

PAWS CHICAGO®

2023 IMPACT REPORT



COMMUNITY ALL-STARS

Volunteers are the heart of everything we do for homeless pets

Year in Review | Highlights and Statistics | 2023 Honor Roll of Donors

pawschicago.org

22,170 PETS WERE SERVED THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS



4,561 adoptions
82,234 adoptions since our founding



1,921
animals placed
in foster care



39,432
free and low-cost
vaccinations



54,989
pounds of pet food
distributed
by the Pet Food Pantry

98.62%

of the animals that
entered our program
were saved



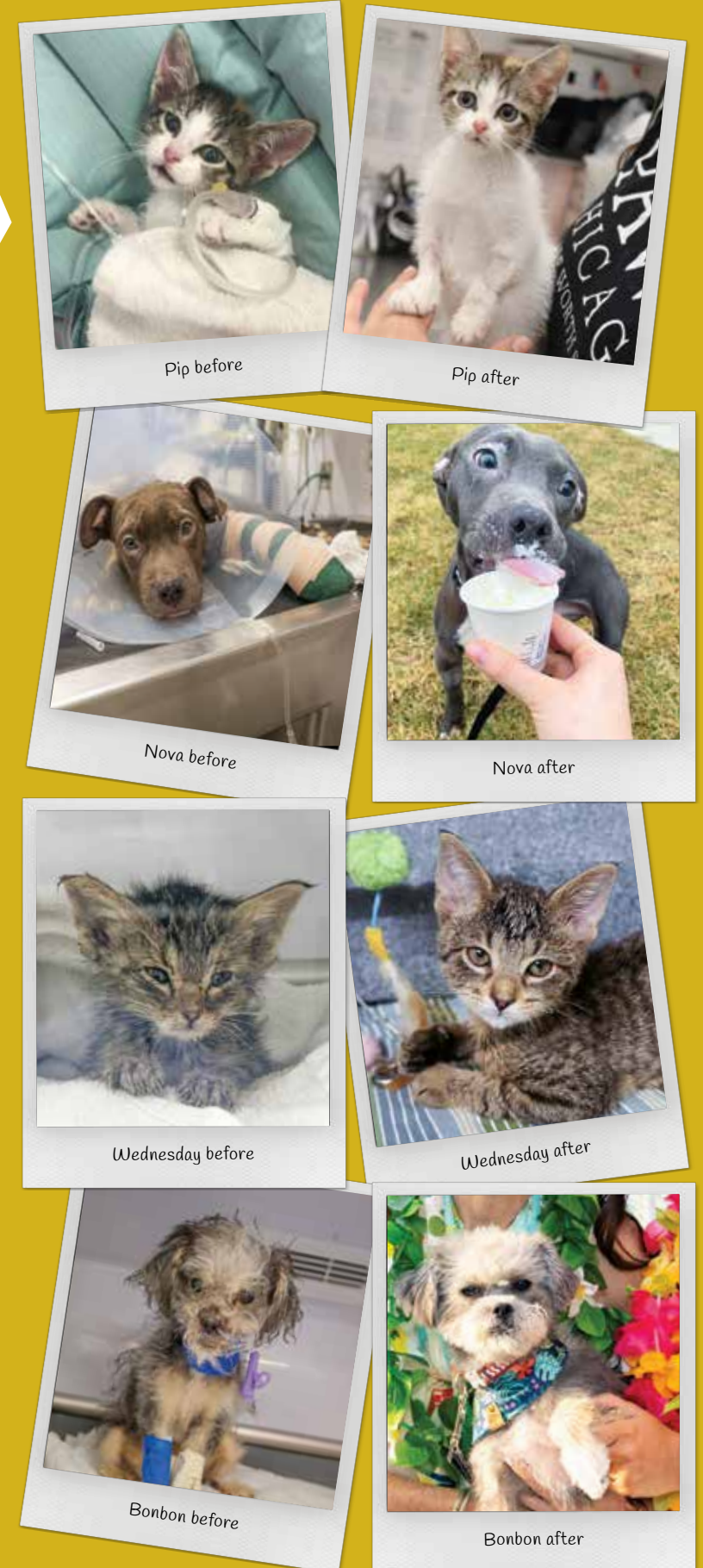
16,587
free or low-cost
spay/neuter surgeries

2,428
spay/neuter
surgeries
provided for feral cats



106,221
hours worked by
volunteers = 51
full-time employees

It's great to be alive!



Pip before

Pip after

Nova before

Nova after

Wednesday before

Wednesday after

Bonbon before

Bonbon after



Above: Tagalong in Kitty City at the PAWS Chicago Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center

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ON THE COVER Clockwise: Manu Puri, Don Allerton, Christine Bortman, Brady Broski, Paige Krueger

PHOTO CREDIT: Charles Cherney



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

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIR



Dear Supporters,

I'm so grateful for 26 years of heartfelt support from our PAWS Chicago community as we work together to build No Kill communities, starting with a No Kill Chicago. Your support was even more impactful in 2023, as we ramped up our programs to address post-pandemic challenges for pets, including an increase in pet abandonment and homelessness in Chicago and across the country. Thanks to your support, PAWS Chicago continues to answer the call when animals need us most.

Euthanasia at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility, increased 22.7% in 2023, and more than 2,500 animals were euthanized for the first time since 2016. But PAWS redoubled our efforts, rescuing 695 more cats and dogs from CACC than the year before, a total of 2,325 animals. Without our increased help, euthanasia at CACC would have increased by 50.6% instead of 22.7%.

Through all of this, PAWS Chicago still achieved two important milestones in 2023: our 80,000th adoption and our 300,000th free or low-cost spay/neuter surgery. For the year, we found adoptive homes for 4,561 pets, and prevented the births of innumerable unwanted dogs and cats by performing 16,587 spay/neuter surgeries.

Our Animal Health and Behavior programs continued to make important strides as well. During periods of overcrowding, pets with contagious illnesses are especially at risk. But in 2023, PAWS Chicago was able to save more parvo-positive puppies who were rescued from CACC in time to effectively administer a revolutionary new drug, Canine Parvovirus Monoclonal Antibody (CPMA). Each of these innocent pets would have been euthanized without our intervention.

Since PAWS was founded in 1997, the world may have changed, but our No Kill mission never has. With your help, we'll continue to rise to the occasion for homeless pets. The future holds challenges to be sure, but we're ready to face them with energy, passion, and innovation because these loving pets rely on us to be their voice and their protectors.

Thank you so much for your continued dedication to the animals who need us most.

Warmest regards,

Paula Fasseas
Founder & Executive Chair

CHICAGO ANIMAL CRISIS FUND

PAWS STEPS IN TO CURB CRISIS FOR HOMELESS PETS

Throughout its history, PAWS Chicago has used data to help guide the organization's No Kill mission and respond to issues and trends as quickly as possible.

As an increase in pet abandonment throughout the country materialized as a crisis for Chicago's homeless pets, PAWS Chicago saw dramatically higher numbers of cats and dogs entering Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility. And PAWS jumped into immediate action.

By launching 360-degree programmatic support of CACC, including support with transfers, adoptions, spay/neuter surgeries, medical care and pet owner support to help people keep their pets, PAWS Chicago is building a comprehensive emergency response.

The Chicago Animal Crisis Fund was launched to make these lifesaving efforts possible. As they always do, Chicagoans took action in a time of crisis, allowing PAWS to continue to lead animal welfare programs during a difficult time for homeless pets in Chicago. But the crisis endures, and the work continues.

A PERFECT STORM ARRIVES

The onset of the pandemic in 2020 produced challenges that PAWS Chicago has not seen before. A perfect storm of factors — economic and housing issues, a worsening national veterinary shortage, and many shelters and animal welfare organizations shutting down — produced an initial spike in adoptions and a decline in spay and neuter procedures. Combined with inflationary factors, those issues have led to a surge in homeless pets in Chicago and nationwide.

That storm, by 2023, produced a crisis for homeless pets.

The situation became apparent in the first half of 2023. Because PAWS is the largest transfer partner of CACC, our team is in their building nearly every day. Last spring, we saw intakes at CACC rapidly increasing. PAWS immediately responded, increasing our rescues from CACC. In all, we rescued 2,325 pets from CACC in 2023, and that doesn't include the pets rescued directly from the public. The number represented 38% of all dogs and cats transferred from CACC to other organizations.

In addition to increasing transfers from CACC, PAWS also altered its communication throughout the year to both raise awareness about the emerging crisis and to emphasize our local efforts.

Last summer PAWS launched a new program, The Big Fix, to provide spay/neuter surgeries for large dogs at CACC. Pets cannot be adopted without a spay/neuter surgery, and CACC did not have enough veterinarians to perform them. PAWS Chicago stepped in, ensuring an additional 10 large dogs each week would be available for adoption. Since large dogs are the population most at risk of euthanasia, this program helps animals who need it most. By year's end, PAWS had provided 147 spay and neuters to CACC dogs, ensuring more pets lived.

Despite PAWS's efforts the surge did not slow down. CACC's year-end intake of cats and dogs was 12,965, an increase of 1,198. As a result, euthanasia there climbed to 2,966 pets, a 22.7% increase over 2022. It was the first year since 2016 that CACC put down more than 2,500 dogs and cats.

At left: Lilah with a PAWS rescue team member leaving CACC for the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center and a life filled with safety, security, and family.

ALL SAVED FROM EUTHANASIA!



Just a few of the hundreds of pets saved from euthanasia Sammy, Torta and Tamale, Penny, Gita, Glen, Hugo.....

CRISIS EMERGES

As the year wore on, PAWS Chicago transfers from CACC increased significantly, but collective transfers to other organizations fell every month through September. As word spread about the seriousness of the situation, and PAWS launched programs to encourage transfers, other shelters began increasing transfers late in the year.

In all, non-PAWS shelters took in 12.8% fewer dogs and cats in 2023 than in 2022. PAWS took in 42% more animals than in the previous year.

PAWS and CACC collaborated to expand the public-private partnership between the organizations. In late November, PAWS announced new and expanded programs that would not only curb overcrowding and reduce the euthanasia rate in Chicago but would serve as a model for other communities.

The organizations agreed that PAWS would:

- Continue the big-dog spay/neuter program
- Transfer and treat parvovirus-positive puppies. Dogs who are symptomatic for parvovirus cannot be quarantined at CACC due to the risk it poses to the rest of the population; if not transferred, they are immediately euthanized.

- Provide on-site and virtual support for owners who are contemplating giving up their pets to CACC by providing services such as free or low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations, acute medical care, behavior support, or pet supplies/food. Data shows that 15% to 20% of owners will keep their pets when these services are available.
- Fund a PAWS representative to staff adoptions at CACC, managing volunteers and supporting adopters, as the city provides no budgeted positions. The month PAWS launched the program, adoptions immediately began improving.

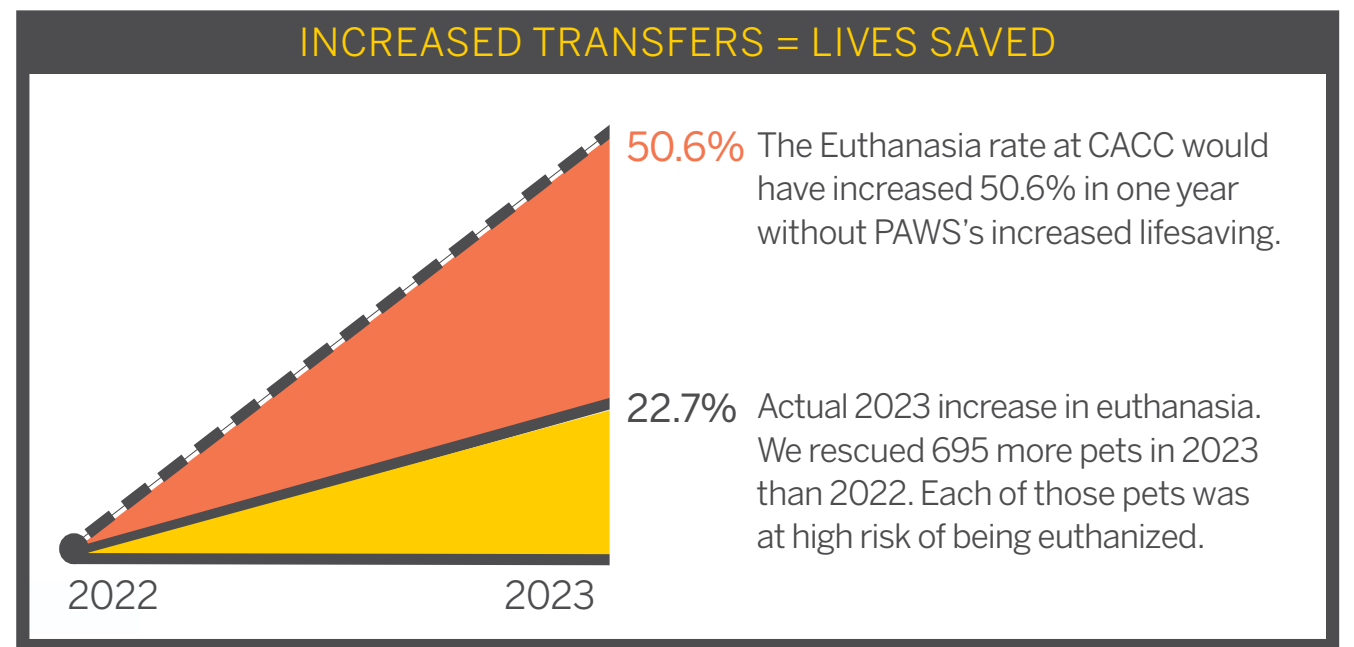
PROMISING START

Although the surge in intake at CACC continued into 2024, the PAWS Chicago response to the crisis was providing promise to the situation. **While euthanasia increased by 22.7% in 2023, without PAWS Chicago's enhanced programs, that number would have increased by 50.6%.** In the second half of the year, euthanasia at CACC only rose by 8.4% year-over-year after being up by more than 45% through June.

"We made great progress in the last year identifying and addressing the homeless pet crisis, but the work is not complete," says Paula Fasseas, PAWS Chicago founder & executive chair. "We need the community's support now more than ever."

In addition to donating to the Chicago Animal Crisis Fund, support from members of the

community includes volunteering at the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center or Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center, fostering to adopt through our Help Me Heal and Foster First programs, or fostering animals temporarily to create additional space in our programs.





WHAT'S IN A NAME?

GENEROSITY, IMPACT, SUSTAINABILITY

Last fall, Nan and Wayne 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 for generations.

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.

The facility, open 365 days a year, features medical-grade quarantine and isolation rooms; advanced surgical suites; a high-volume spay/neuter clinic; intake, triage, and exam rooms; and a world-class veterinary staff and medical team that treats nearly 23,000 homeless and at-risk pets each year.

To help maintain the Medical Center, the Kocoureks established an endowment, designed to ensure some of the essential operations are funded in perpetuity. 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.

Top: PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center, Andrea Parks, Nan Kocourek, Sammi Parks, Skylee Parks and Wayne Kocourek.

At right: Nan and Wayne on a Medical Center visit; Nan with Dr. Emily Yacker, senior veterinarian of shelter medicine; Wayne with Brian Landeta, surgical prep tech; and Nan with Esme Segura, animal care manager.

THE PAWS CHICAGO NO KILL MODEL

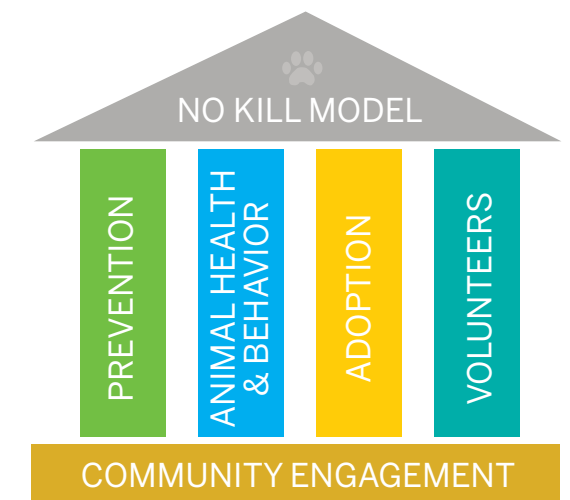
PAWS Chicago's innovative No Kill model was created to put an end to mass euthanasia and build communities where every pet is given the chance to not just survive but thrive.

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

Sitting atop this foundation are our 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 effect, our goal is to achieve a No Kill equilibrium, where the number of homeless and unwanted pets in Chicago is in balance with our community's capacity to save, heal, and care for them.

Since our founding in 1997, when more than 42,000 pets were killed, PAWS Chicago's No Kill model has been instrumental in reducing citywide euthanasia by 90.2%.





PREVENTION CURTAILING PET OVERPOPULATION IS KEY

PAWS Chicago kicked off 2023 with an important milestone: performing our 300,000th free or low-cost spay/neuter surgery since the PAWS Chicago Lurie Clinic opened in November 2000. And PAWS finished the year by completing 16,587 free or low-cost spay/neuter surgeries in 2023, which represents a post-pandemic high.

Most stray and unwanted pets are found in neighborhoods without veterinary service providers. For pet owners in these under-resourced neighborhoods, PAWS Chicago offers free and low-cost spay/neuter year-round at the Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center and Lurie Clinic. As part of our 16,587 free and low-cost spay neuter surgeries, 2,428 were performed on feral cats through our Trap-Neuter-Return program (TNR).

Theoretically, a single cat and her offspring can be responsible for the birth of 420,000 cats in seven years. That's why spay/neuter continues to be a crucial path toward our No Kill mission and why every single surgery has an outsize impact. In addition to spay/neuter procedures, PAWS Chicago prevents pet homelessness by offering preventative medical care. For targeted ZIP Codes, the Lurie Clinic provides free and low-cost vaccines, deworming, microchipping, FeLV/FIV tests, heartworm tests, and flea/tick and

heartworm prevention. In 2023, our vaccine clinic had 4,950 appointments and provided 39,432 total vaccines.

And our Pet Food Pantry is open to the public, distributing approximately 5,000 pounds of free pet food every month along with other pet care essentials, including kitty litter, grooming supplies, crates, and harnesses.

When PAWS began our No Kill mission in 1997, more than 28,000 dogs and cats came to Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility, annually. Today, annual intake has decreased by 54% — that's 15,000 fewer animals who we have to find homes for, medically treat, and care for — all because of critically important spay/neuter surgeries.

But our work is never done. If we stop prevention efforts at any time, the prolific breeding and resultant killing of homeless pets will return. Only by ensuring spay/neuter and preventive care is available and accessible for the people and pets who need it most can we achieve and sustain a No Kill equilibrium.

Above: PAWS Chicago Chief Medical Officer Dr. Alycia Eisenstein performs spay/neuter surgery at the PAWS Chicago Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic.



16,587
free or low-cost
spayed/neuter surgeries

39,432
free and low-cost
vaccinations



Above: PAWS vaccinates thousands of homeless and at-risk pets, helping prevent highly contagious and life-threatening viruses, such as Panleukopenia in cats and Parvovirus in puppies.

Below: Our robust Trap-Neuter-Return program provides spay/neuter procedures to feral cats, dramatically reducing the proliferation of unwanted animals.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Alena Ceniti & Centera Transport

Alena Ceniti's business Centera Transport Inc., is unlike any other trucking company we know. Located in Back of the Yards — a neighborhood with one of the highest stray call rates in Chicago — it's also a "cat sanctuary."

"In 2006, cats started coming around, so we started feeding them. It's just the right thing to do. They're hungry and homeless, and we can help," says Alena.

Alena, her siblings, and her team at Centera went on to convert an old warehouse into a mini haven. But when they saw pregnant cats, they knew they needed to do more.

"They'll just keep multiplying. We found out we were in a ZIP Code where PAWS operates a free trap-neuter-return program. PAWS even comes by and picks them up, which is a big help," says Alena.

Since then, PAWS Chicago has provided regular transport to and from Centera for spay/neuter surgeries.

"We've had hundreds. When PAWS drops them back off, we try to find homes for them. And between employees, drivers, and social media, we've been lucky with a lot," says Alena.

However, their longest-term resident, Mama, is happy to stay with the crew at Centera and can often be found slung over an employee's shoulder like a baby.

"My whole team helps and loves the animals. Everybody working together and getting things done — that's how it should be" says Alena.

Centera is one of PAWS Chicago's most generous supporters as well because Alena believes in the mission.

"I believe Chicago can be 100% No Kill. I see how far we've come already. I know it's going to happen, and it's going to be beautiful," says Alena.



ANIMAL HEALTH & BEHAVIOR

SAVING ALL TREATABLE ANIMALS

Sick, injured, at-risk, neglected, or abused, PAWS Chicago's Animal Health & Behavior programs are built to give every pet who comes into our doors a second chance at life and happiness.

The first step for every PAWS animal is an exam at the Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center, among the most advanced homeless pet hospitals in the country. Able to perform in-house bloodwork, ultrasounds, X-rays, and more, our team can diagnose pets in hours instead of days. And with isolation suites, oxygen therapy and IV care, special surgeries, radiography, tumor removal, and eye and dental procedures, we're able to heal them as well.

With every pet who enters PAWS — contagious, seriously injured, recovering from abuse — we practice "case management," giving them the individualized care needed to survive and thrive. And despite consistently taking in some of the most difficult cases, our save rate is still an incredible 98.62%.

In 2023, PAWS Chicago was one of the few homeless pet hospitals in the country to begin administering a new drug, Canine Parvovirus Monoclonal Antibody (CPMA) — to treat parvovirus(+) puppies in Chicago. Parvo is one of the most deadly and contagious viruses impacting dogs. Initial anecdotal

experience suggested that parvovirus(+) isolation periods might be shortened from 14 days and parvo mortality might be reduced.

To test the drug's efficacy, PAWS veterinarians, led by Dr. Megan Lee, DVM, MPH, designed a research study to determine the impact of CPMA in a shelter environment. PAWS veterinarians will complete data analysis and publish research in late 2024 or early 2025.

Additionally, care offered by PAWS goes beyond the physical, considering animals' behavioral and emotional needs as well. Our training team works one-on-one with animals to assess their needs and offers regular programs to help animals overcome shyness, improve socialization and build confidence.

In 2023, PAWS transitioned to Salesforce, we call our system PAWSforce, for managing our foster program, animal care and enrichment, adoption and foster applications. This development launches a new era of identifying, recruiting, training, and communicating with volunteers and fosters in a more streamlined and effective way.

Above left: Doolittle had an injured leg. Today he's living a charmed life.

Above right: Dumpling was seen being dumped on the street, too weak to move. Through slow, steady work coupled with lots of love, our veterinary team was able to save her.



98.62%
Save rate

716
Special surgeries
performed



Above: Mono, the first PAWS pet to receive the Canine Parvovirus Monoclonal Antibody. Read his full story at pawschicago.org/Mono.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Cathy Bedrick & David Gullion

Cathy Bedrick and Dave Gullion adopted their outdoor-loving Lab, Mosby, in 2007.

"He would sit in our backyard and follow the sun all the way across until he was pressed up against the fence," says Cathy.

Around 2017, Mosby started having some mobility issues. "He was diagnosed with degenerative disc disease. We took him to rehab every week, and by getting focused exercise and therapy, we had several more really good years with him," says Dave.

"To see firsthand the effects of therapy and exercise was eye-opening — it made us appreciate how much extra time it can give you," says Cathy.

When Mosby passed away at 16 years old, Dave and Cathy made an important decision: "We decided to turn the money we were spending on his health into a donation," says Dave.

The result was Mosby's Mobility Course located on the rooftop of our Adoption Center in Lincoln Park, which features pet exercise equipment for stretching, working on injuries, and training.

"We were looking for an outdoor space that would allow pets to heal. A place for people to bond with pets. A place to help them go from a dog on the street to a dog in a home," says Cathy.

Mosby's Mobility Course has become that place, and it fits in perfectly at PAWS.

"PAWS is one of the few shelters that takes a holistic approach, focusing on full wellness and trying to solve the problem from every angle. It's revolutionary in the shelter community," says Dave.

"Your medical and behavioral facilities make it possible to reach pets other shelters can't. That's what makes PAWS stand out," says Cathy.



ADOPTION

LOVING FAMILIES FOR HOMELESS PETS

Anyone who has spent time at the PAWS Chicago Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center knows the pet chooses the person. It feels like magic. But it takes a lot more than magic to reach a milestone of 80,000 total adoptions, which PAWS Chicago did in 2023.

PAWS Chicago's unique ComPETibility matchmaking system helps adopters and adoption counselors optimize pet matches by comparing all kinds of crucial factors, including activity level, home environment, comfort when left alone, and friendliness with kids and other pets. This innovation leads to fewer returns, more stability for pets, and increased adopter satisfaction.

In 2023, PAWS introduced a new digitalized system for pets at the Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center. Next to each animal suite, an Android tablet is mounted to the wall, providing quick and easy access to detailed information about the pets in front of you. Additionally, the new system updates automatically, pulling in any new information about pets as soon as it's available. Technology innovations help adopters get the information they need more quickly and,

ultimately, help us find homes for more pets.

To help our most vulnerable pets get into lasting homes more quickly, PAWS offers foster-to-adopt programs, including Help Me Heal and Foster First. Help Me Heal is for pets who need medical follow-ups (like dental surgery) but are otherwise ready for adoption. And Foster First is for pets who need training support and a specific environment to thrive.

But PAWS isn't just concerned about the homeless pets in our care. We believe every animal deserves a family. That's why we're doing all we can to enhance adoptions at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility. In 2023, PAWS staff started working on-site at CACC, providing comprehensive support for their adoption and volunteer programs. In 2023, PAWS also started providing free spay/neuter surgeries to large dogs at CACC, including transportation to and from the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center. Large dogs are the most likely to be euthanized, and supplying this surgery makes it possible for the public to adopt them or incentivizes other foster-based



4,561

Adoptions in 2023

82,234

Since our founding
in 1997

rescues that don't have surgical capabilities to transfer them. Both of these services are part of our innovative 360@CACC collaboration with the city shelter.

Beyond regular adoptions, PAWS hosted dozens of adoption events at our Adoption Center and around Chicago throughout the year. Not only do these events put hundreds of pets in loving homes, but they also raise awareness for our 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. Our Adoption team is always available to answer questions, and our 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: Looking at just a few of the 4,561 pets matched with their happy new families is enough to make anyone smile.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Nancy & Scott Santi

At the 2023 Fur Ball, Nancy and Scott Santi expected all the usual merriment — dinner, dancing, auctions. But they ended up with much more.

"Right before it was ending, my daughter calls me over, 'Mom, you've got to see this dog.' So, I went over, and I just knew he was meant for us. I felt his spirit, his energy. And it turned out to be so true," says Nancy.

The little Shih Tzu, now named Rutledge, needed a new home because his owner passed away. And a month earlier, Nancy's mother had passed away. "I think we needed each other," says Nancy.

The very next day, Nancy and Scott adopted Rutledge at the PAWS Chicago Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center. "It's such a positive, happy place. It feels like home," says Nancy.

"The special thing about PAWS is how much they prioritize the right placement. The right pet with the right family or the right person. And if it doesn't work out, PAWS is right there," says Scott.

Beyond adoption, Nancy serves on our Board of Directors, working to guide our mission, establish policy, and ensure sustainability in everything PAWS does. Nancy also generously chaired our 2021 Fur Ball, helping organize and execute one of our largest fundraising events of the year. Plus, Nancy and Scott are longtime PAWS supporters who continue to make a major impact with their donations.

Every day, Nancy and Scott are grateful to be a part of the PAWS Chicago community.

"It's just the most satisfying relationship we have. We know the best way we can support pets is however you ask us," says Nancy.



VOLUNTEERS

THE LIFE FORCE BEHIND PAWS

Volunteers are the hands and heart of our No Kill mission, touching the lives of every single pet who walks through our doors. In 2023, an incredible 1,935 new volunteers joined our lifesaving mission, representing a significant portion of our total 3,176 volunteers for the year.

In total, volunteers contributed 106,221 hours of service, equivalent to 51 full-time employees in 2023. Volunteers at the PAWS Chicago Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center help with everything from checking in new pets to providing their first socialization and walks. And specially trained TLC volunteers give our longer-term, hospitalized pets the extra care and attention needed to heal.

Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center volunteers look after our adoption-ready pets. They go on walks, clean animals' suites, and work with potential adopters.

Transport volunteers escort adoptable animals from the Medical Center to the Adoption Center every day and routinely provide transportation to and from the Lurie Clinic for pets in underserved neighborhoods.

Transport volunteers also jump into action when natural disasters strike. In April 2023, tornadoes ripped across Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states, and the Tipton County Animal Shelter in Brighton, TN told us existing

shelter pets faced euthanasia due to overcrowding. PAWS volunteers immediately drove down with a rescue van full of leashes, collars, chew toys, cat litter and hundreds of pounds of pet food, and they returned with 31 homeless animals (21 dogs and 10 cats).

Fosters are another type of volunteer — they temporarily give their hearts and homes to infant puppies and kittens, pets healing from illnesses and injuries, and animals who need training or simply a break from shelter life. In 2023, 1,921 pets benefited from spending time in one or more foster homes — but they weren't the only ones to benefit. Every animal moved into a foster home makes space to save another life at our Medical Center.

Members of our Professional and Development Boards volunteer as advocates in the community. They use their networks to raise awareness and funds and represent corporate, philanthropic, and civic organizations fighting for homeless pets.

No matter your skills, interests, or location, there is a way for you to move the No Kill mission forward. Every animal lover is qualified to save lives as a PAWS Chicago volunteer.



106,221

Total volunteer hours,
equivalent to 51
full-time employees

1,935

New volunteers

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



ELLIE FELDMANN & SAM KUNG

When one of our most active foster parents, Ellie Feldmann, moved in with friend Sam Kung, “the house got bigger, and so did the number of animals that came through it,” says Ellie.

Ellie started fostering in 2011 when she was between jobs and looking for a way to stay motivated. To date, Ellie has fostered more than 230 dogs, and Sam has been beside her for many of those. Both find it meaningful in their own way.

“My biggest love is the shy, fearful ones. There’s nothing more rewarding than seeing them go from hiding in the corner to running around and playing. Having some puppy piles on your lap is not so bad either,” says Ellie.

For Sam, fostering puts life into perspective. “Animals help me to be a better person. Having fosters makes the issues I have feel small compared to theirs. It’s easy to realize it doesn’t take much time or effort to provide them with the safety and kindness they need,” he says.

After being exposed to fostering, Sam started volunteering to strategically support PAWS operations information technology team, advising on data storage and cybersecurity.

“Sam shows that any kind of effort or any kind of time that you can give is valuable, and no matter what your talent is, they’ll find a place to use it,” says Ellie.

Ellie also helps at the PAWS Chicago Training Center, supporting foster parents and adopters. Plus, Ellie and Sam are frequent sponsors of PAWS events and serve on the PAWS Development Board, helping plan fundraisers, gain sponsors, and earn supporters.

There are endless ways to make a difference, but the importance of volunteering remains simple and constant:

“Without volunteers, PAWS couldn’t do everything that needs to be done to make sure these animals are living their best lives,” says Ellie.



Above: Volunteers perform all manner of services for PAWS pets, including the loving cuddles they crave.

Left top: A volunteer welcomes two more homeless pets to the Medical Center, their first step toward a life of health and happiness.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

INVITING ALL TO JOIN THE MISSION

It's hard to fathom, but in 1997 when PAWS Chicago was founded, 26,394 pets were killed at Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC), the city impoundment facility. Since then, PAWS Chicago has led the reduction in homeless pet euthanasia citywide by 90.2%

Engaging the public in the cause of homeless animals has brought about transformational change. And when we look 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.

Within this community is TEAM PAWS Chicago — a group of animal-loving athletes who run in marathons around the world to raise funds and awareness for homeless pets. In 2023, TEAM PAWS Chicago was the largest local charity team in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon with 483 runners proudly representing the No Kill mission.

PAWS Chicago's growing presence is reflected in the media. In 2023, WFLD-Channel 32 (FOX)'s Sylvia Perez started a regular news segment educating viewers about PAWS Chicago's impressive medical

capabilities and making stars of the brave homeless pets who overcome difficult injuries and illnesses.

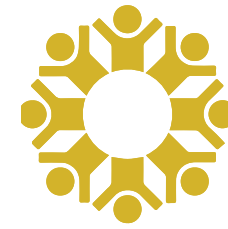
Lots of local businesses also got involved in 2023. For the second year in a row, Piece Pizzeria's three-month "Slice to Meet You" campaign placed adoption flyers atop pizza boxes delivered across the city and sold limited-edition specialty pies — 1,299 of them — to benefit homeless pets. Every \$35 specialty pizza triggered an incredible \$50 donation to PAWS Chicago — \$10 from Piece and \$40 from four generous matching donors.

Enterprise Mobility employees across Chicagoland showed their support for PAWS Chicago by dedicating their employee giving funds to the pets in our care. With a matching gift from the Enterprise Mobility Foundation, more than \$46,000 was donated to PAWS.

And local media personality Dan "Big Cat" Katz, nationally known as a podcast host on Barstool Sports, launched a coffee brand named after his dog, Stella, whom he adopted from PAWS Chicago. Today, a portion of proceeds from every Stella Blue Coffee purchase 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 we will achieve a No Kill community.

Top: Two of the over 500 runners raising critical funds for pets through TEAM PAWS Chicago.



280,812
email subscribers

266,754
social media fans



Top Above: Doug Sohn (Hot Doug's), Bill Jacobs (Piece Pizzeria), Barry Sorkin (Smoque BBQ) show off one of the specialty pies featured in the Slice to Meet You fundraiser.

Below: Dan "Big Cat" Katz and his dog Stella donate a portion of proceeds from every Stella Blue Coffee purchase to PAWS.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



SYLVIA PEREZ

FOX 32 Chicago host Sylvia Perez is a lifelong animal lover, constantly working to give homeless pets a voice. On the news, she features adoptable PAWS pets and recently introduced a segment to highlight our "medical miracle" stories.

"It's about raising awareness — reaching an enormous group of people who would not normally think about how important animal welfare is. If you can tell one story, my hope is that it has this huge domino effect. People see the story of one pet and say, 'Wait a minute, there are thousands like this,'" says Sylvia.

Sylvia's hope has turned into a reality. "People had no idea so many pets wouldn't survive if it wasn't for PAWS. They needed to hear about this. The response has been overwhelming. As soon as people see the pets, they reach out," says Sylvia.

Sylvia also recently spotlighted the PAWS Chicago origin story in a FOX 32 Chicago special called "Chicagoland." In addition to her on-air support, Sylvia is a regular emcee at PAWS events, including our annual Fur Ball and the PAWS Chicago 5K.

"It's pure joy. You're in an atmosphere filled with happiness and you're with hundreds of people who have the same love and passion for animals you do. And once you leave, you feel like you belong to this community and you want to contribute even more," says Sylvia, who also enjoys time with her precious grand dog Marisol, a PAWS pet, of course.

While comfortable in the spotlight, Sylvia is thrilled to be one of the many when it comes to supporting PAWS Chicago.

"It's so fulfilling. There's something about having a pet that brings people together. I am so impressed with what pet owners will go through to make sure they help each other, and I'm just blown away by how much people give back," says Sylvia.

HEROES AMONG US

OUR VOLUNTEER CORPS BRINGS LIFE TO PAWS PETS



The group of five volunteers stand in a comfortable little huddle around Clint, a recent addition to the Dog Town wing at the PAWS Chicago Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center in Lincoln Park.

Maybe it's Clint who calls to mind images of a mythological creature. He's a canine chimera, cobbled together with a pit bull's granite head and colossus shoulders balanced on the milking stool legs of a Corgi — short, squat, stable. A smile graces his face as his head bobs up and down on a sea of affection.

Most likely, it's the five volunteers themselves giving off heroic vibes as they surround Clint, their green and brown aprons as battle worn and tested as ancient armor. They are Christine Bortman, Paige Krueger, Don Allerton, Michael "Brady" Schabowski, and Manu Puri.

Make no mistake, PAWS wouldn't exist without our volunteers. Every single one becomes a hero to PAWS pets the moment they put on their aprons. In 2023 alone 3,176 animal lovers donated 106,221 hours of their time supporting the PAWS No Kill mission. That's the equivalent of 51 full-time employees. Volunteers help with virtually every need at PAWS, from animal enrichment to hosting donor events, from communications planning to traveling into hurricane-ravaged lowlands to rescue pets.

And in the middle of all that lifesaving, you'll find Manu, Paige, Don, Christine, and Brady, each contributing in an outsize way. Together they have donated more than six years of their time and talent to saving Chicago's homeless and at-risk pets.

Left to right: Top row, Christine Bortman, Paige Krueger, Don Allerton. Bottom: Michael "Brady" Schabowski and Manu Puri.



Top: Brady and his wife, Rachel, holding photos of their PAWS Alums Penny and Jude at the BOA Chicago Marathon.

Left: Susanna Wickham, Sylvia Perez, Gina Strohl, Elly Greenspahn, Paula Fasseas, Brady.

MICHAEL "BRADY" SCHABOWSKI

Brady from 103.5 KISS FM stands on a stage at the PAWS Chicago 5K, microphone in hand, looking — and sounding — like he was born for the job. Which, of course, he was.

For PAWS pets, and at-risk animals across Chicago, it's the voice that's saved thousands of lives.

For the last couple of years, Brady has put his love of animals, dedication to giving back to the community, and that rich baritone voice to use as a PAWS Chicago Ambassador, acting as emcee at PAWS events, raising awareness on his radio show, and even putting the rest of his body to the test by running 26.2 miles in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon as a member of TEAM PAWS Chicago.

His motivation is pretty simple. He loves animals. "PAWS saves animals, but animals save us, too. Everyone should know the unconditional love of

a furry family member," he says. Brady and his wife have two PAWS cats, Jude and Penny, adopted together in 2021 after being rescued from the streets of Chicago.

Brady's voice extends far beyond the radio waves for PAWS. His highly followed social channels feature a regular stream of PAWS content. But Brady isn't just a one-man band, he also brings his station — and his audience — for the ride. They donate hundreds of ads to help promote PAWS events. In 2023, the station donated two tickets to a Taylor Swift concert to raise money for Brady's TEAM PAWS Chicago marathon run and the contest went platinum, raising \$73,000 in just a few days.

"Never underestimate the power of Swifties," Brady says.



Tails. They're the first thing a visitor notices upon arrival at the Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center. PAWS Chicago is filled with tails. Curled tails. Wagging tails. Tails that move like airplane propellers and tails that look like they should dust a bookshelf.

A recent day's most visible tail is a rainbow ribbon dangling and dancing from a cat toy gracefully operated by a volunteer sitting on the floor in the sun-drenched kitten room. Five tiny kittens are captivated by its movements. Chasing. Leaping. Rolling. Staring. Maybe they've never seen such a magical sight. They climb over the volunteer's legs to chase the ribbon.

Every hour a volunteer spends with these tiny creatures is crucial for their socialization and development. Every hour moves them closer to a lifetime with a family of their own.



Top: Paige Krueger on FOX 32 segment.
Left: PAWS Animal Magnetism: Sarah Atkinson, Paige Krueger, Liam O'Connor, adoptable PAWS pet Jimmy.



Top: Manu with Big Jim at the Adoption Center circa 2010.
Left: Manu at Beach Party 2023.

PAIGE KRUEGER

You may have seen Paige Krueger on an early morning news program, touting a PAWS pet available for adoption. Or you may have answered one of her hundreds of phone calls or emails asking your company to sponsor a PAWS event or donate an item for our silent auctions.

Paige is a fundraiser. She advocates. She promotes. She engages. Sure, her energy and drive are perfect for that role. But Paige fundamentally understands that engaging the community is the key to our No Kill mission. It may explain why she spent the last seven years co-chairing our Professional Board, a group comprised of animal lovers early in their careers who want to give back. Over those years, she helped grow membership from 20 to over 100. She also co-chaired the spring Animal Magnetism fundraiser for five years, and is a member of TEAM PAWS Chicago, the largest local charity team in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon with over 483 runners in 2023.

"If there's a committee, I've been on it," she says. "When I think back on it, it was probably social media where I learned about the problems animals face in high-kill shelters. My favorite programs at PAWS are community outreach and the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for cats.

"I'm a proud cat lady," she says.

"I regularly cry when I volunteer with TNR. It's so heartwarming. You return the animals and it gets emotional seeing peoples' love and gratitude for PAWS's service," she says.

She volunteers in the field regularly "to remind myself why I fundraise for PAWS." Since 2018, when she started tracking her fundraising, she's raised more than \$154,000 for PAWS pets.

Tables arranged in a semicircle around the room are stacked with pet food and supplies. Women and men in black PAWS Chicago T-shirts chat with pet owners who've come to make sure the animals they love have the food and supplies they need to thrive.

Welcome to the PAWS Chicago Pet Food Pantry, a once-a-month pop-up held at the Ogden Field House in Englewood — a pet resource desert — where pet food stores and basic veterinary care are absent. Data shows that 15% to 20% of people who relinquish their pets would keep them if they had accessible supplies and services.

Volunteers assist more than 175 pet owners find what they need for more than 600 pets. Food is distributed based on the number of pets in the household and their weight. Other items such as food and water bowls, harnesses or leashes are available too.

The Pet Food Pantry is a favorite among our volunteers. They see the immediate impact of their volunteerism — community members helping each other — and know we're one day closer to a No Kill Chicago.



MANU PURI

Manu Puri has volunteered so long, he's not certain of the year. He remembers the day though. It was Christmas.

"It was either 1999 or 2000, my first shift was Christmas Day. PAWS used to have a cat adoption center on Clark Street. I spent the day cleaning litterboxes, putting out food, and socializing kittens," Manu says.

Imagine a light snow falling outside, holiday carols in the background, one or two spritz cookies on a plate, and a few kittens prancing and purring. It might be the perfect way to spend a winter holiday.

What's kept him coming back for more than two decades?

"It's the need more than anything. There have been a lot of great strides but still a lot of animals need help.

It's necessary. You feel an obligation to help them," he says.

The emotional reward? It's seeing a PAWS pet who's waited extra-long for a home, like Peppermint Patty, the dog he adopted in 2022.

"It's exciting for everyone. The dog's happy, the family's happy, the staff and volunteers are excited. Those are the kind of things that keep you going," Manu says.

Manu is at the Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center working the adoption desk every other Saturday (as well as working events) and sees the reward from a practical, return-on-investment approach to spending time as a PAWS volunteer. "PAWS is a leader in the field. You're putting your time in, you want the best return on your investment. PAWS is best positioned to do the most good," he says.

The main lobby at the Drake Hotel is filled each holiday season by an oversize tree adorned with ornaments, lights, ribbons, and all manner of shiny things. But every year on one Friday night in mid-November, its glamour pales next to freshly groomed males dressed in black tuxedos and top hats, and females in ball gowns with rhinestones circling their necks. Their wagging tails and the occasional sloppy greeting do little to diminish their stature. They are guests at PAWS Chicago's annual Fur Ball gala and, clearly, these lucky dogs relish being the stars of the show.

Fur Ball is the most important fundraiser the year for PAWS, which receives no government funding, and is 100% dependent on supporter donations. And this crucial night could not happen without the legion of volunteers, more than 150 people working tirelessly to set up the space, record donations, circulate with our adoptable dogs and serve as table hosts to care for canine guests while their human companions enjoy themselves.

Fur Ball is just one of six fundraising events volunteers make possible throughout the year.





Left: Christine Bortman and Don Allerton at the Adoption Center.

Above top: Don counseling adopters at the Adoption Center.

Above bottom: Christine with a new arrival at the Medical Center.

DON ALLERTON

“The first time I went to PAWS, I came home with two dogs.”

It was late winter in 2008 when Don Allerton visited PAWS to adopt a dog, ended up with two, and a month later began a volunteering streak that continues unbroken to this day. Currently, you can find him at our Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. His smiling face is one of the most recognizable at the Adoption Center. He’s worked in Dog Town, conducted orientation for new volunteers, and helped run off-site events like Angels with Tails, the retail street fest adoption event that launched the organization.

“And as long as I can sit down, I can do adoption counseling,” says the 84-year-old, who looks like he’s never sat down in his life.

Officially, he’s logged more than 5,400 volunteer hours at PAWS. But the number is far higher, given that he’s been volunteering longer than PAWS has been counting volunteer hours.

His favorite PAWS pet of the thousands he’s cared for? That’s easy.

“Red.”

One word speaks volumes to so many in the PAWS family. Red was a 50-pound pit bull who was shot in the spine and paralyzed during a home invasion about

15 years ago. Miraculously, he survived thanks to a caring police officer and a delicate surgery at PAWS Chicago’s Nan & Wayne Kocourek Medical Center. He then spent more than two years at the Adoption Center motoring around with his back half on a specially built two-wheeled cart, before finding his family. Close to 100 volunteers — and the lifesaving police officer, Brian Cicio — were at Red’s going away party.

Don’s wife, Carol, also volunteers at PAWS. “You’ll find her there Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, doing dishes,” he says.

Spending this much time at PAWS “keeps me off the streets,” he jokes. Well, unless he’s walking a PAWS dog.

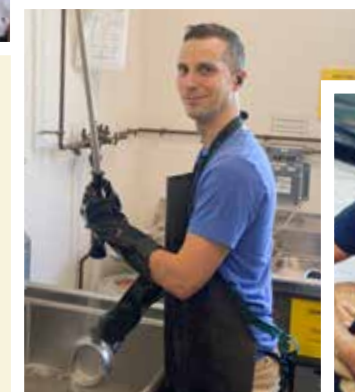
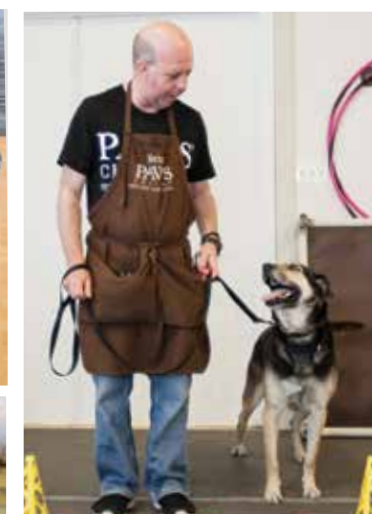
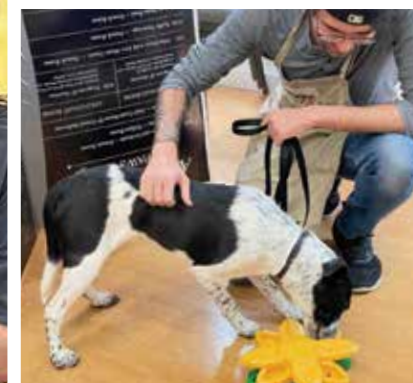
CHRISTINE BORTMAN

If PAWS Chicago ever opens its Hall of Fame, Christine Bortman will be a first ballot selection.

She’s already a two-time winner of PAWS’s Volunteer of the Year award.

“She could win it every year,” says Carlos Adan, PAWS Chicago’s assistant director of community programs.

For the last nine years Christine has volunteered at least three days a week, walking and feeding dogs, helping with Intake, driving the transport van, leading



Adoption, rescue, training, community services, care and support, dishwashing and laundry, events, volunteer groups — PAWS volunteers do it all to serve the more than 22,000 homeless and at-risk pets we care for each year.

More heroes!

new volunteers on their first shift, assisting Intake staff with dog behavior assessments, and fostering. “Boy, does time fly when you are having fun,” she says.

Judging by her 5,000 lifetime volunteer hours Christine has had a lot of fun. And she has no plans to stop any time soon.

“At the end of every shift I do with PAWS, I feel like I have helped the animals have a better day, and if they have a better day, they will be more adjusted and more ready for adoption,” she says.

Christine has felt the same tug toward adopting homeless pets as so many other volunteers. Shih Tzus are her special love.

“I already had two dogs, and I wasn’t planning for a third, but this one little 7-year-old girl looked at me in a way that was love at first sight. I thought I would foster her, but as soon as she jumped in my car, I knew she was a permanent part of our family.”

That was five years ago, and fluffy little Callie just celebrated her 12th birthday.

Five years down and more to come with a certified heart-stealer? Beats a Hall of Fame plaque any day.

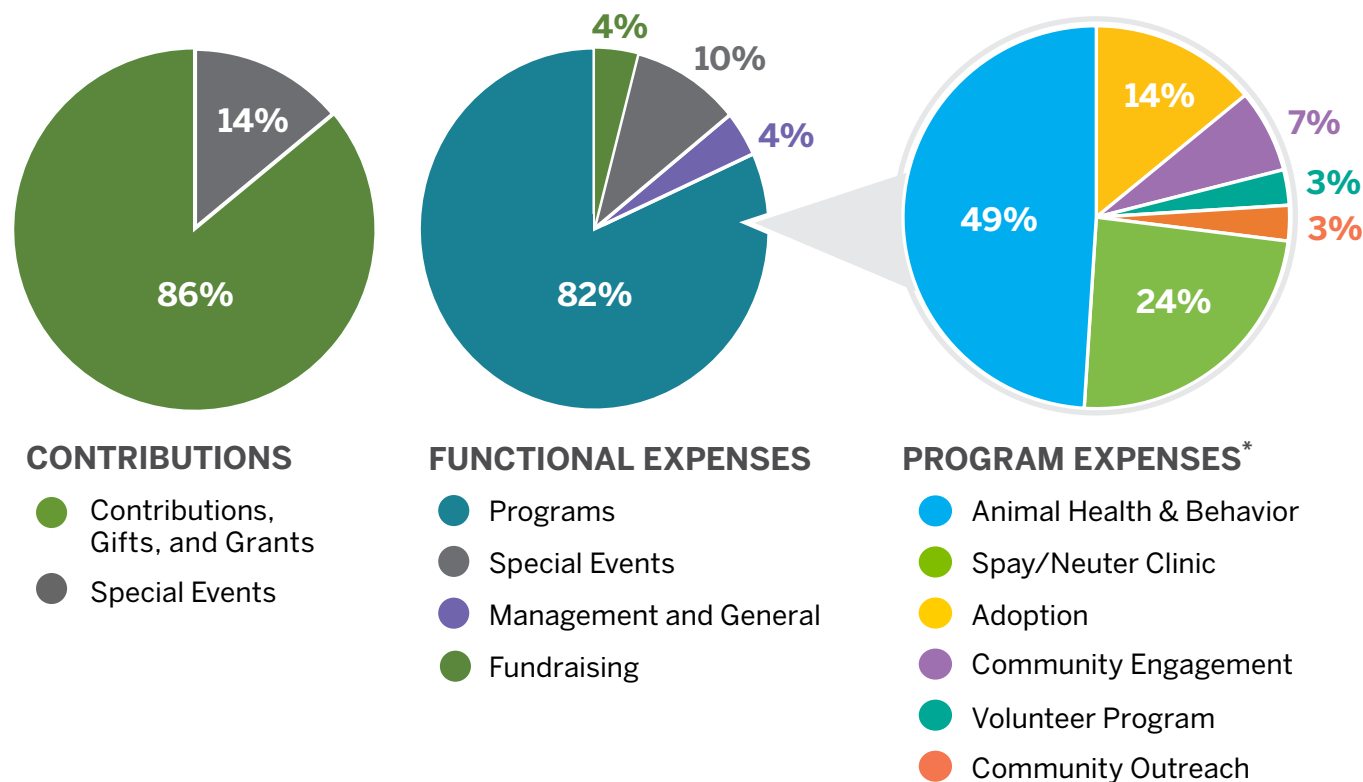
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

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



*Estimates pending final submission of Form 990 to IRS



RECOGNIZED FOR NON-PROFIT 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.

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Lifetimes to Come.



For life,
best
friends.

Remember the dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens
of PAWS Chicago in your estate plans.

Planned gifts of any size support lifesaving work today and
are protected to ensure the future of our No Kill mission.

PAWSCHICAGO
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