

PAWS CHICAGO®

2024 IMPACT REPORT



INTRODUCING PAWS CHICAGO

RESCUE RANCH

*Sneak Peek
Inside*



Our Future Flagship Location in Hawthorn Woods

The Ehlert Family Makes Inaugural Gift Naming Cat Center

YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights & Statistics

pawschicago.org

PAWS
CHICAGO
2024
HIGHLIGHTS



23,842

Total Homeless and At-Risk Pets Served



Effie



97.93%

Save Rate

PAWSCHICAGO®

Thank You!

Your generosity and commitment to homeless and at-risk animals has saved the pets in these pages, and thousands more. The progress and accomplishments outlined here are only possible because of you.



Keebler



4,382

Adoptions



84,430 lbs

of Pet Food Distributed by the Pet Food Pantry



125,071

Volunteer Hours - (Equivalent to 60 Full-Time Employees)



Lorelai



17,168

Free or Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Surgeries



Aruba



2,254

Animals in Foster Care



3,672

Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Surgeries



Argentina



Shondra



43,441

Free or Low-Cost Vaccinations



ABOUT PAWS CHICAGO

For 28 years, PAWS Chicago's founding commitment to saving the lives of homeless pets has stood strong in the face of tragedy, natural disasters, recessions and pandemics. Together, we have continued to build programs and services to bring an end to the killing of homeless pets. As a result, PAWS Chicago is one of the largest comprehensive No Kill animal welfare organizations in the nation, and the killing of homeless pets in Chicago has declined by 89%.

This year, the PAWS Chicago Kocourek Medical Center will provide medical care for more than 25,000 homeless and at-risk pets. Through the adoption program, PAWS will heal, rehabilitate and find families for 5,000 homeless cats and dogs. And the Lurie Clinic, the only remaining high-volume, free and low-cost spay/neuter clinic in Chicago, will provide 21,000 free or subsidized surgeries this year.

With a focus on solving the problem of pet homelessness and euthanasia, PAWS Chicago continues to innovate to save lives. Together, we will build a No Kill community where all homeless and at-risk pets not only survive but thrive!



PAWS Chicago has received Charity Navigator's 4-star rating consecutively since 2003

ABOVE: PAWS volunteers gather together at an Angels with Tails adoption event.
ON THE COVER FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Rob Colbert, Stacy Ehlert, Marilyn "Bunny" Ehlert, and Mickey Evans.
COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY: Maria Ponce

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ABOVE: Rob Colbert, Mickey Evans, Stacy Ehlert, Marilyn "Bunny" Ehlert with Ferdinand the cow at the future PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch.
RIGHT: Bugle at the PAWS Chicago Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center.

A LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE CHAIR



Dear Supporters,

This Impact Report highlights the lifesaving we achieved because of you!

Every day, we experience the tangible impact of what you make possible. We see it in the eyes of a dog who has left the stress, smell, nonstop barking, and chaos of the city shelter — unsure when his next human contact would come — and now finds himself able to relax in the arms of our PAWS staff and volunteers at our PAWS Chicago Kocourek Medical Center. We feel it in the first purr of a kitten who is saved from trying to survive on the city streets, alone, skin-and-bones, and matted in grime. We see it in the eyes of both human and animal, as they fall in love at our Adoption Center and experience the first moments of what will be one of the most meaningful connections in each of their lives. Thank you for making this work possible!

Words and numbers cannot do justice to these moments, but we do our best in these pages to bring to life the programs that you have made possible. The very best of humanity is alive at PAWS each and every day. I hope you will visit to experience this impact firsthand, and, until then, I hope you enjoy the stories and results in the pages that follow.

First, some exciting news! We are expanding our footprint to a 20-acre equestrian center in Hawthorn Woods in the northwest suburbs, which will be the PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch for homeless pets. This new campus will not only broaden our lifesaving impact but will help us strategically support some of the most at-risk animals in our community: large dogs and cats. You can read about this important initiative on page 22. And don't miss reading about Bunny and Stacy Ehlert, featured on the cover. They are our first major supporters of this momentous new initiative for homeless pets. It will take a village to bring this vision to life, and we are so grateful to Bunny, Stacy, and the Ehlert Foundation, for leading the way.

PAWS Chicago was founded 28 years ago with a clear mission: To end the mass killing of homeless pets in our community. The Rescue Ranch will be an important step in the direction of No Kill, but we must also continue focusing on the growing need at Chicago's city impoundment facility.

In 1997, our founding year, more than 42,000 cats and dogs were killed in the city of Chicago, and the number was increasing each year. At that quantity, it was clear that adoption alone couldn't begin to address the depth of the pet overpopulation problem. We focused on the solution, which was to prevent the exponential breeding of pets, and in 2000, we opened what continues to be the city's only high-volume spay/neuter clinic, strategically located in the heart of the city's most underserved zip codes, which also correlate with the highest number of stray calls.

To date, we have performed more than 330,000 free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries for pets in under-resourced communities. The results have been extraordinary, with euthanasia down 89% in Chicago. But we have been seeing a growing need and an increasing number of homeless pets every year since the pandemic.

Nationally, the cost of veterinary care skyrocketed; backyard breeders proliferated just as post-pandemic adoption demand slowed; pet abandonment surged, and our city impoundment facility, Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), is chronically underfunded and over-capacity, putting animals at threat of euthanasia every day. CACC's intake of homeless cats and dogs rose by 10.2% from 2022 to 2023 and by 17.7% from 2023 to 2024.

At the end of 2023, we developed new innovative programs to address the problems that were emerging. With the launch of 360@CACC, we are on-site at CACC seven days a week to help not only intake pets into our PAWS adoption program, but to comprehensively support the underfunded city shelter with additional resources to minimize pets coming in and maximize lifesaving. In this Impact Report, you will read about our first full year of 360@CACC operations, and the very promising impact on page 6. Despite continued surging intake of homeless pets, we've increased the adoption and transfer of thousands of cats and dogs. Every one, a precious life saved. Taken together, we're building a more humane city.

As a nonprofit, PAWS Chicago receives no government funding and relies entirely on dedicated supporters like you. We are grateful that you've chosen to support the animals in our community. Because of your generosity, so many are alive and thriving today.

With warm appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Fasseas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Fasseas
Founder & Executive Chair



ABOVE: Lilah, just one of the PAWS rescued animals, prepares to leave CACC for the Kocourek Medical Center and a life filled with safety, security, and family.

360@CACC: A NEW PATH FORWARD

PAWS SAVES THOUSANDS MORE HOMELESS PETS THROUGH AN ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP WITH CACC

Mamas, a large and lovable white pit bull terrier with adorable brown spots, wiggled her way through the doors at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC) on a cold February day. But instead of being routinely processed as another large dog entering the city impoundment facility, a PAWS Chicago team member was there to help.

Through a supportive conversation, a common storyline emerged. Mamas had been abandoned outside in the extreme cold when her original owners moved away. A kind neighbor took her in, warmed her body and heart with nurturing, and ultimately wanted to keep her as a member of the family — but Mamas came down with a terrible bout of pneumonia. Without resources for costly veterinary care and treatment, the family was in line to give her up.

That’s when PAWS Chicago jumped into action. Mamas was booked for a free outpatient community medicine appointment at the PAWS Chicago Lurie Clinic, where she received the antibiotics and treatment she needed. And, of course, once healthy, she was spayed at no cost to prevent unwanted litters.

One less large bully breed entered the city shelter. One more family kept together. One less pet breeding.

Charlotte was curled up in a tight ball in a cardboard box. Her family was simply devastated. They had rushed their beloved cat of eight years to the emergency clinic, but she had a uterine infection and required an emergency surgery that they could not afford. They brought her to CACC to be euthanized. When a PAWS team member greeted them

360@CACC RESULTS-AT-A-GLANCE

3,019 CACC adoptions – up 28.6% over the prior year

1,986 cats and dogs transferred to PAWS directly from CACC

931 CACC pets spayed or neutered by PAWS and ready for adoption through The Big Fix

405 CACC pets transferred to other rescues received spay/neuter surgeries and veterinary care through the Rescue Ready program

143 animals received medical services through the Pet Owner Support program

76.8% save rate achieved at CACC, slightly improved despite rising intake

at the door and discovered what was wrong, Charlotte was immediately booked for an emergency pyometra spay surgery at the Lurie Clinic. She was rushed over for surgery, and she was home with her family that night!

Mamas and Charlotte are two real-world examples of what PAWS Chicago’s innovative new partnership with Chicago Animal Care and Control is doing each and every day – finding ways to either keep pets out of the shelter system or save the lives of the pets who end up there. Called 360@CACC, this comprehensive program is oriented at providing 360-degrees of support for the underfunded and overstretched city shelter. And after its first year, there are positive results in both the number of animals saved and innovations to improve lifesaving and reduce euthanasia.

THE SURGING CHICAGO HOMELESS ANIMAL CRISIS

Around the country, there has been a surge of pet homelessness in the aftermath of the pandemic, and Chicago is no different. In 2023, intake increased by 10.2%, with 1,198 additional pets entering CACC over 2022.



SAVED FROM EUTHANASIA



ABOVE TOP: Mamas recovered from pneumonia in the comfort of her new home thanks to the 360@CACC program. ABOVE BOTTOM: The Pet Owner Support program helped Charlotte remain healthy and safe in the loving arms of her family.



“
Despite intake increasing 18% in 2024 –
resulting in an additional 2,295 cats and dogs
entering the shelter – the save rate slightly increased,
from 76% in 2023 to 76.8% in 2024.”

On top of that, add a Chicago government fiscal crisis to the mix. Despite being the third-largest city in the U.S., Chicago has the lowest municipal animal control budget among major cities, with CACC operating on an annual budget of just \$7.17 million in 2023 while peer cities have budgets ranging from \$15-30 million. With budget freezes city-wide, additional investment was not coming for animals in need.

These worrying trends led PAWS Chicago and CACC to launch the 360@CACC partnership in November of 2023. And the challenges have only gotten worse since the launch.

In 2024, CACC recorded an intake of 15,262 pets — an 18% increase over 2023 and 30% increase over 2022. The numbers are spiking, and with a citywide budget crisis and hiring freeze, the city shelter cannot add services.

PAWS Chicago stepped in with 360@CACC — a robust suite of prevention and lifesaving programs that provide a safety net to Chicago’s homeless and at-risk cats and dogs.

THE COMPREHENSIVE SUITE OF PROGRAMS THAT MAKE UP 360@CACC

Pet Owner Support is the program that helped Mamas and Charlotte stay in their homes. By meeting families at the door, the PAWS

Chicago team finds ways to support families and keep pets in the homes they already have. Even when families cannot keep the pet they have brought to CACC, PAWS offers additional services, like spay/neuter for other pets in the home to prevent more breeding, or direct intake to PAWS Chicago to keep pets out of the over-crowded city shelter. In 2024, Pet Owner Support provided medical care for 143 pets and 135 came directly to PAWS, preventing further overcrowding.

The **Rescue Ready** program launched thanks to funding from The Rachael Ray Foundation. This support increased the number of transfers to other shelters and rescue groups in Chicagoland by providing medical care for pets from CACC. Each year, transfer is the #1 way that homeless cats and dogs make it out of the city shelter alive. But in 2023, non-PAWS Chicago transfers decreased 13%. Due to difficulty accessing veterinary care, many shelters and rescue groups without their own veterinarians were transferring pets from other states because animals arrived spayed/neutered and vetted.

With Rescue Ready, all cats and large dogs transferred from CACC to rescues without in-house veterinary capabilities are eligible for a \$65 spay/neuter procedure and veterinary care at the PAWS Chicago Lurie Clinic. In 2024, transfers increased by 19%!

The Big Fix program ensures that pets at CACC are ready to go home when adopters come to the city shelter. By law, pets must be spayed or neutered before adoption, but the CACC medical team is stretched thin providing care for the 15,000 animals who enter their doors. That means adopters often wait weeks for a pet to be spayed or neutered before they can bring them home. With The Big Fix, PAWS volunteers drive CACC dogs to the Lurie Clinic for surgery.

In 2024, PAWS provided spay/neuter surgeries and medical care for 405 CACC animals through Rescue Ready and 931 CACC pets through The Big Fix. In total, 39 rescue groups transferred pets who received medical care from these two programs.

The **Adoption Expansion** program staffed a PAWS Chicago employee at CACC to support prospective adopters in finding and adopting a pet. The CACC budget has never had a staffed resource dedicated to adoptions, which means there is not often a clear process, approach or alignment of volunteers to help adopters. The PAWS staff position has helped change that by bringing additional resources to matchmaking and adoption counseling.

With this additional PAWS support, CACC facilitated 3,019 adoptions in 2024, a remarkable 28.6% increase.

THE FIRST YEAR'S IMPACT

These 360@CACC programs work together towards a single purpose: lifesaving.

Despite intake increasing 18% in 2024 – resulting in an additional 2,295 cats and dogs entering the shelter – the save rate slightly increased, from 76% in 2023 to 76.8% in 2024. This means that homeless animals had a greater likelihood of leaving CACC alive.

At the same time, euthanasia increased by 416 animals, totaling 3,380 pets in 2024. But euthanasia would have increased by 77%, with 5,255 pets euthanized, without the additional lifesaving.

In 2024, 1,875 additional animals had a positive outcome, totaling 11,634 total cats and dogs who are alive thanks to the work of CACC, PAWS Chicago, the Chicagoland rescue community, and adopters who came together to save homeless animals.

The initial results have been inspiring, but the 360@CACC program is only getting started. Together, the 360 partnership is working towards a world where pets and families stay united, where fewer animals endure the uncertainty of shelter life, and where homeless pets in Chicago not only survive but thrive.

INVESTING RESOURCES WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

With a surging intake of more than 15,000 pets last year, the team at Chicago Animal Care and Control is doing the best they can to save lives.

Through the generosity of the PAWS Chicago community, these innovative 360@CACC programs are investing in direct lifesaving services.

The Emergency Fund Leadership Council was established in 2024 to help fund the new 360@CACC program. Chaired by Stephanie Field Harris and Katie Gledhill, members commit annually to help Chicago's most at-risk animals.

The Rachael Ray Foundation, one of the most generous national leaders supporting homeless animals, has made a leadership grant to fund spay/neuter efforts for CACC animals, increasing adoptions and transfers to dozens of rescue groups.

It takes a village to save homeless animals, and PAWS is grateful for these innovative funders.

CACC Intake and Outcomes

	2023	2024	% Incr.
Intake	12,967	15,262	17.7%
Adoptions	2,347	3,019	28.6%
Transfers	6,086	7,242	19.0%
Euthanasia	2,964	3,380	14.0%
Save Rate	76.0%	76.8%	0.8%

Without additional 360@CACC lifesaving programs, like adoptions and transfers, euthanasia would have increased by 77%!

THE RACHAEL RAY FOUNDATION TO THE RESCUE

The Rachael Ray Foundation supports The Big Fix and Rescue Ready programs, helping hundreds of adopters and 39 other rescues transfer more at-risk animals out of CACC.

For The Rachael Ray Foundation, The Big Fix and Rescue Ready programs were ideal programs to further their mission.

"We believe in the importance of fostering collaboration among shelters in a manner that addresses urgent needs right now," said John Hall from The Rachael Ray Foundation. "The Rescue Ready and The Big Fix programs leverage PAWS's remarkable veterinary capabilities to facilitate pathways to adoption for more cats and dogs."

The foundation's generous funding helped PAWS provide spay/neuter and medical care for 1,336 CACC cats and dogs. These medical services ensured that animals could be transferred to other rescues, adopted out from CACC, or returned safely to their original owner. As a result, **CACC adoptions were up nearly 29% in 2024, and transfers to other rescues increased by 1,156 cats and dogs.**

"That's a significant victory for Chicago animals in need," said Hall.



GETTING TO NO KILL: THE PAWS CHICAGO MODEL

PAWS Chicago's innovative No Kill model serves the mission to end needless euthanasia and build communities where every pet not only survives but thrives.

The foundation of the No Kill model is Community Engagement. You, the PAWS community, quite literally operate, advocate for, and fund every aspect of this lifesaving mission.

Sitting atop this foundation are four pillars for programming: Prevention, Animal Health & Behavior, Adoption, and Volunteers. These are the programs necessary for building and sustaining a No Kill Chicago.

Putting this model into action, the goal is to achieve a No Kill equilibrium, where the number of homeless and unwanted pets in Chicago is in balance with the community's capacity to save, heal, and care for them.

Since PAWS Chicago's founding in 1997, when more than 42,000 pets were killed, the No Kill model has been instrumental in reducing citywide euthanasia by 89%.





PREVENTION

SCALING UP SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAMS TO END PET OVERPOPULATION

To combat the pet overpopulation crisis looming over 2024, the PAWS Chicago Kocourek Medical Center and Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic in Little Village underwent significant operational changes to boost the organization’s steadfast commitment to its No Kill mission through spay/neuter.

“We know the best way to prevent needless euthanasia is to focus on one powerful solution: targeted spay/neuter for pets in under-served communities that are most likely to breed. In 2024, we undertook a major effort to optimize our capacity to perform spay/neuter surgeries, the most effective tool we have to prevent overpopulation at its source,” says PAWS Chicago Executive Director, Alexis Fasseas. “We laid a solid foundation that will enable the expansion of surgical capacity in the coming years. We anticipate 2025 will be our largest spay/neuter year since our founding, and will increase our surgeries by more than 20%.”

A YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION

Throughout the year, the Medical Center was buzzing with a sense of urgency and purpose as PAWS rolled out new initiatives to provide critical services to more

pets in need. From adding key staff members to implementing cutting-edge medical practices, the goal was clear: maximize the surgical capacity while ensuring the highest level of care for every animal that walked through the doors.



We know the best way to prevent needless euthanasia is to focus on one powerful solution: targeted spay/neuter...”

In October, Brian Shears joined PAWS as Head of Medical Operations, bringing a robust background in managing large veterinary hospitals and launching startup specialty hospitals to scale. “Brian’s medical

operations expertise is exactly what the Medical Center has needed to reach the next level of lifesaving — both for our spay/neuter and shelter medicine teams,” said Fasseas.

Optimizing the existing resources was just as important. McKinsey & Company, a leading global management consulting firm, volunteered an engagement team to assess key processes at the spay/neuter and vaccine clinics, analyze workflows, identify inefficiencies, and recommend improvements. With these insights, PAWS implemented several operational improvements to streamline clinic operations and improve efficiency, including introducing digitized appointment booking.

TRAINING TO INCREASE EXPERTISE AND EFFICIENCY

To kick off the year, nationally renowned spay/neuter surgeon Dr. Alycia Eisenstein stepped into leadership of the Lurie Clinic and spearheaded a series of training initiatives for the entire medical team. These monthly training days combined lectures with hands-on practical work. The trainings focused on cutting-edge techniques in anesthesia, patient monitoring, and surgical efficiency — critical components of performing safe and effective high-volume surgeries.

By the middle of the year, Lurie Clinic staff had gained new insights and refined their skills, allowing them to increase the pace and volume of surgeries. By the end of 2024, the Lurie Clinic performed 17,168 surgeries — an increase from 16,587 the previous year. And the momentum continues, with PAWS Chicago expecting to reach more than 20,000 surgeries for the first time ever in 2025. Looking ahead, PAWS will continue to expand its reach and efficiency with a goal of 25,000 surgeries in 2026.

THE ROAD AHEAD: A NO KILL CHICAGO

With the work at PAWS Chicago, behind every number is a life. Each surgery means a future without litters, a future where fewer pets end up homeless and euthanized. Every surgery is a step towards a No Kill Chicago, where every pet not only survives but thrives.

ABOVE LEFT: Dr. Jacqueline Zdziarski-West performs spay/neuter surgery at the Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Irving & Phyllis Millstein Foundation for Animal Welfare

Irving and Phyllis Millstein were affluent New Yorkers who created their wealth in the fashion industry during the 1970s and 80s. Some years prior to her death, with the help of their long-time attorney Robert Randell, Phyllis created several trusts, most in support of animal causes.

In that spirit, Robert helped establish The Irving and Phyllis Millstein Foundation for Animal Welfare. “Their relationship with their pets was very important to them, so we wanted to honor that in creating a legacy for them,” says Michael Randell, son of Robert and current President of The Millstein Foundation.

The foundation supports low-cost care, focusing on vaccinations, routine veterinary care, and spay and neuter. “Even basic care is out of reach for a lot of people. This allows families to stay intact and allows animals to remain healthy. And it helps reduce stress on the shelter system,” says Michael.

While Michael has worked with numerous animal charities, he sees PAWS Chicago as exceptional in its dedication to the No Kill movement. He says, “PAWS is always looking for the next way to reach into the community, whether it’s physically through their facilities or through their efforts.”

Today, Michael is grateful to be able to participate in the Millstein’s legacy. “It’s been a privilege to support the legacy for the Millsteins because they really did believe in this cause,” he says. “And I’m just happy to be able to contribute to it.”



ANIMAL HEALTH & BEHAVIOR

TRAINING THAT FITS: BEHAVIOR SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY ANIMAL

Every homeless pet has a unique story — often one of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. At PAWS Chicago, it's understood that medical care alone isn't enough. Healing the whole animal means tending to their emotional needs, too. That's why PAWS focuses on behavioral wellness as a vital pillar of its lifesaving work.

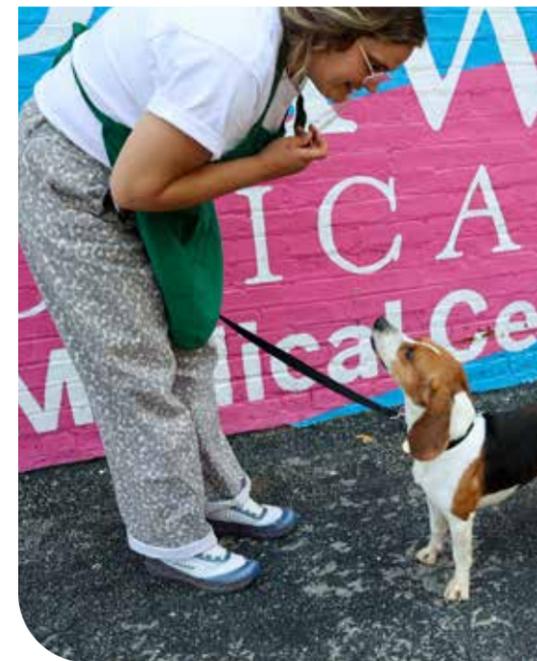
Leading the effort is Jordan Michaels, Assistant Director of Animal Behavior, whose thoughtful, trauma-informed approach has helped countless pets recover emotionally and find their footing. "These animals aren't giving us a hard time — they're having a hard time," Michaels explains. Her work underscores a deeper truth: that behavioral challenges often stem from fear, stress, and past experiences — not disobedience.

In 2024 alone, the PAWS Behavior Team helped 904 cats and dogs — including Level 2, Level 3, and Staff-Only animals — successfully transition into homes. These are animals with more complex needs,

and through customized behavior plans, enrichment routines, and training, they gained the skills and confidence needed to thrive.

A key innovation driving this success is PAWS Chicago's new behavior tracking system, PACE (PAWS Animal Care and Enrichment). Built on the Salesforce platform, PACE replaces the outdated reliance on paper charts and whiteboards, allowing staff and volunteers to monitor each pet's progress in real time. From behavior modification strategies to enrichment needs, every detail is logged and shared seamlessly across teams. With this level of coordination, care plans are tailored and adjusted faster, giving animals more hands-on time and better outcomes.

This data-driven system isn't just helping staff, it's also enhancing the way volunteers understand and support PAWS's animals. By giving them deeper insights into each pet's behavior, PAWS Chicago is helping them build stronger connections and make more informed matchmaking decisions with potential adopters.



In 2024, more than 500 volunteers served in advanced roles, including Dog Town Level 2, Level 3, Level 2 Kitty City, and Adoption Counselors. Over the course of the year, 149 volunteers grew into these critical positions, working closely with the behavior team, reinforcing trust-building exercises and enriching daily care to make a lasting impact on the animals they support.

"Behavior isn't just about training — it's about helping animals feel safe again," Michaels says. That philosophy is deeply embedded in PAWS's approach. Through techniques like counter-conditioning, PAWS is helping pets overcome anxiety triggers — be it bikes, other dogs, or unfamiliar humans — so they can form meaningful bonds and feel confident in a new home environment.

PAWS Chicago's comprehensive, behavior-forward care model — supported by innovations like PACE and the growing network of skilled volunteers — is reshaping how shelter animals prepare for adoption. Every data point, every interaction, and every milestone brings PAWS closer to the vision: a world where no pet is killed for being scared or misunderstood.

ABOVE LEFT: Volunteer Judy Louis accesses PACE, the new virtual pet tracking system.

ABOVE: Emily Burchett, Volunteer Program Coordinator, works with Apollo at the Kocourek Medical Center.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Susan Hurst

When Susan Hurst saw the Kocourek Medical Center for the first time, she immediately thought of her late grandfather, Francis — a man who loved his German shepherds and whose love of animals became a legacy passed on throughout generations of their family.

In his honor, Hurst made a generous donation to name the Francis Phillip Heddy Playroom, a space that's now used for behavioral training, enrichment, and meet-and-greets — all of which help dogs and cats get adopted more quickly, freeing up space for countless more homeless pets to come through PAWS's doors.

"I just wanted to be a part of this. At the Medical Center, they're able to save animals that wouldn't be able to be saved anywhere else," says Hurst, who also serves on PAWS's Emergency Fund Leadership Council, which addresses the surge in homeless pets. "PAWS always steps up. They see a new need, and they never turn away from it. They're always looking for solutions, and they never give up. I just love that."

In addition to Hurst's continued support, her 22-year-old daughter, Alice, is an avid PAWS volunteer, and her home is bustling with furry friends: a senior dog, Charlie, a senior cat, Peter, and two 5-year-old cats (aka "hooligans"), Teddie and Flossie.

"I can't imagine living without them. Animals add so much to your life. And they make people better people. When you think about everything that pets bring to humans, if we're able to help them and alleviate suffering, we need to do it," says Hurst.



ADOPTION FROM SHELTER TO FOREVER, THE POWER OF ADOPTION

Anyone who has spent time at the PAWS Chicago Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center knows the pet often chooses the person. It feels like magic. But it takes a lot more than magic to help thousands of animals find homes year after year. Here are some of the innovative ways the PAWS adoption team worked behind the scenes to find more families for homeless pets in 2024.

The Adoption Center plays a huge role in helping ensure animals are safe, healthy, and adoption-ready. To help with this, in 2024, PAWS refurbished the epoxy floors in Kitty City to make deep cleaning easier and more effective. And a material called Whiterock was added in Dog Town — it's a wall covering that helps with sanitation and prevents dogs with anxiety from chewing on the walls, keeping them safe and healthy. "These updates have helped us create a calm and healthy environment for our animals, which also ensures our daily operations run smoothly," says Celene Mielcarek, Chief Program Officer at PAWS.

Another way PAWS has helped the most vulnerable pets find lasting homes more quickly is by offering new engagement tools for the Adoption

Center volunteers. "We host regular calls for volunteers where PAWS trainers share info about specific animals, including different ways to help handle and show those animals in their best lights. And occasionally, we feature a dog and a cat in the morning huddle for the volunteers. We share details and set our intention to help them find homes. It's been a great way to help people advocate for and rally around some of the animals that take longer to connect with an adopter," says Mielcarek.

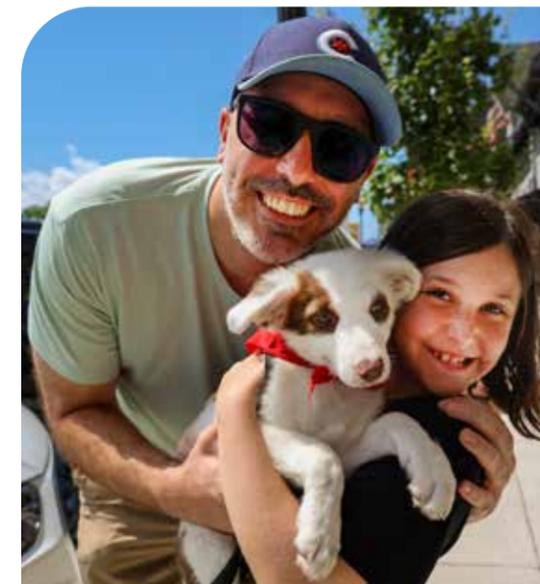
For pets with medical or emotional challenges, PAWS also offers foster-to-adopt programs, which allow potential adopters to take a pet home, get to know them, and make sure it's a perfect fit before committing to adoption. During the foster period, PAWS provides all kinds of support, including access to experienced trainers, medical care, and supplies, including medicines and food.

Often, pets with difficult pasts prefer staying in temporary foster homes over the shelter. However, this means spending less time at the Adoption Center, which reduces their opportunities to meet potential

adopters. That's why PAWS launched the *Pup Premiere* and *Meow Mixer* adoption events. *Pup Premiere* gathers foster dogs for an evening at the Adoption Center, allowing adopters to meet multiple foster dogs at a single appointment. And *Meow Mixer* is a virtual adoption event that makes it easy to meet and learn about foster cats without leaving the sofa.

PAWS also hosts dozens of adoption events at the Adoption Center and around Chicago throughout the year, including *Angels with Tails* — an adoption event series bringing homeless pets directly into Chicagoland communities. The *Angels with Tails*, Gold Coast event launched PAWS Chicago back in 1998 and is still going strong today. Not only do these events place hundreds of pets in loving homes, but they also raise awareness for the No Kill mission and the importance of adopting from shelters.

Now and for the rest of their lives, PAWS Chicago remains dedicated to each pet's lasting happiness. The adoption team is always available to answer questions, and the training team offers classes both virtually and in person. And if for any reason an adoption doesn't work out, PAWS welcomes the animal back with open arms, ensuring they find a new home. "Once a PAWS pet, always a PAWS pet."



ABOVE LEFT and ABOVE: Looking at just a few of the 4,382 pets matched with their happy new families is enough to make anyone smile.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Jerry Gilfone

When Gerard Gilfone from Barstool Sports — also known as 'Jersey Jerry' — laid eyes on Ruffles at the PAWS Chicago Peter Fasseas Golf Open, something special happened.

"I looked at her and I was like 'Oh, wow. This dog is beautiful. Her coat, her color, her eyes. She's perfect,'" says Gilfone. He Facetimed his son and girlfriend, and they agreed: "We better get Ruffles."

When Gilfone went to pick up Ruffles at the Adoption Center, he was delighted by what he saw. "Everybody looked happy. They were taking dogs for walks. They were giving baths. They were cutting nails. These dogs are getting pampered. It was a really nice experience."

Going through Ruffles' adoption paperwork, Jerry and his family made a discovery. PAWS rescued her on May 11, which is also his birthday. Jerry knew then and there this was meant to be.

A survivor of parvo, an often deadly virus that was successfully treated at the Kocourek Medical Center, Ruffles now is savoring every moment with her new family, especially Gilfone's 3-year-old son. "I can't believe how much they love each other and look for one another. If it was up to Ruffles, she would sleep in his bed every night of the week," he says.

While Gilfone's family has French bulldogs back east, he says adopted dogs are special. "Ruffles is so much more attached to me and my family. I feel like deep down, she knows we saved her life. It's just a different kind of love that I've never experienced with an animal."

To all those considering adoption, Gilfone says, "Give it a shot and adopt because that dog is going to love you ten times more."



VOLUNTEERS BEHIND EVERY HAPPY TAIL ARE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the heart of PAWS Chicago, powering its lifesaving mission every day. In 2024, these amazing individuals contributed *125,071 hours of service* — equivalent to 60 full-time employees. That's nearly 20,000 more hours than 2023, and a significant step toward returning to pre-pandemic volunteer engagement. Without this dedicated volunteer force, PAWS couldn't provide the daily care, medical support, adoptions, and community outreach at scale — work that makes the No Kill mission possible.

At PAWS, volunteers do more than lend a hand — they help spread the word and expand lifesaving programs. Whether it's fostering, rescuing, or raising awareness, volunteers inspire others to get involved and grow the PAWS community.

THE PIPPEN FASSEAS ADOPTION CENTER

At the Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center, volunteers are the quiet architects of transformation and part of each animal's story. A seven-day-a-week operation, Adoption Center volunteers breathe life into the space. From the early morning shift — scrubbing each animal's room to ensure they're set for the day — to the tail wags at the promise of connection with each cuddle, these volunteers provide loving interactions and pave the way for a pet to find a perfect match.

THE KOCOUREK MEDICAL CENTER

Inside the Kocourek Medical Center, volunteers become guardians of second chances.

As animals come in, weary and in need of intensive care, volunteers step in as their gentle caregivers. Some offer soothing comfort in times of need, others conquer the mountain of laundry and dishes that come with saving pets. Their selfless efforts create a ripple of hope, ensuring that each animal receives the care and love they deserve on their journey to recovery.

FOSTERS

Fosters are unsung heroes who provide more than shelter — they offer a lifeline by opening their homes to animals in need of extra care. They offer warmth and safety in a world that might otherwise feel uncertain. Whether it's a dog recovering from surgery or a shy cat coming out of its shell, fosters provide the patience and love that make healing possible in the comfort of a home setting. With each foster, PAWS is able to bring in additional animals and expand overall capacity.



ADMINISTRATIVE VOLUNTEERS

Behind the scenes, administrative volunteers play a vital role in connecting people and pets by updating animal profiles, assisting with virtual adoption counseling, tracking donations, and maintaining accurate records. Whether remote or on-site, their efforts ensure all programs run smoothly and animals find loving homes.

TRANSPORT VOLUNTEERS

Transport volunteers are the steady runners of an emotional relay, moving animals wherever they need to go. They offer comfort, reassuring animals before their journey. In times of crisis, they're on the scene, like Hurricane Helene and the Iowa Floods, where they helped 55 displaced animals start anew.

EVENT VOLUNTEERS

Event volunteers' boundless energy and warmth help PAWS shine in the spotlight. They manage the flurry of behind-the-scenes work that makes fundraising, athletic, and adoption events a success, ensuring everything runs smoothly and guests feel welcomed. Through their dedication, they help spread the message of No Kill, ensuring that every animal has the chance to live a full and happy life.

ABOVE LEFT: Volunteer Behn Rudo welcomes another homeless pet to the Kocourek Medical Center — the first step towards a life of health and happiness.

ABOVE: Volunteers perform all manner of services for PAWS pets, including the loving cuddles they crave from volunteer Deanna Safe.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



BEHN RUDO & MARY HARTE

In 2024, Mary Harte and Behn Rudo both made PAWS history as the first volunteers to achieve 10,000 hours of lifetime service, many of which they logged side-by-side.

"He's lighthearted and has a sense of humor that resonates with me. And even when it's a tough day, we always come up with a way to make it fun," says Harte.

Rudo warmly agrees, "We have a similar comedic sense."

PAWS routinely recognizes volunteer milestones like 1,000 hours and 2,500 hours with pins that volunteers can add to their aprons. Behn received the first-ever "10,000 hours" pin at a small ceremony in front of fellow volunteers and staff. And Behn proudly presented Mary with her pin when she earned it.

Celene Mielcarek, Chief Program Officer at PAWS, says, "Behn and Mary are a dynamic duo of volunteerism! Their commitment to PAWS pets is absolutely incredible. It's always wonderful to see them in the halls of Dog Town, forming special bonds with the dogs, going on long walks and helping with cleaning, feeding, and anything that needs to be done."

While volunteering is a lot of work (and dishes and laundry), Harte and Rudo still agree that they get more than they give.

Harte says earning a dog's trust makes everything worth it: "When I have that moment with a dog — it's an a-ha moment — there's something special going on here. It means what I'm doing for the dogs is important to them. It's made a difference."



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MOBILIZING THE MOVEMENT

It's hard to fathom, but in 1997 when PAWS Chicago was founded, over 42,000 pets were killed citywide. Since then, PAWS Chicago has led the reduction in homeless pet euthanasia citywide by 89%.

Engaging the public in the cause of homeless animals has brought about transformational change. And looking at the trajectory of PAWS and what has made the biggest difference for animals, the roots are community engagement and community building.

By telling the public about the needs of homeless animals, PAWS has inspired thousands of people to take action. That action has become a movement propelled by an ever-growing community of passionate donors, adopters, volunteers, and advocates.

In 2024, the community helped spread PAWS Chicago's story and mission farther than ever before:

- + The **Chicago Cubs** hosted a summer adoption event just outside Wrigley Field, raising awareness to hundreds of people while uniting homeless PAWS pups with new loving families. And in December, Cubs General Manager, Carter Hawkins, and his wife, Lindsay Hawkins, continued their support for homeless pets by chairing the annual Fur Ball black-tie event and auctioning off the unique experience of being "General Manager for the Day."
- + Also nationally recognized is **TEAM PAWS Chicago**, a group of animal-loving athletes who run in marathons around the world – including Berlin, London, and Sydney



– to raise funds and awareness for homeless pets. In 2024, TEAM PAWS Chicago was the largest local charity team in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon with 556 runners proudly representing the No Kill mission.

- + For the second year in a row, Piece Pizzeria's three-month "**Slice to Meet You**" campaign placed adoption flyers atop pizza boxes delivered across the city and sold limited-edition specialty pies to benefit homeless pets. Every \$35 specialty pizza triggered an incredible \$50 donation to PAWS Chicago — \$10 from Piece and \$40 from generous matching donors.
- + Local media personality Dan "Big Cat" Katz, nationally known as a podcast host on Barstool Sports, grew an even bigger following for a coffee brand named after his dog, Stella, whom he adopted from PAWS Chicago. A portion of the proceeds from every **Stella Blue Coffee** purchase online benefits PAWS Chicago.

When people find out what pets are facing in a community's sheltering system, they respond. They are mobilized to act and advocate. It's through that mobilization that Chicago will become a No Kill community.

ABOVE: Dedicated runners are cheered on during the Bank of America Chicago marathon.

ABOVE LEFT: Just a few of the over 620 runners raising critical funds for pets through TEAM PAWS Chicago.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



CARL ALLEGRETTI

In 2007, Carl Allegretti's eldest son was diagnosed with pediatric cancer, and a special dog came into their lives. "We rescued a baby pit bull, and it became Joey's friend during his cancer battle and recovery."

This friendship gave Allegretti a whole new appreciation for dogs. And in 2024, as he prepared for his 70th marathon, he was inspired to honor them by including PAWS Chicago as one of the three charities he would raise money for.

"Part of my philosophy was giving people a choice as to what they're interested in, and PAWS blew it away," says Allegretti, who raised a record-breaking \$80,000 for homeless pets from friends, colleagues, and companies.

"I took money from \$10,000 down to \$25, and I said thank you to everybody who gave," says Allegretti. When asked about his secret for recruiting donors, Allegretti's response was short and sweet: "I called in a lot of favors."

Today, Allegretti shares his home with four dogs, all over 100 pounds. He says, "We love dogs. We'll always have dogs. That pack is a big part of our lives."

Allegretti's current pack includes Samson, Delilah, Maggie, and Wolfie, and he talks about them with pure adoration. "Wolfie is from PAWS, he's part Border Collie, and he's brilliant. When you talk to him, he'll look at your eyes trying to understand or showing you that he understands every word you're saying," says Allegretti.

"Thanks, PAWS, for all you do to support our four-legged friends who need a home."



INTRODUCING THE PAWS CHICAGO RESCUE RANCH

A Future Haven for Homeless Pets in Hawthorn Woods



Nestled on 20 acres of rolling green hills in Hawthorn Woods, just 45 miles northwest of Chicago, a bold vision is coming to life. The PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch — set to open in 2027 — will be a transformational campus where animals and people alike find healing, hope, and connection.

Once a quiet equestrian center, the property is being reimagined into a best-in-class homeless pet adoption and enrichment facility. Designed with the latest in animal behavior science, the Rescue Ranch will provide a calm, natural environment where cats and dogs can decompress from the stress of shelter life as they await uniting with their new families. Walking paths, a serene pond, and spacious pavilions will create a true sanctuary.

ADOPTION

The Rescue Ranch will be a lifeline for homeless cats and dogs, especially for large dogs who struggle finding homes in the urban density of the city. This open and beautiful campus will be a destination for suburban adopters who want the unique Rescue Ranch experience. Life in city shelters, even at the state-of-the-art Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center, is stressful for many animals. The Rescue Ranch will facilitate thousands of adoptions per year, reducing time in-shelter by 50% for many animals. Unique features will include:

Welcome Center: A two-story atrium serving as a hub for adoptions, community events, and workshops.

Canine Pavilion: 25+ suites for up to 80 dogs and puppies, most with outdoor patios. Special spaces for daily enrichment and behavior training — specifically oriented to help large dogs, the most at-risk population in city shelters, find homes faster.

Cat Center: Bright, sunlit housing with enrichment features to improve wellbeing and adoption for up to 80 cats and kittens.

SPAY/NEUTER

Prevention of pet overpopulation is at the core of PAWS Chicago's No Kill model, so the Rescue Ranch will have a robust surgery center equipped to perform hundreds of spay/neuter surgeries during large Spay Days — and also help train the next generation of spay/neuter surgeons. Many surrounding communities face significant challenges with feral and community cats, while families in under-resourced neighborhoods often cannot afford the cost of surgery. By offering high-volume spay/neuter days, the Rescue Ranch will address overpopulation at its source in nearby suburbs and ensure that every pet in its care is healthy, altered, and ready for adoption.



THE FARM

A teaching farm with llamas, donkeys, goats, cows, chickens, pigs, and more, each an ambassador for humane education with interactive experiences on care, life cycles, and the sentience of these living beings.

HUMANE EDUCATION

The Rescue Ranch will be Chicago's first animal rescue and adoption center with fully integrated hands-on humane education, with a focus on the sentience of animals. From school visits to family tours, children and adults will learn about the animals, their feelings, and their care; pet homelessness and solutions to end unnecessary euthanasia; and PAWS Chicago's No Kill mission. Annually, thousands of children will have the opportunity to connect and directly interact with animals and learn empathy, responsibility, and stewardship.

ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

The Animal Welfare Institute will feature training programs that bring together individuals, rescue groups and shelters committed to making an impact for homeless animals in their communities by learning how to implement PAWS Chicago's No Kill Model and best practices to increase lifesaving.



RESCUE RANCH LEADERSHIP GIFTS

As this flagship Rescue Ranch moves from dream to reality, PAWS Chicago invites you to be part of shaping its legacy. Your leadership support will bring life to a community hub where thousands more homeless and at-risk cats and dogs will find the love and families they deserve.

For information on naming opportunities please email Sophia Ruggeri at sruggeri@pawschicago.org or call (773) 475-3310.

THE CAT'S MEOW

Mother-daughter philanthropists make inaugural gift to Cat Center at the PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch

One spring afternoon not long ago, Marilyn “Bunny” Ehlert, a generous woman with a soft spot for animals, hopped out of a car and into the next chapter of Chicago’s animal welfare story.

Bunny had arrived with her daughter Stacy Ehlert at an equestrian center in Hawthorn Woods, where PAWS Chicago was quietly nurturing a transformational new vision. A chorus of farm animals greeted them: a stately Highland cow named Ferdinand, along with llamas, miniature donkeys, peacocks, and goats — all part of a sanctuary in transition. But the real magic was still to come.

That day, surrounded by 20 acres of rolling green hills, something stirred in both women’s hearts. They



instantly understood PAWS’s vision, saw not just what was, but what could be: a place where cats and dogs in need would find peace, healing, and a new beginning.

Now, thanks to the Ehlert family’s \$6 million gift, that vision is taking root.

The Bunny and Jim Ehlert Cat Center will be the beating heart of PAWS Chicago’s Rescue Ranch—a best-in-class facility that will forever change how homeless cats and dogs are cared for, rehabilitated, and placed in loving homes. It’s not just a leap forward for PAWS. It’s a defining moment for Chicagoland and the country at large.

Set to open in 2027, the new campus will serve as a haven for animals and a hub for learning. PAWS

staff, volunteers, and future adopters will gather here in a shared mission to save the lives of homeless pets. And with its location just 45 miles from downtown, families throughout the northern and western suburbs will have easier access than ever to adopt, volunteer, and be part of the movement.

A GENERATIONS-LONG LOVE OF ANIMALS

For Bunny, the love of animals was planted early, springing from the rich soil of her father’s hobby farm on the outskirts of Fort Wayne, Indiana. There, amid the gentle rhythm of barn chores and the watchful eyes of horses and goats, she learned that animals weren’t just companions — they were teachers, offering lessons in trust, loyalty, and love.

Her first pet came when she was eight or nine years old. “Walking from school, a little mutt named Snookie would follow me home every day. Snookie’s owners said, ‘you might as well take the dog.’ So I did,” Bunny said.

“Every time I gave Snookie a bath he would run straight down to the creek. He didn’t like to be clean,” she laughed.

When it was time for her own family, Bunny raised her children with the same reverence for animals that shaped her youth.

The family home in Palatine — where Bunny and husband Jim brought up their children — always included animals. “We always had a dog. And then there was the time Stacy adopted a barn cat from the stables where she rode horses. He was so soft I named him Charmin,” she remembers fondly.

“My mom has such a love of animals. She showed us how to respect them and love them back,” Stacy said.

These days, Stacy lives eight doors down from her mom with several rescue cats, acquired from her son when he was traveling on business. “I cat sat for him once and just never gave them back,” Stacy said. “Bunny lost two dogs a couple of years ago. Two Shih Tzus. It was heartbreaking. So she took one of the cats to her home. Now she has one and I have two.”

Look up ‘spoiled’ in the dictionary and you’re likely to see a photo of Bunny’s cat.

“When I die I want to come back as her cat. Bunny lives to care for her pets. She even heats up its food,” Stacy said.

Now, Bunny and Stacy are building on their legacy of helping animals in need. Their transformational gift to PAWS Chicago honors not just their shared past but their hopes for the future — a world where animals

are safe, seen, and deeply valued.

“We feel it is our responsibility to give back. We’re blessed to have health and the funds to help others in need,” Stacy said.

A MISSION THAT RESONATES

For Bunny and Stacy, supporting PAWS Chicago was less a decision than a natural alignment of values.

“We were very impressed with the operations at the Medical Center and the Lincoln Park Adoption Center. There were many staff and volunteers lovingly caring for the animals. The place was immaculate, the animals were content. In so many ways, PAWS is exactly the kind of organization we believe in,” Stacy said. “It’s innovative, solutions-oriented, practical — and focused on solving a real problem in the community.”

From their very first visit to the new PAWS campus in Hawthorn Woods, the mother-daughter team knew they wanted to be part of it. “Hawthorn Woods is the ideal spot for a location in the suburbs. From the moment we stepped on the grounds, we wanted to be in on the expansion,” Stacy said.

Their commitment is now etched in stone: the cat center will bear the name of Jim and Bunny Ehlert.

“My father always wanted his name on a building,” Stacy shared with a smile. Bunny, sounding uncomfortable with the attention, added quietly, “I don’t need that.”

What truly sealed their bond with PAWS was their trust in founder Paula Fasseas. “Paula is so profound in her beliefs about the welfare of animals,” Stacy said. “She’s sincere. Passionate. And PAWS has a succession plan — they’re going to be around forever. . . We want a relationship indefinitely.” She paused, her voice full of conviction.

“Thank God for Paula and her family for saving these dogs and cats.”

LEFT: Stacy and Bunny Ehlert at the PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch

RIGHT: Bunny and Jim Ehlert



THE PAWS CHICAGO RESCUE RANCH

The new PAWS Chicago Rescue Ranch is located at 55 Pine Grove Blvd., on a property that was formerly an equestrian center and will be reconfigured into state-of-the-art cat and dog housing.

The new Ranch will take all PAWS has learned in the last two decades and combine it with the latest in animal behavior science to create a best-in-class facility for cats and dogs. With rolling hills, meandering walking paths and a burbling pond, it's a calm and spacious setting that will help animals decompress from shelter life as they await new homes. It will also serve as a destination for animal lovers interested in seeing one of America's most innovative and humane facilities.

Cat housing will have natural sunlight that provides both enrichment and health benefits. Dog housing will have outdoor patios for daytime relaxation, essential for their physical and mental health. All animals will enjoy daily enrichment activities to support their socialization, including indoor and outdoor play spaces and activities supervised by the animal behavior trainers and trained volunteers.

HELPING HANDS, IMMEDIATE IMPACT

The Ehlert family has a decades long tradition of philanthropy. Giving back to the community was a way to honor the family business, Clayton Metals, which Bunny's husband, Jim, founded in 1976.

"As the business prospered, we wanted it to have an impact on our community. It's amazing the impact you can make," Stacy said. "When my dad passed away in 2019, I decided to really focus on philanthropy. It's only going to grow and get better."

The family foundation was established in 2004 as a way to give back to the community and honor the family business.

Stacy proudly shares the news that Bunny's grandsons, Rob Colbert and Mickey Evans, now also serve on the foundation's board. "Both men are kind, extremely selfless and compassionate."

"We're planning on having this go on forever," Stacy said.

To Bunny and Stacy, philanthropy isn't about grand gestures — it's about being a good neighbor.

The mother-daughter team takes a refreshingly straightforward approach to giving. "We look for

current problems and immediate needs," said Stacy. "We simply want to help. When there are immediate needs, we want to provide immediate help... Get the job done and see results."

Their giving spans a wide spectrum. They've funded music education programs and distributed iPads in under-resourced schools and communities, and donated trucks to a nonprofit focused on helping those with substance use disorder. The vehicles were a typically practical solution. "We're helping get people to treatment centers when they're ready to go," Stacy added.

"Philanthropy has the ability to accelerate progress to benefit people, animals, the environment and society. When an organization receives support, many lives are touched, hopefully for generations," she said.

The process isn't particularly formal. "We talk to people and see how we can help," Stacy said. That philosophy has led to thoughtful, nimble giving, rooted in compassion.

While their impact can be felt across Chicagoland and beyond, Bunny and Stacy don't see themselves as special. They see themselves as neighbors lending a hand. And their generosity, quietly offered, speaks volumes.

"We look forward to seeing the results of adoptions and the lives saved," Stacy said.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Bunny dining with Yogi; Kathy Roeser, Bunny Ehlert, Laurie Turner, and Stacy Ehlert at the PAWS Chicago Golf Open

PAWSCHICAGO BUILDING & SUSTAINING NO KILL

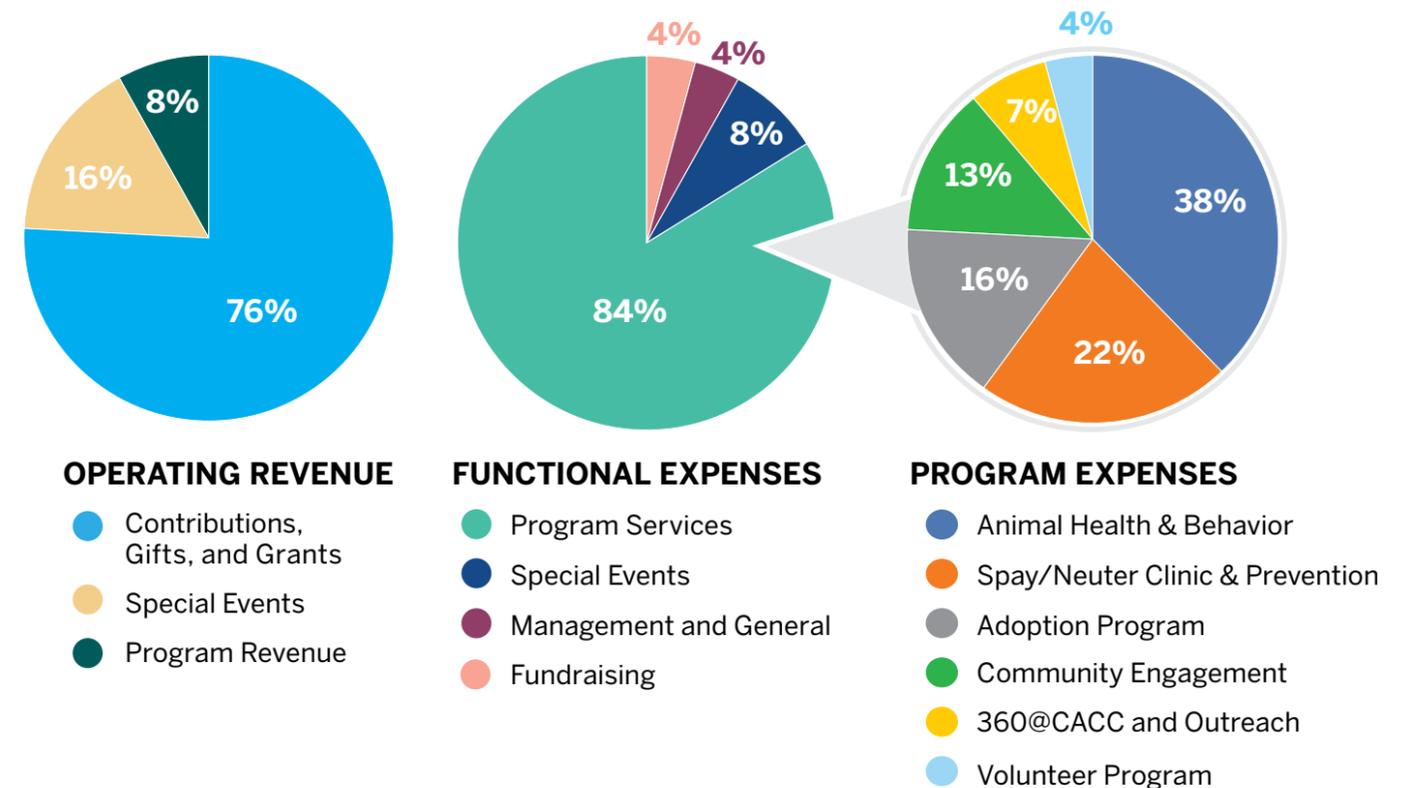
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

Strong fiscal management is key to optimizing and leveraging resources.

We do this by:

- Recognizing the value of every dollar
- Incorporating trained volunteers into everything we do
- Recruiting talented professionals from a wide range of backgrounds, emphasizing private sector experience in our executive management
- Supporting a culture of continuous improvement, always considering how we can do more with less



*Unaudited Financial Statements pending final submission of Form 990 to IRS



RECOGNIZED FOR NONPROFIT EXCELLENCE

Charity Navigator, the nation's largest independent evaluator, has rated PAWS Chicago at its highest 4-star ranking since 2003 — an accomplishment that less than 1% of the charities in the nation have reached.

PAWS Chicago currently holds a Platinum Seal of Transparency, GuideStar's highest recognition. By sharing mission-focused metrics, we demonstrate our continued commitment to transparency and give donors and funders meaningful data to evaluate our performance.

JOURNEYS TO A NEW LIFE



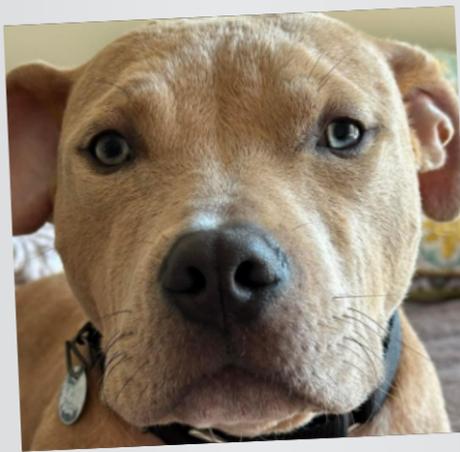
Cookie (Before)



Cookie (After)



Sheldon (Before)



Sheldon (After)

Orphaned kitten **Cookie** and his siblings were only a month old when they were found alone outside, eyes swollen shut from conjunctivitis and a severe upper respiratory infection. Without a mom to care for them, or the ability to see, they wouldn't have survived on their own. Instead, they made it to PAWS Chicago where their eyes were opened to a life without pain or fear ever again.

Sheldon entered a local animal control facility with some of the most severe mange the PAWS medical team had ever seen. Every inch of his skin was red, irritated, and scaly from a demodex infection caused by stress. Spending the first four months of his life as a stray, constantly on the search for food and shelter, Sheldon had only known stress. Healing his skin would be easy enough through medicated baths, but healing his heart was equally important. Months of showing Sheldon the love, friendship, and comfort he'd never known before was exactly what he needed to land into a patient home to spoil him for years to come.

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