

## Share the Shelter Music Fest raises more than \$21,600 for two Emerald Coast nonprofits.

*-Alaqua Animal Refuge and Shelter House Domestic Violence Center will use proceeds to support missions to save lives.*

(Editor's note: For a photo from the event, please go to:  
[www.thelastword.zenfolio.com/stscheck](http://www.thelastword.zenfolio.com/stscheck)

(SANTA ROSA BEACH, Fla.) Alaqua Animal Refuge and Shelter House Domestic Violence Center's missions hit a high note on Sunday, July 24 as the two local nonprofits raised \$21,680.25 in the fight against violence at Share the Shelter Music Fest.

The event, which was held at Gulf Place in Santa Rosa Beach from 5 to 9 p.m., featured live musical entertainment by Dread Clampitt, Heritage, Kelsey Anna, Bryan Kennedy and Daphne Willis, and special guest appearances by performers Matt Miller and Megan McCormick.

“To have so many well-known groups and artists step up and perform at our event was pivotal to the success of Share the Shelter Music Fest,” said Michelle Sperzel, executive director of Shelter House Domestic Violence Center. “We thank all these talented individuals who gave of their time and talents for our fund raiser. Their music allowed us to create an atmosphere where people could come together, have a fantastic time, be a part of social change and break the silence about violence against people and animals.”

More than 500 people attended the first-time festival, which also featured a vendor fair offering food, beverages, arts, crafts and unique gift items, as well as an exclusive ticketed VIP Lounge.

“When Shelter House Domestic Violence Center and our no-kill animal refuge came together to create this fund raising partnership, we hoped we would be able to offer a unique event to the area,” said Laurie Hood, president and founder of Alaqua Animal Refuge. “But when so many organizations stepped forward to graciously offer contributions and hundreds of individuals purchased tickets, we knew our like missions had found common ground with our community. We are so grateful for the support the Emerald Coast showed our nonprofits through Share the Shelter Music Fest.”

Sponsors for Share the Shelter Music Fest include The Seagrove Coyote and La Botona at the title level; AlliBeck Events at the platinum level; Dixielectricar of

Destin, Graffiti's Funky Blues Shack, Silver Sands Factory Stores, The Red Bar and Think It Wear It Express at the gold level; Preston Hood Chevrolet and Smiling Fish Café at the silver level; SunTrust Bank at the bronze level; Grayton Beer Co., Wine World and The Culinary Gallery at the VIP level; and 30A.com, Proffitt PR and SoWal.com at the media level.

Commemorative Share the Shelter T-shirts are still available for purchase at [www.shop.thinkitwearitstore.com](http://www.shop.thinkitwearitstore.com).

**About Alaqua Animal Refuge:**

Alaqua Animal Refuge – an independent, nonprofit organization located on Florida's Emerald Coast – advocates the general welfare and humane treatment of animals by providing shelter, prevention of pet overpopulation and adoption services. Located on 10 acres in Freeport, the refuge was formed by Walton County, Fla.-resident Laurie Hood in 2007 when she discovered that countless animals were being euthanized due to the lack of a no-kill shelter/adoption organization in the area. Since that time, Alaqua Animal Refuge has helped find homes for more than 6,000 animals. Currently, up to 100 animals are adopted per month from this unique rescue facility, which serves as a true refuge for more than 250 animals at any given time. For more information on Alaqua Animal Refuge, go to AARFlorida.com or call 850-880-6399.

**About Shelter House Domestic Violence Center:**

Shelter House is the state-certified domestic violence shelter serving victims of domestic violence in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Services include a 24-hour hotline, crisis counseling, advocacy, outreach, primary prevention, transitional housing and confidential sheltering. Between July 1, 2010 and May 1, 2011, Shelter House directly touched more than 3,665 lives in Okaloosa and Walton counties by providing the following services to abused women and children: provided 10,252 bed nights to 310 women and children, answered 1,021 Hotline calls, provided 2,936 hours of counseling, led 282 domestic violence support groups and gave 1,300 community referrals. If you feel that a family member or intimate partner is endangering your physical or emotional safety, or if you know someone experiencing this in their home, call Shelter House's hotline at 1-800-44-ABUSE, or 850-863-4777.