

PAWSCHICAGO[®]

SUMMER 2024

magazine

Head & Heart

**Wayne & Nan Kocourek
Make a Transformational Gift
to the PAWS Medical Center**

PLUS
**PAWS Springs into
Action at CACC
AND
Our Favorite Animal
Rescue Stories**

pawschicago.org



*"I am a voice for
these animals.
Forever."*

-Wayne Gailis

Wayne arranged for a planned gift to PAWS Chicago, joining the Guardian Angel Program. His legacy gift will help ensure that PAWS Chicago can continue to save the lives of homeless pets for years to come.

"I have seen firsthand the lifesaving success that PAWS has achieved with donor gifts, including during times of worldwide economic hardship when so many other organizations were unable to keep their doors open. As a volunteer, I know PAWS Chicago's commitment to No Kill and making the best decisions for the animals and I have confidence in the organization's longevity. **Sustainability is so important to me—I know that PAWS will always be there for animals in need.**"

Contact us for more information on including PAWS Chicago in your estate plan.
(773) 475-3320
guardianangel@pawschicago.org
pawschicago.org/guardianangel

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COVER PHOTO: Bob Coscarelli

Nan & Wayne Kocourek, whose endowment gift helps ensure care for homeless pets in perpetuity at the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center.



DEAR READER,

We are so grateful to our PAWS Chicago family. You make every story in this magazine possible. The lifesaving impact we have had in our community is extraordinary, and yet, despite our progress, we are fighting a national tide of increased pet overpopulation and increased euthanasia.

When we founded PAWS Chicago in 1997, more than 42,000 pets were put to death in Chicago’s municipal and high-kill shelters. We knew that with the right efforts, we could save at least a few of those innocent lives.

Since then, PAWS has become a movement. We have performed more than 320,000 free or low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, and we’ve found new homes for more than 83,000 dogs and cats. We’ve expanded our spay/neuter program and state-of the-art homeless pet hospital, offering the best possible veterinary care to homeless and at-risk animals. And we’ve helped foster a community of animal lovers, bringing together hundreds of thousands of caring people who share a dedication to a common cause: to end the senseless killing of homeless pets.

The animals need us all now. This issue of *PAWS Chicago* magazine takes a look at the current crisis homeless and at-risk pets are facing—a nationwide upswing in pet relinquishment and euthanasia—and how we’re working with Chicago Animal Care and Control to protect the most vulnerable (page 6). There’s also a look at some of the hometown heroes who’ve done so much for PAWS pets (page 22). We also highlight some of the modern miracles performed at our Medical Center and share photos of the lives you helped save (page 10).

And we celebrate Nan and Wayne Kocourek! In our cover story, you will read about this dynamic and inspiring couple, making a difference for generations to come through their naming of the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center. Don’t miss the feature on them (page 16).

Since we founded PAWS, our No Kill mission has remained the same. But the problems facing today’s homeless pets have evolved. We know that PAWS Chicago’s No Kill Model is the solution to pet homelessness and with your help, we’ll continue to grow, finding loving homes for animals who need us most and ending the killing of vulnerable cats and dogs.

Thank you for your continued dedication to animals. With your help, we are there for them when they need us most.

Warmest regards,

Paula Fasseas

Paula Fasseas
Founder and Executive Chair

PAWS Chicago Adopters!



FREE FIRST EXAM
for new PAWS CHICAGO ADOPTEES
within 30 days of adoption

Exam Value approximately \$65-\$110.

Registration fee for new wellness plan
participants will be waived.

Does not include cost of diagnostics, treatments, or goods such as food or medications.

\$250 HEALTH GUARANTEE
for new PAWS CHICAGO ADOPTEES

Up to \$250 for care related to shelter stay*
within 30 days of adoption

*Includes only disease and illness directly related to stay with PAWS: common skin disorders, eye, and ear infections found at initial visit; vomiting or diarrhea treatment of infectious origin only; respiratory conditions including kennel cough; internal parasites; suture removal.

*Does not include: initial fecal test, well pet/preventative items such as food, vaccinations, dentistry, parasite prevention; ongoing care or diagnosis of chronic conditions such as anxiety, cardiac, neurologic, endocrine, musculoskeletal or congenital diseases; injuries after adoption; refills of medications.

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visit this url for a complete list of participating veterinary hospitals and locations:

pawschicago.org/nva

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save **1 million** puppies
from parvo by 2030.

Join me at defeatparvo.com.

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2023 HIGHLIGHTS



4,561

ADOPTIONS



16,587

FREE OR LOW-COST
SPAY/NEUTER SURGERIES



106,221

VOLUNTEER
HOURS



98.62%

SAVE RATE



Evelyn



Clemson

PAWS Chicago is dedicated to building **No Kill communities**—starting with a No Kill Chicago—where all healthy and treatable pets are saved. Since our founding in 1997, euthanasia has been reduced by 90.2% in the city. But there is more work to be done to save the city's homeless pets. Join us.
pawschicago.org

AT A BREAKING POINT

PAWS CHICAGO SPRINGS INTO ACTION DURING CACC OVERCROWDING CRISIS
by Jim Engel

Chicago is in the midst of a historic surge in pet homelessness. And PAWS Chicago has once again stepped in to fill the breach.

As the Midwest's largest No Kill animal welfare organization, PAWS Chicago has led efforts to drive euthanasia rates down by nearly 90 percent since being founded in 1997. That year, Chicago euthanized more than 42,000 homeless pets. The organization's focus on controlling the pet population in the city through large-scale free and low-cost spay/neuter programs has been a key factor in this reduction.

In 2023, the city's impoundment facility, Chicago Animal Care & Control (CACC), took in 1,198 more dogs and cats than the previous year, leading to a 22.7 percent increase in euthanasia. It marked the first time more than 2,500 pets had been euthanized at CACC since 2016, and a reversal of hard-won progress in the effort to make Chicago a No Kill city where all healthy and treatable animals are saved. The city pound is a barometer of a community's progress toward saving its most vulnerable animals.

Compounding the problem is the fact that adoption rates citywide have not yet caught up to pre-pandemic numbers. This is also contributing to a crisis of overcrowding and, in turn, rising euthanasia rates.

The unnecessary killing of homeless pets won't be overcome with a one-dimensional solution. So, PAWS Chicago joined forces with CACC to create PAWS 360@CACC, a comprehensive public-private partnership offering a safety net and lifesaving resources to Chicago's homeless and at-risk cats and dogs—and to the people and shelters who love and care for them.

PAWS 360@CACC developed organically, one step at a time. At the first sign of crisis last summer, PAWS Chicago, CACC's largest transfer partner, stepped up transfers substantially, rescuing 38 percent of the cats and dogs that were transferred out of CACC in 2023 – 695 more pets than the year before.

If PAWS had not increased intake, euthanasia at CACC would have gone up by 50.6 percent.

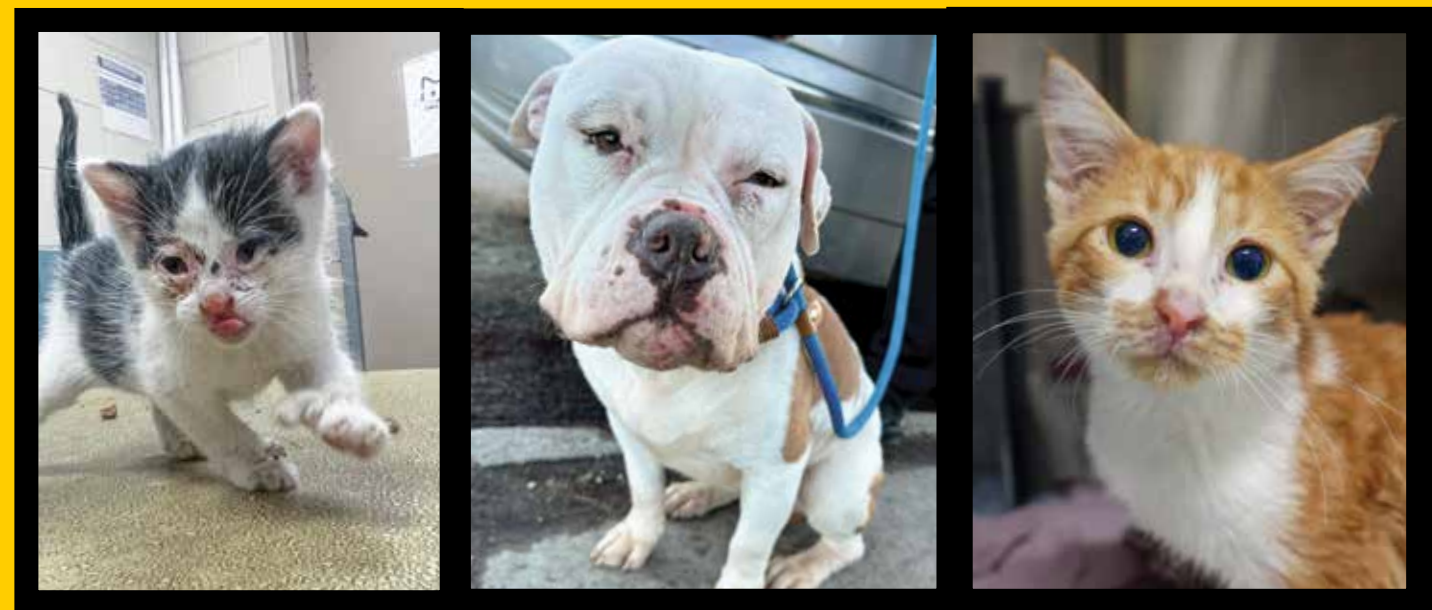
"We were seeing an increased number of stray pets in Chicago, which represents a reversal of so much progress," says PAWS Chicago Founder and Executive Chair Paula Fasseas. "This caused overcrowding conditions at CACC, so PAWS Chicago jumped into action, increasing our on-site programs and deepening our commitment to CACC to help Chicago's homeless pets."

continued on page 8



"For us to care for more stray and unwanted pets, we need people to open their hearts and their homes. Anyone who is ready to adopt a pet or provide a foster home for a pet – now is the time."

-Paula Fasseas
Founder and Executive Chair



Rescued from Chicago Animal Care and Control: Top row is Penny, Titus, Torta, Tamale, Tostada
Bottom row: Sunshine, Mamas, Onyx



“We are seeing an increased number of stray pets in Chicago, which represents a reversal of so much progress,”

-Paula Fasseas
Founder and Executive Chair



Rescued from Chicago Animal Care and Control:
Top, Knobi, bottom, Teeny

Once the euthanasia rate was stabilized in the short-term, PAWS focused on a long-range vision. PAWS 360@CACC, an expansion of their long-term partnership, was introduced last November with programs aimed at both immediate and long-term solutions, including:

“Diversion” Program - By offering free and low-cost supportive services, many people looking to give up their pets at CACC are able to keep them instead. PAWS has representatives on-site at CACC to offer pet owners in need spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations, behavior consultations and treatment for acute medical needs such as upper respiratory infections. Data shows that these services can prevent 20 to 25 percent of owner relinquishments.

“Rescue Ready” Program - To encourage rescue groups to transfer from CACC large dogs and cats, the pets most frequently euthanized, PAWS Chicago offers subsidized veterinary services to qualifying rescue groups that do not have in-house veterinary capabilities. This service includes medical exam, spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, heartworm testing and vaccines.

Medical Care and Surgeries for CACC Dogs - With limited veterinary resources, PAWS is now transporting 10 animals each week from CACC to the Medical Center for spay/neuter surgeries and vetting. Ready for adoption, these pets are often the first to be adopted or transferred to other rescue groups.

Parvovirus+ Commitment - PAWS now rescues all parvo-positive puppies from CACC and treats them with a groundbreaking monoclonal antibody at the PAWS Chicago Medical Center. Without this program, parvo-positive and parvo-suspect animals would be immediately euthanized at CACC to prevent transmission to the rest of the dog population.

PAWS on Site - Without any budget to support adoptions, CACC relies fully on volunteers. Now, PAWS has staff members on site to help build robust adoption and volunteer programs at CACC, increasing the number of lives saved.

The surge has continued in 2024. In the first quarter of this year, intake at CACC went up 22.8 percent – 608 cats and dogs – over the prior year, and PAWS has continued high-volume animal transfers out of Chicago Animal Care & Control, rescuing 34 percent of the cats and dogs that were transferred out of CACC in the first quarter, a total of 495 pets.

“Normally, the first quarter is the slowest intake period of the year, since the cold weather results in fewer births and fewer strays,” says PAWS Chicago Chief Mission & Innovation Officer Kristina Rosinia. “This year, there was no reprieve, and we are calling on our animal-loving community to help, because the warm-weather litter season is upon us and already bringing another wave of vulnerable pets.”

The surge may continue through this year, but allowing euthanasia to rise is unacceptable.

“As a national leader in the No Kill movement, PAWS Chicago follows the numbers of homeless and at-risk pets very closely and we visit CACC daily to support more animals with our comprehensive array of programs,” says Fasseas. “We know that spay/neuter is the long-term solution to pet overpopulation and euthanasia, but for us to care for more stray and unwanted pets, we need people to open their hearts and their homes. Anyone who is ready to adopt a pet or provide a foster home for a pet—now is the time.”



Lilah with a PAWS rescue team member leaving CACC for the PAWS Chicago Medical Center and a life filled with safety, security, and family.

PAWS CHICAGO INTRODUCES CHICAGO ANIMAL CRISIS FUND

PAWS Chicago's Animal Crisis Fund provides animal lovers in Chicago and across the country an opportunity to lend their support in the effort to limit the surge's deadly impact on pets.

Once at the PAWS Chicago Medical Center in Little Village, animals receive all the medical care, behavioral training, socialization, and love they need until they are healthy and ready to be adopted. As one of the most advanced homeless pet hospitals in the country, the PAWS Chicago

Medical Center is often called upon to care for the severely sick and injured animals while achieving a 98.62% save rate in 2023.

“Historically, we’ve seen the community respond every time pets are in crisis. When people learn about a problem, they want to help solve it. Supporting the Chicago Animal Crisis Fund has a direct impact on how many pets we can save,” says PAWS Chicago Chief Mission & Innovation Officer Kristina Rosinia.

Support the Chicago Animal Crisis Fund at: pawschicago.org/crisisfund

MODERN MIRACLES

SIX PAWS CHICAGO RESCUE STORIES TO LIFT YOUR SPIRITS (AND MELT YOUR HEART)

Pepe

"I think my dad poisoned my dogs."

In February, our intake team met a young man at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility. The cold, grey sky matched his despair.

His pets were actively breeding and the family found itself with 19 dogs and few resources to care for them. By the time we met, he had already turned seven dogs into CACC, and the remaining 12 were gravely ill. Poisoning was one possibility, but there were others. We told him to bring them to our Medical Center for care, diverting them from CACC and rescuing them directly into the PAWS Chicago program.

When the dogs arrived at PAWS, lethargic and seriously ill, we quickly discovered they weren't poisoned. They were sick with the highly contagious, often deadly, parvovirus. One had already perished before making it to PAWS, but the remaining eleven, ranging in age from two months to five years, were suffering from parvovirus, each to varying degrees. These eleven pups entered our intensive care unit for the next two weeks.

Our veterinary team provided all the advanced medical care and resources necessary to pull them through their hardest days. That included IV fluids and medications, feeding tubes, blood and plasma transfusions, and a revolutionary new medication called Canine Parvovirus Monoclonal Antibody (CPMA), a first-of-its-kind medication that directly attacks parvovirus cells in the body.

All 11 dogs survived. Among them was Pepe, a 5-year-old with a congenital birth defect that left him with an undeveloped eye, as well as a scarred and bald forehead from a prior burn. Pepe won't know pain like that again.

Shortly after his hard-won recovery, he was scooped up for a spoiled stint in foster care that turned into a forever kind of love. Pepe was officially adopted one month later, newly named Teddy (after Ted Lasso!) for his ceaseless optimism and uncontrollable excitement that each new day brings!



Nova

Odds are, Nova was bait in a dog fighting ring before he suffered a debilitating injury. Then he was garbage. At least to his former guardians.

He was found alive in a dumpster by someone who cared enough to carry him to Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility, where they left him on the doorstep wrapped in a tarp. For homeless pets, life often gets better only inches at a time.

PAWS Chicago rescuers peeked under that tarp; they found a puppy with a horribly infected wound that left his leg swollen to twice its size. It had gone so long without treatment that the tissue had turned necrotic. He would need an emergency amputation before his body went into septic shock.

He came straight to PAWS for care. Nova must have been in excruciating pain, but his tail wagged the whole ride back to our Medical Center.

spirits up. Nova had no hesitations about trusting every new friend he met, as long as they had a gentle touch and a lap to fall asleep in. We may have been the first people to show Nova that kind of love, and he returned it tenfold.

Less than a month after his arrival, a fully healed and extremely happy Nova got his well-deserved PAWS alum bandana and headed to his new, loving home.



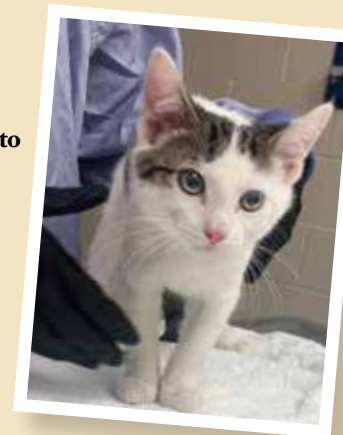
Arlo

Arlo, an extra-curious kitten looking for toys, found a wire to play with and bit into a live electrical cord. It resulted in severe burns throughout the inside of his mouth.

Poor Arlo came to PAWS Chicago for urgent medical attention. In addition to treating those burns, our medical team watched for potential damaging effects from the shocks on his tiny heart and lungs, that could show up weeks later.

Our Medical Center is stocked with state-of-the-art equipment that we used to monitor Arlo's internal-organ function over the following weeks. Luckily, the burns were the extent of his injuries and Arlo has had a full recovery.

Arlo was adopted through our Help Me Heal program. It places sick and injured pets in foster-to-adopt homes, with PAWS providing all medical care at no cost until the pets are cleared for adoption, at



which point they become official members of their foster families. This program allows pets like Arlo to complete their recoveries in stress-free, loving homes. That meant Arlo got to recover with his new sibling, also a PAWS alum, in his new home rather than at our Medical Center.

"We adore him," said Arlo's new mom, Rayah Abdullah. "He's already part of our family and Goober (our other cat) loves him too!" Since joining the Abdullah family, Arlo has adopted some safer pastimes, his mom says, including sleeping in on Sunday mornings between his parents and playing with toilet paper ribbons.





Sonesta

Sonesta gave birth outside on a particularly cold night in Houston. A kind person gave her and her babies food and brought them to a local shelter, but Sonesta wasn't in good shape. She was emaciated, barely producing milk, and suffering from heartworm, but still trying to give her five puppies everything she could.

Their poor health, coupled with overcrowding at the shelter due to recent tornadoes in the area, meant the whole family was labeled pre-euthanasia.

Luckily, around the same time, PAWS Chicago was sending a crisis relief mission to Texas to pick up animals that had been in the shelter before storms hit. One of the shelter employees asked if there was any way we could add them to our transport, and we immediately said yes.

Sonesta was exhausted by the end of the 30-plus hour drive to Chicago, but she still gave staff and volunteers a grateful tail wag when she got off the van at the PAWS Chicago Medical Center.

The whole family was finally able to rest and recover at the Medical Center. Puppy Spartan wasn't feeling his best, so he spent a day in an incubator with IV fluids before he was reunited with the rest of his family. Sonesta was then able to finish weaning all her puppies in a warm, comfortable space, before going to a foster home to focus on her own recovery from heartworm.

The babies found their loving homes within days at our Adoption Center, and Sonesta found her own, too, once she was back to her strong, healthy self.



Topher

Our Community Outreach Team found 9-year-old Topher as a stray, but that was just the tip of the iceberg.

Besides expected issues often seen in longtime stray cats, like much-needed dental care and testing FIV+, poor Topher had pellets from a BB gun embedded in his skin.

You'd think that would make Topher scared of humans, but his faith never wavered. From the day he arrived, Topher was an extremely social, affectionate boy who loved people and gladly accepted all our love.

Topher received a dental surgery at our Medical Center, when a few rotted, painful teeth were extracted. As a cat in his later years, he also got full diagnostic testing done to make sure his organ function was in a good place.

After recovering from his dental work and an upper respiratory infection, Topher found his family, and has been making their life rich with love ever since.



Janie

When she was just under two months old, Janie's body started crashing. She was gasping for breath and had a dangerously low body temperature, blood pressure, and heart rate.

Janie had feline panleukopenia, or feline distemper (FP), a highly contagious and often deadly virus for young kittens. She also had ringworm—a parasite that only added to her weakness and discomfort. We don't always know what medical conditions we will encounter when an animal comes to PAWS, but once they arrive, we are committed to giving any treatment needed to save their lives.

FP infects and destroys cells in the body, resulting in a dramatic drop in white blood cells. The virus particularly affects the intestinal tract, causing vomiting and diarrhea to the point that dehydration becomes life-threatening.

At our Medical Center, Janie spent two weeks on IV fluids and medication that was carefully administered by our medical team throughout each day while they monitored her vital signs. Once she was through the darkest days, Janie finally started to put on weight and perked up for playtime.

With a clean bill of health, Janie moved to our Adoption Center as a seemingly different cat. In a room full of adoptable kittens, Janie stood out for her playfulness, zooming around the room chasing balls and wand toys. She was also super cuddly, keen on any warm lap for affection. We'd like to think that Janie, having seen her lowest lows, now enjoys every single day to the fullest.

Janie is now soaking up the spotlight in her new home and being spoiled to bits by her mom!



MEET PAWS CHICAGO'S NEWEST ALUMNI SPORTING COVETABLE NECKWEAR

The red bandana is an important and lasting symbol at PAWS Chicago. It's what marks the touching moment when we finalize a homeless pet's adoption, signifying that they've completed their journey at PAWS and are going to a loving home.

The red bandana stands for our promise to all pets who depend on us and, specifically, for our impact on that animal's life by taking them from peril to safety; from sick, injured, and scared to healthy, healed, and happy; from homeless to homeward bound.



Apricot & Fig



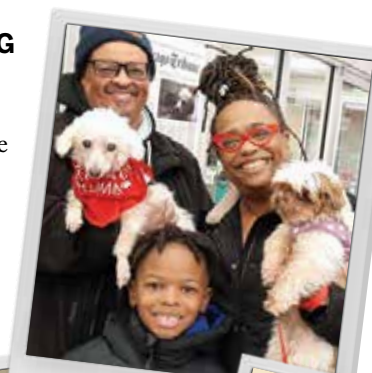
Chino



Jade



Dash & Darius



Stacey



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PASSION for a CAUSE

HOW ONE CARING COUPLE IS HELPING TO ENSURE LONG-LASTING CARE AT PAWS CHICAGO'S MEDICAL CENTER

by Jim Engel

A scrub-suited veterinarian hurrying between examinations on a busy day at the PAWS Chicago Medical Center encounters Nan Kocourek in the crowded hallway, stops suddenly, and embraces her in an enthusiastic hug.

"There's a puppy getting a blood transfusion upstairs thanks to you," the vet tells Nan. "A blood transfusion at a homeless pet hospital," she repeats, her voice breaking with emotion, astonishment, and gratitude.

Nan brushes the thanks aside. "You're the one saving that puppy's life, not me," she tells the vet.

And there you have it.

Emotion. Gratitude. Advanced medicine. That's the Kocourek Effect on PAWS Chicago.

Last fall, Wayne and Nan Kocourek made a transformational gift to the PAWS Chicago Medical Center, one that will help ensure continuity in medical care for homeless and at-risk pets.

Walking through the halls of the Medical Center recently, they redirect any hint of limelight or praise, so it shines directly on the Medical Center staff and volunteers themselves. Nan is the social butterfly; Wayne is the consummate gentleman, smiling at his wife's effervescence.

"PAWS is first rate. Best in class. I'm so impressed by them. And so proud to be associated with the lifesaving work they do every day," Nan says.

The Kocourek's gift, however, couldn't have come at a more critical time for the PAWS Chicago Medical



Wayne and Nan Kocourek's gift to the PAWS Chicago Medical Center helps ensure continuity in medical care for homeless and at-risk pets.

Center. Chicago is in the midst of an historic surge in homeless and at-risk pets. Intake at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility, increased by 1,198 dogs and cats in 2023. Euthanasia at CACC was up 22.7 percent in 2023. More than 2,500 animals were euthanized that year for the first time since 2016.

PAWS Chicago stepped in to help, transferring 42 percent more pets—695 more cats and dogs—from CACC in 2023 than the year before to successfully stifle the increase in euthanasia. None of that happens without the commitment of a passionate animal-loving community. And certainly, the Kocourek's gift resonates through the building as the team works hard to save lives every day.

ENSURING PAWS PETS GET THE CARE THEY NEED

The newly named PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center is a state-of-the-art facility at the heart of Chicago's No Kill mission. A specialized medical team treats more than 23,000 homeless and at-risk pets each year, and the facility features medical-grade quarantine and isolation rooms; advanced surgical suites; a high-volume spay & neuter clinic; intake, triage, and exam rooms; a world-class veterinary staff; and the space to comfortably house and care for hundreds of animals.

Maintaining the operations of the Medical Center, which is open 365 days a year and staffed by dozens of veterinary and animal welfare professionals, requires substantial annual fundraising.

The Kocoureks have established an endowment, which is designed to ensure some of the essential operations are funded in perpetuity regardless of short-term economic headwinds like a pandemic or recession. The endowment gift itself is set aside, and only the income will be spent from their \$6 million gift – or about \$300,000 per year in perpetuity toward medical staffing and medical costs. Gifts like these are critical to ensure PAWS Chicago will always be a viable organization to save Chicago's homeless animals.

This endowment is part of the long-term sustenance plan of PAWS Chicago, enabling the organization to continue to prudently grow its lifesaving work. The PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center is a critical component in the mission to make Chicago a No Kill city, and ensures that Chicago's homeless animals will always have a hospital. While the Kocoureks made the decision to support PAWS together, they were attracted to PAWS for very different reasons.

Wayne, a certified public accountant by training and a self-made entrepreneur, took a business approach to the decision to back PAWS.

"Supporting PAWS makes sense. It's grown into a really robust organization, very complex and doing tremendous things in terms of saving animals," he says.



The Kocourek's gift helps fund the work performed by the PAWS medical team, including veterinarian Dr. Emily Yacker, flanked by Nan and Wayne.

Nan echoes his sentiment. “The Medical Center is an unbelievable resource for Chicago and all of the places throughout the country they’re transporting hurt and at-risk animals from. It’s such a blessing to have this hospital and if you walk the halls, you see those darling animals that are going to be saved and eventually have loving homes.” She adds sweetly, “Well, if pets don’t have a home, I’d just take them all home. PAWS is doing that for me.”

For Paula Fasseas who founded PAWS with her daughter, Alexis, this is a meaningful milestone.

“We want to be sure that PAWS is here for pets in need long beyond our lifetimes,” says Paula. “This Medical Center is critical to saving Chicago’s neglected, injured, and abused animals coming from Chicago Animal Care & Control. I am so thankful for Nan and Wayne’s generosity and thrilled to have their names on the Medical Center, because they are two of the most wonderful people I’ve ever met.”

NAN’S LIFELONG LOVE OF PETS

Nan’s an animal lover, a love that started early in her southeast Iowa childhood.

“I think I’ve always loved animals. Animals, plants, and all of nature are a part of our lives. I love the beauty that we’re surrounded with, and part of it is our relationship with our animals,” she says.

“I had friends who lived on farms, and I had pets. We had Weimaraners. It was just a natural part of my growing up,” she says.

That love of animals continued into adulthood during life on a ranch. “There were horses, cows and dogs, and I had 13 cats at one time.”

Her cat story is a proof that in almost any situation, life finds a way.

“I had six kittens given to me and I didn’t realize, not having had cats before, that you didn’t wait a year to have them spayed. I ended up with six litters. Every friend of mine got a kitten,” she says, chuckling at the memory. “It was quite an ordeal.”

Wayne and Nan met later in life. Both had raised families, and neither was looking for new love, let alone a whole new chapter in life.

HUMBLE ROOTS AND A STRONG FOUNDATION

Wayne was born in 1937 in a farmhouse in northern Wisconsin—“a farmhouse, not a hospital,” he emphasizes. His family moved to suburban Milwaukee when he was just a year old.

“We were very poor. We had four children living in an upstairs apartment, renting it. In 7th grade, the teacher asked, ‘Is there anybody who hasn’t talked on a telephone?’ I was the only one in class that had never been on a telephone.”

“We didn’t have TV. We didn’t have phones. We didn’t have newspapers. And not because we didn’t want them. My parents couldn’t afford it. We didn’t have a car, so my dad rode a bicycle to the factory where he worked every day,” Wayne recalls.

Growing up, Wayne developed a work ethic. Maybe from his parents’ example. Maybe from the desire for comforts that were missing.

“I had a paper route when I was very young. I hated it, but I did it. In high school I wanted to get a car. We didn’t



“We want to be sure that PAWS is here for pets in need long beyond our lifetimes”

-Paula Fasseas
PAWS Chicago Founder and Executive Chair

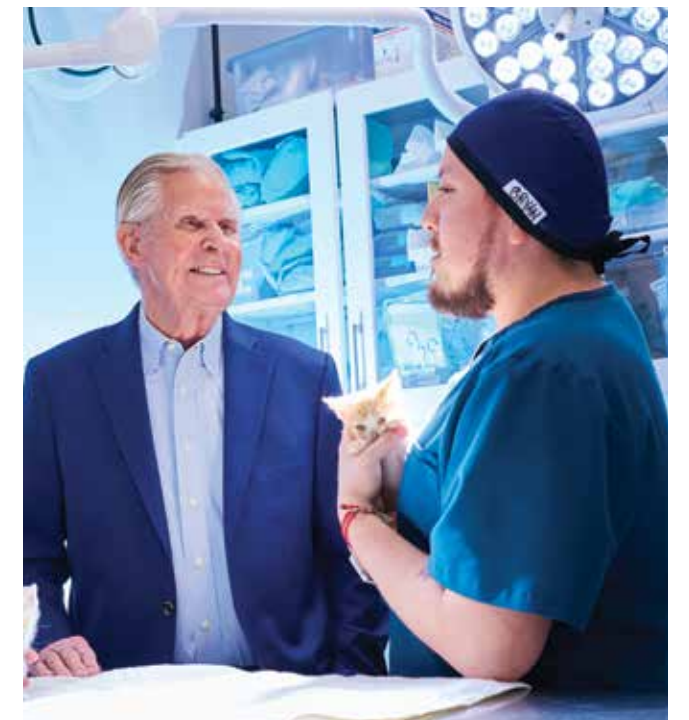
That’s when Wayne and his colleague decided that instead of fixing someone else’s company, they would look for an opportunity to buy their own. They started in manufacturing, took on an ailing business, and within nine months paid back the bank that had financed them. It was a successful formula they would follow several times, eventually leading Wayne to start his own company, Mid Oaks Investments, where he continues to work.

Wayne built a career putting in long days. At 87, he continues to go to his office in Buffalo Grove every day, though he’s down to one company and paring down his workload.

have a car in the family. I lied about my age at the bowling alley to set pins. I think I was 14 and you had to be 16. And the owner obviously was not very meticulous about checking ages,” Wayne says, laughing at the memory of an ambitious boy who knew what he wanted and wasn’t afraid of the work it took to get it. “If you go set pins for two years, you’ve got to have a work ethic, let me tell you.”

“For some reason, I decided to go to college. I just felt I needed to do that. I was the only one in my whole family that ever went to college,” he recalls.

And while Wayne has an aptitude for numbers and quickly found work as an accountant at a Big 8 firm, he had a mid-career setback that changed the course of his life. “After 10 and a half years, I didn’t make partner, which in hindsight is the best thing that ever happened to me,” he says. He went to work at a paper company in Wisconsin, and then joined another company as its CFO to help the CEO with a turnaround. After five years, in 1985 “the company was sold out from under us, and I was let go.”



PAWS Chicago Medical Center is critical to saving Chicago’s neglected, injured, and abused animals.

Love and Adventure



Nan and Wayne Kocourek share a life of philanthropy, travel, adventure, making friends along the way, and leaving the world better than they found it.

And Nan loves life. She rode horses, skied on water and snow, earned her pilot's license, and, 10 minutes into a chat with Nan, no one would be surprised to hear, she was a skydiver.

"I got my pilot's license when I was 8 months pregnant with my third child, my son Clayton, at the Charleston Air Force Base."

Think of it: The mid-1970s on an Air Force base in South Carolina, a mother of two children and another coming any day. Of course Nan got her pilot's license.

"I have a great faith in God, and I don't have any fear," she says.

Wayne says it was that energy that first caught his eye, while Nan appreciates his approach to life, business, and relationships. "It's Wayne's humility. Wayne doesn't think of himself as that special," she says.

Family has always been an important part of their lives. Nan has four children and 12 grandchildren. Wayne has a son and a daughter.

Nan's family is in Iowa. "I have six grandchildren at the University of Iowa now. Three have graduated. One is in vet school in St. Kitts," where PAWS Chicago's own Chief Medical Officer Dr. Alycia Eisenstein graduated.

"You know, one of the things I remember when I met Wayne, he said, 'Well, you're not going to make me stop working are you?' And I said, 'I'm not going to make you do anything and you're not going to make me do anything.' I like the freedom of not having somebody restrict who you are," she says.

Susanna Wickham, PAWS Chicago's CEO, is touched by the influence Wayne and Nan have had on each other. "One of my favorite things about the Nan and Wayne love story is that Wayne was a nose-to-the-grindstone, hardworking guy his whole life and met Nan and she turned a light on in him. He looks younger and healthier now than when they met, and they bring out the best in each other. And they bring that loving example to all of us at PAWS."

Nan agrees. "I'm the energy behind it," she says with a bright little laugh. "I love to travel. I love to get up and go. I love to be involved in things. Wayne's given his whole life to his work and now we're having fun," Nan says.

Wayne adds: "Well, it's just because of her ability to socialize and intertwine with so many different people and handle herself superbly in so many different situations. She's just great, and she is fun to be with."

ON PHILANTHROPY AND LEGACY

At some point in life, most everyone ponders how they'll be remembered, and for what.

"We're loving people. And we want to help humanity," Nan explains. "I think we both feel blessed to have had the lives that we've had, but we also know that we need to give back."

Wayne explains, "We're willing to support PAWS because



of the people first of all, and because of what Paula has created and started from scratch. It's hugely impressive to me that she would start something like this with a passion for what she was doing and grow it into what it is right now."

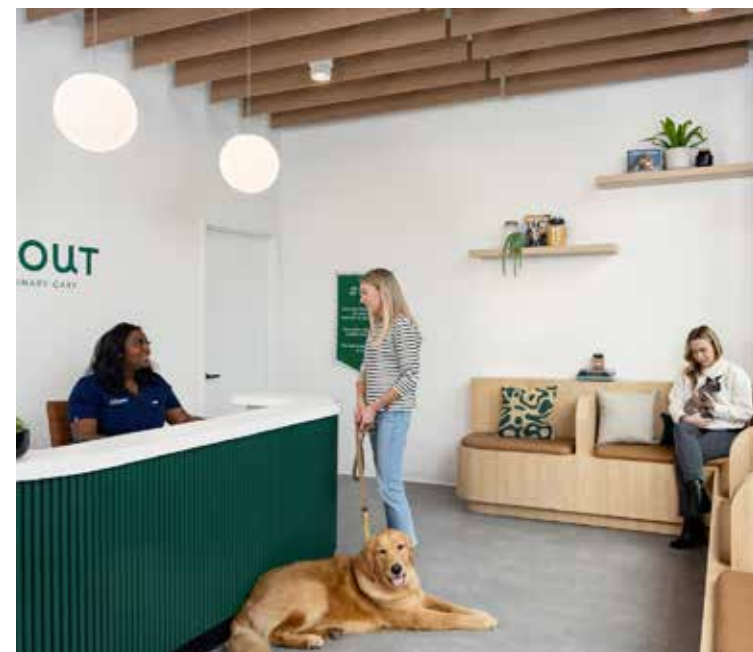
They've made significant philanthropic gifts to dozens of organizations working in a wide range of fields including cancer research, mental health, the arts, the homeless, programs for children, veterans, and education. And, of course, the pets of PAWS.

Nan has a direct and deeply spiritual streak that cascades through her life's decisions and motivates her philanthropy.

"Well, I've always thought God gave us our life and we're here to help others. We're here to be givers. With all that Wayne's worked for and the money that he's been able to accumulate over a lifetime, especially coming from nothing, I just think it's important that it be used for something that humanity can gain from," Nan says.

"Our inspiration of giving this gift was knowing that PAWS Chicago will continue into perpetuity," Wayne adds.

"You can't help but walk through that hospital and see these animals that have been rescued and are being saved, and not feel the need to do something for them," says Nan. "You can't help but want to support it." ■



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RACING TO SAVE LIVES

**103.5 KISS FM'S BRADY SERVES
AS TEAM PAWS AMBASSADOR**

by Julie Olah

“We Run for Their Lives.” It’s a mantra the runners on TEAM PAWS Chicago repeat as they push their bodies, logging mile after mile to train for marathons all over the world as part of one of the biggest fundraising teams in Chicago.

“The pets themselves have no voice, so our runners are a voice for them,” says Carrie Cihasky, Director of Events and Community Engagement at PAWS.

This year marks the 19th season for TEAM PAWS. It started in 2006 with 13 runners who raised \$3,200 competing in the Bank of America (BOA) Chicago Marathon. Since then, it’s grown to include more than 550 runners in four of the six world major running races (Berlin, London, New York City, and Chicago).

In the 2023 BOA Chicago Marathon alone, 483 TEAM PAWS runners participated, representing nine countries and 36 states plus the District of Columbia. TEAM PAWS was the largest local charity team.

Plus, a local celeb led the charge—Brady from 103.5 KISS FM served as a PAWS Ambassador and TEAM PAWS member.

Brady started running back in 2016 after watching the 2016 Boston Marathon live. “I was inspired by watching so many men and women pushing themselves, each for a goal and a cause. I witnessed runners with missing limbs, runners who were there during the marathon bombing in 2013, and runners who were twice my age. I knew that day, I wanted to use my good health for a great cause.”



And Brady couldn’t imagine a greater cause than helping dogs and cats. “I’ve always said that PAWS not only saves animals’ lives, but they also save humans’ lives. Adding a furry family member who will reciprocate unconditional love is something everyone should experience.”

**“Like anything in life, the
fear of the unknown can be
daunting. But TEAM PAWS
Chicago will guide you,
support you, and motivate
you every step (literally)
of the way.”**

- 103.5 KISS FM's Brady

In training with TEAM PAWS for the 2023 BOA Chicago Marathon, Brady was overjoyed to find a flourishing community of likeminded animal lovers. “The city of Chicago loves to run. The city of Chicago also loves to give back. TEAM PAWS combines the two. The support from team members to

each other is something I’ve never seen before. Training and wearing my TEAM PAWS shirt or jacket will always warrant a warm response.”

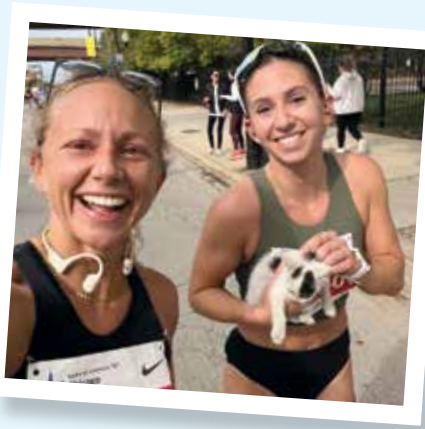
To support PAWS Chicago and Brady, 103.5 KISS FM generously donated two Taylor Swift tickets for a fundraising contest where every \$20 donated to Brady’s page was entered in a prize drawing. Donations came from all over the world—the farthest was from Japan!—and the contest raised \$72,000. “I was overwhelmingly proud. To think that two tickets to a show that lasts about four hours generated so many donations truly blew my mind. Never underestimate the power of Swifties!” says Brady.

While TEAM PAWS has already filled its allotment of 2024 Chicago Marathon entries, runners can still join TEAM PAWS and raise funds for homeless pets by participating in any athletic event. No matter how you choose to get involved, the rewards are well worth it.

“Like anything in life, the fear of the unknown can be daunting. But TEAM PAWS will guide you, support you, and motivate you every step—literally—of the way. Once you accomplish your first race, you will get emotional knowing you just did something so many will never do. And you did it while saving animals’ lives!” says Brady.



Previous page: Brady training for TEAM PAWS
Top: Brady and his wife Rachel holding photos of their PAWS Alums Penny and Jude. (Right) Brady celebrating TEAM PAWS on his social account
Below: TEAM PAWS runners: David Gordan-Johnson, Kendra Frigo, April Knox, and Victor Abaya



RUNNER SAVES STRAY

Under a bridge a dirty and frightened kitten scurried near Sarah Bohan before coming to rest on a pile of leaves. Sarah, a member of TEAM PAWS in the 2023 Bank of America Chicago Marathon, had just 5 miles to run, and was on pace for a personal record. What she did next made her, and the kitten, a viral sensation.

She picked up the cat and walked the next mile of the race alongside a fellow animal loving marathon participant, Gia Nigro. Together they asked spectators if they could care for the kitten. Sarah did find a family to care for the cat, which they named Casper. The cat was examined, treated, and neutered by the PAWS Chicago veterinary team and the family formally adopted Casper through PAWS Chicago.

Sarah and Gia, who had not met previously, finished the race together. Sarah sacrificed her personal record, but is already registered to run in the 2024 marathon with TEAM PAWS.

Sarah's act resulted in more than 380 media stories around the world in more than 20 countries and in 13 different languages. PAWS Chicago was featured on ABC World News Tonight, People magazine, and Runner's World. The total reach of those stories exceeded 1.6 billion people worldwide.



For the LOVE of Coffee & Canines

Barstool Sports' Dan "Big Cat" Katz launches Stella Blue Coffee to honor his favorite dog and gives back to PAWS Chicago

Dan "Big Cat" Katz made a name for himself as a blogger and podcast host on Barstool Sports, one of the most influential sports and pop-culture digital media sites in America. And while a lot has changed for Dan since his rise to fame, his number-one fan has consistently remained the same for the last 12 years.

"My dog Stella means the world to me," he says. "I rescued her from PAWS Chicago, and she's been with me through everything: Three kids. Moving from Chicago to New York. Barstool's growth as a company."

Stella had a rough start to life. She was less than a year old when she was found underweight and injured on the streets of Chicago. Once safely at PAWS, Stella received individualized care to treat her wounds and nurse her back to health. Then, it was time to find her a home.

Despite having to wear a recovery cone while at the Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center (and not liking it one bit), Stella showed Dan who she really was—a dog with just as much personality and panache as him.

"She's only 35 pounds, but she's an alpha," he points out. "She knows what she wants, and she knows how to get it. Adopting Stella was the best move I ever made. She's my best friend."

In addition to loving Stella like crazy, Dan's also head over heels for coffee.

"I've always loved coffee, but after becoming a father of three, coffee transitioned from a passion to a source of life," Dan says. "I needed it to survive and get through every day. I was drinking so much coffee that I felt like I should create my own brand—something that I loved to drink more than anything else I'd tried."

So, Dan put his two passions together and created Stella Blue Coffee.

"I felt like this brand name would be the perfect way to make sure that Stella lives on forever," he says.

But honoring Stella goes way beyond the name. Stella Blue Coffee has pledged to donate a portion of proceeds from every coffee purchase to PAWS Chicago, meaning Stella will help save the lives of countless PAWS Chicago dogs and cats who will come after her.

"The brand brings widespread awareness to our adoption program, and the donation helps us expand the world-class medical care we can offer to homeless and at-risk pets," says PAWS Chicago CEO Susanna Wickham.

On August 9, 2023, Dan and Stella proudly presented Wickham with an appropriately oversized check outside of our Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center in Lincoln Park. The recognizable duo literally stopped traffic — loads of people honked and waved as they went by. "This is just the first check," Dan said to our team. And he more than kept his word, presenting PAWS with a second check in January 2024.

"As the brand's retail presence expands and popularity grows, this will be an important annual portion of PAWS funding, and it will help us expand our programs to help more pets," Wickham says, adding that PAWS looks forward to growing our partnership with Dan, Stella, and Stella Blue Coffee in the years to come.

You can find Stella Blue Coffee in your local Mariano's or Jewel stores or online at stellabluecoffee.com



"I felt like this brand name would be the perfect way to make sure that Stella lives on forever,"

-Dan Katz



Left: Dan "Big Cat" Katz presents PAWS Chicago CEO Susanna Wickham with a donation from sales of Stella Blue Coffee, launched in honor of his PAWS dog, Stella. Above: a portion of every sale of Stella Blue Coffee is donated to PAWS Chicago. Top: Dan "Big Cat" Katz and PAWS dog, Stella, who was less than a year old when she was found injured on the streets of Chicago.



PAWS Veterinarians Dr. Jacobi and Dr. Zdarski-West along with PAWS spay/neuter surgery director and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Eisenstein with Krill, recipient of our 300,000 spay/neuter surgery.

MISSION MILESTONES

PAWS Chicago marked two major milestones in 2023—performing our 300,000th spay/neuter surgery and logging our 80,000th adoption since our founding in 1997. And the work continues in earnest in 2024. Through the first quarter, PAWS had reached 319,189 spay/neuter surgeries and 83,229 total adoptions.

“Why do these numbers matter? Because numbers equal lives,” says PAWS Chicago’s Chief Mission and Innovation Officer Kristina Rosinia.

Overpopulation is the leading cause of pet euthanasia. One female cat and her offspring can theoretically produce 420,000 kittens over a seven-year span. Dogs can produce 92,000 puppies in the same period. That’s why free and low-cost spay/neuter and trap-neuter-return services at the Lurie Clinic are a cornerstone of our No Kill mission.

The result is fewer animals on the streets reproducing. And that has a big impact, not only on Chicago’s homeless pet population but on the resources spent tackling these problems for the City of Chicago and surrounding communities.

A manageable population also means sick and injured animals who would have been euthanized in the past are getting a second chance at life and happiness. While puppies and kittens are among the more than 82,000 adoptions to date, every type of pet you can imagine, including seniors, pets treated for contagious illnesses, abused, neglected, and under-socialized animals also get their second chance.

The problems facing homeless pets are always changing. But free and low-cost spay/neuter supported by adoption will always be key to building a building a No Kill future.

THE BEST CARE FOR PAWS PETS

PAWS Chicago is ensuring homeless pets build positive relationships with humans in their most challenging days by integrating **Fear Free Certifications** into operations.

The Fear Free Shelter Program is a five-hour, self-paced, online training course aimed at improving the experiences of animals by educating shelter workers about their emotional needs.

The course focuses on four key areas: emotional health, including understanding shelter animals’ emotional needs, stress responses, and stressors; recognizing feelings, including understanding body language and the effect fear has on behavior; how animals learn, including how this affects their behavior in the shelter; and Fear Free communication and handling basics, including effective team communication and how to safely handle animals in a way that reduces stress.



“We are so inspired by our hard-working staff and their endless commitment to doing their best for our pets,” said Paula Fasseas, PAWS Founder and Executive Chair.

In 2023, the entire Animal Care team earned their Fear Free Certifications. In the coming year, all PAWS Chicago employees will be required to complete this important program, and it will be offered to all volunteers as well.

THE ULTIMATE REVEAL

HGTV star Alison Victoria recently donated the redesign of an important room at our Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center for the fourth season of her show “Windy City Rehab.” As the Midwest’s first cage-free, No Kill adoption center, this facility set a new standard for the quality of life provided to homeless pets in shelters since opening in 2007. After 15 years, it was ready for a feline refresh.

Alison Victoria and her team, including talented woodworking craftsman Ari Smejkal, tackled the renovation of Kitty City, the space where our adoptable cats and kittens stay. After weeks of planning and executing, Alison personally revealed the results to PAWS Chicago Founder and Executive Chair Paula Fasseas in an episode of “Windy City Rehab.”

Paula was wowed by the end result: Kitty City now has custom, wooden cubbies, and ramps on the walls for cats to play, hide, and sleep in. There’s also easy-to-move seating for adopters and a one-of-a-kind, floor-to-ceiling cat tree (made from real tree branches!) with platforms for perching. “That’s the best treehouse I’ve ever seen,” said Paula.

Big thanks to Alison for this generous gift and for making sure every detail creates a fun, friendly environment for cats to meet their new families.



Paula Fasseas and Alison Victoria celebrate the grand opening of the newly refurbished Kitty City at the Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center in Lincoln Park.



VET FOR A DAY

Khamarion Grayer, a fourth grader at Dulles Elementary School in Englewood, was one of the top readers at his school – he finished a five-month stretch reading 2,727 minutes, which equals about 45 hours. For his achievement prize, Khamarion, who loves animals, asked to visit PAWS Chicago. While visiting the PAWS Medical Center and Lurie Clinic, he received a behind-the-scenes tour and helped Dr. Emily Yacker examine a dog.



FRESH FOOD ON THE MENU

PAWS dogs are now eating fresh, thanks to a recent partnership with JustFoodForDogs, who pioneered the fresh food advances in pet nutrition over the past 15 years.

JustFoodForDogs is donating all of the food served at our Medical Center and Adoption Center. Research indicates the human-grade meals are more digestible and promote immune system health.

“All of the dogs in our Adoption program begin their journeys at our Medical Center, and their medical needs range from basic veterinary care to complex orthopedic surgeries. A healthy diet is an important part of healing, and we are thrilled that our dogs will receive food that is proven to support immune system health”, says Chief Medical Officer Dr. Alycia Eisenstein.

HERE’S TO OUR LIFESAVING PARTNERS

PAWS Chicago’s partners and friends have gone above and beyond to raise awareness and funds for homeless pets.



Piece Pizza collaborates with Rick Bayless to raise funds and awareness for homeless pets. Below: Piece Pizza owner Bill Jacobs (center) poses with chef collaborators Doug Sohn (left) and Barry Sorkin (right).



Chef Stephanie Izard and her specialty pizza

For the second year in a row, Piece Pizza launched a “Slice to Meet You” campaign that placed adoptable animal flyers atop pizza boxes delivered across the city. Piece Pizza also partnered with legendary local chefs, including Rick Bayless (Frontera Grill, Topolobampo, Xoco, Bar Sótano), Doug Sohn (Hot Doug’s), Barry Sorkin (Smoque BBQ), and Top Chef winner Stephanie Izard (Girl & The Goat), to create and sell limited-time pizza creations to benefit PAWS pets. Every \$35 specialty pizza sold triggered an incredible \$50 donation to PAWS Chicago—\$10 from Piece and \$10 each from four generous matching donors.



Chitown Clothing collaborated with PAWS on a custom, Chicago-themed shirt with 100% of the net proceeds benefiting PAWS pets. The t-shirt features iconic Chicago imagery including the Willis Tower, deep dish pizza, and the Wrigley

Field marquee while also sharing facts about PAWS Chicago’s work to save homeless pets. Pick up your own t-shirt to support PAWS at pawschicago.org/shop.

Enterprise Mobility is a PAWS-force! Last year, due to team member interest in supporting PAWS’ mission, the company added PAWS to their Stronger Together Employee Giving Campaign—and more than one-third of their Chicago-area employees selected PAWS as their beneficiary! In addition, the Enterprise Mobility Foundation provided a 50% match to team member donations. They also give employees paid time off to spend volunteering. Thanks Enterprise Mobility, for leading the way to a No Kill community!

To learn how your company can support PAWS Chicago please visit: pawschicago.org/how-to-help/donate/corporate-giving.



Philomena Corgan with Colette (left), Augustus Corgan with Mr. Thom, Chloe Mendel Corgan with Diamond Baby, and Billy Corgan with Angelface.

Smashing Pumpkins front man Billy Corgan and his wife, Chloe Mendel Corgan, were inspired to forego a traditional wedding registry and instead asked their guests to donate to their favorite charity, PAWS Chicago. Billy became a fan of PAWS Chicago while looking to adopt his first cats in 2004, and since then has adopted Angelface (cat), Diamond Baby (cat), Mr. Thom (cat), and Colette (dog). After being exposed to horrible conditions at open-admissions shelters, he was thrilled to see the care and comfort given to each pet at PAWS. Since then, he’s been a devoted supporter, and we’re honored to have been part of Billy and Chloe’s special day!



Meet Mono - Our First Monoclonal Patient

When Elanco Animal Health developed the first-of-its-kind treatment for the normally deadly canine parvovirus, PAWS Chicago was the first Chicago shelter—and one of the earliest in the nation—to receive the monoclonal antibody treatment, which directly attacks the virus.

In September, PAWS administered the first dose to a parvo positive puppy aptly named Mono. Mono went from limp to tail wagging within three days! (Usually, our parvovirus patients are in critical condition for 7 to 10 days.) He still required isolation and lots of love and care at our hospital, but he went from near death to his new loving home with adopters Eddie Sanders and Chelsey Carter-Sanders, in a little over two weeks. They’ve since named him Tank.



Joe Siprut with Kathy and children Lana and Joe, as well as pets Sammy, Rusty, and Leishka.

While it’s common for pet owners across the country to consider dogs and cats their fur babies, Joe Siprut is taking it more seriously than . . .well, maybe anyone else.

Joe, founder of Kerberos Capital Management, has introduced an innovative benefit for his employees: *paternity leave*.

Kerberos offers employees who adopt a pet from PAWS or other qualified animal welfare organization one week off at full pay. For Joe, the reasoning was as simple as the program is innovative.

“Our feeling is that pets are just like children. They need time to acclimate to their new home,” he says.

Rescue animals are an integral part of life for Joe and his self-described “Brady Bunch” family. Joe, his fiancé Kathy, and kids, Lana (age 17), and Joe (14) share their home with PAWS pet Sammy, a miniature border collie living his best life as a tripod, and two other rescue dogs, Rusty and Leishka, in Chicago’s Lincoln Park neighborhood.

PAWS isn’t aware of any other organization that offers paternity leave—but great employers recognize and adopt great ideas.

“I hope other companies hear about it and do the same. All of us can be incentivizing more adoptions,” Joe says.

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Kristina Rosinia



Every year, more than 4 million U.S. households adopt shelter pets, according to national animal welfare organizations. Socializing dogs and cats to prepare them for a variety of environments and situations helps ensure long-term placement success – and years of happiness for pets and their people.

Socialization – which can be done at any age, not just during puppy and kitten stages – involves helping your pet develop positive associations to new experiences and settings, including sights, sounds, and meeting people and other animals. Though they go hand in hand, socialization differs from training, which entails teaching pets specific skills.

For example, teaching your dog to be comfortable around kids is part of socialization; while teaching them specifically not to jump on kids is training, explains PAWS Chicago’s Chief Mission and Innovation Officer Kristina Rosinia, who is also a certified behavior trainer and instructor.

“Socialization helps expand what scenarios pets are comfortable with,” Rosinia says. “And that helps them and their humans lead happier lives with less stress and anxiety.”

Pets that live in the city have some unique socialization needs, like getting used to noises including sirens and fireworks,

and, for dogs, walking past a lot of different things on the sidewalk, such as bicycles and runners. Urban cats require additional enrichment experiences (think kitty TV or additional toys) to provide stimulation if they can’t watch birds and squirrels.

“Try to think ahead: Don’t wait to acclimate a pet to a situation once it occurs,” Kristina says.

Kristina suggests starting with miniature versions of potentially stressful situations: Find a YouTube video of fireworks, for instance, and start playing it with the volume low, then gradually increase it as it stays tolerable while offering treats. Have a friend walk back and forth past your dog with a bike before slowly riding it while you give treats or stand 15 feet from a bike path and gradually get closer while rewarding your pet. “The idea is to recreate situations at a moderate level to provide exposure without stress,” she explains.

No matter where you live, Kristina says it’s important to acclimate an animal to being confined or contained in some

capacity: For cats, that’s likely in a carrier and for dogs, that may be in a crate or in a bathroom. That’s because chances are you’ll need to transport a pet or keep them away from something happening in your home at some point.

Beyond that, think about common and occasional triggers in your specific situation – maybe a friend brings their dog over occasionally or you have repairs done in your home – and prepare your pet so it’s not scary for them or disruptive for you.

It’s easy to get started, too. PAWS Chicago offers all adopters free Dogs 101 and Cats 101 Zoom sessions monthly, and the PAWS Chicago website features extensive literature on understanding dog and cat behavior.” Post-adoption behavior advice from the PAWS Training and Behavior team is available, too. “We’re here to support our pets,” says Kristina. “Once a PAWS animal, always a PAWS animal.”

Every animal can be socialized and trained at any age; she emphasizes. “Go at your pet’s pace. Do it in a way that’s comfortable, fear-free, and force-free. Positive reinforcement always works best.”

PAWS CHICAGO FUR BALL

Join us for the 23rd Annual Fur Ball on
Friday, November 15, 2024 at The Drake Hotel.
pawschicago.org/FurBall
Event Chairs: Laura Sachs & Jordan Fisher and
Lindsay & Carter Hawkins



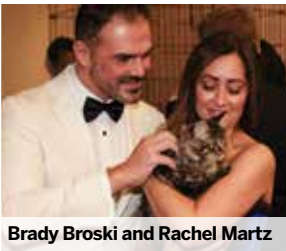
Wayne Kocourek, Paula Fasseas, Nan Kocourek



Jordan Fisher and Laura Sachs



Nancy Santi



Brady Broski and Rachel Martz



Co-Chairs Brook Jay and Karen McEniry

BEACH PARTY

Join us for the 21st Annual Beach Party on
Thursday, July 25, 2024 at the Offshore Rooftop at Navy Pier.
pawschicago.org/BeachParty



Melissa and Michael Canning



Sylvia Perez and Jake Hamilton



Ed and Denise Raddatz, Mary Dine



Domanique Woods



Co-Chairs Vasoula Rekhson and Anna Simon

THE PETER FASSEAS GOLF OPEN

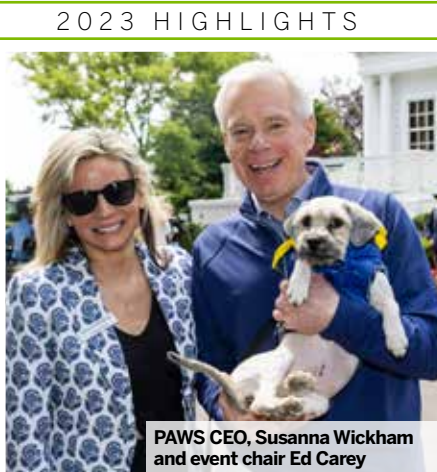
Join us at the 4th Annual Peter Fasseas Golf Open,
presented by the Sachs Family Foundation, on
Monday, June 10, 2024 at
Westmoreland Country Club.
pawschicago.org/Golf
Event Chair: Ed Carey



Dr. Tony Kremer



Stacy Harding, Doug Harding, Kara Brittingham, Mickey Evans, Kathy Roeser, Matt Roeser, Laurie Turner, and Rodney Turner



PAWS CEO, Susanna Wickham and event chair Ed Carey



Peter Dubois, Gary Schaffel

2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Laura Lowderman, Tracie Sadoff, Victoria Howard, Helen Kalantzis, Melissa Canning, Rich Fesi, Beth McMahon

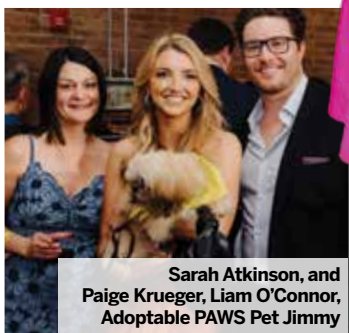
ANIMAL MAGNETISM

Save the date for our 18th
Annual Animal Magnetism on
Friday, April 4, 2025.
pawschicago.org/AnimalMagnetism

Event Chairs:
Alyssa Gregory, Danielle Kroloff,
and Ritu Shah



Mary Nosa Havley and Max Havley with Winnie



Sarah Atkinson, and Paige Krueger, Liam O'Connor, Adoptable PAWS Pet Jimmy



Keke Hampton and Christopher "Fred" Frederick



Ali Baird and Kathryn Knoch



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Memorials & Tributes

PAWS CHICAGO REMEMBERS **BOB BARKER**



“Help control the pet population. Have your pet spayed or neutered.”

That closing remark to every episode of “The Price is Right” was as much a catchphrase of Bob Barker’s as the exuberant “Come on down!” he proclaimed to excited contestants on the iconic game show that he hosted for 35 years.

Barker passed away in August at the age of 99. He leaves a legacy of kindness and compassion as a pioneer in efforts to reduce the pet population and advocate for the humane treatment of animals, including in partnership with PAWS Chicago.

“There are just too many cats and dogs being born,” he told the *New York Times* in 2004. “Animals are being euthanized by the millions simply because there are not enough homes for them.”

A voice for dogs and cats when there weren’t many, Barker was also a generous supporter of animal advocacy programs. He was a large donor to PAWS Chicago’s first spay/neuter clinic in 1999, helping to purchase all the equipment needed to open it the following year. Today, the Lurie Clinic is the only one of its kind located in and serving Chicago’s underserved communities with free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, vaccines, and other wellness services. To date, more than 320,000 spay and neuter procedures have been performed there.

“Bob Barker was a leading voice in animal welfare,” says PAWS Founder and Executive Chair Paula Fasseas. “His daily reminder to spay and neuter pets helped move public opinion in an era when few understood the reality of homeless pet euthanasia. We are forever grateful to him for helping fund the creation of our free spay/neuter clinic. He changed our city for the better and his legacy will continue to benefit the pets of Chicago.”



PAWS CHICAGO REMEMBERS **GLENN FELNER**



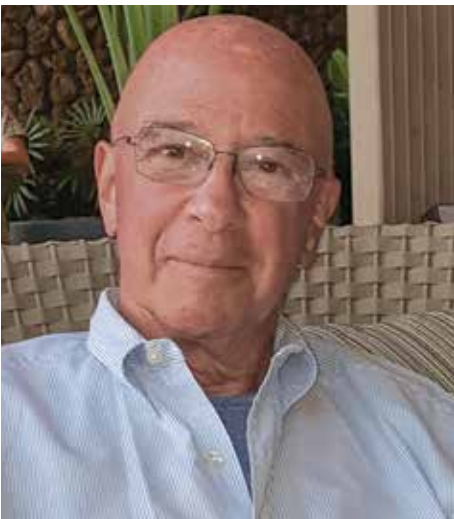
With great sadness, we share that Glenn Felner, loving husband of Bonnie Felner, passed away on Tuesday, October 17, at the age of 97.

Glenn was a cherished “Dog Dad” of Patch and Alfie and longtime animal-lover who generously supported PAWS for many years, making a transformative gift in 2015 to name the Glenn L. Felner North Shore Adoption Center in Highland Park. Deeply committed to PAWS Chicago’s work and No Kill mission, Glenn served on our Board of Directors since 2016.

Glenn was a decorated World War II Veteran who fought in the Battle of the Bulge and received many military accolades for his heroic activity including the Combat Infantry Badge, the US Bronze Star, and the French Legion of Honor decoration. Leaving his military career behind, Glenn came home to a job in journalism for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, but eventually spent decades in the insurance industry. He was an avid reader and a world traveler. He enjoyed riding his Vespa, driving his Jaguar, and piloting his own plane. He was also an honorary consul general in Rwanda through the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund.

We are deeply grateful for Glenn’s compassion, leadership, and generosity. He will be missed by many two-legged and four-legged friends alike.

PAWS CHICAGO REMEMBERS **DR. JACK PICKLEMAN**



With a smile on his face and a touch of humor in his words, longtime PAWS volunteer Dr. Jack Pickleman described himself as a man with a hole in his heart. A hole only pets can fill.

“These animals are helpless. Without the efforts of hundreds of other volunteers, they would never experience a loving home,” he said.

Dr. Pickleman passed away peacefully at the age of 84 after an exemplary medical career as the Director of the Division of General Surgery at Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood, IL and as Professor of Surgery at Loyola University, Stritch School of Medicine.

For more than a decade Dr. Pickleman spent several days a week volunteering at PAWS Chicago, taking care of homeless dogs. He invested thousands of hours making life better for thousands of pets. He and his wife, Brenda, also sponsored events including Fur Ball and Beach Party.

“Dr. Pickleman was an inspiration to everyone at PAWS. He loved animals and had an enormous impact on homeless pets in Chicago,” said Celene Mielcarek, PAWS Chicago’s Head of Program Operations.

PAWS CHICAGO REMEMBERS **LOUIS JOSEPH COHN**



Louis Joseph Cohn, founding partner of the firm of Cohn, Lambert, Ryan & Schneider, passed away on the last day of his 93rd year. He was a long-term practitioner at the Illinois Workers Compensation Commission, as well as contributing greatly to the Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education.

At age 76, a dog named Daisy entered his life and daily walks introduced him to neighbors who became friends and watched over him as he aged. At 80, he found a new passion which brought him tremendous joy. He became an adoption counselor at PAWS Chicago, where he assisted in adopting out approximately 900 dogs to their forever homes.

“Louis’ heart for people and animals came through every day at PAWS. He loved helping the dogs find their homes, but even more, he loved matching people with their forever pets,” Brian Zeman Assistant Director, Foster Program at PAWS Chicago.

PAWS CHICAGO REMEMBERS **DR. HENRY H. ROENIGK, JR.**



Dr. Henry H. Roenigk, Jr., 89, of Scottsdale, Arizona, passed away in December, 2023. Formerly the Chair of Dermatology at Northwestern University in Chicago, Henry was a member of many professional medical organizations, as well as a frequent researcher, lecturer, and teaching professor. Henry was a lifelong sports fan, traveled passionately, and loved animals.

He was a long time supporter of PAWS Chicago, and named the “Bernie” room at the Lincoln Park Adoption Center.

He is survived by his wife, Kathleen; siblings Barb (Harry) and David (Sarah); sons Randy (Julie), Ron, Scott, and Larry (Sheri); grandchildren Ross, Katie (Cooper), Lindsay (Tim), Ryan, Grace, and Griffin; and one great-grandchild, Leigh.

IN MEMORY OF
GEORGE JAY BORNSTEIN



IN MEMORY OF
NANCY CANELLIS



IN MEMORY OF
RIO (RALPH) COLLINS



IN MEMORY OF
CAROL DAVIS



IN MEMORY OF
ROSEANN FITZGERALD



IN MEMORY OF
BARBARA K HOFFMAN



IN MEMORY OF
KIMBERLY MORMANN



IN MEMORY OF
BARBARA PAWSON



IN MEMORY OF
DICK RINELLA



IN MEMORY OF
DAVID ROOS



IN MEMORY OF
MAUREEN M. SCHELL



IN MEMORY OF
CHRISTOPHER SHERWIN



IN MEMORY OF
LOIS SHRUNK



IN MEMORY OF
NANCY STYCZENSKI



IN MEMORY OF
FREDERICK G UHLMANN



IN MEMORY OF
CINDY ZILLER



Pet Memorials

IN MEMORY OF
JESSIE BOHBOT BERRIE



IN MEMORY OF
JADYN DEWALD



IN MEMORY OF
EMMA HENKEL



IN MEMORY OF
LUKE MALLERS



IN MEMORY OF
DUKE GROOM BERTON



IN MEMORY OF
LORD WINSTON EMMONS



IN MEMORY OF
ZOE KOTEN



IN MEMORY OF
MILLIE MIGALA



IN MEMORY OF
CHACHI CANELLIS



IN MEMORY OF
BUCKET GOLDBERG



IN MEMORY OF
JESSIE MALLERS



IN MEMORY OF
WEBSTER MYERSON



Weddings

SEPTEMBER 16, 2023
WILLIAM CORGAN AND CHLOE MENDEL CORGAN



NOVEMBER 28, 2022
JEFF AND ELLY HALL



JUNE 23, 2023
CORY AND JACKIE GROOM



SEPTEMBER 24, 2022
JOHN STURGILL AND DAPHNE ORTIZ-STURGILL



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special person or
pet in your life.
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ADVOCACY ALL-STARS

Meet the four recipients of the PAWS Chicago 2024 Animal Welfare Leadership Award

Community engagement is the foundation for all of PAWS Chicago's lifesaving work. Year after year, thousands of volunteers provide more than 100,000 hours of their time and talent—the equivalent of more than 50 full-time staff members. These four Animal Welfare Leadership Award winners represent the passion and commitment displayed by all of our PAWS volunteers.



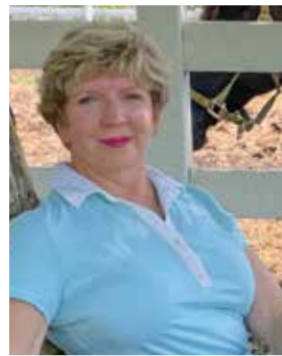
RAMONA GRIFFIN has been an animal advocate for more than 30 years and is a devoted and influential supporter of the No Kill movement. In 2011, Ramona began volunteering in Community Outreach at PAWS, and joined the Development Board in 2016. Ramona's true passion is providing representation within the community and ensuring

animals, and their people, receive the care and resources they need. Ramona was the first recipient of the Companion Animals for Reform and Equity (CARE) Changemaker Award, and in 2023, she was honored by the Humane Society of the United States as a DEI Trailblazer for promoting inclusion through the PAWS Veterinary Assistant Apprenticeship program, where she helps to welcome and support young people of all walks of life within the program. Ramona is a strong voice for pets in need and has served on the Commission on Animal Care & Control, an advisory body to the mayor and CACC, since 2020.



JAMES PSZANKA started volunteering with PAWS Chicago in 2008 one month after his rescue dog, Niki, passed away. After walking dogs for a couple of years, he gradually began running dogs at PAWS to combine his own workouts with volunteer shifts. Since joining TEAM PAWS Chicago in 2012, James has trained for 60 marathons with PAWS dogs, not counting running

12 virtual marathons during the pandemic at the Lincoln Park Adoption Center. In addition to running friends' dogs for PAWS donations, James raises additional funds during the holidays by selling handmade, natural wreaths to benefit PAWS.



CLAUDIA LANGMAN has logged 584 hours of service at PAWS Chicago since she started volunteering in 2019. Working mainly with Community Outreach, Claudia provides spay/neuter transportation for pets in Englewood and Back of the Yards every week, since transportation is often a barrier to access. She has also assisted with the PAWS Pet Food Pantry, door-to-door canvassing,

and community vaccine and "Spay Day" events. In addition to supporting under-resourced communities, Claudia is a regular volunteer at the Medical Center and a devoted member of the Development Board.



MELISSA CANNING and her husband Michael began supporting PAWS in 2010, and a few years later, Melissa asked for a simple birthday gift: "I just want to help cats." Thus, Melissa and her husband Michael established the Melissa Canning Community Cat Prevention Program, which continues to this day and funds spay/neuter surgeries for cats in

under-resourced areas including Englewood, West Englewood, Back of the Yards, and Woodlawn. The program serves hundreds of cats every year - more than 8,000 in total, which has prevented tens of thousands of unwanted pets. The program has also found loving homes for more than 3,000 cats, and provides counseling to people who want to help cats. Nearly ten years ago, Melissa and Michael joined the PAWS Chicago board of directors, and in 2020, Melissa took on the additional responsibility of helming the Development Board as its president. Melissa has chaired the annual Fur Ball, supports all PAWS events, and raises her hand at every opportunity to help animals in need.

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A man with a beard and mustache is holding a small dog close to his face. He is holding a white sign with a black border. The sign has the word "Compassion" in blue, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield logos, and the text "BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois".

of

Compassion



BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois

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