR or visit link for mor information on Animal Justice Task Force. <https://rescuepinkjustice.org>

**Florida Voices for Animals does not endorse any political candidate or political party.*



MORE GOOD NEWS

A new vegan option at White Castle

White Castle introduced its Southwest Veggie Slider nationwide on June 15, 2026, as a permanent menu addition. The Dr. Praeger's patty combines sweet potatoes, black beans, corn, red bell peppers, onions and carrots, with smoky chipotle and barbecue flavors in a crispy brown-rice coating.



Order WITHOUT CHEESE to make it vegan.

PETA also lists crinkle-cut fries and Hash Brown Nibblers as vegan options.

Florida locations include Orlando, Clermont and Kissimmee. The Daytona Beach location opened September 22, 2026., with St. Augustine planned next.

Sources: PETA; White Castle; WFTV (September 9, 2026). Find a location: whitecastle.com/locations

Stuart pigeons spared after advocates speak up

After PETA alerted Florida supporters to reports of pigeon shootings at The Village of Stuart condominium complex, activists called and emailed to raise concerns. On May 21, 2026, PETA reported that the HOA had confirmed an immediate halt to all shooting and lethal-removal services. The HOA also said it was open to discussing humane alternatives with PETA.

Source: PETA update, May 21, 2026. Thank you to everyone who spoke out for the birds!

FVA in Action – Quarter 3, 2026

Dear FVA members, friends, and readers,

Below we share our recent meetup events! We have over 4100 signed up as ‘interested’ in our group and activities. We continue to have a variety of opportunities for you to become involved. WHERE ARE YOU? Please join our Meetup, and attend events that interest you, and help the animals! (If you are unable to attend, please change your RSVP to help us plan appropriately.)

FVA in the Community

7/3, 8/7 & 9/4 - Karaoke & Potluck Nights at Unitarian Universalist Church, a monthly event organized by Trevor Chin and Nachiket Burade. Come and enjoy sharing yummy vegan foods, meeting new people, and having fun singing or listening to those brave ones who do!



7/3, 8/7 & 9/3 - Vegan Support Groups- Monthly meetings are open forums, held virtually via Zoom. You can join in great discussions with some regular and new attendees each time. No pressure to chat, but we like everyone to introduce themselves. Join our hosts: Kimberly Gronemeyer, Psy.D., Myriam Parham, RD, CDCES, and Cathy Unruh, Journalist, Author, and Animal Advocate.

Our refreshing biweekly “Hike & Vegan Eats” series continues to bring people together for outdoor adventures followed by a community meal at local vegan-friendly spots. Our guide, Nachiket Burade, shared highlights from this quarter:

7/12- Boyd Hill Nature Preserve: A scenic 5-mile hike followed by a delicious meal at Good Intentions in St. Petersburg. Sadly, Good Intentions has since closed.

8/2 - Alafia River Nature Corridor: Hikers enjoyed 8 peaceful miles through a light drizzle, spotting deer and birds and not another person along the trail. We wrapped up at Taaza Mart, where Nachi introduced the group to a variety of vegan Indian foods.

8/23 - John Chestnut Sr. Park: A beautiful hike along Park Loop and Peggy Park Nature Trail, followed by a meal at The Green Table in Palm Harbor.

9/13 – Rainbow Springs & Gainesville Veg Fest: Relaxing walk and swim at Rainbow Springs, followed by Gainesville Veg Fest and plenty of delicious vegan food.

Join us for a future Hike & Vegan Eats event! It’s a great way to connect with like-minded people, support vegan businesses, explore nature, and boost your physical and mental well-being all while having fun.



7/19 The Mediterranean Chickpea, Tampa Social + TBFV Volunteer Information. Great discussions and delicious food enjoyed by a dozen attendees. Organized by Kim G and Joan Z.

8/29 FVA & World Vegan Cuisine’s Lunch & Learn program. Over 50 attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet. Dr. Scott Harrington, gave an informative talk on how to “Go Vegan: Eat the Food That Loves You Back.”



9/12 House of Vegano, St. Pete, Social + TBFV Volunteer Meeting. Sixteen attendees enjoyed the unique sushi, dumplings & desserts. We had time to share a little about ourselves and our vegan journey.

FVA in Action – Quarter 3, 2026 (Cont.)

9/13 Gainesville Veg Fest, hosted by The Vegan Squad's. An FVA table was staffed by Truddie Reif & Joe Hahn. Several other FVA members attended to enjoy the amazing array of vegan food and other vendors. Attendees included; Myriam, Cara, Nachi & hiking crew, Tracey, Meg, Sydney, Moss, Alex, Dominic, Amy, and Vidhi.

9/20 – Al Lopez Park Quarterly Cleanup - Great cleanup with many wonderful volunteers. Huge thanks to our hard-working volunteers. See our meetup for details. Please join us any time, as the trash never stops. Thanks for ALL your help!

Al Lopez Park & Other Locations Year-Round Feral Cats feeding, trapping for medical care and sterilizations— Feral cat care and feedings have been coordinated by Tom Bird for years. We need more volunteers. Currently a few volunteers take turns once a week making sure the cats are fed. Thanks to Suzanne House, Ron Gray, Laura P, Amy A, Maggie L, Shawn B, Nachiket B, Kenny E for doing this 365*12. Total dedication!

Media and Other Activities:

7/22 – WMNF Talking Animals with Duncan Strauss- FVA Board member, **Laura Weiss** was interviewed on the protests against **Loomis Brothers Circus** performing with wild animals at the **Sarasota Fairgrounds-Robarts Arena** in Sarasota. Several protests were held on 7/31, 8/1 & 8/2. See note below.

9/10, 9/16 & 9/24 - FVA members joined Betsy Coville, MS, DVM to speak to the Hillsborough County **BOCC** to urge them to allocate funds for a desperately needed **NEW** building for the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center (PRC). The outdated county shelter is in need of adequate medical equipment, repairs too numerous to list, A/C for the dogs, and is overwhelmed with lost, abandoned, injured and animals held in court cases. We urged the BOCC to budget needed funds ASAP to replace the old building.

FVA sends donations to local shelters - **Sanctuary Monthly Donations: July: Food Not Bombs, \$200** to help feed vegan food to the homeless in Tampa, **Sept: St. Francis Society Animal Rescue, \$200** to help with a recent increase of kitten rescues

FVA Demos for the Animals:

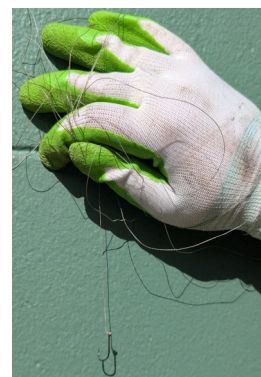
7/11 PETA/FVA Demo against Shriners, at the Tampa Convention Center to urge Shriners International to ban its member clubs from hosting cruel animal circuses! Hosted by Kim & Trevor.

7/31, 8/1 & 8/2 – FVA/PETA protest against the Loomis Brothers Circus performing with wild animals at the Sarasota Fairgrounds-Robarts Arena, Sarasota. FVA's Laura W. joined PETA.

Please check our FVA Meetup calendar to join us at events like these so we can get to know each other. We hope to see you soon!



PLEASE consider helping with our feral cat colony medical bills fund. This also helps sterilize cats that join any of the colonies.



BEST FRIENDS *Opinion by Marilyn Weaver*

Over my many years of animal advocacy, I've dealt with one sad, tragic story after another. Cruelty, neglect, abandonment, & euthanasia of healthy animals. Best Friends promised us they were on a mission to end the killing of homeless- pets in shelters by year 2025. This promise encouraged ongoing generous donations to Best Friends. Shelters started to become Best Friend "Network Partners" which they post at the bottom of their web sites. I was asked what it meant. I didn't know. But I knew this no-kill mission was not met! When I called BF and asked about the "mission", I got a lengthy, non-explanatory answer. So, I went "digging".

What does it mean to be a Best Friend's Network Partner?

In short, being a Best Friend's Network Partner means you're part of a supportive, resource-rich community that works together to save more animals — with tools, connections, and opportunities to make a bigger difference. It includes mentorship. To my chagrin, I found that part of this mentorship is advising reaching a 90% save rate via taking in dogs that can be adopted. That means rejecting admission of certain types of dogs i.e. large bully types, etc. What happens to those rejected animals that people can't keep for one reason or the other? That is a quiet question and a quiet answer!

I recently found out about the No-Birth movement which is the first step in attaining this goal. We have too many companion animals. The killing has to be stopped! No Birth will lead us to No Kill! My donations are now directed to supporting free and low cost Spay Neuter organizations. Please check out these links and become part of a realistic movement to stop the killing, misnamed euthanasia, of healthy animals.



How the Netherlands addressed stray dogs



No Birth Movement



Animal Balance



Animal Balance Galápagos



Animal Balance on Facebook



Animal Balance on Instagram



From No-Kill to No-Birth

Call for Action! - Submitted by Betsy Coville, MS, DVM

Build a New Humane Pet Resource Center for Hillsborough County

Hillsborough County PRC is located at 440 N. Falkenburg Rd, Tampa. Existing facility is over 40 years old and has become antiquated. It no longer meets safe/humane standards required for a community of our size. If you can give the Rays \$800 M they can give our shelter \$30M!!! **Why This Is Crucial Now?**

Severe Overcrowding: As the only open-admission shelter in the county, the PRC must accept all strays, owner surrenders, abuse and hoarding cases. The facility regularly operates well over 150% capacity. On September 17, 2026, PRC housed 320 dogs, 177% of its dog capacity.

Outdated Infrastructure: The building faces continuous failures. There is no A/C in our outdoor kennels in the hot summer sun and no heat in the winter. The veterinary clinic is outdated in terms of size and medical equipment. The laundry is in a garage open to the outside and too small to support thousands of animals yearly.

Unsafe Environment: Overcrowding combined with poor noise dampening creates a stressful, chaotic environment that affects the behavioral and physical health of the animals in county care.

Falling Behind Surrounding Areas: While neighboring counties have successfully funded and built state-of-the-art shelters with indoor climate control for every animal, Hillsborough County continues to push basic humane standards to future. Our human population continues to swell, which means animal intake will rise. We cannot continue to apply short-term fixes to a building that has outlived its functional lifespan. The dedicated staff, volunteers, and the vulnerable animals of our community deserve a safe, clean, and modern facility.

Our Action Demand: We call on the Hillsborough County Commissioners to take the following actions during upcoming fiscal planning and infrastructure allocations:

1. Allocate Dedicated Funding: Commit the necessary capital improvement funds required to construct a modern, expanded campus capable of humanely managing our county & animal population.
2. Prioritize Shelter in Infrastructure Spending: Ensure that animal welfare facilities are treated as an essential public infrastructure priority alongside roads, parks, and stadium renovations.
3. Commit to Humane Design Standards: Ensure the new facility includes full indoor climate control, expanded veterinary hospital spaces, dedicated behavioral assessment rooms, and sanitary, easy-to-clean housing areas.

You can receive this newsletter via email or download it from the FVA website. To go paperless, please email fvaonline@yahoo.com to let us know. You will both help the environment and enable FVA to have more resources. to help animals. If you are interested in advertising in our Newsletter, please contact us for price/size info!

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YES I want to support Florida Voices for Animals, Inc.

Enclosed is my annual membership fee or donation:

☐ \$300 Teddy* Lifetime ☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$50 Family ☐ \$30 Individual ☐ \$15 Student ☐ _____ Other

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail: _____

I would like to volunteer for:

☐ Phone Tree ☐ Attending Demonstrations ☐ Staffing Outreach Tables ☐ Website ☐ Newsletter

☐ Investigations ☐ Other: _____

I prefer to receive my Newsletters: ☐ Electronically via email ☐ Regular Mail

* In loving memory of Keith Roghair's dog, *Teddy*



Our mission is to educate the public about animal abuse and exploitation. Please renew your membership if it has expired. Check your label.

M Paid membership and renewal date
X Newsletter exchange

L Lifetime member
C Courtesy

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All events are posted on our Meetup Calendar so if you haven't signed up for our meetup, go to www.meetup.com, search for Florida Voices for Animals, and then sign up.

Check out Every Wed at 11am WMNF 88.5FM **Talking Animals** radio show with **Duncan Strauss**

10/1, 11/5, 12/3 @ 6:30pm **Vegan Support Group** Zoom Mtg. FVA is hosting a series of vegan support groups on the first Thursday of each month to help you cope with the challenges of living in a non-vegan world. RSVP on FVA Meetup

10/2, 11/6, 12/4 @ 6:30pm **Vegan Potluck & Karaoke**, Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa, 11400 Morris Bridge Rd, Tampa 33637 FVA hosts this fun monthly event. Bring a vegan dish and your best singing voice. RSVP on FVA Meetup

11/14 @11am - 5pm **14th Annual Tampa Bay VegFest** at Perry Harvey Sr park, 1000 E Harrison St, Downtown Tampa.

11/26 @1pm - 4:30pm **ThanksVegan Potluck**, Carrollwood Rec Center, 3515 McFarland Rd, FL 33618. This is a great opportunity to celebrate the holiday in a truly compassionate way. Bring friends and family.

Florida Voices for Animals 17th Annual

ThanksVegan Potluck

Thursday, November 26, 2026
1 pm - 4:30pm

Carrollwood Rec Center
3515 McFarland Rd, Tampa FL 33618

Please bring an appetizer, entree,
 side dish, or dessert to share.

Purchase tickets at below link or scan the QR.

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/2026-thanksvegan-potluck>
www.thanksvegan.com



12/13 @9:30am - 10:30am **FVA's Al Lopez Park Cleanup**, 4810 N Himes Ave, Tampa, FL 33614. Volunteers are needed to help clean up Al Lopez Park. The animals could use your help to keep their environment clean. Bring water or other beverage, sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, long pants & long sleeves. Gloves, trash bags & grabber poles will be provided.